An INGO's Implementation Challenges of Inclusive Education in a Developing Country

by

Tammy Michelle Froese

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

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Abstract

The following thesis is an implementation study of an international non-governmental organization working in the field of inclusive education in Battambang, Cambodia. More specifically the study's intent was to examine the political, economic and socio-cultural challenges experienced by the organization's volunteers as they worked with local education partners in implementing inclusive education initiatives. Consideration was given to general education with emphasis on the implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives at the primary level. Data was collected through participant interviews, formal observations, Follow-up questions completed by participants and various documents from the organization. The findings from the study revealed significant inconsistencies between the organization's policy in gender equality and what was being implemented at the local level. Volunteers received little or no training in gender responsiveness, reported feelings of incapacity to engage in gender issues and failure to identify gender inequality in their development work. The volunteers and their working relationships with local education partners were a major theme in the findings; in particular the political challenges in navigating the agendas of various stakeholders. The organization's support, information and expectations of volunteers were other issues raised by participants in the study. Among the economic challenges to implementation were working within the confines of international funding, the development of the organization's budget, limited human resources, economic sustainability of programing and no funding for gender initiatives. Cultural challenges include volunteers' perceptions of local views on education, the relationship between community and schools, gender equality embedded in the culture, school directors 'losing face' and awareness regarding gender issues.

Acknowledgements

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Jake and Helen Froese. Their love and quiet expectations have motivated me in ways I could never have anticipated. I am deeply grateful for their endless support. Every achievement in my life is because of them.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.0 Introduction

September 2000 marked the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the United Nations as part of their global strategy to eradicate extreme poverty. The overall objective of the MDGs was to ameliorate the lives of people in developing countries by promoting development work in areas such as gender equality, education, child and maternal health, environmental sustainability and HIV/AIDS (United Nations, 2010a). The second Millennium Development Goal, that of universal education, stated that all children will be able to complete a primary level of education by 2015 (UNESCO, 2010a).

In the years since the development of the MDGs, substantial progress has been made in school enrolment. In 2007, the number of children out of school was 28% lower than in 2000 (UNESCO, 2010a). However encouraging these numbers may appear there is still substantial work to be done in achieving a basic primary education for both boys and girls in the developing world. According to recent reports by UNESCO (2010a), 69 million children remain out of school world-wide. The United Nations (2010b) has found that in most developing regions 95 girls were enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys in 2007. Gender parity was only achieved in 59 of 176 developing countries in 2006 (UNESCO, 2009a). This significant gender gap is seen particularly in South and West Asia where girls constitute 66% of out of school children (United Nations, 2010b).

Access to education has been a significant theme when addressing the issue of universal primary education. In most, if not all, developing countries marginalized children and youth are being excluded from educational opportunities. The underlying

causes of this marginalization are varied and also interrelated. Household poverty is the most significant factor of this ostracism, and the direct effects of poverty are reinforced by other factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, language and culture (UNESCO, 2010a).

1.1 Purpose Statement

Generally believed to be a responsibility of the state, primary education is seen not only as a fundamental human right but also as a basic public service. In developing nations struggling to provide these rudimentary services, international organisations have delivered support in a range of capacities from advocacy, service provision to social mobilization. Associations such as religious organisations, community groups, and the private sector have significantly aided in the expansion of the public education system (Sabur & Ahmed 2010).

Much of the success in the endeavour to achieve universal primary education has been due in large part to the development work done by international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs). One way INGOs have accomplished this has been through the targeting of specific groups of children who have been relegated by society and subsequently denied or restricted access to a basic education. Through the growth of inclusive education initiatives, INGOs work to create conditions at the local and state level that encourage the enrolment and subsequent participation of children in school.

This thesis is a qualitative study of VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas), a British international NGO in their implementation of inclusive education initiatives in rural Cambodia. CUSO-VSO (Canadian University Services Overseas) is the North American partner of VSO International located in Ottawa, Ontario. CUSO was founded in 1961 and

later merged with VSO International in 1995. This worldwide alliance of Voluntary

Service Organisations is based in the UK, the Netherlands, Kenya and the Philippines, as

well as Canada (CUSO-VSO, 2011).

The purpose of this study is to cultivate a deeper understanding of the complex

work INGOs engage in and how they function as an organisation within the political,

socio-cultural and economic context of a developing country. Consideration was given to

general education with an emphasis on the implementation of education initiatives for the

inclusion of girls. This study will examine the political, socio-cultural and economic

challenges experienced by VSO staff as they work with local partners within the

education system. Therefore the objective of this research is to achieve a greater

comprehension of the experiences of INGO development workers as they navigate the

implementation process within an educational setting. The data gathered for this thesis

serves to explore a possible theoretical framework for implementation research as well as

educational project work for international nongovernmental organisations.

For the purposes of this thesis, the term "initiative" is defined as "a new action or

movement, often intended to solve a problem" (Initiative, 2011). Therefore when

referring to the inclusive education endeavours of VSO, the international INGO that is

the focus of this study, the term "initiative" will be employed. For the present purposes,

inclusive education is not viewed as a "program" per se, but rather seen as initiative or an

approach to education.

1.2 Thesis and Subsidiary Questions

For the purposes of this study, the thesis will focus on the following central question: What are the challenges experienced by the staff and volunteers of an international nongovernmental organisation in their implementation of an inclusive education initiative in Cambodia, a developing country?

In order to answer the aforementioned thesis question it is not only pertinent but also necessary to employ several guiding subsidiary questions. When conducting research Werner (2004) refers to many types of questions in the area of implementation:

➢ What are the initiative goals, concept and design?

➢ Does the implementing institution have the resources and capacity to implement as planned?

➢ Is the initiative suited to the environment?

➢ Are initiative processes or systems operating as planned? If not, how and why?

In addition to Werner's (2004) suggested questions, for the purposes of this study more specific subsidiary questions will be also be used.

➢ What are the local political implications of engaging in educational development work?

➢ How does the socio-cultural context of rural Cambodia affect project work in inclusive education, in particular girls' primary education?

➢ What role does funding play in educational initiatives within INGOs?

1.3 Definition of terms

The following terminology and concepts are particular to this thesis and clarifying

their use will further elucidate the meaning attached to the data analysis presented in the

findings and discussion chapters.

Implementation:

A rudimentary definition of implementation refers to the progression by which

concepts or ideas are realized and subsequently put into operation. According to Fullan &

Pomfret (1977), implementation is the "actual use of an innovation or what an innovation

consists of in practice" (p. 336). Regarding policy implementation, Bressers (2004) aptly

states that implementation means "the process(es) that concern the application of relevant

policy instruments" (p. 284). Taking Bressers' statement, one can reasonably apply this

logic to the implementation of inclusive education initiatives with a minimum of

difficulty. Consequently, Bressers' definition of implementation is the most relevant and

will be used for the specific purposes of this study.

According to Werner (2004) implementation research necessitates drawing upon

data from a wide variety of sources. For example, questions about the design process may

require an examination of the conceptual planning phase, the initiative's objectives, to the

various stages of design and the final initiative model. There are other potential sources

of data, such as the logistics of initiative implementation. For example, questions on the

resources required in the operation of the initiative, its procedures, systems, and policies

are pertinent to the study of the implementation process. Mazmanian & Sabatier (1981)

posit that the "crucial role of implementation analysis is to identify the factors that affect

the achievement of (initiative) objectives throughout this entire process" (p. 6).

__International Nongovernmental Organisation (INGO):__

According to the World Bank (2002), nongovernmental organisations are "private organisations that pursue activities to relieve the suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development" (p. 1). The World Bank makes the distinction between two main groups of nongovernmental organisations: operational and advocacy NGOs. It is important to note that the Bank does not necessarily view these two groups as distinct entities, as many NGOs operate under both of these areas (World Bank, 1996). For example, operational NGOs will be primarily concerned with national and international policies whereas advocacy work tends to focus more on initiative implementation at the local level. NGOs engage with a variety of global actors such as universities, foreign donors, government agencies and departments, other NGOs, and the private sector (Townsend & Townsend, 2004).

Using the World Bank's definition as a reference point, international NGOs can be viewed as organisations which operate outside political institutions and engage in a variety of projects in developing countries. The term "NGOs" was first used by the United Nations in 1945 to specify the role of consultants in UN activities that were not affiliated with national governments (Srinivas, 2009). Since that time the concept of NGOs has evolved considerably:

A non-governmental organisation (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to governments, advocate and

monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of
information. Some are organised around specific issues, such as human rights,
environment or health. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early
warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements.
(Spivack, n.d.)

Due to the range of services, advocacy roles and other functions that VSO provides on an
international scale, it seems most appropriate to cite Spivak's definition of a
nongovernmental organisation for the purposes of this study.

The orientation of nongovernmental organisations is particularly important when
discussing its definition and classification. According to Vakil (1997), orientation refers
to the specific work and projects which an NGO engages in; this concept is further
divided into several categories: welfare, development, advocacy, development education,
networking and research. The level of NGO operation is another defining criterion,
differentiating between international, national, and community-based NGOs.
International NGOs are generally situated in industrialized countries, national and
community-based NGOs are located in developing regions (Vakil, 1997).

Today international nongovernmental organisations based in industrialized
nations are funded by a plethora of donors; these may be governments, multilateral
agencies, private foundations or private individuals (Townsend & Townsend 2004).
NGOs regularly report to donors on their standard operating procedures, practices and
financial expenditures. According to Barr, Fafchamps & Owens (2005), NGO monitoring
and oversight in industrialized countries are systematised around two legal concepts: that
of nonprofit organizations (also known as "not-for-profit") and charities or philanthropic

societies. As the name implies, nonprofit organisations do not endeavour to create revenue for their members; any profits made are funnelled back into the organisation. Barr et al. caution that monitoring and oversight in developed and developing countries vary considerably. Within the industrialized world, development NGOs operate to attract local support and funding and subsequently direct these funds to a philanthropic cause. In poorer regions the collection of financial support is less important as government agencies and international NGOs provide the bulk of funding for the development of initiatives (Barr et al., 2005). Consequently, the auditing practices of local and international NGOs will look quite different.

Oxfam International is one prominent example of a development INGO; it is renowned for its work in development, emergency assistance, campaigning, advocacy and research. Oxfam is an international confederation of 14 organisations with projects in 98 countries world-wide. In their mission statement, Oxfam (2011) declares their work is based on five fundamental human rights: the right to a sustainable livelihood, access to basic social services, the right to life and security, to be heard and to have an identity. Recent projects include relief work in Haiti, the provision of health services for HIV/AIDS patients in Malawi, microfinance enterprises for women in Afghanistan, to the installation of latrines and sanitation facilities for refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Oxfam, 2011).

Inclusive Education:

The debate over normalization and inclusion during the 1970's brought significant changes, particularly to the field of education. Major policy developments and legislation passed in European and North American states led to important shifts within the public

school system, introducing the integration of physically and mentally challenged students into mainstream classrooms. The movement for inclusion in the global North spread to the developing world in the early 1990's with the Salamanca Conference seen as a prominent milestone (Reindal, 2010). The outcome of the conference was a Framework for Action which called upon the international community to recognize that inclusive education should be fully accessible in every nation and to all students, regardless of their special needs.

Today the concept of inclusive education has evolved to recognize even greater diversity. According to UNESCO, inclusion does not only refer to the integration of physically and mentally challenged learners, but rather encompasses all ostracized groups in society. These range from working children, to ethnic and linguistic minorities, children and youth affected by conflict and HIV/AIDS, remote rural dwellers and nomads, children living in poor health and abject poverty, girls and women (UNESCO 2009b).

> Inclusion is not just a structural issue about how we organise or change the
> different aspects of the school – with reference to personnel, pedagogical
> methods, material and cultural structures – to fit the diversity of the pupils; it is
> also an ethical concept because it is for the purpose of something – that is,
> inclusion is for participating in something that is valuable. (Reindal, 2010, p. 8)

As a result of these broad definitions, inclusive education can best be defined as a philosophical approach that acknowledges and addresses the fact that students of diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds have a right to an education and that provisions should be made through inclusionary practices in order to achieve this end. These practices range

from embracing an adapted curriculum which allows for more flexibility in planning, assessment and evaluation, to the construction of facilities to enable adequate access for students with physical challenges, to the procurement of resources specifically for children with special needs (Croft, 2010).

For the purposes of this study, UNESCO's definition of inclusion targeting girls is the most appropriate as it is in direct alignment with the demographics outlined in VSO's inclusive education initiative. Therefore in this study inclusive education is defined as an initiative to facilitate girls' education. Additionally, Reindal's (2010) definition is appropriate in terms of a philosophical perspective of inclusion. Reindal's statement emphasises the value of including all groups in the education process and encourages individuals to look beyond superficialities such as statistics and facts, and engage the true obstacles that face inclusive education. Therefore both of these articulations of inclusive education will be employed for the duration of this study.

Developing Country:

A developing country is a general term to describe nations whose citizens struggle to secure the most primary material goods, access vital services and to meet their basic human needs. The United Nations (2010c) broadly classifies countries as either "developed" or "developing" according to a system called the Human Development Index. The HDI is an aggregate measure of a country's progress in three areas – income, education and health. Specific indicators within these areas are used to measure a state's

level of development: life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling, expected years of schooling and gross national income per capita (GNI). Nations who score high in the HDI category are considered to be "developed", while within the "developing" countries are gauged as exhibiting high, medium or low human development. As of 2010 Cambodia was ranked 124th out of 169 countries classified and is considered a developing country with a medium level of human development (United Nations, 2010c).

The appellation of "developed" and "developing" nations have replaced terms which are now infrequently used in the language of mainstream development; terms considered by some to be inappropriate or problematic. References to countries as First, Second and Third World arose during the Cold War as a way of classifying states which had allegiances to the United States or the Soviet Bloc. America and its allies were considered First World, Communism and the Soviet Block was the Second World, and all other nonaligned countries were referred to as the Third World (Gale, 2008). After the fall of Communism the label of "Third World" became synonymous with economically underdeveloped countries.

International organisations now employ an abundance of terms to describe and measure the development of countries. In the case of the United Nations (2011), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are the poorest countries in the world, which accounts for approximately 10 percent of the world's population, or just fewer than 75 million people. As of 2011 there were fifty countries classified as being a Least Developed Country, including Cambodia (UN-OHRLLS, 2011a). The LDC list is approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations and is reviewed every three years.

In order to be considered a Least Developed Country, the United Nations takes into account several quality of life and economic measures. This classification is based on dynamics such as life expectancy at birth, per capita calorie intake, combined primary and secondary enrolment, adult literacy, instability of agricultural production, instability of exports of goods and services, diversity of exports, percentage of GDP that is generated by manufacturing and service industries, and population size (United Nations, 2011).

According to the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developing Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS, 2011b), in the latest review of Least Developing Countries in 2009, the following three criteria were used in the identification process:

➢ A low-income criterion, based on a three-year average estimate of the gross national income (GNI) per capita (under $905 for inclusion, above $ 1,086 for graduation)

➢ A human capital status criterion, involving a composite Human Assets Index (HAI) based on indicators of: (a) nutrition: percentage of population undernourished; (b) health: mortality rate for children aged five years or under; (c) education: the gross secondary school enrolment ratio; and (d) adult literacy rate; and

➢ An economic vulnerability criterion, involving a composite Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI) based on indicators of: (a) population size; (b) remoteness; (c) merchandise export concentration; (d) share of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in gross domestic product; (e) homelessness owing to

natural disasters; (f) instability of agricultural production; and (g) instability of

exports of goods and services (UN-OHRLLS, 2011b).

The World Bank assumes a different position in the identification of developing

countries. Its defining feature is to classify economies according to Gross National

Income (GNI) per capita (World Bank, 2011a). In previous World Bank publications this

was referred to as Gross National Product (GNP). Based on its Gross National Income,

each economy is classified as low income, lower middle income, upper middle income

and upper income. Low income countries must have a GNI per capita of $995 or less;

lower middle income countries range from $996-$3,945, upper middle income countries

must generate a GNI of $3,946-$12,195 and to be classified as a high income country the

GNI must be $12,196 or more (World Bank, 2011a).

The aforementioned figures are based on the World Bank's Atlas method, also

known as the Atlas Conversion Factor. The purpose of the Atlas Conversion Factor is to

reduce the impact of exchange rate fluctuations in the cross-country comparison of

national incomes (World Bank, 2011b). On any given year the Atlas Conversion Factor is

the average of a country's exchange rate for that particular year and its exchange rates for

the two preceding years. This figure is adjusted for the difference between the rates of

inflation in a particular country and in the G-5 countries which are France, Germany,

Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States (World Bank, 2011b).

The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) system of classification for developing

nations is quite similar to that of the World Bank. In 1964 the IMF began to classify

countries under three categories: industrial, other high-income countries and less-

developed countries (IMF, 2011a). In the next decade this system changed slightly; in

addition to industrial countries there were two new categories: primary producing

countries in more developed areas and primary producing countries in less developed

areas. In the 1980's a more simplified classification system emerged, that of industrial

and developing countries. According to the World Economic Outlook (WEO) published

by the International Monetary Fund, the main criteria used to classify advanced and

emerging economies are (1) per capita income level, (2) export diversification and (3)

degree of integration into the global financial system (IMF, 2011b).

During the course of this thesis, the term "developing country" will be employed

as defined by the United Nations' Human Development Index. Firstly, as a more

contemporary term it can be considered more appropriate; secondly it is used extensively

by a plethora of organisations, donor agencies and financial institutions, and the term

clearly and accurately defines Cambodia as a country in the early stages economic

development.

1.4   In the field

1.4. 1 Cambodia - Overview

The Kingdom of Cambodia as it's more formally known, is a vast country of

approximately 14 million people covering 69, 898 square miles (181, 035 square

kilometres) and is situated on the Gulf of Thailand in Southeast Asia (Chandler &

Overton, 2011). It shares borders with Thailand, Laos as well as Vietnam. Its capital,

Phnom Penh, has a population of roughly 1.3 million people (National Institute of

Statistics, 2008). There are 6.4 million men and 6.8 million women in Cambodia, making

the ratio of men to women 94.2 per 100, respectively. The average life expectancy is 62

years, and a staggering 30% of Cambodia's population live at the poverty line (World Bank, 2011c). The average literacy rate of adults in the country is 78%.

While Khmer is the national language of Cambodia several other minority and indigenous languages are spoken throughout urban centers and rural areas. In terms of its government, Cambodia has a constitutional monarchy with two official houses – a senate along with a national assembly. The majority of Cambodians practice the religion of Buddhism. While its national exports are timber and rubber, the economy of Cambodia is the least developed of all Southeast Asian countries (Chandler & Overton, 2011). According to the World Bank (2011c), the GNI (Gross National Income) of Cambodia was one of the lowest in the world, at only US$650 per capita.

Cambodia has a long and rich history, of which only a small part can be briefly summarised here. From 1864-1945 Cambodia was a French protectorate, and then given its own independent country status at the end of World War II. In April of 1975 Communist troops entered the capital of Phnom Penh and took over the government, ordering all inhabitants to relocate to rural areas. Thus began four years of genocide and tyranny under Prime Minister Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. Following the lead of Maoist China, the Communist regime sought to mobilize Cambodia's people as unpaid labourers in order to double the pre-revolutionary yields of rice on a national scale. The human costs of this experiment were enormous, resulting in the loss of 20% of the total population. This meant nearly 1.5 million Cambodians died from either starvation, overwork, disease or execution (Chandler & Overton, 2011).

After the downfall of the Khmer Rouge, followed by a brief occupation by Vietnam, a peace accord was finally reached under UN auspices, and Cambodia held its

first democratic elections in 1993. By the early 21st century Cambodia had joined the WTO (World Trade Organisation), began to take control of the AIDS epidemic in the country, developed its tourism industry, reduced its dependence on the logging industry, and began to recognise the economic benefits of the garment industry (Chandler & Overton, 2011).

After excessive delays, in 2009 the first of the Khmer Rouge tribunals began in Phnom Penh. While leader Pol Pot died in 1998, the other military official known as Kaing Guek Eav (also known as "Duch") was found guilty of crimes against humanity in 2010 after already being in custody for ten years and was subsequently sentenced to an additional 19 years in prison.

1.4. 2 Cambodia - Education

Cambodia's education system was a significant causality of the Khmer Rouge's warfare, as all schools were closed during the genocide (Chandler & Overton, 2011). After 1979 Cambodia put a renewed emphasis on primary education (grades 1-6), and reopened secondary as well as post-secondary institutions. According to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS, 2008) there are now 9,431 schools in Cambodia. Since the 1990's agencies such as the International Red Cross and UNICEF have helped to rebuild some 6,000 educational institutions and trained thousands of Cambodian teachers (Tan, 2007). Donor agencies have contributed approximately US$5 billion to Cambodia between 1993-2005, including a pledge of US$504 million in 2005.

Tan (2007) states that a specific challenge for the Cambodian government is to reduce the dropout rate, particularly at the grade 3 level so students can progress to upper

primary education. With grades 7-9 being considered "lower secondary school" and "upper secondary school" is designated for grades 10-12, Tan also points out the high student-teacher ratios: at the primary level there are 53.5 students to 1 teacher, lower secondary ratios are 27.7 to 1 and upper secondary 29.4 to 1, respectively. Velasco (2004) adds that the current annual primary enrolment growth of about 4.8% is a "huge challenge to an education system in which there is a great lack of classrooms, qualified teachers, supplies and materials to meet the teaching and learning needs" (p. 39). Velasco states that the shortage of teachers particularly in remote areas and rural regions is seen to be a very serious issue.

Total enrolments at the primary level in Cambodia have steadily increased over the past several years; 61.8% of all boys were enrolled in school as of 2001, and 72.9% of girls were enrolled (Velasco, 2004). While this is seen as substantial progress, significantly less growth has been seen at the secondary level, particularly for girls. The national enrolment rate (NER) drops to 18.9% for boys and 7.4% for girls. This dismal picture worsens as girls ascend into the upper secondary level where the NER drops to just 5.4%. Velasco posits that while there is optimism at achieving gender parity at the primary level, it appears it is less likely so for the secondary, based on data collected by the Education Monitoring Information System (EMIS) at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) in Cambodia.

1.4. 3 Views of Girls and Women in Cambodian Society

Like many countries in Southeast Asia, traditional roles and gender stereotypes persist for girls and women in Cambodia. While efforts are being made to incorporate

gender equality and gender mainstreaming practices into various aspects of the national

culture, there is still unmitigated evidence of cultural resistance. According to Velasco

(2004):

> The Khmer tradition and values place women in a secondary position and status
>
> relative to men, and hold rigid beliefs on the roles and relations of women and
>
> men: women are mothers and homemakers and are mainly responsible for the care
>
> of children and the family, and men are breadwinners for the family and heads of
>
> the household. There seems to be an excessive fear of cultural erosion. (p. 44)

As is prevalent in many societies, women's work in the home and in childrearing are not

as highly valued as men's work outside of the home. From this it follows that women and

girls are clearly viewed as being unequal and subservient to males. These cultural

perceptions hold significance as any efforts or initiatives to instil gender equality,

particularly within the education sector, will likely experience challenges to

implementation.

1.4. 4 Other Issues Facing Girls and Women in Cambodia

It should also be noted that similar to other countries in the region, the

exploitation of girls and women is a serious problem. According to Takamatsu (2004),

Cambodia is "a sending, receiving, and transit country for (human) trafficking" (p. 278).

Citing statistics from the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs in Cambodia, 40-

60% of sex workers in Cambodia (approximately 14,000 girls and women) have been

forced into the business. A large number of these girls and women have been trafficked

and forced to work in massage parlours, brothels, and karaoke bars. In Cambodia, rates of

exploitation in eastern rural provinces are particularly high (Velasco, 2004). Women are often trafficked to work as cheap, exploited labour in the fisheries industry, in construction, as domestic help and in factories. Children are most at risk for sexual exploitation and trafficking. Baby trafficking is an issue in Cambodia as well; often single or poor mothers are told "not to look for their babies" in exchange for a small sum of money (Takamatsu, 2004).

The societal issue of exploitation and trafficking of girls and women in Cambodia reflects a disturbing cultural perception that females are not only unequal to men but also expendable; that they are not to be treated as human beings deserving of basic human rights. This is a pervasive social problem that undeniably contributes to how females are negatively regarded and subsequently treated in Cambodian society.

1.4. 5 Cultural and Demographic Information of Cambodia

In terms of demographic distribution, the majority of the population in Cambodia belong to the Khmer ethnic group (Chandler & Overton, 2011). The Khmer belong to the Mon-Khmer ethnolinguistic group and its population is concentrated in the lowlands and coast of Cambodia. Other ethnic minorities in Cambodia include Vietnamese, Chinese, Muslim Cham (also known as "Cham-Malays" or simply "Cham"), Laotians and various indigenous groups of the rural highlands called the Khmer Loeu meaning "highland Khmer".

Many of the minority Chinese population fled Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge during the 1970's, but those who remained tended to work in the commerce industry and therefore reside in urban areas. According to Chandler & Overton (2011), the Vietnamese were not regarded as highly as the Chinese, who were viewed as the economic lifeblood

of the country. The majority of Vietnamese living in Cambodia inhabit the rural areas of the country. Vietnamese-Khmer relations in the past have been strained and intermarriage between the groups is rare.

Lastly, hill tribes of indigenous groups inhabiting the scarcely populated provinces which border Laos and Cambodia include the Katu, Mnong, Jarai, Rhadé, and the Stieng in the provinces of Mondulkiri and Ratanakiri. Known as a "land of villages", more than four-fifths of Cambodia's population reside in rural areas, with the remainder inhabiting urban centers.

In addition to aforementioned indigenous groups inhabiting north-eastern Cambodia, there are several other indigenous groups living in rural areas throughout the country. Now largely assimilated into Khmer society, the Chong (also known as the "Xong") are an ethnic minority located along the Thai-Cambodia border as well as in the Cardamom Mountains that border both countries. The Chong indigenous group is closely associated with the Pear and Saoch, who are Mon-Khmer speakers and are classified as Southwest Upland Groups (Hockings, 1993). According to a census, in 1984 the population of the Chong was 5,500. Another cultural group related to the Chong and Pear are the Saoch. This indigenous society was once known as hunter-gatherers and as of 1981 the population was 500 people in Cambodia. The Saoch are now largely integrated into Khmer society (Hockings, 1993). The Stieng are located along the south-west border of Vietnam and Cambodia. Swidden or wet rice cultivation is the dominant economic activity of the Stieng, along with hunting and fishing. They do not have any type of tribal-level political organisation, with each family constituting the primary social and

political units. Additionally, religious beliefs and rituals focused on spirits are concentrated on the family (Hockings, 1993).

The Kui (also called "Soai", "Kuoy" or "Kuy") are an indigenous minority group who inhabits north-east Cambodia. The Kui are also closely related to the Chong, Pear, Chaobon and other similar societies. Once horticulturalists, many Kui now engage in wet-rice agriculture, having replaced their traditional religion with Buddhism. There is frequent intermarriage with the Khmer people (Hockings, 1993). Situated in northeast Cambodia, near the Kui, are the ethnic Brao (known as the Lave or Love) who are another minority within the Mon-Khmer group. Similar to other ethnic groups in the region, the Brao are swidden rice cultivators. The language spoken by the Brao is closely associated with the Kravet and Krung languages spoken in Cambodia.

According to Hockings (1993) the Mnong originated in the southern highlands of Vietnam, but a number of Mnong live in the eastern Cambodian province of Mondulkiri which borders Vietnam. Largely agriculturalists, the indigenous Mnong also engage in fishing, hunting and trade as a means of subsistence. Highly spiritual in nature, the Mnong have spirits and rituals for everything in nature, including inanimate things and animals, even for ancestors and cultural heroes. Shamans serve as medicine men for the Mnong community and they preside at rituals where buffalo sacrifice is often a part of the ceremony.

The Cham-Malay, referred to as the Khmer Islam or Western Cham, are a non-indigenous ethnic minority that originated from Champa, which was formerly a kingdom located in central Vietnam. Initially a matriarchy, the Cham followed Buddhism and Hinduism before converting to Islam in the seventeenth century (Taylor, 2004). Most

Cham-Malay people live in small villages near the Tonle Sap Lake and in the Chau Doc

region which is along the Mekong Delta in Cambodia, the largest river flowing in a

north-south direction across the country (Page, 1993). Cham villages are

characteristically quite poor with few adornments and domestic utensils. Homes are

frequently constructed of split bamboo and are situated above ground level, with the use

of pilings to guard against flooding. The Cham participate in agriculture predominately,

but also hunting, fishing and animal domestication. Cham villages are made up of several

communities and are governed by a mayor and other elected officials. Two religious

systems are followed by the Cham ethnic group: Hinduism and Islam. The Cham in

Cambodia are mostly Muslim; they are members of the Shiite branch of Islam. Therefore

the imam or congregational leader of the Muslim faith is an important part of the

community (Page, 1993).

Lastly, the Khmer, the dominant ethnic group, combines Buddhism, animistic

beliefs and practices and elements from Hinduism and Chinese culture into their religion.

Khmer communities often have their own Buddhist temple (known as a "wat") and

possibly a school. Khmer village size varies from a few hundred to over a thousand

inhabitants (Ebihara, 1993). There are three basic types of village settlements: houses

may be lined up in a linear fashion along a stream or roadway, settlements may be

arranged in a compact cluster or houses may be dispersed among rice fields. It is common

for households to contain three generations – grandparents, parents and children. The

traditional Khmer home is made of bamboo or thatch, and constructed on piles with

access by stairs or ladder. Some thatch houses are built directly on the ground (Ebihara,

1993). Fruit and vegetable production, along with wet-rice cultivation and fishing are the primary commercial activities of the Khmer.

While VSO Cambodia works in six rural provinces, the data for this study will only be collected in the Battambang region. In this province the cultural, indigenous or ethnic groups that inhabit these regions are the Khmer, the Saoch and the Chong.

1.5 Significance of the study

In an increasingly interconnected world, there is great capacity for international non-governmental organisations to facilitate profound social change. Research has repeatedly proven that education is a key mechanism to aid communities and subsequently countries out of extreme poverty. While on a modest scale, this implementation study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how one international nongovernmental organisation experiences challenges in the execution of their educational initiatives. Werner (2004) proposes the benefits of implementation research:

> This information may be important for initiatives whose success depends in part
> on changing the "culture" of the initiative, worker-recipient communication and
> interaction, and stakeholders' attitudes about the initiative and its goals. Moreover,
> by collecting data from a variety of stakeholders, implementation research
> typically includes multiple perspectives on key initiative and policy issues. (p.10)

Studies in the area of implementation are not only a source of valuable feedback for the nongovernmental organisation, but also the international community. Implementation research provides rich contextual and ethnographic information that can be useful for

other local NGOs, policy makers, the program administrators and policy experts (Werner, 2004).

As a final advantage, Werner (2004) suggests that these studies are able to take place during periods of rapid growth and contextual change, thereby rendering it a uniquely flexible and valuable type of research. Ultimately, the more that is known and understood of how non-governmental organisations employ their educational initiatives, the more conclusive assessments are possible.

While the amelioration of programs and other initiatives is laudable, the more important perspective in the significance of this study is that of fundamental human rights. Research has demonstrated that marginalized groups in society have substantially lower incomes, a higher risk of health problems, higher maternal mortality rates in women, lower rates of life expectancy, and who are more poorly nourished than the rest of the population (UNESCO, 2010a). Disenfranchised individuals also receive fewer years of education, tend to have a lower quality experience in school due to having less qualified or inexperienced teachers and will likely attend a school with inadequate infrastructure and poor learning resources (UNESCO, 2010a). It is indisputable that the international community has a moral imperative to work with developing nations to create more effective education systems for all children. Irene Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO aptly states: "From better health to increased wealth, education is the catalyst of a better future for millions of children, youth and adults. No country has ever climbed the socioeconomic development ladder without steady investments in education" (UNESCO, 2010a).

1.6   Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter one served as an introduction to the thesis, explaining the purpose of the study and elucidated key terms in the thesis question. Chapter two provides a comprehensive review of the literature of the global North as well as the global South. The methodology of the study is presented in chapter three. Chapter four is a discussion of the findings from the study, and chapter five includes conclusions and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

International nongovernmental organisations have made extensive contributions to education in the developing world, particularly at the primary level. The era of globalization opened up new lines of international communication, facilitating a wave of transnational social and political networking in which innovative connections, advocacy and initiatives were created. Additionally, landmark conferences on gender equality, inclusive education and human rights contributed to a renewed emphasis on achieving basic primary education for all children in the developing world.

In this unprecedented global transnational network, INGOs are engaging more than ever in the political arena, balancing the requirements of donor agencies while attending to the needs of its beneficiaries. INGOs such as Voluntary Service Overseas recruit qualified teachers in developed countries to support and augment the education systems in the developing world by facilitating new initiatives such as inclusive education. It is these volunteers who work "on the ground" implementing the initiatives,

and in the process encountering a range of challenges relating to the political, socio-cultural and economic.

The focus of this study is to understand the challenges experienced by INGO volunteers and staff as they implement an inclusive education initiative, and more specifically the challenges in implementing an initiative oriented towards the education of girls at the primary level. This study will focus on VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas), a British INGO working in the field of education in a rural Cambodian province. As such, this literature review will comprehensively discuss relevant issues in the fields of implementation, international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs), economic development, inclusive education, and the international gender mainstreaming (GM) movement. There is also a brief overview of Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and the literature review concludes with a synopsis on the current state of girls' education in Cambodia.

