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The American University in Cairo

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE USE OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING TO PROMOTE  
EQUALITY IN PRE AND POST 2011 REVOLUTIONARY EGYPT

Thesis Submitted to

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology and Egyptology

Masters of Arts in Community Psychology Program

By Farah Gamal Shash

July 2012

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### **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my family, especially My Mom, Hanan Hegazy, and Thank you for everything

My dad, Gamal Aziz, my brothers, Mostafa and Mahmoud Shash

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I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Carie Forden, for her support throughout this year, her effort and the time she spent, my experience wouldn't have been this positive if not for her.

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### **Abstract**

Although the Egyptian constitution states that all Egyptians are equal before the law and equal in rights and duties, many gender inequalities existed before and continue to exist after the Egyptian 2011 revolution. One approach to creating gender equality is Gender Mainstreaming. This approach aims to achieve gender equality through governments and institutions, asking them to assess the implications and consider the needs and experiences of both men and women in any planned action, legislation, policy or program. This study examines how Gender Mainstreaming has been implemented in Egypt, the challenges it has faced, the opportunities available for further implementation, and its potential for achieving the goal of gender equality in the face of the political and social changes taking place in post-revolutionary Egypt. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with gender consultants and gender focal points in international and national non-governmental organizations, human rights and feminist organizations, and governmental institutions. The research questions addressed in this study were: 1) How has Gender Mainstreaming been implemented before and after the revolution? 2) Has Gender Mainstreaming been effective at promoting gender equality? 3) What are the challenges and opportunities of Gender Mainstreaming as it has been implemented in Egypt? And 4) what is the potential for implementing Gender Mainstreaming in post-revolutionary Egypt? The results of this research show that Gender Mainstreaming has potential and needs to be implemented in post-revolutionary Egypt, especially with the rise of conservatism and the changes occurring in the political and social systems, so that gender issues and women's needs will not be ignored. However, Gender Mainstreaming will not be effective unless the appropriate environment and prerequisites are in place. These prerequisites are 1) having the political will for implementation, 2) accountability, 3) involvement of men in the process, 4) reaching consensus with stakeholders about the definition of gender equality, 5) applying a culturally



sensitive model, and 6) using other approaches that also aim at empowering women and ask for women's rights.

## **An Assessment of the Use of Gender Mainstreaming to Promote Equality in Pre and Post 2011 Revolutionary Egypt**

### **An Overview of Gender Inequality in Egypt**

Gender inequality is a widespread problem, which is affected by many factors such as socioeconomic status, poverty, rural or urban location, and cultural and religious beliefs.

Although the Egyptian constitution; article 40, states that all citizens are “are equal in front of the law and equal in rights and duties. There shall be no discrimination between them based on gender, origin, language or belief,” there are many gender discriminatory practices taking place even on the legislative and policy level under this constitution.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report (2010), by the World Economic Forum, out of 134 countries analyzed and ranked for the 2010 Gender Gap Report, Egypt ranked 125 overall with a score of 58.9 percent. Additionally, Egypt ranked 13th on the list of the regional countries. Israel and the United Arab Emirates were the highest ranked countries for eliminating the inequality gap between the genders in Middle East and the Arab world. Kuwait, Tunisia, Bahrain, Mauritania, Lebanon, Qatar, Algeria, Jordan, Oman, and Syria ranked in the next tier. All of these countries preceded Egypt (Hausmann et al., 2010).

According to Madiha el Safty (2004), women in the Egyptian society are generally perceived as housewives and mothers, who need to get education, but only to be well socialized to be better mothers. They are also perceived as emotional and incompetent to make independent decisions. In contrast, men are perceived as the main breadwinners who should be in control of money, restricting women to specific gender roles and hindering them from practicing their full rights in employment, ownership and participation in many different spheres (El Safty, 2004). A large body of research shows how gender inequality in Egypt appears in the context of family and family law, physical integrity, education, labor force participation, political participation, ownership rights and civil liberties (Abu- Amara,

Ambrosetti & Condon, 2009). Inequalities are not restricted to these areas, but are widespread through all aspects of life (Abu- Amara, Ambrosetti & Condon, 2009).

**Family and family laws.** According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's publication on Gender Equality and Social Institutions in Egypt (2009), Egyptian women face many inequalities with regards to family law. The minimum age of marriage is 16 for woman and 18 for men, and the issue of girls' early marriage in Egypt, where parents marry off girls, is still a phenomenon in Egypt in rural or less developed areas. The publication cites the 2004 United Nations report that says that an estimated 15 per cent of girls between 15 and 19 years of age were married, divorced or widowed (OECD, 2009). In 2000, the Khul' law passed, allowing Muslim women to divorce their husbands without their consent, but also requiring that they give up all their financial rights. That was a breakthrough in the progress towards granting women some of their rights and control over their lives, and it initiated a tremendous debate on gender inequality in Egypt. It is important to note that although Egypt has accepted and signed international agreements, like the Convention for Elimination and Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), it had reservations on the amendments related to the family and it refused Article number 16, 29 and 2 concerning family laws and the equal status of spouses (OECD, 2009; Abu- Amara, Ambrosetti & Condon, 2009).

**Physical integrity.** Physical, sexual and psychological violence against women is a widespread problem in Egypt. According to the Egyptian Demographic Health Survey in 2005, a third of women are subjected to domestic violence. The penal code criminalizes all violence against women; however, certain provisions are weak, especially those related to domestic violence. Because family matters are seen as private, early marriages and violence perpetrated by fathers, brothers, or husbands, is not prosecuted (OECD, 2009; Abu- Amara, Ambrosetti & Condon, 2009). There were efforts by human rights and feminist organizations

to propose a new law criminalizing violence against women inside the family before the Egyptian 2011 revolution. The law had been proposed to the old parliament but when the revolution started, the old parliament was dissolved so the law has to be proposed again (El Nadim Center, 2012). Sexual harassment is also endemic in Egypt. In a survey conducted by the Egyptian Center for Human Rights (2008), 83 % of Egyptian women have reported being sexually harassed. Another serious type of physical violence that is widely pervasive in Egypt is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). According to the OECD (2009) publication, despite the fact that FGM is illegal in Egypt, 85 per cent to 95 per cent of the female population has undergone FGM with equal prevalence among Muslim and Christian women.

**Education.** Egypt has accomplished a significant improvement in the education of girls in the past decades; the ratio of woman to men in secondary and primary education has increased significantly from 84% in 1996 to 97% in 2006. Moreover, the number of woman enrolled in secondary education, exceeded that of men starting from the year 2001 onwards (Mandour, 2009). However, there are significant differences in the statistics that show that women are still behind. According to the midpoint assessment report of MDG 3 in Egypt, although there has been progress in girls' education, technical education is a real challenge for girls, and higher percentages of girls are concentrated in the less competitive sectors of agriculture and commerce. In addition, women are significantly less represented than men on scientific faculties. The lowest ratio was shown in the faculty on engineering, reaching only 15% of the students in 2005. The percentage of women in leading positions in scientific institutions is also relatively low. In 2004, woman represented only 3% of total number of employees in leading and decision-making positions in National Research Centre and 4% in Mubarak City for Scientific Research (Mandour, 2009).

**Economic status.** The majority of research, publication, and media coverage concerning gender inequality has mainly focused on issues of family laws, woman' and

especially mothers' health issues, and violence against women, with very little focus on the economic status and political participation. Yet, according to the Egypt Gender Assessment held by the USAID in 2010, all analyses indicate that the spheres in which discrimination against women are most apparent are economic and political participation, as well as access to justice.

According to the World Bank (2010) and USAID (2010), Egyptian women's participation in the labor force is low even by the standards of the Arab and Middle East region. In 2007, women accounted for 23.8 % of the labor force, with a larger proportion in rural than in urban areas (USAID, 2010) and according to the Egyptian Labor Market Panel Survey (Assaad, 2007), their economic activity rate was about 27% in 2006. The corresponding activity rate for men was about 79% in 2006. The survey also showed that women unemployment rate was about 11.5% in 2006, which is the double of men unemployment rate 5.6% (Assaad; 2007; Assaad; 2006, Abu- Amara, Ambrosetti & Condon, 2009). Moreover, the global competitiveness report 2010- 2011, ranked Egypt towards the bottom of the World Economic Forum's ranking, the participation of women in the labor force continues to be low with Egypt being the 130th country on the list. Overall, women earn less than men, especially in the private sector, and are less likely to receive training and promotions (USAID, 2010).

A study done on the Access of Finance and Economic Growth in Egypt, led by Sahar Nasr under the World Bank (2011), shows that both genders face obstacles in accessing finances for business, yet, women face greater obstacles, whether in terms of the cost of finance, ability to gain approval for financing, or legal disputes and conflict resolution in case of bankruptcy. Furthermore, banks request stricter security and guarantee (collateral) requirements when dealing with women investors. In fact, according to the study, the proportion of women who complained about collateral requirements was double that of men.

Finally, while more women than men start entrepreneurial projects and few of them resort to banks for credits, those who resort to banks are confronted with higher rejection rates (6 % compared to 4.5 % for men).

**Political participation.** The Egyptian constitution discriminates against women, for example, article 26 stipulates that, "Egypt's president is born to two Egyptian parents and cannot be married to a non-Egyptian woman," implying that only men could be presidents (Aziz, forthcoming). Article 38 of the constitutional declaration only specifies that, "The law regulates the right of candidacy to the People's Assembly and Shura Council in accordance with any electoral system which may be determined that includes a minimum of participation of women in both houses" without defining minimum participation. Previously women's representation in both houses, the People's Assembly and the Shura Council, has been very low, less than 2% and 7% respectively (Aziz, Forthcoming).

**Ownership rights and civil liberties.** The Egyptian law provides women with ownership rights, but they are perceived by society as unable to deal with financial matters (El Safty, 2004). In Nasr's (2011) study, it was found that Egyptian women usually have less productive assets and they have little control in managing these assets, as they are usually managed by a male relative such as a father, brother, husband or son. When some women apply for loans from the banks, in several cases women are prevented from using their possessions as collateral for loans, restricting their ability to participate as self-sufficient agents in private-sector activity (Nasr, 2011; El Safty, 2004; OECD, 2009). According to the OECD report (2009), to travel outside the country, an unmarried women under the age of 21, is obliged to obtain their father's permission to obtain a passport; likewise, wives of any age need their husband's permission.

### **Impact of the 2011 Revolution on Gender Inequality in Egypt**

The Egyptian revolution started in January 2011 asking for liberation, social justice and a transformative change in the system. Both men and women played equal fundamental roles during the revolution; they participated, organized, and were considered leaders and spokespersons during all phases of the revolution. Women challenged stereotypes against them by equally participating from the first day (Boughelaf, 2012). The 2011 revolution seemed to offer a good opportunity to call for gender equality since it demanded social justice, yet, events that have taken place since the revolution show otherwise. There have been several sexual and gender based violence and torture incidents, calls for segregation between men and women in public spheres, and other incidents that show that the gender gap might actually increase post-revolution and that the situation of women specifically is in a critical position (De-Alwis, 2011; ECWR; 2011; Human Rights Watch, 2011, Pratt, 2011).

Violent incidents have been taking place since women's groups and civil society organizations started organizing themselves to bring attention to the issues and rights of women. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2011, The International Women's Day, Egyptian women protestors were attacked and sexually harassed in Tahrir square by Egyptian men and youth who insisted they leave the street and go back to their homes and told them that it was not the right time to discuss their issues (De- Alwis, 2011). On June 8<sup>th</sup> of 2012, a march in Tahrir against sexual harassment was again attacked by a group of men. Despite being surrounded by men who were protecting the women marchers, the attackers were able to assault the women, heckling, groping them, tearing off their clothes and running after them as they tried to escape (The Guardian, 2012).

