

LOOKING TO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN TURKEY  
FROM EMPOWERMENT APPROACH:  
CASE STUDIES IN ZÜMRÜT-KASTAMONU AND OVACIK-TUNCELİ

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## ABSTRACT

### LOOKING TO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN TURKEY FROM EMPOWERMENT APPROACH: CASE STUDIES IN ZÜMRÜT-KASTAMONU AND OVACIK-TUNCELİ

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This study has discussed women's empowerment through development projects. For this aim, development thought and practices are questioned by establishing their relationship with modernization theory and (neo)liberal politics; the theories, which include women and development, are issued historically. From these theories, Women in Development (WID) Approach, Gender and Development (GAD) Approach, and Empowerment Approach are critically discussed. In the study three points are emphasized. Firstly, the theoretical approaches have developed by articulating to each other. Secondly, the approaches have lost their transformative and political characteristics in the usage of mainstream development theorists and institutions. It is pointed that the inclusion of women into development by the mainstream is instrumentalized for the other development goals. Thirdly, although the language of GAD and Empowerment Approaches are adopted by the mainstream, at the discursive and practical level, the dominance of WID continues.

The development projects implemented in Turkey, in the period between 1960 and 1980 and post 1980 that are significant periods of the economic and political history of Turkey, are evaluated from gender perspective and their parallel characteristics to the discourse and practices in the world are indicated. It is seen that whereas the GAD and Empowerment Approach exist in the language of the development projects implemented in Turkey, they do not reflect to the practices.

Within the light of these discussions, to be able to comprehend whether the development projects provide contribution to women's empowerment or not, two development projects that are implemented in Turkey are analyzed. The projects are assessed from the Empowerment Approach, as a current feminist approach in the development field, within the framework of power relations.

Keywords: Development Projects, Empowerment Approach, Women's Empowerment, Turkey

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE’DEKİ KALKINMA PROJELERİNE GÜÇLEN(DİR)ME YAKLAŞIMINDAN BAKMAK: ZÜMRÜT-KASTAMONU VE OVACIK-TUNCELİ VAKA ÇALIŞMALARI

Cevahir, Özgüler

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Bu çalışma kalkınma projeleri yolu ile kadınların güçlenmesini tartışmıştır. Bu amaçla, kalkınma düşüncesi ve pratiklerini, modernleşme teorisi ve (neo)liberal politikalar ile bağlantısını kurarak sorgulamış; kalkınmada kadınlara yer veren teorileri tarihsel olarak ele almıştır. Bu teorilerden Kalkınmada Kadın Yaklaşımı, Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kalkınma Yaklaşımı, ve Güçlen(dir)me Yaklaşımı eleştirel bir şekilde tartışılmıştır. Çalışmada üç noktaya vurgu yapılmıştır. Birincisi, teorik yaklaşımlar birbirine eklenerek gelişmiştir. İkincisi, yaklaşımlar ana akım kalkınma teorisyenleri ve kuruluşlarının kullanımında dönüştürücü ve politik özelliklerini yitirmiştir. Ana akım tarafından, kadınların kalkınmaya dahil edilmesinin diğer kalkınma hedefleri için araçsallaştırıldığına işaret edilmiştir. Üçüncüsü, ana akımda her ne kadar Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kalkınma Yaklaşımı ile Güçlendirme Yaklaşımının dili uyarlansa da, söylemsel ve pratik düzeyde Kalkınmada Kadın Yaklaşımı’nın egemenliği sürmektedir.

Türkiye’de uygulanan kalkınma projeleri, Türkiye’nin iktisadi ve politik tarihi açısından önemli dönemler olan 1960-1980 arası ve 1980 sonrasında, toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifinden değerlendirilmiş ve dünyadaki söylem ve pratiklerle paralelliklerine işaret edilmiştir. Türkiye’de gerçekleştirilen kalkınma projelerinde

Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Güçlendirme Yaklaşımları'nın dilde varolurken, pratiklere yansımadağı görölmektedir.

Tüm bu tartışmalar ışığında, kalkınma projelerinin kadınların güçlenmesine katkı sağlayıp sağlamadığını anlayabilmek için Türkiye'de gerçekleştirilen iki kalkınma projesi incelenmiştir. Projeler, kalkınma alanındaki güncel feminist yaklaşım olan Güçlen(dir)me yaklaşımından, iktidar ilişkileri çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kalkınma Projeleri, Güçlen(dir)me Yaklaşımı, Kadınların Güçlenmesi, Türkiye

To My Father...

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Research Question and Scope of the Study

Nowadays, we witness the proliferation of development projects carried out all around the world in various scales and subjects. In conjunction with this situation, recent terminology including experts, funding organizations, participation (into decision-making), bottom-up approach, grassroots, local communities, income generation, poverty alleviation and sustainability has entered into our knowledge store. Among them, women's empowerment and gender equality became fashionable terms in the development area. Since they became *sine qua non* criterion of donor agencies, they constitute a fundable field, which draws attention of various project-implementing agencies. Even the projects do not directly include women's empowerment or gender equality into their aims; they began to recognize women in their target groups, implementing activities for and with women within the projects. These recent developments of concerning women in projects, via including them to the target groups, seem to be significant steps. Yet, the crucial question is what contributions do they provide to the women? To what extent do the projects offer opportunities for women's empowerment? What kind of changes happen in women's lives regarding the gender equality and women's empowerment? In order to comprehend women's empowerment through development projects, this study mainly asks whether development projects empower women, and if they do, how do they empower women. In this context, the study attempts to explore the impacts of the projects on women's empowerment by analyzing multiple dimensions of empowerment. For this aim, the study will put under scrutiny two (sustainable) development projects, which were carried out in Turkey between 2003 and 2007. These projects are the "Zümriit Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs" and the "Project for the Protection and Encouragement of the Production of Tunceli Garlic".

A comprehensive look to women's empowerment through development projects necessitates both questioning the development (projects) itself and a historical look to theoretical approaches and their extensions in practice concerning women. In terms of questioning the development, the study will point out to the modernization (theory) while it is the underlying idea behind the development thinking, practice and policies. In the same line, throughout the whole narrative in the study, the study will attempt to set up the relations between the development discourses and projects with the (neo)liberal doctrine.

A historical perspective to the development of development theories (and practices) with concern to women's empowerment, traces us back to the 1940s and 1950s, to the early development initiatives which had emerged along with the modernization theory. During this period the development initiatives almost always ignored women. Women were neither beneficiaries of the development practices, nor were agents. In the 1970s, the works designating to the productive roles of women in development and the upsurging liberal feminist movement gave way to the Women in Development (WID) Approach arguing the integration of women into the development projects. This period witnessed an emphasis on women's productive roles. Basing on the limitations of the approach and the failures of practices carried out at this period gave way to the rising out of the Gender and Development Approach (GAD) at 1980s. It has emerged from the grassroots organizational experiences, writings of the Third World feminists and socialist feminist scholarship both in the First and Third World. By bringing the term gender into the foreground, the approach focused on gender and class relations, and in this context targeted both women and men in the projects. During 1990s from inside the GAD, along with the bottom-up and participatory approaches, Empowerment Approach has emerged which is also the current feminist approach in the development area. Rather than both men and women, it stressed women's empowerment. Yet, different than the other approaches, which have had almost common accepted definitions, empowerment approach has diverse understandings among the scholars.

Throughout the discussion on the above mentioned theoretical approaches, the study will attempt to reveal multiple-points. First of all, it will show that the

approaches are not wholly independent from each other or substituting each other. Rather, they emerge as stages developed by articulating each other. Through challenging each other, in fact, they are nurtured from the former approaches. Secondly, it will indicate how the approaches diverge from their original definitions and aims when they enter into the mainstream discourse and implementations. As the approaches are adopted by the mainstream, the approaches (especially GAD and Empowerment Approach) are depoliticized, losing their transformative character. Collaterally, the study will critically focus on how the concerns on women become means for other development objectives within the mainstream development discourse and practices. Thirdly, it will underline the continued existence and dominance of the WID approach- especially through its instrumentalization of women for the anti-poverty and efficiency goals of development- in the mainstream development discourse and implementations; even the language of GAD and Empowerment Approach is adopted. Hence, it will be claimed that since WID, the adoption of GAD and Empowerment Approaches by mainstream is mere a cosmetic change and a change from liberal context extending to the neo-liberal paradigm. In this respect, lastly, even though the Empowerment Approach constitutes the standpoint of this study, it will be scrutinized (with respect to both its mainstream and feminist understandings of the concept) and its relation with the neo-liberal politics will be critically examined.

Another necessity for a comprehensive look to women's empowerment through development projects is to understand the context in Turkey. If we take the subject in the context of Turkey, regarding women and gender, the study will point out to the fact that the development projects follow the same path with the wider world. The period between 1960 and 1980, as well as the post-1980s are crucial since they signify the transitions in the economic and political history of Turkey. The development of development projects can be traced back to the 1960s in Turkey with the state having the leading role. During this period regionally planned projects are implemented either in ignorance of the gender aspect or through following the WID approach by adding women's components. The 1980s is a turning point for Turkey, as it is for the Third World countries, through the implementation of structural adjustment policies. This has given way to the application of neo-liberal

politics, in turn, the withdrawal of the state from economic sphere. During this period, parallel to the discourses mentioned previously, gender equality and women's empowerment entered into the agenda of development area in Turkey as well. The critical evaluation of the development projects from gender perspective in Turkey also displays same features with the happenings in the world, at most staying within the WID boundaries. The aims of gender equality and women's empowerment could not be internalized. They exist only in the language and texts; could not be reflected to implementations.

To be able to understand what actually happens on the ground in Turkey, in other words whether or not the development projects empower women in Turkey, two projects will be put under scrutiny. As the case studies of this thesis, two sustainable development projects- whose focus area is biodiversity- are chosen: The "Zümrüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs" and the "Project for the Protection and Encouragement of the Production of Tunceli Garlic", respectively. In the selection of the projects, the findings of the research named "The Assessment of Social Impact in Biological Diversity Projects of GEF-SGP (Global Environmental Facility-Small Grants Programme) and Determination of Working Fields with Vulnerable Groups of SGP", conducted by the YADA (Yaşama Dair Vakıf) Research Team between 2006 and 2007, are used. In the research of YADA, six biodiversity projects are evaluated. As a result, the ways environmental projects establish connection with the gender issue is categorized. However, here it should be noted that one project can fall into more than one category. These are as follows:

- ignorance towards the issue
- not contacting women
- denying the disadvantaged status
- disregarding the issue
- having the expectation that empowering the household will be automatically reflected on women
- including women in the activities –through secondary ways-
- carrying out activities for women

- incorporating women into the activities –into the design, management, and decision-making processes-
- empowering and/or improving the conditions of women without a gender strategy
- keeping a gender-balanced stance<sup>1</sup>

Among the six projects, two projects are chosen among the ones which does not fall into the category of “ignorance towards the issue”, “not contacting the women”, and “disregarding the issue”. While three of the projects in the research of YADA fall into the category of these and the other one has a huge research area –all around Turkey- the mentioned case studies are issued in this study.

The first project is “Zümürüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs.” The project site is the Zümürüt Village, which lies on the east of Küre Mountains National Park attached to the Province of Kastamonu. The village is mentioned to be the “most remote forest villages located in the buffer zone of the Küre Mountains National Park, and its most important income source, forestry, has been affected negatively by the declaration of the National Park.”<sup>2</sup> The project, through the ecotourism, which is told to have potential for poverty alleviation and nature protection, mainly aims at to improve the relations of the villagers with the National Park and to establish sustainable income generating resource.

The second project is “Project for the Protection and Encouragement of the Production of Tunceli Garlic.” The project site is Ovacık district that is attached to Tunceli. The project mainly aims to cultivate the Tunceli Garlic that is an endemic plant which is under the threat of distinction because of unconscious gathering of the plant by the families whose income is based on the sale of it. Through this way it is aimed to decrease the risk of distinction of the garlic plant and to supply

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<sup>1</sup> See the summary of the report of YADA, available at: [www.yasamadair.org/Texts\\_TR/Toplumsal\\_Etki.ppt](http://www.yasamadair.org/Texts_TR/Toplumsal_Etki.ppt)

<sup>2</sup> Zümürüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs, GEF-SGP, Project Proposal, 2003

alternative income source for the families who had migrated without their consent (dislocation-displacement-forced migration) because of the conflict in the area.

## **1.2. Research Methodology: Operationalizing the Concept of Empowerment**

All too often, theorists of development have fought their conceptual battles on paper while development practitioners have gone their own way. Neither seems to believe they have much to learn from each other. I believe there are many lessons to learn from the field, particularly when considering the often yawning gap between discourse and practice as well as the complexities of working and empathizing across cultural and class divisions. To that end, we turn to voices from the field.<sup>3</sup>

As empowerment is qualitative by its very nature<sup>4</sup>, and quantitative measurements are not adequate to tell about the qualitative processes, qualitative methodological analysis seems to be proper for such a research. The research bases on documents of the projects (mainly project proposals and reports), participatory observations, semi-structured in-depth interviews and informal interviews to understand the context. The participatory observations tell much even sometimes which can not be found out during the interviews. Therefore, observations will also be taken into account for the analysis. In addition, internet sites about the projects-including videos<sup>5</sup>-will also be put into account.

The qualitative interviews are conducted with mainly the women participants of the projects. Furthermore, to be able to understand the gendered power relations, the interviews are also conducted with the project facilitators and husbands of the mentioned women. Project managers and members of the project team are interviewed to comprehend their perspectives. Both their perspectives and the project documents will convey the way projects establish connection with the

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<sup>3</sup> Parpart, Jane L., "Lessons From the Field: Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development from a Post-(Post-?) Development Perspective", *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 46

<sup>4</sup> Kilby, Patrick, "Questioning Empowerment: Lessons From Women's Groups in India", *Participatory Development Working Papers*, No 06/03 (September 2006), p. 8

<sup>5</sup> The Zümürüt village and the project became theme for 'Gezelim Görelim' television programme that is a travel documentary. The video records of the programme can be found at the internet.

women/gender issue. Through the interviews with project facilitators, it will be attempted to find out whether they see the project for poverty alleviation, income generation or for women's empowerment; whether they follow bottom-up approach or top-down approach, whether they see the women as agents or victims. Because the project facilitators' role is important in the sense that through the projects design and implementation they can provide conditions for the women's empowerment. The interviews with the husbands will mainly tell about the gender relations in the household and their impact on the participation of the women to the project.

Within the above context, I conducted interviews with eleven women; eight men (the husbands of women) and with the project facilitator in the Zümüt Village. Additionally I did three unstructured interviews to understand the context better. In the Ovacık, I conducted interviews with ten women; six men (the husbands of the women) and with a member of the project team. In addition, I did ten unstructured interviews with local figures such as members of Association, men and women residing in the project site.

The study will operationalize<sup>6</sup> empowerment as such:

1. Power Within: Individual Empowerment (Resources, Agency, Achievements)
2. Power With: Collective Empowerment (Collectivity and Solidarity)
3. Power To: Collective Political Outcomes

Based on the feminist definitions of empowerment, this study will analyse the projects in terms of "power within", "power with", and "power to". For operationalizing the empowerment approach, this study has been inspired both from Shirin Rai, Kathleen Staudt, Jane Parpart, and from the framework drawn by Naila Kabeer. Individual empowerment will be analyzed with reference to the framework

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<sup>6</sup> For detailed knowledge on methodological approaches to measuring and analyzing empowerment see Malhotra, Anju; Schuler, Sidney Ruth; Boender, Carol, Measuring Women's Empowerment as a Variable in International Development, Commissioned by Gender and Development and Social Development Groups of World Bank, June 28 2002. The study reviews existing theoretical, methodological and empirical literature from various fields of social sciences (economics, sociology, anthropology, and demography) and maps the methodological approaches to empowerment. For this aim, for example, the study reviews forty five empirical studies.

devised by Naila Kabeer whose definition will be detailed in the Chapter Two. To put it here shortly, Kabeer refers to resources, agency and achievements. The resources include material (land, equipment, education, and finance), human and social resources (knowledge, skills, creativity, claims, expectations in the networks, connections). Agency refers to self reliance, decision-making, bargaining, negotiation, deception, manipulation, subversion, and resistance. Resources and agency together constitute achievements, the outcomes.<sup>7</sup>

While material and human resources are clear, agency and achievements needs to be specified more. This study has materialized agency around such concepts like motivations of participation into project activities, participation into decision making within the project, a sense of agency (whether the women define themselves as the agents of the project), participation into decision making within the household and the community; sexual division of labour within the project; household and community, and lastly self reliance. The achievements will be evaluated as specific outcomes of change at the individual level.

Collective empowerment (power with) refers to the social relationships among women. To operationalize collective empowerment (power with), the study focused on the impacts of the project on collectivity and solidarity among women.

Lastly, inspired from Jane Parpart, Kathleen Staudt and Shirin Rai, “power to” is used to refer to specific outcomes of politicized collective power. It emerges as a result of both individual and collective empowerment. The study will look for whether the women exert power to on a collective basis and whether there is any specific outcome.

In the literature, the scholars writing on the concept of women’s empowerment all mention about the complexity and difficulty of the concept and methodology. In other words, they point to the difficulties of understanding, implementing and measuring empowerment. There is no unique accepted methodology. Therefore, this

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<sup>7</sup> Kabeer, Naila, “Reflections on the Measurement of Women’s Empowerment”, *Discussing Women’s Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3, pp. 19-22*

study also shelters the problems inherent to the complex nature of empowerment. The difficulties and problems mainly arise from such features of empowerment:

- Empowerment is contextual: It is context specific. Therefore, indications are also contextual.
- Empowerment is a process: It is difficult to measure changes. The research findings can indicate the direction of change rather than an accurate measurement. On the other hand, behind the change there exists multiple dynamics rather than a one single cause leading to an effect. As Kabeer states:

Indicators of empowerment need merely 'indicate' the direction of change rather than provide an accurate measurement of it....There is an implicit assumption underlying many of these measurements that we can somehow predict the processes of change involved in empowerment whereas human agency is indeterminate and hence unpredictable. Any change in the structure of opportunities and constraints in which individuals make choice can bring into existence a variety of different responses, which can have quite different impacts and meanings in different contexts. This suggests that there is no single linear model of change by which a 'cause' can be identified for women's disempowerment and altered to create the desired 'effect'.<sup>8</sup>

- Empowerment is relational: The dimensions of empowerment are interrelated to each other. Change in one dimension can lead to a change in other.

There also exists a methodological complexity immanent to the study which at the same time derives from the relational nature of empowerment. First of all, some dimensions of empowerment can fall into many categories. For instance, where to place sexual division of labour in the categorization of the study stays as a question mark. If there exists any change in the sexual division of labour, it designates to a change in gendered power relationships. Therefore, it can be an outcome. If it is

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<sup>8</sup> Kabeer, Naila, "Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment", *Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3*, p. 52

exercised on the individual level, it can be an achievement. However, if it is exercised on the collective level, it can be a collective outcome. In the study, it is preferred to place sexual division of labour under the agency for analytical reasons as the sexual division of labour is very much related with participation. Secondly, an individual woman (and man) can exert 'power to' as it can be exerted collectively. Yet, as the study claims that both the individual and collective empowerment together leads to political change (individual empowerment alone does not necessarily lead to political change), to emphasize this claim, 'power to' is constituted as the third category. Likewise, agency can be exercised both at the individual level and collective level. In short, though the categorization of the study, the components should not be considered in isolation, rather it necessitates a relational reading.

### **1.3. Order of Presentation of the Study**

After the first chapter, which is about introducing the research problem, the scope and research methodology of the study, the second chapter will attempt to examine the relevant theories that issue women/gender with respect to development. Within this context, the chapter will include "Women in Development" (WID) Approach, "Gender and Development" (GAD) Approach, and "Empowerment" Approach. The outlines of the two sections Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD) will almost follow the same path in this chapter. First, the emergence of the mentioned approaches will be examined briefly. Next, the main arguments of the approaches will be issued. Then, the institutionalization of the approaches will be explained in order to understand how the approaches enter into the languages of the mainstream development institutions. Later on, the approaches will be critically evaluated. Here, as the theoretical discourses and the mainstream discourse diverge, through the discursive articulation of the approach by mainstream to its language, the criticisms will be directed regarding the two different discourses. Third section of the chapter will cover Empowerment Approach. First of all in line with the previous approaches the emergence of the approach will be studied. Next, different definitions and perspectives of the approach will be carried out in two steps. In the first step, the mainstream

conceptualization of empowerment as “an individual end” will be offered. In the second step, common aspects of various theoretical definitions of the concept, which is “empowerment as a collective process”, will be examined. Here, within the latter, the study will point out to the feminist suggestions of reading the concept of empowerment through power. Lastly, the Empowerment Approach, covering its various understandings-both mainstream understanding and theoretical definitions-will be critically assessed with respect to its focus on local. Furthermore, its relation with emancipation, development and neo-liberalism will be questioned.

In Chapter Three, development projects in Turkey will be evaluated from gender perspective. In order to understand the context of gender and development in Turkey first of all the evolution of development projects will be examined in two periods: from 1960s to 1980s and post 1980s. Such a separation is made, since these periods refer to the significant changes in political and economical history of Turkey that also affected the feature of development projects. The second section of the chapter will glance over the development projects carried out during these periods regarding women and gender. In the last section, development projects in Turkey will be critically evaluated from gender perspective with a stress on incorporation of the goals of gender equality and women’s empowerment into the projects.

The Chapter Four will assess two development projects carried out in Turkey from Empowerment Approach. In order to understand the context, first some information on the project (socio-economic structure of the project site, project aims and activities) will be introduced briefly. Next, the projects will be analyzed from empowerment approach. In this sense, the assessment of projects from the Empowerment Approach will be carried out in three interrelated steps. In the first step the question of whether the projects individually empower women will be analyzed and the specific outcomes of the individual empowerment, if there is any, will be pointed out. In the second step the projects will be studied within the framework of collective empowerment. In the third step, the ways in which the projects engender specific collective political outcomes, if any, will be analyzed. In the conclusion section of this chapter, the research findings of the projects will be

summarized briefly. Here, the latter will enable a comparison of the perspectives of the project implementers since their facilitating roles are crucial in terms of providing the conditions for women's empowerment.

Finally, the last chapter will constitute the conclusion of the study, which will complete the study with suggestions for further studies and a discussion on intervention to development projects.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DEVELOPMENT**

This chapter will attempt to examine the approaches concerning women within the development field. These approaches are Women in Development (WID), Gender and Development (GAD) and Empowerment Approach. In this chapter, throughout the sections on approaches, the study will try to explain how the approaches emerged, the main arguments of the approaches, and how the approach is adopted and used by the mainstream. At the end of each section, the approaches will be critically discussed. Here, as the main arguments of the approach and its usage by the mainstream diverge, both of them will be critically handled.

#### **2.1. Women in Development Approach**

The Women in Development (WID) Approach has been developed during the 1970s by challenging the early development initiatives. It emerged as a reaction to the early development initiatives in the sense that they not only ignore women, but also have negative effects on women. Therefore, the approach proposed the integration of women into development programmes and projects. Understanding the ways in which the WID approach emerged requires shortly a brief summary of firstly, the early development context upon which it was built and secondly, the dynamics behind the approach. Then the institutionalization of the approach will be discussed. After examining the main arguments of the approach, it will be critically evaluated.

##### **2.1.1. Early Development Initiatives: The Context within which Women in Development Approach was Born**

The Development Approach is usually identified with the modernization (theory) while it is the underlying idea behind the development thought, practice and policies. Modernization theory which has its roots in the enlightenment thought

emerged during the 1930s. The main assumption of the modernization theory is that some societies<sup>9</sup> are backward, impoverished and tradition-bound. Both the traditional culture and practices, and the social and economic infrastructure of such societies are found to be obstacles to growth.<sup>10</sup> Development is seen as a linear process that these societies should follow to catch up with modernity, which is identified with Westernization. Therefore, according to the assumption, this process needs the adoption of Western institutions, belief, values and technology. The idea that some societies are less developed and that they need the knowledge and expertise<sup>11</sup> of the more developed ones to reach modernity gave way to the development policy and practices to be implemented in the Third World. Furthermore, it also led to the rise in the authority of the development agencies in the Third World.<sup>12</sup> During 1940s and 1950s the question of how to develop the

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<sup>9</sup> These societies were thought to be the ones that are mainly outside North America and Europe and most of them were former colonies. In the development literature, for such societies a variety of concepts are used such as backward, economically backward, underdeveloped, traditional, Third World, South. The concepts of backward and economically backward countries were used in the earliest writings of development. The usage of the concepts underdeveloped and traditional was based on the assumption of development that all societies should pass the process to catch up with the Western Industrialized model. This process followed a linear line: underdeveloped, developing and developed or traditional, transitional and modern. In 1950s the concept of Third World was adapted by the African and Asian countries which took their position in the cold war neither on the side of USA nor USSR, as non alignment camp. They used the concept to propose a third camp which was assumed to be alternative to the First and Second World countries. In 1980s the concept of South became popular in the writings. The usage is based on the argument of economic differences between North and South. According to the argument while the northern countries are rich, the southern are poor. However, while some countries in the south are rich, some on the North are poor. Even there are critics towards the usage of the Third World in the sense that the concept “suggests a hierarchy of nations”, in this study the concept of Third World will be preferred. The first reason is that those countries call themselves as Third World. The second reason is that instead of hierarchy of nations, the meaning refers to an alternative camp (Rhoda Reddock, “Why Gender? Why Development”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau” (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), pp. 24-29

<sup>10</sup> Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., “Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 106

<sup>11</sup> The expert or the knowledge of expert is very much related with the modernity thought which has its roots in enlightenment thought. For the relation between the issue of expertisation and the enlightenment thought see Parpart, Jane L., “Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 223-226

<sup>12</sup> Parpart, Jane L., “Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 221-222

Third World countries began to be one of the concerns of sociologists and economists aiming to modernize them. With the aim to modernize these societies, in other words, to transform them into democratic, industrialized societies, development policies were planned and projects were designed by development planners. The expected result of the initial development practices that is at the same time the assumption of modernization theory can be summarized as follows: Economic growth will benefit all members of society through trickle-down effects, access to cash and market will improve conditions of people, macroeconomic policies are gender neutral and benefit all of society, modern technology is superior to traditional technologies.<sup>13</sup>

As the development policies and programmes were seen to be gender neutral, the idea was that without differentiating between men and women the initiatives would benefit both automatically. Nevertheless, in practice, men became the target group of the programmes. All the same, it is not possible to claim that women were ignored totally. They became the target group in the welfare programmes, especially with their roles as mothers and wives. In 1960s women became the target of the mother-child health programmes that focused on the reproductive role of women.<sup>14</sup> In this period, the programs and projects directed to women were related to planning population control, nutrition, child care, health, and home economics. In other words, the projects and programmes designed were the ones which aim to “improve the family life and controlling women’s fertility.”<sup>15</sup> The women were not represented as economic actors who took part in production but as mentioned programs and projects indicated, they were identified with their roles as mothers

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<sup>13</sup> Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., “Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 107

<sup>14</sup> Subramaniam, Banu; Bever, James; Schultz, Peggy, “Global Circulations: Nature, Culture and the Possibility of Sustainable Development”, *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 4

<sup>15</sup> Karl, Marilee. *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995) p. 94

and wives. Therefore, instead of active agents of the development processes, they became beneficiaries of the development practices.

The exclusion of women, as agents of the development processes, had its base on the Western representation of women as mothers and wives while the men were represented as the “head of household, taking part in public sphere and monetized production activities.”<sup>16</sup> As Claudia Von Braunmühl argues, development assumption was based on “idealized western type of household organization, with a male head of household who would manage whatever wealth reached his house equitably for the benefit of wife and children, and a housewife who, apart from attending to her homely duties, might support her husband in his income generating activities put pursued none herself.”<sup>17</sup> Such representation of women (and men) could be the explanation of why women were excluded from development policy and programmes, while men, as the perceived agents of development, were taken as the recipients of development funds.

### **2.1.2. The Dynamics Behind the Emergence of Women in Development Approach**

In the literature, three powerful dynamics are mentioned which gave rise to the emergence of WID (and its reflections to development programmes) within the context mentioned above. The first one is the work of Ester Boserup. The second one is the feminist movement. The third one is the development institutions themselves. Let us discuss these factors one by one.

The work of Ester Boserup “Women’s Role in Economic Development” (1970)<sup>18</sup> is commonly designated as the origins of WID. Her study gained importance as it

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<sup>16</sup> Joekes, Susan; Green Cathy, Leach, Melissa, “Integrating Gender into Environmental Research and Policy, *Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Working Paper*, (February 1996), p. 50

<sup>17</sup> Braunmühl, Claudia, Von, “Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision”, *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed. by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002), p. 55

<sup>18</sup> See Boserup, Ester, *Woman’s Role in Economic Development* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1970)

challenged the assumptions of early development initiatives and welfare approach of the development paradigm. Her research, based in Sub-Saharan Africa, challenged the extant assumptions in two related ways.

First, her study revealed the central role of women in economy. According to the study, most of the women in Sub-Saharan Africa were taking part in the agricultural production. Taking their inspiration from this significant finding, many researchers directed their efforts to shed light on the actual role of the women in economy. Such studies put their lens on the issue that the participation of women in agricultural production was mostly underreported in national statistics and worked to reveal out the actual figures regarding the issue. For example, while according to the Egyptian national statistics in 1970 women constituted 3.6 percent of the labor force in agriculture, according to the interviews the percentage of women engaged in agriculture was 55-70 percent. Likewise, 1972 national statistics of Peru showed women as representing 2.6 percent of agricultural labor force; however actual percentage was 86 percent.<sup>19</sup>

Such evidence constituted a big challenge to the assumptions, in which women were identified with their roles as mothers and wives while men were associated with production. Concisely, Ester Boserup's work was significant because, as Kriemild Saunders underlines, "her research revealed the extent to which women in Sub-Saharan Africa were engaged in agricultural work. This directly challenged the prevailing western patriarchal assumption, based on the idealized industrial model, that men were the breadwinners while women carried out domestic work within the home."<sup>20</sup>

Secondly, the study of Ester Boserup challenged the 'trickle-down effect' and 'benefit to all' assumption of the development discourse. Her research included the

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<sup>19</sup> Pietila and Vickers, 1990, pp. 14-15 quoted in Mellor, Mary, "Women, Development and Environmental Sustainability", *Global Sustainable Development for the 21st Century*, ed. by. Keekok Lee et al (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p. 3

<sup>20</sup> Saunders, Kriemild, "Introduction: Towards a Deconstructive Post-Development Criticism", *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders ( London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 4

analysis of the impacts of development projects on Third World women. Underscoring the declining status of women, Boserup showed that development projects did not help to improve the living conditions of women rather worsened them. Rather than providing ‘benefit to all,’ the projects benefited only men, effecting women negatively and further made women victims of development. The development interventions improved the technological knowledge of men and their access to economic resources. Yet, it undermined women’s roles in agriculture, reduced their access to technology and employment leading to the declining income, status, and power of women when compared to men.<sup>21</sup> Mary Mellor adverts for the situation:

Development policies [...] not only did not aid women, but often made their lives more difficult. In many cases it increased their burden of work as they were forced to take on new activities from which they would not necessarily benefit. In others it meant loss of access to land as male heads of household were encouraged to produce commercial corps.<sup>22</sup>

Nonetheless, development interventions should be considered with their relation to the market economy which has given way to an exclusive access to economic resources for men. Following Ester Boserup’s work, many studies have also revealed the negative effects of development initiatives and especially of the global market economy on women. Such studies have demonstrated the negative effects of the commercialization of agriculture and land on women, who used to be engaged in subsistence-based production before the introduction of the market economy.

The second dynamic behind the emergence of Women in Development Approach was the upsurgent feminist movement in late 1960s in the West. During this period, liberal feminist claims for equal rights, employment opportunities for women and

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<sup>21</sup> Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., “Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 56; Reddock, Rhoda, “Why Gender? Why Development”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 34

<sup>22</sup> Mellor, Mary, “Women, Development and Environmental Sustainability,” *Global Sustainable Development for the 21st Century*, ed. by. Keekok Lee et al. (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p. 3

improved representation of women were expressed. Within the development paradigm, allocation of funds in a more gender-equitable way was demanded. Collaterally, “Western women used their position to pressure their governments’ foreign-aid offices to ensure that grants to recipient countries supported women as well as men.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, it can be claimed that liberal feminist women were asking for “their share of the modernization cake.”<sup>24</sup> Liberal feminist approach became very influential in the development discourse especially in determining the language of the WID. For example, Razavi and Miller see the impact of the feminist movement’s emphasis on equal employment opportunities for women on the focus of WID discourse regarding women’s productive labor.<sup>25</sup> According to Kriemild Saunders, the fact that liberal feminism had its strong impacts on WID discourse stemmed from the advantage regarding the ideological position of the liberal feminism: “Its ideological position gave it the greatest level of coherence with liberal modernization and development theory and practice.”<sup>26</sup> As a result, liberal feminist discourse made a happy marriage<sup>27</sup> with development theory and practice.

The third but least emphasized influence behind the WID came from the development community itself which recognized that trickle down approach to development was ineffective.<sup>28</sup> The prevailing strategies have worsened the lives of

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<sup>23</sup> Reddock, Rhoda, “Why Gender? Why Development”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barribeau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 35

<sup>24</sup> Braunmühl, Claudia Von, “Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision”, *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed.by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002), p. 56

<sup>25</sup> Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse , Occasional Paper 1, February 1995, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme, p.3

<sup>26</sup> Saunders, Kriemild, “Introduction: Towards a Deconstructive Post-Development Criticism”, *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p.3

<sup>27</sup> The usage of ‘happy marriage’ is inspired by Heidi I. Hartman’s article titled as ‘The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union (Heidi, I. Hartmann, The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union)

<sup>28</sup> Braidotti et al, 1994 quoted in Bhavnani, Kum Kum; Foran, John and. Kurian, Priya A., “An Introduction to Women, Culture and Development”, ed. by. Kum-Kum Bhavnani, John Foran and Priya A. Kurian, *Feminist Futures: Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development*, (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), pp. 4-5

Third World's poor and women as in 1969 The Commission for International Development, which is appointed by World Bank, underlined the fact that increasing poverty went hand in hand with the economic growth. Claudia von Braunmühl interprets this situation as the beginning of a reform period for the development community.<sup>29</sup>

### **2.1.3. The Main Arguments of Women in Development Approach**

Women in Development Approach mainly advocate incorporation of women into development programmes and projects. In other words, adding women's components to existing projects. The rationale behind this is the claim that women's status would be improved and women would contribute to the development as well.

The reflection of the studies that revealed the central role of women in economy can simply be seen in the emphasis of WID. WID highlights women's productive roles in the economic sphere. Opposing to the identification of women with reproductive roles, the crucial role played by women's labor is pointed out in WID. Therefore, discordant to early development mentality, that drew the image of the women as passive beneficiaries of welfare programmes, women are seen as the active agents of development programs and projects. According to Razavi and Miller such emphasis on women's productivity shows that WID relates women's subordination to the economic framework. In their own words:

By explaining the difference in status and power between men and women in terms of their relative economic contributions the origin of women's subordination was linked to their exclusion from the market place. It was therefore argued that if women were brought into the productive sphere more fully, not only would they make a positive contribution to development, but they would also be able to improve their status vis-à-vis men.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Braunmühl, Claudia Von, "Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision" *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed. by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002), p.56

<sup>30</sup> Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse , Occasional Paper 1, February 1995, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme, pp. 4-5

The arguments of the WID are based on the discourses of equity, anti-poverty and efficiency. In the literature, some of the writers point out that WID followed the discourse of equity during the 1970s. During the 1980s the discourse shifted first to anti-poverty and then to efficiency.<sup>31</sup> Yet, as the WID has focused on women's productive roles in economy for their contribution to economic growth, and as the approach deals with the poor in the Third World from the beginning, it will not be possible to claim such a chronological shift in the discourse. If one can mention any shift, this could be the shift in the emphasis of the discourse. In 1980s, together with the regnancy of the neo-liberal policies, the emphasis on efficiency increased.

Let us briefly discuss these discourses. The equity discourse has its roots in liberal feminism. As mentioned in detail in previous sections, the main claim was made for women to have equal opportunities as men. Therefore, from a liberal perspective, women's access to education, training, property, credit and other resources constituted the main concern. Furthermore, legal rights and gender discrimination were also concerned. Like Razavi, according to Marilee Karl economic independence is emphasized significantly and she argues that even it was seen synonymous with equity.<sup>32</sup>

As for the discourse of anti-poverty, the reason for the economic inequality between men and women was seen as poverty. Therefore, the main target group was constituted from poor women. Mostly, small income generating projects and programs and skills development activities were proposed as the cures for poverty and in turn for economic inequality of women.