2.1 Implementation

The origins of implementation theory can be found in the field of social sciences where researchers began to examine the effectiveness of various state social policies. As a result of this orientation, Werner (2004) posits that implementation research is research that is concerned with the outcomes of social programs. While the majority of research began in the field of public policy implementation in the early 1970's, some of the earliest work was driven in part by the perceived failures in the Great Society programs in the United States (Sabatier, 1986). Many of the early studies were analyses of a single

case and reported dismal conclusions about the ability of governments to effectively implement their programs (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973).

As the scholarship on implementation research evolved into what was called the "second generation", a methodology was developed as the most efficient technique in examining and describing implementation, that of a "top-down" approach (Matland, 1995). Top-down theorists see policy or program designers as the central actors and concentrate their focus on the factors that can be manipulated at the central level. Theorists sought to explicate variation in implementation success across various programs and governmental units by reference to specific variables and conceptual frameworks (Sabatier, 1986). Generally the top-down research process starts from a policy decision and focuses on the extent to which its objectives are met over time and attempts to explain why this occurs.

While the top-down approach was largely popular in academic circles, a new and radical approach was being developed during the late 1970's and early 1980's. This was principally in reaction to the perceived flaws in the top-down approach (Sabatier, 1986). Matland (1995) describes "bottom-up" theorists as those highlighting the importance of service deliverers and target groups in the implementation process. This theory argues that policy or programs are truly developed "on the ground" at the local level by people working in the field. Therefore instead of beginning with a policy decision, this approach starts with an analysis of the various actors who interact at the operational or local level of a particular program, policy or issue (Sabatier, 1986). The focus then becomes on the strategies employed by actors in pursuit of their own objectives.

The third generation of implementation research appeared in the late 1980's and early 1990's; this movement was led by such academics as Malcolm Goggin, Ann Bowman, James Lester and Lawrence O'Toole. These theorists proposed a new approach utilising a dynamic model which was grounded in both top-down and bottom-up methodology (Kaplan & Corbett, 2003). This generation of researchers argue that a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation process is achieved by using the most salient aspects from both top-down and bottom-up approaches (Sabatier, 1986).

The process of implementation, and more specifically the process of implementation evaluation for the purposes of this study will be examined in more depth in chapter 3. Included in chapter 3 will be an overview of conceptual models, implementation theories, and relevant data collection strategies to be employed in this study.

2.2 International Nongovernmental Organisations (INGOs)

While some of the first overseas missions in North America were primarily by faith-based groups in the 19th century, international nongovernmental organisations began to achieve prominent status after World War II. Significant world events such as the Suez crisis in 1956, the Cuban revolution, and the growing apartheid movement in South Africa all gave rise to a growing interest in social activism (Van Rooy, 2000).

The 1980's were known as the "NGO boom", and according to Hickey & Bebbington (2007) there were three distinct global shifts that facilitated this movement. Firstly, the authors cite macroeconomic instability and crisis in a significant number of countries, political liberalisation from dictatorships and authoritarian regimes towards

liberal democracies, and a shift in dominant development discourse. Edwards & Hulme

(1996) illustrate this argument with the example of the macroeconomic Structural

Adjustment Policies (SAPs) which dominated the 1980's. These were employed by

several international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, forcing many

developing countries to severely reduce their national budgets as part of the Bank's loan

conditions. Areas of government spending such as those in social programming were

among the most affected. International and local NGOs began to be employed extensively

by local and international governments, they were seen as an affordable alternative to

service delivery in areas such as health and education (Edwards & Hulme, 1996).

According to Edwards & Hulme (1996), the theme of the "New Policy Agenda"

during the 1990's contained two elements: economics and politics. In the era

characterised by rising globalization, markets and the private sector were seen as the most

efficient mechanisms for achieving economic growth and politically the concept of "good

governance" was viewed as essential for a healthy economy. As a result NGOs were

awarded a key role in the democratisation processes by bilateral and multilateral agencies

such as the World Bank (Edwards & Hulme, 1996**)**.

Due to the proliferation, scope and massive funding of NGOs a "persistent and

public set of concerns about the practice, direction and focus of NGOs" emerged during

the 1990's (Hickey & Bebbington, p. 1708). This concern with NGO accountability was

due to the continued deepening of the democratisation-cum-neoliberalisation agenda, the

increasingly dominant poverty agenda in international aid, and the security agenda in

developing nations. Rahman (2006) outlines other criticisms of NGOs, noting their

perceptible shift away from social mobilisation - one of its primary goals - to an increase

in service delivery, paying only rhetorical "lip service" to issues surrounding social justice. Najam (1996) further contributes to the concept of accountability by offering a conceptual framework which categorizes accountability into three relationships: NGO accountability to patrons, NGO accountability to clients or beneficiaries, and lastly NGO accountability to themselves.

The "new managerialism" of accountability during the 1990's also sought to address social exclusion with the global South. As a result donors heavily supported "partnerships" between Southern and Northern NGOs (Townsend & Townsend, 2004). However these partnerships were found to have several problematic issues. Lewis (1998) draws attention to the fact that partnerships are "a complex concept understood differently by organisations which have unequal power" (p. 504). The author goes on to differentiate between active and dependent partnerships: active partnerships are created through debate, negotiation, occasional conflict and learning. Dependent partnerships, such as those characterised by the North-South, have a "blueprint character" with narrow assumptions about comparative advantage and are often linked to the availability of funding (Lewis, 1998).

The funding of NGOs through official aid has substantial implications for NGOs. Edwards & Hulme (1996) posit that official funding can potentially affect NGOs by encouraging them to provide an increasing amount of economic and social services. What is problematic about this endeavour is that the flexibility and ability of NGOs to innovate may become compromised. The authors also hypothesize accepting growing amounts of donor funds are usually accompanied by "complex (and often conflicting) requirements for project appraisal, reporting, evaluation and accounting" (p. 964). This may limit the

flexibility of NGOs in terms of the interventions they engage in. According to Fowler (1993), donors contributing official aid tend to emphasize short-term, easily quantifiable projects. This becomes problematic in areas such as gender mainstreaming, when NGO interventions focusing on women's empowerment are more difficult to measure and quantify.

The field of international education saw several major developments largely as a result of the NGO boom during the 1980's. Throughout the following decade globalization gave impetus to a renewed interest in the influence of nonstate actors in the world system, facilitating new levels of activism and NGO engagement. These "transnational advocacy networks" or "transnational social networks" brought together an array of NGOs, citizens associations, and trade unions in forms of activism that targeted global level institutions, attempting to level changes at the national level (Mundy & Murphy, 2001). These new networks, according to the authors, have facilitated the creation of new "global structures of governance" that have altered the political itinerary towards agenda setting, coalition building and multilateral regulation. With globalization the world has become increasingly interdependent and the "locus of political decision-making" made by centers of power such as states, multilateral institutions. Increasingly, international corporations and financial capital have made governance progressively more complex and have had significant repercussions beyond national boundaries.

During this era of transnational advocacy, there were important developments in the field of international education. Five key trends were identified by Mundy & Murphy, (2001): firstly, development and relief organisations such as British INGO Oxfam International either initiated or expanded their education sector work and increasingly

evolved into advocacy work. Secondly, virtual coalitions and advocacy networks of

women, human rights, development, and debt relief took up education as a major

component of their agenda for global justice. A third trend found in the study was

Education International – an international teachers' association- renewed their

commitments to internationalism which added considerable weight to the NGO platform.

The authors also found unprecedented levels of interaction emerge between NGO actors

and intergovernmental bodies such as UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. Lastly,

new forms of cross-organisational collaboration emerged after 1990, such as the Global

Campaign on Education.

The Education for All (EFA) campaign received a considerable amount of

pressure from the NGO-led Global Campaign on Education movement in 2000,

highlighting the importance of actors in civil society. The EFA conference, undertaken by

UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF and the World Bank

in 1990, sought to reaffirm its commitment to the basic human right of education which

had been pledged by the international community since 1948 (Colclough, 2005). The end

of the EFA conference in Jomtien, Thailand resulted in the articulation of six goals, two

of which became an official focus of the international community: that of gender parity

and the achievement of universal primary education for all children.

The EFA initiative was noted for the facilitation of new forms of international

cooperation amongst global actors, however according to Strutt & Kepe (2010) "applying

a global remedy to a distinctly national issue has come up against significant academic

criticisms over the last two decades" (p. 370). Much of the criticism of the EFA

movement has been in its conceptualisation – an initiative that was donor-driven and

created in the North with little Southern input (Mundy & Murphy, 2001). In their case study of the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC), Strutt & Kepe (2010) found that this had a significant impact on implementation at the national level. The donor criteria determined what EFA goals were funded, thus establishing a clear power hierarchy; ensuring that these "partnerships" were based on "leaders and followers". This inevitably led to a lukewarm response to EFA in the developing nation. With the locus of decision-making resting with the donors, national ownership of EFA was severely lacking, which limited the mobilisation of coalition members at the grassroots level and furthermore, funding for local initiatives was restricted. Aid dependency is another unfortunate symptom of this type of donor funding: the creation of a target specific agenda such as EFA decreased the coalition's autonomy in self-funding of social sectors. External financial dependency also resulted in a lack of sustainability and autonomy in the coalition's program planning and objective setting.

In conclusion, it is relevant to this study that an understanding of some of the issues within the organisational culture of NGOs is clearly outlined. While what has been highlighted by the literature may not necessarily be an exact reflection of the organisational culture of VSO Cambodia, the larger contextual issue is that organisations are in fact living organisms, and as such are constantly subjected to (and vulnerable to) exogenous influences.

2.3 Economic Development

The international community began to take a vested interest in the study of development economics during the 1960's when many countries in Africa and Asia were liberated from colonial rule. Economic development outside Europe and the United States

was also lent urgency in the competition for the adherence of Third World countries to either capitalism or communism (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). In the wake of this new autonomy, the profound poverty of the Third World became unambiguously evident to the global North. A growing consensus emerged that in order for the newly-independent countries to thrive, assistance must be provided by more developed nations. Thus began the exploration into the study of development economics and the perplexing issue of extreme poverty.

The new field of development economics was critical of certain aspects of classical doctrine; it found conventional economics too abstract and agreed with Keynes in state intervention in the growth process (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). Neoclassical economics assumed working market systems and effective price mechanisms organised all economies efficiently. This was contested by a new structuralist approach; these advocates argued that in fact this traditional view of "monoeconomics" did not exist. Structuralists opposed this view, insisting on the specificity of the Third World economy and its uniqueness from the developed First World. The supporters of structuralism were largely found in the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC). They argued that classical and neoclassical theory, including advantage and trade theories, favoured industrial countries at the centre of a divided global system over the agricultural countries at the periphery of the world. Therefore, they concluded that conventional theory was inadequate for the underdeveloped world (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). This was a distinct departure from tradition and marked a new way of examining the struggling economics of the global South.

Litonjua (2010) outlines three eras of development that the Third World has experienced since the Second World War: the development project, the globalization project and the imperial project. In March of 1961 a youthful and optimistic John F. Kennedy launched the Alliance for Progress, a ten-year plan aimed at establishing economic cooperation between North and South America. Among the goals was an annual increase of 2.5 percent in per capita income in the developing nations, the establishment of democratic states, price stability, more equitable income distribution, land reform, and economic and social planning (Litonjua, 2010). Unfortunately due to the staggering amount of debt of Latin American countries this initiative was largely viewed as a failure.

Kennedy's North-South project was undergirded by an economic perspective known as modernisation theory, the dominant theoretical paradigm of the postwar period (Litonjua, 2010). "Modernisation theory posited that all countries could be arranged alongside a continuum from traditional to modern societies, with Third World countries gathered near the traditional pole, while First World countries are clustered near the modern extreme" (p. 111). It was argued that First World countries were once upon a time traditional societies but had since evolved into a modern society. In theory, with capital infusion, economic assistance and the transfer of technology the Third World would be able to follow suit. Most influential in this perspective was Walt Rostow (1960) who specified the five stages the developing world would need to go through in order to become modern.

In light of the failure of Kennedy's initiative to bring about development, modernisation theory was deluged with criticisms (Litonjua, 2010). It was condemned as

being ethnocentric as it was based on the West's experience: the theory addressed factors internal to one particular nation without taking into consideration other external factors such the nation's past and present history. Additionally, arguments pointed out that the conditions of twentieth-century Kenya, for example, are substantially different from the circumstances of England in the sixteenth century when England emerged from being a traditional society (Litonjua, 2010). Much of this criticism came from two other competing theoretical perspectives at the time: that of dependency theory and modern world-systems theory.

Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems theory (1979) had foundational connections to dependency theory but there were also clear distinctions in its approach. According to Wallerstein, within the world system there are three main economic zones: core, semi-periphery and periphery (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). The core consists of countries with high levels of capital accumulation and efficient, complex production systems. They are also militarily powerful and administratively well-organised. Peripheral states have the opposite characteristics, and the semi- peripheral have combined elements of both. The core countries "dominate the capitalist-world economy and exploit the rest of the system with their economies differentiated and therefore relatively free from outside control" (Litonjua, 2010, p. 112). The peripheral countries would be highly specialised and highly dependent on the export of raw materials and are exploited by the core nations. The economic status of a particular country, therefore, depended on its positioning in the international division of labour and exploitation.

Litonjua (2010) argues dependency theory's greatest contribution "was the recognition of factors, historical, economic, political, and cultural, external to the Third

World nation-state that impinges on its development" (p. 112). Dependency theory was developed in Latin America, first proposed by Andre Gunder Frank (1969) and later refined by Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto (1979). The key argument of dependency theorists was that Latin American countries found themselves in positions of underdevelopment due to the operations of the capitalist system (Willis, 2005). The core industrialised countries would experience growth and economic development through the exploitation of non-industrialised peripheral countries. These exogenous factors played a profound role in many nations' underdevelopment. While being criticised for being overly concerned with economic factors without any consideration of the cultural, social or political contexts within which development took place, dependency theory had a limited influence on policy-making.

After multiple theories and minimal successes, the field of development economics appeared to be waning during the 1970's. The Second Development Decade, as it was known, found itself in an unfortunate circumstance. While many developing countries had achieved high rates of economic growth, little of it had "trickled down" to the poor, as had been previously predicted. Analysts concluded that the new efforts must include measures deliberately targeted at the poor to help them meet their basic needs for health, housing, food, water and education (Litonjua, 2010). Mere economic growth was inadequate: "Development came to aim at increasing the productivity and raising the standard of living – longer life expectancies, more adequate diets, better education, better housing, and more consumer goods – of formerly colonized peoples" (p. 110).

The 1970's were also considerable time of growth in theoretical perspectives on development in the area of feminism. The newly-established Women in Development

(WID) movement actively sought to include women in the development process. The movement focused on liberal modernisation theory, restructuring development programs, welfare, equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). WID accepted the prevailing theory at the time – modernization – and as a result argued that Third World women were left out of the development process. A different school of thought came from the Women and Development (WAD) movement which suggested that women in developing countries had always been a part of the development process; that it was in fact this link to modernisation that impoverished them. The WAD was substantially different than its WID counterpart, focusing more on the power relations between men and women. Feminist advocates also drew support from neo-Marxist approaches as well as dependency theory of underdevelopment (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). This perspective was a socialist feminism centered on alternative development, global capitalism, and the effects of patriarchy.

A more radical strain of feminism emerged around this time, that of Gender and Development (GAD). Here the emphasis was on women's emancipation, capitalism, patriarchy, and racism. The origins of the GAD perspective lie within women working in the mid-1970's at the Institute of Development Studies, at the University of Sussex, England. This group was interested in analysing women's subordination within the development process from the vantage point of gender relations between men and women. The GAD argued that women were not a homogeneous group; they were divided by class, race and ethnicity. This became a new way of looking at the structures and processes giving rise to women's disadvantaged position (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). .

Another radical feminist approach to arise during this time was referred to as the Women, Environment and Development movement. These advocates drew attention to feminist political ecology, sustainable development, gendered knowledges, rights, and politics (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). Feminists "drew parallels between male control over nature and men's control over women and connected masculine science and industrialisation with assaults on the ecological health of the planet" (p. 188). As victims of the violence of patriarchal development, this approach claimed women resisted "development" to protect nature and preserve their sustenance. Thus ecological struggles simultaneously liberated nature from ceaseless exploitation and women from infinite marginalisation.

Despite the wide-ranging perspectives of the feminist movements they have received considerable criticism (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). The WID movement was criticised for not considering influences on women such as class, race or culture. They also avoided addressing gender relations, and did not question women's subordination as part of a wider global system of capital accumulation, argue the authors. Hence development strategies based on WID would be flawed, severely limited in their ability to bring about change. The Women and Development movement was criticised for neglecting "social relations of gender within classes and did not completely take into consideration variations in patriarchy in different modes of production and how these impacted women" (p. 186).

In reaction to the top-down approach of many theories of development, a movement at the grassroots level began in the 1970's known as post-developmentalism. According to Peet & Hartwick (1999) "Post-developmentalism rejected the way of

thinking, and the mode of living produced by modern development, in favour of revitalised versions of nonmodern, usually non-Western, philosophies and cultures" (p. 153). From this perspective, Western development was seen as destructive as opposed to generative, a force that should be resisted rather than welcomed by developing countries. A major focus of this approach was participation at the local level, ensuring individual and community views were reflected in policy development.

Also to enter the development studies field were post-structural critiques of economic growth during the 1980's (Peet & Hartwick, 1999). Post-structuralism challenged the most fundamental claims about development: that development was beneficial, progressive and humane. These new theorists questioned whom development was actually beneficial for, and what was once considered the norm was now viewed as powerful, controlling and at times detrimental for many. For post-structuralists, discourse analysis was a crucial component of development studies:

> The term "development" was an invention, or social construction, and the concept had a discursive or a cultural (rather a natural) history. From this view, economic agents acted as culturally produced identities…As a cultural logic, development existed in two linked forms: as a set of ideas, forms of behaviour, and social practices operating directly in the economic world; and as a discourse representing these real practices, but originating in academia, state bureaucracies, and institutions. (Peet & Hartwick, 1999, p. 143)

According to Willis (2005) post-colonial and post-modern approaches to theorising development also became increasingly popular during the 1980's. These two schools of thought share some similarities: both focus on the consideration of diversity and

understanding of power in the construction of development. However the post-modernist

ideology tends to stress diversity in social, spatial and temporal terms (Willis, 2005).

Post-modern thought would examine the way in which the term "Third World women" is

used to describe all women living in the global South, homogenising women's lives and

is also used in such a way as to imply victimhood. This approach not only "denies the

experiences of millions of women, but also reflects the power relations that frame

understandings of the world" (p. 121). Post-modernism considers the ways in which

Eurocentric assumptions can be challenged and reconceptualised.

Post-colonial theories, on the other hand, seek to change ways of conceptualising

about the world based on Northern assumptions and to recognise difference within the

context of places and people who have experienced colonialism (Willis, 2005). Heavily

influenced by Marxism and post-structuralism, this approach seeks to comprehend the

effects of colonialism and the discourse surrounding development which have been

transferred as part of the colonial process (McEwan, 2001). Willis (2005) stresses the

importance of recognizing diversity in constructing development theories and practise

and an awareness of context as being crucial in this approach.

Out of all the movements of the 1980's, the one having the largest impact is the

unquestionable rise of neoliberalism which began in the United States and the United

Kingdom. In the aftershock of the crippling oil crises of the 1970's, the "Washington

Consensus" became a tool to usher in neoliberal economic policies not only in the United

States but in international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International

Monetary Fund (IMF) and as a result the rest of the developing world. "The economic

mantra of neoliberalism is liberalization, privatization, deregulation, and depoliticization

for free markets to work their magic" (Litonjua, 2010, p. 112). Since the Second World War and the demise of colonialism, the development project had been framed in national terms, according to Litonjua (2010). The prescription of the Washington Consensus however, reframed development as incorporation and integration into the emergent global economy. The foundation of this approach was the brainchild of Milton Friedman, an economics professor at the University of Chicago.

These neoliberal policies eventually spawned a movement referred to as "globalization". The definitions of globalization are vast and complex: "Some interpret it to mean the global reach of technology and capital movements, some refer to outsourcing by domestic companies in rich countries, others protest against the tentacles of corporate capitalism or the US hegemony (economic, military, or cultural)…or simply as openness to foreign trade and long-term capital flows" (Bardhan, 2006, p. 1393). Berberoglu (2003) states that "Globalization is a manifestation of worldwide capitalist expansion, but it involves a multitude of spheres in which it operates. These are economic, social, political, ideological, cultural and environmental" (p. 4).

In the economic sphere, according to Berberoglu (2003) the essence of globalization is profit-making on an international scale. Berberoglu posits that the global expansion of capital as transforming social relations of production in the social sphere, from pre-capitalist or semi-capitalist to capitalist. In the political sphere, power lies in the capitalist class and is exercised through the capitalist state, protecting and advancing the interests of its own. As an ideology, global capitalism continues to propagate the superiority of capitalism and "free markets" in a private economy. Culturally, globalization fosters cultural imperialism, involving the imposition of capitalist values on

other societies in order to integrate them into the world capitalist system. In the environmental sphere, Berberoglu states:

> Considering the impact of globalization on the environment, the destruction of the ecosystem and the living space (through pollution, contamination, and disposal) to reduce the cost of production has meant the gradual deterioration of the quality of air, water, and soil, with long-range negative consequences that are quite often irreversible. (p. 6)

Globalization has long been a contentious topic, due in part to the various claims made by neoliberal supporters. Kiely (2005) engages in the debate, examining one of these claims which states that globalization has decreased world poverty. According to the World Bank (as cited in Kiely), there has been a reduction in poverty and income inequality and that this development is a product of countries adopting "globalization friendly" policies. The Bank indicates that in 1980, there were 1.4 billion people living in absolute poverty and by 1998 this had fallen to 1.2 billion (Kiely, 2005). Upon careful examination, Kiely argues these figures are misleading. He points out that extreme poverty is measured by counting people living on an income of $1 a day. Rather than a US dollar, this "dollar" is actually based on purchasing power parity (PPP) exchange rates, which are adjusted to take account of the fact that the cost of living varies from country to country.

The crux of Kiely's argument is that the Bank's figures were actually based on two different comparative indices – the Penn World Tables and the International Comparisons Project. Thus the favourable comparison between the 1980's and 1990's are based on two different measurements, "so there can hardly be a case made for unambiguously clear decline in the amount of people living in extreme poverty" (p. 896).

The second reason the claim is false, according to Kiely (2005) is that calculating extreme poverty in terms of purchasing power parity is not an accurate measure of the poor in developing countries, as the PPP equation includes data on all commodities, most of which are not consumed by the poor such as cars, air travel, and most electrical goods.

Undoubtedly those most affected by policies of globalization are those residing in the developing world. One of the most controversial developments to arise from globalization is the establishment of sweatshops, used mostly in the production of textiles for the international garment industry (Berberoglu, 2003). The working conditions of these sweatshops have come under heavy criticism, where workers earn as little as $3 a day for designer clothing that generates high profits. People toiling in poorly equipped facilities, who are exposed to toxic chemicals and suffer from a lack of basic human rights are some of the most common complaints made by workers employed by transnational companies that dominate the global economy.

Bardhan (2006) points out it is not only those employed in sweatshops who are negatively affected by globalization in the developing world. International economic integration and trade liberalisation in particular can affect the poor in their capacity as workers, as consumers and as recipients of public services or users of common property resources. Bardhan uses the example of the self-employed workers such as farmers, artisans and small entrepreneurs and the constraints they face in credit, marketing, insurance, infrastructure and government regulations in the Third World. He reasons that by opening the international product markets without implementing supports such as credit or infrastructural services this becomes a negative policy for many poor farmers and artisans, disallowing them from capitalising on new opportunities for growth.

Bardhan adds that trade liberalisation even if it increases the average incomes of the poor, could escalate their vulnerability.

The poor as consumers in the developing world are also vulnerable to the effects of globalization. Bardhan emphasises that whether they gain as consumers from trade is dependent on whether or not they are the net buyers of tradable goods. For example, "the landless labourers in east or south India who are net buyers of rice may gain from imports of cheaper rice from Thailand, but may lose from higher prices of medicine as the Indian drug market becomes internationalised" (Bardhan, 2006, p. 1399).

As recipients of public services, Bardhan (2006) notes severe cuts in public budgets on basic services such as education, health and public works programs are often attributed to globalization. These often came in the form of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) proposed by the IMF and World Bank in order to solve the debt crisis of the developing world. These policies were essentially conditions attached to loans granted to poor countries by the financial institutions. These include interest rate liberalisation, openness to foreign direct investment, privatization, deregulation, tax reform, and reorientation of public expenditures (Litonjua, 2010). Ultimately, Structural Adjustment Policies have been detrimental to developing countries, as trade reforms tend to bring about a decline in customs revenue which according to Bardhan, are usually a considerable source of government revenue in low income countries.

A relatively new field, development economics was born as a result of the inadequacies of economic theories of the time to explain the continued extreme poverty of the Third World. Out of this need to understand came a host of ideas from feminism, modernism, dependency theory and perspectives from both "top-down" and "bottom-up"

approaches. While viewpoints vary, one theme is clear: countries in the developing world

are distinct from the developed world. Their experiences as a nation have been, for the

most part, crippled by colonialism. The economies, societal constructions, and cultures

are vastly different. This perspective is important to understanding Cambodia's own stage

of development. Consequently, understanding their economy will help to elucidate the

issues within the country's education system.

2.4 Inclusive Education

While much of the literature surrounding inclusive education focuses on the

disabled, for the purpose of this study girls are considered to be a disadvantaged group as

outlined by UNESCO (2009b) in chapter 1. The purpose of this section is to understand

the inclusive education movement, in particular the marginalisation of girls. The first part

of this section outlines a theoretical approach from the global South, followed by an

examination of the inclusive education movement, including research on inclusive

education efforts in the developing world. The section concludes with advancements

made in the field of inclusive education.

In light of the significant challenges of prior models of disability, advocates have

promoted Indian economist and philosopher Amartya Sen's perspective called the

Capability Approach (with later contributions by Martha Nussbaum and other scholars).

While the Capability Approach originally grew out of Sen's critical engagement with

welfare economics, academics and organisations supporting the disabled community have

adapted its core values to constitute a valuable framework. In summarising Sen's (1993,

1999) work, Reindal (2010) states that the Capability Approach addresses five areas

where human difference is prevalent and that these are key to the equality and quality of life. The first area addresses personal characteristics such as constitution, impairment, health, gender and age. Second are environmental diversities such as pollution and infectious regions. The third area where human differences are prevalent is variations in social climate in societies. This encompasses people having the ability to convert their assets into the maintenance or improvement of their quality of life. These improvements are influenced by social conditions and the development of infrastructures such as public health, the prevalence or absence of crime and violence in the area as well as public educational arrangements.

The fourth component in the Capability Approach is the diversity in relational perspectives which are dependent upon the cultural codes of a community, for example the issue of having enough assets to be able to appear in public without shame. The fifth component of the Approach cites there are differences which are present within the family. "The perception of relative needs of different members of the family may be closely related to social influences, e.g. there may be magnification of the needs of the head of the household, or underplaying of the needs of women" (Sen, 1999, p. 30). Reindal (2010) illustrates this point with an example from developing countries where boys' education is favoured over girls: it is understood that male education is an economic investment for the family whereas girls are expected to occupy themselves with domestic work and child rearing.

According to Sen (1993), "functionings" represent parts of the state of a person; this includes the various things a person can do or be in leading a valued life. "Some functionings are very elementary, such as being adequately nourished, being in good

health, etc.,…others may be more complex…such as achieving self–respect or being socially integrated"(p. 31). Reindal (2010) expands on the concept, calling an achievement or what a person manages to do as a part of "functioning".

"Capabilities" are the various combinations of functionings a person can achieve and the freedom to lead one kind of life over another (Sen, 1993). These are "the actions and approaches to living that one values, the potentials for modes of well-being or flourishing" (Reindal, 2010, p. 5). Commenting on Sen's (1992) earlier work, Palmer (2011) states that "Capability depends on a set of personal characteristics, the resources available to a person, and the surrounding environment" (p. 211). This "capability set" in turn determines the functionings from which people have the freedom to choose. This emphasis on freedom in choosing levels of functioning, regardless of what the person actually decides to choose, is crucial to the capability approach. Reindal (2010) argues that by "interpreting capabilities as opportunities to live a valued life and the life of one's choices is fundamental to human agency" (p. 5). This idea of an individual's empowerment is at the core of the capability perspective.

The Capability Approach has significant implications for the field of inclusive education. Saito (2003) posits that Sen's approach has highlighted education as involving both intrinsic and instrumental value in the way human capital and human capabilities are developed. Unterhalter (2003) argues that the capability approach provides a useful way to think about gender equality in education. Sen's approach "is concerned with evaluating social policy, including education, without ignoring individual aspirations or dictating social bench marks. He affirms that we must evaluate policy in the space of capabilities, which he defines as valued 'beings and doings'" (Unterhalter, 2003, p. 2). With regard to

the education of children, the capability approach's emphasis on agency and freedoms can become problematic. From this perspective Unterhalter contends that part of the provision of the welfare rights of children entails protecting their interests, including the education of girls. What the capability approach alerts us to, according to the author, is the significance of developing settings for wellbeing and agency freedoms so that boys and girls can experience education in ways that will enhance their wellbeing and agency capabilities as adults. Thus the approach highlights evaluating beyond simple outputs like test scores, addressing complex arrangements relating to what is valued, requiring people to think about the gendered constraints on functioning and freedoms in educational organisations. Therefore it is apparent from these observations that the Capability Approach has made contributions in the way inclusive education and girls' education is conceptualised and understood.

Supporters of the inclusive education movement saw a valuable occasion for advocacy through international events such as the World Conference on Education for All which specifically targeted the goal of universal primary education for both boys and girls. The six Education for All (EFA) goals adopted in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal remain the benchmark for assessing progress on the international commitment to expand learning opportunities for all children, youth and adults by 2015 (UNESCO, 2010b). The Salamanca Statement was also significant for advocates of the disabled, emphasising the importance of special needs education in the global South and North. The Statement was an initiating factor as well as inspiration for the inclusion movement in both industrial and developing countries (Reindal, 2010). In many developing countries, the issue of special educational needs is often ignored

"because these learners have not been identified as legitimate learners entitled to receive education. In these countries the demarcation between those with and without impairments is very real, and impairments often signify as a disqualification for education" (Reindal, 2010, p. 3).

Due to the wide range of encumbrances marginalized children face, the educational needs of the disenfranchised are understandably complex, particularly in a developing nation. UNESCO (2001) suggests that "Any *working* definition of inclusive education must be a *workable* definition, which starts where each country is now and which can guide the critical path of a developmental process into the future" (original emphasis, p. 9). Reindal (2010) suggests any pursuit of an inclusive agenda requires a cultural and ethical analysis. Polat (2011) elaborates on the practice of inclusive education:

> A process (which) involves in-depth analysis of the views and experiences of key stakeholders on barriers and obstacles to educational access, participation and achievement, as well as an investigation into the ways in which such barriers can be reduced or eliminated for all students. (p. 50)

This view reflects much of the scholarship on inclusive education, which tends to focus on barriers to access (UNESCO, 2001; Ajodhia-Andrews & Frankel, 2010; Croft, 2010; Charema, 2010; Villa et al., 2003; Du Toit, 2009; Johnstone & Chapman, 2009).

2.4. 1 Barriers to Inclusive Education

From a social perspective, the barriers to implementing inclusive education policies and programming are omnipresent – in local communities, institutions, curricula,

educational policy and at governmental levels (UNESCO, 2001). The concept of

"barriers" has been used to describe various issues which affect marginalized children

and youth, for example curricular restrictions that disadvantage certain groups, teachers'

rigid assessment and evaluation methods as well as limited understandings of

differentiation (Croft, 2010; Johnstone & Chapman, 2009). According to UNESCO

(2001), barriers to learning may develop "from the interaction of individual and

environmental dimensions with any learning situation, for example the non-fit of the

goals and values of the school and those of the community or learner, or those of the

community and the system" (UNESCO, 2001, p. 12).

Within the arena of institutional barriers, human resources are frequently an issue,

particularly in the developing world. There may be a variety of factors that affect teachers

and the conditions they work in which are beyond their control. Teachers may be required

to work longer hours due to the shortage of available staff, which affects the time and

quality of education for children (UNESCO, 2001). In rural areas some teachers must

travel long distances into urban centers to collect their salary; this results in the teachers'

absence for extended periods of time. In some programs staff are expected to teach in a

foreign language due to donor stipulations. For groups such as indigenous peoples this

constitutes a considerable barrier as they may not use or understand the language of

instruction. All of these factors would certainly affect the implementation process of an

inclusive education initiative (UNESCO, 2001).

In her research on inclusive education in South Africa, Du Toit (2009) describes

the most significant barrier experienced by school systems to be the difficulty in

reforming the attitudes of traditional cultures. Villa et al. (2003) cite a considerable

obstacle in the educational policies, structures, and practices at the state level that were unsupportive of inclusive education. Physical barriers also play a major role in denying children access to schooling (Parnes et al., 2009). For example transportation issues may constitute a challenge for students with physical impairments. According to UNESCO (2001) there may be inadequate facilities and capacity within schools to enrol all the students who are able to attend; this is often due to the high number of under and over-age pupils. Often schools will lack appropriate bathroom facilities, have dilapidated ventilation and lighting systems, and limited or no access to clean drinking water.

