

THE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE PROBLEM OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN DEVELOPMENT IN BURKINA FASO



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Gender inequality persists, wicked problem !

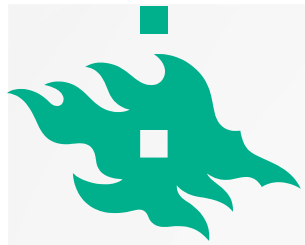
Have we got the nature of the problem of gender inequality right?





What is the problem of gender inequality represented to be in development policies and practices in Burkina Faso?





THE WPR...

WHAT ?

What is the problem of **gender inequality** represented to be in **development** in Burkina Faso?

HOW? METHODS

1. Policy documents (24) analysis:
 - Government
 - International Dev.& Cooperation
 - Brokers

2. Semi-structured interview with 21 actors

Audio transcription

Inductive coding

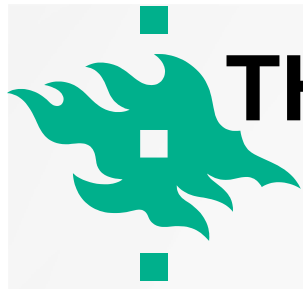
Policy discourse analysis

KEY INSIGHTS

Problem 1
Local culture

Problem 2
Women' agency

Problem 3
Formal state structure: ineffective



THE WPR...

- Patriarchy,
- Cultural, traditional & religious norms, values, expectations and practices

Problem 1
Local culture

Informal structure creating the problem of gender inequality

Women are **not empowered to exercise their rights and opportunities!**

Problem 2
Women' agency

Problem 3
Formal state structure: ineffective

Formal structure solving the problem of gender inequality

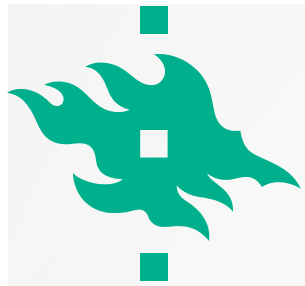
Development practitioners/brokers

Development cooperation

THE SILENCES...



- **The problem is these local people and their culture !** No mention of the **connections** to national, regional and international economic and political dynamics such as:
- **==> colonial legacies, structural adjustment** programs and **currency devaluation** that contributed to de-structured national and local economies, speeded up neoliberalism, privatization and therefore new livelihoods strategies that deepened gaps between men and women;
- **Culture being the problem, is therefore not part of the solution! ==>** top-down approaches that do not challenge patriarchy!
- **Culture is assumed to be static**, thus preventing any meaningful exploration of potentials for transformation



THE SILENCES...

- Depoliticising the problem: **the government is not responsible for (re)producing gender inequality but trying to solve it !** Consequently:
- No mention of **government's policy** i.e., agribusiness ==→ land privatization ==→ eroded access of vulnerable groups including women!
- **Symbolic gender rhetoric, politics** through non applicable or non enforced laws; gender biased text books taught in school !
- Women want to engage in politics **it is culture that stops them!** how about misogyny and toxic environment produced and maintained within **political parties** !?

CONCLUDING REMARKS



- Struggles for gender equality are left on the hands of Development agents including international cooperation, civil society, NGO to solve!
- Blaming the local people leads to patronizing approach that does not enable transformation from below, potentially deprive the locals including women of agency.



**Thank you for
your attention!**