As mentioned before, the WID highlights the productive roles of women. Moreover, this emphasis on the productive roles of women was too much exaggerated to

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<sup>31</sup> For example Bhavnani, Kum Kum; Foran, John and. Kurian, Priya A., "An Introduction to Women, Culture and Development", ed. by. Kum-Kum Bhavnani, John Foran and Priya A. Kurian, *Feminist Futures: Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), pp. 4-5 and Karl, Marilee, *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making*, (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995), pp. 97-100

<sup>32</sup> Karl, Marilee. *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995), p. 97

promote women's contribution to economy that is pretty much related with the efficiency discourse. The idea was that through the efficient use of women's labor, economic growth could be achieved. It was claimed that "the development would become more efficient if women's resources were utilized to the full."<sup>33</sup> Women's access to education, training, property, credit and other resources were seen as the ways to improve women's productivity, which consequently would improve development, and have positive effects on economic growth. Even the WID advocates calculated the costs of enhancing women's efficiency and they concluded that "the costs of investing in women's productivity are justifiable in terms of economic returns as well as social returns."<sup>34</sup>

#### **2.1.4. The Institutionalization of Women in Development Approach**

It was mentioned in the previous parts that the development community itself underlined that the 'trickle down' approach was not effective and the early development initiatives mostly had negative effects on women and the poor. The governments, the donor agencies and development planners began to rethink development policies and plans. Within the modernization paradigm, how to incorporate women into development process became the main concern. Development agencies called for women oriented policies and improvements in women's access to education, training, employment, credit and other resources. In other words, WID Approach was accepted by the international development circles and by this way it was institutionalized.

The United Nations was very influential in the process of institutionalization of the WID discourse. Via the conference held in Mexico City in 1975, the decade of 1976-1985 was enunciated as the UN Decade for the Advancement of Women. UN Decade for Women was significant in the sense that it drew attention to women's

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<sup>33</sup> Gardner and Lewis, 1996; Braidotti et al, 1994 quoted in Bhavnani, Kum Kum; Foran, John and Kurian, Priya A., "An Introduction to Women, Culture and Development", ed. by. Kum-Kum Bhavnani, John Foran and Priya A. Kurian, *Feminist Futures: Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development*, (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), pp.4-5

<sup>34</sup> Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse, Occasional Paper 1, February 1995, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme, p. 5

affairs. Integrating women into the development process became a goal for the decade. During the decade many other world conferences, declarations and conventions were held. In them, generally strategies for the advancement of women were issued and the assumption was that, by integrating women into existing development projects, the situation of the women would be improved. For example, one of the significant conventions was the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women which was accepted in 1979. The convention “recognized women’s rights to receive training, education and extension services, equal access to credit and marketing facilities, equal treatment in agrarian reform.”<sup>35</sup>

Mainly through the international agencies’ attempts, the language of the governments and the development agencies also involved the discourse of WID. Many offices for women’s affairs were set up and officers and experts of WID emerged. For example, the first WID officer was appointed by the World Bank.<sup>36</sup> Especially Third World governments consulted WID experts from the First World. As a result, women-oriented programmes and projects were designed by the Western experts to be implemented in the Third World. In other words, women components were added to the existing development projects.

### **2.1.5. A Critical Look to Women in Development Discourse and Practices**

Given the early development context, the WID can be seen as a significant gain for women. As emphasized frequently, the main contribution of the WID is that it drew attention to women’s productive labor. It paved the way for many studies revealing women’s roles in production, especially in agricultural production. Hence, the approach supplied recognition for “the need to improve statistical measures of women’s work and provide women with more opportunities of education and

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<sup>35</sup> Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse , Occasional Paper 1, February 1995, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme, p. 6

<sup>36</sup> Braunmühl, Claudia Von, “Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision”, *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed. by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002), p. 56

employment.”<sup>37</sup> In the same line with such contributions, as Razavi and Miller mentions, it gave rise to research on the evaluation of the impacts of development projects in the rural area.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, before looking to the approach critically, it should be asserted that the history of WID process was weaved in struggle. Claudia von Braunmühl emphasizes this side of the coin:

Every step of the process leading to WID policies entailed an inordinate amount of struggle on the part of committed women activists and professionals and encountered an inordinate amount of resistance and outright slander on the part of committed women activists and professionals, and encountered an inordinate amount of resistance and outright slander on the part of men.<sup>39</sup>

However, the other side of the coin should be evaluated too. In this respect, the limitations of and the further criticisms to the approach should be mentioned here, which could nurture further approaches providing a wider spectrum for the struggle of women.

First of all, in the literature, criticisms focus on the negative results of the attempts of development projects that were designed within the framework of the WID Approach. It is found out that most of the WID based projects resulted in the marginalization of women. One of the reasons is that while the WID has focused on the productive labor of the women, it has ignored their domestic or reproductive labor. In practice, this has led to the increase in the workload of already overburdened women. The other issue is that, in line with the poverty discourse, these projects usually targeted poor women with the aim of increasing their income. As mentioned before, these were usually small-income generating activities. In the

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<sup>37</sup> Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., “Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 58

<sup>38</sup> Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse , Occasional Paper 1, February 1995, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme, p. 1

<sup>39</sup> Braunmühl, Claudia Von, “Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision”, *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed.by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002), p. 57

discourse of WID, the improvement in the skills of women and of the employment opportunities were targeted whereas in practice, general tendency was to direct women to jobs like handicrafts, which are associated with the traditional tasks of women, and to welfare oriented activities. According to Marilee Karl even the agricultural production, in which traditionally women engage, is forgotten.<sup>40</sup> WID projects tended to increase the workload of the women and caused no change in the subordinated position of women. Rather these attempts almost perpetuated the existing sexual division of labor, not questioning the roles attributed to women. Furthermore, such projects created little income for the women, put aside being sufficient to overcome economic marginalization.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, as will be discussed in detail in the second part on Gender and Development Approach, WID does not seek to provide fundamental explanations for the subordination of women. For example, the crucial issues like the power relations between men and women, the global inequalities, traditions, states are ignored. Women are approached in isolation from the structures surrounding them. Some scholars like Frederique Appffel-Marglin, Suzanne Simon; and Jane Parpart criticize the victimization discourse in the WID. As discussed above, WID constructed its discourse by challenging the early development initiatives. One of the challenges was to see the women as active agents instead of victims. But WID has maintained the perception of women as victims alongside the perception of them as active and productive agents. Though these two discourses that women are victims and agents are seen to be paradoxical, they are not. Because, the perceptions of Third World women as victims, who are constrained by traditions, which are seen as the obstacles for women's liberation-namely their involvement into the industrial capitalism-constitutes the rationale behind the idea to change them into

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<sup>40</sup> Karl, Marilee, *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making*, (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995), p. 100

<sup>41</sup> Braunmühl, Claudia Von, "Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision", *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed.by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002) pp. 57-58; Karl, Marilee, *Women and Empowerment, Participation and Decision Making* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995),p. 100; Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse , Occasional Paper 1, February 1995, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme, p. 8

autonomous Western subjects, who are economic resources to be utilized on the way to economic growth.

To go on with the issue of victimization of women, following early development initiatives, the women in the Third World were seen as the victims of backward Third World traditions and economy “with no agenda of their own, tied to traditional ways of thinking and acting.”<sup>42</sup> Therefore, as it was the case in the early development initiatives, it is thought that the women in the Third World need the expertise and knowledge of the WID experts from the First World. In other words, the WID experts are seen as saviors, who have the knowledge and skills to transmit to the Third World women, to rescue them. In this context some writers draw attention to the ignorance of the indigenous knowledge while the West is assumed to have all the answers. Frederique Appffel-Marglin and Suzanne Simon criticize the victimization discourse of WID from a postcolonial standpoint. They argue that WID discourse has its roots in the Victorian Colonialist Feminists<sup>43</sup> discourse and “the very basis of the WID discourse rests on the same colonial perception of the victimization of women.”<sup>44</sup> The authors point out to the binary oppositions, which are constructed by taking the western subject as the reference point, in the discourse of WID that are also found in the Feminist Colonial Discourse: oppressed, backward, tradition-bound, non-western women/civilized, economically independent, emancipated, autonomous western women.<sup>45</sup> The authors explain the issue of expert with the narrative of “we know what is best for them in spite of what

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<sup>42</sup> Parpart, Jane L., “Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 229

<sup>43</sup> In the narratives of colonial discourse, the women were represented as passive, helpless, “suffering from the backwardness, savagery and wretchedness of their own cultures...the treatment of women was the measuring or the index of civilization of a particular society”. For further details about the Victorian Colonialist Feminists see Appffel-Margin, Frederique; Simone, Suzanne, L., “Feminist Orientalism and Development”, *Feminist Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, ed. by. Wendy Harcourt(London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1994), pp. 27-31

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32

<sup>45</sup> As women were equated with culture and poverty, and poverty was the indicator of economic backwardness, the women’s position in the society came to be used as an index of modernization in measuring its progress. The criterion that is used to judge the position of Third World Women is the emancipated, autonomous, economically independent women of the First World countries. (*Ibid*)

they may say for themselves.”<sup>46</sup> According to the authors, WID identifies women’s own perceptions and ways of knowing as an obstacle to development which must be removed or transformed if their socio-economic development is to succeed. Therefore, it can be claimed that “the experts voice replaces (and eliminates) the women’s voices.”<sup>47</sup> In this context, it should be mentioned that for the WID, there were no such thing like women’s voices. Yet, there was only *a unique women’s voice*. Because, the Third World women were seen as a homogeneous poor mass without any differences such as race, class, ethnicity etc.

Anti-poverty discourse of WID is another point that should be questioned. There was an automatic identification of women with poverty. First of all, WID’s concern was the poor women but not women themselves because; WID ignores women if they are not poor. It binds the subordination of women directly to economic backwardness. This point again proves the claim that WID does not question the fundamental structures behind women’s subordination. On the other hand, the emphasis on poverty opened a space for the feminist agenda because; it was not seen as a threat to male development specialists.<sup>48</sup> Secondly, the pro-poor stand was not innocent. It was instrumental for the development discourse. According to Razavi and Miller, for example, women’s education and employment was important for solving the problem of over-population which was seen as cost-effective. Razavi and Miller add that this was the reason behind the fact that women became the focus group in these projects.<sup>49</sup> According to Appffel-Margin and Simone, the automatic equation of women with poverty was instrumental in the sense that it “justifies the development desire to transform all Third World women into economically productive, autonomous, independent subjects.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p. 34

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 34

<sup>48</sup> Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse , Occasional Paper 1, February 1995, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme, p. 7

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. p. 8

<sup>50</sup> Appffel-Margin, Frederique; Simone, Suzanne, L., “Feminist Orientalism and Development”, *Feminist Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, ed. by. Wendy Harcourt (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1994), p. 32

Lastly, development paradigm was seen unproblematic by the WID approach. As mentioned before, there occurred a happy marriage with liberal feminism and development approach. Therefore, parallel to liberal feminist view, WID was also in consensus with the modernization paradigm in the sense that it was based on the liberal political ideology and later with the neo-liberal doctrine. As Barriteu asserts:

WID maintained a consensus on accepting the rationale of markets as expounded in the modernization paradigm [...] [it] centers on the efficiency of resource allocation, the restructuring of production and distribution, and the liberalization of trade and investments.<sup>51</sup>

In this context, according to Barriteu, WID was making “the ideology of the market economics more humane by including the needs of women.”<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, in the framework of efficiency discourse, rather than including the needs of the women, WID was focusing on women’s contributions to economic growth and industrialization. In other words, as discussed in detail in previous parts, women were seen as under-utilized labor resources “which could be used to stimulate economic growth and industrialization.”<sup>53</sup> Other issues under-evaluated in development approach was that the development programmes, projects and policies were usually set by male specialists ignoring women’s perspectives. In addition to this, women in the target groups were also excluded from the planning and design of the projects.

To sum up, in the WID discourse and practices women were instrumentalised in such a way that rather than paying attention to women’s needs, what development needs from women became the main issue. Liberal feminists asked for a share from the modernization cake. However, the cake poisoned women by perpetuating the sexual division of labour and increasing women’s work load.

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<sup>51</sup> Barriteu, V. Eudine, “Feminist Theory and Development: Implications for Policy, Research, and Action”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V. Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 166

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, p. 166

<sup>53</sup> Karl, Marilee, *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making*, (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995), p. 100

## **2.2. Gender and Development Approach**

The Gender and Development Approach (GAD) has developed during the 1980s in line with the shift from the concept of women to that of gender. The approach is mainly constituted on the criticisms towards the Women in Development Approach in the sense that WID did not question the fundamental structures behind the unequal power relationships between men and women. In this context, the approach focuses on gender and class relations rather than on women, with the aim of putting emphasis on gender equality and empowerment of women. In this part of the chapter, first, the emergence of the approach will be handled very shortly and next, the main arguments of the approach will be explained especially by focusing upon the differences with the previous approach. Then mainstreaming or institutionalization of the approach will be given briefly. Lastly, the limitations of the approach will be discussed and the approach will be assessed critically.

### **2.2.1. The Emergence of Gender and Development Approach**

1980s witnessed the rising awareness regarding the negative effects of WID programme and projects such as the perpetuation of the marginalization of women, as mentioned in the previous chapter. The criticisms directed to WID approach and programmes and revealing of its limitations lead to emergence of a new approach, namely the Gender and Development Approach. The GAD Approach is mainly referred to be based on the socialist feminist scholarship, the writings of the Third World feminists and the grassroots experiences. In the relevant literature, mostly emphasized is the DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) Group<sup>54</sup> that “called for an approach to women’s development that recognizes the

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<sup>54</sup> DAWN, established in India in 1984, is a network of Third World feminists, researchers, and activists. They discuss the impacts of development on poor, especially on women. Their agenda mainly focuses on the issues of environment, reproductive rights, population and alternative economic frameworks; critical of liberal capitalism arguing that it marginalized the Third World poor. Instead of considering the contributions of human development to economic growth, they are in search for alternative economic development which can contribute to human development. They became the representatives of Third World women as they argued that while the Western feminists lack the culturally relevant knowledge about Third World women, their agendas are inappropriate for the emancipation of the Third World Women. (Barriteau, V. Eudine, “Feminist Theory and Development: Implications for Policy, Research, and Action”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V. Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa:

importance of global and gender inequalities.”<sup>55</sup> Briefly GAD emerged as an alternative to WID Approach and Women and Development Approach<sup>56</sup> arguing that they did not address the fundamental structures behind the gender inequality.

### 2.2.2. The Main Arguments of the Discourse

Aiming to reveal the fundamental structures of inequity between men and women, GAD defines these structures through the interconnection of gender ideology and class. Besides, by taking into consideration the oppression that women experience in different forms, GAD encapsulates the differences with respect to race, ethnicity, culture, and colonial history. In this context, if the main approach of GAD is considered with respect to gender and class, rather than focusing only on women, it deals with the relationship between men and women, therefore, targeting also men. As it considers the nature of gender relations as socially constructed, which is argued to be one of the key determinants of women’s subordination, the idea is that

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International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 163; Patience, Elabor-Idemudia, “Participatory Research: A tool in the Production of Knowledge in Development Discourse”, *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 237

<sup>55</sup> Sen and Grown, 1987 quoted in Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., “Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 62

<sup>56</sup> Women and Development Approach was developed under the influence of the radical feminist critiques of liberal feminist ideas. According to radical feminists, patriarchy is the fundamental structure leading to the subordination of women. They suggested creating alternative institutions separate from men. Based on this idea, they proposed women-only projects in order to avoid male domination. However, like WID, it has seen the Third World women as a vulnerable and homogeneous group. It ignored gender relations and the differences among women. As it is the least mentioned approach in literature, this study does not include it. Only a few writers refer to the approach. For example see Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., “Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), pp. 60-61; Parpart, Jane L., “Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 232; Saunders, Kriemild, “Introduction: Towards a Deconstructive Post-Development Criticism”, *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), pp. 8-10; Bhavnani, Kum Kum; Foran, John and Kurian, Priya A., “An Introduction to Women, Culture and Development.”, *Feminist Futures: Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development*, ed. by. Kum-Kum Bhavnani, John Foran and Priya A. Kurian (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), p. 5

gender relations can be subjected to transformation. In this aim, the approach seeks to understand the construction of gender identities, and the role of gender ideologies in the reproduction of unequal power relations between men and women at the national, community and household levels. It also aims to explore economic forces at global, national and local levels.<sup>57</sup> In the words of Jane Parpart, the GAD approach is explained as such:

This approach seeks fundamental explanations for women's subordination, both at the level of broad political and economic forces and at the level of ideology, particularly gender ideology. It acknowledges the need to understand gender relations on the ground, and to investigate the specific ways gender ideology and relations contribute to women's subordination and the sexual division of labor and power.<sup>58</sup>

Focusing on the differences between GAD and WID would enable a better understanding of the approach. In the literature GAD is usually distinguished from WID by referring to Maxine Molyneux's differentiation between practical gender interests and strategic gender interests. Practical gender interests (parallel to the condition of women) refer to the daily practical, immediate needs of women rising out of concrete situations such as education, access to credit, legal rights, food, income, health. Strategic interests (parallel to position of women) "rise out of an analysis of women's subordination and require changes in the structures of gender, class and race that define women's position in any given culture".<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the

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<sup>57</sup> Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., "Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives", *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 3, 62; Saunders, Kriemild, "Introduction: Towards a Deconstructive Post-Development Criticism", *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 11

<sup>58</sup> Parpart, Jane L., "Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups", *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 235

<sup>59</sup> Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., "Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives", *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed.

strategic gender interests are long term goals and they “include ways to empower women through collective action, to encourage women to challenge gender ideologies and institutions that subordinate women.”<sup>60</sup> While WID focuses on the practical gender interests, GAD focuses both on the practical and strategic gender interests. According to the approach, while fulfilling practical gender needs, the practical needs will be politicized and will be transformed into strategic gender interests.<sup>61</sup>

Connelly, Li, MacDonald and Parpart, summarize the differences of WID and GAD in a table, according to which, while WID focuses on practical gender interests, GAD focuses on practical and strategic gender interests. Likewise, GAD emphasizes socially constructed relations between men and women, whereas WID focuses only on women. WID problematizes the exclusion of women from development, which gives way to inefficiency of development, whereas the main problem for GAD is the unequal power relations. When the differences in the goals of these two approaches are considered, while WID targets effective development, GAD aims for equitable sustainable development with men and women as equal decision makers and women as agents. For WID, solution to the problem lies in the integration of women into the existing development projects. In contrast GAD sees the radical solution in the transformation of unequal relations and in the empowerment of women and the disadvantaged. Lastly, WID embraces the strategy of increasing women’s productivity and income on the way to the solution of the existing problem. However, GAD makes use of the strategy of addressing the practical and strategic needs throughout people-centered development.<sup>62</sup>

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by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), p. 63

<sup>60</sup> Parpart, Jane L., “Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 236

<sup>61</sup> Braumühl, Claudia Von, “Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision”, *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed. by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002); Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., “Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000), pp. 60, 63

### 2.2.3. The Institutionalization of Gender and Development Approach: Gender Mainstreaming

Like in the institutionalization of WID approach, UN played the main role in the institutionalization of Gender and Development Approach. Beginning with the conference held in Nairobi in 1975, many UN conferences<sup>63</sup> addressed women's issues. Among them especially the 1985 Nairobi meeting increased the international pressure on development agencies to integrate women's concerns into the programs and projects.<sup>64</sup> Lastly with the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, the shift from WID to GAD was seen as a success story within the development community.<sup>65</sup> All these series of UN conferences helped to create a unified language on a global scale through which gender issues have been interfused into the mainstream policy in 1990s.

With the integration of gender into the development circles, the concern changed from women's issues to gender issues. Development agencies shifted their WID offices to GAD offices. Gender mainstreaming became a strategy of the development agencies. Within this context, development agencies adopted the concept of gender, which became the popular discourse within the development circles and strived to pay attention to gender sensitivity. They integrated gender concerns into both planning and implementation of programmes and projects. Gender-sensitive policy statements and documents were prepared. According to Claudia von Braunmühl among these efforts the "most influential" is "Caroline

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<sup>62</sup> Connelly, M. Patricia; Li, Tania Murray; MacDonald, Martha; Parpart, Jane L., "Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives", *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, V.Eudine Barriteau (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2000)

<sup>63</sup> For example in 1980 at Copenhagen, in 1985 at Nairobi, in 1995 at Beijing, in 1992 at Rio The Conference on Environment and Development, the Conference on Human Rights at Vienna in 1993, the Conference on Population and Development at Cairo in 1994, the Social Summit at Copenhagen in 1995 were held.

<sup>64</sup> Rathgeber, Eva M., "Gender and Development in Action", *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 207-208

<sup>65</sup> Arnfred, Signe, "Questions of Power: Women's Movements, Feminist Theory and Development Aid", *Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3*, pp. 73-74

Moser's attempt to provide a coherent gender planning tool that would suit the mechanisms and procedures of major aid agencies."<sup>66</sup> Many gender-sensitive guidelines were formulated especially for project cycle management. If one is to carry out some research through a short search on the internet, it is highly probable for her/him to come across an abundance of guidelines titled "integrating gender into."<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, every institution prepared its different gender manual regarding the sectors they take part in. For instance, together with the rise of environmental concerns, there emerged several guidelines integrating gender into environmental issues. Besides, sector-specific guidelines were prepared concerning the sub-divisions within environmental issues.<sup>68</sup>

#### **2.2.4. A Critical Look on the Approach**

For the theoretical arguments of GAD have undergone a drastic change with the discourse constructed and implementations undertaken through the institutionalization and the mainstreaming of the approach, which is based on the differences between feminists and development planners in their conceptualization of gender, it is necessary to approach the two critically but separately. While criticisms in literature focus on the mainstream discourse and implementations, the scholars with the perspectives of post-colonial and post-development feminist thought deal with the limitations of the approach in addition to these criticisms.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Braunmühl, Claudia Von, "Mainstreaming Gender-a Critical Revision", *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed. by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002), p. 60

<sup>67</sup> As examples to such guidelines see GENDER Manual: A Practical Guide for Development Policy Makers and Practitioners, Helen Derbyshire, Social Development Division, DFID (April 2002)

<sup>68</sup> As examples to such guidelines see Adamo, A. ; Horvorka A. "Guidelines for Integrating Gender Analysis into Biodiversity Research" Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Program, IDRC(16 July 1998), [http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/10267409810gender\\_biodiversity.pdf](http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/10267409810gender_biodiversity.pdf); Kiorboe, Elisabeth; Vinding, Diana; Salazar, Martha; Tuxen, Vibeke; Munk-Ravnborg, Hele, Intgerating Indigeneous and Gender Aspects in Natural Resource Management-Guideliness For Practitioners, WWF, IWGIA, KULU, Nepenthes, DIIS, 2005; Gender, Water and Environment, [http://www.genderandwater.org/content/download/3064/33483/file/Chapter\\_3.8\\_July\\_06.pdf](http://www.genderandwater.org/content/download/3064/33483/file/Chapter_3.8_July_06.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> Though such an analytical distinction could be made, one should be cautious about the intertwined cases. For instance, the approach sees the women as victims, so is in the mainstream policy embracing GAD. Or as another example, DAWN group, as the reference group in the construction of the approach, makes emphasis on poverty and poor women but not on the women.

The criticisms directed to both the approach and its mainstream discourse are indeed the criticisms addressed to the WID. As detailed above, although GAD is footed upon the criticisms regarding the limitations of WID and differentiated itself widely from WID, once evaluated critically, it can be argued that GAD replicated some problems of WID. Among these main problems with the approach is that GAD evaluates Third World women as homogeneous, keeping congested within the development paradigm. Likewise, it falls into the victimization narrative. While together with the institutionalization of the approach, the shift from WID to GAD both in the discourse and implementations constitutes a “cosmetic change” resulting in the depolitization of the field, as Elson puts it.<sup>70</sup> While the development agencies and governments adopted gender as the new fashionable term, they stayed within the WID paradigm though with some small changes in their rhetoric and practices.

Although accepting that GAD was breakthrough in many fields, the main argument constructed by the feminist post-colonial and post-development thought is that the GAD Approach continued within the liberal framework or the development paradigm. According to the critics, the approach did not question the prevailing development paradigm and it also fell into modernist stereotypes. However, before looking to the approach critically in this context, once the socialist feminist roots of the approach considered, it cannot be claimed that it does not question the development paradigm at all. Because the DAWN group was questioning the development as it is based on the economic growth:

Economic development, that magic formula, devised sincerely to move poor nations out of poverty, has become women's worst enemy. Roads bring machine-made *ersatz* goods, take away young girls and food and traditional art and culture; technologies replace women, leaving families even further impoverished. Manufacturing cuts into natural resources (especially trees), pushing fuel and fodder resources further away, bringing home-destroying floods or life-destroying drought, and adding all the time to women's work burdens.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Elson, 1995 quoted in Rathgeber, Eva M., “Gender and Development in Action”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 5

<sup>71</sup> Dewaki Jain, founder member of DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era), 1984; quoted in Pietila, Hilikka; Vickers, Jeanne, *Making Women Matter* (London: Zed Press, 1990), p. 35 quoted in Mellor, Mary, “Women, Development and Environmental Sustainability”,

In the same line, Sen and Grown (the authors of DAWN documents) in their writings blame capitalism for the poverty of Third World women and the subordination of women.<sup>72</sup> The GAD was generally in search for an alternative development model that is not reduced to economic growth, but a model focusing not only on environmentally and socially sustainable development but also people-centered development. On the other hand, what GAD fell short of questioning is the “enlightenment-trained premises of development.”<sup>73</sup> Because, according to the critics, like WID, GAD also homogenizes Third World women and embraces the victimization discourse. The women were again portrayed as vulnerable and helpless who should be rescued from backwardness and poverty. In other words, the myths about Third World women could not be deconstructed by GAD, rather it was perpetuated. The ‘educated’ scholars and researchers embracing this approach have seen themselves as giving voice to Third World women. For example, a doctoral thesis, which looks from the Gender and Development Approach, analyses “Western Understandings of the Application of Women and Development (WID) and Gender and Development Policies in Cambodia against the backdrop of the reality of Cambodian Culture and Politics.”<sup>74</sup> In this study, it is argued that “Western concepts of gender equity remained alien to Cambodian culture in its specific historical manifestation in the 1990s.”<sup>75</sup> However, the problem arises with the author putting herself in a position of giving voice to the Third World women with her words that is found in the acknowledgement part: “[...] to give Cambodian women a meaningful voice in the academic field, without a strong guide this task

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*Global Sustainable Development for the 21st Century*, ed. by. Keekok Lee et al (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p. 4

<sup>72</sup> Parpart, Jane L., “Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 235

<sup>73</sup> Lazreg, Marnia “Development: Feminist Theory’s Cul-de-sac”, *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p.125

<sup>74</sup> Petre, Santry, “When Asparagus Smile: Women and Development in Cambodia 1990-2000: Cultural Barriers to Change”, *Front Pages of the Thesis Submitted for Assessment of Doctor of Philosophy, School of Education, Faculty of Human Development, Victoria University, 2005*, <http://eprints.vu.edu.au/archive/00000319/01/01front.pdf>

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. p, 5

would not have been possible.”<sup>76</sup> In the same sense, Kriemild Saunders criticizes DAWN acting as the representatives for the “impoverished” Third World women:

DAWN acts as a representative of poor women in the south [...] an intellectual class standing in for poor, illiterate southern women. DAWN imitates a strong, problematic and risky western gynocentric feminist move, in articulating a centered Third World woman subject [...] southern representatives to speak for impoverished Third World women.<sup>77</sup>

As it was the case in previous development approaches, the narrative of victimization “rationalizes the planned management and liberation of the women in the South by Westernized professionals in the development apparatus.”<sup>78</sup> In this way, again the expert knowledge was seen as a solution to “rescue” women.

The acceptance and adaptation of GAD by the states, international and national development agencies, in other words, the institutionalization of the approach - mainstreaming gender- can be seen as a successful step. However, the success has come at a high price and which needs to be reconsidered is whether to read it as a success or not in terms of transformatory politics in gender relations. It is necessary here to focus on what gender mainstreaming resulted in.

First of all, the shift of GAD language from margins (from its socialist feminist and Third World grassroots background) to the center led to the depoliticization of “gender”. Because the term “gender”, which is used popularly (by development agencies and NGO’s), obscures power relationships. To recall, GAD footed upon the criticism that WID disregarded unequal power relations, based on which feminists advocated GAD. As stated by Signe Arnfred, GAD brought with itself such opening outs as: “It put women into a context, focusing on the socially constructed relation between women and men, and by doing so it made visible the

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid. p. 15

<sup>77</sup> Saunders, Kriemild, “Introduction: Towards a Deconstructive Post-Development Criticism” *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 18

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. p. 14

aspect of power in gender relations”<sup>79</sup> and “thinking in terms of gender power relationships also pointed to the epistemological aspects of male dominance, calling for a deconstruction of apparently gender neutral development language.”<sup>80</sup> However, in time, GAD and the concept of gender retreated from its interconnection to feminist concerns and losing its political character, it transformed into the language of development agencies which is “not the language of political struggle.”<sup>81</sup> GAD discourse and the concept of gender turned into a technical language of researchers, policy makers, statisticians, economists within the development agencies. Thereafter emerged the terminology of gender within the development literature and community through the preparations of various kinds of gender checklists, plannings, guidelines, trainings, gender analysis, monitoring. Jane Parpart discusses the complexities and hardships regarding the mechanisms of integrating gender into policies. According to her, these formalities of planning exclude the women who are not formally educated. Within this understanding, GAD analysis gets narrowed with the modernist definitions of development in the sense that such planning and policies need technical expertise with the assumption that northern models for development can be applied universally.<sup>82</sup> Together with the increase in the number of institutions providing funds and in turn in the number of projects, technical expertise turned into a new professional field. For instance, once the operating fields of development agencies considered, experts are recruited with regard to the newly emergent sectors.<sup>83</sup> Accommodation of disadvantaged groups within the projects became to be evaluated as a signal for fundability and respectability within the field. In the same line, the accommodation of women as a vulnerable group created a fundable field together with the mainstreaming of gender and became a *sin a qua non* element of projects. In this context, another problem

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<sup>79</sup> Arnfred, Signe, “Questions of Power: Women’s Movements, Feminist Theory and Development Aid”, *Discussing Women’s Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3*, p. 74

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p. 75

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, p. 74

<sup>82</sup> Parpart, Jane L., “Deconstructing the Development Expert: Gender, Development and the Vulnerable Groups”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 236

<sup>83</sup> For example see [www.unjobs.org](http://www.unjobs.org)

with this expertization is that, as Sally Baden and Anne Marie Goetz mentions, new players, to supply the demand for gender-aware policies, such as statisticians, economists “who bear no allegiance to feminist research and may not have any familiarity with its basic texts, concepts and methodologies”<sup>84</sup> entered into the field. In the studies gender was conceptualized within the framework of gender roles analysis rather than social relations analysis.<sup>85</sup> Thus, gender was reduced to role analysis and statistical variables, which usually focuses on the isolated roles of women and men in the household. These studies provided valuable data. Yet, they stayed at a level which justified the feminist criticisms regarding gender mainstreaming, since they “stripped away consideration of the relational aspects of gender, of power and ideology and of how patterns of subordination are reproduced”.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, the focus shifted towards women and men rather than on women. As a result, within the development process, GAD embraced a technical concern, delinking from its political aspect.

Secondly, as it was the case in the WID discourse, gender is instrumentalized for other objectives of development. Gender equality is not considered as an end itself, rather it is issued as a means to reach other development goals. For example, Cecile Jackson pinpoints this issue as such that: “the justifications made for attention to gender are in terms of how this will facilitate to other development objectives rather than being an end itself. Gender issues have been taken on board in so far as they are consistent with other development concerns.”<sup>87</sup> She gives examples to this situation that World Bank justifies emphasis on gender in relation to economic

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<sup>84</sup> Baden, Sally; Goetz, Anne Marie, “Who Needs [Sex] When You Can Have [Gender]? Conflicting Discourses on Gender at Beijing”, *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis and Policy*, ed. by. Cecile Jackson, Ruth Pearson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 22-23

<sup>85</sup> For gender roles analysis and social relations analysis see Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, “From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse” , *Occasional Paper 1, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme* (February 1995)

<sup>86</sup> Baden, Sally; Goetz, Anne Marie, “Who Needs [Sex] When You Can Have [Gender]? Conflicting Discourses on Gender at Beijing”, *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis and Policy*, ed. by. Cecile Jackson, Ruth Pearson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 22-23

<sup>87</sup> Jackson, Cecile, “Rescuing Gender from the Poverty Trap”, *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis and Policy*, ed. by. Cecile Jackson, Ruth Pearson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 40

growth and poverty reduction, UNFPA to population control, environmental agencies in relation to conservation of nature and management. In other words, women became instruments for controlling the population, providing environmentally sustainable development, increasing economic growth and poverty alleviation.<sup>88</sup> Razavi takes a different standpoint in the debates of instrumentalism. Although she finds criticisms of instrumentalism relevant, she also criticizes them and the critics towards GAD in the sense that they do not take into account the institutional and political constraints within which gender policy is formulated, within which the internal advocates of gender –the policy makers-found themselves in. According to Razavi, they work within these constraints posed by her institution. In this context, she sees the institutionalized language of GAD as a political maneuver of the internal advocates to highlight the relevance of gender through a language that is familiar and accepted.<sup>89</sup>

Here how gender is considered in the context of economic growth and poverty alleviation needs to be discussed briefly:

As mentioned in the WID part, after the 1980s, the emphasis on efficiency has increased together with the neo-liberal policies and became regnant with the structural adjustment programs. In literature many feminist studies revealed how negatively the structural adjustment policies affected women and the poor. However, as mentioned above, in this context of structural adjustment, statisticians and economists based their analyses on gender efficiency approach. In other words, rather than focusing on the effects of structural adjustment policies on gender, they investigated the effects of gender roles on economic growth and its impacts on the macro-economic concerns<sup>90</sup>, because women have a vital role in the process of structural adjustment. As Diana Elson asserts:

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Razavi, Shakra, "Fitting Gender into Development Institutions", *World Development*, Vol 25(7), (1997) pp. 1112-1120

<sup>90</sup> Within this context there are many articles that analyze the effects of gender on economic development. For instance see Knowles, Stephen; Lorgelly, Paula K.; Owen, Dorian P., "Are Educational Gender Gaps a Brake on Economic Development? Some Cross-Country Empirical

In the context of economic crises and structural adjustment, women are particularly valued for their ability to devise and implement survival strategies for their families, using their unpaid labor to absorb adverse affects of structural adjustment policies.<sup>91</sup>

In this sense, as it was the case in WID, gender inequality became to be evaluated as costly to economic development. Hence, development agencies, especially the World Bank focus on gender equality as a means to economic growth. For example, the World Bank Document titled “Engendering Development” states: “But gender equality also enhances development by strengthening the ability of countries to grow, to reduce poverty, and to govern effectively.”<sup>92</sup> It is mentioned just before this statement that “gender equality is a development objective in its own right”. Indeed, the use of the latter statement is common in various documents and this must be questioned through a profound analysis of these documents since even through an on the surface investigation of these documents, it is recognized that gender equality is focused on for the sake of economic growth. Added eclectically to the relevant documents, the statement stays only on the surface and probably serves as a legitimization statement to counter the criticisms directed to this discourse.

From the late 1980s on, gender became to be concerned in relation to the poverty alleviation objective of development. The research conducted in this period revealed out the negative effects of structural adjustment especially on the poor and women. In the literature, specifically two different entities, which emphasize the issue, are mentioned. First is the DAWN group as founders of GAD approach. They focused on poverty, caused by structural adjustment policies, overlapping with the feminization of poverty discourse. They criticized the capital accumulation practiced through export-oriented development strategies in terms of their

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Evidence”, <http://www.st-and.ac.uk/~res2000/papers/pdf/tuesday/Knowles2.pdf> (February 1999, Revised April 2000)

<sup>91</sup> Elson, 1989 quoted in Elson, Diane, “From Survival Strategies to Transformation Strategies: Women’s Needs and Structural Adjustment”, p. 26

<sup>92</sup> World Bank, 2000, p. 1 quoted in Arnfred, Signe, “Questions of Power: Women’s Movements, Feminist Theory and Development Aid”, *Discussing Women’s Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3*, p. 77

polarizing outcomes in both class and gender terms. In this context, they argued for an alternative model of development that is human-centered and concerned with the needs of the poor and the women. The second is the empirical studies of UNICEF. Showing the negative effects of adjustment policies, UNICEF proposed Adjustment with a Human Face. Especially, under the influence of the report of UNICEF, it is claimed that during the 1990s, mainstream development agencies, especially the World Bank and the IMF, turned poverty alleviation into the priority of development.<sup>93</sup> Within this process, there began the resurgence of projects aiming at poverty alleviation especially for the so-called vulnerable groups to remove the short term negative effects of adjustment. Nevertheless, the assumption was that economic growth through structural adjustment would alleviate poverty in the longer term.