In terms of increased resources and funding for inclusive education, some advances have been made. In several countries, governments and donors have joined their efforts to support educational resourcing by employing sector-wide approaches (SWAp) which "gives the government greater control and flexibility in the use of external resources and reduces the number of agencies, forms and occasions on which governments need to be accountable" (UNESCO, 2001, p. 15). This approach to international development coordinates governments, stakeholders and donors within any sector of society, such as education. A benefit to the approach is that it conserves limited human resources while upholding accountability of governments in terms of the funding they receive. The World Bank has utilized this approach in several African countries, working in conjunction with other donors (UNESCO, 2001).

As the literature has revealed, inclusive education not only entails the implementation of a new curriculum; the multitude of complex dynamics that surround and affect implementation are integral to effective planning, programming and advocacy.

Getting (disabled) students into schools is important, overcoming attitudinal,

bureaucratic, and logistical barriers at various levels along the way, but being in

the classroom is only a precondition for inclusion in formal education; *presence*

does not guarantee participation in learning. In the final analysis it is largely

what happens in the classrooms that determines whether pupils will stay in

school, for how long, and with what degree of academic and social success

(emphasis added, Croft, 2010, p. 3).

From this statement it becomes evident that to understand that inclusion should not be

viewed as a state *per se*, but rather as a process of growth and development. This kind of

evolution necessitates significant changes on a social plane as well as politically,

culturally and educationally.

As evidenced by the literature presented in this section, inclusive education in the

global South faces a host of challenges – cultural perceptions, securing adequate funding,

curricula adaptations, the training of educators, infrastructure and logistics, and

government policy development. What has also been demonstrated by the literature is

that girls are a significantly disadvantaged group in society; a group that constitutes more

than half of a country's population in most of the world. This negative view of girls has

clear implications for the cultural and political implementation challenges of inclusive

education initiatives.

2.5 The International Gender Mainstreaming (GM) Movement

Economic, social and political issues concerning and affecting women became a

prominent agenda item within the international community during the last quarter of the

twentieth century, resulting in several milestone conferences. In 1975 the first World Conference on Women took place in Mexico City, after which the United Nations declared a Decade for Women (1976-1985). This declaration reflected the considerable change occurring within feminist circles. Lansky (2000) states that up until the 1970's development policy was heavily influenced by the welfare approach. This implied policies focused on women's reproductive role as wives and mothers, rather than addressing the issue of women's work as producers. De Waal (2006) adds that the welfare approach emphasised "women's practical needs, and translated into attempts to meet women's material needs within the existing gender order based on the sexual division of labour, resources and rewards" (p. 210).

The 1970's saw an increasing research interest in women in developing countries and a growing influence of the liberal feminist movement in the United States. This, coupled with the UN's Decade for Women became the impetus for the Women in Development (WID) movement. This new approach shifted the policy focus from equity to anti-poverty, equity and empowerment of women (Lansky, 2000). More emphasis was placed on women in development policy and practice; underdevelopment being a key agenda issue rather than gender subordination, argues De Waal (2006). The goal was to improve basic needs and material conditions for women through employment and women's participation in their own development (Snyder, 2004).

Other noteworthy events in the feminist arena were the World Conferences on Women in Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985) where progress was assessed by reviewing the achievements of the Decade for Women. During the Nairobi conference a 10-year plan for the advancement of women was developed. It was during this period

when a conceptual shift occurred from the dominant "Women in Development" to a movement referred to as "Gender and Development" (GAD). A major criticism of the WID movement was that it failed to address power relations at the core of inequality issues as well as its focus on women as an analytical and operational category (Lansky, 2000). Much of the development literature in the 1970's regarded women as useful resources to be integrated within the development process, but still not consulted as part of that process (Mitchell, 1996).

The modification of the term "women" to "gender" represented a distinct evolution in ideology; Gender and Development emphasised examining the social relations of power and subordination between the male and female genders (Moser, 1995). One of the goals of the Gender and Development approach was to change "gender-blind" multi-lateral agencies such as the World Bank and government aid policies "that assumed men were the normative agents and distributors of development, while failing to respond effectively to the basic needs and economic goals of developing countries" (True, 2003, p. 370). According to Lansky (2000), GAD also "brought promising (efficiency-based) attempts to transpose 'gender analysis' from the project level to the macro-economic policy-making level by reconceptualising gender with neo-classical tools of analysis" (p. 499).

These conceptual changes were evident in the last World Conference with the Beijing Platform for Action in September 1995, where an agenda for women's empowerment was developed and later ratified by all UN member states. One of the key outcomes of Beijing was the development of gender mainstreaming (GM) as a global strategy for advancing women's empowerment (North, 2010). Gender mainstreaming was

defined as a dual strategy: "The integration of women's and men's concerns (needs and interests) throughout the development process and second, specific activities aimed at empowering women" (Moser, 1995, p. 581).

According to North (2010), "These events formed the backdrop to a global mobilisation of women's organisations and feminist activists, whose active engagement in and organisation around the conferences was critical to the emergence of a global women's movement" (p. 426). The shift in the 1990's from the GAD paradigm to gender mainstreaming "reflected a strategic change in language and the globalization of that agenda to address gendered outcomes and promote institutional changes in the 'developed' and 'developing' world" (True, 2003, p. 370).

The United Nations Economic and Social Council's (2007) definition of gender mainstreaming remains the most cited, and therefore will be used for the purposes of this study. Gender mainstreaming is defined as:

> The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programs, in all areas and at all levels, and as a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (United Nations, 2007)

Unterhalter and North (2010) argue that women's needs and interests in economic and social policy have been either overlooked or marginalized in the past. True (2003) aptly states that "In contrast to anti-discrimination law and policy that seek to remove

institutional barriers to women's *equality* with men, gender mainstreaming starts from the recognition that gender *differences* shapes policy processes and outcomes" (author's emphasis, p. 369). According to Unterhalter & North (2010), gender mainstreaming was advocated as an institutional strategy to bring the actualization of gender equality into the mainstream of grassroots activity, decision-making and social development. This was accomplished through "embedding gender-sensitive practices in the structures, processes, and environment of public policy" (Daly, 2005, p. 435).

Moser (1995) posits that there are two further dimensions of gender mainstreaming that are articulated in some definitions. First, the institutionalisation of gender issues with the organisation itself, taking account of gender equality in administrative, staffing, financial and other organisational procedures, thereby committing to a long-term evolutionary process for the organisation in terms of attitudes, culture, goals and procedures. Secondly, the term "gender empowerment" appears in some definitions to encourage women's participation in decision-making processes, in addition to having their voices heard and the power to put issues on the agenda.

Moser's (1995) reference to gender equality and gender empowerment reflect an important point of contention within the concept of gender mainstreaming. North (2010) argues that the differences in these words go beyond "mere semantics"; creating policies using terms such as equality, empowerment and gender parity can have significant and long-term ramifications in the way that gender issues are understood, conceptualized and acted upon.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2011), gender equality contains three interconnected domains. The capabilities domain is measured by

basic human rights such as health, education and nutrition. The access to resources and opportunities domain is the occasion to employ these capabilities in political and economic spheres. The security domain highlights the significance of violence and conflict in hampering an individual to meet their full potential. The World Bank (2001) defines gender equality in terms of equality under the law, equality of opportunity and equality of voice. Equality of opportunity refers to equal rewards for work and access to human capital. Equality of voice is the capability to shape and contribute to the development process. Reeves and Baden (2000) point out the assumptions behind gender equality:

> (Gender equality) expresses a liberal feminist idea that removing discrimination in opportunities for women allows them to achieve equal status to men… It assumes that once the barriers to participation are removed, there is a level playing field. It also does not recognise that women's reality and experience may be different from men's. (p. 10)

Empowerment, distinct from gender equality, is seen as both a process as well as an end focusing on options, choice, control and power (World Bank, 2002). Kabeer (1999) associates empowerment with choice under which three inter-related dimensions emerge: resources, agency and achievements. Resources are defined not only as access to, but future control over, material, human and social resources. Agency is the essence of empowerment, outlined as the processes of decision-making (Kabeer, 1999). Within agency is self-efficacy; the inner transformation allowing women to not only define their own self-interest and choice, but consider themselves able *and entitled* to make choices (emphasis added, World Bank, 2002).

Lastly, achievements are the well-being outcomes of the use of resources and engagement of agency (Kabeer, 1999). Agency is the most defining feature of empowerment, distinguishing it from gender equality which generally focuses on increasing access to resources. According to Tadros (2010) agency is advocated on an individual and collective level with Batliwala (2007) adding that both processes must occur for true empowerment to exist. The literature on agency states it is a bottom-up process, but that in order to sustain women's empowerment top-down approaches at the institutional level such as social inclusion must also be implemented (World Bank, 2000; World Bank, 2002).

According to Moser & Moser (2005) the majority of major developmental institutions share the following key components in their gender mainstreaming policies, which include bilateral organisations, international financial institutions, systems of the UN and NGOs. Each organisation has adopted a two-pronged strategy of mainstreaming gender integrated with specific actions for gender equality, gender analysis, gender training, shared responsibility with support by gender specialists, support for women's empowerment and decision-making, along with monitoring and evaluation.

The Beijing Platform for Action declared gender analysis as integral to gender mainstreaming (Miske, Meagher & DeJaeghere, 2010). Gender analysis is defined as:

The systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations in order to identify, understand and redress inequities based on gender. Gender analysis is a valuable descriptive and diagnostic tool for development planners… The methodology and components of gender analysis are

shaped by how gender issues are understood in the institution concerned. (Reeves & Baden, 2000, p. 8)

Gender analysis facilitated the creation of numerous frameworks and tools to conduct gender analysis at various levels and sectors (Miske et al., 2010). The United Nations Development Programme created gender-disaggregated statistics, gender budgeting and formal instruments such as the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) and the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) to measure the dimension of gender in human development (Unterhalter, 2005). The GDI and GEM were generated to monitor the progress of interventions and "to assess the measure of gender inequality at a global scale and to work towards women's empowerment" (Charmes & Wieringa, 2003).

Other tools in GM include gender (sensitivity) training for staff in governments, institutions and organisations to explain the basic concepts of gender analysis and gender planning and to increase awareness and reduce the gender bias that informs the actions of individuals. The training will equip participants with introductory knowledge and tools to be able to effectively mainstream gender throughout their work and improve gender-responsive result-oriented policy dialogue (UN, 2002). Reeves & Baden (2000) refer to it as a "facilitated process of developing awareness and capacity on gender issues to bring about personal or organisational change for gender equality" (p. 2).

Gender specialists are professionals embedded in the offices of institutions and organisations, performing an integral function in the implementation of gender mainstreaming practices. Gender-proofing of policies and gender-audits are examples of this (True, 2002). Gender monitoring and evaluation are integral to holding accountability of gender mainstreaming policies; this may be done through tools such as gender-impact

assessments (Morley, 2010). These assessments identify negative or positive outcomes of proposed policies in terms of gender equality and are meant to inform decision makers at an early stage in order to adapt policies if necessary (Verloo, 2005).

As gender mainstreaming was introduced into the 1990's it experienced an unparalleled rate of acceptance in the international community. Hafner-Burton & Pollack (2002) note that while many organisations quickly adopted GM policies, this was more of a "rhetorical acceptance". The vague and non-specific character of the concept of gender mainstreaming has facilitated its rapid predominance and may explain why there has been little ownership of it and subsequently has allowed governments to easily adopt policy initiatives in its name (Beveridge & Nott, 2002). Considerable arguments have been made regarding the gap between theory and practice (Unterhalter & North, 2010; True, 2003; Moser & Moser, 2005). Many studies report the "evaporation" of gender mainstreaming policies during the implementation process (Unterhalter & North, 2010).

The theoretical approaches of gender mainstreaming (GM) can be categorized using Squires' (2005) typology of inclusion, reversal and displacement. Heavily influenced by liberal feminism, inclusion tends to view people as autonomous and support objectivity (Squires, 2005). Those who perceive GM from an inclusion perspective seek gender neutrality, see it as a "product of bureaucratic policy process and conceive of it as a way of mainstreaming formal equality of opportunities" (Squires, 2005, p. 371). Therefore integrationist approaches are employed to address gender issues within existing development policy paradigms (Beveridge & Nott, 2002). The importance of gender experts and the bureaucratic creation of evidence-based knowledge in policy-

making are emphasised (Jahan, 1995**).** As a result, much of the focus of inclusion has been on top-down approaches to gender mainstreaming (Beveridge & Nott, 2002).

Much of the criticism of inclusion has been centered on the tools developed to facilitate gender mainstreaming. Beveridge & Nott (2002) postulate that the choice of tools is heavily laden with assumptions about what mainstreaming entails and whom it involves, ultimately affecting how gender mainstreaming is defined, implemented and its expected outcomes. Critics of this "bureaucratic and expert approach" (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000) argue that gender mainstreaming practices have become instrumentalist; being reduced to little more than a technical exercise of how-to guides, toolkits and checklists (Daly, 2005; North, 2010; Karlsson, 2010, Morley, 2010). This in fact depoliticizes the concept of gender mainstreaming (Silfver, 2010; Unterhalter & North, 2010), and has resulted in a co-opting of the feminist agenda (True, 2003; Hankivsky, 2005, Walby, 2005).

The concept of reversal sought to re-instate a more radical feminist agenda in gender mainstreaming where inclusion was perceived to have failed, employing an interpretive methodology and viewing GM as a political strategy. Reversal places a clear emphasis on a "difference" politics, women's participation and empowerment as well as a focus on marginalized groups, seeking recognition for a specifically female gendered identity through positive action (Squires, 2005). These agenda-setting approaches imply the challenging, transformation and reorientation of the development agenda (Beveridge & Nott, 2002; Walby, 2005). This approach views gender mainstreaming as a political strategy as opposed to a tool or end process. The reversal approach seeks to "recognize group perspectives from outside the existing policy-making elite" (Squires, 2005, p. 375).

Instead of relying on bureaucratic policy instruments, advocates stress bottom-up approaches such as consultation with civil society organisations, for example nongovernmental organisations (Beveridge & Nott, 2002).

Participatory and democratic approaches such as the inclusion or empowerment of marginalised groups in relation to policy-making have also been problematic. Squires (2005) states that its weakness is its "tendency to reify group identities" by potentially privileging certain gendered identities over others, resulting in political fragmentation and diverting "from (a) widening material inequality". Also, as stated earlier the concept of "empowerment" is deeply contested, thus allowing for multiple interpretations and policies. Jahan (1995) cites a largely rhetorical promotion of empowerment by many institutions, noting their perceptible shift in language by employing terms such as "participatory development", "self-determination", "autonomy", and "voice". Jahan (1995) cautions that evidence from field-level assessments are needed to accurately gauge whether the changes in language reflect rhetorical shifts or imply real changes in policies. Other issues such as measuring women's empowerment have also contributed to its complexity (Kabeer, 1999).

Lastly is the perspective of displacement, which arguably has been less explored than inclusion and reversal in gender mainstreaming efforts (Woodward, 2008). Displacement promotes a genealogical methodology, which "speaks of subject positions and of gendering (as a verb) rather than gender (as a noun), espouses a diversity politics and are labeled as postmodern" (Squires, 2005, p. 368). The displacement model of gender mainstreaming seeks to deconstruct those discursive influences that engender the subject and conceive of GM as an open-ended and potentially transformative project.

Displacement is ground in democratic theory, suggesting issues of inequality be addressed through deliberative democracy which considers more fully the various types of oppression (Squires, 2005). Hankivsky (2005) argues the problem with current practices is that gender mainstreaming "prioritizes a coherent analytical category of gender, in which race and class, among other factors, are considered an *add-on* to gender" (original emphasis, p. 986).

While advocating for a displacement approach to gender mainstreaming, Squires (2005) states that the concept is problematic in certain areas. Woodward (as cited in Walby, 2005) argues that focusing on other inequalities may weaken the effort spent on gender mainstreaming in terms of resource reallocation, a loss of focus on gender, a decrease in the appreciation of the specific structural causes of inequality or if there is a competition over the priority accorded to different forms of inequalities. Squires (2005) adds the problem with the transformatory approach of displacement lies in its lack of specificity due to its theoretical roots, leaving very few concrete features or precise articulations. Because the model seeks to denaturalize and subsequently politicise policy goals rather than implement alternatives in its place, the model does not have a clear conception of equality. Eveline, Bacchi & Binns (2009) argue Squires' (2005) focus on deliberative democracy "lacks viable application to the process of GM because she envisages her methodology for better policy occurring in separated spaces of policy machinery and community implementation" (p. 6), citing that the citizens' forums and referenda suggested by Squires (2005) operate beyond the range of policymakers, therefore holding little relevance and unlikely to prove sufficient for transforming goals into action.

In addition to feminism, gender mainstreaming has been informed by other disciplines, particularly in empirical studies. This empirical research has evaluated the extent to which policies have been implemented, providing insight to its achievements and challenges. Studies from social movement theory, for example, have found that successful implementation depends on political opportunities, mobilizing structures and strategic framing of policies (Hafner-Burton & Pollack, 2002). Using transnational policy diffusion, True (2002) found that the three enabling factors for gender mainstreaming were the engagement of a new language for women's rights, the proliferation of women's networks and transnational linkages, and growing numbers of men and women in foreign policy. Research from organisational practice theory has suggested that gender mainstreaming policy constraints are due to a lack of staff, organisational culture, the treatment of gender equality as a separate issue, staff simplification of the gender issue and a lack of feeling of ownership (Moser & Moser, 2005). This research has been integral to the field of gender mainstreaming and has raised issues towards the accountability, assessment and evaluation in policy implementation (Moser, 1995).

After Beijing, many governments in the global South created new departments or ministries to support gender mainstreaming activities. This work included gender training, working with gender focal points (an appointed gender mainstreaming liaison) within various government ministries, giving gender-related input into planning within ministries, to providing information and awareness-raising about gender-specific issues including violence against women in the community (Kusakabe, 2005). This commitment was also reflected in the projects undertaken by NGOs in the developing world. Osirim (2001) differentiates between national organisations which tend to address the needs of

mostly upper middle class women and will often employ advocacy campaigns. Grassroots organisations' purpose is to meet disadvantaged women's economic needs through income-generating projects and basic health services.

Much of the work assumed by national and grassroots NGOs fall under two areas: firstly, practical gender needs are basic necessities of the domestic area such as income-earning activities, childcare, health and food provision (Moser, 1993) and "do not entail a strategic goal of women's emancipation or gender equality" (Molyneaux, 1985, p. 233). Secondly, strategic gender needs are those identified by women due to their subordinate position in society, relating to the structure and nature of relationships between women and men. Women's strategic gender needs are dependent on their specific cultural and socio-political context (Moser, 1993), and include goals such as:

> The abolition of the sexual division of labour; the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and childcare; the removal of institutionalized discrimination such as rights to own land or property, or access to credit; the establishment of political equality; freedom of choice over childbearing; and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women. (Molyneaux, 1985, p. 233)

Microfinance has been lauded as a source of women's empowerment in the developing world and is often categorized as a "Self-Help Group" (SGH) or a "rotating credit scheme" (Tesoriero, 2006; Osirim, 2001). Lack of income is one of the fundamental problems of the disadvantaged in developing world society and INGOs have responded by providing small loans at low interest with no collateral required (Fonjong, 2001). This allows women entrepreneurs to start up small local businesses to generate their own

income. Additionally, vocational training, workshops on marketing techniques and self-employment strategies are offered by INGOs (Fonjong, 2001).

In the era of post-Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs), many governments in the developing world severely reduced funding to health programs. Women are among those most affected because of their particular health needs, for example sexually transmitted diseases, childcare and maternity. Fonjong (2001) argued that the insufficient provision of health needs increases women's absenteeism from work and consequently reduces their chances of participating in the formal job sector. In response to this need, INGOs frequently coordinate teachers, fieldworkers and peer educators to teach disease prevention and family planning. In addition to health, INGOs have renovated and constructed wells, dams and rainwater catchments and the community is trained in their maintenance and in environmental protection, liberating many rural women from the time-consuming tasking of obtaining water over long distances (Fonjong, 2001).

While the aforementioned projects are primarily focused on meeting women's practical gender needs, INGOs also work in the area of strategic gender needs, providing counselling, awareness-raising and engaging in political participation (Osirim, 2001). Many NGOs provide support services not only for women but men and children in areas such as anger management, guidance on marriage, stress management, sex and sexuality issues, career guidance and counselling for single-parent families and carers of elderly people (Desai, 2005). This type of support facilitates healthier home environments and relationships for women and their families.

According to Fonjong (2001), "Women's empowerment requires that the population in general as well as the women themselves, know the extent of their

problems, so that proper strategies can be adopted to reverse the situation. This is referred to as conscientization" (p. 230). According to Desai (2005) the purpose of this awareness-raising work is to raise both men and women's awareness about gender inequality, and to support women learning to exercise their right as equal citizens. Involved in this process is promoting women's ability voice their concerns, exercise decision-making options and to protest if they are unfairly treated. This also involves women gaining a better understanding of their relationship with the larger community and challenging inequality.

Awareness-raising is employed in grassroots NGOs through a variety of media such as newsletters, debates, sketches, folk songs, local plays and information sessions (Ruwanpura, 2007). Through these activities issues such as domestic violence, gender stereotypes and social exclusion are explored, educating the public on women's concerns in the community. Other types of awareness-raising are in the area of legal rights; NGOs hold "mobile clinics" where lawyers provide free counselling for women in areas such as divorce law, property and inheritance rights (Fonjong, 2001). Some organisations provide temporary shelter and legal support for victims of domestic abuse (Ruwanpura, 2007).

Key parts of women's empowerment are advocacy and increased influence in the political domain. NGOs often establish relationships with institutions such as local police departments and hospitals, providing gender sensitivity training and educating professionals how to treat women in crises such as domestic abuse situations (Osirim, 2001). Partnerships with ministries of health, justice and law are also developed; NGO staff provide input to policy-makers on relevant issues affecting women in the community. These types of partnerships are imperative to the mainstreaming of gender equality issues and to the strengthening of civil society as a whole.

Despite the success of these initiatives, research has identified several problematic areas. Most NGOs focus on women's practical gender needs as opposed to strategic gender needs, as these tend to be more easily quantifiable and are favoured by international donors (Wendoh & Wallace, 2005). However, empowerment is often mistaken as simply providing women's access to basic needs without necessarily having control over them and properly benefiting from them (Fonjong, 2001). Jakimow & Kilby (2006) argue that while projects such as microfinance provide women with more choices it "does not challenge the social structure in which marginalised women have relatively less ability to pursue their interests" (p. 20). Other studies state that NGO initiatives in awareness-raising and other support tend to homogenise women's experiences, failing to reflect on important aspects such as culture, ethnicity, caste, age, location and other particularities in different neighbourhoods (Desai, 2005; George, 2007). Wendoh & Wallace (2005) caution that awareness of women's issues does not necessarily guarantee authentic gender mainstreaming or translate into sustainable social change.

Desai (2005) outlines the considerable challenges associated with gender mainstreaming and organisational change within NGOs, particularly within organisational norms and culture. Tiessen's (2004) study of an NGO revealed negative staff attitudes towards hiring women, limited perceptions of gender equality and biased treatment of female staff members. The findings also showed staff's limited capacity to address gender issues in their own work. Desai (2005) suggests that NGOs have little conceptual understanding of how their gender mainstreaming interventions facilitate women's empowerment in the context of rapid economic, social and cultural change. Additionally NGOs rarely evaluate their interventions in this context. Several studies

stress that due to the nature of gender mainstreaming, the concept entails extensive attitudinal change and therefore requires a considerable amount of time to fully adapt (Desai, 2005; Fonjong, 2001; Wendoh & Wallace, 2005).

As demonstrated by the examples above, NGO gender mainstreaming initiatives at the level of operations have exhibited a wide range of experiences from successes to significant challenges. Unterhalter & North (2010) suggest how easy it is for gender mainstreaming "to slip from an agenda-setting aspiration to a side-stream, characterised by neglect, minimal action or technical support to other development goals" (p. 395). However, Unterhalter & North (2010) also credit NGO success to the presence of gender activists inside and with access to powerful bureaucracies; they argue these partnerships and networking are integral to effective on the ground implementation.

Much of the literature about experiences with gender mainstreaming tends to focus on organisational processes and not any specificities of a particular social sector, such as education (Unterhalter & North, 2010). Mehra & Gupta (2006) suggest that the focus on organisational processes increasingly became an assumption that these internal organisational changes were a pre-condition for mainstreaming gender at the level of operations. The end result of these misconstrued understandings was a lack of attention on gender mainstreaming in operations, resulting in the loss of a decade of opportunity to acquire experience and learning and to show impact on development on the ground (Mehra & Gupta, 2006).

Studies indicate that the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming may overlook some aspects of implementation associated with political and socio-cultural alignments within and across national contexts (Unterhalter & North, 2010). Para-Mallam's (2010)

research on the ways that gender-stereotyped beliefs and practices derived from traditional African and Christian religions affect Nigerian women demonstrates this point. Despite increased access to education, the concept of gender equality remained vague due to the sexist ideologies that are the foundation of widely-practiced traditions and beliefs. Para-Mallam (2010) highlights the gender bias inherent in school curricula in addition to the socio-cultural and physical environment, noting that in many rural areas religious leaders double as teachers, principals and education officers. She concluded by stating that a critical interrogation of commonly held beliefs as well as intervention strategies positioned to transform the patriarchal paradigms that underlie educational systems were required for gender equality to exist.

Political and socio-cultural issues also played a key part in Silfver's (2010) study of a Swedish international development organisation working on educational initiatives through the support of NGOs in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The focus of the study was on how Lao education officials, working with development cooperation partners, discuss and negotiate local gender issues in relation to gender equality and gender mainstreaming policies. Silfver (2010) posited that without acknowledging and articulating the historical roots of gender equality in the Swedish context, and gender mainstreaming in the international context, that concepts tended to become convoluted and distorted at the level of operations. Silfver (2010) found the Lao case to be a typical example of the problems that can arise when gender mainstreaming policy is donor-driven and is interpreted as part of education practice; and where local context is not considered in the implementation process. Despite these challenges Silfver (2010) did

note that the focus on gender did facilitate the appointment of more women in education positions in Laos.

Even in cases where gender mainstreaming is not donor-driven, similar issues can arise. Karlsson (2010) researched the challenges of gender mainstreaming implementation in a South African provincial education department. Citing prior research, Karlsson (2010) points out that despite a high proportion of girls' enrolment in school, gender inequalities persist. Females were reported to be more at risk to suffer from HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, and betrothals. Additionally, teen pregnancy and attracting girls' interest in technical and scientific careers were other significant issues in the South African education sector. Gender challenges were not isolated to girls: female teachers reported difficulties in securing appointments and promotions as education managers. Karlsson (2010) argues these societal issues should be considered when addressing gender mainstreaming initiatives.

In her research Karlsson (2010) saw no evidence within the Provincial Education Department of a provincial and/or national education policy document concerning the implementation of gender equality for the education sector, despite the installation of mainstreaming initiatives such as gender focal points. Plans, programmes, and projects carried out by the gender focal points were largely symbolic because there were no explicit strategies in place on how to employ tools (such as checklists) in deepening the work of gender mainstreaming. "This shows that gender mainstreaming is jeopardised when there is no gender in education policy to stipulate responsibilities and roles, strategic directions, activities and resourcing arrangements" (Karlsson, 2010, p. 307). In her conclusion, Karlsson cited the top-down approach as problematic, accounting for

"low levels of commitment of many staff at district levels, and inadequate budgeting for activities and personnel, and the unevenness across districts" (p. 510).

Despite the difficulties in implementation there have been measures of success with regard to gender mainstreaming initiatives. NGOs now commonly employ gender analysis in their projects, highlighting important contextual concerns in the local community. Miske, Meagher & DeJaeghere (2010) argue the need to collect data to illustrate the various barriers that affect girls and boys differently in attending and achieving in schools, thus illustrating gendered relations. These kinds of data help planners understand why there is a sufficient or lack of equitable retention and educational achievement. In their study of CARE's gender mainstreaming at the level of operations, Miske et al. (2010) examined the NGO's use of an education and gender analysis framework that integrated dimensions of educational attainment, quality, equality and girls' empowerment in the basic education sectors of rural and urban areas in Cambodia and Mali.

In the CARE Common Indicator Framework (CIF) the educational quality indicators provide an understanding of how teachers interact and teach boys and girls differently based on perceived sex differences, which become socially constructed gender norms and result in unequal learning opportunities that perpetuate gendered roles and relations. Attainment indicators examine completion, persistence and achievement of students, relying on sex-disaggregated data to reveal gender gaps. Equality indicators approached key stakeholders such as boys, girls, male and female teachers, as well as men and women in the community to assess perceptions of equal opportunities for boys and girls to participate in and benefit from education. This data reveal underlying

gendered norms and attitudes that can perpetuate gender inequalities. Empowerment indicators in the framework provided CARE workers with a "better understanding of the structures and relations that affect young girls and boys, and of how measures of agency may differ from those for adult women" (Miske et al., 2010, p. 455).

Miske et al. (2010) cited many positive outcomes from the use of the framework, stating the findings from the CIF-based situation analyses have resulted in programmatic changes in the education sectors in both Cambodia and Mali. The findings had also begun to reach civil society and policy discourse through the sharing and engagement with the community and government stakeholders. The study concluded that the use of qualitative indicators was imperative to moving beyond gender parity in education. The authors stressed these types of frameworks reveal broader social processes and begin to explain why inequities exist and how they can be addressed.

The emphasis on qualitative indicators in gender mainstreaming projects is a fundamental shift from an overreliance on quantitative measurements in education. With the UN's Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015 and the proliferation of gender mainstreaming initiatives, many NGOs became solely focused on issues of access and gender parity. While these are pertinent issues, North (2010) cautions there are limitations in this approach to gender equality: "This has meant that more substantive understandings of gender, which relate to the experiences of girls and women in and beyond school, often go un-discussed and un-addressed" (p. 425).

North's (2010) research examined the ways in which the MDG declaration on gender equality in education was being translated into policy and program work and what this revealed about gender mainstreaming within global education organisations. She

highlights the MDG 3 which seeks to "promote gender equality and empower women". North points out that the specific target attached to this goal does not refer to "empowerment" or "equality", but rather seeks to achieve gender parity in primary and secondary school by 2005, and at all levels of education by 2015.

The data collection for North's (2010) study focused on interviews conducted with individuals who held a gender brief in international development organisations. The research found that the wording of the MDG declaration had profound implications in the way gender issues were addressed by international organisations. Policies of these global institutions revealed the privileging of a limited interpretation of gender as outlined by these declarations. According to North (2010), this often led to the adoption of a narrow form of gender mainstreaming while more complex political issues remained unchallenged. Despite this the author does emphasise the significance of MDG 3 as an instrument of advocacy and as "an important tool for leveraging action on gender issues in education" (p. 431). She also credits the declaration with opening spaces for dialogue around gender and gender-related issues, legitimising mainstreaming in the international community. In her recommendations North (2010) states that gender equality should examine processes not only of exclusion but inclusion, and the basis of gender equality should be a political contestation. She also urged NGOs to adopt a more transformative agenda; to go beyond the tendency to fulfill gender mainstreaming requirements as a technical, top-down exercise and "develop a more substantive notion of gender equality work linked to activism on women's rights" (p. 425).

While the efforts to implement gender mainstreaming on an international scale have been laudable, the reality of what is pontificated at prestigious international

conferences and articulated in public and program policy looks profoundly different at the level of implementation. International NGOs implementing a gender mainstreaming initiative face an overabundance of challenges. How gender mainstreaming and female empowerment are defined and conceptualised by an organisation intensely affects the types of initiatives it undertakes, such as focusing on practical gender needs or strategic gender needs which emphasise advocacy. This has direct and important implications for INGOs such as VSO, who claim in their advertising and reporting that the organisation's mission is to empower females; how this materialises on the ground remains to be seen.

2.6 Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) is a British international nongovernmental organisation established in 1958, with federation counterparts in countries such as Canada, the Netherlands, the Philippines, and Kenya. VSO is a development INGO which recruits volunteers from Australia, India, the Philippines, Canada, Ireland, the UK and Kenya to work with professionals in developing countries in a variety of fields. These range from engineering, health, education, HIV/AIDS, secure livelihoods, participation and governance, to disability (VSO, 2011a). The INGO works in over forty countries ranging from Bangladesh to Zimbabwe. Each of VSO's country programmes selects two or three development goals to focus on.

In addition to development projects, VSO also undertakes advocacy campaigns locally, nationally and internationally to raise awareness for social justice and to effect change in policies and procedures. The organisation forges local partnerships within developing countries, assigning their volunteers to placements in order to increase their

impact and effectiveness in their respective fields. These partnerships vary from local ministries and departments, to national volunteering and membership organisations, and other institutions at the local, provincial and national level. VSO also works with international corporate partners, coordinating similar development goals that are mutually beneficial. Learning through International Networking and Knowledge Sharing (LINKS) is a program created to involve VSO international partner organisations in activities such as study tours, themed workshops, and in-country partner exchanges to learn about best practices in their respective areas of expertise. The participants in the LINKS program are mid-career practitioners in developing countries studying the best practices in their field in another county (VSO, 2011b).