Additionally, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the current government, has been inflicting violence against women. Many incidents of torture targeting women specifically have taken place since ex-President Mubarak stepped down. In

December 2011, Human Rights Watch published a report that showed that there has been escalating physical attacks on women protestors that are mainly sexual in nature by the military and the police officers (Human Rights Watch, 2012). During the early month of the revolution, the military police subjected women protestors to “virginity tests” claiming that the military wanted to prove that these girls were not virgins. In December 2011, the media was bombarded with pictures of a woman being beaten, stripped, her clothes being torn off and stomped on by the military police. On November 23, 2011, A US-based Egyptian journalist, Mona Al Tahawy, reported that the CSF police arrested her on Mohamed Mahmoud Street and at least four men then beat and sexually assaulted her (Human Rights Watch, 2012). All these incidents and many others have been scaring away woman from participating in the protests, and pressuring parents not to let their daughters join the protests in order to protect their family’s honor.

Since the ex-president, Mohamed Hosney Mobarak, stepped down in February 2011, women have been sidelined from political positions and decision-making authority. Women have also been excluded from the new government led by Prime Minister Issam Sharaf so that out of 26 ministers only one is a woman, similarly the Ministry of National Salvation, headed by Dr. Kamal El Ganzoury only includes 3 women (ECWR, 2011). Moreover, the SCAF has discussed cancelling the women’s quota in parliament, a provision that was introduced in 2005 (Pratt, 2011).

Debates initiated by the SCAF, the newly formed parliament, and conservatives have focused on canceling many policies and legislations that preserve basic women’s rights gained through several decades of fights from civil society organizations and women’s groups (Pratt, 2011; ECWR, 2012; Armbrorst, 2009). In April 2012, the Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights issued a press release asking the Freedom and Justice Party, which had the majority of the seats in the parliament, to identify their attitudes towards women. They



described some of the positions the party has taken regarding family laws in Egypt:

- Request for the cancellation of the Penal Law against the sexual harassment of women, therefore the victim should bear the responsibility, breaking the main principle of the law.
- Canceling Article 20 of the litigation procedures of the Personal Status Law (El-Khula Law).
- Preventing proof and documentation of birth certificates for children of unknown parentage thereby depriving the children of their basic rights and punishing them for a crime they did not commit.
- Allowing a law that would permit husbands to rape their wives.
- Preventing women from traveling alone because it promotes *khulwa* (illegal seclusion, being left alone without a guardian).
- Preventing the children of Egyptian women and their foreign husbands from obtaining Egyptian nationality.
- Canceling the condition of informing a wife about her husband's second marriage, claiming that maintaining the family is more important even if it is based on lies and fraud.
- Canceling the law keeping the women who have custody of their children in the marital apartment because the men feel threatened that they might be expelled without guarantees (ECWR, 2012).

In addition, in March 2012, Azza el Garf, the former parliament member of the Freedom and Justice Party, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, called for the canceling of the 2008 law banning Female Genital Mutilation saying that it is a beautification plastic surgery that every Egyptian woman has the right to choose to undergo (Woods, 2012). The reality is that FGM is performed on girls between the ages of 9-12, who of course, have

no real choice on whether or not to undergo the procedure. In addition, the Freedom and Justice Party held a conference the same month under the title "Women and the Future," demanding the abolition of National Council for Women and canceling the CEDAW agreement, claiming that they are both against Sharia law and claiming that they serve a foreign agenda (Mourad, 2012).

During the data collection process of this research, the presidential elections took place and Dr. Mohamed Morsi, who was the candidate of the Freedom and Justice Party won the elections, which makes the FJP the ruling political party. Moreover, the parliament was dissolved the same month, in June 2012 and there have not been new elections until July 2012. During these events, many violent incidents targeting women took place. Several incidents of women being harassed on the streets and asked to cover up or stay at home were reported. A group called "*El Amr Bel M'arouf W el Nahy 'An el Monkar* (Exhorting Good and Preventing Evil) have attacked women asking them to cover up, moreover, an incident calling for gender segregation, happened in Suez governorate in which a student was killed because he was walking on the street with his fiancé without being accompanied by a man from her family (Shaker, 2012).

### **How Gender Inequality Has Been Addressed**

The problem of gender inequality has been addressed by a number of different approaches and strategies, each having different goals and theoretical backgrounds. These differences can make it difficult to assess the relative effectiveness of the approaches. A further complication for assessing effectiveness is that over time, there have been several shifts and experimentations with these approaches, and as strategies are seldom implemented in isolation, it can be unclear which approach is having an impact. In addition, cultural factors play a role in determining the effectiveness of a strategy, so that what may work in one country or area, may not work in another. This is an overview of the main strategies and

approaches that have been used as interventions on the international and national level. Later, the Gender Mainstreaming approach, its strengths and weaknesses and how it fills the gap of these approaches is described.

**Women in Development (WID)/ Gender and Development (GAD).** Two approaches to gender equality focus specifically on women and development. These approaches attempt to include women more fully in the development process.

*WID.* The WID approach evolved in the 1970s asking for greater concentration on women in development policy and practice, and emphasizing the need to incorporate them into the development process (Reeves & Baden, 2000). It was a reaction to women being seen as “passive beneficiaries” of development. The WID approach calls for women to be seen as change agents, who are both affected by and affect the development process (Reeves & Baden, 2000). Programs taking the WID approach address women’s needs by, for example, creating employment and income-generating opportunities, and improving access to resources, credit and education. Several organizations in Egypt used the WID approach and shifted to Gender Mainstreaming or the Rights Based Approach later when they were introduced, and as the international community pressured them to use them.

*GAD.* The Gender and Development (GAD) approach evolved as a response to the WID approach. It calls for understanding gender relations rather than women in isolation in order to change gender roles (Reeves & Baden, 2000). GAD approaches aim at meeting both women’s practical gender needs and more strategic gender needs, by challenging existing divisions of labor or power relations (Reeves & Baden, 2000). GAD argues that interventions and initiatives have addressed women’s issues while they are at the margins, providing them with, for example health care or entrepreneurial training and opportunities, but not addressing the root cause that puts them on the margin and causes their exclusion from the public and private spheres (European Commission, 2004).

However, according to Reeves and Baden (2000), the GAD approach is still faced with the same issue that the WID approach has faced, as in general the word “gender” is solely associated with the word “woman.” These interventions still fail because they target women as mothers and wives, rather than agents of production, development and change (Reeves & Barden, 2000). The development approach that focuses primarily on addressing women’s issues of has ignored the wider social and economic relationships in which they have been embedded. Therefore, these interventions have not been sufficient in affecting the distribution of services or resources, and do little to end inequalities between men and women.

**Rights Based Development.** The Rights Based Development approach is based on the Rights Based Approach (RBA), which is described by the United Nations as an approach that “integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into the plans, policies and processes of development” (Kapur & Duvvury, 2006). It aims at allowing vulnerable groups to participate in decision-making and initiatives that affect their lives and to be integrated as citizens and not to experience discrimination in terms of access to benefit from resources, services, opportunities and representation (CENACT, 2005). Although RBA is not solely aimed at women, because women are a vulnerable group, its programs have the potential to impact gender equality.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the World Bank are examples of organizations that have been incorporating the RBA in their projects in Egypt. The CIDA has made the RBA a crossing theme in the Country Program Development Framework (CPDF) for Egypt from 2002- 2008 (CENACT, 2005). Their projects are targeting women micro-entrepreneurs and groups that improve socio- economic conditions of low-income families. This objective is achieved through several projects that focus mainly on working directly with women, including specific projects aimed at reaching potential women

entrepreneurs, and projects, which build the capacity of institutions to address women's needs. The CIDA also works on a project to guarantee access to quality education and aims at empowering them in their own communities. One example is The Girl Child Community Education project, which incorporates a direct and important new approach to basic education for girls in Egypt, through the model of community schools (CENACT, 2005).

Moreover, The World Bank uses human rights instruments as a basis for their work. These instruments include the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1986), the UN Declaration on Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic (1976), Social and Cultural Rights. Three instruments are specifically related to gender equality, the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979), the optional protocol to the CEDAW and the Declaration on Violence against women (Tsikata, 2007).

Tsikata (2007) critiques the RBA approach. She states that on the positive side, the RBA has placed great responsibility on states and international actors to work on issues of inequalities as it stresses on empowerment, participation, non-discrimination, and attention to vulnerable groups. It also stresses working on roots of inequality and injustice rather than just relieving its effects. Moreover, it has been used by human rights organizations as useful basis for legal arguments (Tsikata, 2007). On the other hand, the RBA does not focus on debates regarding economic liberalization. In addition, although it has been reported by many implementers that it has been used for legal arguments, it is not applicable to third world communities that consider the approach insensitive to their cultures, view it interference from the West, and argue that human rights are not universal. For example, research has found that very few African women use lawyers and the courts to address violations of their rights (Tsikata, 2007). Rather than being seen as a force for positive change, many developing countries have become resistant towards the RBA and reject initiatives taken under it.

Furthermore, some have argued that the RBA is inadequate for analyzing the social relations that gender inequality is embedded in and that the RBA has rarely delivered the expected benefits (Tsikata, 2007).

**State Agreements and Conventions.** The Egyptian government has signed international agreements (like the CEDAW) and announced their commitment to United Nations Goals (MDGs) that holds them accountable for decreasing the gender gap in Egypt and eliminating forms of discrimination against women.

**Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).** Egypt adopted the Millennium Development Goals in the 2000 Millennium Summit, which are a set of eight goals approved by the UN member states to ensure sustainable development (Sika, 2011). To ensure sustainable development the MDGs set out eight measurable developmental goals, two of which specifically address women, but all of which can play a role in promoting gender equality: Goal 1: to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty; Goal 2: to achieve universal primary education; Goal 3: to promote gender equality and women's empowerment; Goal 4: to reduce child mortality rates; Goal 5: to improve maternal health; Goal 6: to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; Goal 7: to ensure environmental sustainability; and Goal 8: to implement a global partnership for development (Sika, 2011). Since the adoption of the MDGs, Egypt has made significant progress on many levels; yet, it still needs more progress on the goal concerning promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. For example, several initiatives were taken to increase the inclusion of woman in education. One such initiative was the "Girl Friendly" schools, which are gender-segregated schools that encourage parents who are against gender mixed schools to send their daughters to school. These initiatives have helped in increasing the number of classes that include girls from 213 classes in 1994 to 2717 in 2003 (Sika, 2011).

However, according to Sika (2011), the MDGs would not be enough to achieve full gender equality and empowerment in the Arab World. She argues that the MDGs have emphasized quantity rather than quality. For example, success is measured by the number of students enrolling in school, ignoring the quality of education and whether the content of the education that enhances or impedes gender equality (Sika, 2011). Moreover, it does not address the cultural and social norms that discriminate against women, and which hinder the achievement of the MDGs. For example, there has been a significant increase in the enrollment of woman in education; however, the gender gap in the workforce remains high. The MDGs do not take in consideration the eradication of discriminatory laws and practices, which “represent the backbone of any developmental project in the Arab world” (Sika, 2011, p.40).

*CEDAW*. Egypt signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) agreement in 1980 and ratified it on September 18, 1981. Under the commitment to the MDGs and CEDAW the government initiated the creation of the National Council for Women in 2000, which addresses “gender biases and harmful traditional practices as well as to increase girls’ enrollment in schools” (Sika, 2011, p.39). Egypt was one of the countries that established ministries and councils specific to women’s affairs under the commitment for the CEDAW agreement (Al- Maaitah et al., 2010). Egypt was also one of the countries that adopted actions to increase women’s political participation like the quota for women in the parliament (Al- Maaitah et al., 2010). Additionally, in 2008, Egypt officially withdrew its reservation to article 9(2), which concerns gender equality regarding the nationality of a woman’s children (Al- Maaitah et al., 2010).