As the poverty alleviation became the development priority, “gender has collapsed into the poverty trap”<sup>94</sup> as it was the case in WID. Economic poverty was again considered to be the main problem. Within the development community gender took attention “as a variant of poverty problem.”<sup>95</sup> The relevance of the negative effects of structural adjustment policies and the feminization of poverty discourse legitimized the development interventions that targeted women but stayed with the main focus on poverty. As a result, the projects undertaken were poverty focused. The statistical data as the evidence of the feminization of poverty pictured women as the poorest of the poor. There are many articles in literature that tackle the relationship between gender and poverty, the ways in which poverty affects gender relations and how gender relations affect poverty. However, the main problem with many studies is that gender is assimilated into poverty approach and beyond, is seen as a means to poverty alleviation. Like the World Bank document mentioned

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<sup>93</sup> Razavi, Shahra, “Fitting Gender into Development Institutions”, *World Development*, Vol 25(7), (1997), p. 1118; Connelly, Patricia M., “Gender Matters: Global Restructuring and Adjustment”, *Social Politics* (Spring 1996), p. 14

<sup>94</sup> Jackson, Cecile, “Rescuing Gender from the Poverty Trap”, *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis and Policy*, ed. by. Cecile Jackson, Ruth Pearson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998)

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p. 39

before, the document of OECD titled Environment Gender and Poverty Linkages exemplifies this on-the-surface discourse with the statement that :

At the same time, addressing gender disparities should not be reduced to a means of ensuring the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies. Gender equality is a development objective in its own right, and sustainable development strategies must aim to foster women's empowerment and effective participation. This implies involving women and men as partners and allies in formulating and pursuing strategies for more equal societies.<sup>96</sup>

Once the document examined, whereas it focuses on poverty and environment, gender stays subordinate as is evidenced even with that few references are given to the issue of gender in the reference part of the document.

Cecile Jackson, who argues that feminization of poverty and the discourse of "women are the poorest of the poor" reduce gender and women's subordination to poverty and depoliticize gender, asks: "Does this mean that where poverty is not feminized then there is no justification for GAD? Are there no gender issues amongst those who are not the deserving poor? Will poverty alleviation improve the position of women?" To rescue gender from the poverty trap, she suggests poverty independent gender analysis and policies:

We need poverty independent gender analysis and policies which recognize that poverty policies are not necessarily appropriate to tackling gender issues because subordination of women is not caused by poverty...Women who are not poor, of course, experience subordination of different kinds...A poverty focus misses the range of interconnected gender issues across classes and socio-economic strata and obscures both the problems of gender bias by women towards other women as well as the possibilities for solidarity across social boundaries.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> OECD, "Poverty, Environment, Gender Linkages", *Pre-print of the DAC (Development Assistance Committee) Journal 2001*, Volume 2, No. 4 (OECD Publications 2002), p. 7

<sup>97</sup> Jackson, Cecile, "Rescuing Gender from the Poverty Trap", *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis and Policy*, ed. by. Cecile Jackson, Ruth Pearson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 60

However Razavi criticizes the critics towards “feminization of poverty” in the same sense as the critics towards the “instrumentalisation of gender”. According to him, “similar political considerations apply to the feminization of poverty discourse [...] (internal advocates) have found poverty to be a useful platform on which to raise their demands for gender justice.”<sup>98</sup> For him, focus on poverty is tactical in the sense that “it makes the feminist agenda less threatening to male bureaucrats.”<sup>99</sup> Another factor is that “detrimental economic policies [...] have made poverty a concrete reality for a growing number of men and women.”<sup>100</sup> Poverty has a key priority on the agendas of not only donor agencies but also international and national agencies and southern feminist groups and Networks who are opposed to the neo-liberal agenda. According to Razavi, the alliances among these groups provided a powerful critique of neo-liberal mainstream.

To sum up, the shift from women to gender was breakthrough in many fields. The emergence of GAD was carrying political potential for the feminist circles. Yet, especially through the adoption of the approach by the mainstream, it replicated the problems of WID. Furthermore, the term gender and the GAD lost its political character by the mainstream discourse and practices. They became new means of poverty alleviation and efficiency objectives of the development field.

### **2.3. Empowerment Approach**

The following part of this chapter will firstly discuss the emergence of the empowerment approach. Then, the different usages of the concept of empowerment will be discussed. For this purpose, I will critically review the mainstream usage of the concept of empowerment as an individual end. This discussion will deal with the definitions that the scholars agree upon as defining the concept of empowerment as a collective process. In this regard, empowerment should be defined with an

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<sup>98</sup> Razavi, Shakra, “Fitting Gender into Development Institutions”, *World Development*, Vol 25(7), (1997), p. 1120

<sup>99</sup> Ibid

<sup>100</sup> Ibid

emphasis on its relation to the concept of power. Lastly, a critical assessment of the empowerment approach will be provided.

### **2.3.1. The Emergence of Empowerment Approach**

Empowerment Approach emerged in the late 1980s. The origins of the Empowerment Approach is usually traced back to the local, grass-roots, and community based movements, activists and also on the efforts of theorists mainly in the Third World as well as in the First World who are in search for alternative approach to development. Among them, especially the DAWN group is associated with the idea of women's empowerment.<sup>101</sup> As GAD has emerged based on the limitations of the arguments and practices of WID, Empowerment Approach also emerged from critiques of the previous approaches and practices.<sup>102</sup>

In search for alternative approaches to development, the western notions of development were criticized. The mainstream development policies, practices and projects were criticized in the sense that they are top-down, western centric, (Third World) women are represented as victims, the voices and knowledge of marginalized people were ignored, and they have a technical understanding of development privileging economic growth. Therefore, based on these critiques, a more people-centered, participatory and grassroots development that focused on local communities was called for. With a specific focus on women, this new approach was women-centered and emphasized the women's empowerment. It was highlighting "the need for women to become empowered so they can challenge patriarchal and economic inequalities."<sup>103</sup> For example, in the book Development

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<sup>101</sup> Although in the literature, the origins of the empowerment idea is referred to the Third World, Zoe Oxaal and Sally Baden indicate to the point that the origins of the concept is debateful in the sense that "the concept has been described as more evolving from Western individualism rather than from politics of the South". ( Oxaal, Zoe; Baden, Sally, "Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy", Briefing prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *BRIDGE, Report No 40* (October 1997),p. 19

<sup>102</sup> However, at the same time Empowerment Approach can be seen as an extension of Gender and Development Approach. At the discursive level of the theory it -mainly the Dawn group- carries women's empowerment in its aims.

<sup>103</sup> Parpart, Jane L.; Rai, Shirin M.; Staudt, Kathleen, "Rethinking Em(Power)ment, Gender and Development: An Introduction", *Rethinking Empowerment: Gender and Development in a*

Crises and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives (1988), Gita Sen and Caren Grown mention the women's empowerment as a vision "rooted in a commitment to collective action growing out of the specific problems and contexts facing women (and men) in the South, whether economic, political or cultural."<sup>104</sup> They proposed political mobilization, legal changes, consciousness raising and popular education as a means for empowerment through which transformation for a new vision of development can be realized. They also emphasized the role of collective action by women, mainly the women's organizations for this political transformation.

### **2.3.2. What Does Empowerment Mean? : Different Perspectives and Definitions of the Concept**

Today, empowerment has become a fashionable concept used by various different organizations. The concept has been adopted both by the mainstream agencies and the small grassroots NGOs. Both in the growing literature and mainstream documents on women and development, it is common to come across with the concept. However, in all fields, the concept is being used without being questioned. In fact, in the literature, the scholars writing on the concept of women's empowerment all note the complexity and difficulty of the concept and methodology. In other words, they point to the difficulties in understanding, implementing and measuring empowerment. A significant body of literature focuses on the concept itself and makes its own understanding of the term. Some scholars like Naila Kabeer<sup>105</sup>, in addition to theoretical understanding, deals with practices and measurements for the operationalization of the concept of women's empowerment. As a consequence, based on the complexities of the concept, both mainstream agencies and scholars provide different definitions and measurements according to their own understandings.

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*Global/Local World*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, Shirin M. Rai, Kathleen Staudt (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 10

<sup>104</sup> Ibid

<sup>105</sup> See Kabeer, Naila, "Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment", *Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3*

Understandings of empowerment differ according to the different dimensions of the concept. When these different understandings are categorized, the first basic difference appears as whether empowerment is viewed as an end product or as a process. Second differentiation appears as whether the emphasis would be on the individual or on the collectivity. In the literature, the feminist standpoint reads empowerment through the lenses of power relations. Power is disaggregated into *power over*, *power to*, *power within* and *power with*. In fact, while the power within corresponds to the individual dimension of empowerment, power with corresponds to the collective dimension of the concept. In this sense, this perspective harnesses the individual and collective dimensions of empowerment. Assessing and giving meaning to empowerment through power relations is provided in line with the emphasis on the collective dimension. This is because the studies in the literature, which emphasize the collective dimension, do not disregard individual empowerment, yet put emphasis on the collective side. They claim that individual empowerment would not necessarily lead to political transformation by itself.

While mainstream development agencies and scholars emphasize the individual dimension of empowerment and define it as a product/end, alternative development agencies and feminist scholars emphasize the collective dimension of empowerment and define it as an ongoing process. In this context, I will discuss the mainstream conceptualization of empowerment, followed by the empowerment perspectives developed by some scholars, who aim to develop alternative approaches to the development approach.

### **2.3.2.1. Empowerment as an Individual End: Following WID in a Neo-liberal Context**

In 1990s, top-down, state-led projects began to be evaluated as failing to alleviate poverty. This helped the pro-neoliberalism arguments inadvertently as this situation served a proof for the need of state contraction in its size and functioning, and for the need that the development practices should be (left) in line with the operation of the market forces. In the Third World, there was an increasing suspicion about the capacity of the state. The demands for good governance, democracy and economic

liberalization began to be voiced up. In this process, mainstream approaches adopted alternative development discourses based especially on the previous failures.<sup>106</sup> The contemporary popular terms such as empowerment, participation, participation into decision-making, indigenous voices, capacity-building, self-reliance, and bottom-up development entered into the agenda and the language of mainstream development agencies. At a global scale local, grass-roots, small scale projects, that have emphasis on empowerment and participation, began to be implemented.

The adoption of Empowerment Approach by mainstream discourse and agenda is just followed the way that GAD was adopted. Empowerment Approach was integrated into the mainstreaming gender discourse. As it would be recognized through an investigation of the mainstream documents, the aim of women's empowerment was added upon the target of gender equality. However, this transformation, as it was the case with the cosmetic transition from WID to GAD, did basically not mean more than the change in the language of the mainstream approaches. In short, the discursive shift has constituted a cosmetic change. What is meant by cosmetic change is the instrumentalization of women's empowerment in the mainstream development discourse for the scope of development objectives.<sup>107</sup> Women's empowerment, resurgent hand in hand with participation discourse, basically became subordinated once again by the forefront targets of poverty alleviation and economic efficiency. In this regard, Marilee Karl underlines the issue of participation into planning and decision making as follows:

It is now recognized in development circles that economic growth and social betterment are best achieved when the mass of the population is informed about and involved in development aims and plans, and sees itself as a direct beneficiary of the expanded resources growth should bring. One of the ways to achieve this is structuring the decision making process in such a way as to ensure widespread consultation at

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<sup>106</sup> Jane Parpart, "Lessons From the Field: Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development from a Post-(Post-?) Development Perspective", *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002),p. 45

<sup>107</sup> Since this is mentioned before in detail through poverty alleviation and economic efficiency, it will not be elaborated here again.

all levels of society about development goals, the processes by which those goals are to be reached and the resources needed to achieve them.<sup>108</sup>

A brief look at the documents of mainstream development agencies would display the perspective of empowerment as a means towards other development objectives. Once the UN document titled “Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women”<sup>109</sup> is analyzed as an illustration of the case, the book includes UN’s strategic priorities like combat against women, guaranteeing sexual and reproductive rights. Once the chapters in contents part are examined, the chapter on strategic priority devotes a section on cost analysis as it is alike the costs of the poor’s reproductive rights. The name of the last chapter (chapter 11) is ironic in the sense that it reveals much about the idea: “The Financial Costs of Interventions to Achieve Gender Equality.” Furthermore the book reveals more with its first sentence the contexts, under which it attaches value to empowerment and gender equality:

The task force affirms that gender equality and women’s empowerment are central to the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. Development policies and actions that fail to take gender inequality into account and that fail to enable women to be actors in those policies and interventions will have limited effectiveness and serious costs to societies.<sup>110</sup>

No matter how empowerment is adopted by the mainstream agenda, it is seen that the projects undertaken global-wise still stay in and are restricted by the framework of WID. In this regards, many studies showed the fact that the projects could not go beyond than fulfilling the practical gender interest.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Karl, Marilee, *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making* ( London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995), p. 108

<sup>109</sup> Grown, Caren; Gupta Rao, Geeta; Kes, Aslihan, *Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women*, UN Millennium Project, Task Force on Education and Gender Equality (London, Sterling: Earthscan, 2005)

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, p. 30

<sup>111</sup> As an example, Lotsmart Fonjong, from the Department of Women and Gender Studies, University of Buea, Cameroon, in her article “Fostering Women’s Participation in Development through non-Governmental Efforts in Cameroon” evaluates case studies of NGO’s in terms of women’s empowerment in Cameroon. For the assessment she uses the UNICEF’s empowerment

To reiterate it, in the mainstream WID discourse the assumption was that through practical gender interests, mainly through income generation activities, women's status would be improved. This was related to understanding women's subordination in the economic framework. In the same line, with the integration of empowerment approach, it was assumed that the fulfillment of the practical gender interests and "increased income and economic independence will lead to greater personal empowerment."<sup>112</sup> Therefore, following WID discourse, mainstream development agencies define the strategy to empower women mainly through (in addition to basic needs and services, fertility control, education) economic interventions. Especially, micro-enterprise and micro-credit programs and projects became so popular in the mainstream. Zoe Oxaal and Sally Baden looks critically to credit-programs in the sense that "their lack of access to capital is treated as a technical problem which outsiders can identify and tackle without actually committing to deeper structural transformations."<sup>113</sup> There is an extensive literature, which assesses the effects of such program and projects. Evidence from these studies shows the negative effects on women rather than empowerment of women. For example, much of these studies reveal that these credits are controlled by

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ladder. As it is the case in the UNICEF's empowerment ladder, empowerment is seen as a product, an end in the study. According to the study women are empowered if "they gain a voice, have mobility, establish a presence, obtain control over different aspects of their lives and overpower structures or change them" (Johnson, 1992, p. 148 quoted in Fonjong, Lotsmart, "Fostering Women's Participation in Development Through Non-Governmental Efforts in Cameroon", *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 167(3)(September 2001), pp. 227) In addition to this women are seen to be empowered if both their practical and strategic gender needs are fulfilled. The research bases on the assessment of the training and acquisition of new skills, accessibility of credit, women's employment and income, women's welfare and health concerns, NGO's and women's rights, Cameroon women in politics. The study finds out that "most Cameroonian women are now better housewives, better farmers or better small traders than in the past" (Ibid, p. 232) which leads to the reduction of poverty among women. The interventions of the NGO's have "improved women's access to health, credit, training, employment, and family-decision making"(Ibid, pp. 233-234). However, there is not found "any significant change in their subordinate position" so that women "can hardly participate effectively and efficiently in all spheres of national life". Therefore, the study shows that according to the UNICEF framework, women are not empowered. In other words, she found that NGO's in Cameroon, did not address strategic gender needs-discrimination against and subordination of women-, but it addresses practical gender needs, in which they succeeded in limited terms.

<sup>112</sup> Kilby, Patrick, "Questioning Empowerment: Lessons From Women's Groups in India", Participatory Development Working Papers No 06/03 (September 2006), p. 7

<sup>113</sup> Von Bülow et al, 1995 quoted in Oxaal, Zoe; Baden, Sally, "Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy", Briefing prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *BRIDGE, Report No 40* (October 1997) p. 14

husbands or male relatives. In this sense, while the scholars consider the improving women's access to credit as a positive step, on the other hand they emphasize that it does not directly lead to economic empowerment of women.<sup>114</sup> Therefore, they highlight that these projects "will merely shift the burden of household debt and household subsistence onto women"<sup>115</sup> if the different contexts are not taken into account and or sufficient number of empowerment strategies are not developed.

In fact all the above mentioned women's empowerment through entrepreneurship, micro credit scheme strategies pinpoint the mainstream interpretation of empowerment within neo-liberal context as it is the extension of the relation of WID to liberal doctrine. It is just this conjuncture that women's empowerment is defined by the mainstream as an individual end. It is in this sense that mainstream emphasizes entrepreneurship, individual self-reliance, individual rights, and participation into decision-making. The usage of the concept, which includes power in its roots, ignores power structures in the wider social context. Furthermore, dealing with the individual empowerment process, social transformation is not addressed. Zoe Oxaal and Sally Baden underpin this issue briefly as follows:

Empowerment is often envisaged as individual rather than as collective, and focused on entrepreneurship and individual self-reliance, rather than on co-operation to challenge power structures which subordinate women (or other marginalized groups). This individualistic approach to empowerment fits together with the belief in entrepreneurial capitalism and market forces as the main saviors of sickly or backward economies, and with the current trend for limiting state provision of welfare, services and employment. It is also consonant with a liberal approach to democracy, emphasizing individual rights and participation in decision-making, through the electoral process.<sup>116</sup>

Aslı Çoban, in her master's thesis mentions that empowerment in development area, rather than a transformative perspective, based on individual or group

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid

<sup>115</sup> Mayoux, 2002, p. 7 quoted in Mosedale, Sarah, "Assessing Women's Empowerment: Towards a Conceptual Framework", *Journal of International Development*, 17(2005), p. 248

<sup>116</sup> Oxaal, Zoe; Baden, Sally, "Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy", Briefing prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *BRIDGE, Report No 40* (October 1997), p. 19

strategies for women. The concept “does not address the inequality producing processes and structures in social institutions.”<sup>117</sup> She argues that “this is a result of neo-liberal influence in the development field.”<sup>118</sup>

Neo-liberal influence, as well as turning empowerment into an individual development process for women, deteriorates the transformative perspective of feminist empowerment through turning the principle of ‘agency of women’ and self-empowerment principles into small scale initiatives of women in which some women improve their position within existing structures and regulations...neo-liberal understanding...cuts of ...political organization and action dimension which actually bestows empowerment approach with the potential of creating transformative change.<sup>119</sup>

### **2.3.2.2. Empowerment as (Both an Individual and) a Collective Process: Reading Em-power-ment through Power**

The concept of women’s empowerment has been defined variously by different scholars. Diverse emphasis put on aspects of empowerment differentiate the understandings of empowerment from each other. For example, Batliwala emphasizes the changing consciousness of women in terms of understanding gender ideology and accordingly their oppression by male domination.<sup>120</sup> Nelly Stromquist defines the term as a socio-political concept which has cognitive, psychological, economic and political aspects. According to Jo Rowlands, empowerment includes three components that are personal, close relationships and collective. For Naila Kabeer empowerment refers to “the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.”<sup>121</sup> Sarah

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<sup>117</sup> Çoban, Ashi, *An Evaluation of the Women’s Entrepreneurship Support Activities in Turkey*, A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the Degree of Master of Science in Gender and Women’s Studies (September 2006)

<sup>118</sup> Ibid

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, p. 79

<sup>120</sup> Oxaal, Zoe; Baden, Sally, “Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy”, Briefing prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *BRIDGE, Report No 40* (October 1997), p. 248

<sup>121</sup> Kabeer, Naila, “Reflections on the Measurement of Women’s Empowerment”, *Discussing Women’s Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3*, p. 19

Mosadele defines empowerment as “the process by which women redefine and extend what is possible for them to be and do in situations where they have been restricted, compared to men, from being and doing. Alternatively, women’s empowerment is the processes by which women redefine gender roles in ways which extend their possibilities for being and doing.”<sup>122</sup> Although the definitions and the emphasis of the scholars on the dimensions of empowerment differentiate from each other, there are some common points in their approach to women’s empowerment. In line with Sarah Mosadele’s analysis, (with some additions and interpretations to her points by the author of the study) agreed-upon aspects can be mentioned under four points.<sup>123</sup>

- There is a precondition for empowerment. To be empowered one must have been disempowered. Women are disempowered relative to men.
- Empowerment cannot be bestowed by a third party. An external agent can not empower women. Only the women themselves empower themselves.<sup>124</sup> A third party or an external agent (mostly the development agencies or NGO’s) only can play a facilitating role by creating conditions for the women. For example they can encourage women for participation, arrange activities such as skills improvement or related trainings, they can support women’s organizations or support women to organize. In other words, such a view understands empowerment as a bottom-up process rather than a top-down one.
- Empowerment usually includes capacity to make decisions about women’s own lives and it refers to a change. It can be both at the individual level and collective level. As this study categorizes the approaches to empowerment accordingly, the scholars take attention to the mainstream development

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<sup>122</sup> Mosedale, Sarah, “Assessing Women’s Empowerment: Towards a Conceptual Framework”, *Journal of International Development*, 17(2005)

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, p. 244

<sup>124</sup> In this context, in Turkish translation, “kadınların güçlenmesi” should be used, rather than “kadınların güçlendirilmesi”.

agencies in the sense that they mostly focus on individual level. Yet, the scholars mostly agree that the individual and collective aspect of empowerment does not exclude each other. Emphasizing on the collective aspect, they agree that individual empowerment is fundamental. Yet, it does not lead to political change alone. Therefore they designate both the individual and collective dimensions of empowerment.

- Empowerment is an ongoing process, not a product: “There is no final goal. One does not arrive at a stage of being empowered in some absolute sense. People are empowered, or disempowered, relative to others, or, importantly, relative to themselves at a previous time”.<sup>125</sup>

Besides all these agreed-upon dimensions of empowerment, some scholars, who put the emphasis on both the individual and the collective dimensions of the concept, agree that empowerment should be conceived through the concept of power and that power should be central to an understanding of empowerment. In line with these arguments, this study apprehends empowerment through the concept of power, the arguments related to which are presented below.

In the literature some scholars<sup>126</sup> claim that empowerment should be read from power as the term has its roots in the idea of power. They argue for putting power in the center of empowerment debates to understand various approaches to empowerment. Therefore, they try to understand power relations mostly from basing on Foucault’s conceptualization of power. In this context, let us mention briefly how power is conceptualized.

First of all, power has different bases. It can be economic, political, social, cultural or religious. Secondly, power operates at different locations; it can be in institutions, in the family, in the people themselves, in relations with both people

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<sup>125</sup> Mosedale, Sarah, “Assessing Women’s Empowerment: Towards a Conceptual Framework”, *Journal of International Development*, 17(2005), p. 244

<sup>126</sup> For example Zoe Oxaal and Sally Baden, Sarah Mosadele, Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo, Patrick Kilby, Kabeer, Shirin Rai, Kathleen Staudt, Jane Parpart

and structures. Related to this aspect of power, it can happen every time and at the same time leading to different consequences. Moreover, power is relational; it is not static “but rather practiced and constantly negotiated in relation to others”.<sup>127</sup> Most importantly power is not something possessed but it is exercised. Power is exercised in four ways:

- *Power Over:* This form of power relates to domination/subordination type of hierarchical relationship. Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo explains it as:

The most dominant and commonly practiced power. Having control over economic resources, occupying political positions, having expertise and access to information, or simply being a man, could be some of the basis of this power... Having been mostly exposed to this model of power, it is not surprising that women, when put in positions or conditions of power, show their internalization of this dominant practice of it.<sup>128</sup>

- *Power To:* This form of power is related to the capacities and abilities to do something. According to Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo it is “the opposite of power over, which strips women and men of their ability to act and take control of their lives.” But, she adds that “women and men practice and are surrounded by these two opposing types of power.”<sup>129</sup>
- *Power Within:* This form of power is related to the individual dimensions and internal resources of a person, in other words to inner strength. Self-esteem, self-awareness, assertiveness, a sense of agency, etc. is usually referred to power within.

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<sup>127</sup> Medel-Anonuevo, Carolyn, “Reclaiming the Empowerment Discourse: A Challenge to Feminists”, *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion*, ed. by. Marianne Baig and Sonja Wölte, (London and Newyork: Zed Books, 2002), p. 84

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

- *Power With*: This form of power is related to collective strength. It is a group-based type of power. It “involves people organizing with a common purpose or common understanding to achieve collective goals.”<sup>130</sup>

According to feminist scholars *power to*, *power with* and *power within* can be developed as alternatives to *power over*. This kind of understanding both challenges the kind of power that is based on domination/subordination relationship and the idea that increase in one’s power leads to decrease in another’s power. Rather than power exercised as oppression, it gives chance to live in a more equitable society as men benefited from women’s empowerment as well.<sup>131</sup> In this context, both Marxist and liberal perspectives of power that are founded on power over resources, institutions, people, and decision-making are criticized by feminist scholars. They call for a feminist approach to power that focuses on power within and power with. For example Naila Kabeer touches upon the transformative potential of “power within”:

This power is rooted in self-understanding that can inspire women (and some men) to recognize and challenge gender equality in the home and the community.<sup>132</sup>

Jane Parpart, Kathleen Staudt and Shirin Rai also touch upon this point. They mention that empowerment usually refers to transformatory promise of change, often for the better. Taking their stance from this point, they criticize the liberals and Marxists as Kabeer does. While Marxist approach to power focuses on revolutionary and fundamental social transformation, liberal approach foregrounds a benign view of power, one that emphasizes the potential for rational discussion and evolutionary change within modern societies-associated with liberal arguments

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<sup>130</sup> Oxaal, Zoe; Baden, Sally, “Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy”, Briefing prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *BRIDGE, Report No 40* (October 1997), p. 19

<sup>131</sup> *ibid*

<sup>132</sup> Kabeer, 1994, pp. 224-229 quoted in Parpart, Jane L.; Rai, Shirin M.; Staudt, Kathleen, “Rethinking Em(Power)ment, Gender and Development: An Introduction”, *Rethinking Empowerment: Gender and Development in a Global/Local World*, ed.by. Jane L. Parpart, Shirin M. Rai, Kathleen Staudt (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 11

of modernization and democracy.<sup>133</sup> Yet, the common ground of both of these approaches is that they both view empowerment through the lenses of “power over”.

### **2.3.3. A Critical Look to the Empowerment Approach**

A critical evaluation on the mainstream understandings of the empowerment approach was provided in the previous parts. Yet, to briefly evaluate it once again in the neo-liberal context, mainstream keep WID discourse although it adopted the language of empowerment approach. Women’s empowerment served as a means for poverty alleviation and efficiency. In this regards, for instance, Kathleen Staudt underlines the impossibility of women’s empowerment through the international development agencies’ approach. As she thinks that, “sometimes they serve only to control women and extract more labor and resources from them”.<sup>134</sup> Women’s subordination was restricted within the economic framework and equated with poverty and thus power relations (in household, community, national, global and institutional structures) were disregarded. Associated with the focus of neo-liberalism on individual, women’s empowerment was conceptualized as individual self- development. If seen from a more critical perspective, it can be claimed that neo-liberalism is in search for the creation of competitive, entrepreneur, efficient, self reliant, and leadership oriented participant individuals armed with masculine values which would make them ready for the competitive world. In other words, the empowerment approach of the mainstream can be claimed to be a Western project in an effort to change the women from “object to subject” that is non-threatening to global capitalism.<sup>135</sup> Mainstream manicured its discourse in the framework of liberal, democratic, human rights. In this regards, it valued an approach with an emphasis on people-centered development. Yet, it evaluates women’s collectivity

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<sup>133</sup> Parpart, Jane L.; Rai, Shirin M.; Staudt, Kathleen, “Rethinking Em(Power)ment, Gender and Development: An Introduction”, *Rethinking Empowerment: Gender and Development in a Global/Local World*, ed.by. Jane L. Parpart, Shirin M. Rai, Kathleen Staudt (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 5

<sup>134</sup> Ibid

<sup>135</sup> Saunders, Kriemild, “Introduction: Towards a Deconstructive Post-Development Criticism” *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 37

on the basis of group strategy which does not challenge the power structures and in turn which is not transformatory.

Secondly, the debates regarding all the approaches to development—the mainstream, anti-development thinking, post-structuralists and populist-alternative thoughts to development, focus on the local scale in the context of empowerment. In other words, local emerges as “the site of empowerment, locus of generation of knowledge and development interventions.”<sup>136</sup> The first risk regarding the emphasis on the local scale lies in undertaking a romantic approach. Romantic approach to local ignores the local power structures and social inequalities within the local. Indeed, this is carried to an extent that tradition gets to be sanctified. However, these traditions and local beliefs themselves constitute one of the structures that result in women’s subordination. Furthermore, within the framework of these local inequalities, the power relations among the women themselves are not recognized. Secondly, local is issued in isolation from broader political and economic power structures. As Giles Mohan and Kristian Stokke note “in this spatio-political schema the ‘local’ and the ‘non-local’ are treated as ‘discrete entities, entirely separable from each other in space.’”<sup>137</sup> Although there are debates on empowerment, it is limited to the question of how empowerment can be effective at the local level. It is in this respect that the focus is on grass-roots participatory methods. Such focus on the local ignores the impact of regional, national and global power structures on women’s empowerment.<sup>138</sup> Jane Parpart summarizes the problem as follows:

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<sup>136</sup> Mohan, Giles; Stokke, Kristian, “Participatory Development and Empowerment: The Dangers of Localism”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol 21(2) (2000), pp. 247-248

<sup>137</sup> Mohan, Giles; Stokke, Kristian, “Participatory Development and Empowerment: The Dangers of Localism”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol 21(2) (2000), p. 254

<sup>138</sup> Parpart, Jane L.; Rai, Shirin M.; Staudt, Kathleen, “Rethinking Em(Power)ment, Gender and Development: An Introduction”, *Rethinking Empowerment: Gender and Development in a Global/Local World*, ed. by. Jane L. Parpart, Shirin M. Rai, Kathleen Staudt (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 3; Jane Parpart, “Lessons From the Field: Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development from a Post-(Post-?) Development Perspective”, *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 48

I am bothered by double standards. When people talk about women's empowerment, they use the word power in a non-threatening, almost romantic way. So many local projects claim to empower, especially ever-popular PRA techniques, with their promise of giving voice to the marginalized. Yet, global structures often disempower women and the communities in which they live.<sup>139</sup>

Based on these critics, Jane Parpart, Kathleen Staudt and Shirin Rai<sup>140</sup> call for understanding empowerment in their contexts, yet, at the same time, understanding the power relations in local, national and global scales interrelationally. Within this context, they propose a redefinition of empowerment. The authors define empowerment as such:

- Empowerment must be analyzed in local, national and global contexts.
- As empowerment includes the exercise of power (not the possession of power), power must be analyzed deeply to be able to understand and facilitate women's empowerment. Empowerment must be understood both including individual concretization (power within) and collective work. Because these together bring the politicized power that can lead to change.
- Empowerment-both individual and collective- takes place in the institutional, material, discursive power structures. Therefore, attention must be paid to political, economic structures, cultural assumptions, discursive patterns, belief systems.
- Empowerment is both a process and an outcome. It is process because of its fluid, unpredictable, changing (over time and place) character. It is an outcome in the sense that it can be measured against its expected accomplishments. In other words, there can be some specific outcomes.

Lastly, even this study looks from empowerment approach; it still carries some doubts about the concept of empowerment. There is a gap in the literature that

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<sup>139</sup> Staudt, Kathleen; Rai, M. Shirin; Parpart, L. Jane, "Protesting World Trade Rules: Can We Talk about Empowerment?", *Signs*, Vol. 26(4) (Summer 2001), p. 1253

<sup>140</sup> Parpart, Jane L.; Rai, Shirin M.; Staudt, Kathleen, "Rethinking Em(Power)ment, Gender and Development: An Introduction", *Rethinking Empowerment: Gender and Development in a Global/Local World*, ed. by Jane L. Parpart, Shirin M. Rai, Kathleen Staudt (London and New York: Routledge, 2002)

scholars do not question or ignore the concept of emancipation in its relation to empowerment. In the existing literature, the concept of emancipation either has not been touched upon at all or the concept is used together with empowerment just by putting “and” between two concepts with no need to emphasize or explain their differences: “women’s empowerment and emancipation”. An example can be given from Patricia Connelly’s work:

They are concerned with both policy formulation and implementation. Through their intervention in the broader policymaking agenda, women's interests can influence the course of development (Kabeer 1994). Increasingly, they are demanding to be heard as they work toward *empowerment and emancipation*. In this way, women become agents of change.<sup>141</sup>

What happened to the concept of emancipation? What do the scholars mean when using these two concepts together? It is unclear –as in the above quotation-whether emancipation and empowerment are used as referring to the same meaning or not. It seems that while empowerment is defined as a process, it becomes one of the means for emancipation as an end. What distinguishes empowerment from emancipation? Is it its being more practical and easier to be operationalized in fieldworks that distinguishes empowerment from emancipation? The only explanation encountered in the literature regarding the question of why the concept of emancipation disappeared from the literature, after the concept of empowerment began to be used widely. The differences between these two concepts are as follows: “Among the feminists in 1970s emancipation came to be regarded as too large and ambitious agenda, while empowerment was seen as more practical and enabling immediate action.”<sup>142</sup> Based on this explanation it becomes clear that empowerment was preferred to be used rather than emancipation with the debates of integration of women into the development agenda. Today empowerment is mainly used in the development discourse and literature. Even if it is preferred because of its practical aspect, it carries some questions and perils with it. The first question to ask would

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<sup>141</sup> Connelly, Patricia M., “Gender Matters: Global Restructuring and Adjustment”, *Social Politics* (Spring 1996), p. 27

<sup>142</sup> Pieterse, Jan Nederveen, “Empowerment: Snakes and Ladders”, *Feminist Futures: Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development*, ed. by. Kum-Kum Bhavnani, John Foran and Priya A. Kurian (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), p. 112

be whether the feminist discourse falls into the empowerment approach trap? It is mostly emphasized in the literature that new methods and discourses are needed for the analysis on the concept of empowerment. In my opinion, the plurality and the complexity of definitions of empowerment and the efforts to redefine empowerment reveal that the feminist discourse collapsed into the empowerment trap. Secondly, despite the criticisms of the development and neo-liberal politics, and efforts to seek for alternatives to development, did the feminist discourse fall into the trap of the development paradigm? While viewing “emancipation” as ambitious or “utopic” and empowerment as “practical”, are we distracting ourselves with the concept of empowerment? Capitalist patriarchal development would prefer empowerment-as empowerment is not so dangerous to neo-liberal politics, instead can easily be appropriated- rather than emancipation.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN TURKEY WITH GENDER PERSPECTIVE**

In this chapter, the transformation of development discourse and practices will be presented through the historical development of development projects in Turkey. As for this, the economic policies of period between 1960 and 1980 will be examined for first. Later on, the period after 1980, which is considered to be a turning point in Turkey's economic and political history, will be elaborated. In the second part, gender and development projects in Turkey will be briefly examined. In the last part, the development discourse and implementations that are developed and carried out after 1980s and 1990s will be critically evaluated from gender perspective.

#### **3.1. Historical Development of Development Projects in Turkey**

##### **3.1.1. 1960-1980 Period**

The evolution of the development projects in Turkey traces back to 1960s. The development projects must be examined within the context of planned economy and its transformations in Turkey. Therefore, to understand these transformations, especially the transition from statist policies towards liberal policies, one should go back to the 1930s to have a comprehensive historical look. However, since the actual starting of the development projects coincides with the 1960s, a historical look going back to the 1930s is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, for the sake of summarizing the period before the 1960s, it can be said that the Turkish statist development model started in the 1930s and that the economic development in this period has been shaped by planned industrialization. The policies and plans made in this period had the goal of industrialization as the main priority. The most specific and important aspect of this period was the reliance of the plans, with an economic independence perspective, on national funds and not on international resources. The years 1947 and 1948 signal an important transformation in Turkish

economic history as the 7<sup>th</sup> congress of CHP and the Turkish Economic Congress in 1948 has been cited in the literature as “platforms where statist policies were eliminated and the voice of private entrepreneurship got louder.”<sup>143</sup> In the period between 1950 and 1960, under the rule of the Democratic Party (DP), with a liberal vision, privatizations increased and the emphasis on the priority of industrialization shifted towards the priority of agriculture. The economic independence perspective in the previous period had been replaced by the funding of resources of economic planning by international financial institutions. According to Soyak, in order to follow the traces of the funds which they supplied, these institutions advised the governments to make plans. For this reason the planned development policies which started in the 1960s had its origins in this period.<sup>144</sup> In this period, although the DP government was standing against the planned development with its identification of planned economy with communism and totalitarianism<sup>145</sup>, as the international agencies asked for, the DP had to accept the planned economy. The experts of the World Bank visited Turkey for the first time in the DP period and under the influence of the demand of these experts for development planning, in 1958 Coordination Ministry was established to administer plan preparations. For this reason, the planned development of the 1960s has been conceived as an extension of the DP governance.