VSO is governed by an international board with representatives from all federation counterparts. The board conducts decision-making in areas such as resources management, defining and achieving objectives and constitutional and legal matters (VSO, 2011c). Board members, also known as trustees, meet five times a year and serve a tenure of three years before standing for re-election. The board of trustees is elected by VSO Council which is made up of fifty members elected for a three year period. The council is the ultimate ruling body of VSO and its main function is to act as a constitutional check on the board of trustees (VSO, 2011d). The operating budget for VSO in 2008 was £48 million or US$78 million (VSO, 2011e).

Within the field of education, VSO works in nineteen countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. The cornerstone of the educational work that VSO focuses on is in support of the Education for All (EFA) campaign, citing the Dakar Framework as part of their mission statement (VSO, 2011f). The six goals of the Framework were to

expand early childhood care and education, provide free and compulsory primary education for all, promote learning and life skills for young people and adults, increase adult literacy by 50 percent, achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015, and to improve the quality of education.

The majority of VSO volunteers who work in education initiatives are trained teachers in their countries of origin. Once placed, volunteers work in teacher training colleges and schools to develop teaching methods with in conjunction with local teachers (VSO, 2011f). VSO also works in the mainstream education system to help eradicate obstacles facing disenfranchised groups, such as the provision of inclusive education. Volunteers liaise with local government offices and ministries of education in areas of assessment, national curriculum development, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation and national equality standards (VSO, 2011f). In terms of advocacy, VSO has conducted policy research on teachers' motivation in developing countries as part of their campaigns to work with governments. This research, which has been compiled from data from over a dozen countries, highlights key issues for teachers and their working conditions to inform and shape educational policies at the government level. Additionally, VSO is a member of an international coalition of charities, NGOs, civil society organisations and education unions called the Global Campaign for Education. The mandate of the Global Campaign is to mobilise the public to put pressure on local governments to fulfill its promise made in 2000 to provide of free education for all children (VSO, 2011f).

2.7   VSO Cambodia

In Cambodia, VSO engages in three specific areas of development: education, health and secure livelihoods. In the area of health, the INGO has worked to improve reproductive and child health of the nation. Volunteers from both clinical and non-clinical backgrounds work in four rural provinces to increase the quality, range and uptake of reproductive, child health and nutrition services and facilitate the adoption of healthy living practices (VSO, 2011g). According to VSO, their Livelihoods Programme is "committed to supporting the improvement of food security of local communities dependent on fisheries and forestry resources through partnership with non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations and government institutions" (VSO, 2011g). This is executed through two phases; the first is through promoting communities' access to, and control over, natural resources as means of supporting their livelihoods. The second phase builds on its successes by focusing on the promotion of food production, food processing, marketing and other aspects of business orientation with their partners (VSO, 2011g).

In support of the Education for All campaign, VSO Cambodia's goal is to "ensure that primary and lower secondary children in rural provinces of Cambodia receive a basic education that is based on their individual needs and abilities, regardless of their sex, disability or ethnicity" (VSO, 2011h). This is executed through two goals: firstly, to improve the quality of teaching in schools, teacher training colleges and professional development centers serving poor and marginalised groups, in particular the disabled and girls. Secondly, the goal is to improve the management of education systems and

resources for poor and marginalised groups, especially women and people with disabilities (VSO, 2011h).

VSO Cambodia's Mainstreaming Inclusive Education (MIE) initiative is dedicated to six rural provinces: Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri, Banteay Meanchey, Battambang, Koh Kong and Kampot. The focus of international volunteer placements is to provide technical assistance at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in Cambodia, implement short-term and long-term technical assistance at the provincial and district levels, deliver long-term technical assistance at Disability Action Council, and facilitate communication for Teacher Training Centers, Provincial Offices of Education and the Departments of Education in Cambodia. Additionally, VSO volunteers also work to mainstream inclusion into the work of Provincial Offices, Teacher Training Centres, Regional Teacher Training Centres and various Departments of Education (VSO, 2011i).

The technical assistance VSO Cambodia provides often comes in the form of workshops, training and conferences. With the Disability Action Council, VSO volunteers deliver training on advocacy and disability. The NGO also supports the development of Model Child Friendly Schools, where target groups (children with disabilities, ethnic minorities and girls) are the focus of the Mainstreaming Inclusive Education initiative (VSO, 2011i). Training is also provided for teachers to work in Model Child Friendly Schools, educating professionals on strategies, methodology and best teaching practices in the Teacher Training Centres. Advocacy training is also offered at the Ministry of Education level as well as within NGO Education Partnerships (NEPs) (VSO, 2011i).

2.8 Girls' Education in Cambodia

While scholarly information on girls' education in Cambodia is limited, a few themes emerge from the literature. As stated in chapter 1, the latest statistics on female education are promising, particularly at the primary level. However, as Velasco (2004) has highlighted, the gender gap in enrolment significantly widens as girls enter secondary studies. The figures are discouraging – at the lower secondary level the gender gap is 23% and this increases to 36% at the upper secondary level. According to Velasco, very few girls complete secondary education at all, and they tend to have higher dropout rates than boys at all levels of education, rates which are among the highest in East Asia. Consequently, university enrolment is profoundly skewed in favour of males.

Among recent developments to promote gender equity in education in Cambodia have included the government's sector-wide education reform strategy, the Ministry of Education's Sector Support Programme (ESSP) and Cambodia's EFA (Education for All) commitments. The result of these efforts has culminated in the development of the MoEYS (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport) Gender Working Group. This group has contributed to a "climate of change" by providing frameworks and strategies for planning, monitoring and evaluating progress and achievements in gender parity in the education field. Notable improvements have been seen in the female recruitment of the teaching service, female enrolment in primary education and participation of women in educational planning and monitoring activities (Velasco, 2004). Projects and initiatives have been geared towards improving learning conditions in the classroom, making schools more conducive to learning and more responsive to the learning needs and interests of boys and girls.

Despite these laudable contributions, conventional issues within the education system persist. Teaching approaches are still perceived as being of a poor quality; teacher-centered techniques are employed rather than learner-centered. Assessment methods largely emphasise rote memorisation rather than authentic understanding. Teachers are not educated on how to vary their pedagogical approaches; or on the different learning styles of girls and boys. Current statistics show that women in Cambodia occupy only 38% of the total teaching positions, most of these being at the primary level and in urban areas. As is common in many male-dominated societies, women represent an even smaller number at the upper echelons of the field: only 9% of women are school directors. This statistic is also reflected in the levels of central management and executive government. Velasco cites cultural barriers and attitudes imposed on women to contributing to this professional lag behind men. This underrepresentation of women in education is an important issue within gender equity – by having fewer educated female role models for young girls and not fully implementing gender equity measures as initially promised by governments.

The curriculum content is described as "gender blind", lacking any references to gender equality concepts in their contents. Textbook writers, curriculum developers and teachers "have yet to acquire the capacity to integrate gender equity issues and concerns into their work" (Velasco, 2004, p. 38). Ideas about gender equality are limited to the illustrations in secondary level textbooks, teachers' manuals and children's books. This is evidenced by the portrayal of girls in textbooks – in traditional roles as weavers and engaging in housework, whereas boys are farm workers and men are office managers. In the Ministry's Curriculum Development Plan (2003-2007) there was no mention of the

incorporation of gender equity issues into the revised curriculum. Velasco adds there is no specific reference or mention of gender issues or identifying the treatment of gender in any relevant subjects or topics in the primary or secondary curriculum in Cambodia.

There are several factors attributed to the continued lack of schooling for girls – financial costs, lack of facilities for secondary schooling, particularly in rural areas, repetition of grade levels and late start and grade completion (Velasco, 2004). Other reports suggest that "girls are more heavily burdened with housework and family-care responsibilities, and thus are more vulnerable to falling behind in school" (p. 39). There are additional complex dynamics influencing the under-education of females, such as a lack of separate toilets for girls, security issues, curricula relevance and gender-based differences in interactions with peers and teachers. In remote areas girls may have to travel long distances to attend school or live with relatives in order to be closer to the school facilities; these options are deemed to be less acceptable, particularly to parents of adolescent girls. According to Tan (2007) many parents in rural areas discourage their children (both boys and girls) from continuing their studies after the upper secondary level as they perceive their children will be unable to secure employment, due to the high rate of unemployment of university graduates in Cambodia.

For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the education of girls at the primary level. As previously outlined in chapter 1, section 1.5 (b) "Cambodia – Education", this has been defined as grades 7-12. Therefore the ages of the girls will range anywhere from 12-18 years of age, on average.

2.9 Conclusion

This literature review has provided a comprehensive assessment of the issues and complexities relevant to this study: that of implementation, international NGOs, economic development, inclusive education, the international gender mainstreaming movement, as well as a summary of VSO as an organization and the state of girls' education in Cambodia. The literature has demonstrated a host of challenges to the implementation of an INGO initiative – be it cultural, political, or economic in nature. The success of any initiative greatly depends on how an organisation navigates these challenges.

In the next chapter the methodology of this study will be discussed, along with a review of implementation research and conceptual frameworks.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will elucidate the methodology which will be used for the purposes of this study. The concept of implementation evaluation will be expanded upon, including the presentation of a conceptual framework. This will be followed by a restatement of the thesis question and detailed guiding questions. The research design of the study will be discussed, including the methods and instruments of mixed-method data collection. A justification of the approaches used, and the analytical processes and interpretive models will also be explained. Ethical issues and procedures are also elaborated upon.

3.1 Conceptual Framework - Implementation Evaluation

Implementation is defined as the execution of a basic policy decision. "Ideally, that decision identifies the problem(s) to be addressed, stipulates the objective(s) to be pursued, and in a variety of ways, 'structures' the implementation process" (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1981). When examining the various qualitative methods for a study, certain evaluation purposes, questions, and situations are more appropriate with qualitative methods than others.

The purpose of implementation evaluation (also known as "process evaluation") is to understand the internal dynamics of program operations (Patton, 1987). It focuses on the following types of questions: What are the factors that come together to make this program what it is? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program? What is the nature of staff-beneficiary interactions? Patton states that implementation evaluations most typically require a detailed description of program operations. This may be based on observations and/or interviews with staff, program administrators or beneficiaries. Often these types of evaluations emphasise how the program is perceived by staff and beneficiaries. The development of a detailed and accurate description of program operations lends itself well to the use of qualitative methods.

Werner (2004) makes a relevant distinction between implementation (or process) evaluations and impact evaluations:

> The goal of the impact evaluation is to discover whether a given policy or social intervention is making a difference, as well as how much of a difference and for whom. Impact evaluations accomplish their mission by comparing *what happens*

within the context of the policy or intervention being tested with *what would have happened* in the absence of the policy or intervention. (author's emphasis, p. 120)

Conversely, assessments of implementation compare data on program operations, activities, services, and outcomes with some set of norms, models, or standards. Unlike an impact evaluation, an implementation study may require multiple comparisons (Werner, 2004). The challenge then for this type of approach is to select the appropriate standards, models or norms that elucidate "what is desired or expected".

Werner (2004) defines the most common types of standards as program model, plan or design, federal and state standards, broader social standards, industry standards or exemplary programs, professional experience or judgement and stakeholder opinions and judgements. Program model, plan or design is defined as the "blueprint" for the program and may contain details about the program's services, policies, target population, and anticipated short- and long-term outcomes. Federal and state standards are defined as federal and state legislative or administrative rules specifying program content and performance standards.

In terms of broader social standards, success in the program may be judged by evaluating the outcomes using a social values perspective. Industry standards may be exemplary programs or other types of benchmarks sometimes used in implementation research based on what constitutes an effective program. Implementation researchers may also use their own professional judgement and experience to assess various aspects of program operations and results. Lastly, participants, program operators and other stakeholders may contribute relevant perspectives on the quality of program operations, policies and services (Werner, 2004).

Within implementation evaluation, the focus implies an examination of how an outcome is produced as opposed to examining the program itself (Patton, 1987). Patton describes implementation evaluation as "developmental, descriptive, continuous, flexible and inductive" (p. 23). The researcher conducting an implementation evaluation sets out to comprehend and document the day-to-day reality of the program under study. They search for significant patterns and important nuances that give the program its distinctiveness; this requires becoming intimately acquainted with details of the program. It is important to note implementation evaluations look at formal activities and anticipated outcomes, but researchers also investigate the informal patterns and unanticipated consequences on the full context of program implementation and development.

An important data collection strategy used in implementation studies is ethnographic research (Werner, 2004). In the past several years, Werner posits that ethnographic research methods have gained increasing credibility in the field of evaluation research. Generally speaking, ethnography looks at how individuals respond to changes in their social and cultural milieus. One example of how ethnography is employed in implementation research is through a "street-level bureaucracy" approach to studying program operations and policy implementation.

This approach draws largely from the work developed by Lipsky (1980). The theory which Lipsky established suggested that true implementation was not, in fact, created at the upper echelons of administration but rather "on the ground" by "street-level bureaucrats". This "bottom-up" approach to implementation flew in the face of traditional "top-down" approaches. Lipsky theorised that the actual implementation of a policy or

program by service-delivery-level workers such as teachers, police officers, social workers and other bureaucratic professionals may bear little resemblance to the original policy regulations. "Public policy 'is' what happens in the interchange between bureaucracies and clients…Research in street-level bureaucracy thus focuses on the content, quality, and meaning of that interchange in understanding how policy gets implemented" (Werner, 2004, p. 74).

Implementation evaluations have many merits and are useful for a variety of stakeholders. Implementation evaluations allow decision-makers and information users to understand the inner workings of program operations (Patton, 1987). This permits people to decide to what extent the program is functioning as it should. These types of evaluations are particularly useful for revealing areas for improvement and highlighting program strengths which should be continued. Stakeholders outside of the program, such as external funders, public officials and external agencies may find implementation evaluations useful in understanding how a program operates. This allows for more informed and intelligent decision-making by those not intimately involved in program operations. A final advantage of the evaluation lies in the dissemination and replication of exemplary programs to other sites.

3.2 Study Objectives

For the purposes of this study, the thesis focused on the following central question: What are the challenges experienced by the staff and volunteers of an international nongovernmental organisation in their implementation of an inclusive education program in a developing country?

General Guiding Questions

> What are the local political implications of engaging in educational development work?

> How does the socio-cultural context of rural Cambodia affect project work in inclusive education, in particular girls' education at the primary level?

> What role does funding play in educational programming within INGOs?

In addition to the above thesis question and general guiding questions, the following set of detailed questions were also be helpful in collecting relevant information for this study.

a. In what way(s) does funding influence the implementation process?

b. What role does local politics play at the level of program implementation?

c. How does the VSO financial budget affect the challenges volunteers experience in the operating of an inclusive education program?

d. How does the local socio-cultural context impact the implementation process of the inclusive education program?

e. What are the challenges in implementing a program targeting girls' education?

3.3 Research Design

In this study, there were several different approaches integrated into the research design. Using the original thesis question as a guide, a case study is the most appropriate choice of method. A definition of case study will be provided, along with a justification. A primary goal of case study research is to develop a program narrative, which will be explained below. The design of case studies allow for the use of both qualitative and

quantitative research methods which is discussed in later sections. Included in the research design section are the methods, instruments and processes which was employed over the course of the study.

3.3. 1 Case Study

When a researcher needs to understand some particular problem, process, or situation in great depth, and where one can identify cases rich in information – rich in the sense that much can be gleaned from a few exemplars of the phenomenon in question – case studies become a particularly useful apparatus (Patton, 1987). The author also adds that well-constructed case studies are holistic and context sensitive. A holistic approach assumes that the whole is understood as a complex system that is greater than the sum of its parts. In defining context, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (as cited in Patton, 2002) explains:

> Context becomes the framework, the reference point, the map, the ecological sphere; it is used to place people and action in time and space as a resource for understanding what they say and do. The context is rich in clues for interpreting the experience of the actors in the setting. (p. 63)

Case studies are characterized by a "microscopic approach where intensive examination of the 'particular' is emphasized; this is what some call 'peeling the onion' to carefully view each layer of identified case-related program activity" (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). Patton (2002) states that it is nearly impossible for the researcher to anticipate in advance how a program may acclimatise to local conditions, needs, and interests. Therefore it is particularly appropriate under these evaluation conditions for the researcher to employ a naturalistic inquiry. In this type of inquiry, the research takes place in real-world settings and there is no manipulation of the phenomenon of interest by the researcher. Be it a

group, event, program, community, relationship or interaction, the phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally in the sense there is no predetermined course of action established by the researcher. What is advantageous about the naturalistic inquiry is that its openness allows the researcher to be sensitive to the varying perspectives of all stakeholders. This sensitivity, adds Patton, permits the collection of data and reporting of findings with particular attention paid to those whose perspectives are often less heard.

Case studies are selected because they serve a specific evaluation purpose, according to Patton (1987). These types of studies are valuable when the purpose of the evaluation is to capture individual differences or unique variations from one program setting to another or even from one program experience to another. "Regardless of the unit of analysis, a qualitative case study seeks to describe that unit in depth, in detail, in context, and holistically" (p. 19). Researchers in case studies employ a wide variety of forms of data collection such as formal and informal interviews, questionnaires, standardized tests and measurements, archival records, audio- and videotapes, photographs, artifacts and maps (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Because case studies are the investigation of people and processes, narrative research plays a key part. Narrative research is concerned with studying the lives of individuals and entails understanding people's lives and lived experiences (Patton, 2002).

For the purposes of this study, the method of a case study was employed because it is the most appropriate due to the nature of the study's topic of interest. As Patton clearly stated, because case studies tend to focus on people and processes, this is the most logical choice of method for this particular study. This method allowed the researcher to understand the participants lived experience volunteering for an international

nongovernmental organisation and implementing an inclusive education program, while examining how this affects the larger implementation process of the education initiative as a whole.

3.3. 2 Developing a Program Narrative

The primary goal of case study research, state Lapan& Quartaroli (2009), is to present an accurate portrayal of typical program operations using observation, participant dialogue and other firsthand accounts to shed light on and reflect authentic everyday program activities. At the program level, case data can include program documents, statistical profiles, program reports and proposals, interviews with program participants and staff, observations of the program, and program histories (Patton, 2002). This information can then be compiled to create a comprehensive program narrative.

Program narratives are an essential part to case studies just as in implementation research. According to Werner (2004) program narratives are "discursive descriptions of how a program operates – (they) are probably the most familiar products of implementation research" (p. 82). Werner goes on to state that the program narrative lays the foundation for the evaluative and explanatory functions of implementation research into a concrete framework. A significant challenge to the narrative construction process, however, is being able to develop a lucid account from the multiple interviews, program observations and program documents used to collect the data.

Werner (2004) outlines that two basic methods in which to create successful program narratives. The first method is to combine participants' (also known as "informants") responses across all topics. As it is unlikely any one subject will provide a comprehensive description of the program in its entirety along with its results, the "story"

of the program should be "built up from partial views of the whole", states Werner (p. 83). This narrative of the program could include aspects of program planning through development to start-up, ongoing operations and outcomes. The second method to creating a program narrative begins with multiple accounts of the same aspects of the program (Werner, 2004). Policies, procedures, and services were discussed by various participants, and occasionally, according to Werner, these accounts will not agree and even in some instances some disagreement is to be expected. The completed program narrative will endeavour to record these differences and their relative prevalence.

In order to create a narrative synthesis, the first step is to combine participants' responses to the same questions. Then the responses should be reviewed for consistency. Werner (2004) posits that responses that agree or are similar may be grouped together. The next step is to analyze responses by questions or topics that show no important variations, those that seem to vary in expected ways, and those that vary in unexpected ways. A summary statement should be developed for the responses showing no important variations, states Werner. For the responses that were varied in expected ways, the researcher should then develop a set of summary statements for each type of response, along with the relative prevalence of each variation. Lastly, the responses containing unexpected inconsistencies should be highlighted for resolution by other more reliable respondents or documents or a potential call back to the research site(s). By the end of this process the researcher should have a comprehensive summary of the variety of answers to each question or topic in the interview guide. Werner outlines that the summary should indicate the source(s) for each response, as well as if the responses varied as anticipated or were contradictory.

Once the program narrative has been developed, thought must be put into its presentation. Werner (2004) highlights some ways to organise a narrative program description: through a conceptual model, client flow display, chronological order map and programmatic areas summary. For the purposes of this study, the two most appropriate options in this case would be a conceptual model and programmatic areas. A conceptual or logic model "explains the hypothetical causal relationships between program intervention and its intended outcomes" (Werner, 2004, p. 89). This usually includes a description of the program, the program context, the target population program activities and short- and long-term outcomes. The approach is effective as it simplifies combining description and evaluation: "Does the implemented program mirror the conceptual model?" Programmatic areas allow information to be organised by topic, focusing on detailed areas in-depth. This may be a useful approach for studies which are only looking at a particular aspect of a program.

According to Werner (2004), graphic presentations can be a useful tool in summarizing descriptions of program or conceptual models. Figures or tables can present the program as a whole in one view and can lend a certain dynamic quality to narratives. Werner notes that graphic presentations are particularly appropriate for program narratives focusing on the model of programmatic areas or employing a conceptual program model. Descriptive statistics are another method of presentation, which describe "what is happening" in a program. For example, some measurements of group phenomena are best described using numbers. "In well-constructed implementation studies, statistical data are often woven into program narratives to express the scope and scale of project operations" (Werner, 2004, p. 93).

For the purposes of this study, a program narrative was developed based upon the responses of the participants, as outlined by Werner (2004). This included a narrative synthesis, summary statements for responses and explanations for any inconsistencies found. In terms of presentation, the most appropriate method was to develop a summary of the programmatic areas in the study. For example, there were some participants in the study (VSO volunteers and staff) who conducted professional development seminars with local teachers, other participants are assigned to lead training sessions with ministry and government workers, and another set of participants focused on holding advocacy workshops with local grassroots NGOs.

Due to the wide range of positions held by volunteers and the functions they serve within the organisation, a summary of programmatic areas provided the most comprehensive and lucid picture of the study results.

3.4 Qualitative Research - Approaches to inquiry

There are five approaches to qualitative inquiry which are classified as narrative, phenomenology, ethnography, case study and grounded theory (Creswell, 2009). Narrative inquiry focuses on people's knowledge, beliefs and practices (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Phenomenological approaches explore how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness as shared meaning and as well as at the individual level (Patton, 2002). Ethnography is a strategy of inquiry where the researcher studies a cultural group in its natural environment over an extended period of time by collecting observational and interview data. According to Lapan & Quartaroli (2009) case studies "seek rich descriptions about people, events, topics or programs by researching them in their natural environment (p. 165). Grounded theory builds theory

from the ground up by thoroughly studying multiple examples of concrete instances of an idea or case, followed by a development of an explication for all of those concrete events.

For the purposes of this study, the case study approach was employed to guide the overall research design. However due to the nature of this study, aspects of other approaches are applicable and present within the case study approach, such as phenomenology and naturalistic inquiry. And as cited earlier, ethnography in implementation evaluation seeks to understand the experience of "street-level bureaucrats" who work on the ground.

3.5 Methods and Instruments of Qualitative Data Collection

3.5. 1 Purposeful Sampling

Purposeful sampling is a research design strategy used to make cause-and-effect conclusions that generalize to other settings and participants (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). This is a deliberate approach, where the researcher clearly outlines the characteristics that portray the persons, times, settings, independent variables, and dependent variables that the researcher wants to generalise. Then the study participants are chosen (also called key informants) to match the specified characteristics.

> The power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in-depth. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the evaluation, thus the term 'purposeful sampling'. (author's emphasis, Patton, 1987, p. 52).

Due to the nature of this study, purposeful sampling was employed. This was the most appropriate method as the central thesis question required specific key informants (staff

and volunteers) who worked for a development INGO working within the field of education. Furthermore, the thesis question required an examination of a particular aspect of the INGO's initiative - that of the challenges of implementation as experienced on the ground, therefore the sample must be very precise.

3.5. 2 Document Collection and Document Analysis

Implementation research is "eclectic and pragmatic in its methodologies – the data, data collection strategies, analyses, and presentational styles required are determined by a combination of its specific research questions and an educated guess by the researchers about where and how to look for the answers" (Werner, 2004, p 5). One of the easiest and most frequent methods of data collection in an implementation study is through document collection. Administrative documents are a valuable source of document collection, states Werner (2004). This is particularly useful when researching the origins and development of a program design, or when describing the program model, and the program's overall goals and performance measures. This may include minutes of planning meetings, administrative letters to program management and staff, memoranda related to program development and draft versions of program design. Also important are statistical reports, background data on local demographics, budget submissions, and annual reports (Werner, 2004). A major challenge in collecting administrative data, however, is locating the necessary information and organising the data in a uniform and well-organised way.

A sub-category of document collection consists of visual and audio material. This data, Creswell (2003) states, may take the form of videotapes, art objects, photographs, or

any forms of sound. All of the aforementioned documents have the potential to contribute to a study's authentic and comprehensive program narrative.

For the purposes of this study, administrative documents were used as part of the ongoing analytic process to confirm or dispute results from other data sources. Statistical reports, financial documents, annual reports and grey literature were examined and used to develop the program narrative at the conclusion of the study.

3.5. 3 Participant Observation

Good implementation analysts "must be fully aware of the characteristics of the society within which implementation takes place" (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983, p. 19). Participant observation, according to Werner (2004) is a "specialized tool of ethnographic research that places the researcher for extended periods of time in a program's social milieu in an attempt to understand the program from the subject's viewpoint" (p. 6). In this approach researchers remain at a site for an extended time period in an effort to become members of the society or culture they are studying. By engaging in this way the researcher (or ethnographer) attempts to understand the target group's day-to-day life from first-hand experience and lengthy observations.

Patton (2002) argues the purposes of observational data are to describe the setting that was observed, the activities that took place, the individuals who participated in the activities of that setting and the meanings of what was observed from the perspectives of those observed. "The descriptions should be factual, accurate, and thorough without being cluttered by irrelevant minutiae and trivia" (p. 262). Patton states that direct, personal contact with and observations of a setting have multiple advantages. Firstly, the researcher is better able to understand and capture the context within which people

interact. Understanding, according to Patton, is essential to a holistic perspective.

Secondly, firsthand experience with a setting and the people within the setting allows the

researcher to be "open, discovery oriented, and inductive because by being on-site, the

observer has less need to rely on prior conceptualisations of the setting" (p. 262).

Another strength of observation as a research tool, states Patton (2002), lies in the

fact the researcher has an opportunity to observe aspects that may routinely escape

awareness among people in the setting. Direct observation also provides an opportunity to

learn about things that participants may be unwilling to speak about in an interview,

particularly to a stranger. This method of data collection permits the opportunity to move

beyond the perceptions of others. While interviews present the understandings of people

being interviewed, it is important to bear in mind that interviewees are reporting selective

perceptions. Field observers or researchers will also have their own perceptions, and by

making this a part of the data, a more comprehensive review of the setting can be

achieved. Lastly, by getting to know participants in a setting through firsthand experience

permits the researcher to draw on personal knowledge during the formal interpretation

stage of the data analysis (Patton, 2002).

In this study, one of the advantages of travelling to the site of an INGO's initiative

was to conduct participant observations of the implementation process *in situ*. The

inclusion of observations as part of the research design added a richness to the

understanding of a developing country vastly different than those of the global North.

3.5. 4 Participant Interviews

The purpose of interviewing, according to Patton (2002), is to allow researchers to enter into the perspective of the participant. "Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. We interview to find out what is in and on someone else's mind, to gather their stories" (p. 341). As a result, depth interviewing is an important source of qualitative data. Participant interviews are a basic data collection method connected with ethnographic research (Werner, 2004). Open-ended interviews, which are semistructured conversations that focus on the aspects of the program or program experiences that are most relevant to the study. In this approach the researcher engages participants in multiple conversations over an extended period of time in an attempt to gain their confidence and understand their values, beliefs and concerns. This demands the researcher poses open-ended questions, listening to and recording the answers, and then following up with additional relevant questions. Interviews have the potential to add an inner perspective to a participant's outward behaviours (Patton, 1987). Because the researcher is not physically able to observe everything, including feelings, thoughts and intentions or situations that preclude the presence of an observer, employing the interview as a strategy then allows the researcher to some extent to enter the participant's "world".

Interviews play an integral role in implementation research, as these are first-hand interpretations of what is happening in a program by the people who are directly involved in the program design, management, or operations (Werner, 2004). Werner posits that an important purpose of first-hand accounts to collect opinions of those involved in the program in order to find out how well things are functioning within the program, why

things are working as they are and how to improve program operations and results. In this regard, participants are used as "first-level program evaluators" (p. 33). Werner adds that these individual accounts of program experiences could be used to develop initial models of how the program actually functions.

In an implementation study a variety of people may be interviewed such as program staff, administrators or other officials associated with the program. In each instance, the evaluator as the interviewer is looking to find out how that particular person perceives the program under study. Patton (2002) outlines three basic approaches to collective qualitative data through open-ended, in-depth interviews. These approaches require different types of preparation, conceptualization and instrumentation and each contains its own strengths and weaknesses. The first approach is the informal conversational interview; the second is a general interview guide approach and third is the standardized open-ended interview. While the informal conversational interview relies entirely on the instantaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction, its weakness lies in the laborious amount of time required to generate systematic information.

The second approach, that of the general interview guide, is more controlled than the informal conversational interview, as the interview questions are prepared by the researcher well in advance. The purpose in employing this approach is to ensure the researcher obtains the same information from a number of people. It serves as a general checklist of topics to be covered during the interview.

The standardized open-ended interview is similar to a general interview guide as it is much more structured and "consists of a set of questions carefully worded and

arranged for the purpose of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words" (Patton, 1987, p. 112). This not only reduces the bias that may occur from having a variety of interviews from different participants, but this approach makes data analysis easier because it is possible to locate each participant's responses to the same question in an expedient fashion and to organise questions and answers that are similar. "Probes" or probing questions are added to the questions at appropriate places prior to conducting the actual conferences. One of the weaknesses in conducting an open-ended interview, however, is that it restricts the pursuit of topics or issues which were not anticipated when the interview questions were initially developed.

For the purposes of this study, the standardized open-ended interview approach was employed. This approach facilitated the data collection process due to the variety of positions held by the various volunteers and staff working for the organisation. The interview questions were field-tested by conducting interviews with two VSO administrators in Phnom Penh. And as iterated in the previous section, a distinct advantage of traveling to Cambodia was that the interviews with VSO staff and volunteers were in person, adding depth to the data collected from the interviews.

3.6 Qualitative Data Collection Process

3.6. 1 Participants, Number and Rationale

For the purposes of this study, five participants were chosen from one research site, Battambang province. The participants in the study were volunteers from outside of

Cambodia who were working in VSO's inclusive education initiative. The volunteers in this organisation were trained teachers in their countries of origin. As this was an implementation study of an inclusive education initiative that is based on staff and volunteers' experiences, the participants were directly engaged in the program's operations. Therefore a purposeful sampling approach was used in the study. Every effort was made to select participants that would constitute a representative sample. Due to the nature of this study, VSO administrators responsible for program implementation were interviewed in addition to the five participants.

3.6. 2 Interviews and Follow-Up Questions

Due to the remoteness of the research sites, observations and interviews were conducted concurrently. Each of the interviews was approximately one hour in length and conducted at the end of the observation period. All interviews were tape-recorded to enable later transcription. The researcher took brief notes over the course of the interview using pen and paper method. These interviews were conducted on site where VSO Cambodia works in Battambang province, therefore the locations varied. The location of the interview depended on the participant, the nature of their position and where they work as well as the determined appropriateness of interview location based on circumstances at that time. The approach taken was that of a standardized open-ended interview. For the purposes of this study, because the limited amount of time is a critical factor this approach is deemed as the most appropriate. The interview questions and probes to be used for this study are attached. (See Appendix 1 – Interview Questions and Probes)

After the interview was conducted, participants received a written sheet containing a set of Follow-up Questions which participants completed on their own time and returned to the researcher upon its completion. The content of the follow-up questions are designed to be similar to those posed in the interview. The purpose of the follow-up questions was to allow participants additional time to reflect on the questions presented in the interview and to provide participants with another opportunity to contribute further information that was not articulated or expanded upon in the interview (see Appendix 2 – Follow-Up Questions**).** The data collected and subsequent analysis from the follow-up questions was recorded on a laptop. This data contributed to development of the program narrative and more specifically the analysis of the challenges experienced by participants in the implementation of an inclusive education initiative. The actual Follow-up Questions completed by participants were kept for analysis as per the ethics section in this chapter.

3.6. 3 Observations

Observations were conducted at one research site for the purpose of this study. Each participant was observed for approximately three days. This time period fluctuated depending on the availability of the participant. The participant observations took place at the schools and other workplaces located in the rural province of Battambang in Cambodia where VSO works. During the observations, field notes were taken by the researcher to be compiled later as part of the data collection process. Field notes were taken by pen and paper and later typed up on a computer. The field notes contained records of informal interviews and conversations with participants, depictions of the

school environment, the activities the participants engaged in, the interaction of the participant(s) with other people, and notations on meanings, beliefs and emotions specifically relating to implementation and girls' education at the primary level (LeCompte & Schensul999). Field notes contained visual representations of the physical environment such as classrooms, offices and schools.