Yet, Egypt has still made reservations on important articles like article 16, 29 and 2. Article 16 is concerned with the equality of men and women in all matters relating to

marriage and family relations during the marriage and upon its dissolution. Article 29 is concerned with the submission to an arbitral body of any dispute, which may arise between states concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention. This is in order to avoid being bound by the system of arbitration in this field and most importantly that states “The Arab Republic of Egypt is willing to comply with the content of this article, provided that such compliance does not run counter to the Islamic Sharia” (Al- Maaitah et al., 2010). The Egyptian state still adheres to these reservations hindering Egyptian women from gaining their basic rights. Moreover, the CEDAW does not guarantee appropriate implementation or sufficient dissemination of projects and information due to the absence of performance indicators for monitoring and evaluation (Al- Maaitah et al., 2010; Sika, 2011). In addition, the reporting process might be subjected to corruption as an attempt to “look good” in front of the international community (Al-Ali, 2002). Finally, the skepticism of the religious extremists and their supporters about the agenda for women development is growing, asking for the limitation of the woman’s role to the household and asking for the cancelation of the international agreement; like CEDAW, because they think its imposed from the West (Al-Maaitah et al., 2010).

**Feminist Movements and Civil Society Organizations Interventions.** Some Egyptian scholars have identified the beginning of the feminist movement in Egypt with the participation of women in the 1919 revolution, associated with Hoda Shaarawy and the Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU) funded in 1923 (Al-Ali, 2002). The EFU called for equal education opportunities for women and increasing professional opportunities for women in Egypt. Other scholars have argued that the feminist movement really started in Egypt in 1948 when Doria Shafik founded the Bint El Nil (Daughter of the Nile) group as an initiative for a new feminist movement asking for the political rights for women (Al-Ali, 2002).



Under the rule of Gamal Abdel Nasser (1952-1970), the state was monitoring political activism and banning of any kind of autonomous organization. Consequently, the activities of feminist and active organizations declined, but the state adopted women's issues, framing them as social welfare issues. This helped shed light on women's issues, giving them higher importance and thus, creating gains for women. In 1956 the state granted women the right to vote and to run for political office, and in addition, the educational system was improved to enhance the enrolment for primary and secondary school education, which eventually affected women participation in higher education (Al-Ali, 2002).

Under the rule of Anwar el Sadat (1970-1981), the role of the state changed, and it focused on the economic development and increasing the participation of the private sector, ignoring social equality policies (Al- Ali, 2002). This situation continued during the Mubarak era (1981-2011), and the woman's movement was associated with discussions on the Personal Status Law; a law concerned with marriage regulations, divorce and family relations, and new taboo issues related to women's reproductive health (e.g., FGM, contraception). In 1994, The United Nations International Conference on Population and Development was perceived by the women's movement as a turning point for feminists because it would create a platform for debate on women's issues and encourage implementation over research. They addressed taboo issues like abortion, violence against women, reproductive rights, political participation, and the personal status law. However, all of these expectations were shattered with the extreme resistance of the Egyptian state along with the pressure of conservative groups (Al-Ali, 2002). For example, during the ICPD the Egyptian state declared its commitment to ban FGM by law, however, Al Azhar, an Islamist university that interprets Islamic law, succeeded in pressuring the Ministry of Health to withdraw this commitment (Al-Ali, 2002). In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs continued the restriction of civil society organizations, and the already registered organizations had to operate under the restrictions of the ministry. The

ministry had the right to license or dissolve any organization, and any license could be revoked if any organizations engaged in political or religious activity (Al-Ali, 2002). In recent years, the debate has been mainly concerned with issues of violence against women; unfortunately some conservative groups along with some women's organizations have dismissed this issue seeing it as a "western imposition," or seeing it as low priority and preferring to focus on issues like poverty and illiteracy (Al-Ali, 2002). Over time, the women's movement has changed their goals, priorities and activities to focusing on income generation, credit and loan programs and campaigns to change the Personal Status Law, in addition to the establishment of the FGM taskforce. They also worked on designing and distributing gender training packages among NGOs, publishing books, magazines, and journals on different women's issues, and the establishment of the Women Media Watch (Al-Ali, 2002).

The women's and feminist movement in Egypt, according to Nadjie Al Ali (2002), has been highly influenced by the state's role and position towards women's organizations and groups, its lack of commitment to women's issues, and the restriction of the civil society organizations. In her article, Al Ali states "women activists are not just struggling against general obstacles to women's rights they are also battling against the increased political authority of conservative religious forces and a state that is inevitably caught between the demands of Islamist groups and pressures applied by the international community."

### **Gender Mainstreaming**

Previous efforts to achieve gender equality have proved inadequate to combat the issue of gender inequality in Egypt, either because they do not address the complex context under which the problem exists on all the different levels of analysis (macro, meso, and micro) and address only the consequences, but not the causes of inequality (for example, WID, Feminist Civil societies movements, WID and GAD) or because they have been dismissed as being

culturally insensitive (like the CEDAW, and the RBA).

According to the European Commission report (2004) the failure to transform women's (and thus also men's) position has led policy makers and those in the equality field to question the impact of equal opportunities policies; which attempt ensure no discrimination based on sex, race or disability. They realized that the causes of gender inequality were deeply rooted and often hidden in social structures and practices. The core of gender inequality lies within the social structures, the institutions, and the values and beliefs, which produce and perpetuate the imbalances between men and women. Simply adding women to different processes does not challenge the structures and values that create the imbalances. Reshaping the mainstream and these processes to create equal spaces for the involvement of both women and men to challenge the mainstream is what is needed (European Commission, 2004).

A partnership between both women and men, and attention to the role of men in society is necessary to achieve gender equality (European Commission, 2004). The misconception of the meaning of the word gender and its association with women has led people to conclude that gender concerns are only relevant to sectors traditionally associated with women, such as health, and irrelevant to sectors such as economic policy. Instead, Reeves and Baden (2000) argue that the term "gender" is about the socially accepted ideas of what it is to be women or men, and how these ideas impact on the power relations between women and men at all levels in society.

Societies are defensive and resistant to the issue of gender equality and use "culture" and "tradition" to justify practices that constrain women's life chances and progress (Reeves & Baden, 2000, p.2). Even the international development community remains resistant to gender equality because they believe it is western interference or "cultural imperialism" (Reeves & Baden, 2000). As White (1993, cited by Reeves and Baden, 2000, p.9) says, "we

talk about poverty across societies, and no one raises any problems. We talk about gender subordination across societies, and people cry cultural imperialism!”

Gender Mainstreaming is a public policy approach to address gender inequality that was introduced at the Beijing Conference in 1995. It is a holistic approach that tackles the issue of gender discrimination on all levels, micro, meso and macro. The most widely recognized definition of Gender Mainstreaming is the one given by UN Economic and Social Council (1997/2):

Gender Mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (UN, 2003, p.15).

To fully understand the concept of Gender Mainstreaming and what it entails, we should understand the definition of all the concepts and terms associated with it. “Gender” here refers to the socially and culturally determined roles, rights, duties, resources, and interests of men and women. “Mainstreaming” refers to the specific ways of acting that form the standard and common patterns of action in an organization, which result in intentional or circumstantial outcomes, expectations, and patterns of behavior and interaction (Thege & Welpel, 2002). Thus, in a Gender Mainstreaming approach, the common patterns of action in an organization are analyzed in terms of how they impact the roles and interests, etc. of men and women.

Gender Mainstreaming could be considered an extension of public policies targeted for women but not necessarily focused on women issues and equality. What is novel about

Gender Mainstreaming is that it considers both genders—not just women. It considers the developmental and equity needs of both men and women and the experiences of both of them. It is a top-down-strategy in which gender-specific methods and instruments are applied.

Although the concept of Gender Mainstreaming is associated with the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) the idea actually goes back decades before this conference (Joseph, 2009). According to the UNDP evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming report in 2006, the concept of Gender Mainstreaming was first proposed by the international development community, at the 1985 Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi. The way in which policy was developed was criticized, and the inclusion of women in policy development for stronger integration of women in the mainstream was suggested instead. This is also reflected in the Final Report from Nairobi, which stated:

Women should be an integral part of the process of defining aims and shaping development. Organizational and other means which enable women to contribute their interests and preferences into the evaluation and selection of alternative development goals should be identified. This would include specific measures which are conceived in such a way that the autonomy of women is enhanced so that they bring women into the mainstream of the development process on the same basis as men (UN, 1986, p.91).

Although, the concept of Gender Mainstreaming was not developed then and the report did not include the word “mainstreaming” or “gender” but “women,” it was certainly the first step towards the development of the concept (ECOSOC, 2003). In 1994, the Council of Europe set up a Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG), which took up the concept of Gender Mainstreaming at the level of the Council of Europe for

the first time. This Committee reports directly to the Council of Ministers and is responsible for measures to promote equality (Strasbourg, 1998).

The idea was then further developed by the United Nations and introduced in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (Burton & Pollack, 2009). Gender Mainstreaming was recognized as a global strategy for the promotion of gender equality in the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). The Mainstreaming mandate was reinforced in ECOSOC Agreed Conclusion 1997/2 and at the 23<sup>rd</sup> special session of the General Assembly in June 2000. The ECOSOC resolution 2001/41 calls to “intensify efforts to ensure that Gender Mainstreaming is an integral part of all its activities, including through follow-up to the implementation of the ECOSOC Agreed Conclusion 1997/2” (UN, 2003). All Member States were obliged to develop a concept for the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming as part of their national strategies for the implementation of the 4th World Conference on Women. At the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, delegates from 189 countries on 15 September 1995 signed the Beijing Declaration and the Beijing Global Platform for Action, which set out a unique program for equality between women and men in twelve critical topic areas. These topic areas were: Women and Poverty, Education and Training of Women, Women and Health, Violence against Women, Women and Armed Conflicts, Women and Industry, Women in Positions of Power and Decision-Making, Mechanisms for Promoting Women, Women’s Human Rights, Women and Media, Women and the Environment, and Girls. These twelve critical topic areas were seen as of fundamental importance if real equality between women and men was to be achieved. At the end of 1995, the President of the European Commission initiated a “Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming” (UN, 2003).

Not only does Gender Mainstreaming advocate for including men in the process to work on issues of gender, but it also promotes an ecological approach to address gender issues

on all levels. Working on the individual level alone would not achieve gender equality, rather gender issues should be addressed on the macro level, for example national policies and governmental decisions, and the meso level, such as the different institutions (educational and religious institutions) along with the micro level, which focuses on individuals and families (Espey, 2010). This should be done through every stage in the program cycle, starting from identifying the needs to program implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Espey, 2010). Maretha de Waal's (2006) describes what Gender Mainstreaming interventions need to do in order to address gender in ecological context. She says the macro level needs to reflect a gender analysis of the political and economic context, policy, budgeting, strategy, structures, systems, and linkages with lower levels. At the meso-intermediate level, it must reflect a gender analysis of institutional capacity, human and financial resources, management systems, and linkages with other levels. Finally, at the micro/field level the data should reflect a gender analysis of project implementation, personal and interpersonal experiences, and linkages with other levels.

Gender Mainstreaming uses tools like gender analysis, which is a sub-socioeconomic analysis tool, informing policy makers of the connections between gender relations and the development or economic issues that need to be resolved (UNDP, 2001). It also uses gender desegregated data, gender impact assessment (GIA) and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation in order to identify positive and negative outcomes of proposed policies in terms of gender equality, at all stages of the interventions (Verloo, 2002).

### **Public Policy and Change**

Gender Mainstreaming is a public policy approach to gender equality. Public policies can be implemented in a way to reduce social and gender inequalities, and on the other hand, they also can reinforce and strengthen gender discrimination and inequalities. According to Reeves & Baden (2000), policies can reinforce and perpetuate gender inequalities because

they are typically “gender blind”. Gender Mainstreaming however, specifically approaches public policy through the lens of gender.