However, despite this extension, the *coup d'état* in 1960 brought the role of state into preeminence in a very different manner than it was during the last years of the DP rule. Central planning began to be made in this period. With this aim, to prepare national development plans, to administer applications and to serve as a counseling agency, State Planning Organization (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, DPT) was established as an institution tied to the Prime Ministry. The main difference

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<sup>143</sup> Soyak, Alkan, *Ulusaldan Uluslarüstüne İktisadi Planlama ve Türkiye Deneyimi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004), pp. 121-125

<sup>144</sup> Soyak, Alkan, *Ulusaldan Uluslarüstüne İktisadi Planlama ve Türkiye Deneyimi*, İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004), pp. 121-125. For further details about the economic history of Turkey see Boratav, Korkut, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-1985* (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1998) ; Bayar, Ali, H., “The Developmental State and Economic Policy in Turkey”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (1996)

<sup>145</sup> Sezen, Seriyeye, *Devletçilikten Özelleştirmeye Türkiye’de Planlama* (Ankara: TODAİE, 1999),p. 166

between this period and the planning vision in the 1930s is that from this period on planning began to be funded by external resources. Ali Somel even points to the fact that Turkey has begun to consider World Bank as a domestic variable with the 27 May *coup d'état*. The relations far reached beyond the visit of the experts in the DP period, instead Turkish and foreign experts started to work together<sup>146</sup>. DPT prepared four quinquennial national development plans in the period between 1960 and 1980. The first three of these plans were implemented but the fourth was first interrupted by the stabilization program in the end of 1970s and was later abolished altogether.<sup>147</sup>

The main aspect of the development plans in the 1960s was regional development approach which was extended to the whole country. The aim was to materialize national development with regional development and to overcome the inequalities between the regions. This plan was modified in 1971 and with the determination of 28 underdeveloped Turkish cities, a new application –preferred regions for development application- started. Projects with various scales were implemented in these cities by the Turkish Government (DPT, Ministry of Agriculture) and by international institutions (World Bank, FAO, IFAD).<sup>148</sup>

The Southeast Anatolia Project (GAP) serves as an important exemplar of regional development. GAP which was planned in the 1960s includes several projects of irrigation and energy production for Euphrates and Tigris. This plan which was initially dependent on the development of land and water resources transformed into a multi-sectoral and integrated project at the end of the 1970s. Besides the

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<sup>146</sup> Somel, Ali, “Kalkınma Plancılığının Kökenleri ve Türkiye Deneyimine Eleştirel Bir Bakış”, *Memleket Siyaset Yönetim*, Cilt 2, Sayı 4 (2007), pp. 23-27.

The 1980s has usually been considered as a turning-point in the Turkish economic history. However, Ali Somel, considering the international capital relations that began before 1960 and accelerated in 1960, calls the 1980s not as a turning-point but as a breaking-point in which the dependency relations has been incontextualized in a neo-liberal context.

<sup>147</sup> Soyak, Alkan, *Ulusaldan Uluslarüstüne İktisadi Planlama ve Türkiye Deneyimi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004)

<sup>148</sup> Sezen, Seriyeye, *Devletçilikten Özelleştirmeye Türkiye’de Planlama* (Ankara: TODAİE, 1999), p. 18; Ertürk, Yakın, “Doğu Anadolu’da Modernleşme ve Kırsal Kadın”, 1980’ler Türkiye’si’nde Kadın Bakış Açısından Kadınlar, ed. by. Şirin Tekeli (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995), p. 205

development of high dams, hydro-power plants and irrigation schemes, social and economic development of South East Anatolia was targeted. Within this context several socio-economic projects (education, health, housing, transportation, and tourism) were began to be implemented in both the urban and the rural side of the region. In other words, GAP has witnessed a shift of paradigm in a very different discourse after the 1980s. In this respect, it would be meaningful to examine the evolution of the development projects with respect to the socio-economic transformations in Turkey in the 1980s.

### **3.1.2. The 1980 and Beyond**

The year 1980 signifies an important turning-point in the Turkish history. By late 1970s Turkey had entered into a state of economic as well as political crises. With the 24 January 1980 decisions a stabilization program was implemented and in the 12<sup>th</sup> of September *coup d'état* took place. As a solution to economic crisis with the guidance of IMF and World Bank, implementation of structural adjustment policies began. As Alkan Soyak notes, IMF supported policies were also implemented before 1980 but after 1980 the policies of IMF and World Bank began to determine Turkish economic policies.<sup>149</sup> With the structural adjustment policies of IMF and World Bank neo-liberal policies were began to be implemented in Turkey. In other words, a vision of economic growth through external debt and market oriented development were promoted. The new economic policy promoted more liberalization and less state involvement in productive activities, which at the same time asked for privatization. Export orientation became the primary priority in resource allocation. This means that the role of state in the economic sphere and development decreased, state withdrew from social welfare provision, government expenditures for social services were reduced, and real wages were cut down<sup>150</sup>. In addition to the withdrawal of the state from development, with the constitution of 1982, DPT was no longer a constitutional institution. DPT lost its significance and

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<sup>149</sup> Soyak, Alkan, *Ulusaldan Uluslarüstüne İktisadi Planlama ve Türkiye Deneyimi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004), p. 130

<sup>150</sup> Gürses, Didem, "The Capability Approach and Human Development in Turkey", *Journal of Third World Studies* (Fall 2006), p. 81

authority; turned into an institution which only makes assessment of projects in the 1990s. Yet, it continued to make quinquennial development plans. As it was mentioned before, the fourth plan of DPT was abolished without being implemented in the 1980s. The fifth and sixth quinquennial plans were based on sectoral planning. The seventh plan was prepared with the strategic planning vision which replaced the aggregate planning vision that encompasses all the sectors of the whole socio-economic structure, with the partial and segmented project planning. Yet, Alkan Soyak claims, these plans were prepared under the guidance of IMF and the World Bank. Especially the seventh plan apparently demonstrates this influence.<sup>151</sup>

As it is mentioned in Chapter Two, it was assumed that the structural adjustment policies, in the manner they are applied to the Third World Countries, would bring economic growth and would alleviate poverty. However, on the contrary the structural adjustment policies increased poverty in the Third World and it had negative effects on the lives of especially poorer segments of these societies. There were similar consequences for the Turkish case. As Gürses mentions “Turkey has had a volatile economy since the early 1980s. The years of rapid growth were succeeded by the years of crises and/or recession.”<sup>152</sup> As projects began to be prepared to recover negative effects of structural adjustment in the Third World, the same process also went on in Turkey. The 1990 witnessed the increase in projects, especially in local projects, due to the increase in the funds provided by international agencies and increasing role of NGOs in the social and political life of Turkey. Besides the common projects of international agencies and governmental institutions, the NGOs were also paid attention by international institutions. In other words, “realizing the negative effects of structural adjustment on vulnerable groups in society, the consequence of this approach is the increasing importance given to NGOs by donor organizations such as the UN agencies and other development

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<sup>151</sup> Soyak, Alkan, *Ulusaldan Uluslarüstüne İktisadi Planlama ve Türkiye Deneyimi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004), pp. 131-141

<sup>152</sup> Gürses, Didem, “The Capability Approach and Human Development in Turkey”, *Journal of Third World Studies* (Fall 2006), p. 82

assistance agencies.”<sup>153</sup> Regarding the increasing rates of unemployment and poverty, mainly micro-entrepreneurship projects gained prominence. The goal was to decrease poverty by assuring the employability of the poor. Especially after the economic crisis in 2000-2001, high rates of inflation and high rates of unemployment occurred. Economists even told that unemployment has turned into a long term phenomena. For this reason, poverty-focused and employment creating projects are given priority. For example, the Social Risk Mitigation project (Sosyal Riski Azaltma Projesi-SRAP) began in 2001 with the partnership of Social Solidarity Fund and World Bank. The aims of the project are defined as “the reduction of poverty by decreasing the adverse affects of economic crises on the least protected and disadvantaged groups, improving the capacity of social assistance and service institutions, improving the education of the poor and the human capital of the poor and increasing employment opportunities of the poor”<sup>154</sup>. The project has four different types of assistance one of which is local entrepreneurship. In local entrepreneurship projects mainly income generation activities (vocational trainings and employment projects such as agriculture, carpet, hand crafting) are implemented.

The projects made in the post-1980s have other apparent properties associated with their characteristics of poverty-focus and employment creation, and even properties that poverty depended on. The vision of international institutions, especially that of UN; is based on sustainable human/people-centered development influenced the projects in Turkey. In fact, this vision itself coincided with the experience of the negative effects of structural adjustment policies. In this context, the projects especially those made after the 1990s in Turkey have been defined as sustainable human development projects. The main discourse of these projects does not focus on economic growth but rather focuses on the notion of increasing the quality of human life. The properties that are present in the sustainable human development

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<sup>153</sup> Genel, Sema, NGO's As the Link Between State and Society? Women's Community Centers in Southeastern Turkey, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and Public Administration in The Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Bilkent University, Ankara (December 2002), p. 64

<sup>154</sup> Gül Sallan, Songül, Sayın Aysun, Vural, Devrim Gül, “The Importance of Employment Policies in Poverty Reduction and its Reflections on Woman Employment in Turkey”, p. 7

have been integrated into the visions of the projects in Turkey. Therefore, the projects in Turkey are also shaped by a framework which includes concepts like “participation”, “grassroots”, “environmental”, “empowerment”, “multiculturalism”, “governance”, “bottom-up”, “equalitarian”, “vulnerable groups”. As it will be mentioned in the following section, the objectives of “gender equality” and “women’s empowerment” were also integrated into the discourse of the projects.

We can, once again, return to the GAP as an example. In the previous section it is mentioned that a shift of paradigm took place in the discourse of GAP. After the 1995s, a similar transformation can be discerned in the GAP especially by the influence of a number of UN agencies.<sup>155</sup> GAP has defined its official policy as sustainable human development. In the discourse of GAP sustainable, participatory and human-centered strategies were stressed. These included human resource development and basic social provisions such as education, health, housing, environmental sustainability, capacity building.<sup>156</sup> Amongst these strategies, a field with which this study is concerned, the field of gender equality has been added. GAP has included the targets of gender equality, to enhance women’s status, women’s empowerment in its discourse similar to other numerous projects made in Turkey.

### **3.2. Gender and Development Projects in Turkey**

Most of the authors address that the gender aspect is understated in the development projects implemented between 1960 and 1980 in Turkey. In other words, gender aspect was absent in the development projects of planned development period. The projects either did not carry a gender orientation at all or did not have a women

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<sup>155</sup> Many UN agencies work in collaboration with the government of Turkey within the GAP. For instance, the project named as “Supporting Integrated Regional Development and Alleviating Socio-Economic Inequalities” which is composed of twenty-eight sub-projects started in 1997 with Intergovernmental Social Development Policy and UNDP.

<sup>156</sup> Erhan, Selahattin, “The GAP (South East Anatolia Project) and Women in Irrigation”, *Water Resources Development*, Vol 4(4), (1998); Elmas, Gülen, “Women, Urbanization and Regional Development in Southeast Anatolia: A Case Study for Turkey”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol 5(3) (Autumn 2004); Genel, Sema, *NGO’s As the Link Between State and Society? Women’s Community Centers in Southeastern Turkey*, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and Public Administration in The Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Bilkent University, Ankara, December 2002

component.<sup>157</sup> In fact, it can be claimed that up to 1990s gender dimension was still missing and it was only after this period that projects recognizing gender dimension and women's empowerment came into the agenda.

As mentioned above beginning from 1970s, various scales of rural development projects were implemented. Those projects were funded and implemented by the government, international institutions and NGOs. For example, Çorum-Çankırı (1976-1982), Erzurum (1982-1989), Bingöl-Muş (1989), Yozgat (1990-1991) projects are of major rural development projects funded by international organizations.

The rural development projects of the period were mainly oriented towards the goals of "improvement of infrastructure, modernization of agriculture, and income generation."<sup>158</sup> Despite the fact that the importance of women in rural areas was emphasized by the projects, women were still excluded from the implementation process. The reason behind this exclusion is the belief that the wage earned by men would sufficiently increase family welfare. Women's responsibility was considered to be the accomplishment of domestic work and child care. Consequently, projects targeted men; trainings, especially the ones aiming at the modernization of agriculture were offered to men. The project activities targeting directly women or the ones that include women components were limited to the activities that are associated with women's roles. The activities mentioned included, home economics, silkworm processing, handicraft training, and carpet weaving. In the projects, women usually participated to production, but excluded from decision-

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<sup>157</sup> Yakın Ertürk mentions about four types of projects regarding the women issue. These are: projects without a gender orientation, projects with a women component, special women's projects, and integrated rural development projects. For details see Ertürk, Yakın, "Rural Women and Modernization in Southeastern Anatolia", *Women in Modern Turkish Society: A Reader*, ed. by Şirin Tekeli (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1995)

<sup>158</sup> Akder, Halis, "Rural Women and Poverty", *Bridging the Gender Gap in Turkey: A Milestone Towards Faster Socio-Economic Development and Poverty Reduction, Europe and Central Asia Region, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit* (September 16 2003), p. 128

making, planning, accounting and marketing. They were excluded from activities that are considered to be men's jobs.<sup>159</sup>

Briefly, it is sufficient to claim that development projects of the period, adopted WID collateral to the developments in the international agenda. As it was discussed in detail throughout the features of WID in Chapter Two, the characteristics of development projects implemented in Turkey appear as follows: women participated to projects in tasks which associated women as housewives and mothers, traditional role of women as unpaid family workers was maintained, projects intensified sexual division of labour, and lastly woman's labour was perceived as a means of efficiency serving to development goals.

Through 1980s and especially in 1990s, with the influence of international organizations and women's organizations, women were started to be recognized in development projects. Goals of enhancement of women's status, women's empowerment and gender equality took their places beside the others. As Selahattin Erhan notes:

The issue of women, or rather the role of women in production and in public life, has been largely ignored and overlooked in Turkey until quite recently when the issue was realized globally and brought to the attention of politicians elsewhere in the world once again.<sup>160</sup>

As for international organizations, both the UN and UN agencies in particular, were influential on the recognition of gender equality in development agenda. For instance, in Yelda Devlet's study, UNDP's Approach to Women's Rights, Turkey case is analyzed and the influence of UNDP on Turkey is discussed in detail:

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<sup>159</sup> T.C. Başbakanlık Kadının Statüsü ve Sorunları Genel Müdürlüğü, Kırsal Alan Kadınının İstihdama Katılımı, Kırsal Alan Kadınının İstihdama Katılması: Tarım ve Köy İşleri Bakanlığı ve Dünya Bankası Eğitim Programlarının Değerlendirilmesi (Ankara, 2000), pp. 29-44; Ertürk, Yakın, "Doğu Anadolu'da Modernleşme ve Kırsal Kadın", *1980'ler Türkiye'sinde Kadın Bakış Açısından Kadınlar*, ed. by. Şirin Tekeli (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995), pp. 205-208; Akder, Halis, "Rural Women and Poverty", *Bridging the Gender Gap in Turkey: A Milestone Towards Faster Socio-Economic Development and Poverty Reduction*, Europe and Central Asia Region, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit (September 16 2003), pp. 126-130

<sup>160</sup> Erhan, Selahattin, "The GAP (South East Anatolia Project) and Women in Irrigation", *Water Resources Development*, Vol 4(4), (1998), p. 443

The UNDP's assistance emerged with the launch of the National Program for the Enhancement of Women Integration in Development in 1992. Since then, the UNDP Turkey has been very active in capacity building and raising awareness of the government offices and civil society. It has played a significant role in the establishment of the national machinery on women's rights (the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women) as well as of promoting independent experts to advance research in gender studies, advocacy and support for NGOs, and the establishment of international linkages and stakeholders' networks. The UNDP has also been very active in the area of gender mainstreaming in its programs since 2001 in order to fight gender inequalities and reduce women's rights violations in Turkey.<sup>161</sup>

As women suffered more from the period marked by poverty and unemployment, and as the women's unemployment rate increased, the projects of the period focused on education, vocational training and income generating activities. The correlation made between education and unemployment rate gave primacy to the educational projects. Women's entrepreneurship projects and activities, was assumed to constitute a potential remedy to women's unemployment and women's economic independence.

### **3.3. Critical Evaluation of Development Projects in Turkey**

In the development projects carried out in Turkey, the concept of gender equality and women's empowerment –likewise other concepts- are incorporated with the influence of international organizations. They are imported through the international organizations. Since the matters in question were not internalized, the concepts were just presented in the texts but could not be reflected on the implementation.

This point is indicated also in the study of Sema Genel which is about the ÇATOM (Multi-Purpose Community Centers) under the GAP program. The study focuses on the functioning and effectiveness of local institutions, and while NGOs used

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<sup>161</sup> Devlet, Yelda, "UNDP's Approach to Women's Rights: The Case of Turkey", *A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, In Partial Fullfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Gender and Women's Studies*, December 2006, p. 90

alternative development concepts, it is observed that there was not such an approach in implementation:

The rhetoric of a globalized alternative development was present in some of the NGOs contacted for the purposes of the current study. Comments on adopted development approaches included local participation, grassroots, empowerment, governance, multiculturalism, sustainability... However, despite the use of such fancy words, pertaining to a global development policy, none of the NGO's within the scope of the current study were in fact in the process of implementation of such approaches in the field. It was as if these concepts had been imported and were symbolically there, as I observed no revelations of such approaches in actual project implementation.<sup>162</sup>

As a matter of fact, reports of international organizations were influential at this situation. The negative outcomes published in the reports on gender equality such as Human Development Report, resulted as for the development projects of Turkey to determine their goals without internalization. To provide compatibility with the criteria of the reports was more important than to promote gender equality itself. Women came to be conceived as the indicators of development, namely modernization. For instance, Turkey had to catch up with the Millennium Development Goals. "According to MDGR Turkey 2005, in order to reach goal 3, which is promoting gender equality and empowering women, gender disparity has to be eliminated at all levels of education no later than 2015."<sup>163</sup>

Based on these reports, international reports determine the issue of the projects and support the projects that are about the determined issue. For example, Belkis

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<sup>162</sup> Genel, Sema, *NGO's As the Link Between State and Society? Women's Community Centers in Southeastern Turkey*, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and Public Administration in The Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Bilkent University, Ankara (December 2002), p. 306

<sup>163</sup> Devlet, Yelda, "UNDP's Approach to Women's Rights: The Case of Turkey", *A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Gender and Women's Studies*, (December 2006), p. 96

Kümbetoğlu, states that some of the projects supported by UNDP in the beginning of 1990s, are on women and employment.<sup>164</sup>

Consequently, as for the issue of gender and women, the goal of the projects was conceived as to fulfill the quantitative criterion of development foundations. The focus was in quantity rather than the quality. The number of women who participated to trainings was considered to be a sufficient criterion. Yet, a critical evaluation of the efficiency of the trainings was not considered to be necessary. In other words, the number of women who participated in the projects was considered to be more important than the benefits and impacts of the projects on women.

As a matter of fact, this situation points at not only the problem about the implementation of the projects, but also the problem about the evaluation of the projects. In terms of impact analysis, there is a huge gap in the literature in Turkey. The studies, once again, were to adopt the “success stories” of the international organizations. In these studies, gender aspect was either ignored or it was measured by participation in quantitative terms. In a study presenting “good” projects of civil society from Turkey and other parts of the world, what is meant by “good” was quite obscure and gender was not involved<sup>165</sup>. There are similar problems in success stories. First of all, the concept of success itself refers to a patriarchal language, and as Jane Parpart indicated in Chapter Two, a technical language is used for the criterions. In any case, the study carried out by Chamber of Industry and Commerce, “The development of entrepreneurship capacities and encouragement of women for the active labour market”, is one of the success stories which were evaluated in a “success stories” study in Turkey. Apart from the criterion like congruity, performance, high usage and payment rates, evaluation regarding women was as follows:

“Number of project beneficiaries: 105 women participated.”

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<sup>164</sup> Kümbetoğlu, Belkıs, “Kadınlara İlişkin Projeler”, *90'larda Türkiye'de Feminizm*, ed. by. Aksu Bora, Asena Günel (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), pp. 165-166

<sup>165</sup> See Ayman, Zelal; Abay, Eralp, Tezcan; *Sivil Toplumdan Proje Öyküleri* (Sivil Toplum Geliştirme Merkezi, Ankara, 2007)

“Impact: There has been no observable impact on the social groups of targeted women.”<sup>166</sup>

Nükhet Sirman identifies the situation as virtual feminism. As to her, the object of virtual feminism is not criticizing the world from women’s perspective but to report the number of women to the foundations. Virtual feminism is based on the development discourse. It does not focus on critical aspects for women in their daily lives like their relationship to their neighbors. Rather, aspects like number of children, whether they are wage earners or not, literacy are taken into consideration which results in the abstraction of the women from the context and the virtualization of women. Taking the reference point from the western developed women the attempts are to constitute a subject throughout the criterion.<sup>167</sup>

It was mentioned before, that with the increase of poverty and unemployment, projects that are directed towards improvement of economic status of women, proliferated. In both those projects and development discourse, it is seen that the goal of improvement of women’s economic status serves not to the goal of women’s empowerment. These goals remind again WID. However, this time they are framed in a neo-liberal context. Here it will be mentioned briefly since it was discussed in Chapter Two in detail.

First of the goals is that the improvement of women’s status is a means for struggle against poverty. In this regard, target was not women, but the poor. Moreover, it is actually the struggle of the household against poverty by the participation of woman into labour.

Another example of instrumentalization of women for development goals is efficiency discourse. As to this, women are conceived as unused labour. Though the new discourse appears to be people-centered, in fact the aim is still economic

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<sup>166</sup> See Loannou, Dimitra G., Hibe Projelerinin Uygulanmasında Başarılı Örnekler, “Kadınların ve Kız Çocuklarının İnsan Haklarının Korunması ve Geliştirilmesi”, Birleşmiş Milletler Ortak Programı

<sup>167</sup> Sirman, Nükhet, “Proje Toplumunda Sanal Kadınlar”, *Amargi* (3 Aylık Feminist Dergi) 3, (Winter 2006), p. 22

development. GAP was mentioned before, and as to remind, GAP defines its development approach as people-centered instead of economic growth centered. On the other hand, the mission defined in GIDEM project, realized by the cooperation of GAP Regional Development Administration and UNDP, contradicts with such a situation. It is seen that the actual goal in the long run is to take part in the capitalist market. In this case, the human-centered approach itself is instrumentalized for the goal of economic growth:

The long-term vision is to improve the competitiveness of Southeastern Anatolia in national and international markets. Our mission with GIDEM programme is to improve the entrepreneurial, operational and managerial capacities of existing entrepreneurs, small medium and micro-enterprises by providing information, training and advisory services.<sup>168</sup>

The mapping study of the institutional framework, present policies, implemented projects, programmes and researches regarding women's entrepreneurship carried out by Yıldız Ecevit reveals that the encouragement of women' entrepreneurship is instrumentalist in the context of different strategies by different institutions in the framework of different approaches. It is seen that the institutions and projects, taking part in the study, instrumentalized women's entrepreneurship strategically on the base of different goals such as: "the improvement of household welfare, struggle against poverty, rejection of the decline of women's participation in the labour and rising unemployment of women, improvement of the efficiency of economic activities of women, development of gender equality and women's empowerment."<sup>169</sup>

As it was the case in Chapter Two, it is necessary to examine again the relation of women's entrepreneurship with neo-liberal doctrine. Because it is apparent that, most of the projects realized in Turkey are in accord with such a perspective. Apart from the projects and programmes which aim to develop gender equality and women's empowerment, the realized projects are self-entrepreneurship projects.

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<sup>168</sup> <http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=30>, 15.09.2007

<sup>169</sup> Ecevit, Yıldız, *Türkiye'de Kadın Girişimciliğine Eleştirel Bir Yaklaşım*, Uluslararası Çalışma Örgütü (2007), p.47

These projects focus on the individual rather than the women's empowerment collectively. The projects aim to encourage women to enter the business world as strong and competitive individuals. Therefore, through the self-entrepreneurship projects, the main aim is the construction of strong, rational, self-reliant, leader spirited individuals ready to enter the market. These are the qualifications associated with men. In the dichotomic structure, men's characteristics are found superior when compared with the women and the characteristics associated with them. Instead of deconstruction of such dichotomic structures, through the self-entrepreneurship projects, as the mentioned qualifications that are attributed to men are tried to be adapted to women, the dichotomic structures are perpetuated. Arming women with masculine values, they are prepared for the patriarchal world.

A body of literature written on gender equality and women's empowerment consolidates this situation by discussing empowerment in individualistic terms. The approach is imported from external mainstream literature. For example, in the definitions of women's empowerment, individualist perspective is emphasized and women are instrumentalized for development goals:

(Empowerment) is the process of provision of the equation of women with men and women's egalitarian control over production factors. (It) is the provision of encouragement of their own progress, and their independent survival by developing their capacities and providing necessary support and guiding atmosphere.<sup>170</sup>

Problem of women in development is not merely a problem of just benefiting, but women's participation to social processes and development is a factor that increases the efficiency of development activities.<sup>171</sup>

As a result, when experience in Turkey is read with a view to the narrations of Chapter Two, it is possible to claim that development practices of Turkey are in

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<sup>170</sup> Demir, Sibel, Kırsal Kalkınmada Kadınlar, Orman Köyü Kalkındırma Kooperatifleri Yönetici ve Üyelerinin Orman Ekosistemlerindeki Biyolojik Çeşitliliği Yerinde Koruma Eğitimi Projesi(GEF SGP TUR/98/G52), Birleşmiş Milletler Kalkınma Programı GEF-SGP, Kırsal Çevre ve Ormancılık Sorunları Araştırma Derneği, (Ankara, 2002)

<sup>171</sup> Fazlıoğlu, Ayşegül, Kırsal Kalkınma Projelerinde Cinsiyet Dengeli Kalkınma Yaklaşımları, Erozyonla Mücadele ve Kırsal Kalkınma Projelerinde Sosyal Boyut Semineri, GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Başkanlığı, 8-10 Aralık, 2003, Erzurum

parallel with (Third) World. In Turkey in mainstream discourse and practices, women's empowerment appear as the cosmetic change of WID in the neo-liberal context. Although such a generalization can be claimed, approaches of institutions and people implementing the projects appear to be an important dynamic. Even a few, there are also valuable examples of projects which do not instrumentalize women's empowerment or gender equality rather put them as their aims.<sup>172</sup> In the next chapter, two projects from Turkey will be assessed with empowerment approach where the significance of the roles of the project implementers will become evident.

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<sup>172</sup> For examples of such projects see Şen, Leyla; Akmut, Gülçin. "Toplumsal Cinsiyet Perspektifinden Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı: Kars Kırısahında Kadın Örgütlenmeleri", *Kadın Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 1(1) (2006): 44-51 and Kümbetoğlu, Belkıs, "Kadınlara İlişkin Projeler", *90'larda Türkiye'de Feminism*, ed. by. Aksu Bora, Asena Günal (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002)

## CHAPTER IV

### **DO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS EMPOWER WOMEN IN TURKEY? : TWO CASE STUDIES**

This chapter will separately analyze two (sustainable) development projects carried out in Turkey from the empowerment approach. These projects are “Zümrüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs” and the “Project for the Protection and Encouragement of the Production of Tunceli Garlic.” First, information on the projects will be offered briefly. The socio-economic structure will be introduced briefly and then the projects’ aims and activities carried out within the scope of the projects will be stated. The assessment of projects from the empowerment approach will be carried out in two interrelated steps. In the first step the question of whether the projects individually empower women will be analyzed and the specific outcomes of the individual empowerment, if there is any, will be pointed out. In the second step the projects will be studied within the framework of collective empowerment and the ways in which the projects engender specific political outcomes, if any, will be analyzed in terms of collective empowerment.

As was stated in Chapter One on research methodology, the fact that women’s empowerment is necessarily contextual makes it impossible to compare and contrast these two projects because there are a lot of contextual differences affecting women’s empowerment. In this sense, a brief introduction on the socio-economic structure will be offered in order to understand the context within which the projects have been carried out before project assessments. Yet, there are other evident differences apart from socio-economic structures. First of all there are differences between the two projects in terms of quality and timing. Another difference derives from geography. The Sunni Turkish identities in Zümrüt Village and the Alevi Kurdish identities in Ovacık are significant dynamics. The ideological structure in Ovacık, which is a democratic left culture, based on their historical characteristics is also another very significant factor affecting women’s empowerment. Again the

political situation in Ovacık is among important dynamics affecting women's empowerment.

This study mainly studies the impacts of these projects on women's empowerment. Nevertheless, a comparison can be carried out through questioning to what extent the projects provide conditions for women's empowerment. In this context such, a comparison will be offered in the conclusion section of this chapter.

#### **4.1. Zümrüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs**

##### **4.1.1. Information about the Project Site and the Project**

###### **4.1.1.1. Socio-Economic Structure of Zümrüt Village**

The project site is the Zümrüt Village, which lies on the east of Küre Mountains National Park<sup>173</sup> attached to the district of Azdavay and province of Kastamonu.<sup>174</sup> The village is mentioned to be the “most remote forest villages located in the buffer zone of the Küre Mountains National Park, and its most important income source, forestry, has been affected negatively by the declaration of the National Park”<sup>175</sup>. As it is mentioned in the project proposal, around the Küre Mountains National Park, there is limited means of herbal, animal and forestry products. For this reason, there has been a gross immigration from the region. In the last ten years, 43.000 people

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<sup>173</sup> In 1997-1998, the projects of Management of National Parks and Protected Areas, Conservation of Biological Diversity and Rural Development were conducted by the General Management of Environment and Forest Ministry. The logic of the project is “the preparation of a management plan that is based on participatory approach in the planning and management of the protected areas and that could be an example for other protected areas”. The most important outcome of the project is the declaration of the Küre Mountains as the National Park. It is stated that the project of Küre Mountains is the first, as the “participation of the interest groups in the decision making mechanisms is provided”.

<sup>174</sup> Kastamonu is a city in the Middle North of Turkey, in the Black Sea region. For further details about the district and the province see [www.kastamonu.gov.tr](http://www.kastamonu.gov.tr)

<sup>175</sup> Zümrüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs, GEF-SGP, Project Proposal, 2003

immigrated from the provinces around the national park. This quantity corresponds to the twenty six percentage of the whole population. Continuous immigration takes place mostly in the province of Pınarbaşı, Şenpazar and Azdavay to which the village of Zümrüt is bounded also. In these provinces the young population is decreasing by immigration due to narrow means<sup>176</sup>. Zümrüt Village, once holding forty-eight households, now permanently holds four, due to same fact and due to lack of school in the village. There are four women and six men living permanently in the village. One of these households is in the Arıt District, which is thirty minutes distance by walking. The number of continuous residents varies since some families stay continuously in the village for one year, and stay only during the hot seasons (or except winter) for another year. For instance, the continuous residents of Arıt District, which was mentioned before, husband and wife, stated that this year, they will stay with their children in the city. Other than the four households who are permanent residents, there are families who stay in the village at times, for whole year.

The population immigrated from Zümrüt Village lives primarily in İstanbul and then in Ankara and in Azdavay. The people who were interviewed stated that, in these settlements, their sons work mostly in the service sector. It is stated that women usually do not work, or they work in sectors like house service or in clothing stores. A young woman who was in the village for the holiday, expressed that, women including herself, are not allowed to work by their husbands even if they want to. Therefore they mostly stay at home in the urban area.<sup>177</sup>

As it is mentioned above, youth population in the village is too little, there is only one youngster (he is nineteen years old) living permanently in the village. The old population stays with their children in the city during the winter, and stay for the rest in the village. There is no school or medical clinic in the village. There is no

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<sup>176</sup> Zümrüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs, GEF-SGP, Project Proposal, 2003

<sup>177</sup> Nevertheless, these statements are not sufficient to represent neither the professions nor the gender relations of the people from the Zümrüt Village who lives in Istanbul and other cities. A wider study is needed, in order to introduce such a representation.

public transportation between province and village; therefore private cars are used for transportation. Since in winter roads get closed, it is difficult to get to the hospital. Therefore, old people have to move to the city for the winter period, even if they want to stay at the village. The reason for them to prefer staying at village is that living costs less and they can take care of the garden in the village, whereas in the city, they have to stay at home all day as they don't know the city so well. Especially the women denoted that they stay at home all day when they are in the city and they only go out with their husbands.

The above findings of the research on the population differ from the census statistics of Turkey Statistics Institution which is based on 2000 census year. Basing on the table below, one can have the idea that forty seven people are permanently living in the village among which are between the ages of fifteen-nineteen. The reasons behind the differences could be the time difference of the census year (2000) and the research year (2007), and the mobile character of the population. Yet, as mentioned above, during autumn, spring and summer the population rises while the old population stays at the village. In the summer time the population rises even more, as the younger population spends their vacations with their families and relatives in the village.

Table 4.1. Population by age and gender in Zümrüt Village<sup>178</sup>

Age	Total	Men	Women
'0-4	2	1	1
'10-14	2	1	1
'15-19	5	2	3
'20-24	1	.	1
'30-34	2	1	1
'35-39	2	1	1
'40-44	1	1	-
'45-49	3	2	1
'50-54	6	2	4
'55-59	6	3	3
'60-64	7	3	4
65+	10	7	3

<sup>178</sup> Source: Turkey Statistics Institution (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu), Census Data's for 2000

In the interviews, it is stated that, before the immigration, the primary means of livelihood was the forestry. Agriculture also took place and animal husbandry was made in low amount in the village. Currently, forestry activity holds even if it decreased as the region became a national park. According to the interviews, due to the population decrease, there is not enough care for the fields, so the fields become forest. In addition to this situation, because of the pigs, it is not possible to make cultivation in the village. The other factor is that it is costly to take the products to the market in the Azdavay, as the price for the transportation is expensive. Therefore, there is no vegetal production anymore. In the two permanently staying households, there are animals in little amount. The animal products are consumed by the family and sold to the neighbors. Besides, the villagers collect herbs from the forest and they use these herbs for their own alimentation and send them to relatives living in the cities. According to the 2000 census data on employment, among forty five villagers (twenty three men and twenty two women) twenty women and twenty men is employed in agriculture, animal husbandry and forestry.<sup>179</sup> Here, it should be noted that, as mentioned above, the agriculture is subsistence-based.

Lastly, if to mention briefly on the education level of the villagers, interviewed people are primary school graduates, primary school leavers and illiterates. 2000 census data shows the literacy level in detail which also takes into account the gender:

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<sup>179</sup> Turkey Statistics Institution (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu), Census Data's for 2000

Table 4.2. Population by Literacy, Educational Background, and Gender in Zümürüt Village<sup>180</sup>

	Total	Literacy			Graduation	
		Literate	Illiterate	Unknown	The ones who could not graduate from any school	Primary School (five years)
Gender						
Total	45	16	29	-	2	12
Men	23	12	11	-	2	8
Women	22	4	18	-	-	4

Table 4.2. (Continued) Population by Literacy, Educational Background, and Gender in Zümürüt Village

Graduation						
Primary School (eight years)	Secondary School	Vocational High School Equivalent to Secondary School	High School	Vocational High School Equivalent to High School	University	Unknown
-	1	-	-	-	1	-
-	1	-	-	-	1	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

#### 4.1.1.2. Aims of the Project

The project site is Zümürüt Village that is located on the east of Küre Mountains National Park in Kastamonu province. The project is implemented by Küre Mountains Eco-tourism Association (Küre Dağları Ekoturizm Derneği-KED), a local Association established in 2003 by twenty local nature guides in Pınarbaşı district of Kastamonu.<sup>181</sup> The project began in April 2004 and ended in April 2006.