VSO volunteer activities range from training local teachers in various inclusive education pedagogy, to conducting training sessions for education officials at the government level, to working with grassroots NGOs partnered with VSO, working directly in local schools with students and teachers and engaging in advocacy at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS). Therefore the researcher was present at some of the aforementioned activities in the field. As part of the ethnographic research criteria, rich descriptions of individuals, conversations, environments, activities and researcher thoughts were provided in the field notes.

3.6. 4 Document Collection

For the purposes of this specific study, the documents collected were largely administrative in nature. These documents focused on information about the inclusive education initiative's goals, resources, implementation, and overall progress. The purpose of these administrative documents was to contribute to a rich description of the initiative's functionings for the program narrative, as is the goal of a case study. Administrative documents include statistical information, annual reports, "in-house" evaluations, workers' manuals, and background research on demographics and target populations, program descriptions, and implementation strategies. Printed material is also

a useful source of detailed information about how a program is supposed to operate in theory. These data are normally collected and maintained as part of ongoing program and agency operations (Werner, 2004). "Documents prove valuable not only because of what can be learned directly from them but also as a stimulus for paths of inquiry that can be pursued only through direct observation and interviewing" (Patton, 2002, p. 294). In this study, documents were collected at VSO Cambodia's head office in Phnom Penh, as well as on site at the research locations in Battambang province.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

As in any study, extreme care and caution must be exercised when handling confidential and sensitive information. For the purposes of this study, the names of the participants were known to the researcher conducting the interviews and observations; however pseudonyms were used in the written notes and transcripts. This maintained the participants' confidentiality throughout the data collection and analysis process. All the interviews were tape-recorded.   All notes were kept confidential and in a locked office. Tape-recorded interviews were destroyed one year after the research process was complete. No confidential records were accessed at any time for the purposes of data collection. (See Appendix 3 – Letter of Consent)

Consent in writing was obtained by all participants prior to the commencement of the study. Prior to the actual interviews and observations, meetings with each participant were conducted to discuss the nature of the study and the participant's participation in the study. During this time the letter of consent was distributed and explained. This provided an opportunity for participants to pose questions and clarify any ambiguities. As the participants are adults, no consent from guardians was required. No confidential records

were consulted for the purposes of this study.

Due to the nature of this study, there was no need for deception of any kind. Participants were aware at all times of the data collection process. All participants had an option through the information provided on the consensus form to receive a written summary of the results of the study when it is completed. There were neither risks to the participants nor any third parties in this study. The benefits from this study can be found in allowing the participants an opportunity to reflect on and share their insights about the implementation process of an inclusive education initiative. Participants were not compensated monetarily or otherwise for their participation in this study.

3.8 Data Analysis

3.8. 1 Role of the Researcher

As with all qualitative studies, the researchers themselves are the research instrument. With this thought in mind, it is not only relevant but necessary to articulate and acknowledge the bias due to the socio-economic, cultural, racial, age, gender and geographical positioning of the researcher in this study. The researcher is a white female in her mid-thirties from a middle-class upbringing in a Western Canadian province. Raised in a predominantly Mennonite rural setting and having attended university in an urban center, the researcher has lived and taught abroad in Asia, the United Kingdom and the Middle East, working in both the private and public sectors. In addition, the researcher has also participated in volunteer work in Asia for a Canadian organisation. It is important to note that all of these demographic factors will undoubtedly affect how the data will be understood, analysed and interpreted by the researcher.

3.8. 2 Inductive Analysis

"In our view, the crucial role of implementation analysis is the identification of the variables which affect the achievement of objectives throughout this entire process" (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983, p. 21). With this thought in mind, there are two fundamental approaches in conducting analysis within qualitative and quantitative research: this is done through inductive and deductive perspectives. Patton (1987) states inductive analysis "means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being decided prior to data collection and analysis" (p. 150). It is important to note at this junction that analysis should not be confused with interpretation. "Interpretation involves attaching meaning and significance to the analysis, explaining significant patterns, and looking for relationships and linkages among descriptive dimensions" (Patton, 1987, p. 144). The purpose of inductive analysis is to simplify and organise the complexity of data into significant and practical themes or categories. When a researcher is conducting analysis in a case study, they look for quotations or observations that are similar or are examples of the same underlying concept, idea or issue. The first step in this process is labelling the data and classifying its contents. A clearly defined classification system is critical, states Patton.

3.8. 3 Coding

Once the data has been collected, the researcher must engage in a systematic process of analyzing the textual data. Variations exist in this process, but in general the data should be analyzed "for material that can yield codes that can address topics readers would expect to find, codes that are surprising, and codes that address a larger theoretical perspective in the research" (Creswell, 2003, p. 193). Citing Bogdan and Biklen's study

(1992) in his research Creswell (2003) suggests coding has many possible types such as setting and context codes, perspectives held by participants, participants' way of thinking about people and objects, process codes, activity codes, strategy codes, relationship and social structure codes, in addition to preassigned coding schemes.

The coding process is used to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis (Creswell, 2003). This type of analysis is useful particularly when designing detailed descriptions for case studies, narrative research projects and ethnographies. Coding is the procedure of organizing the data into "chunks" before actually bringing meaning to these "chunks". The method necessitates classifying text data or images into categories and then labelling these categories with a term, often a term from the actual language of the participant in the study.

In this study, the analysis was done on a laptop computer. Due to the remoteness of the research site(s), a printer was not accessible; therefore codes were annotated alongside the transcribed data.

3.8. 4 Typologies

There are two types of inductive analysis methods used in qualitative data, indigenous typologies and analyst-constructed typologies (Patton, 1987). Typologies are classification systems made up of categories "that divide some aspect of the world into parts" (p. 150). According to Patton indigenous typologies begin with an analysis of the verbal categories used by the participants to simplify the complexity of their reality into parts. Once the researcher has developed labels based on the information revealed by participants, the next step is to identify the characteristics or attributes that make each label unique. Every program contains a specialised vocabulary which staff use to

differentiate different kinds of activities, different types of program beneficiaries, and different contributions to the program, highlights Patton. These indigenous typologies are signs to the researcher that to fully understand the setting it is imperative that these terms are and their implications for the program are understood.

Analyst-constructed typologies are the second step in the induction process. The purpose here is for the researcher to search for themes, categories or patterns that seem to exist but that are not a part of the participants' vocabulary (Patton, 1987). A typology can then be developed to explicate disparities and contrasts in program activities or participants. Building these alternative paradigms or ideal-types is a rudimentary way to present qualitative comparisons. To construct an analyst-constructed typology the researcher must initially flesh out patterns or themes in the data. These patterns appear to exist to the researcher but may remain unperceived by the participants being studied, advises Patton. Then a series of patterns is condensed into contrasting themes to construct alternative ideal-types. Explicit throughout this process is that the researcher has constructed these paradigms and caution must be exercised to only include what has been identified in the data. In this instance the researcher has constructed and interpreted something that exceeds only descriptive analysis. What is useful about analyst-constructed typologies is that they can be used at a later time to make interpretations about the nature of the program, and they can be connected to other observations to make conclusions, states Patton.

After constructing the typologies for the data there is the concluding phase of analysis. "Once patterns, themes and/or categories have been established through inductive analysis, the final, confirmatory stage of qualitative analysis may be deductive

in testing and affirming to authenticity and appropriateness of the inductive content analysis" (Patton, 2002, p. 454). This also includes carefully examining deviate cases or data that don't fit the categories developed. Deductive analysis is "where the data are analysed according to an existing framework" (p. 453). This approach, using both inductive processes initially and then concluding with a deductive process, will lend credibility and validity to the findings of the study.

For the purposes of this study, inductive analysis was employed as outlined by Patton (1987), including the development of codes and typologies. During the final phase of analysis a deductive approach was employed to ensure consistency and reliability of the study's findings. While initial typologies were developed through pen and paper method, the final typologies were constructed using a laptop computer. Any additional analytical comments or observations were typed directly onto the typology documents.

3.8. 5 Triangulation

Triangulation is a validation approach whereby more than one data source and more than one method of collecting information are employed by the researcher (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). Source and method triangulation builds on the strengths of each while correcting their shortcomings, state the authors. Findings in a study tend to be viewed as more trustworthy when confirmed by multiple sources or instruments. Patton (2002) highlights four kinds of triangulation which can contribute to validation and verification of qualitative analysis: methods triangulation, triangulation of sources, analyst triangulation and theory/perspective triangulation. Patton states that because it is important to understand inconsistences in findings across various kinds of data, the point

of triangulation is to test for such consistency. He stresses finding these inconsistencies does not weaken the study's integrity, rather it offers an occasion for deeper insights into the relationship between the phenomenon under study and the inquiry approach.

The first approach, methods triangulation, requires comparing and integrating data collected through a type of qualitative method with data collected via a quantitative method (Patton, 2002). This means a single program or problem will be studied through the use of multiple methods such as interviews, observations, questionnaires and documents (Patton, 1987). While this process is seldom straightforward as certain kinds of questions lend themselves to a particular research approach, it is common that both qualitative and quantitative methods are "used in a complementary fashion to answer different questions that do not easily come together to provide a single-well-integrated picture of the situation" (Patton, 2002, p. 577).

Triangulation of qualitative data sources, the second approach, necessitates comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information resulting from different time periods and by different methods within qualitative approaches. Patton (2002) provides examples of triangulation of qualitative data sources such as comparing interviews with observations, comparing what people say in private versus what people say in public, checking for consistency of what people say about the same thing over time, checking interview data against program documents or other written data that can corroborate what interview respondents report, or lastly comparing the perspectives of participants from different points of view. An example of this might be in an evaluation or implementation study, triangulating beneficiary views, staff views and international donor views.

The third type of triangulation is known as analytic or investigative triangulation. The approach calls for the use of multiple analysts to review the findings in a study (Patton, 2002). This method is valuable in the way it reduces the potential bias that comes from a single researcher completing all the data collection. Two or more persons independently analyse the same qualitative data and then compare their findings. Sometimes this analysis is conducted by the study participants themselves, another option is an audience review as credibility (in an evaluation study this may be the program's administrators) or another alternative involves using experts to assess the quality of analysis (Patton, 2002).

Theory triangulation, the fourth type, is a process which involves employing different theoretical perspectives to look at the same data. "The point of theory triangulation is to understand how different assumptions and premises affect findings and interpretations" (Patton, 2002, p. 562). For example, Patton suggests one might examine observations of a group from a Weberian or Marxian perspective, or even a functionalist or conflict point of view. The process demands examining the data from the perspectives of various stakeholder positions, and it is common to find disagreement among stakeholders about program goals, purposes and means of attaining those goals. Patton theorises these variations represent different "theories of action" that can project the same findings in different perspective-based lights.

One type of triangulation was employed for the purposes of this study. Methods triangulation involves collecting data from more than one method. In this study interviews, document collection, participant observation and Follow-up Questions were used.

3.9 Interpretation

3.9. 1 Definition of Interpretation

Conceptual frameworks are useful mechanisms in qualitative research as they provide a guide to inquiry. Often these frameworks offer a means of explaining and interpreting what has been collected and analysed in the data (Patton, 2002). At the stage of interpretation it is important to differentiate between what constitutes data analysis and what is meant by interpretation of the findings: "Analysis is the process of bringing order to the data, organising what is there into patterns, categories and basic descriptive units" (Patton, 1987, p. 144). Conversely,

> Interpretation, by definition, involves going beyond descriptive data. Interpretation means attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order on an unruly but surely patterned world. (Patton, 2002, p. 480)

3.9. 2 Data Interpretation Process

A part of the interpretation process involves dealing with rival explanations, accounting for disconfirming cases, and accounting for data irregularities as part of testing the viability of an interpretation (Patton, 2002). The expectation is to confirm what researchers know is supported by the data, disabuse the researcher of misconceptions, and illuminate important things the researcher did not know but should know, states Patton. Again, the process of creating a holistic picture is essential – what the phenomenon in question is like and to understand its fundamental nature in a specific context are key. This will contribute to a full and complete case study/program narrative.

Patton's definition of the data interpretation process will be used for the purposes of this study.

3.10 Implementation Models

3.10. 1 Introduction and Approach to Implementation

Implementation research has many theories which guide analysis and interpretation. The purpose in employing implementation theories it to aid in the elucidation of the findings. One model of implementation has been chosen based on the nature of this study, Contextual Interaction Theory (2004). This model, developed by Hans Bressers (2004) was used to interpret the data collected.

3.10. 2 Contextual Interaction Theory (CIT), (2004)

Mazmanian & Sabatier (1983) posit that "the energizing force of the implementation process is the rational pursuit by individuals of their desires for power, security and well-being" (p. 20). This aptly summarizes Contextual Interaction Theory (2004), a social process approach that specifically considers several variables, including the policy tools (also known as instruments) and the strategic interactions between the implementers and the recipient (or target groups) over extended periods of time (O'Toole, 2004). The premise of this "bottom-up" theory is that the process and end result of the policy result depends not only on the inputs (for example the characteristics of the policy instruments) but more importantly on the characteristics of the actors involved, such as their motivation, information and power. The theory acknowledges the possibility of other factors that may influence the process but argues that their influence can be best

understood by assessing their impact on the motivation, information and power of the actors involved (Bressers, 2004).

Werner (2004) states that since its introduction as a fundamental orientation in understanding the workings of public institutions, "street-level bureaucracy" has made some important contributions to implementation research: "By recognizing that frontline workers' incentives and motivations shape how policy is implemented, street-level bureaucracy helped focus attention on an otherwise neglected aspect of public administration" (p. 138). Werner goes on to suggest that this research orientation is particularly valuable during times of significant changes in programs, policies and organisational practices or even institutional culture. According to the theory behind "street-level bureaucracy", true policy (or in this case programs) are created out of the tension between the demands of new administrative rules and the procedures and frontline workers' need to develop a new comfort level in doing their jobs. The appeal of this approach, states Werner, is that it focuses researchers' attention on what happens at the point of service delivery.

According to Contextual Interaction Theory (2004), within the realm of actors is the role of the public in policy/program implementation. Ultimately the community as a whole as well as individuals are viewed as the target groups or recipients of the programs who are able to request or reject specific programs. A major assumption of Contextual Interaction Theory (CIT) is that the factors influencing the implementation process are interactive; this in turn depends on the particular contextual circumstances, whether positive or negative. CIT (2004) also assumes that policy implementation is not only about achieving implementation, but also about attempts to prevent implementation or to

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change the character of what is being implemented. The theory outlines a system of constructs connected to the actors involved as part of the implementation process. (see Figure 1 – Contextual Interaction Theory Framework, 2004)

CIT (2004) considers three constructs in implementation: an actor's motivation, information, and power. These are known as the "core circumstances".

1. Motivation – Bressers (2004) argues that implementation is affected by the level of importance actors place on a particular policy or program, and to the degree which the policy or program contributes to their goals and objectives. Actors exhibiting low motivation, for example, may choose to simply ignore the policy, issue a "symbolic policy" supporting only a minimal of resources or even endeavour to undermine the policy or program. CIT (2004) suggests that attempting to understand the perspectives of implementers- their objectives, values, belief systems, value priorities, and perceptions of the importance and magnitude of specific problems and policy solutions – often reveals the root causes of implementation barriers (Sabatier, 1991).

2. Information (also known as "Cognitions") – Information is defined as the "technical knowledge of the matter at hand and levels and patterns of communication between actors" (Spratt, 2009, p. 3). Effective program or policy implementation is dependent on those actors involved having adequate information. Some key questions within this construct are: Do the actors know the culture and processes of other organisations in their network or partnership? How is information between actors coordinated? Do beneficiaries have sufficient and appropriate information to benefit from the program?

In addition to having adequate information at their disposal, another construct of information is that of cognitions. This construct is based on the assumption that interpretations of reality are the product of social construction. Therefore, at the level of individual actors, it is not the facts that are important but rather how what is observed is interpreted by the actor (Bressers & Kuks, 2003).

3. Capacity & Power – (also referred to as "Resources") Bressers (2004) argues that power is an important facet to implementation in the way that it is imperative to understand who is empowered to implement a policy or program and to what extent they are able to implement it. The theory acknowledges two sources of power – formal and informal. Formal sources of power may be legal or regulatory systems and informal may be the concept of dependency or reliance on another party for the achievement of other objectives. As CIT recognises the importance of social interactions, informal sources of power may be important, equalizing the more formal powers of the implementing authorities. The Capacity and Power construct rests on the assumption that those actors with the largest number of choices have the most power.

3. 10. 3   Figure 1. The Contextual Interaction Theory Framework (Adopted from Bressers, 2007)

To view the diagram which relates to Bressers' (2007) Contextual Interaction Theory, please visit the following URL:

http://www.utwente.nl/mb/cstm/reports/Downloads/contextual_interaction_theory.pdf

Bressers, H. (2007) *Contextual Interaction Theory and the issue of boundary definition: Governance and the motivation, cognitions and resources of actors*. Accessed June 13, 2011 from http://www.utwente.nl/mb/cstm/reports/downloads/ contextual_interaction_theory.pdf.

External circumstances are the factors that have an indirect influence via their influences on the core circumstances. The policy instrument (inclusion initiative in this case) can be included among these external circumstances, along with other contextual factors. External circumstances (including policy characteristics of policy instruments) are taken into consideration when estimating the value of the core circumstances.

Interaction (three types – cooperation, opposition, joint learning)

Interaction – Interaction predicts the level of collaboration among actors, which in turn may influence policy or program implementation. Therefore, in the study of potential barriers to implementation, CIT (2004) suggests that the interactions between actors must be considered. More to the point, there are three areas that are looked at in-depth:

> 1. Cooperation:

>> *Active Cooperation* – this occurs when both parties share a common goal, which includes the impeding of program implementation.

>> *Passive cooperation* - is demonstrated by actors who adopt an inactive approach to implementation. This neither stimulates nor hinders the implementation process.

>> *Forced Cooperation* - Dominant actors may force cooperation, which is a type of passive cooperation.

>> *Obstructive cooperation* – both actors stand to gain from an inappropriate application.

2. Opposition:

- *Negotiation* – parties do their utmost to realize as many of their own objectives as possible by reaching a compromise.
- *Conflict* – target group usually breaks the lines of communication and confronts the other party with a negative use of power.
- *Obstruction* – This occurs when one actor tries to prevent implementation of the policy or program by another actor.

3. Joint learning:

➢ *Joint learning* – is when multiple stakeholders navigate a dearth of information impeding implementation (Bressers, 2004).

4. Symbolic application – policy procedures are followed but change is very weak.

5. No interaction- situations where there will be no interaction at all between the implementing agency and the target group

3.10. 4 Rationale

Due to the nature of this study, Contextual Interaction Theory (2004) was the most appropriate approach for the data interpretation process. As evidenced by the literature, how organisations and more importantly, how individuals understand and define concepts such as gender mainstreaming have clear implications for the

implementation of girls' education initiatives. CIT's bottom-up approach helped to answer the central thesis question of "on the ground" implementation challenges in inclusive education.

Another merit of CIT (2004) is that it assesses the larger picture of the organisation, seeing the larger pattern of interactions within a network. This may be inherently challenging for those actors working within the organisation to recognise (Senge, 1990). Examining the network within the organisation is critical to the identification of barriers. Within networks, the concept of interdependency is also crucial between actors, thus potentially affecting implementation. In Contextual Interaction Theory, isolation of these constructs, tools may help to measure the extent to which each of the core constructs contributes to implementation barriers. This in turn will inform the design of interventions that will reduce barriers more effectively.

During the initial research process of selecting implementation models, the researcher personally contacted Dr. Hans Bressers, who is a professor of Policy Studies and Environmental Policy at the Twente Centre for Studies in Technology and Sustainable Development in the Netherlands. As the principal theorist who developed Contextual Interaction Theory (2004), the researcher sought his personal perspective. In the email correspondence with Dr. Bressers, the researcher explained the nature of the study and asked for his professional opinion in terms of the suitability of his conceptual model for this particular study. He confirmed that indeed CIT would be appropriate, and in his response Dr. Bressers cited two other programs similar nature in which this model was being employed; in several anti-HIV programs in Vietnam, as well in a Dutch doctoral program where CIT was used to evaluate community development programs in

Suriname, South America. The researcher is grateful to Dr. Bressers for his thoughtful observations as well as the supplementary research, documents, and studies on CIT he included in his correspondence.

Chapter 4 – Discussion of Research Findings

4.A   Purpose of the Study

The primary focus of this study was to examine the political, economic and socio-culture challenges experienced by VSO volunteers to implement inclusive education, more specifically gender mainstreaming initiatives. One of the six dimensions of the Cambodia's Child Friendly School Policy (CFSP) is gender responsiveness (GR), which facilitates gender mainstreaming into all dimensions of the Policy. According to Cambodia's Ministry of Youth, Education and Sport (UNICEF, 2005) in order for schools to become gender sensitive, they must identify gender barriers in schools and strive to increase awareness about gender inequality. The CFSP outlines activities that facilitate gender sensitive schools which include raising gender awareness among local stakeholders, establishing student counsellors to support at-risk children, especially girls, and ensuring gender representation in school management committees (UNICEF, 2005).

4.B   Program Narrative – Section 1

4.B. 1 Child Friendly Schools Policy

In 2004 the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) in Cambodia established the Child Friendly Schools Policy (CFSP) to ensure a basic education for all students as a commitment to the Millennium Development Goals. The CFS policy is

based on strategies, content and principles for the effective provision of basic education which are represented by the six dimensions of the Child Friendly School Framework, reflecting equity in education and inviting participation from institutions and agencies, particularly INGOs, so that the CFSP can meet its targets and objectives. According to the Policy, the concept of the Child Friendly School is an institution that works with all stakeholders, including parents and guardians of students to develop a school that is 'characterised by equity, balance, freedom, solidarity, non-violence and a concern for physical, mental and emotional health' (Kingdom of Cambodia, 2007).

The first Dimension of the CFSP is that all schools are inclusive, regardless of circumstance, and to support disadvantaged children such as the poor, girls, the disabled, children affected by HIV/AIDS and victims of domestic violence. Dimension two is effective teaching and learning (ETL), the objective being to develop teacher capacities so that they have the practical and theoretical knowledge with a focus on teaching and learning activities and materials which facilitate child-centered approaches to learning. Health, safety and protection of children, Dimension three, ensures that all children are able to participate in a safe and healthy environment. Dimension four is focused on gender responsiveness (GR), which promotes awareness in families, schools and communities of their goals to provide equitable education for both boys and girls to ensure equal participation in school, family and society. The objective of Dimension five, the participation of children, families and communities in the running of their local school, is to foster the relationship between schools and communities to promote school improvement and effective management. Lastly, Dimension six is the national education system supports and encourages schools to become more child friendly, guaranteeing the

support of the national education system working in partnership with all schools in Cambodia (Kingdom of Cambodia, 2007).

Within each of the six dimensions are several 'core activities' such as school mapping and data collection on children to guarantee that all students attend school, teaching the child-centered approach, supporting 'slow learners' (those with mental/physical challenges), the improvement of libraries, mobilization of community interest in school activities, school assessment, developing school plans, school director training on leadership, development of student councils, and organizing partnerships between schools. Included in the core activities is the enrolment campaign to mobilize non-attending children to enrol in school, improving the classroom environment, mainstream gender activities for all dimensions, and work with the gender focal points, or persons designated to facilitate gender responsiveness initiatives.

In their development work for the organization, VSO volunteers actively engage in the Child Friendly Schools Policy, and coordinate with a variety of stakeholders to increase the capacity of the local educators, school administrators and education officials to ameliorate the schools in Cambodia. Five volunteers consented to participate in this study, each performing vastly different roles in the education community to address various dimensions of the CFSP.

4.C   Program Narrative – Section 2

4.C. 1 Volunteer Requirements

According to VSO, there are several requirements for becoming a volunteer. For those working in the education sector, there is a requirement of two years teaching

experience to become a volunteer. There are also 'soft skills' that are beneficial to working in overseas placements such as flexibility, a willingness to learn, problem-solving skills and an ability to work with limited resources (VSO, 2012a). In the prerequisites for volunteers there are no specific statements requiring an awareness of gender inequality. The organization does provide three types of training prior to and at the beginning of a placement: personal preparation training, work-focused training and then in-country training upon arrival (VSO, 2012b). During this process it is entirely possible there may be some gender awareness training for volunteers; however this is never explicitly stated in the organization's grey literature.

4.C. 2 Participant Roles in the Organization

Five volunteers consented to participate in the study, all working in different capacities within the Battambang region. The selection process of participants in the study was determined by the list of volunteers given to the researcher by the administrators of VSO Cambodia. Prior to the researcher's arrival in Cambodia all potential participants were contacted via e-mail, and five volunteers in Battambang consented to participate in the study. Therefore, in terms of the limited time in-country and travel logistics involved it was determined that the Battambang area would be the sole location for data collection.

The following is a brief narrative of each of the participants, their position as a volunteer with VSO, the responsibilities of their role and the current projects they are engaged in, as well as the length of time they have been in Cambodia. These narratives

serve as a contribution to the larger program narrative as well as facilitating a deeper understanding of the research and findings of the study.

Linda* (pseudonym) works in Effective Teaching and Learning (ETL) in the area of literacy and maths at the primary level with a focus on Year 1 and 2 as well as working in the area of library development. In her interview she stated that when she began her term as a volunteer she consulted with the directors of the local schools that she would be working with to assess their needs. Linda observed that the students in Year 1 were not learning to read in Khmer, and this appeared to be a concern for her. Therefore, based on Linda's own areas of interests and the needs of the directors, it was decided that Linda would work in these areas. Many of the schools in Cambodia do not have libraries and those that do are sparsely funded, lacking resources and are poorly constructed. Linda has been working as a volunteer for the past 17 months. The study's first observation took place when Linda was facilitating the training for Year 1 and 2 teachers in a new Khmer language reader that was to be implemented in the fall.

Natalie's* (pseudonym) role is Community Participation, under which she stated that there are four main responsibilities: to decrease dropout rates, to contribute to the Effective Teaching and Learning (ETL), develop community participation and to increase enrolment rates. Natalie began her term as a volunteer in February of 2012 and had been working in Cambodia for the past eight months. She stated that a part of her job was linking with other international and local NGOs to work on child enrolment in the rural areas of the country. There are several children in the area who have parents who are

* (Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities)

itinerant farmers (for example cashew harvesting is quite common), and as a result they are required to leave school to help supplement the family income. Consequently many of these students return several months later, only to repeat the grade. As school enrolment is such a critical issue in this part of the country, this has become a responsibility of Natalie's in her work with VSO.

One example of a project Natalie is developing for Community Participation is a parental learning group run by a local teacher. Still in the initial planning stages, the program consists of one or two hour weekly sessions where the teacher educates parents on basic activities – Khmer literacy and maths. The purpose of the six-week program is to help parents to educate their children while at home, reinforcing the basic math and literacy skills learned at school. This program also serves to better inform parents of what is being done at schools. It is her hope this will improve the school-community relationship. In her work on decreasing dropout rates and increasing enrolment, Natalie is coordinating with another INGO who is working with children in her catchment areas. Currently this other organization is running a library program for non-attending students and Natalie is hoping to transition these students back into schools.

George* (pseudonym) stated that his specific role as a volunteer in Community Participation is to identify volunteers in the community who can support the school. While his official role with VSO is the same as Natalie's, George focuses on being a community liaison, working with the local community members to facilitate beneficial relationships with the schools. An example of one such endeavour was the 'calf project' where he was trying to arrange the purchase of a calf for a local school. His plan was to find a member of the community (a local farmer) who would raise the calf and at the time

of selling the fully-grown cow, the proceeds would be split between the local school and the farmer. George was also currently involved with the acquisition of a toilet for one school (many schools in Cambodia do not have toilets) as well as facilitating a health and hygiene information session for students on the maintenance of the toilets as well as hand washing practices. Another part of his job is to develop the schools' student councils. At the time of the researchers' interview with George he had recently facilitated a library workshop for teachers and community volunteers.

Rita* (pseudonym) is a technical advisor to the management of the RTTC, or Regional Teacher Training College, where secondary school teachers are trained. Part of her role is to develop inclusive management strategies with the Directrice (a female director) and other senior management at the college. She also works with monitoring and evaluation of the Teacher Trainers (TTs) at the college. Rita is involved in the college's History Society, the Debating Society and English Club as well. Rita was currently working on facilitating a professional development seminar for management and a group of senior Teacher Trainers to visit two other colleges so they could observe their management strategies. At the time of the researcher's interview, Rita had worked for VSO for 17 months.

Holly* (pseudonym) works at the Provincial Teacher Training College (PTTC) where primary school teachers are trained in the Battambang region of Cambodia. Her role is called a Teacher Trainer Advisor (TTA), and she works with the management of the College to facilitate the work of the Teacher Trainers (TTs). For the past five years VSO has worked at the PTTC in Battambang, and Holly stated that she felt her role was more about helping the administration strengthen the running of the PTTC by facilitating

a relationship between Teacher Trainers and administration. Holly works with senior management to implement changes in best practices to help Teacher Trainers do their job effectively. Holly said the Teacher Trainers had received a lot of workshops and training from other INGOs and the previous Teacher Trainer Adviser. As a result, Holly stated that her job was to train the management of the PTTC to improve its overall effectiveness.

4.D   Findings from the Data

The findings from the data are based on the formal interviews and observations conducted by the researcher, the documents collected and the Follow-up Questions completed by volunteers. Prior to the study's data collection in Battambang, the interview questions were field-tested in Phnom Penh during separate interviews with two of VSO Cambodia's head administrators.

The results from the study are organized under three themes: political challenges to implementation, followed by economic and socio-cultural challenges. Each theme is further organized into several subthemes, based on the data collected. At the end of each thematic section there is a discussion of the interpretation of the findings according to Bressers' (2004) Contextual Interaction Theory (CIT) and the implications of the results with regards to the study's guiding questions.

Within the political challenges discussed the first overarching theme, the Volunteer and Gender Responsiveness (GR), includes the following sub-themes: Volunteer Engagement with Gender Responsiveness, Capacity, Volunteer Area of Expertise and Priorities in Gender Responsiveness. The second political theme – the

Volunteer and Working Relationships – addresses the following sub-themes: Challenges in Working with Education Partners, Donor Agenda vs. Volunteer Agenda, Volunteer Agenda vs. Organizational Agenda, Organizational Expectations of Volunteers, Support and Information from the Organization, and Organizational Monitoring and Accountability.

Themes in the economic challenges section include Organizational Designation of Funds, the 'Bid' for Funding and Budget Development, Human Resources, Economic Sustainability of Programming and Funding for Gender Responsiveness Initiatives. Lastly, socio-cultural themes include School Directors 'Losing Face', Local Views on Education (as perceived by volunteers), the Relationship between Community and Schools, Gender Equality and the Local Culture, and Awareness Regarding Gender Issues.

4.D. 1

Figure 2 - Thematic Overview: Findings from the Data

Political Challenges to Implementation (2 Sections)

- The volunteer and gender responsiveness (Section 1 of 2)
    - Volunteer engagement with gender responsiveness
    - Capacity
    - Volunteer area of expertise and priorities in gender responsiveness

- The volunteer and working relationships (Section 2 of 2)
    - Challenges in working with education partners
    - Donor agenda vs. volunteer agenda
    - Organizational expectations of volunteers
    - Support and information from the organization
    - Organizational monitoring and accountability

Economic Challenges to Implementation

- Organizational designation of funds
- The 'bid' for funding and budget development
- Human resources
- Economic sustainability of programming
- Funding for gender responsiveness initiatives

Socio-cultural Challenges to Implementation

- 'Losing Face'
- Local views on education
- Relationship between community and schools
- Gender equality and the local culture
- Awareness regarding gender issues

4.0   Political challenges to Implementation (2 Sections)

4.1   Introduction

This section reports on the findings of the study with respect to the political challenges experienced by international volunteers in implementing gender responsiveness initiatives as well as working with the other dimensions of the Child Friendly Schools Policy. As stated in chapter 3, the guiding questions of the study sought to understand the role local politics played at the level of program implementation, as well as the implications of engaging in educational development work at the grassroots level. Within the section of political challenges there are two themes, which are outlined as follows: the Volunteer and Gender Responsiveness and the Volunteer and Working Relationships. Within these two themes are several subthemes which emerged from the data and correspond to that specific arena.

4.2 The Volunteer and Gender Responsiveness

4.2. 1   Introduction

During the interview portion of the data collection process, the researcher asked participants to discuss to what extent their work included implementing gender responsiveness initiatives or navigating gender-related issues. The following four themes emerged from the data, and are organized as follows: Volunteer Engagement with Gender Responsiveness (GR), Capacity, and Volunteer Area of Expertise and Priorities in Gender Responsiveness.

4.2. 2 Volunteer Engagement with Gender Responsiveness

When asked about her work in gender responsiveness, Holly said her work in the teachers' college involved the dimension of Effective Teaching and Learning (ETL) more than gender responsiveness. She did add that when there is a possibility to give attention to it opportunities were seized. Holly had recently facilitated a workshop for the student council at the college in gender responsiveness. It is through these types of activities that Holly says she tries to "raise awareness." Another example she offered was World Teachers' Day where she integrated a discussion on gender issues. She also provided the example of obtaining a financial grant to address gender in education. Although she couldn't remember the name of the event, she likened it to the World Teachers' Day, with a focus on gender. She generally describes implementing GR as more 'incidental'; that she tries to "mainstream it but because the focus is more on Effective Teaching and Learning we do that more."