How might public policy work to change norms? In her article, Karen Nyborg (2003), discusses the impact of public policy on social and moral norms that should result in change in behavior. She argues that approved social norms could be affected by public policy and these norms could be internalized over time, so that individuals sanction themselves if breaking those norms. She cites Rege (2003), who argues that public policy could “crowd in or crowd out a social norm encouraging voluntary contributions to a public good” (Nyborg, 2003, p.262). Nyborg and Rege (2003), also argue that public policy has potential effects on changing behavior if supported by social approval and disapproval. They state that once the norm has been established, it would be stable even if the regulation or policy is taken away, because by then the social approval or disapproval of the behavior would be the main motivator. That means that government policies and legislations can indirectly change behavior, even if the legislation no longer applies, the new social norm would control it.

However, Manski (cited in Nyborg, 2003) argues that the change in behavior could be caused by external factors and it would not necessarily be accompanied by change in attitude. Therefore, a change in behavior enforced by change in legislation does not guarantee a change in attitude, but it still could cause a change in social norms. Brekke et al. (cited in Nyborg, 2003), argues that the main motivator for behavioral change is achieving a positive identity or self-image, driven by the understanding that this change is a morally ideal contribution that would maximize the welfare of the society. Hence, if the individual, organization or governments do not believe that the change in behavior is morally ideal, they will not bear the costs for this change. Yet, Brekke et al, suggest that when public policy changes, the perception of what is good or ideal changes, thus inducing a change in behavior (Nyborg, 2003). This means, that if there is a belief in Gender Mainstreaming as a public



policy approach, the implementation of it would cause a change in social norms and challenge the cultural stereotypes, changing the behavior of institutions and organizations, and eventually changing individual behavior, thus facilitating the gender equality.

**Gender Mainstreaming and Feminism.** Sylvia Walby (2003) described Gender Mainstreaming as “the re-invention, restructuring, and re-branding of a key part of feminism in the contemporary era. It is both a new form of gendered political and policy practice and it is a new gendered strategy for theory development” (Walby, 2003, p.2). She says that Gender Mainstreaming actually sums up many of the tensions and dilemmas that faced feminist theory and practice and offers a new approach on how to move forward (Walby, 2003). Feminists have taken a variety of perspectives on the problem of gender inequality. Four influential perspectives have been Liberal Feminism, Cultural Feminism, Radical Feminism and Socialist Feminism. Freedman (2001) describes the differences between these perspectives in the following ways: Liberal Feminism is the wave of feminism that defines gender equality as sameness between men and women and how they are treated or perceived. They believe that this can be achieved by legal means and social reform. Cultural Feminism on the other hand emphasizes natural differences between men and women, believing that there are fundamental personality and psychological differences, and those women's differences are not only unique, but also sometimes superior. Radical Feminism emphasizes the importance of power and believes that human relations in society are organized under a system of power that perpetuates women oppression (called patriarchy) in favor of men). It calls for a radical restructuring of the power in the society and overthrowing patriarchy by opposing and challenging the social gender roles. Socialist Feminism believes that gender equality could be achieved by working on ending cultural and economic sources of women's oppression. They argue that capitalism is the source of all women's oppression.

There have been many debates and controversies between the different feminist perspectives regarding Gender Mainstreaming (Guenther, 2008). Guenther (2008) attempted to understand policy diffusion, which is the process of policy being adopted and implemented in other movements, among feminist movements and their reaction to the case of Gender Mainstreaming. She shows that Gender Mainstreaming fits some of the feminist perspectives, especially the cultural feminist perspective, as it acknowledges the differences between men and women in experiences and needs. Gender Mainstreaming also says that gender inequality affects not only women but also men and the society as a whole and calls for the participation of men in the process of combating gender inequality (Guenther, 2008). She says that feminists consider Gender Mainstreaming as a funding opportunity to get funds from the European Union to be able to work on gender issues, which increases the concept's appeal, especially among feminists working in local women's organizations (Guenther, 2008). In addition, as it emphasizes the participation of the state they would be able to work without being pressured or without resistance from the state. On the other hand, Gender Mainstreaming has received intense resistance from radical feminists for several reasons. Initially, according to Guenther (2008) policy originates from, and centers on, the state or the government, from which they have been seeking autonomy and which they have always been fighting. Moreover, they think that Gender Mainstreaming overemphasizes the importance of gender equality of men, which would result in not addressing women oppression issue effectively (Guenther, 2008). They also say that there are severe gender inequality issues that only affect women, which will be ignored by policy makers and by the Gender Mainstreaming processes. As Guenther (2008) says the consequences of gender inequality are more brutal for women than for men but that Gender Mainstreaming tries to "make it all sound the same".

### **Rationale for the Present Study**

As the literature shows, earlier efforts to achieve gender equality have had limited success. Gender Mainstreaming, because it addresses gender inequality on different levels (macro, meso and micro), addresses public policy, is administered from the top-down, and does not explicitly use a rights based approach which many cultures and states are resistant to, may be more effective. In particular, in Egypt, which is undergoing major political and social changes which appear to be unsupportive of women's rights, and is experiencing the rise of Islamist and conservative groups who have been emphasizing gender differences between men and women, the approach of Gender Mainstreaming may be more acceptable as it acknowledges differences in needs and experiences between genders yet uses these differences to achieve gender equality.

In Egypt, Gender Mainstreaming has been recently incorporated in some projects and policies from the government and some civil society organizations. In 2002 the National Council for Women drafted a plan to mainstream gender in the National Plan for Economic and Social Development of Egypt from 2002 to 2007, and subsequently the plan was approved by the parliament (NCW, 2004). The plan called for the creation of Equal Opportunity Units in 30 ministries in Egypt, making the state budget gender sensitive, and ensuring gender sensitive follow up assessments (NCW, 2004). Two of the ministers who have shown commitment to this plan were the Ministry of Trade and Industry who started a project that aimed to build a gender sensitive trade capacity agri-business (International Trade Center, 2010) and the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, which has been working towards the goal of Mainstreaming gender throughout all its policy frameworks and programs since 1997 (National Research Center, 2010). It is important to note that there have been intense debates around the National Council of Women (NCW) pre and post the 2011 revolution. It was established in 2000 under the rule of ex-president Hosney Mubarak and

was headed by his wife, Suzan Mubarak. Its aim was to empower women and increase their role in social, economic and political spheres (Viney, 2012). Since 2012, civil society organizations, feminist unions and Islamist groups have attacked the NCW as it was associated with the old regime and the Islamists claimed it goes against Sharia, as it advocates for laws that break up Egyptian families. Even after its reconstruction by Kamal el Ganzoury, civil society organizations said that the NCW does not represent them or Egyptian woman and that the newly appointed members were associated with the old regime, and the council was considered illegitimate under the military rule. On the other hand, many of the women's rights activists said that the NCW is essential for applying the Gender Mainstreaming agenda, that it helped in taking steps that created a foundation for further implementation, and that it will not have the same power after the revolution since other organization used to fear Suzan Mubarak so they had to do the work enforced by the NCW (Viney, 2012).

The UNDP in Egypt renewed its commitment to Gender Mainstreaming in 1996 and stated that it should be addressing gender in every action and evaluation the organization does. In the past decade it has created a number of policies and programs to mainstream gender. In 2005, UNDP developed a Corporate Gender Strategy and Action Plan to support measuring Gender Mainstreaming activity, such as the continuation of a Gender Unit at headquarters, the appointment of regional gender advisers, the creation of a system of gender focal points and the establishment of trust funds that support Gender Mainstreaming activities (UNDP, 2006). Some civil society organizations have been introducing initiatives to mainstream gender in all their activities. Nazra for Feminist Studies, which was established in 2007, has been using Gender Mainstreaming as their main theoretical background. They have been working on projects that promote Gender Mainstreaming in human rights organizations that do not work on women's rights and student unions in universities in Egypt. In 2010, they

produced a manual to integrate Gender Mainstreaming in the electoral process (Nazra, 2010).

While Gender Mainstreaming has been implemented in Egypt, there is a lack of data regarding how well it has been implemented or whether it has faced any challenges. In order to assess the potential for Gender Mainstreaming as a strategy for promoting gender equality in post-revolutionary Egypt, interviews were conducted with key informants in Cairo who have been involved in Gender Mainstreaming projects, either as gender experts consulting for international organizations, or gender focal points who are contact persons responsible for gender projects in international or local organizations, governmental institutions and human rights organization. These interviews address the following research questions: (1) How has Gender Mainstreaming been implemented before and after the revolution? (2) Has Gender Mainstreaming been effective at promoting gender equality? (3) What are the challenges and opportunities of Gender Mainstreaming as it has been implemented in Egypt? And (4) what is the potential for implementing Gender Mainstreaming in post-revolutionary Egypt?

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants were chosen using snowball sampling. The first participants were suggested by contacts in organizations or consultants who worked in gender, then the interviewer asked the participants to suggest other participants to interview. Participants were consultants or gender focal points; an individual bearing the responsibility of being the contact person for gender related activities in the field site (UNFPA, 2011), or members in the gender unit who have implemented gender-mainstreaming projects in the past or who are still implementing it. The target number of interviews was 20 interviews. Participants were contacted by email and by direct phone calls. Thirty-eight emails were sent out to gender specialists and international and local organizations, and sometimes followed up by phone calls if they did not reply, and four were contacted solely by phone. Twenty-two responded,

four were either unavailable or were not specialized in the field of Gender Mainstreaming, two answered after the data collection was completed, 15 of the specialists or organizations never responded, and 16 interviews were held. Fourteen of the participants were women and two were men. The sample included five consultants, who mainly worked for international organizations, and were trained in foreign countries on Gender Mainstreaming. Most of the consultants had experiences working in the MENA region and four of them had experience in working with ministries, mainstreaming gender in equal opportunity units or in projects, several of them worked in mainstreaming gender in agriculture and irrigation, and one of them worked with the National Council of Women. Moreover, the sample included four human rights organizations, three of them had a feminist background and one of them identified themselves as a feminist organization. Two of them crosscut Gender Mainstreaming throughout all their projects, and two of them put Gender Mainstreaming as part of their activities as an introduction to women rights specific activities. Their activities range from working with economic empowerment of women, mainstreaming gender in political groups and unions, or mainstreaming gender in the ministry of interior. It also included four international organizations that put ads for funds which NGOs bid on, they worked with organizations in different areas, such as informal settlements, two of them were organizations that received funds from governments from foreign countries. Additionally, two governmental organizations were recommended for their work in Gender Mainstreaming, and one local NGO that worked in a poor area in Cairo and was assigned to work on projects by the National Council for Women, this NGO targets the family through the mother.

All interviews were held in Cairo and all the participants were Egyptians. Ten interviews were held in English and six were held in Arabic. The participants came from the middle, upper middle, or upper socioeconomic classes. The consultants and the specialists working in international organizations tended to come from an international educational

background (American education, French education...etc.). All participants signed a consent form saying that their names and information were confidential and that their title of their organizations would not be mentioned.

### **Instruments**

Because of the lack of previous literature on Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt, in-depth qualitative interviews with open-ended questions were conducted. The interview was semi-structured as the interviewer prepared nine main questions and six follow up questions. This approach encourages the participants to answer at length through probes, rephrasing and follow up questions. During the data collection process, a question was added to discover whether everyone agreed on a definition of Gender Mainstreaming. Questions covered their understanding of Gender Mainstreaming, how Gender Mainstreaming projects were implemented before the revolution; the tools and activities used, whether it had been evaluated and who was responsible for the implementation, how effective the projects were in achieving the goal of Gender Mainstreaming from their point of view (i.e., gender equality), what is meant by gender equality in the Egyptian context, the challenges they faced during the implementation, the opportunities they see for Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt, what is the future of Gender Mainstreaming in their work and what are their recommendations for other organizations implementing Gender Mainstreaming according to their experiences. This information helped produce data about benefits, drawbacks and challenges of Gender Mainstreaming being implemented in Egypt and whether Gender Mainstreaming could be effective in policy making, program design, and planning for future projects to contribute to gender equality in post- revolutionary Egypt, given the changes that have been taking place in the political system.