<sup>180</sup> Source: Ibid

<sup>181</sup> For more details about KED see [www.ked.org.tr](http://www.ked.org.tr), 10.10.2007

Yet, as the project implementer<sup>182</sup> underlines, even though the project has ended formally, and in this context, the fund from the donor agency is no longer available, the project in fact still continues. Indeed the coordinator argues that “the project has just begun.”<sup>183</sup>

The project aims to develop the relationship of the public with the National Park and to create a sustainable income source by means of eco-tourism<sup>184</sup>, which is defined as an activity that alleviates poverty and supports protection activities, in Zümrüt village. The village is known to be “the most remote forest village located on the buffer zone of the Küre Mountains National Park, and it’s most important income source, forestry, has been affected negatively since the area has been declared to be a national park.”<sup>185</sup> The project sets out by determining four

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<sup>182</sup> Project implementer is Environment and Forestry Provincial Directorate (Çevre ve Orman İl Müdürlüğü) National Parks Department Chief. He has taken part in the administrative process of Küre Mountains becoming National Park. Currently, he is also the project implementer of Nature Based on Ecology Training (Ekoloji Temelli Doğa Eğitimi) Project that is implemented in Küre Mountains National Park and supported by Turkey Scientific and Technological Research Institute (TÜBİTAK, Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu). He also takes part in the project, funded by EU, which aims to restore a Mansion House in Azdavay (Yanık Ali Paşa Konağı). It is planned to be used as a Center for Improvement for Eco-tourism. He has supported such a project at 2002, implemented by WWF. In this project, a Mansion House in Pınarbaşı district of Kastamonu, that is neighbor to Azdavay, is restored. Actually, it is used as a pension that is at the same time the eco-tourism center in the district.

<sup>183</sup> To account for the sustainability of this project and to implement other eco-tourism projects, an eco-tourism cooperation has been established recently. The new cooperation’s main sphere of activity has been designated as Küre Mountains. According to the project implementer, people who want to carry out Zümrüt type activities will become members of this cooperation. It is reported that with the Eco-tourism cooperation the goal is to obtain a ‘standardization’ of eco-tourism activities that will be carried out in the region by way of preparation of visitors’ plans and common logos, and creating a network among the economically interrelated projects realized in Küre Mountains.

<sup>184</sup> In the Zümrüt Ecotourism Project (GEF-SGP) Inception Report, written by Guy Delanuy in October 2004, eco-tourism is defined as “a kind of tourism interested in the ecologic resources and cultural dimensions of the countries visited. It aims to provoke a minimum negative impact on the environment. The activity is tamed and generates income to the benefit of local populations. It contributes to the preservation of the natural and human environment. It reduces dependence on activities that degrade natural resources. It plays a major role in the awareness of all the stakeholders”. The report differentiates eco-tourism from green tourism and/or nature/adventure tourism in the sense that such kind of tourism “uses natural resources, but without particular ecological concern and without asserting local community development”. In contrast, the intended eco-tourism implementations in Küre Mountains National Park aims “to subsequently increase the income of local communities” and at the same time conservation of the area by the local communities.

<sup>185</sup> Zümrüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs, GEF-SGP, Project Proposal, 2003.

problems. The first determination is that income sources have decreased in Zümürüt village, the main income source of which is forestry, with the declaration of the National Park, as it has been experienced in other inner forest villages and in neighboring villages. In this context, the project states that “there has been and still is a constant migration because of the limited income sources based on agriculture, livestock and forestry.”<sup>186</sup> The project also maintains the fact that the percentage of young population in the region is low, and also there are no sufficient opportunities for income sources. In relation to this, the project also puts forward that “because of the fact that forestry and forestry activities cannot account for a sufficient economic contribution, about 10 million people living in about 17 thousand villages located in and near forests form the ‘poorest’ section of the society in Turkey.”<sup>187</sup>

The second determination is the pressure occurring with the collection of some plant types and the harm done by opening plantations, although the cutting pressure upon the area has decreased with the declaration of the National Park.

The third determination is to take precautions against “the possible conflicts that could occur between the National Park Administration and the neighboring settlements.”<sup>188</sup> The last one is the risk that tourism activities develop in a way that does not benefit the local community, but getting subordinated to the organizations from the greater municipalities.<sup>189</sup>

The project, setting out with these rationales, sets its general aim as “to ensure that the local community espouses the protected area policies in the development process of the income sources and participates in the administration of the National Park; to increase public consciousness on the issue of environmental preservation and to preserve the National Park”; while it sets its aim as “to develop sustainable

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid

<sup>187</sup> Ibid

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

income sources so that the local community supports the protected area targets and takes care of the National Park.”<sup>190</sup>

The intermediary aims that serve to reach the general aims of the project are “to create the infrastructure for eco-tourism, which is a sustainable income source, and to start eco-tourism in Zümürüt Village that is a forest village”, “to warrant the more active participation of especially women in social life and to create an additional income source by putting the village products to use” and “to develop the capacity of the KED to start up eco-tourism in other villages around the National Park.”<sup>191</sup>

#### **4.1.1.3. Activities of the Project: The Implementations of the Project Prior to the Fieldwork**

The contents of the project have been determined by the eco-tourism planning report that was prepared following the research by an eco-tourism expert in the region. The report is a strategy plan concerning Küre Mountains, focusing on Zümürüt. The aim has been to make Zümürüt Village set an example in the Küre Mountains region and the village has been designated as the starting point in this respect. The report on the whole considers Zümürüt village in the context of Küre Mountains and puts forward the relation of the village to Küre Mountains. The potential resources for eco-tourism in Zümürüt Village and the ways in which these resources can be put to use are determined in the report, as well as the possible activities that can be carried out in Zümürüt and its environs. Further, the main problems before the implementation of the eco-tourism system are also stated. Within the framework of the eco-tourism report, eco-tourism has been initiated through the use of existent potential resources in the village<sup>192</sup>. Trial tours have been organized and with an opening ceremony on May 6, 2006, during which the

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Guy Delanuay, Zümürüt Ecotourism Project (GEF-SGP) Inception Report, October 2004 in Zümürüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs, Project Report the period of April 2004-January 2005, April 2005

author of this study was also present, the project's outputs have been made public, also the eco-tourism center and the boarding house have been opened.

In order to secure participation to the decision making process in the project meetings have been held and project activities, problems and questions have been debated among participants. During the meetings held with the eco-tourism planning specialist at the outset of the project in order to “determine the operational principles of the eco-tourism system through *a participatory process*, to try these during the project and to determine the bases to guarantee their sustainability following the end of the project”<sup>193</sup> such issues as what eco-tourism is, the range of possible activities, at which level and through which ways the villagers can participate in these activities, works started in the village and problems encountered in the village were discussed.

The main activities planned in the village are riding horses, riding bicycles and hiking. In this respect, besides families (men) who wanted to participate in the activities with their own horses, families (men) without horses who also wanted to take part in the activities have been provided with one within the scope of the project. The village barn has been organized for the grooming and sheltering of horses and a male villager has taken responsibility for that.

Within the scope of the project a house has been restored into a boarding house and has been opened to host incoming visitors. The house that the author of this study stayed during the fieldwork is also being modified into a boarding house. Further, although the project has ended there are still families (men) who want to turn their houses into boarding houses and according to the coordinator of the project, the houses of all the willing will be modified as boarding houses as long as the Association is able to secure funding.

The unused school building in the village has been modified to be used as the eco-tourism center and its administration is undertaken by the male villager who is also

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<sup>193</sup> Zümürüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs, GEF-SGP, Project Report, April 2004-January 2005

in charge of the horses. The eco-tourism center is planned as an information space for visitors. The environs of the center have been organized as a camping site. In this area women provide food for visitors.

In a room of the school that is being used as the eco-tourism center, local products (such as mushroom pickles, dried apple and pear, grape molasses, rose hip jam) made by women are being sold. The man who is in charge of the eco-tourism center is also responsible for the sales of the products.

The villagers received some training within the project. Among these are basic visitor hosting training (hospitality, cleaning, and food); local nature guide training for guiding the hikes for visitors to Zümrüt and its environs; training sessions for the production, packaging and the hygiene of local products.

Other activities besides trainings have also been carried out. Other eco-tourism related undertakings realized in the neighboring areas have been visited. A few villagers participated in the Tourism Fair. In addition to this, the funding agency each year organizes GEF-SGP project meetings, where the project implementer, local NGO project teams and the participants of the projects meet to exchange their experiences. Some Zümrüt Village residents also attended this meeting.

#### **4.1.2. Analysis of the Project from Empowerment Approach**

##### **4.1.2.1. Power Within: Individual Empowerment**

###### **4.1.2.1. 1. Resources**

As briefly mentioned in the previous part on the aims of the project, the project aims to develop sustainable income resources for the local community through eco-tourism activities that is defined as having the feature of alleviation of poverty. Therefore, the project can be referred to as mainly an income generating project, focusing on the financial resources. Before considering the contribution of the

project to women in terms of financial resources, it would be apt to look at the perspective of the project implementer about income generation.

In terms of income generation, the project implementer's perspective towards this issue displays collateral features with the WID approach. First of all, when asked about the dynamics behind the unequal power relationships, the project implementer explains the reason of inequality between men and women mainly in the economic framework although he mentions other factors like culture and religion.

Economic income ... (it is based on) economy of course. Now people ... when you think of it, if the only person who contributes to the family budget is the man, then this is the first reason. Because he is the one who rules. The woman here will be willy nilly stay in the background. Although she might be in the foreground seemingly. For example when she needs to live alone in life, it'll be more difficult for her to do that. Because ... the man has the opportunity to act as he wishes because he has economic independence ... I mean, a lot of things affect this, culture, religion, etc. etc.

Secondly, as can be extracted from the above quotation also, the project implementer assumes that through gaining financial resources women's status in the society will be improved. According to the project implementer, the by-product of earning income will be higher economical freedom which in turn will reflect to her self-reliance, her social life, her apparel, her attitudes, shortly in every part of life. Within this context, the project implementer mentions about a future plan of getting credit cards for women in their own names. Again, he thinks that having a credit card will get women closer to their economic independence and increase their self reliance and improve their status:

Moreover we are thinking of new activities for women on this issue... For women ... getting credit cards. We are thinking of having women making themselves a bit more individualized in their economic activities, a bit more like this, even having them using bank credits... though on a micro scale... Getting credit cards, that is to say, like keeping identification cards of their own is a system whereby women can have direct say over their money. I mean, we want to give this a shot. I mean, we'll be taking them closer to their economic independence. OK, maybe their spouses will be using these cards but

we believe that having such a card in their own names will improve their status in society; it will have a positive effect.

Yet, as Zoe Oxaal and Sally Baden notes, “improving women’s access to credit is a positive step, but is by no means enough to secure their economic empowerment”<sup>194</sup>

Thirdly, as is the case in the WID approach, the use of income within the household is not the issue of the project. According to project implementer, the project cannot intervene into the household relationships. This in turn is related with the idea that the power relationships in the household are seen as a ‘private’ area which should not be touched upon. In other words, as Eva Rathgeber mentions “the social relations of gender are labeled as falling into the realm of culture” and any intervention is considered to be “cultural interference.”<sup>195</sup>

On this issue, the project implementer tells:

About the use of income ... there is a family, the woman and man work in that family, the money coming in for the family comes through the woman and the man but of course we cannot intervene how it will be spent.

Lastly, women’s economic freedom and/or women’s engagement in economic activities are related with the development aims. It is mentioned that the productive activities of women are necessary for the development of a society both in economic and in intellectual terms.

You see that the society develops on the rate that women have economic independence or contribute to financial activities. Today most of the women in Turkey do not work. I cannot give figures, but when you don’t work both labor remains inactive and development of the society becomes harder. Because, then let’s say if fifteen million women in Turkey is not working then this very fifteen million people are dependent on someone else. And this of course prevents you from thinking and improving yourself... Of course that doesn’t only

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<sup>194</sup> Oxaal, Zoe; Baden, Sally, “Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy”, Briefing prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *BRIDGE, Report No 40* (October 1997), p. 12

<sup>195</sup> Rathgeber, Eva M., “Gender and Development in Action”, *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 207-208

contribute to development but also it's effective not only in economic but also in intellectual terms. Consequently, development is an issue related to human resources and quality. When you look at the world too, in any case in all developed societies you see that the women of that society are more educated, more independent, they are more involved in economic activities ... Besides when you look at backward or underdeveloped countries you see that there is a negative situation regarding women. Yet, when you look at history on making use of freedom, this is an issue of will. In fact you can see that even women who have economic independence do not make use of their freedom, they are more reserved.

In terms of financial resources the project offers three different areas of opening for women. The first is realized through the transformation of the houses into boarding houses. In fact this is directed towards the household. The other two directly target women. The second is materialized through the ecotourism center in which women's products are sold. The third is through cooking for visitors in front of the ecotourism center. Since women take part in different activities in terms of income opportunities that the project offers, these should be rendered separately.

As mentioned in the activities of the project, since May 2006 there is already a working boarding house in the village. The other is planned to be opened in the next season (2008). There are two income generating activities in the existent boarding house<sup>196</sup>. First one is the revenue from guests staying at the boarding house. The second is through the women's products sold in the boarding house rather than the ecotourism center (this situation will be discussed as it is related with the question of collectivity and individualism). Both the women and men, who run the boarding house together, emphasize the contribution of the project in terms of financial resources. The contribution of this economic input into the household is materialized both in the renewal of the house during the restoration process and in the new furniture bought for the house.

The second boarding house that is still under construction, also participates to other various kinds of income generation activities. First of all, the boarding house can be

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<sup>196</sup> Five people live in this house. Although the actual managers of the boarding house are the son and his wife, the son's parents also took part in the project and now they all manage the boarding house. The fifth person is the newly born baby of this young couple.

claimed to carry an important potential for generating income for the family. During her stay in the boarding house, the author of the study has witnessed telephone calls coming in from customers asking about when the boarding house will be opened. Secondly, the grandfather in the house is responsible for guiding the tourists and the horses. Thirdly, the man in the house is responsible for the management of the ecotourism center. Lastly, the woman engages in the production of village products and cooking activities in front of the ecotourism center. The woman explains the main change in her life with the beginning of the project and the increasing income of the household:

Of course it's good; we get to earn a couple of bucks. If they (the tourists) didn't come, if you'll excuse me, we wouldn't have a penny. When they come [we give] a little amount of money, we offer food there (at the ecotourism center), Mr. X (the project implementer), may Allah bless him, accepts what we give. Today or tomorrow we go there knowing that Mr. X has our money and buy things on credit. This tourist business is very good. I wish my house was built so that we can earn a couple of pennies, we would gradually clean, bake bread...  
(A forty-seven year-old woman)

The same woman's husband also talks about the importance of the income mentioning the selling of products that his wife makes at the ecotourism center (and at their house) and his economic expectation after their boarding house is opened:

We sell the canned food, bottles to the visitors. Molasses (pear), rose hip sells a lot. We've sold like fifty-sixty kilograms this year. It really has a good income. My wife makes some handiwork; we sell them forty (New) Turkish Liras a piece. We sell them at the school, at the ecotourism center...I'm sure that this business will develop. If my house were opened this year, I'd have earned 3-5 billion. People want to come.  
(A forty-three-year-old man)

When income generation through cooking for the tourists in front of the ecotourism center and preparing canned food to be sold at the ecotourism center is evaluated, women mostly remarked their dissatisfaction with the income. The reason of dissatisfaction is related with other dimensions of empowerment such as participation and collectivity/individualism. Therefore, these reasons will be

detailed in the following parts. Here, to summarize, the main points women mention about the reasons of their dissatisfaction about the income emerge as:

1. The lack of an established system of product sales at the ecotourism center engenders problems about income. Women have talked about the fact that their products were not sold, moreover they did not even know if they were sold or not. Besides the women have mentioned inequality thinking that the ecotourism manager was selling his own goods, not theirs:

I had given off ten-eleven bottles, jars (to be sold) at the opening, even those haven't been sold yet, they're still there. We have given them there to be sold, I mean, I haven't seen it myself but people say they're still there. They themselves take from here and sell there, for example and say ours are there. You don't see anythin' ... Maybe they're sold but not replaced, who knows ... These stay where they are, we don't know because we don't go there.

(A sixty-one-year-old woman)

I've never got one; I even don't know where my jars are. Maybe they're at the school somewhere. Each has molasses, rose hips, we'd made canned food out of each one of them and put one a bottle there, they have neither given us the money ... We haven't seen the money, nor the bottles.

(A sixty-year-old woman)

2. There are also problems regarding the payment for the food cooked in front of the ecotourism center. Women complained about the lack of an established payment system, delay in payments and the insufficient income:

At the opening I had 'sarı burma' and another desert, someone had ....., the other had roast 'ıspıt' as we call it, someone else had 'sarma.' ... In short all kinds of food were cooked back then, I don't know how many people were there, they had paid thirty million then. We got that, nothing more.

(A sixty-one-year-old woman)

Twenty people came, they stayed at the school. They gave them breakfast. ... and sixty million to us, that's all.

(A sixty-year-old woman)

The total amount of money I got so far doesn't even make up to fifty bucks, I got too little.

(A sixty-five-year-old woman)

3. The idea that they are excluded from the project activities in general; the mentioned income generating activities in particular.

The manager of the ecotourism center calls us to the center if he ever wishes to. If it only suits himself. ... I have a profit neither there, nor from here...

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

4. The idea that only the keepers of the boarding house make profit on the project.

Don't get involved, we'll handle the tourism business, they (tourism people) said. ... I mean, this won't turn up good for us in fact... If they don't herd my livestock I don't have a profit but a loss, I can't get any economic situation so it doesn't matter if there were tourists or tourism in this village.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

Well, you know people are building boarding houses over there, it's only them who will have hope, who will have income... If there's a meeting at that school, our neighbors, just a couple of people here, I mean, can have an income from there, or else the profit from the boarding houses goes to them, of course, they've built their houses, that's that. If I do the same, I will profit from what comes into my house, won't I?

(A sixty-year-old woman)

We, well, cannot say we're pleased, no lies, I don't see anything, people who come just return from there and go away, I neither have profit nor loss. Frankly, right, speaking frankly I have neither profit nor loss...Everything is the same for me; Allah is my witness because I haven't seen anything. Like I've said, once in a while when we're called from there I went, or else I've seen no tourism, no profit, that's why nothing seems to be changing for me, but these people, the ones who got into the boarding house business, rebuilt their houses, they can host, take care of their visitors, I don't have that.

(Over fifty/sixty-year-old woman)<sup>197</sup>

It's not enough, but not too little, I mean, we just get enough for a cup of tea, just enough for tea and sugar, but the ones who have rebuilt their houses with tourism they earn some. People stay with them, staying fees, lunch fees, breakfast, they receive lunch and dinner. They get thirty for a night, they make money, I mean, from the tourism house, but

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<sup>197</sup> She does not know her age exactly. She told that she should be over fifty-sixty years old. She added maybe she can be sixty five years old.

we in a gathering, if they call us for a gathering, if they organize a dinner only that way we can make some money.  
(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

Regarding the income, the project implementer emphasizes that the ecotourism implementations or the project is just beginning. He mentioned that:

Of course we have met with women in our activities. We selected the ones who would bake the bread, who would cook, and to a point we agreed who would do which particular task, but from now on there will be the division of tasks, we have just begun implementing that. Hereafter we will have some implementation, see the problems, and will draw our path again and again. Because I think laying down the rules not à mot might have negative consequences. I think rules and implementation should go parallel.

Furthermore he mostly emphasizes that the system in the ecotourism center has not been established soundly yet. In this context, they have some plans like being able to pay women directly without having to wait for the sale of the products at the ecotourism center by establishing a fund with the newly founded ecotourism cooperation. This way they will prevent the unequal sale of some products, and also prevent getting others stale.

In terms of human and social resources the opportunities that the project made available for women should be considered in four different areas. The first is the contacts with other people (tourists). The second is the tour organized for women. The third is the trainings engaging women. Lastly, the fourth is, as project aims are reconsidered, knowledge about environmental issues.

The project through ecotourism elicits connection and communication between women (and men) and tourists coming into the village from various areas. While some women give voice to their discomfort about being excluded from the project and complain about their being unable to meet anyone, all women utter their happiness about meeting new people and about the air of festivity in the village within the understanding of 'villagers' hospitality:

In fact, these visits make our village merrier, it's good, people come to see one another, come to understand one another, but when none of us goes, understands nothing, I mean, you can't do much. You can't get to understand whether it's good or bad.

(A sixty-one-year-old woman)

Women who have more contact with tourists talk about gaining new information through meeting new people. For instance, a young woman managing the boarding house touches upon this point:

Doctors come here, teachers too. This place then looks like a school. Believe me one gets to learn a lot here. [...] For example, some people act like customers and treat us like maids but some others act as if we were friends for ages. But one learns a lot. For example, psychologists come.

(A twenty-one-year-old woman)

For women the impact of the tour to the other eco-tourism related undertakings realized in the neighboring areas was that it made it possible to compare the ecotourism activity in their village with other places. On the other hand, the impact was more of a socio-cultural type rather than gaining new information. Women revealed that "they did not go out much" in the cities where they were staying for the winter because of various reasons (economic dire straits, not knowing the city well, being unable to go out without their spouses). The same situation was true also for the women in the village because of the hardship of transportation to the county.

The women engaged in two kinds of trainings. One is training sessions for the production, packaging and the hygiene of local products. It was observed that women prepare their products as was shown in trainings. Nevertheless, some women have said that they would not be engaged in such activities because they were old although they have acknowledged that they had attended the training sessions. The other training is the basic visitor hosting training (hospitality, cleaning, food). While some women have admitted that they began to make use of what they had learned in their everyday lives, most of them argued that they had already known what was taught during the trainings:

You're gonna keep your feet clean at work, your neck and ears clean, your mouth, teeth, ears ... you're gonna keep them clean. All together (men, women), well, the bed, quilt, sheets, towels, the bathroom, well here and there. They've told us about whatever to use, whatever to do at work. Thanks anyway may Allah bless them, it's not a shame to say or to talk ... I know them all; I worked as a cleaning lady in İstanbul.

(A sixty-five-year-old woman)

You know, people talked about what you drink instead of coke, the hazards of coke, should wash the clothes like this, brushing your teeth in the morning, hand care, skin care, facial care, personal care. Village products hygienically put into jars, packing the linden and things like that were told...In fact it was of no (use) to me but it may be for people living in the village. I knew all about the things we were told since I'm a person who already takes good care of herself.

(A twenty-five-year-old woman)

As related with the project aims –except the women in the boarding house- the environmental terms, such as ecotourism and national park, make no sense for the women. When asked about the ecotourism and National Park, women mostly said they had no idea about what ecotourism was, or what the difference between the ecotourism and tourism was. In this sense women have proposals that are in conflict with environmentally sustainable development:

There can be buildings or not, there will be no difference for us.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

You know, I don't know anything about that, people call it ecotourism, that's all I know, no lies, how am I supposed to talk about something I don't have a clue about.

(Over fifty/sixty-year-old woman)

A hotel would have employed more people; it would have been more appreciated.

(A sixty-five-year-old woman)

#### **4.1.2.1. 2. Agency**

To be able to understand to what extent the project creates spaces for women in terms of exercising “power within”, or encouraging them to exercise their agency in a positive sense towards “power to”, first of all there seems a need to touch upon the power relations between the project implementer and the women. The approach

of the implementer is necessary in terms of whether it is a bottom-up approach or top-down approach. In this sense, first the question of why the project incorporates women should be tackled. At this point the WID approach exposes itself once again, since women's participation becomes significant in terms of human resources for the project's development goals. The project implementer responds when asked what is aimed at by women's participation in the project as such:

Then something would be missing in a work. Let's say, if you're carrying out some development work in a village, this development work assigns roles to everyone. You know, when you think about development you can't have a sexist base. It's based on human resources; men, women, young whatever. You can't have that kind of attitude around here anyway. I mean, if you're going to milk a cow and have milk, you can't do this without women.

As was discussed in Chapter Two on WID approach, while the women are seen as active agents of the project related to the above mentioned narrative, they are at the same time seen as victims who need to be saved. Indeed it is important to state that the discourse of victimization is constructed in a different way through the addition of new narratives as different from the one in WID. To recall what WID envisioned for women it is necessary to keep in mind that in WID women are pictured as victims of economic backwardness and tradition. Yet, especially in alternative – specifically in environmentalist- discourses, this situation is romanticized with a stress on the local. Therefore, victimization discourse is reconstructed. In this context, as opposed to the WID, both men and women are seen as victims.

Indeed one can have a better understanding of the implications through an assessment of the project story written by the project implementer<sup>198</sup>. The project story cites a peaceful relationship between nature and humankind in Zümürüt Village, and puts forward that people are content with the amount nature has given them and that they do not ask for more. Yet, according to the story Zümürüt Village is under danger. This danger, that is the new world and “the new world's mentality of consumption that demands more than the nature can give and its sentiment of hegemony tending to handle things roughly based only on the power of mental

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<sup>198</sup> Menteş, İsmail, “Dağın Efendileri”, Zümürüt Village Implementing Project for the Development of Eco-Tourism in Bartın-Kastamonu Küre Mountains and Its Environs, Project Story

superiority of humankind.”<sup>199</sup> For Zümürüt Village residents who cannot fight this danger alone the funding organization came along “like a savior hero fighting against the evil in legendary tales.”<sup>200</sup> So, not only the women, but also the whole village is “victimized”.

To continue with the question of agency, if women are seen as active agents in the project the question of whether the women see themselves as active agents need to be posed. This very point will reveal both the power relations between the women and the project implementer and the ways in which women define themselves in the project, what women define themselves with that is the relation women have with the project.

The language of the project implementer reminds us the words of Jane Parpart about PRA practitioners claiming that “the language of empowerment and participation ‘creates an aura of moral superiority’, which can protect practitioners of PRA from criticism and critical self-reflection about the truth of their claims.”<sup>201</sup> The project implementer defines women as the agents of the project, characterizes his relationship with the women as equalitarian and stresses the bottom-up approach and participation. According to the project implementer, women participate in the decision making process in the project and they discuss everything with the project implementer and a common decision is made in the end. On the other hand, the project implementer defines his role not as the project facilitator but as director and driver:

We discuss an issue to a great extent ... A lot is given to me personally, in matters of authority, that is, in decision making. But, you know, we couldn't set up such kind of system. In the following terms to come we'll of course sit down at a table with women, for example, which women will carry out which activities, in which order, what's gonna happen... now we're watching. What kind of problems occurs when the

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Heather Crawley, 1985, p. 25 quoted in Jane Parpart, “Lessons From the Field: Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development from a Post-(Post-?) Development Perspective”, *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 48

visitors come, how will they be resolved. Maybe... like I said, I'm not really in favor of establishing rules beforehand. I want to carry these along simultaneously with implementation. Our activities are too recent anyway... in fact, I'm the driver there because it's me who is in charge now, I mean, the one who organizes who directs, etc ... When an issue comes up, of course we intervene. We give them new perspectives that are not in their reservoir of thinking. We make them discuss things then the problem is resolved or what needs to be done is done... Let's say, if there's something wrong with services there, we talk about its reasons together.

As understood by the women's statements, it is clear that women do not see themselves as the agents of the project. Women refer to their activities in the interviews as "the project implementer told us to do so, we did it" rather than only "we did" or "we decided". Moreover, two women state that they see themselves as workers in the project. Most women talk about what they were doing in the project like an assigned "task" rather than seeing it as their own project. The fact that the project implementer is an outsider, that he has an official identity, and along these lines, the fact that he is a representative of the state in women's eyes is among the reasons of this power relation. Besides, the project implementer is an "expert" in women's eyes based on a hierarchy of knowledge. For example, a young woman, coming in from a different village because of her marriage with boarding house manager, observes the following about women:

All the women participate. If Mr. X is there, they listen to him, all the women participate. They do what he says. ... Why? He's an intelligent man, they listen to him. Because he talks really well.  
(A twenty-five-year-old woman)

In line with the above ascertainties, women respond to the question of how they come to know about the project activities by reducing the project activities to cooking, which is the field they participate in, and like "they told us, we did it".

He (the project implementer) is said to be calling them (to the manager of the ecotourism center) by phone, and well, ... we'd cook stewed fruit, then he'd tell the other woman you do the desert, to the other you do the pie, to the other you boil the potatoes... Bread would be done out of them, bread would be made from something like spinach; we're told that he had said these, and that's what we're doing.  
(A sixty-year-old woman)

They tell us to do this, to do that. We do those and give them, from every product, from the potatoes to beans, you'll put some in the bags and you'll hang them in the school, you will put them there, visitors will buy them, this will happen that will happen...The project implementer) tells us which dish will be cooked, he makes the decision. ... He tells us that thirteen people were coming or ten people were coming, then what shall we do, some of us cook pilaf, some boil beans, some bake borek, some baklava. Then we open there, we have a stove at the school, we have everything there. We put the food in plates, the visitors naturally sit down at the tables, we, as workers I mean, we participate like that as workers.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

When the women are asked whether they were talking about the project among themselves, a woman responds:

Of course we talk, like we talked about that today, this happened today, that happened today. We also tell the men about what we have done, what tasks we have completed. I don't know how this is gonna end.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

When women are asked about the contribution of the project to them, most of them mention their own contribution to the project through cooking food, rather than telling about the project's contribution to them. For example, a woman answered the question on the change since the beginning of the project and the contributions of the project; she said: "Of course there is (change), we give more or less, we too have a contribution". Along the same lines when women are asked to which activities they would like to participate in, what they would like to do, mostly they answered like: "We participate in things we are told to, what we are told to do so".

Nevertheless, one issue needs to be handled carefully at this point. Such kind of narrative carries the risk of putting women into passive position who do what they are told without ever questioning. What is intended here is not to portray women as passive recipients, but the question of to what extent do women embrace the project, whether they feel like the agents of the project. In the following sections, this point will be resolved and women's reactions will be taken into consideration. Further, women are not just carrying out activities like a task because they are told so. There are other dynamics that account for women's motivation. One of these is

to have income as was mentioned before. The other is the will to be included in the activities in the village, the will to be together with other women. On this issue most of the women state that they wanted to participate not only for money but also for being together with their neighbors. Another factor affecting women's participation is their husbands' approach to their participation. Husbands have varying approaches to their wives' participation in the project. It is not possible to handle each case separately since gendered power relations between man and woman in the household differ. Yet, in the interviews it was observed that men's thoughts on the project (their support, participation, or criticism) are reflected upon women's participation. This can be divided into three categories. However, there are transivities among the categories. For example, on the one hand, a man does not want his wife to participate in the project either because the project does not include them or because it does not provide income to them, on the other hand he does not intervene his wife's participation, because he wants his wife to be included in what is done. If these categories are handled separately:

1. Those who are critical of the project – those who do not want their wives to participate in the project (because they think that the project does not include them or that the income was not sufficient):

They have never called us. I went once. I went there when those teachers came, then no one has ever called us to a meeting. One day, near the mosque ... Mr. X (the project implementer) had told our neighbors ... He had said that this person should get ready that he'd take him to the tour, there'd be a speech delivered there. But he hadn't said this to my husband, get it? My husband was not told either. My husband got angry because he himself was not told that's why he's not letting me go... My husband got angry at that, nothing more, that's why he's not letting me. He says, they didn't call me, now are they calling (you)? I mean, this is the problem. There's nothing else, that's why he doesn't let me... You can't benefit from anything, for example, tourism comes, you know, people cook and bake bread, my husband doesn't let me go there... I say, I could earn some money, there's a lot of gossip going on ... some say they don't give us money, some say they give us little money, some say people pocket money ... Then my husband says he wouldn't get involved in such puzzles, tells me not to go, doesn't let me go. ... But they don't call us, they never do. Look, wouldn't I go if I had heard of them? ... I would, but when you're not called. I tell my husband that Mr. X (project implementer) had come. He says, maybe

they'd be talking about something, why would I go unless I'm called. He's not called, where would you go? ... If something like this had not happened before he'd let me go again, yes I'm talking to you, he let me go to the previous opening, back then there was nothing wrong. Afterwards when he wasn't told, he told me I was never ever supposed to go there, he said I won't let you... He said other people are told but why not me? Then he didn't let me, what am I supposed to say, you do what your spouse tells you to do... I would have gone if he had let me, but of course he doesn't.

(A sixty-one-year-old woman)

(My husband) obviously doesn't want that, he tells me not to go, because what good will that do if they're not paying, he tells me to rest, says don't go.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

2. Men who regard the project positively, but who also do not actively participate in the project either do not intervene their wives involvement, leave the decision to them or support their participation because of several reasons such as income expectation, to let their wives to be together with other women:

He doesn't interfere, going or not depends on me, I'll do it if I leave my works, if I don't he wouldn't ask why.

(Over fifty/sixty-year-old woman)

He wouldn't object if I had participated.

(She does not know her age)<sup>202</sup>

We expect some profit. I don't have an income. We get 230 million for three months; we live on that with my wife. We don't have an income. The children never take care of us either. They haven't sent us a dime in two years.... My wife gets a couple of pennies (through income generating activities of the project), money for flour, sugar, and tea.

(A seventy-three-year-old man)

He (my husband) doesn't have a head for these kind of things, if I do I'll do, if I don't, he'd say nothing, he doesn't have a head for it because he can't hear.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

3. There are those who want their wives to participate since they themselves are also participating in the project. As one woman said:

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<sup>202</sup> Yet, as she takes sixty-five-year-old fund from the state, she should be at least sixty-five-year-old.

If he tells me to get involved again, I will, if he (my husband) says let's get involved, I will.  
(A woman between the ages of sixty-five and seventy)<sup>203</sup>

Within this third category, mainly the men who manage (or going to manage) the boarding house should be evaluated separately as they are the most active male participants of the project. These men all support their wives' participation to the project activities, mainly in relation with the boarding house. Among the three men who are in the boarding house business, especially a father working in the boarding house and a man working in the boarding house under construction support their wives' participation since they consider their wives as labour resources for the boarding house. There is a more equalitarian relationship between the young man, who is the main manager of the boarding house, and his wife. Since this support is closely associated with sexual division of labor, it will be addressed in detail in the following chapters on sexual division of labor. In other words, since the participation of both men and women in the project depends on sexual division of labor, the whole question of participation will be reevaluated through the lens of sexual division of labor.

Before stating whether there is any increase in women's participation to decision making mechanisms in the household and community via the project, the participation of women to decision making within the project should be questioned. In fact as dealt previously regarding the power relations between women and the project implementer, it is hard to claim that women participate in the decision making process. But, this issue needs to be studied in some more detail without reducing it to this relation. From the beginning of the project the target group (the Zümürüt Villagers, both men and women) was encouraged to participate in meetings about the planning of the project. As told in project activities, especially in the period in which the ecotourism expert was present, through regular meetings their ideas about the project, their questions, problems, things they could do etc. were discussed. Women were invited to these meetings. As some of the women mentioned, the project implementer has encouraged women to speak. Yet, the

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<sup>203</sup> She does not know her exact age.

participation of women into the decision making could not be secured. As women mentioned, they either did not speak or they did not attend. If they had attended the meetings they mostly did not speak because they were not able to speak when men were present<sup>204</sup> or if they were the owner of the house in which the meetings were held, they were busy serving the visitors. The reason why women did not attend the meetings is the fact that other women were not going and think it was men's business. Further, it is useful to state that women who had not attended the meetings and other project activities generally access information about the project through their husbands or through other women –usually through gossip.

Brother X (project implementer) organized a meeting, I didn't attend, my husband did... Women didn't attend although he called for us, when other women didn't go I didn't go either, men went...I don't attend the meetings... (my husband) will tell me about it when he sees fit, he would tell me if I asked, if I don't he wouldn't say a word.  
(A forty-seven-year-old woman)

As a matter of fact I really don't feel like talking when there're men around, brother X (project implementer) asked whether this or that was o.k., some talked, some didn't, some went out, something happened ... They asked questions to all of us, whether this or that was o.k.. for us.  
(A sixty-five-year-old woman)

Of course they called us ... Our son-in-law went, like do you want tourism or not... I didn't go, you know, men are talking they are. Teachers come to us, like, say you'll do this like that, you'll put this on jars ... When women teachers called we went to them, we didn't go to men... Now, it's kind of shame for us, our men go meet other men ... we didn't want that, you know, coming forward men, women going forward, it's not fine, I mean, everything has a place, it isn't good.  
(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

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<sup>204</sup> In fact, such a situation is revealed in many studies. For instance, Jane Parpart mentions about the study of Goebel in Zimbabwe. There, Goebel found out that "in general village meetings women constantly had to be invited and reinvited for their views, while men regained control each time a woman had spoken (Goebel, 1998, p. 284 quoted in Jane Parpart, "Lessons From the Field: Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development from a Post-(Post-?) Development Perspective", *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 48

(I cannot remember what was discussed in the meetings)... You know, we serve tea to the visitors; I can't stay in there long.  
(A twenty-five-year-old woman)

While in the beginning of the project there were regular meetings held about establishing the ecotourism system, now these meetings are rather about calling in of interested people about related issues. This gives way to both men's and women's complaints about not being called in for activities. As will be discussed in detail on the issue of sexual division of labor, because the activities are based on a sexual division of labor meetings also became based on the same premises.