While Natalie acknowledged that all the volunteers work to try and address gender responsiveness issues, she felt there should be a larger push or more concerted effort towards GR to achieve real progress. Natalie suggested having a volunteer do a job with fewer responsibilities and 'have GR linked onto it.' She didn't think it would be advisable to have an entire volunteer position dedicated solely to GR issues. Natalie did say that she viewed addressing GR as a part of her job, but it wasn't her central focus, viewing it more 'of an attachment to something else.' Part of the dilemma is that gender is a large and challenging issue, and Natalie acknowledged the need to go beyond 'low level' things like equal representation of boys and girls. "My point is that you can do a day here, a day there, but it doesn't mean anything. That's changed no one's view on

gender awareness", referring to joint events put on by VSO and schools such as World Teachers' Day, which involved "giving flowers, notebooks and stuff to every teacher."

Rita made a point of stating that she doesn't work in the area of direct contact with schools, but that there are things she does to address 'the gender issue', as she calls it. One example is in her formal observations of Teacher Trainers during lessons – she pays careful attention to the women's participation in class and whether their opinions are being taken seriously, which she notes in the feedback she gives the Teacher Trainers. Rita describes the male Teacher Trainers as being "pro-male student" and as a result "we react positively and negatively if we see gender behaviour." Rita also commented on the culture of the college and the deference given to male students, particularly if something was needed. One way of addressing this issue is through the use of humour, she states. Rita mentions the timidity of the female Teacher Trainers, and their reluctance to be active in the college classrooms while the older male Teacher Trainers were less likely to give class contribution time to girls. "We do talk about gender issues (at the college). And the girls are too shy, they don't want to. They naturally concede the positions to men, and then you have to tell them 'No, that's not acceptable. You have to do it.'"

Other ways GR is implemented was through Women's Day at the College, Rita adds. The school brought in speakers to lead round table discussions with girls, emphasizing their right to have ambitions and dreams. One particular issue was the fact that girls married very young in Cambodia, and that would be something Rita said she might encourage them to defer, cautioning however that one should not be too invasive of the local culture. In terms of GR initiatives at the RTTC, Rita said they were trying to encourage more girls to participate in sports, for example getting a volleyball team for the

girls at the college. She added that in the Debating Society she ensured equal representation by both genders in formal debates, and in discussions about gender in the History Society.

Natalie makes the point that the high authority positions in Cambodia are all held by men, such as village chiefs. Natalie said it is the village chiefs who are the people they would need to begin speaking with regarding gender issues, to understand what's happening in their community. She offered an example: in her work with student council, when Natalie requested equal gender representation for both female and male students there was a surprised reaction by the head administrators of the school. Natalie commented:

> There seems to be a real thing about boys are 'the ones', they should carry on the education and everything. But when we've seen award ceremonies of the highest achieving students, it's been normally girls. The majority of them being girls. So there's a real clash between their impressions of girls and how well they are succeeding and their impression of the boys and how they are succeeding. (Natalie.)

George stated that one of the requirements for the workshops he conducts is that there is equal representation from both genders on the student council. George said this was a requirement that he stipulated to guarantee girls were equally represented in school-related activities. He alluded to the fact that gender responsiveness was "in the school directors' interest if he's ever inspected." George's perspective on gender awareness is "whatever we do we need to be sympathetic to boys and girls." He highlights the problem of the lack of toilets in schools, and how it is a gender issue for girls, particularly ones at

the age of puberty and are menstruating. "It means girls aren't coming to school" he states. George considers himself to be 'gender aware', and frames the issue for girls around access to education. He makes a point of stating it was this issue that facilitated his first involvement in the school – the procurement of a toilet for one village school. As securing funding was problematic he volunteered to procure the funds and materials himself on the condition the community would build the facilities.

Linda explained what types of gender responsiveness initiatives VSO had organized, stating past workshops had been less than successful:

> And of course at the moment VSO is doing this big focus on gender and running workshops on gender. However I'm not quite sure about that because I've heard quite bad reports on the gender workshops, it's very teacher-centered, not very participatory. And again, people are being talked at 'This is what you should do. We are all equal.', rather than it being a process that they work out for themselves, how they (the local people) are going to tackle this issue. (Linda.)

Another issue that was raised about gender awareness workshops was with regard to the outcome of these initiatives. 'It was a very nice thing that we did with the women (the World Teachers' Day), but where's the follow up?...I wonder what happened to those girls. Did some of them get married, what were the circumstances?" Rita envisioned a kind of central group to keep the momentum of gender awareness going. Rita also stated that it would be beneficial to have 'political contacts' to facilitate implementing GR initiatives, commenting on the importance of maintaining a non-threating relationship with the community so "they don't get suspicious that you are going to disturb the social

setup." Community liaisons should be involved too, she said, local people in the area to network and facilitate the process.

4.2. 3 Capacity

One of the themes to emerge from the data was the perceived lack of capacity to address gender issues by volunteers. In their Follow-up Questions one participant summarized the dilemma: "The incapability of volunteer to raise the issue, it's not something you have done before, so you need to have the courage to just start and do something." Another participant, Natalie commented on the fact she felt that she wasn't as informed on some of the "gender questions" as she should have been because she doesn't see it in her job. She explained that due to the nature of her position working in Community Participation, she wasn't in the schools on a daily basis.

> It's more piecing things together rather than concrete, which is difficult. But that's true with my whole job, is that I'm not in one place, learning about this. I'm darting all over the place and just trying to fill in the gaps. (Natalie.)

Rita's statements were similar with regard to not 'seeing' gender issues in the workplace, stating "So I mean the gender issue is a big issue, it's just I don't have to deal with it every day, but I definitely am aware of it. It's certainly a huge issue in the city of Battambang." Rita did indicate that she felt VSO did not have adequate resources to implement GR in her opinion, citing specifically human resources were lacking. She said she felt that she had some skills but didn't have enough to implement GR, stating it would be beneficial to have an advisor or expert in the field to facilitate the implementation process. Knowing who to include is one issue, she states. "Because you can't include all women every place. What do you want to get out if it in the end?" In

their Follow-Up Questions another participant commented: "Volunteers need to be more aware of gender issues. Some volunteers do not acknowledge the cultural stereotypes in Cambodia."

4.2. 4 Volunteer Area of Expertise and Priorities in Gender Responsiveness

Holly said she felt the focus on gender was new to VSO, and "I think it's difficult if you are talking about CFSP (Child Friendly Schools Policy) to do both or all of the six parts in one time". Holly was speaking about the challenges in trying to address all six dimensions consistently, however comfort and area of expertise do play a role in what type of work the volunteers engage in: "And I feel more comfortable with the Effective Teaching and Learning (dimension of CFSP) so I will be really honest that that is my focus because that is what I know." She goes on to state that if she has the opportunity to work on gender responsiveness she does try and address it. "The focus now on gender – that's maybe the wrong thing to say because it's in the CFSP. It's not that they (VSO administration) say 'don't do something about it' but I think the focus of the CFSP is perceived as the Effective Teaching and Learning. Because that is already such a big thing to implement and work on." While Holly does see gender responsiveness as being part of the Effective Teaching and Learning (ETL) dimension she commented:

> If you want to have gender equality and if you want to have children with disabilities in your classroom...there needs to be a basic level of teaching. That basic level isn't already there. So of course it's important to focus especially on the girls but then I agree with them, but yeah, we just need to have a good education. So if we're going to try and get a good education for everybody, gender is already included in that. (Holly.)

Natalie's comments on her role and responsibilities of her position were similar to Holly's, stating while there was still a lot more work that was needed to be done in the area of GR, it becomes difficult as she describes 'you get into your own area' of interest. She commented on the fact that GR could be "easily attached onto one of our (volunteers') focuses. I mean it is a focus to me, but not a huge focus." One challenge Natalie pointed out was that she wasn't in the schools daily, like some of the other volunteers in the organization. This makes it difficult to address the needs of the school, to see what is happening in the school's community. Rita said she thought GR was important to VSO as an organization, but stated that since she wasn't working at the primary level or working directly in the community, that it wasn't a major focus in her work. Rita elaborates, saying:

> That my role is to keep an eye out for it, do what I can but it's not a main objective of what I'm doing…I try you know when we talk about inclusiveness in the classroom, also inclusiveness here (at the college) and it's not a big problem. (Rita.)

Rita also commented that VSO administrators wanted to know the gender composition of the group whenever she did an activity, and they also want to know of the reason if there is any gender imbalance. "I wouldn't say they (VSO administration) are focused on numbers. They are focused on keeping me aware of inclusiveness." George's response was similar to Rita's in terms of gender equality in participation. "Only in the sense we are told (by VSO administration) to be aware that we want an equal number of boys and girls on the school council (similar to the Parent-Teacher Association) and student council." While George acknowledged gender equality was important, he stated that he

hadn't had to confront gender issues directly in his work as a volunteer. "I went around first three months, I didn't see issues of gender. I saw girls and boys equally in schools. I think there are a few more men than women who are teachers but not much difference."

4.2. 5   Interpretation - Political Challenges to Implementation

According to Bressers' (2004) Contextual Interaction Theory (CIT) the primary assumption is that the course and outcomes of the policy process (or education initiative, in this case) depend not only on inputs but more critically on the characteristics of the policy actors involved – the organization's volunteers – and their power, motivation and information. According to the participants interviewed in the study, most appeared to acknowledge the issue of gender and did make efforts to address it in their work as a volunteer, despite not always 'seeing' gender issues in their daily work lives. What was interesting was that the volunteers seemed to have their 'area of focus' and gender tended to be something that would be 'added on' to an activity or a made as a reference to equal gender participation. This was a common theme in the literature; in an attempt to develop gender mainstreaming initiatives this was often reduced to a symbolic or superficial implementation (Unterhalter & North, 2010).

Bressers (2004) theorises an actor's motivation can affect how his/her attention is focused, for example selective perception, thus influencing cognitions (information held to be true, observations of reality, frames of references and interpretations) and how they use their capacity and power. Furthermore, volunteers who perceive themselves as less competent in dealing with gender issues may be more reluctant to engage in this area. Similarly volunteers who view gender responsiveness as 'not their job' or 'not their focus' may selectively view fewer opportunities to implement this aspect of the

curriculum. There appeared to be a fair amount of flexibility and discretion in terms of the volunteers 'area of focus' for their assigned roles, while they had an official title and position their own interests seemed to heavily guide their daily activities. Depending on these interests, as well as the motives, cognitions and resources of the volunteers could greatly influence to what extent gender responsiveness initiatives are implemented.

Based on the findings, what then can be implied for the implementation of inclusive education, or more specifically girls' education? According to the Child Friendly Schools Policy (CFSP) a requirement is that schools become 'gender responsive' through identifying gender barriers in schools and increasing awareness about gender equality (Kingdom of Cambodia, 2007). The CFSP outlines activities such as raising awareness amongst local stakeholders, equal gender representation in school management committees and establishing student counsellors to support children at risk of dropping out, especially girls and the establishment of a gender focal point. Another 'core activity' is the mainstreaming of gender activities with all other five Dimensions of the CFSP.

In the results from the study there was no indication from any of the participants that they worked with gender focal points, student or girls' counsellors within the education system of the Battambang region, if in fact these positions had been created at all by the Cambodian government or VSO. There were efforts made by volunteers to ensure equal gender representation on school activities such as student council, which can constitute an element of raising awareness. It can also be argued that there is limited, if any mainstreaming of gender activities within the other CFSP dimensions, based on the findings. In terms of other initiatives for educating local stakeholders on gender equality

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there were one-day celebrations such as Women's Day and Teachers' Day, but no other long-term endeavours were in place, according to the data collected. Therefore, from an implementation perspective it can be argued there is poor fidelity to the policy, as outlined in the gender responsiveness dimension and Child Friendly Schools Policy.

While the purpose of the study was to examine VSO's initiatives surrounding girls' education, the data provides more of an insight to the general state of the education system in Cambodia. What conclusions then can be drawn from these insights? Based on the interviews, observations and Follow-up Questions, it appeared that the volunteers worked mostly in isolation under enormous expectations from the organization, in a region with extremely poor working conditions in the education sector. Volunteer efforts seemed to be directed at raising the overall standards of education, rather than focusing specifically on gender issues. As one volunteer stated, by raising the general quality of education girls too will benefit in this way, however limited this benefit may be. In a country where schools do not have toilets or running water, where most teachers don't have a high school education and corruption is a part of the political culture, volunteers face an overwhelming working environment.

With respect to the guiding questions of the study, the most significant political challenge is the Cambodian education system as a whole. The most basic needs of local staff and students are not being met, and as a result the volunteers focus their work in these areas. Volunteers also lack gender awareness training – how to identify barriers to girls' education, how to facilitate discussions with local stakeholders surrounding gender issues and how to develop more substantial gender responsiveness initiatives. With training it is far more likely volunteers will "see" gender issues in the workplace;

furthermore they may recognize it as an important issue within the organization's development goals and be more likely to address it in their work.

4.3 The Volunteer and Working Relationships

4.3. 1   Introduction

The volunteers who participated in the study engage in many complex environments – with local education partners such as the Provincial Office of Education, management of the Primary and Secondary Teachers' Colleges, various school administrators as well as with representatives from other INGOs. Added to these working relationships are VSO's head administrators located in Phnom Penh and the organization's international donors. According to participants, the result of these interactions can at times present challenges in their work as a volunteer. Based on the themes presented in the data, this section is organized as follows: Challenges in Working with Education Partners, Donor Agenda vs. Volunteer Agenda, Volunteer Agenda vs. Organizational Agenda, Organizational Expectations of Volunteers, Support and Information from the Organization, and Organizational Monitoring and Accountability.

4.3. 2   Challenges in Working with Education Partners

In terms of political challenges, one participant, Linda, spoke about the education partnerships the organization engages in as a source of frustration. As an international aid organization, VSO makes contracts with partners in the education field to accomplish various initiatives, for example such as those with the global Education for All (EFA) movement and achieving universal primary education. According to Linda, these partnerships have been the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the various Provincial and District offices (POE and DOE, respectively). Linda described the contracts as being

'very overambitious', citing too many objectives, lacking targets and 'not time-focused'. More specifically she commented on the top-down process of decision-making, the disconnect between the objectives of the organization and the expectations of the partners:

> It seems that most of the contracts are done in Phnom Penh with the Ministry (of Education), who might have a very good understanding of things and then were assigned to the provincial level and often the provincial level doesn't have any idea about what we (VSO volunteers) are there for or what we're meant to do. And they are not involved in setting up the program. (Linda.)

Partnerships also seem influenced by the capacity of the local people, particularly those in higher administrative positions in education. One participant commented on the fact that while however competent in their roles, very few if any had a background in education. The participant stated:

> So they (administrators) are not educationalists. So a lot of the stuff that VSO is talking about and UNICEF and all the educational theory on child-centered learning, they don't really understand it or maybe even believe in it. Because they learned a particular way and they think they are successful so they think that's the way we should learn it. (Participant 1.)

Despite the differences in the roles as volunteers, several other participants commented on their partnerships or working relationships with the local education partners as being a challenge. Part of Rita's responsibility is to work with the upper management of the teachers' training college at the RTTC. Rita observed that the relationship with the upper

management was a challenge: 'Keeping things on an even keel. Getting approval for what needs to be done and doing as much as I can within the framework of a peaceful relationship with the leadership (administration)."

During the researcher's own observations of one other volunteer, the challenge of working with education partners seemed to be present. This particular volunteer was working with three administrators of the Teachers' College, conducting a professional development workshop on how to conduct observations and give feedback to Teacher Trainers. The volunteer modeled different scenarios of what would be considered 'positive' and 'negative' feedback. During this process it was observed there was a certain level of resistance in accepting this new strategy, and the volunteer spent a considerable amount of time explaining and justifying the concept in several different ways to convince the administrators the method was more effective. The volunteer later commented it had been a challenge trying to convince the administrators to adopt the strategy.

Linda commented on her work at the Provincial Office of Education, stating she found it very difficult to work at the provincial level when language was a barrier but also that she felt that those at the provincial office were less conducive to change, compared with local teachers. Linda elaborates on this point, stating

> When you are working in the schools they are actually quite keen to have new ideas, new ways of teaching. They (teachers) can see the relevance of it. Whereas people at the district level, who have never been teachers, actually don't understand education but the teachers themselves are usually quite receptive. (Linda.)

Holly indicated that one of the biggest challenges in her work with Teacher Trainers, is more specifically, trying to change their beliefs about education. She advocated for a child-centered approach, whereas most Teacher Trainers still retain a very traditional teaching style, which can be problematic. Most teachers in Cambodia only have nine years of basic education (until grade 9) and limited post-secondary training before becoming teachers. This topic arose again during an observation with Linda, where she was facilitating a professional development workshop with teachers and administrators. The workshop participants were being trained on how to use a new reader (Khmer literacy) for grades 1 and 2, and Linda commented that the teaching methods of teachers in Cambodia were very traditional and did little to engage children in learning.

One participant, Linda, expressed some frustration with the teachers' capacity to be inventive with limited resources. While she did acknowledge the challenging conditions in which the local teachers worked, Linda commented on the fact that at times the resources which the school had were not being fully used. She indicated that there were always requests for more teaching materials and things to decorate classrooms. Linda highlighted the importance of using the resources outside of the school, and using the community as a learning tool for students.

> Sometimes it's not a question of resources, it's a question of being creative and using the resources that you have in the community. Using your community as a teaching point, rather than thinking you have to be in a school building. You know you can measure things outside, they can be going out and looking at the heights of things. They don't have to have sort of, structured things in their classrooms. In terms of 'We don't have maps.' Well make bloody maps! There

was this sort of thing like 'We don't have' (anything). Well, think about how you can have! (To the Khmer teachers) 'We don't have any books.' Well, make up some books! Make up stories! You could alter stories, you could all yarn. Teach them how to do stories just using a few cards or a few props. And then how you teach from that. I have questioned sometimes when they (the Khmer teachers) have complained about lack of resources. (Linda.)

The issue of capacity arose during one of the researcher's observations at a village school in the Battambang area. One participant in the study, Linda was working with the school's librarian to help her organize the library. Linda explained that the librarian had no inventory system in place, nor had she any idea on how to organize the books. Linda spent a considerable amount of time advising the librarian on a cataloguing and inventory system to track all of the library's resources. Linda observed that she found it challenging to work with the librarian, as she appeared to lack the knowledge and skills that the librarian's position required.

4.3. 3 Donor Agenda vs. Volunteer Agenda

The agenda of financial donors add even more complexity to the theme of differing agendas in the data. The issue arose when Linda spoke about working with the 'core schools'. Until recently, Linda stated that she had been working with a group called the Technical Group Leaders (TGL). The Technical Group Leaders are administrators who are trained in a variety of areas at the primary and secondary levels. It is the responsibility of the TGL to 'cascade' or to carry on the training they receive to local teachers. Linda stated that when she first arrived she didn't know what she was doing,

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and also trying to respond to what the School District Director wanted, which was not what VSO necessarily wanted. Linda indicated the Director wanted her to train all of the TGL in his 'clusters' or groups of schools, instead of simply working in the one model or core school. Linda complied and observed that she and the Director were extremely pleased with the results.

Despite their apparent success, Linda was directed to work in the 'core schools'. She stated that he decision for her to work in the core schools was due to a request by the donor. What is interesting about Linda's comments is that despite the instructions to work in the core schools, she continued her work with the TGL, apparently unbeknownst to the head office of the organization 'in a very underhanded way', as she described it. Linda articulated how much she hated having to tell the Director she couldn't work with him on the project, but because of donor funding in a specific area she wasn't able to make it work, calling the experience 'frustrating'. Referring to the international and political aspects of the organization's agenda-setting Linda said "Because I think when the Cambodian people do come up with an idea it has to fit in with all these Millennium Goals and not necessarily what their needs are."

4.3. 4   Volunteer Agenda vs. Organizational Agenda

One of the themes that emerged from the data during an interview with one of the participants was that of conflicting agendas. At several different points Linda spoke about how her Provincial Office Director and District Director wanted her to do some work in the Tonle Sap, a remote area in Cambodia populated largely by indigenous groups. The Tonle Sap is a major waterway and children that live in the area attend what is called the 'floating schools'. She described her potential role as not necessarily working with

schools directly, but rather working with administrators to come up with solutions to meet some of the needs of the children. According to Linda, when she suggested to the VSO's head office that she wanted to work in the Tonle Sap area the request was denied.

> VSO said 'No, we are not helping the floating schools.' One, because they are so needy, they might not be able to measure any change. Those were the words…But that really is what the director would've liked us to do. Because he's stuck – he doesn't know what to do...But VSO has their proposal of what the donor wanted. And it's not floating schools. (Linda.)

Based on the interview and the researcher's observations, this appeared to be a dilemma with Linda. She went on to add that her original assignment by the VSO head office was at the Provincial Office of Education (POE), which she stated there was 'no reason' for her to be there, that the local people didn't welcome Linda's contributions as a volunteer:

> The guy who's the head of primary education made it quite clear that – very friendly and very nice – (he) definitely didn't want much to do with anything. So yeah, it's that sort of step of removal and VSO sort of has played that game here in Cambodia. It's great that they are involved at the government level but they are involved at the hierarchical government level. (Linda.)

4.3. 5   Organizational Expectations of Volunteers

The numerous expectations of the organization seemed to be linked to the challenges within one participant's responsibilities as a volunteer.

The objectives from my program, it's saying we should be working at the provincial level (of education), the district level, working with District Training and Monitoring Teams (DTMT) plus teachers, plus head teachers and it's just too big an objective. So you either have to make a decision as a volunteer – do you work in the schools direct and try to achieve a little bit in the schools or do you work at the district level and try to influence district training and directors. And that's a personal choice. (Linda.)

When asked to expand upon this process of making a choice on what to focus on as a volunteer, Linda replied she consulted with education partners to assess their needs and based on her own areas of strength and interest she then chose one area to focus on, which was Year 1 and 2 in literacy and mathematics.

Another participant, Natalie brought up the issue of the organization's expectations as well, stating her job role was Community Participation, which entailed four broad and challenging responsibilities: to increase enrolment rates, to decrease dropout rates, to contribute to the Effective Teaching and Learning (ETL) dimension and to develop community participation. She talked about the overwhelming aspects of her position: "It's quite a lot and I'm sure you'll appreciate it's so complex. I mean to improve enrolment rates and decrease dropout rates is a huge thing for someone to try."

The concept of having to 'make a decision as a volunteer' with regard to job focus was common with several of the volunteers. Holly, for example, works in the area of Effective Teaching and Learning (ETL). She said she felt she was able to make more of a contribution in this way, as this was her 'strength', thereby allowing her to more easily identify needs of the education community and respond to them. Linda stated that literacy

was an interest and an area she had worked in during her career as an educator. Another participant, George, expressed an interest in working in the area of disability. Based on these expressed preferences, it appeared from the data that it is these choices that influence the types of initiatives they engage in as volunteers.

4.3. 6   Support and Information from the Organization

A lack of information emerged as another theme in the data. One participant commented that beginning as a volunteer was challenging, as very little background information about previous volunteer efforts and projects were given, projects that could potentially affect outcomes and expectations of initiatives presently in place. Natalie said "Sometimes I go to meetings and I don't know what they are talking about because it's about projects that happened years ago but has impacted them now." In the Follow-up Questions another participant commented on the problem of accessing information as one of the larger challenges in their work. The participant, referring to the resources created by prior staff stated that "VSO has very little record of the work of past volunteers. Tools are only now being shared on Volconnect 2011 (Computer Database for NGOs). However many volunteers and interpreters are duplicating materials which have already been developed." Another participant cited a lack of support with regard to gender responsiveness. In the Follow-up Questions they stated that volunteers needed to be better supported with training on best practices and ideas on how to implement gender responsiveness in their work.

The second issue related to a lack of information was the predecessor's activities over the course of their assignment. Natalie thought she felt she was ill-prepared when she first started, that it would have been beneficial to have a summary of what her job

expectations would be, and what types of initiatives other volunteers had worked on. "Because you sort of come in and you've got no background and all these projects and all these things that have happened and you've got no idea how it relates to the situation you're seeing at the moment. Which is difficult." Another participant commented one of the biggest challenges was working on her own, with little support from others. "Some volunteers do not have enough experience or knowledge to act as advisors. So I rely on a mentor rather than my colleagues in Cambodia."

During an observation of a staff meeting of the volunteers, a lack of procedural knowledge about the Annual Partnership Review (APR) was the subject of much discussion. Several of the volunteers were unsure of how to conduct the reviews, what responsibilities were to be assigned to the local education partners, when they were going to be sent the forms from the head office in Phnom Penh. Concerns were also expressed that due to the considerable size of the task that there would be insufficient time to complete the APR before the due date.

4.3. 7   Organizational Monitoring and Accountability

One challenge that a participant brought up was the lack of monitoring by the head administration of the INGO, and the effect this had on the focus of the volunteers.

> I'm trying to follow what VSO has said we are supposed to be doing. However, it's very pick and mix, like, if I said 'We're the team in Battambang. Are we all (volunteers) working together on the same goals?' No. We are not. I feel there's no sufficient supervision from Phnom Penh on us to actually check what we are doing. I think there's a lot of people wandering around the countryside, not knowing what they are doing. (Participant 1.)

Another example of a lack of monitoring was the end of year reporting through the Annual Partnership Review (APR). The forms are to be filled out jointly by the volunteer and the education partner to report on the progress over the past year. Not only did Linda find the training for the reporting at the partnership meetings confusing, she commented on the fact that 'no one really checks up on that report to see if it's actually accurate'.

> And when the form came out to assess your work for the year with your (education) partner, I went and I said "I don't have time fill this in. You fill this in." And I spent a whole morning with each Director, right? I sort of showed them (how) to go about it. And they really tried hard and they did really well for me. But lo and behold, my other colleagues in VSO didn't even speak to their directors.

4.3. 8 Interpretation - Political Challenges to Implementation

Volunteers expressed their concerns in several areas with respect to the working relationships of their local education counterparts. According to CIT (2004), all the individuals who engage and participate in the implementation process are actors, thus the local education partners would be considered actors working in conjunction with VSO volunteers. Consequently, the influence of the education partners and their own motives, cognitions and resources are seen as critical to the success of implementation. In his theory, Bressers (2004) predicted various 'degrees of adequate application', based on the relations and exchanges between various actors. "The theory assumes that the policy implementation process is not only about achieving implementation, but also about attempts to prevent implementation or to change the character of what is implemented"

(p. 4). Therefore, it can be argued that the challenges experienced by volunteers such as the perceived lack of capacity and resistance of local partners to change could potentially influence the implementation process. These cognitions, or an actor's observations of reality view opportunities and threats, thus influence their motivations and use of their own capacity and power towards implementation.

Differing agendas of actors can play a significant role in how a given initiative is implemented. According to CIT (2004), 'opposition' occurs when one of the actors tries to prevent the application of an initiative by another actor. There are two sources of power – formal and informal. Formal sources may be regulatory systems and informal power is the reliance on another party for the achievement of other objectives. As a volunteer, it can be argued Linda has considerable power as she has a relative degree of flexibility and discretion in her work as well as some control over financial resources. In this case it can be argued the Director requesting her help with the Technical Group Leaders could be perceived as a source of informal power, allowing Linda to work in an area she may perceive as being important. There appeared to be four differing opinions on how Linda's efforts would best be served: VSO head administrators, Linda, as well as the Provincial and District Offices of Education (POE and DOE, respectively). As CIT assumes that the implementation process is not only about achieving implementation, but also about modification of original policies, it can be argued Linda may be attempting to alter the implementation of a project. This modification would be based on her own observations and discussions with the local education community, and perhaps also due in part to the negative reactions from the education partners at the Provincial Office of Education (POE). Motivation, one of the core variables of CIT, suggests that successful

implementation is determined in part by the degree to which the actors perceive the initiatives as contributing to the goals and interests of the various actors and stakeholders involved.

A dearth of information could pose another challenge to a program's operations. Information is defined as the "technical knowledge of the matter at hand and levels and patterns of communication between actors" (Spratt, 2009, p. 3). The successful implementation of an initiative depends on those actors involved having sufficient information. One question the theory poses is: Is the target group adequately informed of the potential benefits of the initiative? During the process of communication of initiatives from the volunteer level to the ministry of education through to provincial levels, if there are any gaps in information this could potentially affect implementation. 'Joint learning' is one of the types of interactions outlined by Bressers (2004), a process he describes as multiple stakeholders navigating an absence of information impeding implementation. Consequently the theory suggests that this problem could pose a serious threat to successful implementation.

A lack of organizational support and even unrealistic program expectations can hamper the degree of adequate implementation of an initiative. CIT (2004) suggests the characteristics of actors are also influenced from an external context of its 'governance regime', in this case the head administrators of VSO. If a volunteer, acting in the role as implementer, does not have adequate resources, this may not only restrict what the volunteer may be able to do in their work (thus affecting capacity and power) but also potentially negatively influence their own motives and cognitions. CIT suggests that the volunteers' (actors) belief system, value priorities and perceptions of the importance and

magnitude of specific problems and solutions reveal the root causes of implementation

barriers (Sabatier, 1991). CIT suggests this could result in a superficial or 'symbolic

implementation' or 'passive cooperation' whereby an actor adopts an inactive approach

to implementation, neither stimulating nor hindering the implementation process.

       The organization's monitoring and accountability of the implementation process

are also critical to success; this context belonging to a larger framework of political,

socio-cultural, economical, technological and problem contexts. According to CIT

(2004), if there is limited external pressure on actors to successfully implement an

initiative, there may be little motivation for its completion. Unmonitored, actors may

deviate from the original vision of the initiative, adhering to their own goals and values.

Thus the wider political context of organizational monitoring may affect the actor's

efforts in the implementation process of education initiatives.

       Based on the study's findings, what conclusions can be drawn with regards to the

implementation of the gender responsiveness policy and girls' education in general?

Again, the results from the data speak more to the overall state of education and the

perceived capacity of local education partners. The focus of this section – the volunteers

and their working relationships- reveals the complexities and political challenges of

implementation. The guiding questions of the study sought to understand the role local

politics played at the level of program implementation, as well as the local political

implications of engaging in educational development work. Based on the findings, it

would appear that the relationships with local education partners play a significant role. If

partners do not recognize the need for gender equality or are resistant to gender

initiatives, this could prove challenging in terms of implementation. As cited earlier,

those in the education system face a host of development challenges – lack of infrastructure, capacity of staff and limited resources. Volunteers may advocate for gender equality, but if there is no 'buy in' at the ground level by partners or if their goals differ from that of the organization, sustainability of any gender initiative would be at considerable risk.

4.4 Economic Challenges to Implementation

4.4. 1 Introduction

The second purpose of the study was to understand the economic challenges to program implementation. Three specific questions guided the inquiry: what role does funding play in educational programming within INGOs? In what ways do funding issues influence the implementation process? And lastly, how does the organization's financial budget affect the challenges volunteers experience in the operating of an inclusive education program? Based on the findings, there are five themes which emerged in the area of economic challenges to implementation and they are outlined as follows: Organizational Designation of Funds, the 'Bid' for Funding and Budget Development, Human Resources, Economic Sustainability of Programming and Funding for Gender Responsiveness Initiatives.

4.4. 2 Program Narrative

From 2005 until 2009 VSO Cambodia's primary development initiative was the Mainstreaming Inclusive Education (MIE) project, which was largely funded by the World Bank and the European Commission. As VSO is a British INGO, the U.K. Department for International Development (DfID) supports VSO's core costs and makes

the volunteer professional program fiscally possible. The MIE project functioned in five focus areas: promoting inclusion of disadvantaged children in education, teacher professional development, civil society engagement, project planning and management as well as monitoring and evaluation (CUSO International, 2012).

After the MIE project was completed, VSO Cambodia's primary donor became the Canadian counterpart of VSO known as CUSO or Canadian University Service Overseas. According to financial records provided by VSO Cambodia, the bid for funding by CUSO for the 2012-2013 year was approximately $30, 834 (Canadian dollars). It is important to highlight that this funding is not only for the education sector, but VSO's other programming areas of Livelihoods, Health and Governance. Outlined under the targets for education funding are a focus on literacy and mathematics in primary education, in addition to teacher training, developing school directors' leadership and management capacity, and improving the monitoring and evaluation system (CUSO International, 2012).

Gender Equality Programming did appear in the financial documentation of the bid for funding, however this was limited to VSO's new target area of northeast Cambodia. Thus far volunteers in the new target area have conducted over 30 gender mainstreaming training sessions, working with teachers, principals as well as the Ministry of Education to provide follow-up training and materials to support implementing further gender mainstreaming initiatives. Included in these efforts was the establishment of girl councillor groups and segregated and hygienic toilet facilities. The project objectives of the three target provinces of Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri and Kratie are to increase the communities' awareness of children's' rights to education, especially girls at the primary

and lower secondary level, to appoint female teachers to act as 'girl counsellors' and to work with management to facilitate increased progression of female student enrolment (CUSO International, 2012).

One possible explanation for the lack of Gender Equality Programming funding for the Battambang region may be due to a possible future exit by the organization. Based on the researcher's discussions with VSO volunteers it is believed the INGO will be leaving the Battambang region within approximately two years.