## **Procedures**

Participants were contacted through emails or phone calls, and they were told what the study was about and that their information would be confidential. Participants were asked to sign an informed consent form before starting the interview that explained the purpose and length of the interview, that participation was voluntary, and that their answers would remain anonymous.

Interviews were semi-structured in order to give respondents an opportunity to freely express their views. The time for the interview took from 30 minutes to an hour and a half. Fourteen of the interviews were audio recorded, one participant refused the audio recording and one interview was conducted on the phone, so it was not possible to record. At the end of the interview, participants were given the option to receive results and recommendations and they were all interested in them. After the interview, they were asked if they would recommend additional contacts who have worked on Gender Mainstreaming and who might be willing to participate in an interview

## **Results**

All the interviews were transcribed, and themes were extracted for each question and a codebook was created. The coding was done using the inductive content analysis approach. Using this approach, themes and codes are not created in advance; this enables the researcher to find information and themes that were not anticipated and were not mentioned in previous literature. According to Elçigil and Sari (2011) the inductive content analysis process includes open coding, creating themes of categories and abstraction. The analysis started with transcribing all recordings and interviews and reading the transcripts several times. Answers to the questions were highlighted, coded and put under themes in the margin. These themes were then grouped in a code book which was divided according to the questions, and then each question was divided by the type of organization or participant in which these themes



were mentioned, whether international, human rights, governmental, consultants or local NGO (see appendix B for example). These themes were then grouped under a general theme or category. An test of inter-rated reliability was done to ensure the reliability through measuring the agreement and homogeneity in the assignment of codes and themes extracting process. Another researcher was given several questions and an example of the codebook and was asked to code the answers of these questions. The inter-rater reliability score was 0.89.

### **Question Themes**

**How do you define Gender Mainstreaming?** When participants were asked how they or their organizations define Gender Mainstreaming, six participants said having “gender within everything”; organizations, all activities, all programs. Three participants said both genders having the same rights, the chance to contribute to the society, and address social problems. Policies, programs and legislation taking gender issues in consideration were only mentioned twice by participants. One participant said mainstreaming gender in places where gender is not on the agenda, and one participant said having women specifically available in all fields, economic, political and social spheres.

### **How was Gender Mainstreaming implemented before and after the revolution?**

In responding to this question, participants identified who was responsible for Gender Mainstreaming in their organization, the history of Gender Mainstreaming in their organization, and the tools they used to implement Gender Mainstreaming. They also discussed the impact that the Egyptian revolution had on the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming.

**Responsibility for Gender Mainstreaming.** Five participants were consultants who mainly implemented Gender Mainstreaming themselves, three participants mentioned that gender units in organizations or ministries implement Gender Mainstreaming, four participants worked for organizations did not have gender units or focal points, but the whole

organization was implementing Gender Mainstreaming, and four participants who represented international organizations, did not implement Gender Mainstreaming themselves but recruited contractors and trained them to implement Gender Mainstreaming in their organizational structures or their projects. The table below illustrates who holds the responsibility for implementing Gender Mainstreaming in these organizations.

Table 1. Responsibility of Gender Mainstreaming.

Theme	Frequency
Consultant implement Gender Mainstreaming	5
Recruit contractors (int. organizations)	4
The whole organization is responsible	4
Gender units in organizations or ministries	3

***Organizational history of Gender Mainstreaming.*** When the participants were asked what the history of Gender Mainstreaming was in their organization and what Gender Mainstreaming activities and tools were implemented, the main activity was capacity building. The most common capacity building activity implemented by 11 of the participants interviewed was offering training and workshops on Gender Mainstreaming to other organizations' staff members and gender focal points. The second most implemented activity, mentioned by five of participants, was conducting awareness-raising activities and seminars, and producing manuals and publications on how to implement Gender Mainstreaming. Three participants said they offer technical support services to other organizations implementing Gender Mainstreaming. Three participants mentioned implementing gender indicators, which are measures based on sex statistical disaggregated data by which quantitative change can be assessed (Bridge, 2007), for other organizations. All of them were international organizations that recruit contractors to implement the projects they plan. Table 2 illustrates the frequency

and types of capacity building activities offered by projects implementing Gender Mainstreaming.

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Table 2. Gender Mainstreaming Activities

Theme	Frequency
<i>Capacity building activities</i>	
Training and workshops	11
Producing manuals	5
Offering technical support	3

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Three participants said they gave recommendations to other organizations on how to implement Gender Mainstreaming according to their structure and the culture of their organization. Two participants mentioned doing needs assessments as part of their gender-mainstreaming project before starting it. One participant said they do policy research. In addition, one participant mentioned establishing Equal Opportunity Units in ministries as a main activity. One participant said they do gender desensitization to their documents (manuals, strategy, design and curriculum) as an activity. Table 3 lists the other activities mentioned by the participants and their frequencies.

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Table 3. Other Gender Mainstreaming Activities

Other activities	
Themes	Frequency
Awareness raising and seminars	5
Putting gender indicators	3
Recommendations on how to implement Gender Mainstreaming	3

Needs assessments	2
Policy research	1
Establishing equal opportunity units in ministries	1
Gender desensitization of project documents	1

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*Use of Gender Mainstreaming tools.* According to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2003), several tools and curricula have been developed that have proven useful for promoting greater implementation of Gender Mainstreaming strategies. Examples of these tools are gender analysis, gender audits, gender budgeting, gender sensitive indicators, gender impact assessment techniques and gender specific activities. Participants did not frequently mention utilizing specialized Gender Mainstreaming tools, only six 6 (37%) of the participants mentioned using one of these tools. Developing gender policy for other organizations, gender budgeting, gender audits gender analysis, gender-desegregated and Fishbone analysis was each mentioned once by different participants. Eight of those participants (50%) mentioned that they implement activities targeted at women only, like, skills development training, loans and local funds for women. When the participants were asked if they evaluated their projects, almost half (7), of the participants said that the Gender Mainstreaming projects were not evaluated, either because there was not enough time to evaluate them or because they were not good in evaluation and they used the time and money to implement other activities, as one participant said “No, honestly we are not good in evaluations, we don’t do evaluations well, but we are starting to improve.” The remaining half did evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming projects, and of these, five participants said they did outcome evaluations, and three participants mentioned they did process evaluations. Table 5 shows the amount of projects evaluated and what type of evaluation.

Table 4. Evaluation

Theme	Frequency
Projects not evaluated	7
Outcome evaluation	5
Process evaluation	3
Impact evaluation	1

When participants were asked whether they implemented Gender Mainstreaming on the institutional or organizational level only, or in projects and programs targeted at the grassroots level or both, eight (50 %) participants said that they did Gender Mainstreaming projects to mainstream gender in institutions and organizations only. Three (18.75%) said that they implement Gender Mainstreaming in their project activities on the grassroots level, and five (31.5%) said they implemented Gender Mainstreaming on both the institutional and the program and grassroots level.

***Gender Mainstreaming after the revolution.*** When participants were asked how they see Gender Mainstreaming in their future work after the revolution, ten participants expressed feelings of uncertainty about the future of Gender Mainstreaming due to the political instability in Egypt, and about five of those participants said their work would depend on the results of the upcoming election since the data was collected before they president was announced. As one participant said:

Look, our work has stopped, our situation is bad... all our projects have stopped and waiting in (head office country), waiting what are the results of the elections, if the results of Shafik, although Shafik was not our first choice, all the projects will come, if the results are Morsi, it doesn't mean that the (head office country) will not engage

Egypt, because Egypt is a strategically important to all countries, but to a minimum, they will work in other things.

Three participants said that they either did not receive any acceptance on any of their projects or they put all their work on hold until the political situation is stabilized, one participant stated,

We are one of the organizations after the revolution who did not get one approval on any of our projects, they were not rejected, but we didn't take anything, some organizations got rejected, and that's what I am talking about, we have the money and the donor will take it back and we can't set a hand on it.

Two participants said they think Gender Mainstreaming would not be a priority for the government or organizations or policy makers. Three participants said they were optimistic about the future, while another three participants said that they were not. As one participant said "I am so afraid that the word gender would be deleted from the dictionary," adding that "no one knows where we are going, because if this system comes, or this system comes, they both have bad history with civil society organizations". In addition, two participants said they would shift to women empowerment activities and the rights based approach instead of Gender Mainstreaming. Two participants said they would focus on promoting women's political participation. Three participants said that they would remain working on Gender Mainstreaming as a crosscutting activity throughout their work. Also, focusing on mainstreaming gender in poor areas, focusing on having the religious parties as their partners and focusing on mainstreaming gender in workers syndicates were each mentioned once by the other participants. Table 5 shows how the participants see the future work of Gender Mainstreaming.

Table 5. Future of Gender Mainstreaming

Theme	Frequency
Uncertainty about the future because Of political change	10
Work has stopped since the revolution	3
Keep working on Gender Mainstreaming as a crosscutting theme	3
Gender Mainstreaming will not be a priority	2
Shift to women empowerment or RBA	2
Promoting women political participation	2
Work with Islamic political parties	1
Mainstreaming gender in workers syndicates	1
Mainstream gender in poor areas	1

**Has Gender Mainstreaming been effective at promoting gender equality?** In response to this question, participants discussed how they defined gender equality and how well they felt Gender Mainstreaming worked to promote that equality.

**Definitions of gender equality.** When participants were asked to describe what gender equality looked like for them, the majority (12) agreed that gender equality is represented by equal opportunities and equal chances for both genders, including employment opportunities and skills development. Equality involving having equal rights and responsibilities for both genders and the right for the freedom of choice was mentioned eight times by the participants, one participant said when asked what does gender equality look like for them,

It's just that we have the same opportunities and the same choices, and in order to have the same opportunities and the same ability to choose, that is for me gender equality, it doesn't mean that we need to choose the same thing or that we need to end the same place

The belief that gender equality is represented in a balanced distribution of gender roles was mentioned three times by the participants. Having a gender blind lens for all aspects of life was mentioned twice by the participants, as one participant said:

Gender equality to me means that people don't deal with, or institutions basically don't deal with people based on their sex, it might not sound right, but I want a gender blind lens when institutions are dealing with people, I don't want to be looked at as a woman, I want to be looked at as a person, in the labor market or the job market I want to be looked at through my qualifications or based on my resume, not based on my sex.

Being sensitive to gender based needs was also mentioned twice by the participants. One participant mentioned that if the concept of citizenship, which is being a political agent who is actively participating in the society and asking for civil, political and social rights, were applied, it would automatically create gender equality. One said they see gender equality as involving different gender roles, but that that difference does not indicate inequality saying,

I believe that we are different in gender and equal in terms of levels. We are complementing one another because we are different and this is my personal opinion and this variation and diversity to make both genders in need for one another.

Two participants stated that gender equality does not exist, as one of those participants said, Gender equality I don't think it exists, even in any cultural context ... it actually does not exist, because women play a triple role in the society, whether on the professional



level, domestic level, or the networking and community level and it's taken for granted.

Table 6 shows the answers mentioned by the participants about their vision of gender equality and the frequency of the answers.

Table 6. Definition of Gender Equality

Theme	Frequency
Equal opportunities and equal chances for both genders	12
Equal rights and responsibilities and freedom of choice	8
Balanced distribution of gender roles	3
Having a gender blind lens in all aspects of life	2
Being sensitive to gender needs	2
The concept of citizenship	1
Different in roles, equal in level	1
Gender equality does not exist	2

**Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming for promoting equality.** When participants were whether Gender Mainstreaming really works through your organization to move closer to the goal of gender equality, the majority of the participants, with a number of 12 (75%) said yes but they all said only under certain conditions: four participants said it has to be implemented appropriately, one stated "its 200% effective if you do it right", this meant, with good cooperation between stakeholders, that people have to believe in it, and it has to be done with the right requirements and prerequisites; two mentioned that it could only be effective on the institutional level; and one participant said it would only work if the implementers know that women and men are not starting at the same point and that women need more capacity building first, the participant stated,

I think that definitely Gender Mainstreaming, but Gender Mainstreaming that is aware that we are not starting at the same point and therefore that there is a need for gender equity measure, but GM alone, if you are starting from 0 and you are starting from 10 than what is the point? I mean it is not fair.