There is no indication that reveals whether the project has had a positive or a negative effect on women's participation into the decision-making processes at home or in community. Women or men have not mentioned any change in this direction. Participation into decision making requires a more detailed gender analysis and differentiating in which fields decision making takes place. Yet, a general picture can be drawn within the scope of this study. Although the decision making process at home changes depending on the relationship between the man and the woman, except for subjective situations (for example, a woman whose husband is deaf and mute makes all the decisions in the household) the common point is the fact that men consult women, however it is the men who make the final decision. While the decisions women make are mostly about fields that are defined as women's jobs like domestic works, kitchen works; monetary calculations, jobs related to outside that are seen as men's jobs appear as fields in which men make decisions. The question of who decides whether the house will be transformed into a boarding house related to the project stands out as a significant point. Although the project implementer consults (some) women on the issue, and asks them whether it will increase their work load or not, men make the final decision. For example, in the boarding house that is still under construction although the woman does not want a boarding house since it will add another burden to her shoulders because she is sick, men in the house (with a 'forced' 'persuasion' method, telling the woman that they would help her) make the decision.

When the sexual division of labor in the village is assessed generally it is seen that women are engaged in such tasks as cooking, laundry, dish washing and cleaning that are all household chores and identified with women. Apart from those, subsistence farming and, if there is any, herding the livestock are also among women's tasks. Men are involved in cutting works in the forest or transporting forestry products. Yet, it is worth noting that in almost all the families interviewed men (also) served tea. It is stated that local plants (mushroom, "ispit," rose hip) are gathered generally together with men and women<sup>205</sup>. Canning of these plants is carried out by women. Women talk about the sexual division of labor in their own words:

The uncle never got into the orchard and did something, well, he wouldn't even water the plants, I do those, and he's always out.  
(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

Well, I can say that I'm responsible for everything in the house. He doesn't really do anything about the house things.  
(Over fifty/sixty-year-old woman)

The uncle does nothing in the summer. He just sits there and prays five times a day with prayer beads in his hands, he goes to the mosque, he can't do anything in hot weather. At other times for example, there is ..., he goes and gathers them from the forest, he makes things out of them.  
(A sixty-one-year-old woman)

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<sup>205</sup> The rising concerns about environmental degradation triggered considerations about the development and women/gender to think on terms of sustainable development/environment. Therefore, over the past twenty years there emerged literature focusing on women/gender and environment. With the support of the field researches especially from the Latin American, Asian and African countries, it is indicated that women have an intimate interaction with natural resources because of their responsibilities. There emerged an increasing literature showing women's multiple roles as farmers, herders, forest gatherers, drawers of water, food processors, selectors and preservers of seeds and their knowledge about natural resources emerging from their daily experiences. The recognition of women's such roles gave way to see them as main actors of nature conservation; women became focal points as users and managers of nature. Nevertheless, the fact that in Zümrit Village forest gathering is carried out jointly by men and women, and in this context it requires the knowledge of both men and women challenge gender/women and environment literature to a great extent. The assumption that women are food gatherers and have knowledge of nature is also related to the western perceptions that see eastern women as a homogenous group. Western literature ignores the peculiarities of gender relations. Moreover, the stress on these roles has become a means to environmental concerns just as the stress on women's roles became a means to developmental ends in WID.

Men's statements about the division of labor are akin to women's. For instance:

There's a difference between a man and a woman of course. Women carry out household chores, you know, laundry and whatever; they take care of the orchards. Men may very well have a specific task of course. He either goes to the forest demarcates his field's boundary. These are the things a man does, you know, when there's something to be done he goes out. When I don't have anything to do, I stay with my wife in the orchard.

(A forty-three-year-old man)

Although there may be generalizations such as the above statement, one should not ignore the fact that sexual division of labor demonstrates peculiar characteristics according to gender relations between men and women. This means it is different at every household. Here though each and every peculiar characteristic is not rendered separately, it is possible to offer a couple of examples. For example, while the man is not involved in farming at all in one household, in some other cases the man and the woman carry out farming tasks together. On the other hand, at the same household while the woman never goes gathering mushrooms in the forest, the man does the job all by himself and he claims that a woman is not capable of handling forestry tasks. In another household, an elderly woman has stated that she had worked with her husband in the forest when she was young and that they still go to the forest together:

(In the past) I used to go with him. What'd I do, if the motor needs to be held, I would ..., I could have done them all after him, we worked like that ... (now) If I'll bake bread I do it myself, if I'll milk the cow I do it myself, he gets up just steep the tea, that's all, he doesn't help much. In spare times we peck up the ground together, if we ever go to the forest and can take something, can take wood, we take those, if there's a need for a tree from the forest we take it together if we can, if we can't we don't have it either.

(A sixty-five-year-old woman)

The research could not find any evidence indicating a change in the sexual division of labor. Instead of creating possibilities for improvement of women's status, the project perpetuates the sexual division of labor through its activities:

1. As it is a characteristic of WID based projects, the division of labor in the project is organized according to gender based division of labor. Women in the project were given roles like preparing canned food and cooking at the eco-tourism center, which are seen as extensions of household chores and in this context these are again in-house roles. Men, on the other hand, are given roles like guiding, management of the ecotourism center, taking care of the horses, which are all outside related tasks.

Two points need to be underlined about this issue. The first is, in works with a locality focus, especially in tourism business women are visualized in such a way to point to what is “authentic” and “traditional”. Women are visualized for the tourists by cooking (the figure of the woman baking ‘gözleme’) or serving food in their local clothing in front of the ecotourism center. Also in these lines, while the women are presented as horse riding women in a TV show<sup>206</sup>, as was mentioned tasks about horses are given to men in the project. It is not possible to make a generalization covering all women, however, for example a sixty-five-year-old woman talks about how a good horse rider she is and she says: “Men does that job but if I were given the task I could very well have done the same”. Again another woman recounted that it was not her husband but herself who was taking care of the horses at home, how good she was at that, underlined the fact that how good she used to ride horses and stated that now because she has some weight problems she could not do that but she could guide the tourists nevertheless:

I saddle my horse better than my husband. I used to have a horse when I was single, we also had water buffalos. I do them all since I was a little girl. A man couldn't have ridden the horse I was riding. Now I'm overweight that's why I can't do it anymore.  
(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

Secondly, as the ecotourism center is managed by a man, this position increases his power relative to the women. Rather than equal participants of a project, the women turn out to be workers in service of the man. He becomes the decision maker about the ecotourism center. He tells about his responsibility in the ecotourism center:

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<sup>206</sup> “Gezelim Görelim” TV show.

Women of the village work for me on a daily fee... Since I do the list, catering programme of the place, I too call on women. I record them in a notebook. I visit the houses, give the paper, and tell them to cook these kinds of meals, sign the paper and give it to me. They bring the food, I check it if it is clean and delicious, if it's not we cancel the order and tell them to bring it back for example.  
(A forty-three-year-old man)

2. Collateral with the project's division of labor, the trainings are based on sexual division of labor. Women are offered trainings on tasks that are seen as extensions of women's domestic roles rather than trainings through which women would be able to develop new skills other than household chores. Men too received trainings on tasks that are seen as manly tasks. As mentioned in the previous parts, while the trainings considered suitable for women were about production, packaging and the hygiene of local products and basic visitor hosting (hospitality, cleaning, hygiene, food); for the men the suitable trainings were considered to be about guiding tourists.

It is possible to see the extensions of this type of division of labor in the project in the division of labor in the boarding houses. In both boarding houses women are involved in household chores as their trainings have reinforced, while the men are concerned with outside tasks. Yet, since the relationship of sexual division of labor and gender is peculiar in both boarding houses, the reflections of the project also vary. For example, in the open boarding house these reflections should be seen through the relationship among four people. Because the young man and woman have a more equalitarian relationship relative to others, the woman states that it is she who is in charge of all the book keeping tasks in this boarding house. Both the man and the woman stress that they share the tasks equally and help each other. On the other hand, the young man's father in the same house and the other man in the other boarding house, which is still under construction, see their wives as labour resources at home. For example, the latter tells that her wife will be responsible with the inside jobs, however as she is ill, he will help her. In this context "considering his wife", "not to put the work load on her shoulders", he has the idea of marrying to a second wife. To continue with his words:

Since we go to the town (Azdavay) we do the shopping. I take her (my wife) with me (to Azdavay) only once in a month, two or three times a year, during festivals or wedding ceremonies. Now when we take her with us, the house remains unattended here. Especially now, after tourism began... Our arrangement hasn't changed. There's only one thing, we share the excitement of hosting a visitor. Like how do we behave, is it going to be good or bad? Succeeding in this, making a person satisfied is so hard. My wife doesn't know ironing for example, if I do the ironing my other jobs will be delayed.... These are big problems.... She'll learn, she has to do it. If I'm free, I'll do it. If I'm not, she's got to do it... The sheets, the pillow case need to be ironed so that the person sleeping on them can take a deep breath. These things should be taken care of, this boarding house business is hard I mean. I tell my wife let's get another wife because, she won't be able to manage these. She's not ok with that either... I thought about it, really I'm thinking about it. I also have this in my mind... I mean, I told her to let me get her another wife, as a helping hand. Mine is not aimed at getting married, if we are to manage this business.

(A forty-three-year-old man)

Considering the sexual division of labor in the project, the project's relation to WID approach reveals itself once more. Interviews with the project manager also support this fact. The project implementer accepts and normalizes the sexual division of labor without having the aim of changing:

Household chores, that is, because of their sociological tradition are already predominantly women oriented. Outside jobs are also predominantly man oriented. I mean, putting the product in the jar, closing it, packing are mostly the tasks that women carry out. But browsing the horse outside, taking the horse, feeding it are men's job. I mean, we don't have anything; it is already the case here.

The participation of women into the project is considered to be important within the context of sexual division of labor. In other words, ecotourism needs women in line with roles associated with them. The project implementer, emphasizes that ecotourism prioritizes women. Because according to him, ecotourism is related with housework such as cleaning and cooking that are seen as women's jobs:

Ecotourism activity is an activity that embraces women more because it involves a specific tradition, say cooking or boarding house management... It is an activity that prioritizes women, that encompasses them too.

Because ecotourism is not a type of mass tourism like other tourism activities. I mean, it's not a business that could be carried out through a hotel system much. It's a kind of tourism that's carried out in rural areas, on a small scale, based on family or an individual. When things are like this, both accommodation and some of the services offered to these people prioritize women of course ... Therefore, we bring women to the foreground; the work itself is like that anyhow, because in the end household activities are like cooking and like cleaning. Of course this could be perceived as assigning women more work load but women are already doing this job. Yet, when we think about it in Zümürüt's scale, we have seen that men too were active in food service. Therefore, our activities in Zümürüt women are in the foreground a little bit more for us. Anyway this is an activity that women carry out willingly because in the end after the completion of these activities they are offered a certain amount of resource, or rather a financial input...

Regarding the agency, lastly the question of whether the project has changed women's self-reliance will be discussed. As was mentioned and criticized in the second chapter of the study, self-reliance is one of the most significant dimensions of empowerment in the mainstream development discourse. The assumption is that the income generation will directly lead to increase in women's self-reliance. As mentioned in the previous parts of the study the project implementer has also the assumption that the increased income will directly increase women's self-reliance. As the women do not earn enough yet, it is hard to assert that income increases women's self-reliance and it is also hard to assess that along the same lines. Yet, the only income increase that is able to affect women's lives has taken place in the boarding house. Here one can make an assessment only through two women. The woman, who has been participating into the project since the beginning through helping her daughter-in-law, mentions transformations like her increased purchasing power and the changes in the house, however there is no indication that her self-reliance has increased. On the other hand, the woman's daughter-in-law defines herself as a business owner and a business woman, and as was mentioned before, she talks about her self-reliance based on her contact with people staying in the boarding house. Nevertheless, this situation is not based on a possible effect of the project but on the equalitarian relationship between her and her husband. Because all the accounting works of the boarding house are being carried out by her.

According to the project implementer, women's self-reliance and their self-respect have risen, and their relations with the community have been strengthened. The project implementer regards these as the most significant contributions of the project to women. He bases this increase in self-reliance and self-respect mainly on the contacts women have with other people. For the project implementer, women have realized how important they actually were in the community with their culture and through the interest visitors have been paying to them and to their products. As the project manager said:

First, women have more self-reliance now. Second, they have realized that their way of life was actually being appreciated by others and in fact there was nothing wrong with this way of life to be depreciated. They have seen that the products they themselves have been making, the bread they have been baking... were actually important. More than anything else they have more self-respect now. A sentiment that they were important in society has arisen. I think the most important thing is that women now have more self-reliance and their relations with the community are stronger. I mean, the truth is now people who visit Zümürüt like the food cooked by ladies of Zümürüt, they like taking pictures with their (authentic) clothing, they really like being together with them. Beforehand this used to be perceived as villagers' culture ... and used to be seen as something negative. Now there's no such thing. Women are now more relaxed in the community. They have realized how significant they were in society with their culture and traditions.

Indeed this argument of the project implementer draws us to another dimension, to the issue of romanticizing the local and even further to the orientalism debates, as was discussed before in the section on sexual division of labor. Because the way that city dwellers' regarding villagers carries "otherness". City dwellers want the village and its people, especially the women, stay "unspoiled", "uncontaminated" and the way it is as traditional.<sup>207</sup> Therefore, this subject needs a discussion within the context of orientalism debates which exceeds the scope of this study. Yet, it is possible to ask such questions here: If this interest in women increases women's self-reliance, since this interest is related to a locality what will these women feel in another space, for example in the city? Will women have the same level of self-reliance then? Will the women, who attract attention in their colorful traditional

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<sup>207</sup> What is tradition is another question mark, since tradition itself is not static but continuously changing.

clothing, draw the same interest if they were to wear ordinary villagers' clothes? Why does tradition reveal itself through women's clothing, not men's? As was mentioned previously, this situation places women into spectatorship position-objectifying women. Men are also aware of this interest in women's clothes and they now want them to dress like that. For instance, a woman talks about her husband such that he never takes her with him in everyday life. As she says:

There are people who go (to the forest) but my husband never took me ... Even if I had wanted him to do so, he wouldn't do it anyway. He'd tell me to stay at home, prepare your meal, brew your tea in the evening. ... My husband doesn't let me go out much. ... He himself goes (everywhere).  
(A forty-seven-year-old woman)

While this man still maintains the same attitude in everyday life because of the interest in his wife's clothing, he takes her with him to places (like meetings) where she can be displayed:

There's a difference between times when women wear dirty clothes in fields and when they're clean and have proper hair. ... Because there's a visitor the woman sets herself in order, she has golden jewelry she wears it, she wears her beads. She fixes her fez on her head, wears her headscarf ... When a woman dresses beautifully, she becomes a lady like you. When she gets into that group, that place is like a world of exhibition, like the movies. .... While she's baking bread now they're always shooting. The first thing is clothing. They really pay careful attention to that. I went to Antalya, made my wife wear those clothes, I swear you can't hold on to your wife there, they could just take your wife away there.  
(A forty-three-year-old man)

At this point without going into further details on the argument, the thing that needs to be underlined is that it will still be the women who will answer the question whether this situation have increased their self-reliance. The interviews conducted with women reveal that women who are more self-reliant relatively to other women and who have a more equalitarian relationship with their husbands state that contact with strangers, or going out in public as they say, has increased their self-reliance. For instance a woman talks proudly about how everybody takes pictures of her while she is riding a horse, how everybody looks at her. Another woman says:

Getting mingled in public of course gives you some reliance, like you're able to do it, getting out in front of people, if you'll excuse me, but you may say whether going out in public is for people or not, but it's a change for us, isn't it?

(Over fifty/sixty-year-old woman)

Some women say that they felt shy and timid in society, and having their pictures taken was embarrassing to them. Further a woman states that she was not 'mingling in the crowd' just because 'she did not know how to talk,' and if she had known how to talk she would have 'mingled'. As she said:

I don't have the head for anything ... I don't even know how to talk, why would you talk then? ... I can't know, you see, I can't talk I'd feel abashed, embarrassed... Why would I ever go if I can't talk?...I feel embarrassed, I had a sister, then she would tell me sister look here, I feel embarrassed, she would say look there, they'd take a picture, but I feel embarrassed.

(A woman between the ages of sixty-five and seventy)

(They asked me to deliver a speech) to our visitors (at the opening ceremony of the project). ... X is literate; they gave her a piece of paper. They asked me, I said I was illiterate I couldn't read the paper either, besides I'd feel abashed in front of all those people. ... They had written (the speech) on paper, she read it, people listened to her. Some among our men talked, they talked but of course they're educated people, they're all educated, they aren't ignorant like us, we can't go for long because we're ignorant. ... I told them I couldn't make a speech, I told him (the project implementer) not to make me do it, each place has a different rural language. ... I told him to deliver the speech in my place, then X made the speech instead of myself.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

Considering the last quotation, it should be mentioned that generally there is the idea of "giving voice to women" in front of the public. Yet, instead of increasing self-reliance, such undertakings usually results in the opposite way as the women had not been listened until that time. Jane Parpart also marks this point through handling public discussions:

Giving voice to women (or men) especially in public is not always empowering...The public discussions so popular with PRA may sometimes be disempowering, in fact, for the more marginalized members of a community-particularly women. Moreover, seeking the voices of Third World women has too often become a means for

building the careers of development experts rather than an empathetic attempt to bridge cultural and material divides.<sup>208</sup>

#### **4.1.2.1. 3. Achievements: Individual Outcomes**

As the project does not provide conditions for women's empowerment, instead the approach to women is along with the lines of Women in Development Approach, there is not and cannot be any specific outcome.

#### **4.1.2.2. Power With: Collective Empowerment**

Before discussing collectivity and solidarity among women, firstly ways in which the project has affected the village (women and men), the change and transformation in the relationship of the villagers through the project need to be evaluated shortly. Only after this it will be possible to understand the relationships among women better.

As was indicated in the previous chapters, there has been a change in relations in the village with the introduction of a new economic activity field. It is hard to assert that the project has facilitated in such a way so as to create a space for collectivity. On the contrary, with the project the capitalist competitive mentality that has also been at work in other touristic spaces has penetrated the local. The only difference is the fact that here in the village neo-liberalism is worked out through an environmentalist discourse and the fact that families are working for themselves instead for working for others, that is, the system works as a family business. As was mentioned in the section on the aims of the project, places like Zümürüt Village and the villagers are generally subjected to tourism agencies in the cities and are being exploited in this context. Yet, in this way self-entrepreneurs have been created in the very local with the project. Since the village now has an economic meaning, it is impregnated with conflicts among local powers. On the one hand, the Association founded by those who had migrated to the cities from the

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<sup>208</sup> Parpart, Jane, "Lessons From the Field: Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development from a Post-(Post-?) Development Perspective", *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism and Representation*, ed. by. Kriemild Saunders (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002), p. 50

village defines the project implementer as an “outsider” trying to claim the village with the introduction of tourism in the village. The Association is in a conflict with the boarding house owners on the grounds that they are the only ones who draw benefit from the project. On the other hand, while there were problems and conflicts about forestry works between local powers and generally the villagers before the project with the introduction of tourism power relationships began to be exercised in the context of tourism.

Training and activities carried out within the scope of the project have contributed especially to men in the boarding house business in terms of both material resources and human and social resources and have increased their self-reliance. These men refer to the changes and transformations in their lives as experiencing increases both in income and knowledge, and self-reliance. For instance, a man states that even his way of talking has changed. The interviews conducted with these men reveal that they are very knowledgeable about environmental protection and that they have begun to develop ideas on environment and tourism. For instance, one of these men has told that he has written a project about the protection of wild animals. In short, with the project self-reliant, self-entrepreneur, self-maximizing rational individuals (men) have been created in line with the definition of empowerment in the context of neo-liberal mainstream development. It is interesting to note that these men have responded to questions in interviews not in the context of the village itself but rather over their own boarding houses and their own plans. Responding to a question on how they would talk about the place a decade later, they again answered the question over their own boarding houses. Men in both boarding houses have talked about their future plans of new enterprises:

For example, a boarding house manager says:

I have a piece of land there, I told Mr. X (the project implementer) let's build fifty wooden tree houses. Small villa type houses like those in Ilica, let there be twenty-thirty houses. One story. People come and we give the keys for a month. I have a very bright future, I have lots of hope, I want to accomplish a lot of things. .... I will build a stall on the other side; I told Mr. X that I would build a two room house over the

stall. It's not good for the owner of the house to use the boarding house as his own house.  
(A forty-three-year-old man)

The other man (and his father) has also talked about their new plans:

I'll continue building the rest. I'll use it together with this place ... I'll use credit. I mean, we don't have money now for the building. Plus I'm thinking of a concrete building... (I'm planning to build) five-six more.  
(A twenty-four-year-old man)

Further, there is a joining of forces created by the competition working with a capitalist mentality between these two boarding houses. On the one hand, they have conflicting issues about the boarding houses and they glorify of their own boarding houses while criticizing the other along the same lines, on the other hand they define themselves as those who are responsible for tourism in the village and stress the need for unification (especially against other power groups):

For instance, a male boarding house owner firstly talks about unity and cooperation then situating his own boarding house against the other he says "mine will be the most superb":

People don't want other people to earn money, to move forward, I mean there's nothing else. If a person wants to move forward doing something good, they trip that person, don't you move forward? Why? If four or five people can come together... If I support you, and in turn if you support me, if we can join hands, no one can destroy us. One hand doesn't clap. In order to make this work, of course two boarding houses need to work in cooperation. When two people come, I don't want all to stay at my place, let one stay at the other... I'm ready for anything; I stand here like a fortress. I'll build the most superb one.  
(A forty-three-year-old man)

The father of the owner of the other boarding house constructs the identity of "we" against "the others" referring to the two boarding houses against other power groups:

(The project implementer) found me first. He told me that he would buy the house. Fellow villagers told me not to sell it; they told me that they

were trying to fool me. Those people are also comfortable because of tourism but no, they won't be able to do it. We will manage this tourism, I know it well. I don't take the so-called Association, this or that into consideration. They come and undermine us here, but I don't give a final thought about that. We will continue.  
(A fifty-five-year-old man)

The fact that the boarding houses have inevitably become the focal point of the project and the fact that training sessions have been offered to people who would be involved in the business in line with the aims of ecotourism have given way to the idea that villagers, men and women, have been excluded from the project. Parallel to the "we" characterizations by those in the boarding house business, villagers who are not involved in the boarding house business also describe them as "they" or "tourism people". Except for those who have actively participated in the project, in interviews almost everyone –especially women, as will be discussed in detail below- states that there is a discrimination in the village, that the village is now separated, that tourism is based on the boarding house business, and that they themselves are not included. For example women say on the issue:

He divided the village into two; Mr. X (project implementer) divided the village into two. ... Tourism houses were built for others... they (tourism people) don't want us to get closer. So we don't do that either... They say we shall manage. We don't have anything against that. ... They didn't even want us to approach those (the opening and other activities)... They say these places are now for tourism, I don't know what will happen in the end... Nothing has changed... Nothing... I don't know, since tourism started there's been a lot of gossip going on. There's been discrimination, the village; there's been discrimination for sure... A lot of discrimination. Discrimination, you know, people have taken sides... He made the tourism business on the upper side, and here he built this (the ecotourism center), these people became conceited, we made a fuss over that, we accepted the tourism business, we kind of made it, but now they don't want our livestock to wander about the streets.  
(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

Now nothing will be told to us, since our's is not a tourism house... Because they're in the tourism business he (the project implementer) is friends with them. Phone calls, everything.  
(A sixty-one-year-old woman)

Relations among women cannot be considered in isolation from the above mentioned relations in the village. The project has not been able to play a facilitating role giving way to women's collective empowerment, but it rather individualized them. There is no collective identity, no collective adoption of the work (the project) among women, therefore no collective agency. Further, solidarity has decreased and relations have started to be established through money.<sup>209</sup>

The above mentioned relations have also reflections on women. As was mentioned before, women have complained about tourism's focus on boarding houses. On the other hand, there has been a resolution between women working in the boarding houses and women at the ecotourism center. For example, a woman in the boarding house business regards herself as an employer for other women like the men do. In this context, as Kabeer mentions, agency is exercised in a negative sense of power over other women<sup>210</sup>. She talks about the change in relationships with other women:

I only tell them to be quiet when they come in, maybe they're offended. Before people would barge in, would talk, I began to treat them with a little distance now... I buy curd from someone, if I don't have enough time I buy it; someone else also makes money because of me.  
(A forty-nine-year-old woman)

When asked whether she has suggested other women to transform their houses into boarding houses or not, she responds:

It's up to them, but I don't advise that to anyone of course. But because of me, they too earn some money; I buy bread and butter, you know, they make money because of me.

On the other hand, both sides (those who are in the boarding house business and those who cook at the ecotourism center) complain that there is discrimination in

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<sup>209</sup> Nevertheless, it can not be claimed that there was a strong solidarity and collectivity among the women prior to the implementation of the project. There had been problems among them. Yet, the project effected relations negatively.

<sup>210</sup> Indeed at this point a Gramscian reading might be more useful to understand both the relations in general and the relations among women in the village. Gramsci argues that the values of the bourgeoisie become common sense values of all in this concept of hegemonic culture. Here new self-entrepreneurs identify their own good as for the common good of all villagers. Yet, contrary to Gramsci's argument, women and men who think that they are excluded from the project do not identify their own good with the good of the new self-entrepreneurs. Therefore, hegemonic consolidation did not emerge yet.

the village, that one side is sidelined, that there is no more solidarity and that relations are constructed over money business, and they underlined unity and cooperation:

There's a discord in our village. It's divided into three. Karaca district, our ... district, here Sarilar district and Mutlu district at the back. We, four women stay (summer-winter, permanently) in the village, you know, nobody wants the things others make... What do I expect? The village, all neighbors shall unite in cooperation, we shall come together and get an income together. Let everyone have an income, let everything we do be in unity, I want unity and cooperation... I mean, I want everyone to be together, I too shall be there with what you do, the other shall be with me with what I do, my neighbor because see we came here, I had her coffee and lunch. But when my neighbor doesn't have an income, when I don't have an income, but if two people have income, there's something there, I don't know.  
(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

They're now into the central village. Because we're running the boarding house we aren't informed about things. For example the school became a place; we don't know what's going on there. Visitors ask me whether I go there, whether I know things about there. We only go visit in the evenings; we don't know what's going on. There's discrimination in the village. That side is (school side) separate, down district, they don't want to include us like because we run the boarding house... In the past when someone came she/he would bring yoghurt for example but now citizens don't even want to give some, they always expect money, expect some pay. Everybody has understood what it really is... They used to say look some things make money, that thing won't, now they have learnt what it is, what tourism means, also that it makes money, but there's no unity or cooperation here.  
(A forty-nine-year-old woman)

In fact the project has offered a potential for women's collectivity through the ecotourism center. Yet, because of the following reasons no collectivity can come into being here:

1. The ecotourism center is run by a man rather than women themselves. As was underlined in the section on the sexual division of labor, the women are in the position of employees of the man. This in turn reproduces the gender hierarchy.

2. There is no established system at the ecotourism center. This has become one of the factors giving way to the individual sales of products by women and has transformed into a competition among women. A woman tells:

Those we got out from the center are just for window dressing, they just stay there, people buy mushrooms, molasses, sour sauces, rose hips from our own houses.

(A fifty-seven-year-old woman)

Another woman says:

Nope, they don't buy anything, I took three jars up there but I don't know if they're sold or not. You know, they don't even say it was sold, nor say let's give you the money. I thought of taking them to school, but that didn't work out either. I sell them to my neighbors in cash, I sell to my neighbors indeed.

(A fifty-seven-year old woman)

At the same time, the arrangement of who will cook for the visitors is also planned by the man who runs the ecotourism center. Women also argue that there is injustice in the arrangement, which they have not been called for and only three to five women have been benefiting from that business; and they talk about problems like the purchase and sharing of cooking material.

3. Women in the boarding house business sell their own products at their own houses rather than selling them at the ecotourism center. This is both a situation that obstructs women's collectivity and also gives way to the purchase of products from the boarding houses by the visitors:

No one buys anything from here, just from the tourism house maybe, they don't buy from here. What shall I do, shall I say buy my product? Have I earned my money from tourism up to now? Noo.

(Over fifty/sixty-year-old woman)

The project implementer normalizes the existence of problems and in turn women's individualization. Further, he states that change will always bring along problems to a certain extent, and if there are no problems there will not be any development. The project implementer regards the problems among women as "sweet competition brought about by development":

Women... surely on a certain issue, for example in economic activities... there can be problems to a certain extent but ... you know, if there's a change in a place this will have certain negative effects on human relationships... This should be regarded normal. If there's no problem in a place, that means there's also no change anyway. That is to say, change always brings along problems. I mean, if there isn't any problem in some place, I think, there's also no change there. Therefore there will be (problems), they surely exist... but this isn't a very (big) problem, this isn't a problem that will upset the relationship among them. This is a sweet competition brought about by development itself or the result of such work.

#### **4.1.2.3. Power To: Political Outcomes**

As the project did not provide conditions for the collectivity of women, one cannot conclude with any collective outcome in terms of women's collective empowerment. Instead, the project promoted self-entrepreneurship and individualism. Gender hierarchies were perpetuated. Indeed hierarchies among women occurred.

### **4.2. Project for the Protection and Encouragement of the Production of Tunceli Garlic**

#### **4.2.1. Information about the Project Site and the Project**

##### **4.2.1. 1. Socio-Economic Structure of Ovacık**

The project site is the 80 Konutlar Area of Ovacık district, which is attached to the province of Tunceli<sup>211</sup>. It is located in the north of Tunceli. According to the 2000 census data, the population of the county town is 5909; the population of the villages is 5909; and the total population is 8522. The population by gender and age in the county town is like this:

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<sup>211</sup> Tunceli is a city located in the East Anatolia region of Turkey. Information about the province of Tunceli can be viewed at [www.tunceli.gov.tr](http://www.tunceli.gov.tr)

Table 4.3. Population by age and gender in Ovacık<sup>212</sup>

Age	Total	Men	Women
'0-4	214	108	106
'5-9	412	217	195
'10-14	638	338	300
'15-19	389	250	139
'20-24	2457	2283	174
'25-29	494	334	160
'30-34	315	209	106
'35-39	220	138	82
'40-44	153	75	78
'45-49	110	55	55
'50-54	116	69	47
'55-59	72	31	41
'60-64	77	44	33
65+	242	124	118

In 1990's the population of the villages was 11.669; and the population of the county town was 3647. When compared with the 2000 census data, there is a 150 percentage decrease in the population of the villages, while there is a 48 percentage rise in the population of the county town. Totally, there is a 58 percentage decrease in the whole population of the district.<sup>213</sup> One main reason of this decrease is that in 1994, among sixty seven villages of Ovacık, thirty four villages were vacated. The villagers had been forced to migrate from their villages because of the political conflict in the area. Therefore, these people had migrated to other cities. The second reason of the reducing numbers in population is due to the decrease in the birth rate.<sup>214</sup>

In Ovacık, the primary means of livelihood is agriculture and animal husbandry. The major products grown in the district are bean, leguminous seeds, and feed grain. In addition to these, in some areas and villages of the district, walnut is also grown. Red pointed trout is very famous as it is endemic species in the Munzur

<sup>212</sup> Source: Turkey Statistics Institution (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu), Census Data's for 2000

<sup>213</sup> Untitled document, UYD

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

River.<sup>215</sup> In the county town, among 2405 men, 1024 of them are in labour force, 467 of them are unemployed, and 917 of them are out of labour force. Among 2145 women, 92 of them are in labour force, 95 of them are unemployed, and 1958 are out of labour force.<sup>216</sup>

Tunceli is known as the city in Turkey which has a high degree of literacy level. According to 2000 census data the literacy level by gender in Ovacık is as below:

Table 4.4. Population by Literacy, Educational Background, and Gender in Ovacık<sup>217</sup>

	Total	Literacy			Graduation	
		Litterate	Illiterate	Unknown	The ones who could not graduate from any school	Primary School (five years)
Gender						
Total	5630	5091	538	1	1057	1659
Men	4132	3980	151	1	576	1381
Women	1498	1111	387	-	481	278

<sup>215</sup> [www.tunceli.gov.tr](http://www.tunceli.gov.tr)

<sup>216</sup> Turkey Statistics Institution (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu), Census Data's for 2000

<sup>217</sup> Source: Ibid

Table 4.4. (Continued) Population by Literacy, Educational Background, and Gender

Graduation						
Primary School (eight years)	Secondary School	Vocational High School Equivalent to Secondary School	High School	Vocational High School Equivalent to High School	University	Unknown
168	656	12	947	339	251	2
98	599	12	793	319	201	1
70	57	-	154	20	50	1

After having a brief look on the socio-economic structure of Ovacık, there seems a need to draw the general profile of the interviewees and the project site. The project site is the 80 Konutlar area which is placed slightly distant to the county town. After the vacation of the villages, approximately 300 families, coming from the villages of Ovacık, has settled down in the area. Therefore majority of the residents are composed of the displaced families.

As it was expressed in the interviews, the main livelihoods of the families in their villages were agriculture and animal husbandry. They have all denoted how much they were pleased with their well-being in the village. They all expressed that their living conditions in the village were used to be very good. However, since 1994, with the vacation of villages, they had lost their income resources. Currently in Ovacık, according to the interviewees, majority of the men work seasonally (usually in summer time) mostly in constructions and majority of the women are not employed.

Wild plant gathering (garlic, ‘gulik,’ ‘savul,’ ‘ışkın’ and ‘kenger) come into prominence as a significant income resource for these families. As the conflict diminished in 2000, people had the opportunity to have re-access to the upland meadows and mountains. Therefore, some villages, which were vacated previously, are now allowed as living places. On the other hand, some villages are accessible

only by permission. Women (and men) who are able to go to their villages visit their villages in the summer and they plant and/or raise their livestock there. Some of these people make plans for permanently moving back to their villages in the future. Since no one lives in some of these villages which are uninhabitable now, people from these villages state that although they want to move back they cannot because of this situation.

Lastly, if to mention briefly on the education level, the majority of the interviewed people are either primary school graduates or illiterates.<sup>218</sup> Yet, the children of the families all attend to school. The families give full weight to the education of their children, both boys and girls. They push their children to continue to higher education, even if the children are not willingness to continue. Therefore, in terms of expenditures, the primacy is given to the education expenditures of the children despite the low income rate. The reason of giving such importance to education is explained with their previous experiences of hard life conditions, thus they want their children to have better conditions. Many of them stated that they are oppressed too much, yet, through education, their children will be saved; they will break free from their negative experiences.

#### **4.2.1.2. The Aims of the Project**

The project site is Ovacık district located in Tunceli. The project is run by the Ovacık branch of the Accessible Life Association (Ulaşılabilir Yaşam Derneği-UYD)<sup>219</sup> that is based in İstanbul. Although the project has formally one

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<sup>218</sup> Yet, one participant woman and her husband, who are from Ovacık, are high school graduates.

<sup>219</sup> The foundation process of the Accessible Life Association (Ulaşılabilir Yaşam Derneği -UYD), which runs the Project for the Protection and Encouragement of the Production of Tunceli Garlic, began with the 1999 Düzce earthquake. Volunteers for Solidarity (Dayanışma Gönüllüleri), made up of volunteers who got together after the earthquake in order to help the victims of the earthquake, dissolved themselves because of disagreements among members and UYD was founded in 2000. UYD after carrying out 'social rehabilitation' activities for the disabled in Düzce and İstanbul started running organic agriculture activities and it has been active in Ovacık since 2001. The Association mainly targets vulnerable groups in the society such as "small or landless peasants, people with low income or people who are unemployed, disabled people, women, children"(Yarar, Betül, "Civil Struggle for the "Housing Right" After the Earthquake: A Case study on the "DepDer" in Duzce, <http://www.erc.gr/English/d&scrm/torun-papers/session1/B%20%20Yarar.pdf>, 30.10.2007, p. 15). Having the aim of struggling against the social and regional inequalities (Ibid.), UYD has been

implementer, it is carried out by a team.<sup>220</sup> The project that started in 2003 is composed of two phases. The first phase began in September 2003 and ended in November 2004 while the second began in February 2005 and ended in April 2006.

The project mainly aims to cultivate the Tunceli garlic, an endemic species that only grows in the region of Tunceli, which is under the threat of extinction because of uncontrolled gathering of the plant by families whose income is based on garlic sales. The aim here is to decrease the risk of extinction of the garlic plant and to supply alternative income resources for the families who had been forced to migrate from their villages in 1994 because of the conflict in the area.