4.4. 3 Organizational Designation of Funds

During one of the interviews the topic of VSO's funding came up; more specifically one type of activity the organization funded called a study tour. According to Linda, this funding is designated to increase the capacities of local teachers and librarians by exposing them to other schools in Cambodia and abroad as well. During these tours participants would have an opportunity to observe how other schools and libraries are run; and to speak with other professionals in the field. In Linda's budget she had $600 (USD) to conduct study tours with the librarians in her catchment area. She stated that she didn't want to use the study tours, claiming the research evidence of its effectiveness was 'pretty limited'. She characterised the study tours as 'a mess of people who go off and have a good time.' When asked what the consequences would be if she didn't use the study tours, she replied the funding would be given to someone else (another VSO volunteer) in a different province who wanted study tours.

When Linda questioned VSO administration about the origins of the study tours activity she was told: "It's what VSO put in (the bid) to the donor. So they (VSO) are at fault, not the donor, there. VSO, when they put in their bids, said that's one of their things

that they'd do with teachers, have study tours." Linda claimed she knew what she wanted

to do with the librarians in her district, and the librarians had told her what they wanted.

Linda's perspective was that the Tours were overfunded and perceived as an ineffective

activity, her reasoning being that simply observing other schools would do little to

facilitate sustainable change, noting the vast differences between schools.

> And what they see is libraries – like donor libraries like Room to Read or SEEPA
>
> (other INGOs) which is a big library thing here. And they see a lovely-built
>
> building. And they see lovely shelving and they see lovely books. And it's all
>
> come from an outside donor. And I've got village schools, which have a wooden
>
> structure with dirt flooring. And they see that. It's no help to them – to go and see
>
> something like that, you know? I mean there's one school I might think of taking
>
> them to which is on the way to Siem Reap, we can do it in a day trip, which is a
>
> village school like theirs, which has a very good library. It might be nice for them
>
> to spend an afternoon with that librarian. But it would be better for them to work
>
> at each other's libraries for the afternoon to help each other. (Linda.)

4.4. 4 The 'Bid' for Funding and Budget Development

As cited in the literature review, one of the criticisms associated with INGOs is

that of funding, and in particular official aid. Research has demonstrated that official aid

can potentially compromise the ability and flexibility of INGOs by imposing complex

stipulations on how funds should be distributed, the types of projects to be employed and

the requirements for evaluation, assessment and reporting (Edwards & Hulme, 1996).

Consequently, the inevitable question raised by the literature is that of organizational

direction: are INGOs pursuing their own agenda, or that of their donors? While not technically associated with the state most, if not all major INGOs receive some form of official funding. This is true of VSO, which receives financial support from the British Department for International Development (DfID). As a result, soliciting funding from various donor countries is an integral part of the economic landscape for these international organizations.

The issue of donors and VSO's funding emerged in an interview with one participant in the study. She did state that there was some flexibility within her own budget and also commented on the ability of donors to direct the organization's endeavours:

> VSO has to attract donors. So, basically, they have to lobby for donors or request a donor and the donor again will have its agenda. And they (VSO) have to fit their proposals within the agenda of what the donor wants. If for example the donor really wants AIDS education, it's a big priority, then they'll (VSO) make a bid for that. And volunteers are then assigned that. That doesn't mean to say the needs of that village is AIDS education. But it might be the donor's needs. So there is conflict in that. (Linda.)

The observations made by this participant are consistent with what the literature has suggested; one of the risks with financial aid is that the locus of decision-making resides at the upper echelons of power, often in another country rather than at the grassroots level (Lewis, 1998; Strutt & Kepe, 2010). The top-down process of the organization's decision-making was frequently cited by the participant as a critical issue.

With regard to her own budget, Linda alluded to the fact that she could direct funding in a certain direction, if she was able to justify it according to the organization's goals, stating:

> I could've said anything. I could've said I wanted a marching band, basically. As long as it fitted with the criteria of all the objectives that VSO has in terms of Cambodia – for example literacy, maths, girls' education, disability, you know, they're so broad, the topics. You can ask for whatever (you) want to, really. (Linda.)

4.4. 5   Human Resources

The organization's human resources were cited by two participants as another problematic area in their work. As all of VSO's international volunteers are foreigners and speak limited Khmer, VSO provides local interpreters called Volunteer Assistants or VAs to allow volunteers to work with teachers, school directors and other education officials at the upper levels of government. As most of the local people speak limited English, interpreters are vital for volunteers to conduct teacher training and professional development seminars, for meetings with administration, and liaising with the community. Therefore these interpreters play a pivotal role in a volunteer's work. One of the more recent budget cuts of the organization saw the reduction of interpreter time, which directly affected volunteers. Linda stated:

> Unfortunately at the moment they (VSO) have reduced the interpreter time. Prior to 2010 we had full-time interpreters which meant easier access for volunteers and which does remain a critical issue. Even though we do have language training, to work in it and to advise in it is expecting a lot. So you need a full-time interpreter.

So sometimes you find yourself really frustrated because you can't be out at the

schools all the time. (Linda.)

Particularly for a volunteer in Linda's position, where the majority of her time is spent

directly in schools it would appear that the need for an interpreter would be necessary.

During the researcher's observations, VAs were almost always present – speaking with

local teachers, directors and vice-directors, at meetings and workshops. Without some

form of communication, a volunteer's efforts would be quite limited. One other

participant commented on the challenge of having to coordinate schedules with others, as

VAs would often work with more than one volunteer. This presented logistical

challenges, limiting what could be done according to the availability of the interpreter.

Related to the issue of interpreters was the capacity of the VAs. In the Follow-up

Questions one participant in the study noted 'language issues' of interpreters were a

challenge in their work, commenting 'working through an interpreter is difficult'. This

issue arose during the researcher's own observations, having observed and interacted

with two different VA interpreters on separate occasions. During training sessions and

other larger meetings, the VA had the onerous task of translating everything that was

being said by a variety of different people at a rapid pace. A high proficiency of the

English language would be required to do this and it was remarked by the researcher

herself that both VAs seemed to struggle to communicate everything that was being said.

4.4. 6   Economic Sustainability of Programming

Speaking about her role in the organization and the activities she's engaged in,

sustainability and more specifically economic sustainability were issues that arose in one

participant's interview. One of her roles is working on the relationship between school

and community, and Natalie said she didn't want there to be any money from the organization involved when facilitating participation in workshops. She was referring to the practice of financial incentives for local people who would participate in ING-sponsored training or information sessions. In Cambodia a *per diem* honorarium is paid out to teachers, other education officials and community members who choose to participate in a workshop; this is a common practice employed by INGOs. Natalie said her concern was that she wanted the local community and school members to sustain any initiatives after she was gone, and not simply participating as a means to supplement their income.

> If they come because they are gonna get *per diem* and that's another thing. I know some people who think that if you give someone per diem and they come but I don't really want those 'per diem people' to come. Because they come for the money and sit there absolutely not registering anything. Whereas if people come actually interested in improving their children's education and interested in learning, then maybe they go to their friends 'Oh, you know I learned this last night.' And then you can gradually start the process from there. (Natalie.)

This issue of '*per diem* culture' came up in another participant's interview. In the workshops she facilitates, Rita notes the different motivations with regard to professional development. "You do it for itself, for the knowledge, whereas they (Cambodians) don't." The concept of program sustainability is a common theme in the literature (Strutt & Kepe, 2010). While there is a need to compensate community members, educators and other professionals for their time for training or workshops, the dilemma is that this can

become a double-edged sword – that people's motivations will be based solely on the financial, running the risk of facilitating little change through the organization's efforts.

4.4. 7 Funding for Gender Responsiveness Initiatives

Natalie said she didn't know much about the Canadian donors, only that they had changed donors from the previous DfID (UK Department for International Development), but did say that some of the elements had changed. Natalie said there had been a budget for gender-related activities with the previous donor but wasn't sure if there was one for the current donor. Natalie stated that they had already been given their targets from the INGO in April and halfway through the financial cycle the donors had changed. According to Natalie, she was operating under the responsibilities she was given when she first arrived, even though the donor had changed. She did make a point of stating that she had to link her job and the activities she does to the donor who is currently funding the organization.

While she didn't answer the question of economic challenges directly, Natalie's primary concern with implementing gender responsiveness (GR) was with the organization's funding. She said that unless the organization could get an extra donor for that specific purpose it would take money away from other areas volunteers worked on 'because you've only got certain amounts to play with.' Interestingly she commented that gender responsiveness "could be easily attached without causing too much of an issue, I think." Rita stated that she felt she was 'outside the loop' since she didn't work with primary schools. As she works with secondary schools in her role with teacher trainees, she said she had 'almost no budget'. Rita said that the INGO gave her a small

budget and she did get some funding from the Canadian donor for working with two schools.

Rita noted the vast difference in funding for volunteers working in primary and tertiary areas of education – 1500 and 4000 dollars respectively, although when questioned Rita wasn't sure whether this was due to the new Canadian donor. While she did mention the decrease in worldwide funding for VSO in recent years, she does make a point of mentioning that 'money isn't the first thing you should have' in Cambodia. At several points during the interview Rita stressed the importance of building a rapport and relationship with local people – teacher trainers, recent graduates, and teacher trainees. She spoke about sharing skills and that money was only required at the level of implementation. Rita stated that you didn't necessarily need a lot of money, 'throwing money at them stops them from developing', that budgets which are too large can become unsustainable. Rita highlights that it was important for development workers to 'activate the native intelligence of (local) people' to allow them to develop.

Holly noted that VSO's volunteers in other more remote provinces such as Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri and Kratie had done several gender workshops, but stated that 'we don't have that, that part of funding to do that here', meaning there was no funding for gender workshops at the PTTC. This conflicted with Linda's comments about funding for gender, who said there was 'all this money for gender.' The gender workshops that were done in the remote provinces by VSO were not done at the PTTC but volunteers in the ETL (Effective Teaching and Learning) had facilitated them. Holly thought the funding for their PTTC included money for materials to make resources (for example teacher trainees make teaching materials to take with them when they go out to do their

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practicum), for study tours or implementing BET materials. Holly stated she thought that the VSO volunteers in this community did not have funding for gender workshops.

When asked if there was any specific funding for GR at the secondary level, Rita replied 'No, because I think it's not perceived as a huge thing at this level.' She goes on to say that gender responsiveness was not perceived as an issue at the tertiary level either. George also stated that he knew little about the new donor or if any funding was available for implementing gender responsiveness. He did make a connection with the new Canadian donor and their requirements for the Annual Partner Review (APR), stating there were a lot of questions and criteria required for the review. Part of his (and the other volunteers') responsibilities were to contribute to the compilation of the APR, which documents all the volunteer efforts over the past year.

4.4. 8   Interpretation – Economic Challenges to Implementation

As previously indicated, the economic context is an important part of the larger framework of Contextual Interaction Theory (2004). While not necessarily asserting a direct influence on implementation, these wider economic contexts play a role in the structure and process of how initiatives are executed. While there appeared to be little to no official funding for gender responsiveness initiatives despite conflicting reports by volunteers, the issue of money did not seem to be critical, as several volunteers commented that the financial requirements were minimal. What did appear to be a concern was how the volunteers' budgets were developed, which was a top-down process inviting only minimal contributions by volunteers. This was demonstrated by the example of the study tours, an activity the volunteer criticised as being ineffectual. CIT suggests that if the adequate implementation of an initiative contributed positively to the

objectives of one actor (the head administrators of the organization) and negatively to another actor (the volunteer), given that the positive actor has sufficient information, then the dominance of the positive actor will lead to forced or constructive cooperation. What is interesting in this example is that due to the fairly high level of discretion in her role as a volunteer, Linda appeared to alter the study tours by making it locally based and participatory as opposed to simply observational. This change was intended to lend more relevance to the initiative, according to the participant.

In terms of the implementation process, actors are guided by their own motives, cognitions as well as capacity and power. CIT (2004) defines 'capacity and power' as 'resources available and accessible.' As a result, limited human resources may pose a challenge to program implementation, as the availability of resources for intended action(s) could potentially influence an actor's motivation to successfully implement any initiative, whether in the form of training, books and other materials or interpreters. Ultimately it is the actor who gauges the relevance of the resources, based on a host of factors within their working environment and their own internal motivations.

The guiding questions of the study sought to understand the role played by funding in the educational programming of INGOs, as well as how VSO's financial budget affected the challenges volunteers experienced in the execution of an inclusive education program. A further question examined the ways INGO funding influenced the implementation process. According to one participant, there was a substantial difference in VSO's funding for primary compared with post-secondary. One explanation for this may be the organization's commitment to the Education for All (EFA) movement and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to achieve universal primary education by

2015. As VSO's funding for gender in this particular region of Cambodia was virtually

nonexistent, according to the organization's financial documents, it is difficult to

ascertain if this difference in funding has any significant implications for consideration of

gender issues.

Donor requirements and the objectives of the organization are influential in the

way they can highlight or simply pay lip service to gender equality in education. INGOs

can be perceived as being vulnerable as they must continually strive to secure funding;

this often comes at a price with regard to the direction of development work. While there

appeared to be no gender equality funding for this particular region, volunteers

commented that initiatives did not require extensive support. However it can be argued

that the designation of funds, coupled with gender awareness training, would signal to

volunteers the importance and priority of gender equality within the organization. It

should be noted that current gender funding was available only in the new target

provinces in northeastern Cambodia, which may suggest that the organization focuses on

gender as an issue only at the beginning of their development initiatives. Once volunteers

and locals have received training, the organization's gender mainstreaming efforts may

fall to the wayside. What is problematic about this is that when international volunteers

leave at the end of their two year placement, it would seem unlikely new volunteers

would receive any gender awareness training. The possible implications of these

organizational practices speak to the lack of program sustainability and poor fidelity to

the Child Friendly Schools Policy.

4.5 Cultural challenges to Implementation

4.5. 1   Introduction

The last question of the study focused on socio-cultural challenges in program implementation. The primary intent was to understand how the socio-cultural context of rural Cambodia affected project work in inclusive education, in particular girls' education at the primary level. As indicated in the Methodology section, other pertinent questions of the study sought to comprehend how the local cultural context influenced the implementation process of the inclusive education initiative, as well as examining the more general challenges in implementing a program targeting girls' education. The following themes emerged from the data and are organized as follows: School Directors 'Losing Face', Local Views on Education (As Perceived by Volunteers), Relationship between Community and Schools, Gender Equality and the Local Culture, and Awareness Regarding Gender Issues.

4.5. 2   School Directors 'Losing Face'

A socio-cultural challenge in Natalie's work was the perception of 'losing face' when working with school directors. As one of Natalie's responsibilities is to improve enrolment at the primary level, she frequently works with school administrators. In rural areas truancy is a significant issue, and often there is a dearth of documentation indicating how many children reside in a given village. School directors in Cambodia are required to know how many children reside in their catchment area so that efforts can be made to enrol them in school. It is this assessment of non-attending students that becomes problematic, states Natalie. School directors appearing to not have all the students in the

catchment area enrolled could have potentially negative consequences for administrators, such as creating the impression of incompetency. To avoid this, school directors may simply say there are no non-attenders in their catchment area.

> I think you don't want to be seen to not have gotten everyone. There's a lot of the whole shame thing and saving face and if the DOE (Department of Education) finds out, it's just easier to say 'Have you got everyone?' 'Yes' (response of school director). Because then there's no question. And if someone says 'yes' to me, then I've got nothing more to question. If you've told me 'maybe' then I'm onto you, because there's a possibility of that you don't have everyone (all of the students). (Natalie.)

4.5. 3 Local Views on Education (As Perceived by Volunteers)

The lack of value of education in the community was cited as a source of frustration by two of the study's participants. While money is an issue for families, states Natalie, she says parents feel "What's the point if they are not going to do anything with it, why do they need to spend all those years of school when they could spend a whole day at the farm. A whole day doing something else." Rita echoed similar sentiments, stating "Education is of very low value here, and the more you go into the country (rural areas), the less value it has." Natalie also noted the negative perceptions held by many towards rural inhabitants. 'Farmer – dirty, low work, dark skin' was how Natalie described the stereotype of a village farmer.

When the significant drop in secondary enrolment rates for girls was mentioned in the interview, Natalie said she was not surprised. According to UNICEF (2012) during

the period 2007-2010 primary school participation for girls was 87%, compared to boys at 90%. In secondary education this figure dropped to 32% and 36%, respectively. In her work with local villagers, it was common for girls to go to school until the age of 11. By then they are able to run the household: look after the children, go to the market, clean the house, cook, and help with farming, Natalie stated. The perception held is that by this time the girls have received a 'basic education'; they can read and write to a sufficient degree. She made the following comment on the parental views on girls' education.

> They don't understand why they have to send their children for school for more years than that. Why is it important to get an education? Because they (the girls) are only going to come back to the village and be a housewife. There's no understanding as to why for anything and they don't understand the education system. (Natalie.)

Another interesting point that Natalie brought up was the low number of secondary schools in the area, and that the distance was an issue particularly for girls. Transportation such as a bicycle may be required to make the journey and parents were often reluctant to send their daughters to schools far away. Another possible issue was monetary: in secondary school students, would have more teachers, therefore more financial bribes were required. The increased expense of paying bribes to teachers was one potential reason for students not attending secondary school, she stated. It was not uncommon for students to buy exams, for example. Families that have limited financial resources may send only the boys to school, perhaps valuing their education more in terms of income generation, which would put girls at a considerable disadvantage.

4.5. 4   Relationship between Community and Schools

Related to the value of education, Natalie commented that the relationship between parents, the community and schools can often be a negative one, perhaps due to a lack of communication. "So really the issue is in the parents' understanding of why they (children) should be in school. But this isn't supported by the school, which is why I'm here to help. Because the school directors say 'The parents don't understand the value of education.' But they don't understand the value of education because they (the schools) have never told them what the value is. So it's sort of half the parents' responsibility and half the schools' responsibility. But neither of them are communicating with each other so they can't get that done." With regard to the relationship of school and parents, Natalie cites lack of communication as a key issue.

4.5. 5   Gender Equality and the Local Culture

Holly stated that one cultural challenge in working on gender issues is that of inequality. "Women are not valued in the same way as men. There are strong gender roles (in Cambodia)." Natalie notes the progress already made in recent years; more girls today are achieving higher levels of education. For example the World Bank (2006) reported that their scholarship program for girls to complete secondary school increased enrolment and attendance at program schools by as much as 30 to 43 percentage points. Despite this growth, Natalie said the cultural norm of early marriage and motherhood is still very present. In addition, the perception of men being perceived as more capable was noted by one other participant. During a workshop at the teachers' college, Holly had a conversation with several of the local women. They explained that they felt they were not

good enough to do things. The women also said they were not seen by men as being competent enough to do things.

Natalie observed that a challenge would be 'getting their (women's) voices heard', trying to alter the community's perceptions of who should be doing what job. Cambodia is still very traditional in terms of gender roles, and Natalie offers one example: it is usually women who supported their children's education. Men tend to participate little in their child's school life and education. "Cambodia is sort of in a little bubble of its own", she states, noting that there hasn't 'been any push from the government on gender responsiveness.' She adds that school directors would be of the perspective that gender responsiveness wouldn't be needed in the community. Natalie added that that GR is 'talked about but not modeled.'

In the Follow-up Questions, one participant commented on the fact that more work needed to be done at the school and district level, and to focus on change in the curriculum as a means of addressing gender equality issues. The participant said "There is still evidence of the *chub screy* (the correct behaviour for women) being taught in school." This statement refers to the traditional behavioural expectations for females in Cambodian/Khmer culture. Another participant made similar observations in their Follow-up Questions:

> Culturally speaking, boys are more important for the household, because of their ability to work and earn money. Girls are often seen as the ones who are taking in the 'caring' tasks. Girls (according to Khmer culture) need to be obedient and not too assertive. These ideas about men/women are deeply engraved in Khmer culture. (Participant 2.)

Rita's comments on gender inequality within the Cambodian culture were consistent with Holly's sentiments. Rita agrees that 'there is no obvious aggression towards women or putting them down in a public way' that she's seen, but suggests the gender inequalities come out in other ways. She describes a 'horrific' experience last year at a report from the Department of Education. One male teacher in a remote province had been accused of raping a young girl, and the person presenting the report had made a joke regarding the incident: "You know we all have hormones, so it could have been any of us." This brought a great laugh from the audience, observes Rita, and 'shows an aspect of (the) attitude towards the power of men in this society.' At the college where she works, Rita sees this attitude manifest itself, particularly in the jobs people hold, where men still form the majority of high-level positions.

A comment was made by one of the participants in their Follow-Up Questions regarding gender inequality. She spoke about women volunteers needing to be more valued, adding "There are still examples where the male (VSO) volunteers are asked to be on the official table at school events rather than female volunteers." This comment would further suggest that traditional views of women – Khmer or otherwise – are still present in the culture of the area. Gender inequality within the working relationships of staff and local education partners may prove challenging with regard to the implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives.

George stated that he thought there wouldn't be any political challenges in implementing GR initiatives, rather it would be the culture that proved challenging. He notes the low number of women in higher positions of power such as district and provincial directors. "I don't think politically there is a problem but I can imagine in the

communities, if it's an important job, men would be thought of first." Due to the male

dominance in positions of power, George observed that this might affect community

support for initiative such as a gender workshop.

4.5. 6 Awareness Regarding Gender Issues

Holly states that one of the challenges of implementing gender responsiveness

initiatives is 'unawareness', as she described it. People don't see there is a problem, says

Holly. She illustrates this point with an example: she did a gender education workshop

with Teacher Trainees and spoke with them about the pictures in one of the school's

textbooks. All of the pictures portrayed stereotypical gender roles: women shopping at

the market, holding a job as secretary, whereas men were portrayed as the boss. Holly

attempted to highlight how these images might be perpetuating gender inequality, "it was

really difficult to get the message through that pictures could be giving a message we

don't want them to give." Holly reported that the Teacher Trainees saw no problem with

the images, stating "The Ministry is trying to get more female people in higher position

so we are working on it (the gender issue) anyway."

Natalie observed that the Khmer community doesn't see gender as an issue, using

the example of women's aspirations to illustrate her point. She said in the U.K. if a

woman were to state that her dream was to be a housewife, this would generally be met

with disapproval. In Cambodia it's accepted, she said. What is interesting is that Natalie

notes that the image of Western women as portrayed on television – successful,

independent women who are often engaged in casual sex. This might be used as a

negative stereotype, of what traditional people want to avoid. Natalie does point out that

in Cambodia men often have mistresses and that it is an accepted part of the culture; but not so for women.

The timidity of the Cambodian women was noted as one cultural issue, in that they weren't 'exactly forthcoming with ideas' about how to address the gender issue. It is usually males in the higher positions of power in Cambodia, and people such as the village chief may pose further complexity to the issue of gender relations. When asked if the timidity of the girls was due in part to the gender issues in Cambodia, Rita replied she thought that this behaviour was "particular to this college", as well as to the management and leadership style of the college.

Holly's comment 'they don't see the issue of it' was consistent with other volunteers' remarks on the need for gender responsiveness. Part of the issue might be that at the PTTC, the whole practice school (the school where the teacher trainees do their student teaching) is female, and that they have a female director; therefore the problem of gender inequality doesn't appear to exist, stated Holly. Although she has not asked them directly, Holly thought that the management at the PTTC (two vice-directors and a main director, all male) don't view gender as being an issue. They probably think it's important in theory, "but in practice…it's not that they don't want to do it. They just don't see maybe the possibility of implementing it."

4.5. 7 Interpretation – Cultural Challenges to Implementation

A basic assumption of CIT (2004) is that the factors which influence the implementation process do not operate in isolation from each other. That is to say that a factor which exercises a positive influence under certain contexts may exert no influence or even a negative influence under other situations. Contextual Interaction Theory

assumes initiative processes *are* actor interaction processes. The way in which these processes develop between actors (in this case the volunteers and their local education partners) must be explained on the basis of combinations of the values of the various distinctive factors. This is done by distinguishing two independent variables – the 'core circumstances' and the 'external circumstances'. The 'core circumstances' are defined as the factors that have a direct influence on the development of the processes and 'external circumstances' are the factors that have an *indirect* influence via their influence on the core circumstances. Contextual factors such as politics, economics and more specifically in this study, culture, can be considered as an 'external circumstance'.

There are several areas in which the results from the data could be attributed to the larger cultural context, such as perceptions of the value of education, gender inequality embedded in the culture, the risk of 'losing face' while working with colleagues, the lack of awareness of the gender issue, traditional gender roles, and the relationship between the school and community. Using the lens of CIT to answer the question of how the local socio-cultural context impacts the implementation process of inclusive education initiatives, would explain how the aforementioned themes could potentially pose challenges to implementation. This would largely depend on the extent to which actors would be influenced by the cultural context as well as the other contextual factors, and the extent to which this influence would affect the actors' motives and cognitions. If for example, education holds little value in the community or if the expectations of girls are closely connected to a traditional lifestyle, initiatives geared towards the empowerment of females may be met with a certain level of resistance from local education partners, or they may alter or impede the implementation process.

CIT (2004) suggests that the dependent variable, known as the types of interactions between actors, directly influences the implementation process. 'Opposition' occurs when one of the actors tried to prevent the implementation of an initiative by another actor. 'Passive cooperation' is defined as one of the parties adopting a relatively passive stance which neither hinders nor facilitates the implementation of the initiative. 'Forced cooperation' is a form of passive cooperation that is imposed by a dominant actor. In this context the volunteer can be considered the dominant actor, as they are the primary implementers who arguably have more power than local actors, considering the volunteer's substantial resources and influence as representatives of an international organization. As the volunteer's role is to implement policy, the success of the outcome will be influenced by how the policy is received by the various local actors, being participants in the implementation process but also beneficiaries, thus making them the target group as well. Depending on who the individual is in any given interaction or scenario – parent, community member, teacher or education official – the implementation outcome will depend on a multitude of other extenuating factors and contextual influences.

The study's guiding question sought to understand how the socio-cultural context of the region influenced project work in inclusive education. One of the implications that can be drawn from the findings is that traditional attitudes and gender stereotypes appeared to dominate in the region. As the Battambang area is mostly rural, many of its inhabitants lead an agrarian lifestyle, either as itinerant workers or landowners. These conservative views may have an influence in terms of a girls' access to education, whether it is due to an early marriage, to supplement the family's income through crop

harvesting or caring for younger siblings and tending to domestic responsibilities.

Furthermore, if education in general is not perceived by the community as being relevant

to their daily lives or necessary to increase the family's income, it is unlikely that girls or

boys would receive parental support to complete their schooling. The implementation

process of gender responsiveness initiatives would undoubtedly be influenced by the

community's traditional views of girls as well as their perceptions of gender equality,

which should be noted is an ideology developed and perpetuated by the global North

(Unterhalter & North, 2010; Moser, 1995).

4.5. 8 Triangulation

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 supports several of the study's findings, for

example INGOs and the complexities of facilitating gender equality initiatives. In their

respective studies Tiessen (2004) and Desai (2004) found INGO staff to have a limited

capacity to address gender issues in their work, as well as a narrow conceptual

understanding of how their gender mainstreaming initiatives facilitated female

empowerment in the context of a country's societal change. Desai argues that

international organizations rarely evaluate their own interventions in this context.

Certainly in this study the issue of monitoring and evaluation was brought up by one

participant, as well as the perceived lack of capacity of the volunteers to effectively

navigate gender equality issues.

Unterhalter & North (2010) posited that the effectiveness of gender

mainstreaming initiatives may neglect some aspects of implementation associated with

political and socio-cultural alignments within and across national contexts. In her

research in Nigeria, Para-Mallam (2010) draws attention to the gender bias with school curricula, as well as the socio-cultural and physical environments. She posited that a critical interrogation of commonly held beliefs in addition to intervention strategies are needed to evolve the patriarchal paradigms that underlie the educational systems. Based on the findings of the present study it would appear that while female enrolment at the primary level is on par with male enrolment, traditional gender stereotypes persist in Cambodia, particularly in the more rural agricultural regions. These traditional views may account for the considerable drop in female enrolment at the lower and upper secondary levels.

The study's findings are also consistent with the literature on international NGO funding. The literature on official aid and INGOs is well documented (Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Fowler, 1993; Koch, Dreher, Nunnenkamp & Thiele, 2009). One of the more complex issues noted by scholars was the influence of donors with respect to the organization's agenda and objectives. The results from this study appear to be consistent with the research; the topic of donors was raised during the data collection as being a political challenge in their development work. To the specific extent that these external agendas affect outcomes of gender mainstreaming initiatives remains as topic for further inquiry.

4.E   Organization of Chapter 5

Chapter 4 reported on the political, economic and socio-cultural findings from this study. The conclusions from the data collection will be discussed in chapter 5, revisiting the guiding and subsidiary questions. The subsequent sections of chapter 5 will discuss

the implications for practice and how the study's findings inform the literature. The last

section includes suggestions for further areas of study.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

5.0 Conclusion

This study's primary aim was to understand the challenges experienced by INGO

volunteers in implementing inclusive education initiatives in a developing country, with a

specific focus on gender mainstreaming. Among these challenges, three specific areas

were of interest: political challenges to implementation, economic as well as socio-

cultural. The data collected presents more of an overall picture of the current state of

education in Cambodia, rather than the intricacies of facilitating gender mainstreaming

initiatives. Despite this there are conclusions that can be drawn from this lack of

engagement with gender equality issues.

5.0. 1 Guiding Question – Political

In the political domain the guiding questions sought to understand the local

political implications of engaging in educational development work. Due to the nature of

these international organizations, the local education system was most influenced by the

global agenda as well as organizational programming and donor requirements. These

various agendas may not consistently address the needs at the local level as reported in

the findings. With their substantial funding INGOs have considerable clout to change

structures within the education system, in Cambodia UNICEF facilitated the

implementation of the Child Friendly Schools Policy, initiated the concept of core/model

schools and created positions such as Technical Grade Leaders (TGLs) to maximize

limited resources. These structural amendments profoundly change the way education systems function. Furthermore, by promoting a Western pedagogical perspective and concepts such as gender equality, these efforts communicate values that extend to the local level. These ideals can often be in conflict with local perspectives; therein lies the quandary that must be addressed in order to fully engage in gender equality issues.

5.0. 2 Subsidiary Question - Political

A guiding question of the study was concerned with the role played by local politics at the level of program implementation. By far the most influential aspect of the implementation process is the organization's relationship with local education partners. These groups – be it the village school, at an administrative level or governmental office – can be considered the first tier of implementation. There were several concerns raised by participants; one of which was the expectations of the education partners vis-à-vis the organization. Contracts between partners and the organization are initiated and developed with the Ministry of Education in Phnom Penh. The dilemma occurs in the implementation of programming at the provincial and local village levels due to a lack of information-sharing regarding the purpose and role of the INGO and its objectives. The transition process from state to local levels can be problematic from an implementation standpoint if there are substantially different expectations between the volunteers and local education partners.

There are other complexities regarding the role played by local politics at the level of program implementation. If education partners lack the capacity to understand and fully participate in initiatives, or conversely have opposing views to what volunteers are

attempting to achieve within the education system, this will likely decrease the chance of successful implementation. While lower levels of government are given edicts to implement inclusive education practices, there is palpable evidence of resistance at the local level to these new ideas and concepts. This may be due in part to a lack of information-sharing from the upper echelons of government. To further add to this negative environment, as volunteers are from Western countries, they can be largely viewed as 'outsiders' to the culture and as such developing productive working relationships become challenging for all parties. Several volunteers articulated feelings of alienation, frustration and even complete rejection of their efforts by local education partners. As a result, depending on the volunteer and their local counterpart, as well as and a host of other external factors, developing these working partnerships is an integral part in the implementation process. Without this, inclusive education initiatives may not reach local schools, teacher colleges or communities.

5.0. 3 Guiding Question – Economic

In addition to the numerous political challenges experienced by volunteers, the study examined the role of funding in INGO educational programming and how it influenced the implementation process. As VSO depends on international donors and more specifically official funding, it can be argued that this aid dependency creates a degree of vulnerability whereby donor requirements often dictate the types of development work organizations engage in. Multilateral institutions such as the United Nations tend to heavily influence governments and other international organizations in the areas of global importance, thus driving official aid and other funding to specific areas of need. Consequently, when there is a worldwide shift in development priorities,

economics ultimately directs the types of educational programming INGOs develop in their programming. This was evident in the study's findings: VSO's current donor requested a focus on literacy and maths, and this became the emphasis of volunteers on the ground level. While these are laudable areas of development, this will likely diminish the likelihood that gender mainstreaming initiatives will be of equal priority.

5.0. 4 Subsidiary Question – Economic

One of the study's subsidiary questions asked how VSO's financial budget affected the challenges volunteers experienced in the operation of an inclusive education initiative. The top-down nature of the budget development process was raised by one participant as being an issue, particularly with regard to the types of activities and initiatives designated by the organization. The participant expressed concerns that the needs of partners at the local level were not always met by the types of programming reflected in the organization's objectives, such as the study tours. Furthermore, donor stipulations for funding would direct resources in particular areas which may or may not reflect the needs at the local level. Another issue regarding funding was the need for human resources, more specifically the interpreters who work with volunteers on a daily basis. In recent years there has been a considerable reduction in the funding allotted; this resulted in volunteers having less time with interpreters. Less funding also meant interpreters worked with more than one volunteer, thus requiring more planning and coordinating of schedules.