Two participants said that it works because the feminist approach either failed or was not adequate enough to address gender issues in the Egyptian culture. As one participant stated;

The word equality is now understood from the feminist perspective and feminism in Egypt, unfortunately when it started being applied, it was applied as it is in Europe. I think that the 1<sup>st</sup> generation feminism was unfair to the feminist movement. Egypt needs, so we can reach a real mainstreaming of gender, we need to go step by step in the framework of the culture, you can't adopt a shocking approach, if you keep shouting no one will listen to you.

Two participants said Gender Mainstreaming is the most practical and realistic approach for intervening in gender inequality. Five participants said that Gender Mainstreaming could not work alone; it would only work if it was implemented along with women specific activities and with the rights based approach. The three remaining participants felt that Gender Mainstreaming could not achieve the goal of gender equality because it is just a technical step, and does not actually impact the status of women, As one participant stated,

Gender Mainstreaming only makes sure that you are taking the right steps, you are not hurting anyone, and not forgetting anyone, it does not work on gender equality or women's empowerment, and that's why we are changing the approach, it does not focus on the implementation of the activities, the outcomes would only be counting heads, quantitative, and unfortunately numbers are justifiable but not indicative.

Finally, one participant said it would depend on the women mainstreamed and one mentioned that it is just a step towards women specific activities. Table 7 summarizes the answers of the participants when asked whether Gender Mainstreaming has been effective in achieving the vision of gender equality through your projects and the frequency of the answers.

Table 7. Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming

Theme	Frequency
Yes, but under certain conditions Good cooperation, believe, buy in of stakeholders, only on institutional level, with the right prerequisites, feminist approach was not adequate, most practical and realistic, depends on women in the mainstream	13
No, It's just a technical step, it tends to forget women	3

**What are the challenges and opportunities of Gender Mainstreaming as it has been implemented in Egypt?** In answering this question, participants described a variety of opportunities and challenges.

*Opportunities.* When participants were asked about the opportunities of Gender Mainstreaming, three themes emerged that could be classified into political opportunities, educational and achievement opportunities, and institutional and implementation opportunities.

*Political opportunities.* The majority of the participants mentioned opportunities related to the political events, which accompanied the revolution; these responses represented 62.5% of the sample. Five participants said that the political mobilization of the citizens and women's increase in political participation offered opportunities for Gender Mainstreaming.

Furthermore, two participants mentioned that there is now a mass of women voters that needs to be mobilized. Women are now claiming public spheres and asking for their rights was mentioned five times by the participants. One participant mentioned that political groups and parties could now be “blackmailed” into adopting a gender agenda, the participant stated,

Basically the opportunities let me start with the opportunities, the political groups and the political parties, in the phase of political mobilization we are living in that is turning into political action, you can easily blackmail many people into adopting a progressive agenda towards gender (laugh) especially the groups that label themselves progressive or civic, you can easily blackmail them into believing that gender must be part of their agenda, and I like the deal, you want to act progressive, you have to adopt the gender agenda as well, so I think these are the main opportunities we have.

Egypt having a very strong civil society that works under harsh conditions and even under strong resistance from the government and cares about the issue of gender equality was mentioned five times by the participants. Also, four of participants mentioned that gender issues are now on the table and taboo issues are being discussed. Two participants said that the social mobilization happening in the Egyptian society now is an opportunity. One participant said that now there is a higher possibility to negotiate with the government officials and ministries on gender policies. Table 8 illustrates the opportunities for Gender Mainstreaming related to the changes in the political situation and the frequency of the answers by the participants.

Table 8. Political Opportunities

Theme	Frequency
Political mobilization and women participation, rise of women leaders	6

Women are more likely to ask for their rights	5
A strong civil society after revolution	5
Taboo issues are being discussed	4
Mass of women voters	2
Social mobilization (civic engagement)	2
Possibility to negotiate with the government	1
Blackmail political groups/ parties to adopt a gender agenda	1

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*Educational and Achievement opportunities.* Some of the participants (4) mentioned greater citizen awareness and activism, and greater potential for women's education and achievement. Four participants mentioned that the level of awareness of the citizens has increased, as one participant said,

In the child upbringing process, families became more aware and they include the gender aspect in the process of upbringing, the equality and the roles of men and women and so on, I imagine that the other part related to the working woman is becoming a very important thing, the working women has much more roles and is aware of the idea of different roles much more than the stay at home mum, the new generation is looking for jobs, the idea of a girl who gets married and stays at home is not an option within our difficult life now, the struggle and going out and so on, she started understanding her rights and that there are different roles and so on, so that is a process present in the society and I believe it is an opportunity in the society.

The use of digital information for the exchange of experiences and information is an opportunity, was mentioned twice by the participants. Additionally, two participants said that more women are currently receiving education and two participants mentioned that more women are working and that's an opportunity. One participant said Egyptian students now

learn about the concept of gender. One participant said that new youth leaderships of men and women are now rising. Table 9 shows the frequency of the answers related to the educational and achievements opportunities happening in the Egyptian culture that represent an opportunity to Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt.

Table 9. Educational and Achievement Opportunities

Theme	Frequency
Educational and achievement opportunities	
Increase in awareness	4
More women are getting education	2
The use of digital media	2
More women are working	2

*Institutional and Implementation opportunities.* Some participants mentioned opportunities related to the achievements of Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt, and factors that would help the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt. These responses represented 37.5% of the answers of the participants. Four participants said Egypt has already taken many steps in Gender Mainstreaming, as the equal opportunity units in ministries, implementing gender budgeting by the ministry of finance and gender desegregated data by CAPMAS (The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics) so it would be hard to take backward steps regarding that. Three participants said that after the revolution, they are expecting funds to come in to Egypt for development as an opportunity, one participant said, They (an organization the participant was talking about) were going to close, and many organizations were closing, then they continued because of the revolution,

because the funds were focusing on Iraq and then all the conflict areas and now we are a conflict area so there are many funds coming to Egypt.

Moreover, Egypt having good gender experts was mentioned three times by the participants. In addition, two participants considered the fact that organizations are forced by either the National Council for Women or by their international head offices to implement Gender Mainstreaming is an opportunity. Two participants mentioned that the presence of National Council for Women is an opportunity. Finally, one participant said there is an increase in organizations asking for women's rights and that's an opportunity. Table 10 shows the opportunities of previous and current implementation of Gender Mainstreaming.

Table 10. Institutional and Implementation Opportunities

Themes	Frequency
Steps already taken in GM	4
Funds will come in	3
Egypt having good experts	3
International org, and NCW force GM	2
The presence of the NCW	2

**Challenges.** When participants were asked about the challenges currently facing Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt, the challenges mentioned by the participants could be classified into political challenges, cultural challenges and policy, technical and implementation challenges.

*Political challenges.* Some of the participants mentioned challenges related to the political changes accompanied with the revolution, these represented 56% of the responses. That the rise of Islamists and conservative groups and their participation in the parliament

presented a challenge to Gender Mainstreaming was mentioned 11 times by the participants (69% of the responses), as one of the participants stated,

I am afraid that the term gender is misunderstood, it is considered a western concept and with the rise of the Islamists and the Muslim Brotherhood's taking so much power, I am even afraid it will disappear, they emphasize that it is imposed on us from the west, which makes people reject the term gender and they flip every time they hear gender.

Another participant stated:

It's the part of the rise of the Islamic fundamentalism is a challenge, it's a big challenge especially that there is a trend to revise all the achievements that the feminist organizations were struggling or advocating for, for the past 20 years and now they are revising them and considering their cancellation because they are associated with the past, but the reality is, we advocated for the Khul' law for more than 10 years, we advocated for the age of marriage for more than that, circumcision took almost 50 years and in a blink they want to take all that, CEDAW, although the country has reservations on a lot of amendments for CEDAW, we were happy with it, at least I mean that we have CEDAW, now they are considering it a western oriented agreement and they are revising it, they talked about it, they said it does not reflect Egyptian family values and it was imposed from the west and they actually mentioned that on the last international women's day during the celebration of the Freedom and Justice Party, the Secretariat for Women, (sarcastic laugh), so of course this is a challenge because it directly affects the rights of women, it's also a challenge in terms of the certain expectations from women, firstly the work life balance in the work would be very much challenged, because they will emphasize even further the role of women in the house, the family, the dress code of women, how women should behave



on the street, so it is going to be very, very challenging, this is one challenge, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism.

The unstable political situation and the uncertainty about what is going to happen next is a challenge because it is not clear where gender issues will fall was mentioned five times by the participants. Moreover, four participants said that the government is politically resistant to accept mainstreaming initiatives and there is no buy in from policy makers; as one participant stated,

The government formulation is set up in a way dealing with women as if she is a complementary member of the society not as a main part and a contributor. The worst part is that the state is not willing to change this mind set ...it is simply not willing to put policies that will help elevate the society.

Another participant said,

And there is another part related to the culture and its political, which is the political will for a political system, and part of the constituencies of the patriarchal society, so there is constant political resistance, it starts from the educational system to the media and so on, it in itself makes the process of GM harder.

The participants mentioned the lack of participation of women in the parliament and the constitution writing twice as a challenge. One participant said there are new ideas and movements emerging but they are not organized or adopted by any organization in a sustainable way. Three participants mentioned legislative challenges as, one said that laws and policies were forced on people without preparing them, one participant said old policies and achievements around women's issues are associated with Suzanne Mubarak so it caused a backlash and one said that after the revolution the legislative process has become harder because of the instability in the parliament. One said women in the National Council for Women now doesn't have as much power and access to resources as the women before. One

mentioned the gender-based violence by the SCAF. Table 11 illustrates the challenges related to the political changes happening after the revolution and the frequency of the themes mentioned.

Table 11. Political Challenges

Theme	Frequency
The rise of Islamists	11
Unstable political situation	5
Government resistant/ no political will	4
Legislative challenges	3
Lack of political participation of women	2
NCW does not have power anymore	1
Gender based violence by SCAF	1

*Cultural challenges.* Some of the participants described challenges related to cultural issues, power issues between the genders, the way the community perceives gender equality, and how people respond to gender intervention. These responses represented 69% (11) of the answers. Seven of the participants mentioned that a main challenge is that the Egyptian culture, that the people and the NGOs don't accept gender discussions and interventions, one participant said:

We had the partners training but we didn't call it gender training, because the participants don't swallow it, they become defensive, and we applied to our topic, urban development in informal areas, so we didn't do it very theoretical, there was theoretical info in it but it was all coated with trying to enhance urban development

efforts through the participation of men and women, not to make it so offensive to people so they all won't be that on edge from the beginning.

Six participants made the point that a main challenge facing Gender Mainstreaming is that Egypt is a patriarchal society, one participant stated,

I mean I am not the kind of person who would shout out you know I am really scared with the rise of Islamists because I think that the patriarchal conservative society is a bigger threat, the society that would give space for fundamentalism, not the fundamentalists themselves are the issue.

Three participants said the misunderstanding and interpretation of religion is a challenge facing Gender Mainstreaming. An indicator of the strength of the influence of patriarchal culture is the finding that five participants said that women not believing in or are being resistant to gender equality is a challenge facing Gender Mainstreaming now. Three participants said that a challenge facing Gender Mainstreaming is that people are not aware of gender issues. Four participants mentioned that the Egyptian women lack the capacities and skills that make them competitive and that's a challenge. Four participants mentioned that the feminists in Egypt have taken a wrong approach to gender issues, by challenging gender norms and directly pushing for women's rights, that implementers disagree with and are still suffering from. As one participant said,

I myself am freezing all my activities and all the projects with for example the (a women rights organization that has a feminist background", because I disagree with them in the practice, because as I told you they work on forcing ideas on the people, but I see when I go down to the people I couldn't I have to take it step by step with them so I could get somewhere with them, I couldn't do that if I am fighting or I lose the men in the society, I am working on them both, I can't achieve anything while I am telling the women all the time, no the man has to cook or whatever, unfortunately

the attitude we talked with in the beginning about gender, it were not the right examples to be given, it's a dream and we're still not there, we have to give more practical experiences.