In the 1990s because of the mounting terror in the area most of the villages were vacated and people were forced to settle in Ovacık district. With the closing of the upland meadows to cropping for animals, the section of the population involved in livestock breeding and agriculture completely lost its income resource. People who had been victims of forced migration and who could no longer use their lands switched to garlic gathering after the evacuation of their villages. These people who make up the most disadvantaged group of Ovacık and who have hard living conditions see gathering that requires no capital as a significant income resource. In Ovacık not only garlic but other wild plants (such as ‘gulik,’ ‘savul,’ ‘ışkım’ and ‘kenger’) are also being gathered and sold, and even there are families who survive

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implementing numerous development projects. The Association originally founded in Düzce moved its headquarters to İstanbul and carries out its activities in Ovacık through its branch in the district. The members of the branch are the local people from Ovacık. Before the project for the protection of garlic, UYD has run organic bean farming, livestock breeding, and filigree projects in Ovacık. The association has arranged a workshop about migration in Tunceli. Currently, in Ovacık, a couple of projects are implemented. For example, one of them is “Construction of Sewage System and Waste Treatment Plant in Twenty-two Villages that Discharge Domestic Wastewater to Munzur River”. Another one is the construction of Dairy Farm. Furthermore, in Ovacık, also a Corporation named Ulaşılabilir Dersim A.Ş. is formed by local producers. Further information on the many past, current and planned activities of the Association can be viewed through [www.uyd.org.tr](http://www.uyd.org.tr), 01.12.2007

<sup>220</sup> The project is carried out as a team work. The project implementer is in fact an “outsider”. Yet, as she has been living in Ovacık for five years in order to realize the activities of the Association, she has been known by almost every one from Ovacık, therefore she became a local person. She has had experiences in the above mentioned projects in Ovacık. The position of the other team member is like the same as project implementer. In the interviews, it was mentioned that he had lived in the 80 Konutlar District before. Thus, he was neighbor of the project participants. The other team member, whom I conducted interview, is a local person. He is an agricultural engineer. Initially, he worked for the organic bean project of the association as a volunteer. Since 2003, he has been professionally taking part both in the UYD Ovacık branch and the projects implemented by it.

on only by gathering these plants. Previously garlic was gathered only so as to meet families' needs, however as the conflict diminished in 2000 people had the opportunity to have re-access to the upland meadows and mountains, many people, especially the displaced villagers, intensively began gathering these plants to have an income. With the increase in gathering, garlic has been gathered before its season and this endangers the species.

The project based on these facts defines two main targets. The first target is "to make gatherer families to be regarded as producers of the garlic in a common agricultural land;" the second target is "to raise consciousness for the protection of the species in the region through the demonstration of the danger of extinction of garlic."<sup>221</sup>

#### **4.2.1.3. Activities of the Project: The Implementations of the Project Prior to the Fieldwork**

The first phase of the project "is dedicated to scientific works, test plantings in pilot areas, gatherer and market ascertainment, training and publicity activities."<sup>222</sup> For this reason related specialists have carried out onsite cultivation works in the first phase of the project. Interviews were carried out in neighboring villages and test plantings were done with volunteers and it was seen that the garlic could be raised in the plains.

In the second phase, in order to meet the second goal of the project consciousness raising activities about the garlic were carried out with various groups in Ovacık and its villages. Logo, publicity booklets and display posters were prepared for customers. It is possible to see these posters everywhere around Ovacık. Young people received trainings on biological diversity and the Tunceli garlic at schools. Further, military police and public officials also received trainings on the same

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<sup>221</sup> Project for the Protection and Encouragement of the Production of Tunceli Garlic, GEF-SGP, First Phase Project Proposal, 2003 and Second Phase Project Proposal, 2004.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

subject. Awareness raising activities were performed for villagers by visiting the villages of Ovacık. Trainings for Tunceli garlic farming were held in these villages.

Land available for planting garlic (which is akin to areas where garlic naturally grows) where garlic gatherers reside were chosen for farming and through meeting with farmers in these areas pioneer farmers (woman-man) were selected. Now farmers, who live in their own villages and whose farming on their own lands are encouraged, plant garlic more in terms of test planting on a small scale voluntarily in Ovacık Mercan area, Kösel, Paşadüzü and Aşağı Torunoba villages. These people are also encouraged to promote widespread planting of garlic in their own villages.

In accordance with the first goal of the project (to make gatherer families to be regarded as producers of the garlic in a common agricultural land) a ten thousand square meters of land has been made available. The land is close to 80 Konutlar Neighborhood where forced migration victims have been placed in Ovacık. Interviews have been conducted with families (women and men) residing in this area. Consequently, garlic cultivation began with twelve women most of who are victims of forced migration and survive on gathering. The most important cultivation land within the scope of the project is this ten thousand square meter land where twelve women farmers work. Therefore, the study at hand focuses on this part of the project.

#### **4.2.2. Analysis of the Project from the Empowerment Approach**

##### **4.2.2.1. Power Within: Individual Empowerment**

###### **4.2.2.1.1. Resources**

The most important material resources of the project made available for women is access to land. As mentioned above, with the project a ten thousand square meters of land very close to the houses women reside in was made available for women for cultivation. Women make use of this land in two ways. The first is they get income

through garlic farming and product sales. The second is that they meet their daily needs through cultivating (tomato, pepper, squash, eggplant, beans etc.) plants in vacant parts of the land.

Up to now there was one harvest collection from the land in 2006. Women state that they got eighty YTL from the sales of the product up to now. Most of the women say that they spent this amount for their children's schooling expenditure since it coincided with the opening of schools:

My daughter was going to school; I had really needed that money back then. She was going to sit in for an exam, I was really happy.  
(A forty-one-year-old woman)

Apart from this, there are some women who say that they met other urgent needs with the money. For instance, a woman states that she urgently needed to go to İstanbul and because this money covered her ticket fee she felt good about it.

According to the information given by women, men, and a member of the project team reasons why the income from the land was low are listed as the fact that there is only one harvest for garlic in a year and the product obtained from the ten thousand square meter land is divided among twelve women. Further, women have shown their land and the garlic they cultivate during the fieldwork and they have stated that they will have another harvest after the fieldwork. Yet, they have pointed out to the fact that they would get less garlic this year since the land was not planted completely because some of the garlic seeds were sent to other places for test planting.

In the interviews only a couple of women have talked about their dissatisfaction concerning the income and their unwillingness because of the low production rate this year:

Last year was productive, this year is not. There's nothing this year, this is why the women have cold feet now, if we had planted we would have some products for the next year if not this year.  
(A forty-two/forty-three-year old woman)<sup>223</sup>

In the interviews many women have voiced their satisfaction saying that they could make use of the income although it is not much, working was better for them rather than going idle and the garlic business did not take much of their time.

We met our children's needs with that money, we did household needs, of course it is good for us, and even if it's not much it is good for us.  
(A twenty-year-old woman)

Most of these women underline the importance of working as was also mentioned above. Especially the most educated woman among them (a high school graduate) states that working is much more important for her than materiality:

I'm a kind of person who likes to work; I like being occupied with things. Frankly, I have never ever thought about the financial part of this job... I only wanted to work, you know, I wanted to be involved in, wanted to be preoccupied with something. Especially women's not working, staying at home bothers me a lot to be frank. I don't even go idle when I stay at home. I do the household chores, I read books, you know, I get myself busy with something. I like being productive. I wanted in because of that.  
(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

Moreover, since there is a possibility that the larger land neighboring the garlic field might also be allocated for garlic cultivation, women who are satisfied with the situation regard the project as a long-term one and think that it will earn them profit in the long term. Along the same lines, they criticize others for aiming to make money in the short term. The same woman continues:

A friend of ours, for example, quit because of that. She says this doesn't earn me any profit. But she doesn't think about this. O.K. It doesn't have any profit for you now. But in the future, when you enlarge this field, when you increase this production then it will surely have a profit for you. And this requires some time. I mean, it requires three or four years of hard work. There's no awareness about it, if it

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<sup>223</sup> She has told that her age is forty-two or forty-three.

were there. People want to earn immediately. Not everything is accomplished right away. Especially this kind of business. Now, you don't work for a company so that you can get what you deserve for your labor right away. People have this kind of mentality. Like, I work; I should immediately get what I deserve for my labor. They don't want to understand that this will happen in time.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

On the other hand, all the women mention the contribution of the subsistence products which they plant in vacant parts of the field rather than the income they get from garlic cultivation. Moreover, they state that many women wanted to be included in the project after they had seen their subsistence field rather than garlic cultivation:

We plant a garden nearby the garlic there. We get products from those gardens too. For example, I get my winter food from the garden. What do I do? I make canned beans... I meet my winter needs after the summer. ... There are people who want in. They see it. For example, there are a lot of people who say I wish I were also involved. (They say) At least we would have worked for the garlic, would have cultivated the garden.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

For example, we plant tomatoes; we have a kitchen garden in the garlic field... We don't have a connection with the greengrocer any longer. We get everything from the garden, I mean, if this garden weren't there, if we bought everything from the greengrocer all the time, it would have costed at least 500 million liras. Now, instead of paying 400-500 million liras to the greengrocers, you can spend it on another debt, on dried horse beans, on your kid's school expenditure... In the end, we grow them without hormones and have healthy food. You yourself growing, picking, and eating are of course different from eating those hormonized plants.

(A thirty-four-year-old-woman)

Project team member also states that the project has no significant contribution to women in terms of financial resources now, but as the women have also suggested, the Association has applied for the 600 thousand square meters of land neighboring the field and the field could be used for both garlic cultivation and other things like a stall or a hayloft. As the project team member states:

There's no significant thing in terms of financial resources now because it's just a little money now. But it also comes in handy for them because these women have earned money from the land, from what they grow for the first time since 94... We'll have vegetal production; we'll have garlic production, stall hayloft in the 600 thousand square meter field.

At this point, it should be underlined that although the project team member identifies the women as the poorest of the poor and thinks that the project will increase women's self-reliance, women's participation is not reduced to income generation in the project. The significance of women's participation in the project, more than income, is defined on many levels regarding its possible effects on women, for the project team and even for the Association itself. These dimensions will be studied later in the following sections regarding the question why the project includes women.

The opening that the project makes available for women in terms of human resources can be viewed from two perspectives. First is environmental sensitivity, the second is the knowledge women get about the project.

Sensitivity raising activities conducted in the area for the protection of the Tunceli garlic within the scope of the project resulted in the full sensitivity of all the women (and men) interviewed with. During the interviews men and women have talked about the fact that garlic is close to extinction because of early harvests, when it should be gathered, and they have stated that they were warning those who gather the garlic prematurely. All the women (and men) have stressed that they were waiting for the harvest time so as not to make the garlic extinct, however they had seen that there were only a little garlic left for them since it was gathered prematurely by some insensitive people.

The women especially underline the fact that they received information about garlic and learnt how to grow garlic both through works carried out with the project teams and with professors from Ankara University's Faculty of Agriculture. Further, women who were able to go to their villages (upland meadows) in the summer or

those who are planning to move back to their villages in the future state that they could cultivate garlic there<sup>224</sup>:

I, for example, didn't know anything about garlic. Like I said, I haven't been to garlic (farming) before. I've learnt a lot of things about garlic; it's been the greatest change in my life. I used to buy and use garlic while cooking, I mean as a woman. Now I know a lot more about garlic. I know garlic. I wasn't able to differentiate between a female or a male garlic before. Now I know that, I know when it should be gathered. Then, I know when I can grow garlic. I've learnt a lot of things from there. It's good this way, you know, the more you know the better you get.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

I also thought about growing a field (of garlic) in the village, I think about that too.

(A forty-nine-year-old woman)

We got knowledge I mean. We learnt, we didn't know before that, we didn't know how to remove the cap on the garlic and to grow it that way, we didn't know it was because of *kiska*, they taught us that.

(A twenty-year-old woman)

As a matter of fact I'm thinking of growing a field (of garlic) in the village by myself, by what I've learnt.

(A forty-one-year-old woman)

#### **4.2.2.1.2. Agency**

The project team member, who has taken gender trainings, explains the reasons why women have been included in the project from a multi-dimensional perspective. The member states that the garlic species is under the threat of extinction and since it is known that mostly women gather garlic the project is carried out with women. The member underlines that the production of garlic is itself not a goal but rather a means towards achieving other ends for women. In this context reasons for the inclusion of women within the scope of the project can be listed as such according

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<sup>224</sup> Because of the political situation in the region people are allowed only go to some villages. Some villages are accessible only by permission. Women (and men) who are able to go to their villages visit their villages in the summer and they plant and/or raise their livestock there. Some of these people plan to move back to their villages in the future. Since no one lives in some villages and because some of these villages are uninhabitable now, people from these villages state that although they want to move back they cannot because of this situation.

to the project member's statements. Yet, it should be noted that the articles in the list are all interrelated:

1. The fact that mostly women gather garlic that is under the threat of extinction<sup>225</sup>:

To remove the species from the risk group. It will become extinct. Families are involved (in garlic gathering) but it's mostly women. We can't say this roughly: Don't gather! It's not our method anyway; it's not our style... Let's make some sensitivity raising activities. They should understand and know this; this is our resources, if it's going to become extinct, you know, you can carry on gathering for three or five years, but there's the risk that you can't gather anymore in three years. You can't get your sustainable income from there because you're going to finish up your resources in three years. Because women were in the foreground in gathering, we preferred women.

2. The necessity of women's empowerment and the fact that garlic is a means for that:

When I was going to the garlic project, I wasn't going there only for the sake of garlic. Generally the empowerment of women's roles in this society. It's my approach. Because I run a rural development activity. Production of garlic is just a means for me. It's the thing that we put in the foreground in all our activities. To strengthen women's roles in rural development activities.

3. The necessity of equality on every condition, the necessity of affirmative action in cases where there is inequality. Affirmative action towards women is necessary since women are in an unequal situation compared to men in modern capitalist societies:

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<sup>225</sup> Men also gather garlic with women. During the interviews most men have acknowledged that they were gathering garlic with their wives. Nevertheless, because men are employed as seasonal workers chiefly in the construction business as long as they can find jobs during the summer, which is the garlic season, it is mostly women who gather garlic. Again during the interviews it has been stated that only women were gathering garlic based on subjective situations, or during interviews conducted outside the 80 houses area it has been revealed that only men gathered garlic. Except for some subjective cases, men and women have equal knowledge of garlic. Yet, as is acknowledged, detailed information on garlic (female or male garlic, in which season it should be gathered, its cultivation) has not been obtained through experience but through the activities carried out within the scope of the project. Both situations challenge Western assumptions identifying women with the role of gathering in the gender/women, environment and development literature just like it was in Zümürüt case.

Here you should definitely have affirmative action. Affirmative action is also necessary in terms of the roles, status assigned to women in society... In the end, unfortunately when we think of the development of the capitalist society there is a role assigned to women. Therefore, because of her role in fact, do women need affirmative action from birth or not? I think they don't. But in the societies we live in, in the systems we live in because of the roles assigned to women I think they should be exposed to affirmative action in fact. This is the thing we defend anyhow. We act more on the affirmative action principle assigning a different role for women among our target group although we say that our rural development activities are society based. There's nothing by birth but, unfortunately, with the developing process it's necessary because of the situation we're in. ... When you judge it from the perspective of gender, women and men are definitely equals by birth. ... Men did what women had done from time to time; women did what men had done. In the end everybody is equal in terms of their undertakings etc. But if we move retrospectively now, when we look at the process etc. of course the principle of inequality is really abnormal. Women and men should be equals. This is what I defend in fact. ... Affirmative action (is necessary) because of the current situation.. or else there won't be affirmative action. I mean... if women are in the foreground, if they are in the foreground in every part of life and if men are in the background then what shall we do? We shall build shelters for men; we shall do other things of course. In this case (we shall have affirmative action) towards men. ... Why? Because we believe in the principle of equality. ... Therefore, I think there should be equality on every condition.

4. Women who were involved in agricultural production in their own villages before 1994 came to a place that did not belong to them and were pushed away from production after 1994. This situation has given way to women's depression, and both this situation and the economic dire straits have caused unrest in the families. With garlic farming, women will be socialized through collective work. In this sense production is very important and garlic cultivation is a means of rehabilitation for women:

Production is very important; where there is no production significant conditions of distress, trauma, various social problems, and unrest occur. There is a significant socialization indicator because of production for example, (this is) also related to the socialization of women. In this sense, for example, they become involved in collective works and they're more in harmony with one another. In the past women in those houses didn't produce anything, because there was no production there was gossip. ... They didn't produce because they didn't have the materials to produce. ... In fact this is a hard working

community, because here, where there was no technological mechanization, they (used to) produce with ploughs. ... I mean, a family used to cultivate thirty or forty thousand square meters of land here. ... But what happened? After 94 people who migrated from their homes passed onto non-productivity, they couldn't produce. Naturally enough problems occurred here. For example, they immediately became significantly socialized especially because this garlic project is located so close to their houses and they obtained economic resources although it was too little. ... They became socialized especially with one another. It's less with Ovacık district because what we have is in fact isolation, it is insulation. Because people here (in Ovacık centrum) do not regard there in really positive terms.... A woman who had been producing something in every part of life up to now, in 94 comes to a place that never belongs to her, comes to a concrete apartment that never belongs to her and what does she do? She is depressed everyday, and what does she do? She spends the cash buildup; she has been spending the buildup for thirteen years. ... She has problems with her husband, with her kids. ... Production is a serious means of rehabilitation in this sense. In this sense, it began with garlic for us.

5. Securing the socialization of women through putting women in the foreground and challenge social prejudices. The fact that this will be easier for men and the society to appropriate the situation if it is carried out by highlighting the economic dimension:

In fact women should be put in the foreground. Inevitably we come across various problems in this situation. In rural areas when women stand in the foreground ... when there is some socialization ... various problems start to pop up. We have in fact undermined that tradition here a little bit with a couple of projects. For example, especially filigree business... People working in the atelier are all women. We started with about twenty women there, and now twelve women regularly attend. They filigree silver in the atelier. They contribute to the family budget at the same time. When there is contribution to the family budget, there is more adoption. If the economic dimension is more highlighted than the social one, men appropriate it more because there is still... an unusual (situation) in the community. What does the woman do? She leaves her house, walks from there, comes to the atelier and is constantly in communication with various people. The community had a little bit of negative perspective in the beginning but then after they had seen the works (it has changed a little)... There is a significant amount of support for especially the filigree work and the garlic work... The fact that women leave the house can be disturbing for men in these works... When the woman leaves the house and walks to Ovacık, as if she was doing something else... Therefore, we were giving them (men) messages like women are not onto something bad,

they are beginning to produce something, contribute to the family budget, have self-reliance and take care of disturbances in the family in a way. Unrest in the family has a clear reason, you know, there is a significant trauma because of (none) productivity.

6. Women's economic independence will make them active players in the decision making process:

If women are to gain economic independence, an income here then this will inevitably have a reflection in the family. In fact, one of the reasons why we have chosen women for the garlic project is this to a point. Women are not active generally; they are active in production but they are not in the final thing; they are nothing in the decision making process, they can't add up their own influence.

7. The fact that UYD generally works with disadvantageous groups in the community.<sup>226</sup> Not only victims of migration, but women victims of migration have been included in the project with a priority because they are considered to be more disadvantaged.

After studying the reasons why the project involves women, when women's motivations for participation in the project are assessed firstly women's will to work reveals itself. As the project team member has mentioned, women state that they were in production before they had migrated and were pushed away from productive activities because they did not have any field whereby they could produce before the project. Further women note that there are no employment opportunities in the region. As the women say: "Working is better than staying idle." As will be elaborated in detail in the section on collective empowerment, the existence of collective work becomes one of the factors securing women's participation. As is put forward in the section on material resources, obtaining economic resources, contribution to the family budget are other motivating factors. Further, as is also mentioned in the same section, a couple of women are discouraged because they did not have enough income from the work. On the other hand, the advantage of growing garlic in the field compared to gathering it from the mountains is also another factor regarding women's participation. According to the

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<sup>226</sup> See [www.uyd.org.tr](http://www.uyd.org.tr), 01.12.2007

women, one of these advantages is the fact that they will always have garlic in the field unlike the mountains where they could not find any garlic because of premature gathering. Another underlined advantage is the fact that the field is so close to where they live rather than going to the mountains. Besides, they say that garlic cultivation does not require intensive labor. Therefore, it does not take much of their time:

It's both motivation and income; it's better than staying idle like this; it's a good thing... It's your own business, you're involved in your own business; working for others is hard.

(A forty-two/forty-three year-old woman)

Women are into this thing; they're undertaking a collective work; I also wanted in, it was interesting for me; besides I'm not a kind of person who likes to stay idle, I always like being involved in things and produce something no matter what.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

We always get this garlic from the mountains to get some income. Let's try it nearby this time. Also if it's nearby, it won't be worth the trouble going to the mountains; this will be more convenient. (Garlic) grows through autumn in September anyway; we shall gather easier, we shall sell it easier with the support of the Association. That's why we're enthusiastic about it.

(A thirty-four-year-old woman)

The influence of men in women's participation is another significant factor. The most active women among the women interviewed with have the following relationships with men: Their relations with their husbands in the household are at a more equalitarian level, does not have a husband, husband is a member of the Association (UYD, Ovacık Branch), or the husband is disabled. The husbands of two women who have a more equalitarian relationship with their husbands especially stand out among others because these women are the ones who have adopted the project most. The husbands of these women acknowledge the rehabilitative effect of production on women. They support their wives' participation rather than for economic reasons like the project implementer noting that staying idle depresses women. They also underline the significance of collective work. These men also helped out women in the project when physical power was called for. Further, as will be discussed in the section on collective

empowerment, when these two women wanted to quit the project because of problems in collectivity they were persuaded to go on working by their husbands:

They tried to quit; we (told them that) we would support them... I and X have helped them in many things like the wire fence. Like the hoses... I wasn't of any help during autumn, but I went there during the summer and spaded the kitchen garden; we selected the stones there... We went there and helped them out with the wire fence... Men should go too, I mean, it's not a lady's job, it requires manly strength... Let's say there are twelve women there, we want all twelve of these women's men there, supporting them; and then it would be really nice.

(A thirty-seven-year-old man)

One of these men further draws attention. Therefore, his statements will be quoted in length. This man is the only high school graduate among men, so as his wife is the only high school graduate among women. He thinks that the participation of women is important for gender equality and women's collective empowerment, believes that it will increase women's self-reliance and the project is an opportunity for women to be able to say "I exist in the community":

The fact that women say I exist in the community by producing. I have supported my wife to participate in that. I said Of course, see what it is, participate and show yourself as a woman, say I am here. And other women should think about this too and they should say we are here. Like once there used to be no woman governors in Turkey... now all those taboos are undermined, only a woman president is yet to be... Here's the chance. Maybe this chance will not be available again. Talk to each other, understand each other but be sure to keep some of your negative attributes. Because you will go there, you will work and produce and show yourselves. ... That's why I support this project initiated by our friends at the Association... What is important here is people's self-reliance... You see, money counts up to one point... Money should be a means... If you produce, if you earn and say we are here you set an example for other people too. ... This is a spark, it spans out in flames, this is very important. ... When I see it socially the fact that women will do this will enable women to claim their rightful place in this society. And this will be a tremendous source of pride and honor for me. When I think socially ... when a woman gets into something she is more attentive, more careful and more successful... We can't accept these. Not because our women work there but we always turn things into materiality... This is actually what the Association does in here. To make people jerk themselves out of a somnolent state. That person will jerk himself out of that somnolent state and will say 'I am what I am and I deserve this'. (A thirty-seven-year-old man)

The same man continues by questioning masculine practices (especially by criticizing the commodification of women in commercials), and reveals that he was ashamed of being a man because men see women as sexual objects. He also criticizes men who do not extend support to their wives:

The wire fence needs to be erected. Now there are ten or twelve women in this work. They have husbands too. But when it comes to work... Mr. X and I go there as men. I mean, as if others don't have husbands. What's the reason for this? Maybe there some problems among themselves they can't get rid of. Their spouses don't regard their wives like we do. Of course they need a fourth man to play 'okey, he will go to the coffeehouse so he's not around. You go once or twice. ... You can't have a war alone. Nor a fight. If you can act in unity as women and (if) your spouses support you. Now will the women plant the seeds, dig the earth, irrigate the field ... and be the watchman of the field? And then she will come home and what is she supposed to do? Is she going to clean the house, cook dinner ... or is she going to satisfy her husband sexually at night? Which one of these is she supposed to do? What good are we? Of course, like I said we need to find the fourth player to play 'okey,' we need to fill the coffeehouses. We are not concerned with these things. See, this mentality is a corrupt kind of mentality. ... And then when the man at night, forgive me but this is the truth, because we don't discuss these things, this woman, these women don't have names, we turn our backs and go to sleep when we're done. Because we're relieved, because we came all our problems and stress are over then. Our laundry is done, our dinner is ready at the table, ohhh, we have clean socks. This is not manhood. This is in fact; I mean think of a tyrant, that tyrant has pride too. ... This makes me sick and I'm ashamed of this as a man.

Other men are also supportive of women's work because of the fact that it will contribute to the family budget stressing the importance of work rather than staying idle. Yet, there is no concrete support as in the above examples:

My husband told me to do it if I could; he said 'don't get involved if you can't,' and I said I could.  
(A twenty-year-old-woman)

Indeed it's good; let them work rather than staying idle. It's better they grow garlic here. You know, people go pick garlic prematurely, when they do that garlic becomes extinct. I want people to work, let everybody work. ... This place will be done in a couple of years; unemployment, people are miserable here. ... It has quite a contribution to us; I actually don't value money much, but ... you know there's a

difference between having three people work and four people work in the family.  
(A forty-one-year-old man)

Finally, a couple of women who find the income inadequate and therefore became less motivated to participate are also affected by their husbands. Their husbands suggested them to quit the project:

He finds it problematic. He says ‘don’t go if you listen to me.’ He tells me to quit if I wanted to. You put a lot of labor into that. I don’t get what I deserve for my labor, that’s what disappoints me; I had put so much labor into there, I had picked up so many stones. They hadn’t planted garlic this year; if it had been planted this year I would have taken but you don’t have that either; I mean; really he’s right on this point. He doesn’t want me (to participate). Not last year but the year before that he was really enthusiastic about that but now he’s not; he had lost his enthusiasm, just like I had lost mine.  
(A forty-two/forty-three-year-old woman)

As Zoe Oxaal and Sally Baden mentions, “development organizations can, under some circumstances, play an enabling or facilitating role. They can ensure that their programmes work to support women’s individual empowerment by encouraging women’s participation.”<sup>227</sup> Power relations between the project team and the participant women can be seen as another factor that enables women to participate in the project. The project team runs the facilitating task and creates the conditions for women to participate in decision making. Interviews conducted with women reveal that the women have adopted the project and have been regarding themselves as the agents of the work rather than solely participating into it. During the interviews the women talk about the project as their own business and voice statements like “we did it; we decided”. Further, while they are talking about the project, they refer to the project team as people supporting them, as people helping them rather than project implementers. The women talk about the project team not on a hierarchical level but as if they were talking about their friends. Moreover, women also have knowledge about the other projects run by the Association not only about theirs. It is stated that especially the most active women (and their

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<sup>227</sup> Oxaal, Zoe; Baden, Sally, “Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy”, Briefing prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *BRIDGE, Report No 40* (October 1997), p. 8

husbands) in the project not only have detailed information on these projects but they also develop ideas about them and discuss these issues with the project team. When asked about their meetings, how they reach a decision, what they do when they encounter problems and their relations with the project team women respond:

Our meetings go well. When we hold a meeting we talk about things everybody can contribute to, everybody can do. The fact that everybody is there at the same time ... The Association holds meetings. We tell them whenever it's necessary. It was us who demanded our latest meeting and the Association gathered our friends together. ... We discuss, voice our problems. For example, why have we called for our latest meeting? Because some of our friends were not there, I mean, because of this problem we have called for a meeting. They have talked to these friends of ours for example; they have resolved the problem somehow... Generally it's them who come and talk to us. We talk on the phone when we have problems. We go there and talk in person if need be. Apart from that we have a friendship with them besides the Association. They acted like neighbors here. Apart from that we used to come together and chat... Whenever we have a problem we come up with the issue and say we have this, this, and this problem. Then they direct us to necessary means; they help us out; they resolve our problems with government offices when we have one.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

For instance, I had some work to do today so I couldn't go; the other friends say that they were coming but why doesn't she? There are some problems but we resolve them among ourselves. Let's say I have work to do today, you have tomorrow. If you can't come, I'll go in your place. We are friends here... They (the project team) talked to us about garlic and we accepted; those from the Association said that; they came to our houses and talked about that. They said, for example, contribute a little, plant the garlic, it's yours. I mean, they also had a contribution like we do; it all started like that.

(A twenty-year-old woman)

We talk about things, you know, when there's a problem a friend of ours says let's do it in this way or in that way, it's all between us. ... They (the project team) helped us; they came here and showed us things, they came too. ... They only ask our opinions; like, is it ok if we do it like this, to learn what we think, everybody says their own ideas, some ideas are appropriate some are not, that way I mean, for example we need a wire fence, how are we to buy it, how are we to pay for it, how can we buy a hose? Since the Association doesn't have any either, we generally apply to resources.

(A thirty-four-year-old woman)

The approach of the project team enabling a bottom-up process and the fact that the Association is located in Ovacık are significant factors concerning the establishment of a non-hierarchical relation between the project team and women (and men). Based on instructed interviews and observations one can argue that a large section of the population is acquainted with UYD. The Association has run and indeed is running many projects in Ovacık apart from the garlic project. Moreover, one of the project team members had lived in the 80 Konutlar area where women reside. The project implementer (she) has been living in Ovacık for five years and is not known to be an outsider. The project team includes people from Ovacık. For instance, project team member, who is interviewed with, has returned to Ovacık after graduation from college and firstly participated in the ecological agriculture bean project that the Association was running and began to take part in the garlic project besides other projects joining the project team. The Association has many members both from the 80 Konutlar area and from Ovacık center. The Association has become an institution that listens to everyone and tries to resolve problems. For example, during the fieldwork an elderly man came to the Association and it was observed that he asked for help from the members of the Association. Indeed, the relations the Association has established with the local residents in general and with the project participants in particular can be summarized through the words of a participant woman's husband:

We have already been living with the Association on intimate terms. Let it be x, y, or z (project team members)... we are always this intimate; they come and go; we talk, we discuss things.  
(A thirty-seven-year old man)

The project team member also stresses the significance of their always being together with the women when talking about their roles and approaches in the project:

You need to have this kind of approach. Let's get you together and inform you from time to time. We told them this: Mutual learning, learning together. Through simulation techniques. For example, we were always together with the women. With the production process we also visited them at nights. We dined with women, carried out some activities but we realized what we had wanted to give to them during

those activities. ... We have developed very strong social ties. ... House calls are very important for us. For example, we used to select and visit two families every night, or we were divided into groups and each group would visit a separate family. We didn't have a communication problem because we're already in the field. We could reach women whenever we wanted to and said whatever we wanted. They don't have a communication problem either... We have an office ... Since our local friends are in the working groups we didn't have a communication problem. Like I said, we held the trainings at houses, in the field, at the office. When the specialists came (we had) various activities. ... We would have our picnic in the field right away... Fieldworks are very important. I think that if this project has been influential here both in terms of the community, in terms of sensitivity, the environment, if it created a multiplying effect it is definitely because of the integration with the target group, being in the field with the target group.

According to the project team member, the project team has been taking part with women in all works, rather than not making them carry out the project/work. He mentions that collective work has been carried out and even those women who did not participate in the project have supported them:

We have not carried out works only towards those women in especially the processes of planting, cultivation and the refinement of land. We, our friends, our volunteers went there and what did we do? There's an activity. What is that? We're going to pick up stones... They came with their children in that process. Those kinds of works were already collective works. Because we didn't say you'll throw this away by dividing the field into parcels. ... We carried out the planting processes together. ... For example, I never had a problem of ... when I went there, all the producers came there, all the gatherers. There was even an abundance of them. There was the labor of tens of women handing out support voluntarily who didn't want to be a part of the work group.

The project team member also mentions that they have taken the decisions together parallel to the women's statements and defines himself (and the Association) as offering support to women along the same lines as the women define the project team. The project team member argues that their approach follows a bottom-up process without any hierarchical attitude and that they both teach and learn as equal subjects. In short he notes the facilitating role of the project team or the Association to encourage women to become agents of the work:

We try to make them agents in our works. You know, we never told women to do this or that. Women gather, produce, select, and bring; we decide together about how we will put that to use, whether we shall sell it in retail or wholesale; we make the decision together with women; we study the market together. ... This business is yours; you yourself are going to plant it, gather it, you will decide whether you're going to sell it or not. But you can say this, we will produce but we won't sell; we'll use it as a means. But you should decide this. Show that authority. We make them feel that they are important in this business through various methods; for example I don't like to speak up much during the decision making process. ... They themselves make the decisions, themselves materialize them. ... It's not much like teaching from above, giving from above but more like the one who listens to them; you learn a little they learn a little. ... When I go to the field I never say I'm here to teach you. We begin by talking about the problems, how it is going, what is happening, then spontaneously something comes up.

Indeed the Association's past project experiences have also effects on the above mentioned approaches. For instance, the project team member underlines that unless the participants become "the agents of the work" the project cannot be sustainable, mentioning the errors in the ecological agriculture project carried out previously by the Association in Ovacık:

Now sustainability in the project is very important. You carry out a work and when you quit a work ... it should continue through the target group. We did something in the bean (project). We couldn't make (them) the subject of the work. If we had succeeded in making them the subject of the work; we, for example, packed the things we produced and sold them; when we stopped that nobody did those; this means that there is a problem. ... They establish a platform among themselves and continue with those processes, become active in marketing processes. Today what we aim at in the garlic (project) is to make some people in the target group get immersed in marketing, in strategy, or even in project development so that they can claim the business rather than marketing over 100 thousand square meters of land. But if you say everybody shall go back to their past lives once the project is over then there's no way you can talk about the success of the project. Therefore, the subject.<sup>228</sup>

One can assert that women have been participating in the decision making processes within the context of the project and have become the agents of the work based on the previous statements. Yet, the critical question is whether there is any change in

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<sup>228</sup> One point needs to be noted in this context. The project has aimed at establishing a cooperative with women members, however because of bureaucratic setbacks it failed.

gender relations at the household and the community in terms of participation in decision making. In other words, has the project have any impact in decision making processes at home and in the community? The research was not able to find any indication of change in decision making either in its negative sense or positive sense. As was indicated in the Zümürüt Case Study, the common issue is that women do not participate in decision making mechanisms in the community although participation into decision making changes according to the power relations at every household. For example, the wife of the man quoted criticizing manhood states that they already have an equalitarian relationship between them, they have been taking all kinds of decisions together and that the man has always respected her decisions and in this sense there had been no change related to the project. On the other hand, she notes that the project did not have any effect on the decision making in the community, men have been deciding about community matters or it was men who attended the meetings when there was one and she adds that women stay in the background in Ovacık when it comes to decision making. Further, she thinks that this could change since the younger generation is more educated but links the current situation to the low level of schooling of the older generation. Another woman says that the leader of the household is man referring to the fact that it was her husband who was making decisions at home, and notes that there has been no change with the introduction of the project<sup>229</sup>. Women's participation to decision making at home varies in between these two extreme examples on different levels. Nevertheless, the common point is that no woman participates in the decision making in the community and the project did not have any impact in this sense regardless of the egalitarian or inegalitarian decision making mechanism at the household.