How to develop program sustainability without aid dependency was another critical issue for participants in the study. The 'per diem culture' in the region presented a

difficult situation: while it was important to compensate education professionals and community members for their time, volunteers stated that some individuals viewed their participation in workshops as simply a means to secure extra income. Lastly, the lack of funding for gender responsiveness initiatives in this region should be noted. While participants insisted that only a modest amount was required, the explicit absence of funding has important implications in terms of the organization's goals and priorities in education.

5.0. 5 Guiding Question – Socio-cultural

Lastly, socio-cultural challenges in working with gender responsiveness initiatives were studied. The guiding questions sought to understand the extent to which the socio-cultural context of rural Cambodia affected project work in inclusive education, in particular girls' education at the primary level. Based on the findings, it appears that the rural context does affect project work, particularly in the area of education. Most inhabitants in the region lead an agrarian lifestyle, a consequence of which being that children are often pulled out of school for months at a time to either help on the farm or to attend to domestic responsibilities. The consequences of this are evident in the high repetition and inconsistent enrolment rates in village schools. This was noted by nearly all the participants as being a critical issue.

5.0. 6 Subsidiary Question – Socio-cultural

A secondary question focused on the local socio-cultural context and how it influenced the implementation process of inclusive education programming. With regard

to gender, traditional views seem to be present within the Khmer culture, according to the participants. This was noted at the post-secondary level with teacher trainers and teacher trainees as well as within the local teaching level. This has significant implications, as the teacher trainers and future teachers hold important and influential positions within the educational field, and as such have a unique opportunity to facilitate profound change towards gender awareness and equality in the classroom and greater community. If there is resistance to gender mainstreaming initiatives, coupled with the fact that volunteers have no training in awareness raising, implementation efforts would be considered limited at best.

The lack of awareness regarding gender equality and gender issues may be connected to the traditional views of girls and women in the community. Participants cited that education partners failed to understand or acknowledge the concept of gender stereotypes and that these perceptions were being reinforced in the education system in a variety of ways, such as through the portrayals of girls and women in school textbooks. Participants noted the timidity of women in the Khmer culture, and their self-perceptions as being less capable than men. Other challenges that influenced the implementation process of inclusive education programming was the issue of school directors 'losing face' and the perception of poor job performance. Volunteers must tread carefully between their own objectives and ensuring diplomacy to avoid unnecessarily alienating or threatening local education partners.

The cultural context may be more influential in this circumstance due to the fact that volunteers are working in small farming communities as opposed to larger, more diverse urban centers. A more traditional farming lifestyle may also account to some

extent for the local populations' values and perceptions on education, as reported by volunteers. If common practice is for girls to only complete primary school as their future roles are to become wives and mothers, this patriarchal view may further complicate progress in the areas of implementing gender equality and gender responsiveness initiatives. As a result more traditional values could play a larger role in the community, possibly affecting the relationship between local education partners and volunteers.

5.0. 7 Implications for Girls' Education

The results from this study are based on data collected from the region of Battambang and as such may not necessarily be representative of other rural or urban areas in Cambodia. Despite the small scale of this study however there are important implications that can be drawn regarding gender mainstreaming and girls' education. Based on the study's results, there appear to be multiple barriers to gender equality which persist throughout the region. The education system faces significant challenges in terms of school infrastructure, funding, resources, teacher education and school management. Due to the overwhelming needs of the education system, gender responsiveness initiatives are largely overlooked by local partners and international development organizations. The restricted capacity of the education system creates barriers such as limited access and opportunities in education, particularly at the lower and upper secondary levels. Failure to address gender equality as a legitimate and necessary approach to education will result in girls perpetually being subjected to patriarchal views in educational materials and in outdated teacher-centered pedagogical methods. Without any explicit efforts at awareness-raising or gender responsiveness training in teacher

colleges, professional development or at the governmental level, traditional views and stereotypes of girls and women will remain unquestioned, leaving more than half the population at a profound disadvantage. In order to achieve true gender equality within the education system it is imperative that there are concerted and deliberate efforts made by all local and international stakeholders.

5.1 Implications for Practice

VSO and Gender Mainstreaming

The results from the study connect to several issues, informing the literature on gender mainstreaming (GM) and implementing GM initiatives. In its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), VSO has pledged to "promote gender equality and empower women". Its goals for education include achieving gender parity and gender equality by 2015 (VSO, 2012c). The organization intends to achieve this primarily through increased access to education. While these efforts are laudable, Reeves and Baden (2000) highlight the assumptions behind the term 'gender equality', which assumes that once barriers to access are removed, there is equality for all. However, gender equality does not recognise the fact that the female experience and reality may be different than the male.

Distinct from gender equality, the Word Bank (2002) defines 'empowerment' as a process and an end which emphasises women and girls' options, choice, control and power. The definitions of gender equality and empowerment have important implications for development INGOs and how they approach gender issues. As Hafner-Burton & Pollack (2002) argue, many organizations quickly embraced gender mainstreaming

policies, but that this was more of a 'rhetorical acceptance'. What is problematic

according to Beveridge & Nott (2002) is that the imprecise nature of the gender

mainstreaming concept has facilitated a rapid adoption of GM policies with little sense of

ownership or direction attached to it. It is important to highlight that in light of VSO's

contributions, the terms 'gender equality' and 'empowerment' should be seen as two

distinct entities, never assuming that once equality has been achieved empowerment will

automatically follow. While realizing gender parity in education is an important step in

the gender equality process, this should not be viewed as an end goal of development.

In North's (2010) research on international NGOs, she found that the wording of

the Millennium Development Goals declaration had far-reaching implications in the way

gender issues were viewed by organizations. North argued that INGO policies revealed a

privileging of a restricted interpretation of gender as defined by the MDG declaration,

which often led to the development of a limited form of gender mainstreaming while

more challenging political issues were ignored. Evidence of this can be found in the

'quantification' of the gender issue, whereby development organizations such as VSO

work to achieve gender equality primarily through parity in school enrolment, yet issues

such as gender-biased textbooks and pedagogical methods are largely overlooked.

Furthermore, Karlsson's (2010) research of gender mainstreaming initiatives found that

despite a high proportion of female enrolment, gender inequalities persisted in the

country. Problematic areas such as the top-down approach to gender issues were cited by

Karlsson, resulting in minimal levels of commitment by staff, insufficient budgeting for

human resources and initiatives, and unevenness across school districts. Reducing the

gender issue to one of numbers and merely achieving gender parity, while failing to

acknowledge these important issues, are challenges that need to be addressed by VSO and other development INGOs.

In order to circumvent the symbolic adoption of gender mainstreaming policies, several strategies must be employed by organizations. Volunteers working at the level of implementation must be trained in gender issues – how to facilitate discussions with local people surrounding gender stereotypes, how to identify gender issues in the workplace, coupled with explicit approaches on how to integrate gender practices into all aspects of development. A broad outcomes-based gender responsiveness curriculum alone will not guide volunteers, education officials, or teachers on how best to navigate gender inequality so deeply embedded in the school system.

While VSO does conduct gender equality workshops, the literature on gender mainstreaming suggests that the installation of an education and gender analysis framework by INGOs has garnered some success, as indicated in chapter 2 (Miske, Meagher & DeJaeghere, 2010). CARE International's Common Indicator Framework (CIF) provides a more comprehensive assessment of the underlying gendered norms and attitudes that can perpetuate gender inequalities in education systems. Another option is the use of gender focal points in the organization. However, research has demonstrated that without explicit strategies in place on how to employ gender analysis tools, implementation of gender mainstreaming will be largely symbolic (Karlsson, 2010).

In addition to training on gender mainstreaming practices, other improvements in VSO's training could be made. Information regarding cultural awareness and how to best navigate cultural differences such as 'losing face' may provide helpful for international volunteers. Furthermore, during data collection the transition process for new volunteers

was cited as problematic. More detailed documentation of past volunteers' activities and accomplishments would be beneficial for new volunteers to understand the direction of the organization's development work and priorities of the local community. Lastly, while the Annual Partnership Review is an important method of evaluation, increased monitoring and accountability of volunteers on a more frequent basis may prove advantageous for head administrators, as well as for volunteers themselves, providing a clear direction towards to organization's goals and objectives.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

The examination of the political, socio-cultural and economic challenges to inclusive education in this study provides questions for further studies. Firstly, while INGOs at the upper echelons of power may be inundated with accountability measures to their various donors and other stakeholders, at the ground level of program implementation, a lack of monitoring and accountability was cited as a cause for concern. Additional research in this area would reveal if these findings are consistent with other international development organizations (i.e. OXFAM, CARE International, etc.) and to what extent this lack of evaluation influences implementation of inclusive education programming and more specifically gender mainstreaming initiatives.

This study focused on development work being conducted by volunteers in a rural area in Cambodia. While engaging with their local education partners, these volunteers worked almost entirely in isolation from other volunteers in a variety of settings which ranged from the local school level, directly with communities, to post-secondary management and at the government levels of education. This inevitably raises the

question of what is most effective: to allocate technical aid to multiple areas of the educational landscape or to rather concentrate volunteer efforts in one or two particular areas, thus perhaps facilitating more profound change? While most, if not all INGOs, work in many echelons of the education system, it would be interesting to examine the different approaches from a development perspective. More research in this area would shed light on these questions.

The results from this study have a limited generalizability due to the size and scope of the data collected. Further studies in the area of INGOs are needed in several areas, in particular in the transition process for new volunteers and other development workers. Nearly all international organizations that provide technical assistance have international staff working in developing countries, often in environments vastly different than their own, and the learning curve for foreigners can be significant. Cultural sensitivity and gender awareness training, country information and other forms of support from the organization are critical to the transition process in order for volunteers to be successful in their work. From an implementation perspective, it would be interesting to explore the extent to which this transition process affects the execution of gender mainstreaming initiatives.

While outside the scope of this study, it was reported that VSO's latest development efforts were being targeted in the northeast provinces of Cambodia. The communities in this region are largely inhabited by indigenous peoples, and the local community has received extensive training and workshops on gender equality and gender-related issues. As research on these particular indigenous groups is limited, more studies with respect to gender mainstreaming are needed to inform the practice for

INGOs. In Cambodia, the cultural beliefs and lifestyle of these communities are vastly different than ethnic Khmer, and they retain uniquely traditional views on the role of women. To what extent gender responsiveness initiatives will be successfully implemented remains to be explored.

A complex relationship appears to exist between international volunteers and their local education partners. Levels of participation, cultural beliefs and power relations within these relationships and the role this plays in the negotiation and navigation of policy execution would reveal insights into the implementation process. Increased exploration in the area of these relationships would serve as an important contribution to the research on program implementation.

As previously stated, the location of this study took place in a rural region of Cambodia. Based on the study's location and findings two questions emerge: firstly, is the implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives more challenging and complex in rural settings as compared with urban centres? Secondly, to what extent is implementation affected by geography and physical distance between organization headquarters and their various outposts in terms of accountability and monitoring? Continued research efforts in these areas would contribute to the existing literature on implementation.

Lastly, another important area for further studies, particularly in the rural regions of Cambodia, is the drop in female enrolment at the lower secondary and secondary levels of education. While there was evidence in the study that suggests girls leave school due to participating in income-generating activities as well as to tending to domestic responsibilities, there may be other contextual factors contributing to this dilemma that

have previously been unexplored by researchers. Understanding the reasons for this decrease in enrolment is necessary to augment girls' participation in secondary education.

5.3 Reflection

As a researcher entering a foreign country to conduct a study, it is important that he/she does not simply collect the data without making a contribution or attempting to affect change in some way, however small. A contribution during data collection was made through discussions about gender equality with participants, with the intention of raising gender awareness. Positive feedback was given by one participant who stated that she valued the researcher's contribution of information on gender mainstreaming through discussion and the provision of a copy of the study's literature review.

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Appendix 1 - Interview Questions and Probes

1. As a volunteer with VSO, can you explain what your specific role is within the organization?

2. How does VSO as an organization work with the Child Friendly Schools Policy?
    a. Who are the people that VSO collaborates with? Other INGOs, levels of government, etc.
    b. What are the goals of the CFSP?
    c. Dimensions – access to schooling, effective learning, health/safety/protection, gender, community participation, National Education system support.

3. Gender Responsiveness is one of the six dimensions of the CFS Policy. To what extent does your work include implementing Gender Responsiveness?

    a. How is gender responsiveness/inclusive education a part of your position with VSO?

    b. How do you work to implement GR within your role as a volunteer with VSO?

    c. What has been your experience with Gender Responsiveness in your work as a volunteer?

    d. If you haven't worked on gender responsiveness, why would you say this hasn't been a part of your work?

    e. Is the GR dimension operating as it's outlined in the CFSP?

4. With this new Canadian donor, how does their funding for gender work with the CFS?

    a. What kinds of gender initiatives has the new Canadian donor requested?

     b. How does the Canadian donor's gender funding work with VSO and their goals?

5. In your work as a volunteer, what are the political challenges of implementing Gender Responsiveness?

     a. What are the political challenges of implementing inclusive education in your work?
     b. For example – power struggle, power relations, bureaucratic challenges, etc.
     c. In the work that you do, is there a need/request for Gender Responsiveness?
     d. If you haven't worked on GR, what would you say might be a political challenge, based on your experiences thus far in Cambodia?

6. In your opinion, does VSO have adequate resources to implement GR?
     a. In terms of financial, HR, Facilities

7. What are the economic challenges of implementing GR?
     a. How important is funding to GR?
     b. Where does funding come from?
     c. How does funding affect the implementation of GR?
8. With respect to GR, what are the cultural challenges in working in this area?
     a. How was the local community (teachers, parents, kids, etc.) reacted to the idea of inclusive education and helping girls in this way?

9. Is VSO currently working on GR at the secondary level?
     a. If not, why is this not a priority for VSO, in your opinion? (Especially as VSO is leaving Battambang in the next few years.)

10. How much of a priority would you say GR is within your role at VSO?
     a. How much GR is going on at the moment?
     b. How much GR has gone on in the past year?
     c. How much GR have you seen while you have been here?

Appendix 2

Follow-Up Questions - VSO Volunteers and Staff

Thank you for taking the time to complete these follow-up questions. The purpose of these follow-up questions is to understand the challenges that you experience in implementing an inclusive education program that targets girls' education in Cambodia.

Please respond to the questions as honestly and accurately as you can. These surveys will remain confidential and will only be seen by the researcher.

If there is insufficient space on the survey, you may use the back of this sheet or an additional sheet of paper to record your responses.

1. What is your job title at VSO-Cambodia?

    _____

    _____

2. Based on your knowledge, what are the goals of VSO's inclusive education program?

    _____

    _____

3. What are VSO's contributions to girls' education in Cambodia?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. What have been some positive experiences you have had in your work at VSO?

_____

_____

_____

5. What are the biggest challenges in implementing girls' education in Cambodia, based on your experience working in an inclusive education program? **(Consider the following: VSO's program goals, the politics of partnerships, the local culture, the politics of implementation, and VSO's program funding.)**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What changes would you recommend for VSO's program to be more effective in girls' education?

_____

_____

7. Based on your experience, how would you change <u>the implementation process</u> of a girls' education program to make it more successful?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Please use the space below to add any other comments you have about VSO's

program implementation and / or girls' secondary education in Cambodia.

_____

_____

Please return this to Tammy Froese when you have completed this survey. Thank you for taking the time to fill in your responses to the above questions about VSO's inclusive education program.

Appendix 3 – Letter of Consent

Thesis Title: An INGO's Implementation Challenges of Inclusive Education in a Developing Country

Researcher: Tammy Froese

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges that VSO staff and volunteers experience while implementing an inclusive education program in Cambodia. The research I will conduct will consist of one interview with you, speaking about your experience in implementing an inclusive education program. The interview will last about an hour in total. I will be tape-recording our interview and will be taking brief notes as we speak about your experiences. The questions I will be asking you will be about the various cultural and political challenges you have experienced in your work in implementing an inclusive education program, and more specifically, your perceptions of the challenges in girls' education in rural Cambodia.

While this is considered a low-risk activity based upon the outlined criteria, it is important that you are fully aware of the details of this study as well as your participation in it. In addition, please note that your confidentiality will be maintained at all times. While I will be aware of your identity, for the purposes of this study you as a participant will be given a pseudonym. I, as the sole researcher will be the only one to have access to this information. My thesis advisor, Dr. Deo Poonwassie at the University of Manitoba, Canada, will view all field notes, data collection and analyses. Should you so desire, a written summary of the results of the study can be made available to you when it is completed.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and / or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Researcher contact information: Tammy Froese

tammyfroese@hotmail.com

Thesis Advisor's Contact Information: Dr. Deo Poonwassie

poonwass@ms.umanitoba.ca

This research has been approved by the Education Research Course Review Committee at the University of Manitoba, Canada. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or Dr. Zana Lutfiyya, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and Research at the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, at the following email address: zana@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

--Provide for Signatures as Required------------------------

I wish to obtain a written summary of the results of the study when it is completed.

(Please check one)

_____ YES

_____ NO

_____

Participant's Signature   Date

_____

Researcher Signature   Date

Appendix 4 – Ethics Protocol Submission Forms

Fort Garry Campus Research Ethics Boards
CTC Building, 208 - 194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2
Phone: (204) 474-7122

Protocol # _____
(Assigned by HES Admin.)

**FORT GARRY CAMPUS RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
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Psychology/Sociology REB ☐   Education/Nursing REB x☐   Joint-
Faculty REB ☐

Check the appropriate REB for the Faculty or Department of the Principal Researcher.
This form, attached research protocol, and all supporting documents, must be sent **in
quadruplicate** (original plus 3 copies), to the Human Ethics Coordinator, CTC Building,
208 - 194 Dafoe Road, 474-7122.

Principal Researcher(s):   Tammy
Froese_____

Status of Principal Researcher(s): (please check):   Faculty ☐   Post-Doc ☐
Student: Graduate X☐   Undergraduate ☐   WRHA Affiliate ☐   Other
Specify:_____

Address (to receive Approval Certificate): Road, Wpg. Mb. R3E
2W6_____

Phone: Fax: N/A_____   Email:
tammyfroese@hotmail.com_____

Project Title: An INGO's Implementation Challenges of Inclusive Education in a
Developing Country

Start date: September 2011__Planned period of research (if less than one year):
December 2011_____

Type of research (Please check):
Faculty Research   Administrative Research   Student Research

Self-funded ☐   Sponsored ☐   Central   ☐   Thesis X ☐
                                                                            Class Project ☐
(Agency)   _____   Unit-based   ☐
                                                                            Course Number:

Signature(s) of Principal Researcher(s):

_____

For student research: This project is approved by department/thesis committee. The advisor has reviewed and approved the protocol.

Name of Thesis Advisor_Deo Poonwassie_____

                                                                    Signature_____
(Required if thesis research)

Name of Course Instructor: _____
Signature_____
(Required if class project)

Persons signing assure responsibility that all procedures performed under the protocol will be conducted by individuals responsibly entitled to do so, and that any deviation from the protocol will be submitted to the REB for its approval prior to implementation. Signature of the thesis advisor/course instructor indicates that student researchers have been instructed on the principles of ethics policy, on the importance of adherence to the ethical conduct of the research according to the submitted protocol (and of the necessity to report any deviations from the protocol to their advisor/instructor).

Ethics Protocol Submission Form
(Basic Questions about the Project)

The questions on this form are of a general nature, designed to collect pertinent information about potential problems of an ethical nature that could arise with the proposed research project. In addition to answering the questions below, the researcher is expected to append pages (and any other necessary documents) to a submission detailing the required information about the research protocol (see page 4).

1.   Will the subjects in your study be
        UNAWARE that they are subjects?   ____ Yes
                                                               __X__ No

2.   Will information about the subjects be
        obtained from sources other than the
        subjects themselves?   ____ Yes ___X_ No

3.   Are you and/or members of your research team in a
        position of power vis-a-vis the subjects? If yes,
        clarify the position of power and how it will be   ____ Yes
                                                               ___X_ No
        addressed.

4.   Is any inducement or coercion used to obtain
        the subject's participation?   ____ Yes
                                                               __X__ No

5.   Do subjects identify themselves by name
        directly, or by other means that allows you or
        anyone else to identify data with specific subjects?
        If yes, indicate how confidentiality will be
        maintained. What precautions are to be
        undertaken in storing data and in its
        eventual destruction/disposition.   ___X_ Yes
                                                               ____ No

6.   If subjects are identifiable by name,
        do you intend to recruit them for future
        studies? If yes, indicate why this is necessary
        and how you plan to recruit these subjects
        for future studies.   ____ Yes
                                                               __X__ No

7.   Could dissemination of findings compromise

confidentiality? ____ Yes
__X_ No

8. Does the study involve physical or emotional
   stress, or the subject's expectation
   thereof, such as might result from conditions
   in the study design? ____ Yes __X__ No

9. Is there any threat to the personal safety
   of subjects? ____ Yes ___X_ No

10. Does the study involve subjects who
    are not legally or practically able to give
    their valid consent to participate
    (e.g., children, or persons with mental health problems
    and/or cognitive impairment)?
    If yes, indicate how informed consent will be obtained
    from subjects and those authorized to speak for subjects. ____ Yes
    __X__ No

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11. Is deception involved (i.e., will subjects be
    intentionally misled about the purpose
    of the study, their own performance, or other
    features of the study)? ____ Yes __X__ No

12. Is there a possibility that abuse of children or persons
    in care might be discovered in the course of the study?
    If yes, current laws require that certain offenses against
    children and persons in care be reported to legal authorities.
    Indicate the provisions that have been made for complying
    with the law. __X__ Yes ____ No

13. (a) Does the study include the use of personal health information? The Manitoba Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) outlines responsibilities of researchers to ensure safeguards that will protect personal health information. If yes, indicate provisions that will be made to comply with this Act (see document for guidance - http:/www.gov.mb.ca/health/phia/index.html).

_____ Yes

_X___ No

13. (b) PHIA requires that all employees, students, or agents who handle or are exposed to personal health information take PHIA Orientation and sign a pledge of confidentiality that acknowledges that they are bound by written policy and procedures.

Has PHIA Orientation and pledge-signing been completed by all employees, students, and agents? _____ Yes _____ No

If "No," the Principal Investigator should contact UM Access & Privacy Coordinator's Office to make arrangements, fippa@umanitoba.ca

Where individuals have not completed PHIA Orientation and signed a pledge, and for the purpose of ensuring that they do, Principal Investigator's contact information will be provided to the University Access & Privacy Coordinator's Office.

Provide additional details pertaining to any of the questions above for which you responded "yes", excluding question 13 (b). Attach additional pages, if necessary.

_12_/07__/2011_

_____

dd   mm   yr   **Signature of Principal Researcher**

Ethics Protocol Submission Form   Page 4

(Required Information about the Research Protocol)

Each application for ethics approval should include the following information and be **presented in the following order**, using these headings:

1.   **Summary of Project:** Attach a detailed but concise (one typed page) outline of

the **purpose** and **methodology** of the study describing **<u>precisely</u>** the procedures in which subjects will be asked to participate.

2.   **Research Instruments:** Attach copies of **<u>all</u>** materials (e.g., questionnaires, tests, interview schedules, etc.) to be given to subjects and/or third parties.

3.   **Study Subjects:** Describe the number of subjects, and how they will be recruited for this study. Are there any special characteristics of the subjects that make them especially vulnerable or require extra measures?

4.   **Informed Consent:** Will consent **in writing** be obtained? If so, attach a copy of the consent form. (see guidelines on informed consent). If written consent is not to be obtained, indicate why not and the manner by which subjects' consent (verbally) or assent to participate in the study will be obtained. How will the nature of the study and subjects' participation in the study be explained to them **before** they agree to participate. How will consent be obtained from guardians of subjects from vulnerable populations? If confidential records will be consulted, indicate the nature of the records, and how subjects' consent is to be obtained. If it is essential to the research, indicate why subjects are not to be made aware of their records being consulted.

5.   **Deception:** Deception refers to the deliberate withholding of essential information or the provision of deliberately misleading information about the research or its purposes. If the research involves deception, the researcher must provide detailed information on the extent and nature of deception and why the research could not be conducted without it. This description must be sufficient to justify a waiver of informed consent.

6.   **Feedback/Debriefing:** Describe the feedback that will be given to subjects about the research after they have completed their participation. How will the feedback be provided and by whom? If feedback will not be given, please explain why feedback is not planned. If deception is employed, debriefing is mandatory. Describe in detail the nature of the post-deception feedback, and when and how it will be given.

7.   **Risks and Benefits:** Is there any risk to the subjects, or to a third party? If yes, provide a description of the risks and the counterbalancing benefits of the proposed study. Indicate the precautions taken by the researcher under these circumstances.

8. **Anonymity and Confidentiality:** Describe the procedures for preserving anonymity and confidentiality. If confidentiality is not an issue in this research, please explain why. Will confidential records be consulted? If yes, indicate what precautions will be taken to ensure subjects' confidentiality. How will the data be stored to ensure confidentiality? Will the data be destroyed, if so, when?

9. **Compensation:** Will subjects be compensated for their participation? Compensation may reasonably provide subjects with assistance to defray the costs associated with study participation.

Ethics Protocol Submission Form   Page 5
Review your submission according to this:

Checklist

Principal Researcher: Tammy Froese_____

☐	Item from the Ethics Protocol Submission Form
x	All information requested on the first page completed in legible format (typed or printed).
x	Signatures of the principal researcher (and faculty advisor, or course instructor if student research).
x	Answers to all 13 questions on pages 2-3 of Ethics Protocol Submission form, INCLUDING ANY QUESTIONS FOR WHICH YOUR RESPONSE WAS "YES".
x	Detailed information requested on page 4 of the Ethics Protocol Submission Form in the numbered order and with the headings indicated.
x	Ethics Protocol Submission Form in quadruplicate (Original plus 3 copies).
x	Research instruments: 4 copies of all instruments and other supplementary material to be given to subjects.
x	Copy of this checklist.

NOTE: For ease of reviewing it would be much appreciated if you could number the pages of your submission (handwriting the numbers is quite acceptable).

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<u>**Required Information about the Research Protocol**</u>

1.   **Summary of Project**: The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine

      one international nongovernmental organization's (INGO) political,

      cultural and economic implementation challenges of an inclusive

      education program in Cambodia. Of particular interest to this study within

      this inclusive education program, is the education of girls in Cambodia at

      the secondary level.

      I will be researching the INGO Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). VSO

      is a British international nongovernmental organization established in

      1958, with federation counterparts in countries such as Canada, the

      Netherlands, the Philippines, and Kenya. VSO is a development NGO

      which recruits volunteers from Australia, India, the Philippines, Canada,

      Ireland, the UK and Kenya to work with professionals in developing

      countries in a variety of fields. These range from engineering, health,

      education, HIV/AIDs, secure livelihoods, participation and governance, to

      disability. The NGO works in over forty countries ranging from

      Bangladesh to Zimbabwe. Each of VSO's country programmes selects two

      or three development goals to focus on. In addition to development

      projects, VSO also undertakes advocacy campaigns locally, nationally and

internationally to raise awareness for social justice and to effect change in policies and procedures. The organization forges local partnerships within developing countries, assigning their volunteers to placements in order to increase their impact and effectiveness.

In support of the Education for All campaign, VSO Cambodia's goal is to ensure that primary and lower secondary children in rural provinces of Cambodia receive a basic education that is based on their individual needs and abilities, regardless of their sex, disability or ethnicity. This is executed through two goals: firstly, to improve the quality of teaching in schools, teacher training colleges and professional development centers serving poor and marginalised groups, in particular the disabled and girls. Secondly, the goal is to improve the management of education systems and resources for poor and marginalised groups, especially women and people with disabilities.

VSO Cambodia works in three areas of development. Consequently there are three separate programmes - Education, Health and Secure Livelihoods. The organization is composed of permanent staff and volunteers who commit to a one or two year contract with VSO. There are

19 permanent staff including 3 expatriate staff working at the VSO Head

Office in the capital city, Phnom Penh. In terms of potential participants,

there are 30 volunteers who work in the Education program throughout

parts of rural Cambodia.

VSO Cambodia's Mainstreaming Inclusive Education (MIE) program is

dedicated to six rural provinces: Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri, Banteay,

Meanchey, Battambang, Koh Kong and Kampot. The focus of

international volunteer placements is to provide technical assistance at the

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in Cambodia, implement short-

term and long-term technical assistance at the provincial and district

levels, deliver long-term technical assistance at Disability Action Council,

and facilitate communication for Teacher Training Centers, Provincial

Offices of Education and the Departments of Education in Cambodia.

I will be conducting this research in two rural provinces in Cambodia,

Kampot and Battambang. I will be interviewing six participants who will

have volunteered for this study. All of the participants will be volunteers

and staff working for one specific international nongovernmental

organisation, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). All of the volunteers

will be working within the inclusive education program. I will contact the

manager of VSO in Cambodia to ask their assistance in the recruitment of

participants for this study. Each participant will be observed for three days

at the VSO Cambodia work site(s). Near the end of the observation I will

conduct a one-hour interview with each participant. Upon completion of

the interview a set of follow-up questions will be left for the participant to

complete and send back to me. Participants will be required to notify me

via email when they have completed the follow up survey, at which point I

will collect the survey.

My role within VSO Cambodia is solely has as an independent researcher.

I will not be working for or providing any services for VSO Cambodia.

2.   **Research Instruments**: Methods of data collection will be through

observation, a set of six individual interviews, (a one-hour interview per

participant) and a set of follow-up questions to be completed by the

participants. **(See Appendix 2 for Interview Questions and Follow-up**

questions) All six participants in the study will be volunteers and staff

working within the inclusive education program of an international

nongovernmental organisation in Cambodia. I will be observing each

participant over the course of three days. I will be taking brief field notes

during the observations. Field notes from the three-day observations will not include any activities of the children. Only the activities of the participants will be recorded. Activities that will be recorded: volunteer training sessions with local teachers, volunteer meetings with local grassroots NGOs, volunteer training sessions with government and ministry officials, volunteers meeting with school administrators, etc.

3.   At the conclusion of the observation an interview will be conducted. The interviews will take place at the workplace(s) of the VSO, international nongovernmental organisation. My approach during the interview will be semi-structured: due to the nature of this study, the interview's structure will likely take on the form of a conversation about their personal experiences in working in an inclusive education program, rather than a formal interview. The list of interview questions will be used as a means of facilitating and guiding the general direction of the conversation. All the interviews will be tape-recorded for further data analysis. I will be taking brief notes during the interviews with the participants. Another method of data collection is through a set of written follow-up questions presented to each participant at the conclusion of the interview (**also outlined in Appendix 2**). The follow-up questions are to be completed directly on the question sheet by participants and sent back to

me upon completion. Participants will be required to notify me via email when they have completed the follow up survey, at which point I will collect the survey.

4.   Study Subjects: Two staff members from VSO Cambodia will be interviewed – the director of VSO Cambodia as well as the Education Program Manager. The other participants in the study will be six volunteers who work in rural Cambodia for VSO. I will send a letter to Mr. Sokhim, Education Program Manager at Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), asking for his help in recruiting participants for this study. **(See Appendix 4).** I will request that VSO send out a letter to all their staff and volunteers on my behalf, explaining the project and asking them to contact me directly if they are interested in participating in the study. These individuals will also be informed that they are free to decline this offer with absolutely no consequences to their work. All interviews will take place at the work locations of the international nongovernmental organisation, VSO. Due to the fact that all the participants are adults who will volunteer to participate in this study, there are no special characteristics of the participants that make them especially vulnerable or require extra measures.

5. **Informed Consent:** Consent in writing will be obtained by all six

    participants in the study. **(See Appendix 3)** Prior to the actual interview, I

    will conduct a meeting with each participant individually to discuss the

    nature of the study and the participant's participation in the study. During

    this time the letter of consent will be distributed and explained. This will

    provide an opportunity for participants to pose questions and clarify any

    ambiguities. As the participants are adults, no consent from guardians is

    required. No confidential records will be consulted for the purposes of this

    study.

6. **Deception:** Due to the nature of this study, there is no need for deception

    of any kind. Participants will be aware at all times of the data collection

    process.

7. **Feedback/Debriefing:** All participants will have an option through the

    information provided on the consensus form to receive a written summary

    of the results of the study when it is completed.

8. **Risks and Benefits:** There are neither risks to the participants nor any

    third parties in this study. The benefits from this study can be found in

allowing the participants an opportunity to reflect on and share their insights about their experience working in an inclusive education program.

9. **Anonymity and Confidentiality:** The names of the participants will be known to the researcher conducting the interview; however pseudonyms will be used in the written field notes and transcripts of the interviews. This will maintain the participants' confidentiality throughout the data collection and analysis process. All interviews will be tape-recorded. All notes will be kept confidential and in a locked office. Tape-recorded interviews will be destroyed one month after the research process is complete. All field notes, tape-recorded transcriptions and all other data will be kept confidential and in a locked office. Tape-recorded interviews will be destroyed one month after the research process is complete. Data will be destroyed by shredding hardcopies and deleting files stored on my computer. Taped interviews will be erased from the recorder's memory card. No confidential records will be accessed at any time for the purposes of this interview**.**

10. **Compensation:** Participants will not be compensated monetarily or otherwise for their participation in this study.