In addition, four participants said Ministries, NGOs and women networks do not collaborate but compete with each other and they don't have a unified goal or vision of gender equality.

Table 12 illustrates the cultural challenges facing the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming.

Table 12. Cultural Challenges

Theme	Frequency
All stakeholders are resistant to gender discussions	7
Patriarchal society	6
Women themselves are resistant to gender equality	5
Feminists have taken an aggressive approach addressing gender issues	5
Egyptian women lack the capacities, constituencies and skills	4
Lack of collaborations and competition	4
Misinterpretations of religion	3

*Policy, Technical and Implementation challenges.* The majority of the responses of the participants were about technical and implementation challenges that might prevent Gender Mainstreaming interventions from having the desirable effect. This category had 20 related responses. Ten participants mentioned that after the revolution, gender issues are not considered a priority, either by the government, policy makers or organizations. Five of those participants mentioned that there are not enough funds and budgets allocated for Gender Mainstreaming, or they were rejected or not accepted yet and one participant said that the

budget of her project has actually decreased. Five participants emphasized that the evaluation and reporting of on Gender Mainstreaming the effects of the intervention on the people or the change in the gender relations, is a challenge facing the implementation and impact of Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt. As, one participant said

Every time the reports would come from the field you would find three pages on the project results and the monitoring report on the gender, three lines, three lines and again quantitative, again quantitative, so it is a very difficult way, especially when gender is a crosscutting theme and not the main focus.

The work done is not enforced in the organizations and that they are usually put on the shelf and not used was also mentioned five times by the participants. Four participants said that Gender Mainstreaming, as a process is complicated and hard for people and organizations to understand, it is also a long, challenging and costly process. As one participant said:

“Some specialists worked on making something easier or simpler in application, we gave it in forms of schedules for example, we didn’t give it in this complicated way because its hard for people to understand and apply,” another participant said “ let me start by saying that GM is a very challenging process, ok? Especially in countries like ours where you have to level the playfield.”

That NGO management and staff implementing Gender Mainstreaming do not believe in Gender Mainstreaming as an approach was mentioned four times by the participants, as one participant stated,

You can do gender audit and extract very beneficial activities ... but the willing of the management is the issue, and that’s one of the main obstacles, even if we were taking trainings on GM and gender, they would always mention that even if the big organizations, the management and board would be the obstacle because the idea of this strong change and the acceptance of change is very hard; the idea of him looking

at everything from a gender perspective is hard, he would say yes I am already employing women and that's enough.

Table 13 illustrates the types and frequency of the technical and implementation challenges facing Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt.

Table 13. Technical and Implementation

Theme	Frequency
Gender not a priority	10
Design, indicators and reporting is quantitative	5
Work planned not being enforced	5
GM is hard, complicated, long, costly	4
Lack of believe by implementers	4

**What is the potential for implementing Gender Mainstreaming in post-revolutionary Egypt?** When the participants were asked to share their recommendations for the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt, they spoke of the need to build commitment, consider the cultural context, and to rethink implementation.

*The Need for Achieving Political will and Awareness Raising.* Seven participants said that we have to make the different stakeholders believe in the process of Gender Mainstreaming, the head of organizations and staff, policy makers and governments to achieve political will, and the community they are working with. One of those participant said that only governments have the power to implement Gender Mainstreaming and we have to be aware of this, this participant stated,

For me, from my long experience, civil society is unable to implement Gender

Mainstreaming; it has to be a governmental body that is in a position higher than, you will have to order to do it actually or to ask them to do it, in my opinion the NCW has a very good chance, if its composition was different... now actually it is headed by Mervate el Telawy, who has no power what so ever, I mean, when it was Suzanne Mubarak at that time everybody feared her, Mervat el Telawy does not have any power.

Four participants said show the people the cost of gender inequality and the gains of gender equality. Three participants recommended educating the media. Two participants we need to educate the people the meaning of gender equality as not to be resistant to the interventions. Two recommended giving awareness raising activities to change the stereotypes of women and keeping a track record of the achievements of women. Table 14 illustrates the themes related to achieving political will and the need for awareness raising and the frequency of these themes as mentioned by the participants.

Table 14. The Need for Achieving Political will and Awareness Raising

Theme	Frequency
Achieve political will	7
Only governments have the power to implement GM	
Need for Awareness Raising	
Show the people the cost of GIE and the gain of GE	4
Educating the media	3
Educate the people about the meaning of GE	2
Change the stereotypes of women	2

***Need to consider gender in cultural context.*** Five participants recommended applying gender sensitive approaches that understand the culture, in all activities, like putting in consideration the time and place of an activity to suit both genders and invitations specific to each gender. Four participants recommended not losing the men and involving them in all the activities. Also, three participants mentioned that implementers and researchers have to understand the power structure and relations in the society and between both genders before and after working on Gender Mainstreaming. Three participants said implementers should not take religion and culture for granted and be culturally sensitive. Two recommended not using the same approach with different communities. Table 15 illustrates the recommendations of the participants related to the Egyptian culture and how to be culturally sensitive.

Table 15. Need to consider gender in cultural context

Theme	Frequency
Applying gender sensitive approaches	5
Involve the men	4
Understand gender relations and power	3
Don't take religion for granted	3

***Need to rethink implementation.*** Three participants said Gender Mainstreaming has to be in the plan, design and conceptualization from the beginning. Three said organizations should mainstream gender in their structure to be an example to other organizations. Two recommended learning from the previous experiences in previous interventions. Two said implementers have to be careful not to “mess with the system” or do harm. Two



recommended doing gender analysis as a gender-mainstreaming tool in order to understand gender relations, the needs of both genders and the effect of the intervention on both.

Additionally, two said that usually the gender analysis shows that women are more in need of interventions so they need specific activities targeted to fit their needs as Gender

Mainstreaming is not enough, one participant said:

They (the head office) came in the new projects before the revolution they said they must take a GM approach, so interviewed all the gender experts in Egypt and they were all against this, they said that we think that having a gender outcome is important because it means that you have accountability, its very difficult without having a gender outcome and just saying that all projects must mainstreaming gender to have accountability, its very difficult because it is very challenging to do GM, you are talking to people on the ground who don't know how to do it and they want to report on their main project objectives, the main project results.

Other recommendations mentioned once by different participants were, be creative, be flexible, do gender audits, and change the whole administrative system of governments and ministries. Table 16 shows the frequency of themes mentioned by the participants related to the need to rethink implementation.

Table 16. Need to rethink implementation

Theme	Frequency
Conceptualization of Gender Mainstreaming from the beginning	3
Be an example	3
Learn from previous experiences	2
Do not mess with the system	2

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*Additional themes.* There were other common themes that were not part of the answers of the questions that are worth mentioning. Three participants said they don't use the term gender in their Gender Mainstreaming activities and projects; instead they use words like youth participation or community participation. Three mentioned that Gender Mainstreaming interventions could change the system of gender relations leading women to take double or even triple roles; being a wife and a mother and an employee. Two said that the bad economic situation, actually helped empower women and not the opposite, they started working and being financially independent and supporting families, and they are more aware of their rights and the way they affect the community. Two said that the success of Gender Mainstreaming depends on the type of women being mainstreamed. One participant said they use Gender Mainstreaming as a step towards establishing a feminist approach. Finally, only one participant talked about a project targeting men as a Gender Mainstreaming activity.

## **Discussion**

### **Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality in the Egyptian Context**

**Defining Gender Mainstreaming.** The formal definition of Gender Mainstreaming by the UN Economic and Social Council (1997/2) states that:

Gender Mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres

so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (UN, 2003).

When participants were asked about their definition of Gender Mainstreaming, the most common definition was “having gender within everything” and when they were asked what that meant, they said things such as, asking that both genders having the same rights and chances to contribute to the society or women specifically being involved in all fields. Only two of the 16 participants said it involved policies, programs and legislation. This demonstrates that while the basic goal of Gender Mainstreaming, gender equality, is understood, there is no common definition. No participants mentioned the need for assessing and understanding the implications of gender as the first step in the Gender Mainstreaming process. The finding that the people responsible for implementing Gender Mainstreaming do not share a similar view of what it involves, and have definitions of it which differ from official definitions provides support for critiques which argue that Gender Mainstreaming has been vaguely defined. According to Carney (2004), there appears to be confusion around the Gender Mainstreaming definition, as it seems ambiguous to implementers and it does not provide clear ways to apply it practically and not theoretically. Lombardo (2003) too, makes the point that the ambiguity of the definition of Gender Mainstreaming makes the approach challenging to achieve in practice and this vagueness of the mainstreaming could prove difficult to apply to the reality.

Despite the fact that participants did not share the view of Gender Mainstreaming outlined in the formal definition, their descriptions of Gender Mainstreaming are in line with their visions of gender equality. The majority of participants agreed that gender equality is defined as equal opportunities for employment, pay, and skill development, and the availability of choices. The second most common definition of gender equality was having equal rights and responsibilities for both genders. The participants’ understanding of Gender

Mainstreaming represents a tool to reach equal chances, rights and responsibilities and higher participation of women, which means there is a consensus that their perception of Gender Mainstreaming in general as a tool to help them reach their vision of gender. Gender equality is defined by Reeves and Baden (2000) as “women having the same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere”, the definition is highly similar to what the participants said, yet, the participants did not specify women, but said both genders should have equal opportunities and chances.

**Implementing Gender Mainstreaming.** The findings showed that there are a large number of gender expert consultants as the main implementers of Gender Mainstreaming. They also showed that Gender Mainstreaming mainly works on the institutional level and might not filter down to community-based organizations. Further, the main Gender Mainstreaming activities taking place are capacity building of organizations so they would be able to implement Gender Mainstreaming, and awareness raising activities about gender issues. There is a lack in the use of Gender Mainstreaming tools or strategies such as gender analysis, gender budgeting, gender desegregated data and gender audits. More than half of the Gender Mainstreaming projects are not evaluated, so we can't tell whether or not they had an impact and the remaining percentage mainly do only outcome evaluation.

**The need to institutionalize Gender Mainstreaming.** The majority of participants were consultants (31.25%), then feminist and human rights organizations (25%) who either use Gender Mainstreaming as a crosscutting theme in their work or do it as an activity on the side, and international organizations (25%); who give funds to contractors who propose projects according to their criteria and ask them for reports and provide technical support. Two (12.5%) of the participants were part of a governmental organization or ministry. Only one (6.5%) local non-governmental organization was suggested and was one of the participants. This sample shows that the majority of the Gender Mainstreaming projects are

done by consultants, international or human rights organizations. Governmental organizations and local NGOs do not implement Gender Mainstreaming. These findings were unexpected as Gender Mainstreaming is a top down approach, which means that the government should be calling for its implementation. Additionally, it's interesting to find that human rights organizations implement Gender Mainstreaming while they are expected to take a rights based approach. Yet, several of the participants in these organizations said they used Gender Mainstreaming as an entry point to work on women's rights so that people won't reject the initiatives from the beginning.