When the project is regarded only through 80 Konutlar one can say that it is a women-only project. Men are in the project only through their supportive roles. In this sense there is no need to study sexual division of labor within the project. Yet, one can study whether the project affects the sexual division of labor at home or in the community. It is acknowledged that the project neither has impact on

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<sup>229</sup> In fact the impact of men on women's participation in the project is linked to participation in the decision making process in the household. In households where decisions are made relatively more on an equalitarian basis men support their wives participation.

participation in decision making nor it affects the sexual division of labor at the household in the interviews. Sexual division of labor changes from household to household as it was in the decision making mechanism and is parallel to the decision making at home. The common point is that men work outside (generally in the construction business as seasonal workers) while the women work at home (household chores, babysitting). Nevertheless, the changes reveal themselves in the levels of support by men to women in household chores. When the extremes are considered, while there is a profile of a man who undertakes every kind of household chore (washing the dishes, cooking, laundry etc.), there is also a profile of a man who does nothing at home and spends all his time at the coffeehouse when he is unemployed.<sup>230</sup>

When whether there has been a change in women's self-reliance is assessed within the context of agency, a couple of women who have been less motivated based on issues of income state that there was no change. While some of the other women explicitly note that working has increased their self-reliance, some of them point out to its rehabilitative effect or the happiness that working brings along:

My self-reliance is strengthened. You get the feeling that I too can achieve something. You can say 'I too exist.' ... This is what it enables women; women's self-reliance increases. Their self-reliance increases. But there's something; I cultivate this garlic and when I get some income from this garlic in the future then what happens? Then women's position at home may change. The woman will have more self-confidence; she'll get her own economic independence. It is very important in this sense. It shall have a tremendous impact. Then I myself will buy whatever I want; I'll have my own money, my own income, or I'll contribute to the family budget. Even if I don't need it, I'll spend it for myself.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

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<sup>230</sup> At this point sexual division of labor should not be handled alone in isolation from other facts as underlined by Jane Parpart, Shirin Rai and Kathleen Staudt. In this context the migration fact should be recognized because sexual division of labor too has experienced great changes after 1994 with migration. On the issue of division of labor in the village all the women state that men and women worked together in the field while they were residing there. Household chores again vary depending on the gendered power relation between man and woman. Yet, after their migration while women quit production thoroughly and began undertaking only the household chores, men were directed to outside employment opportunities. Further, the problem of unemployment in the region was highlighted in all the interviews. All the women note that they wanted to work if there was an employment opportunity.

We now have self-confidence to say the least; working is best rather than staying idle.  
(A twenty-year-old woman)

There is work; there is a place I'm committed to. I want to work constantly; I go there and spend my time. For example, if you always stay at home thinking, thinking, and thinking you always feel demoralized. But when you have something to do, then those thoughts fade away; it doesn't leave you with much to think about; you shed your stress; you know, I think it's a good thing; it created in me a very nice thing; I like working a bit too, being involved in something. ... When a person doesn't have anything to work on he/she goes insane; always see the same woman, always do the same thing. ... For example, I spent the last two weeks at home, I lose my mind. I sometimes gaze the streets; there are people who have money and others who have not. ... They hand in petitions to the *kaimakam*<sup>231</sup> so that she/he gives us 100 or 150 million liras and so that I can pay the electricity bill, pay back my debts to people. I don't want to be like that, I don't want to be like that while I'm healthy and young. Petitions are no good it's better if you earn it by your feet, your wrists, your hands and arms.  
(A thirty-four-year-old woman)

#### **4.2.2.1.3. Achievements (Individual Outcomes)**

The project has had a significant facilitating role in women's participation to decision making processes, their becoming the agents of the work and in the increase of their self-reliance. While these are important steps for exercising the power within, the processes themselves are empowering. Yet, these have been limited to the project and have not transgressed the boundaries of the project yet. In other words, it is not possible to talk about a specific outcome on an individual level yet. On the other hand, as will be discussed in the next section, women have obtained some specific outcomes on the collective level. Certainly the dynamics engendering collective outcome cannot be differentiated from the individual one by some definite lines. Power within and power with are interrelated. Nevertheless, as was argued in the second chapter, individual empowerment does not necessarily lead to political outcomes. In this sense, collective outcome will be studied in the following section.

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<sup>231</sup> Official charged with governing a provincial district ([www.seslisozluk.com](http://www.seslisozluk.com), 02.01.2008)

#### **4.2.2.2. Power With: Collective Empowerment**

First of all the project team's perspective should be briefly studied in order to understand whether the project team offers opportunities for women's collective empowerment. Interviews with the project member and Association members, and works carried out by UYD reveal that there is a dominant collectivity focus. The project text notes that the project is based on "the principle of equal use and sharing". The project team member also underlined the collective work during the interview and has constantly reminded the women that this was a collective work. The fact that the project member states that he will be telling about the project ten years after the project is done with a focus on collective work makes this perspective open:

I would probably be telling about the collective work in there, when passing onto the production phase, while carrying out the (land) improvement, about that picture as the most memorable thing in my mind; the collective work there, the excitement of beginning.

In order to assure the sustainability of both the project and collectivity a cooperative for women was planned to be founded within the project, however because of bureaucratic setbacks the plan failed. Men who have been supporting their wives' also frequently pointed out the necessity for women to act collectively and suggested that women should be heading to an organization like a cooperative or a foundation. Further, one of the men has said that they had been talking about the issue a lot, and he notes that "it should be (women) themselves who has to create this field" and they should not be expecting the Association to carry out everything.

Women also frequently stress the need for collective work. From the beginning of the project women suggested other women to be involved in the project, and some women now participating in the project have become involved after some other women quit the project for various reasons advising them to work in the project:

I didn't go; I didn't accept the offer in fact. Then a woman friend told me. My neighbor called and she also told me. She said, 'come, let's go together.' Then I went, we started out there.

(A forty-nine-year-old woman)

Previously, as it was mentioned shortly in the agency part of the study, collective work has been one of the motivating factors for women's participation. Most of the women have talked eagerly about the joys of collective work:

It's like I have a share there. I go there and work as if I was working in my own house; I always have this feeling; I never feel like an outsider; it's as if my own business. ... When we pick up (garlic) we do it in groups of three people, it's so nice.

(A forty-one-year-old woman)

We do it all together; it's not only me; I'm really happy.

(A forty-five-year-old woman)

On the other hand, women have problems about collectivity. Especially active participants criticize the inactive ones and they think that all the work is left on their shoulders. There are two reasons engendering this criticism. The first is about the ones who cannot lend time to the field in case of a collective work because of personal reasons, while the second reason is related to the fact that women who go to the upland plains in the summer are not able to work during garlic planting and pecking up since these two are carried out also during the summer. These two situations cause unrest among the women. Moreover, two active participants who have been supported by their husbands state that their motivation has decreased because of that and they have even thought of quitting the work all together.

Women say the following on the issue:

I have things to do. Friends get together, you know, but my (work) is more important. If it is done today, it is done; then I can't do anything. My daughter is sick so I'll go to Aydın or Denizli; I'll definitely go; I have to go; my daughter's health is much more important. Now if I go neighbors get mad at me behind my back; why does she always have to go? ... No one understands me, I don't understand them either.

(A forty-two/forty-three-year old woman)

Relations in the group are sometimes good sometimes bad. We can't really communicate with the ones in the upland meadows. Now when we gather garlic we inevitably tease them saying we gathered the garlic, we pecked the ground, why weren't you there; you should have been there. If we're making wire fences why aren't you; you too should have been doing it. Sometimes we discuss these face to face.

(A thirty-four-year-old woman)

For example, we're making the wire fence ... We all say let's make this wire fence; there are only three or five people who come to make the wire fence, where are the others? Some say I'm baking bread, one says I have guests, one says I have to cook, one says I have this. I mean now everyone has some excuse. Then what did we do the next day? We brought our spouses along with us. X and I made the wire fence there with our spouses. When this kind of thing happens you think that people take advantage of you. Of course when this happens you get upset, for example, I have even thought about quitting the garlic project most of the time. ... What happens? Something happens, and you feel alone. You need a hose. We, I and only friend Y, two ladies went to the office of the *kaimakam*. People should not be alone in these kinds of situations; you say that and when you say that they tell you it's okay to your face. When the day comes everybody withdraws. ... For example, on the day of pecking the land my arm really hurt. I couldn't go that day, but the following day I pecked my share and got it through. But if the others had this level of awareness too they would say my friends went pecking. I didn't, I should at least do my share. ... And there are the uplanders; we really have a hard time with them. They go to the upland meadows in the summer; they're not there during the wire fence time; they're not there during the pecking. They're also not there during the gathering. They can only come to the planting.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

Actually sometimes it's up to two women. Since she goes to the upland meadows she never attends the meetings, doesn't come to the wire fence. It's only them, all the others are working.

(A forty-five-year-old woman)

Women have resolved the problem to a certain point by discussing the issue with the participation of the project team. They have decided to form groups of three or four women since not everybody could devote equal amount of time. Thus each group has been made responsible for its share and these three people solve the timing problem through a division of labor among themselves. The project implementer and the women stress that this is not a division but a continuation of

the collective work and they point out that grouping is necessary to make the division of labor easier. Again in women's words:

For example we formed four groups of three people; everybody (is responsible) from their portion... It's easier for us, because you can make yourself heard with people in your own group. The others are not your problem. You don't have a problem whether she's there or not, whether she does that or not. ... When there are three people we covered for one another. ... The other friend did what she needed to do and when she had something else we did the work in her place; we covered for each other that way. ... Everybody gave away the garlic she picked up from her own area... Of course she who picked up more, got a bigger share from the sales. The one who picked up less, got less. It happened that way.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

The same woman added:

We asked for it (this grouping). We decided that. ... Okay, grouping was not in the sense of that. It's again the same field, again there're no groups but let's say I peck the ground here for example, I come and irrigate the field, I come and pick up (garlic) here and you have something else to do; if you don't come once, twice or thrice then other people will have to bear your burden. In order not to allow that to happen we preferred to work in groups; it's better for us.

Some people don't join... If we form three groups (people will say) that group began pecking why don't we; that group finished pecking why don't we... like making others jealous; they have more crops I have less, like that; like making the field more lively, having more.

(A thirty-four-year-old woman)

When I'm there I do it, when I'm not they do it. For example I wasn't involved at all this year, so I don't know how they pecked the ground, how they watered, what they did; I left in the summer.

(A forty-one-year-old woman)

Women's expectations about the future are also through collectivity. All the women want the field to be enlarged for reasons like increasing their income and their not being able to handle a larger field by themselves and in addition in order to make it available for other women. Nevertheless, women who are active now want other women to be in when the field is enlarged if they are really going to participate, if they are really going to work based on their current experiences and complaints:

I draw benefit from that; let others draw benefit too; I mean, this is what I aim for.

(A forty-two/forty-three-year old woman)

Why wouldn't we want (them)? She shall come just so and work till the end. When she comes, when she participates; if she's not going to work she'd better not come.

(A forty-five-year-old-woman)

Now we can't handle a 600 thousand square meters of place with twelve people. Of course these will increase; we want more women. First of all we want conscious people to join in... And we're going to say that in the meeting; we'll call for a meeting. We'll make a list of people who want in. We already know all the people in the list. For better or worse we know the ones who are able to do it and those who are not. We'll eliminate among them. I mean, it won't be like it was before. Previously they signed everyone in who asked for without ever thinking about anything, without thinking about the possibility that these types of problems might occur. But now we think more about details. ... Anyway, we'll not do that; we'll not definitely accept the uplanders for this new field, because we have a hard time with uplanders. It's because they won't have anything for us, the load will be on other people's shoulders rather than not wanting them. When this happens I'll have to do the job that should be done by two people. This naturally wears us.

(A thirty-two-year-old-woman)

The quotations above refer to the fact that while the women want other women to join them with a collective consciousness, they even talk about the project team's mistakes, they define themselves as collective agency by talking in "we" terms. Therefore it can be claimed that women exercise "power with". On the other hand, the fact that some women participate and some not and the solutions found by active woman participants raises some significant questions. Before going into detail about this, solutions found by the active women need to be opened up. First, as was mentioned in the above quotation, one solution is the proposition that women who are deemed to be not working should be excluded from future plans thoroughly. The second is a director assigned by the Association:

When someone from the Association leads us he/she can get people together. What do we need here? I think we need a director. This needs to be a person with a title; she/he will either be assigned by the

Association or will be someone from the Association, or she/he will be someone picked up by the Association and will direct (us) somehow. I mean they can't do that. When everybody is equal the decisions are not implemented. But when there's a person in a director's position I'm sure things will run more differently. I think this is the solution.  
(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

Exercising “power with” also carries some threads and problems inside. Women that we qualify as active are also the women featured as leader women, as pioneer women by the project team. This situation gives way to the empowerment of these women through developing the relations between these women and the project team. At this point the following questions should be posed: Does this lead to hierarchy among women? If the active women exclude the passively participating women rather than searching for alternative solutions, can we still call it collective empowerment? In such a situation is the exercised still a “power with”? Within this context the study will not be in search of a specific yes or no answer. Rather it will claim that such a situation carries the dangerous possibility of shifting the exercise of “power with” to the actively participating women exercising “power over” passive participant women. Such possibility also takes us to question the limitation that the term empowerment sustains. It sometimes can obscure the power relations among women. Within this framework Pieterse states:

Empowerment is itself a form of power, emergent power. It follows that empowerment can be merely mimesis of power: As Paulo Freire said the greatest risk for the oppressed is to imitate the oppressor. Similar problems apply to terms such as ‘participation’. Empowerment can obscure conflicts of interest among different categories of women; forward movement is not inevitable and one person's empowerment may be another's disempowerment to address this problem, we would need to problematize power<sup>232</sup>.

Finally when we assess whether the project has changed the solidarity among women it is hard to assert that the project has increased the level of solidarity among women although the project implementer has a contradicting opinion. It has been observed that there is solidarity among women in terms of groups. In other

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<sup>232</sup> Pieterse, Jan Nederveen, “Empowerment: Snakes and Ladders”, *Feminist Futures: Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development*, ed. by. Kum-Kum Bhavnani, John Foran and Priya A. Kurian (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), p. 113

words, there is solidarity among those participants who live in close proximity to one another. There is a solidarity based on neighborhood relations. For example, there is a small hut nearby some houses to bake bread. Women who live close bake bread together in here. Women spend their time together and share their problems again in their groups. On the other hand, it has been observed that they do not have close relations with those who live further away. Women have also stated that there was no change in their relations through the project and that they were already having solidarity among their specific groups. For example, a woman talks about solidarity among women as such:

In fact we don't quite find solutions to problems with women; I mean, we're not actually trying to find solutions to problems by getting together. This is our fault. And there's this too; when there's something to be done women expect the other to do it, and the other expect it to be done by someone else. Since people have these expectations from one another everybody tries to handle her job by herself. She tries to come over her problem by herself. Frankly we really don't think of getting together and finding solutions to one another's problems much. Except that, it's good I mean, as friends we come together. Especially in the winter I visit x, and x visits me all the time.

(A thirty-two-year-old woman)

#### **4.2.2.3. Power To: Political Outcomes**

There is no indication of a specific collective outcome in terms of improvement in women's status or a change in gender hierarchies in the project. Yet, significant developments have been achieved through the project in the sense that women have been politicized and have demanded their rights and women have obtained an outcome by struggling for their rights.

Women need stone picking machines, water and other equipment in order to secure production in their field. With this aim women (more active ones) now have been talking to local powers and have been voicing their demands. Both the project team and supportive spouses have been influential in this. The project team leaves the ground for women when a situation like this occurs and the team even directs women to solve the problem themselves when women demand direct help. However

they support women when they are not able to handle the situation themselves. Spouses' supportive attitudes encourage women to meet with local powers to solve the problems themselves. For example, one of the supportive spouses has noted that when women face a problem they should try to find a solution themselves rather than directly asking help from the Association. Supportive spouses help women out meeting with local powers when women cannot solve the problem with local powers.

For instance, the women have met with the *kaimakam* and they voiced support for women and they achieved concrete output concerning their field and needs:

But the *kaimakam* supported us in every sense... We met with the *kaimakam* and we never left the meetings with the *kaimakam* empty handed. He offered us every kind of support. They helped us. We went there and talked to them as women.

The most important problem women have in the field is the irrigation problem. Since the municipality has cut off their water the women have problems with the municipality. Women said that they have met with officials from the municipality concerning their needs especially for water however they note that the municipality did not help them and even they did not take notice of them. After long efforts, with the help of the Association, the women now have water for their field:

For example, they cut the water off in the summer... (One of the women) suggested that we should go to the municipality. ... So went to the municipality.

Finally, the women have fought for their rights (with the support of a couple of men and the support and direction of the project team) have achieved results for issues significant for them. In other words, women have power to face with local powers to take what they see as their rights. Women's both individual empowerment and mostly collective empowerment lead to the political act of the women exercising power to.

### **4.3. Concluding Remarks: The Differences of Two Cases**

The contextual variables entail difficulties in comparing the two case studies. The projects, projects' sites and the target group differ much from each other. At the beginning of the chapter, these differences have been already noted. To reiterate briefly, the main disparities appear in such spheres:

- The location of the project sites: Historical, political, geographical, social and economic peculiarities.
- Very much related with the above particularities, identity, religion, and ideological structures: While in Zümürüt the project participants are Sunni Turkish, in Ovacık they are Alevi Kurdish. The province of Tunceli, to which Ovacık is attached, is known with the prevalence of democratic left culture.
- The qualification of the projects: The project carried out in Zümürüt is an eco-tourism project, which in turn is a service sector. Whereas, the project carried out in Ovacık is based on production.
- The timing of the projects: The project carried in Zümürüt began in April 2004 and ended in April 2006. The project carried in Ovacık has had two phases. The first phase began in September 2003 and ended in November 2004. The second phase was carried between the dates of February 2005 and April 2006.
- The characteristics of the target group: In Ovacık the target group of the project is women. Therefore, the project carries the features of women-only project. On the other hand, in Zümürüt, the project targets all the villagers, both men and women. While the education level of the women and men in two districts are approximately same, there are differences in terms of age. In Ovacık, the interviewees are younger than the ones in Zümürüt.

Leaving these contextual variables for a while, when the findings of the research are reconsidered, it can be seen apparently that the results of the projects in terms of women's empowerment diverge much. The project which has been carried out in Zümürüt just follows the way the mainstream development agencies do. The research findings, as detailed in the analysis, reveal that women are considered in the framework of WID approach. Although the project has a few contributions to a couple of women in terms of financial resources, human and social resources, the participation of the women to the project mainly serves to the project aims, rather than women's empowerment. In the project, the focus is on individuals. The project creates self-entrepreneur men engendering to exercise power over women. Perpetuating individualism and rivalry in the village, the project influences the collectivity and solidarity among women (and villagers) in a negative sense. On the other hand, the project which has been carried out in Ovacık, follows alternative development discourse. The women's participation in the project is considered within the framework of women's empowerment, empowerment both as an individual and a collective process. There is an emphasis on "we", an emphasis on collectivity and solidarity. The women exercise "power to" collectively and they reached some political outcomes. Yet, both of the projects fell short of influencing the household with regards to sexual division of labour and decision-making process. One of the crucial reasons behind this is that neither of the projects targeted men in the aim of providing gender equality.

As was mentioned at the end of the third chapter, on Turkey, as well as in the world, even the projects are funded by the same donor organization, basing on the above mentioned research findings, the two case studies become evidence for the significance of project implementers' roles with respect to the openings they provide for women's empowerment. Likewise, they serve as good exemplars of two dimensions of empowerment, namely individual empowerment and collective empowerment.

Razavi and Miller touch upon the prominence of the NGOs in integrating gender into development planning. They note that:

Even though there is no explicit discussion of this question, it is clear from the literature that the main difference lies in NGOs' "organizational capacities" and their "visions and perspectives". This will presumably take them beyond the project approach and enable them to provide the "missing link" in efforts to integrate gender into development planning (i.e., make planning participatory or bottom-up).<sup>233</sup>

Eva Rathgeber also designates the same point. She puts progressive individuals within the agencies into the foreground:

Many agencies, progress towards the implementation of gender-based concerns into programming has to a considerable extent been due to efforts of progressive individuals...The discourse on gender issues has taken different directions. In some cases, agencies have continued to work within the WID framework, officially promoting policies aimed at enhancing women's economic position and giving recognition to the importance of women's contribution to development processes. However, individuals within the agencies have sometimes concerned themselves more specifically with the position of women and have tried to develop projects which address issues of social change and gender power relations.<sup>234</sup>

In Ovacık, perspectives, (bottom-up) approaches, methods, and experiences of the project team enables openings for women's empowerment. In addition to these, Association's being in Ovacık, having members from Ovacık, and thereby, project team's settling in Ovacık also contributes to such an opening. Yet, in Zümrüt, besides the perspective and approach of project implementer, his being official, and his being outsider also bring forth the project stay within the WID framework. His experience is also inadequate when compared with the project team in Ovacık.

However, if we reconsider the contextual variables, which were juxtaposed at the beginning of the section, the question can be raised that to what extent the conditions were supplied by the project implementers and to what extent they

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<sup>233</sup> Sen and Grown, 1988, p. 89 quoted in Razavi, Shahrashoub; Miller, Carol, "From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse", *Occasional Paper 1, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development United Nations Development Programme* (February 1995), p. 35

<sup>234</sup> Rathgeber, Eva M., "Gender and Development in Action", *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, ed. by. Marianne H. Marchand, Jane L. Parpart (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 211

were supplied by the particularities of the local? In addition to these, where does the emphasis on “we” or “collectivity” emerge from in Ovacık? To what extent does it emerge from the perspectives of the project team and to what extent from the already prevalent democratic left culture and relationally the tradition to be organized? What would happen if the project team in Ovacık would carry the project in Zümürüt and vice versa? Would it be so influential as much as in Ovacık? If a comparison is made between the women in Ovacık and women in Zümürüt, due to contextual differences, the women in Ovacık seems more vulnerable than the women in Zümürüt. Therefore, a small support to women in Ovacık would have bigger effects than it would in Zümürüt. The local context in Ovacık provides more openings for women’s empowerment than in Zümürüt. Nevertheless, the project implementers’ roles keep their significance. In the reverse fiction, where the project implementers take each others’ place, even if the outcomes would not be the same, and even if the project team of Ovacık case would not be so influential as it is currently, through their bottom-up approaches, perspectives towards gender equality and women’s empowerment, experiences, and methods, they would still provide conditions for women’s empowerment in Zümürüt village as well. Therefore, it is possible to claim that the local context provides provisions which make creating conditions for women’s empowerment easier. Yet, what is indispensable is how to use these materials and/or provisions at hand. It is in this context that the subjective positions of the project implementers gain importance.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

This study ostensibly carries two paradoxical positions. The first one is that the study has both looked from and also criticized the perspective of “empowerment approach”. In relation with the first one, the second paradox is that the study has assessed development projects, while at the same time it has attempted to provide a critical look to them. This paradoxical appearance needs to be discussed first and should be clarified. Through such an explanation, the study aims to arrive at a point which will help out to develop suggestions for further studies and practices.

In both two senses, it can be argued that the seemingly paradoxical situation derives from the question of whether to take a position within the development field or not. In fact such a question can be considered in a wider debate whether to be within the system or not. Any position taking on the side of ‘not’, means to stay out of the system.<sup>235</sup> Probably, it would suggest dealing with structural problems embedded in a much wider context of capitalism or neo-liberalism and struggling from outside. In addition to create and/or seek for alternative mechanisms, this study proposes to move and struggle *within* the system through the mechanisms of the system. It suggests using the expansions made available inside it.

As it is mentioned above, the question is undertaken in various fields. Some scholars also maintain to move within the system. For example, on the subject of music, Timothy Brennan handles the question of world music in its relation to capitalism as it becomes a product of music industry, presenting the authentic and otherness for global consumption. Then he asks the same question whether to stay within the system or be outside of it. As a result, he suggests being “a kind of Trojan horse for disrupting the system within.”<sup>236</sup> In the same sense, on the same

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<sup>235</sup> Actually, nothing can stay out of the system. Both positioning is inevitably within the system.

subject, John Hutkyn shows how the system can be disrupted through taking part within it, based on the example of a group named Asian Dub Foundation which takes part in MTV with its critical lyrics.<sup>237</sup> In a wider context, Hardt and Negri, with their conceptualization of Empire<sup>238</sup>, refer to the new global form of sovereignty, while they also propose to find alternatives within the Empire. According to them, we can simultaneously be inside the Empire and also against it. In fact, for Hardt and Negri, the most powerful antagonistic movements and the most efficient alternatives rises up from the situation of “within”.<sup>239</sup>

In terms of feminist politics, Elisabeth Gross calls for to use of the means even provided by the system itself as a form of strategy to challenge the patriarchal models:

As a form of strategy, feminist theory needs to use whatever means are available to it, whether these are patriarchal or not (...) in order to challenge and move beyond patriarchal models, feminists must be able to use whatever means are at hand, including those of the very systems it challenges.<sup>240</sup>

In Turkey, within the feminist circles, the criticisms towards the development projects mainly stay within the framework of the critics towards neo-liberal politics. As Nazan Üstündağ mentions, the main critics can be summarized as follows: the NGOs bear the responsibility of the state and this justifies the withdrawal of the state from social provisions; projects raise individuals in accordance with the neo-liberal doctrine; the projects carried out are subordinated to donor agencies.<sup>241</sup> Yet,

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<sup>236</sup> See Martin Roberts quoted in Timothy Brennan, “World Music Does Not Exist”, *Discourse*, Vol. 23(1) (Winter2001), p. 46

<sup>237</sup> See Hutkyn, John, “Adorno at Womad: South Asian Crossover and the Limits of Hybridity-Talk”, *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol.1(3) (1998)

<sup>238</sup> See Hardt, Michael; Negri, Antonio, *İmparatorluk*, translated by Abdullah Yılmaz (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2001); Hardt, Michel; Negri, Antonio, *Empire* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: Harvard University Press, 2000)

<sup>239</sup> Hardt, Michael; Negri, Antonio, *İmparatorluk*, translated by Abdullah Yılmaz (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2001), p. 14

<sup>240</sup> Gross, Elisabeth, “Conclusion: What is Feminist Theory”, p. 197

<sup>241</sup> Üstündağ, Nazan, *Amargi* (3 Aylık Feminist Dergi), s. 3 (Winter 2006), p. 23

both Nazan Üstündağ and Aksu Bora draw attention to two interrelated obstructions which such a narrow perspective puts. First of all, it tends to ignore the subjective positions of the project implementers. The assumption that the projects are subordinated to donor agencies and to their restrictions, in turn, puts the subjects of the projects (NGOs, project facilitators, project participants) in a passive position. Yet, sometimes, even very rarely, the accomplishments within the projects can be in contradiction with the neo-liberal context of the donor agencies. In this context, the project carried out in Ovacık, Tunceli serves as a good exemplar for challenging this assumption. Though the project has limitations in terms of the space it provides for women's empowerment, still it challenges neo-liberal politics through its stress on collectivity and through women exercising "power to" collectively.

The second point Üstündağ and Bora mention is that, such a narrow look to the development projects prevents us from taking action. Therefore, they offer to use this space created by the donor agencies strategically for women's enhancement, to use it for the advantage of women. At this point, Aksu Bora, who claims that the action carries the potential of becoming free, offers that intervening to the situation is possible only through action and to act<sup>242</sup>.

Collaterally, the claim to act within the development area is prevailing for a global scale, significant for the global women's movements, for both the women from the First World and Third World countries. In this context, probably inspired from the French philosopher Michel De Certeau, Signe Arnfred also calls women from the South and the North to permeate into the cracks within the states and development agencies:

The idea is to work inside, but to some extent 'against the grain' of state and development institutions, the strategy not being attempts to make these institutions take over a transformatory agenda, which is not going to happen, but rather to work in a more subversive manner, taking advantage of person-to-person contacts, and of the spaces opened up by cracks and contradictions in the institutional setup of states and development agencies. This strategy of taking advantage of 'cracks in the edifice' may be seen as an initial concretization of the 'there is no

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<sup>242</sup> Bora, Aksu, *Amargi* (3 Aylık Feminist Dergi), s. 3 (Winter 2006), pp. 25-27

other option' – position. Feminists North and South have to develop an astute critique of prevailing trends of marketisation, and of the institutions – governments, multinational financial institutions and agencies of development aid – which promote this marketisation. Feminists have to be acutely aware of the relations of power – of class, race and gender – embedded in these institutions. But at the same time we have no other alternative but to work through these same structures. These are major challenges for North/ South women's movements.<sup>243</sup>

Within the light of these discussions, this study suggests that feminists should intervene to the development projects from inside both at the theoretical and the practical level. For the sake of permeating into the cracks, within the boundaries of the study, couple of points for further studies will be suggested.

First of all, as it is mentioned in the third chapter of the study, in Turkey there is a huge gap in the literature in the sense that there exist just a few studies<sup>244</sup> assessing the projects from empowerment approach. Therefore, in Turkey there seems a need for more studies focusing on this issue. Instead of leaving the space to the technical assessments, measuring the “success” of the project through reducing the context to numbers and technical analysis, feminist studies should intervene to this space. Through such an intervention the projects can be assessed from women's perspectives. Furthermore, the openings that the projects make available as well as their shortcomings would become lessons to learn from the field for further implementations. For instance, the project conducted in Ovacık becomes noteworthy to mention and leads us to learn couple of good implementations from the Ovacık case. To begin with, the settling of the project team in the project area emerges as a significant dynamic that also paves the way for the bottom-up approach to be easily realized. It constitutes a trust for the women (and men) participants of the project. The women (and men) do not see the project team as “experts” or “outsiders”. Rather both the people living in Ovacık and the project team have established relationship on lines of “friendship”. The project team's

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<sup>243</sup> Arnfred, Signe, “Questions of Power: Women's Movements, Feminist Theory and Development Aid”, *Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice, Sida Studies No3*, p. 86

<sup>244</sup> For example see Şen, Leyla; Akmut, Gülçin. “Toplumsal Cinsiyet Perspektifinden Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı: Kars Kırsalında Kadın Örgütlenmeleri”, *Kadın Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 1(1) (2006): 44-51 and Kümbetoğlu, Belkıs, “Kadınlara İlişkin Projeler”, *90'larda Türkiye'de Feminizm*, ed. by. Aksu Bora, Asena Günel (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002)

teaching methods and night visits to the families have been very influential in such a relation. The other accomplishments of the Association in Ovacık have also made the project and its members known by the whole population and increase faith and reliance in project team. The project team is very careful in their manners towards the women of Ovacık. More specifically, they do not treat women in a hierarchical manner as if they are women's manager, or they do not isolate women and try to solve all the problems by themselves. Yet, they support women and encourage them to accomplish the things on their own, solve the emerging problems by themselves on the collective basis. The prominence and influence of gender trainings reinforced the perspectives of project team members towards the gender issues which in turn have positive reflections on the project. These mentioned points are all significant dynamics of project team's facilitating role that created conditions for women's collective empowerment and women's exercising "power to". Moreover, another crucial point to mention regarding the effects of the project is that women in the Ovacık area gained political outcomes as well. Nevertheless, despite women's individual and collective empowerment through the project in Ovacık, the project could not be influential in male dominated decision-making mechanism and sexual division of labour within the household yet. In other words, the research could not find any significant change in gender hierarchies within the household. In this context, in my point of view, the shortcoming of the project is that it did not target men for the aim of gender equality. Without targeting men, a significant change in gender hierarchies seems difficult and women's empowerment stays restricted.

Let us continue with the suggestions of the study. While assessing the projects from empowerment approach, further studies can make a deeper analysis of power. Thus, as Jane Parpart, Shirin Rai and Kathleen Staudt mention, further studies can make such an analysis on two ways. The first is that, an assessment can be run through a Foucauldian understanding of power. Yet, as they warn, feminist insights should be integrated in it. The second is that a comprehensive study, recognizing the broader structures surrounding women, can relate the power relations within the local to the more regional, national and international ones. Forasmuch as, only through the development projects women's empowerment can stay within the boundaries of the local. Establishing such a relation reveals the other mechanisms engendering the

subordination of women, which enables both the projects and the feminists to move strategically towards such structures.

Secondly, this study has looked from gender perspective and empowerment approach. Yet, within the scope of the study it did not look from environmental perspective. The projects analyzed within the study, if the aims of projects are reconsidered, have environmental aims. YADA report, based on the research findings, submits the fact that in Turkey the environmental projects usually lack gender perspective<sup>245</sup>. In the same line, the studies which look from gender perspective usually lack the environmental dimensions. Therefore further studies should follow an integrated approach considering both the gender and environmental concerns. Furthermore, an inter-disciplinary study can be realized with a collective work from different disciplines. This situation is also adverted in a study on gender, environment and development:

Most environmental studies still lack a gender perspective, and fail to take an interdisciplinary approach seriously....there is still resistance to gender as integral to all research topics, even if at the same time the link between gender and environment is increasingly recognized. In making this link however, researchers and policy-makers tend to prioritize one element over the other, by either considering environment as more urgent than gender concerns, or the reverse. There are very few interdisciplinary, gender sensitive and participatory research projects. It is only through an integrated approach to gender and environment that we can help bring about the evolution of sustainable development.<sup>246</sup>

Thirdly, the interventions of the feminists should not be limited with the project assessments. They should go beyond measurements and evaluations by establishing connections with the development projects carried out in Turkey. In other words, direct links with project facilitators and collaborations with project implementing NGO's seem necessary. The two projects carried out in Ovacık and Zümrüt serves as an evidence for such a need. Although the Ovacık case has some limitations, when compared with the Zümrüt case, it is evident that the project facilitators'

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<sup>245</sup> See the report prepared for GEF-SGP in [www.yasamadair.org](http://www.yasamadair.org)

<sup>246</sup> Douma, Willy; Van den Hombergh, Heleen; Wieberdink, Ange, "The Politics of Research on Gender, Environment and Development", *Feminist Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, ed. Wendy Harcourt (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1994), p. 183

perspectives regarding gender and women differ much. Among many dynamics, one of the reasons is that the project team member in Ovacık has connections with the feminist scholars and he has attended to gender trainings. Yet, it is insufficient, as once again the limitations of the Ovacık case displays, the feminist organizations, scholars, activists and indeed further studies should find multiple alternatives to influence the project facilitators (also project implementing NGO's and donor agencies) in order to intervene into the projects. Otherwise, the projects carried out in Turkey will be captived to be restricted within the boundaries of Women in Development Approach. In other words, as long as the feminist movement can not be able to influence the projects (organizations, facilitators), the aims of gender equality and women's empowerment will stay as "imported". Hence, as they could not be internalized, they will remain as fashionable concepts taking place in the discursive level (through the language and the texts), yet could not be reflected to implementations.

Lastly, as a current approach, this study has looked from empowerment approach and the above suggestions designate to the empowerment approach. As an actual tool at hand, further studies should use the empowerment approach with an attention to above suggestions. Nevertheless, at the same time, we should look for alternatives to the empowerment approach. Because, as it is criticized in the Second Chapter of the study, it seems that we fall into the empowerment approach trap which in turn stuck us within the boundaries of the development paradigm. This study has tried to draw attention to the issue that the neo-liberal paradigm prefers the "women's empowerment" rather than the term "emancipation" while it does not constitute a threat for the global patriarchal capitalism. Therefore, while using the tool at hand critically; further studies at the same time should attempt to go beyond both the concept of women's empowerment and the empowerment approach. In this regard, why the concept or problematique of "emancipation" wiped out from the agenda should be questioned and explained in detail. Moving from this point, further studies should attempt to reestablish the connection with the term of emancipation and emancipatory politics. It is possible to improve an alternative to empowerment approach which can be raised within the emancipatory politics, while it can constitute politics towards emancipation as well. Therefore, strategies in favor

of emancipatory politics must be reconsidered. In the development field while considering the concept of gender equality, which has lost its political transformatory aspect, the literature forgot to use the concept of patriarchy. Bringing the concept of patriarchy (class and differences) back to the agenda, and considering the ways to challenge patriarchal, (neo-liberal) capitalist structures, models, and discourses, without ignoring the differences, an alternative to empowerment approach should carry the idea of the possibility of another world as a long term aim. For such a possibility, the approach should within itself carry ecological concerns as well<sup>247</sup>. With the rising environmental/ecological concerns, the approaches concerning gender/women within the development field are integrated into the environmental/ecological issues. Yet, instead of articulating one to another (articulating women/gender issues to ecological/environmental issues and vice versa), the approach from inside should already be an integrated approach.

However, here it must be mentioned that an alternative to empowerment approach does not mean totally leaving the approach behind. The alternative to the approach will be constituted by basing on the previous approach once more, especially regarding its reading through (gendered) power-relations, yet, this time linking it with the new strategies for emancipatory politics. This new combination of strategies, more truly, leaving the empowerment approach while, at the same time feeding from it, is vital to achieve a better approach to fulfill the previous experiences of failure. Women's empowerment approach particularly focused on the women in the local which made the approach lose the sight to evaluate the situation in a more broad sense. In this regard, it is necessary not to stick on singular examples in the local since women's emancipation is not possible through women's empowerment at the local in isolation from national and global structures or from the other women in other locals. In this sense, the suggestions of Jane Parpart, Shirin Rai and Kathleen Staudt can be recalled. Within this framework, the women's experiences in the local should also be related with other women's experiences at the local, the national and the global level. Through this way, the women's experiences do not stay within the boundaries of the local, contrarily, open

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<sup>247</sup> Eco-feminism can be an example to such an approach which carries ecological concerns within it. Yet, it has many shortcomings one of which is that it ignores the differences among women.

the way up for women's political mobilization and find the chance to spread into other women's lives.

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