Gender Mainstreaming's implementation in Egypt is not different than Gender Mainstreaming implementation in the international community. A recent study done by the African Development Bank Group in 2011 found that, even though mainstreaming should make gender everyone's business, thus effectively making the role of specialized gender experts unnecessary, this organizational status has not been realized in practice. It was discovered that the staff implementing their projects was active at the international policy and strategic level, and in research on gender equality. Yet, this did not filter down to the country implementation level, where there were restricted resources. This again confirms what the participants said, that Gender Mainstreaming is a challenging, long, costly and hard to understand process, thus, only international organizations or governmental institutions could implement it. Moreover, an overall problem with the procurement process, which involves consulting firms or NGOs bidding for a fund from international organizations or foundations, is that it gives space for a changing collection of these consulting firms or individuals with a diverse mix of teams who do not sustain their work for each project (Pradhan, 2004). Usually a consulting firm would be successful in winning contracts due to their positive track record in earlier phases or similar projects in the country or in the region, so the consultants are not the same and they leave the project or the community when their contract ends, they run out

of money, or the project phase ends. This represents a major challenge to the implementation process of Gender Mainstreaming since it results in lack of follow up, thus the discontinuation of the Gender Mainstreaming initiatives.

Rima das Pradhan (2004) gave some recommendations for consulting firms to encourage the institutionalization of Gender Mainstreaming so that other organizations would have the capacities to implement it when the consultants leave. This could be achieved through strategies including having an in-house gender specialist or focal point that advises on all aspects of the project process, including an audit of technical proposals submitted, as well as an ongoing process of gender-awareness raising and training within the organization, which involves business development, senior management and project management teams as a part of staff development strategies.

***Gender Mainstreaming tools and activities.*** According to the results, there is a lack of use of Gender Mainstreaming tools, as gender policy research and proposals, gender budgeting, gender analysis, gender audits and using gender desegregated data were only mentioned one time by the different participants. In addition, the main Gender Mainstreaming activities implemented are capacity building activities and awareness raising activities. The majority of the participants stated that they gave training sessions and workshops on how to implement Gender Mainstreaming in other organizations and institutions, produce manuals on how to use it, and some give technical support to organizations to implement Gender Mainstreaming. This could be because Gender Mainstreaming is a new approach in Egypt so that trainings and awareness raising are needed, however, few attempts to take additional steps were mentioned by the participants. Funders and governments need to consider further steps of using gender-mainstreaming tools and assess how far gender-mainstreaming work has gone and where it stands.

***Lack of evaluation.*** Most of the projects are not properly evaluated or not evaluated

at all; other projects that are evaluated have mainly done outcome evaluation. The lack of process or implementation evaluation represents another challenge in the implementation and evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming projects. Implementation evaluation could help determine whether the activities of Gender Mainstreaming are being implemented appropriately and as needed, it could also provide more qualitative information on what exactly is happening during the implementation. A sound implementation evaluation could help solve an issue with implementation in an early stage instead of wasting resources, and ensure that there is no harm being done, and it would increase the accountability of implementers (Bliss & Emshoff, 2002).

*Integration across levels.* Most of the Gender Mainstreaming projects done are done on the institutional level, in departments in organizations and on employees, and not in the field with different communities, and with the expectation that these institutions will implement what they learn with other smaller institutions. This is the case in other countries implementing Gender Mainstreaming as well, according to the Council of Europe (2004).

Gender Mainstreaming is a political process as well as a technical one. It involves new ways of devising and approaching policies, with the belief that these approaches will cause a shift in organizational or in institutional culture and that should eventually lead to changes in societal structures. According to some of the participants, the Egyptian government along with the efforts of civil society organizations has taken initial steps to mainstream gender in ministries and governmental institutions. According to the interviews, in 2002 the National Council for Women drafted a five-year plan to mainstream gender in the national plan from 2002 to 2007, they did this through several activities, and the most important activity was the establishment of the equal opportunity units, which were proposed to 30 ministries. Those units, affiliated directly with the minister's office, were to underline issues of concern to working women, integrate these issues in the ministry's draft plan, stress

the participation of women in all stages of decision-making, and ensure that women obtain their constitutional rights in the workplace (NCW, 2004). In the 2007 to 2012 plan, Egypt put the national five-year plan for the socio-economic development to meet the needs of both men and women, adopting gender budgeting tools in the ministry of finance (Hassan, 2008). The ministry of finance has started, through the equal opportunity unit, doing gender performance budgeting in the education, health, water and irrigation and the agricultural sectors.

The direction or shape of the work on Gender Mainstreaming after the 2011 Egyptian revolution is not clear yet. Most of the participants expressed their uncertainty about what their work would look like, and said that the approach of the work would depend on the new political system and whether gender issues would be a priority. Consultants, who do not work as fulltime employees in an organization and are recruited to do Gender Mainstreaming work, especially emphasized this. Some stated that they have not received acceptance or funds for Gender Mainstreaming projects yet but others said that there is a higher chance for receiving funds in general because Egypt is a conflict area now and developmental and international organizations would want to contribute to the development process after the revolution. Yet, it seems from the results that some organizations, those for which Gender Mainstreaming work is a crosscutting theme or activity, will continue doing Gender Mainstreaming and may be finding new approaches to implement it, others will shift on women empowerment, and one stated they will start working as partners with Islamic or conservative political parties.

***Effectiveness at promoting gender equality.*** When participants were asked whether Gender Mainstreaming would eventually help them achieve their visions of gender equality, the majority of the participants answered “yes,” but only on the institutional level. However, it was also felt that changes on the institutional level would filter down and create societal changes. As one participant stated,



It will achieve it but on the institutional level, I think that gender equality is an interrelation between the institution and the society, they are both interrelated, but at least on the institutional level it will lift the burden, and it will eventually impact the family and the society, because of course changing the mindset of the society is extremely difficult so the institution can impact that. I will give you an example of a working mother, if my husband is convinced that my work is not affecting my role as a mother, he will believe and value the work that I am doing, he will value the organization I am working at, he will not undervalue my economic role, but if he sees that because I am a working mother, I abandon my children or I send my children at an early age to nursery or I work for late working hours that is not being acceptable considering my marital status he will under value my work even if I get a lot of money, because my main role in society is being a mother and a caring wife and a clever housewife, so if the institution that I work in, succeeds in helping me maintain a work life balance, then my work will be valued by the rest of the society, whether my husband, my family, neighbors and the society as if, it's the part of maintaining a work life balance.

Participants also felt that Gender Mainstreaming would be effective in achieving gender equality if the prerequisites were in place, the right environment for Gender Mainstreaming was provided, and not without using other approaches to complement it. The prerequisites they mentioned were, good cooperation between stakeholders, buy in of all stakeholders, achieving political will by the government and policy makers, accountability, the use of Gender Mainstreaming tools (mainly gender analysis), and men and women having the same skills and capacities. As mentioned in the literature review, several participants mentioned that Gender Mainstreaming needs to be complimented other approaches, as the women's rights approach or the WID approach.

**Gender Mainstreaming after the revolution and in the rise of conservatism.**

When asked about the future of Gender Mainstreaming after the revolution, participants discussed a number of challenges and opportunities, and emphasized the need for certain conditions to be in place in order for Gender Mainstreaming to succeed.

***Challenges of conservatism.*** When participants were asked about the challenges of implementing Gender Mainstreaming, the majority said that the main challenges are the rise of Islamists and the conservative wave that has made many attempts to roll back the progress that has been made in Egypt regarding gender equality. For example, these groups have called for the cancelation of CEDAW, and have moved to strike down laws that preserve women's rights. Harclerode (2012) argues that Gender Mainstreaming can be crucial during times of post conflict especially with the rise of what she calls "hyper-fundamentalism," which is the case in Egypt. The cautionary cases of Iran and Afghanistan demonstrate the impact of not pursuing gender equality as part of a reconstruction effort and specifically the possibility of the emergence of conservative movements which seek to eliminate the rights of women. In addition, Harclerode also argues that the association of previous achievements with a failed system can cause the elimination of rights of women and their participation. This is also the case in Egypt since these conservative groups use the association of the laws and legislations with the old regime as a justification to cancel or edit them.

***Opportunities for increased implementation.*** There were several opportunities for implementing Gender Mainstreaming in post-revolutionary Egypt, which were mentioned by the participants. These mostly focused on the increase of the participation of women in the different fields and were mainly political; like women political and women rights activists who are associated with the revolution (ex: Samira Ibrahim, Asmaa Mahfouz, Esraa Abdelfatah, Mona Seif, etc) even if they are not officially invited to participate by the government, and their ability after the revolution to break the fear and silence and ask for

their rights and freedoms. This is particularly important as Gender Mainstreaming policies can be helpful when both men and women citizens actively engaged themselves in the revolutionary conflict (Harclerode, 2012). As argued by Harclerode, this equal engagement helps overcome the patriarchal “citizen-warrior” in which the man is the main warrior and defender and women are protected, to reach the gender-neutral “citizen-defender” and thus creates a stronger foundation for Gender Mainstreaming. Gender Mainstreaming initiatives result in a more systematic pursuit and adoption of gender equality, especially in places where gender is not explicitly included. It is more effective than the creation of separate male or women groups, which according to Harclerode, is more likely to prohibit the consideration of gender during important policy decisions that are not related to these organizations.

Another opportunity discussed was the fact that there are steps that have been taken in the previous decades, such as the ministry of finance enforcing gender performance budgeting, the establishment of the National Council for Women, the establishment of the equal opportunity units, and the CAPMAS doing gender desegregated data. All are opportunities for better and further implementation of Gender Mainstreaming as they have already taken steps using Gender Mainstreaming tools and forcing those governmental entities to adopt Gender Mainstreaming. Also participants mentioned that Egypt has good experts trained on Gender Mainstreaming. All these opportunities constitute a foundation for Gender Mainstreaming to work in the right environment if the appropriate prerequisites are in place. This small progress for women preceding the revolution could help kick off Gender Mainstreaming policies, however, as demonstrated by what happened in Iran and Afghanistan, the assumed association of laws and legislations related to women’s rights by the previous regimes also has the potential to be used against those laws (Harclerode, 2012). Since the revolution, the SCAF and Conservative groups have dissolved the quota for women parliamentarians, woman have taken only eight seats as opposed to 64, and they have also

attempted to eliminate laws associated with Suzanne Mubarak mainly because the policies she championed are tied to the overthrown regime, saying they don't preserve family traditions or seek to "protect the Egyptian Families" (Riggs, 2012).

***Conditions for successful implementation.*** Gender Mainstreaming has potential for implementation and seems to be the best approach to achieve gender equality if some important factors are present. In Mehra & Gupta's (2006) assessment of Gender Mainstreaming, several factors were identified that are essential for the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in NGOs. These factors exactly correspond with what participants said was important for implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in Egypt. These factors begin with achieving political will, which requires that the government take steps and be accountable for implementing Gender Mainstreaming as a tool for achieving gender equality. That political will must also be combined with accountability of other stakeholders, such as policy makers and organizations. It is also essential to success to have men committed to and involved in the process. And finally, Gender Mainstreaming must be paired with other women's rights approaches implemented by civil society organizations in Egypt, which have proven to be effective and represent a great opportunity for the future.

*Achieving political will and accountability.* Most approaches to peace building after or during times of conflict or revolutions have either ignored or marginalized issues of gender and women. Women constantly remain a minority in peace building projects; they receive less attention than men by the state in peace building policies; and gender analysis rarely informs peace-building strategies (Mehra & Gupta, 2006). However, according to Harclerode (2012) Gender Mainstreaming in post-conflict situations provides one of the best opportunities for gender equality and reduced conflict in the years following revolution.

The findings of this study show how important it is to establish political will which has been lacking in Egypt. According to the Council of Europe (2004), political will is one of

the most important prerequisites for the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming. The state must define gender equality as one of its main objectives. Egypt's agreement to the CEDAW Convention shows a visible commitment, however, this is not enough. It could have been signed as an attempt to "look good" or in response to pressure from the international community, but does not necessarily mean that the government is determined to achieve gender equality. Gender Mainstreaming should be made a political issue. NGOs can be important in helping to create this political will. The government should additionally issue a 'mission statement' stating explicitly its intention to mainstream gender equality into all policies, legislation and programs, and indicate that the objective is that these programs and policies will effectively promote and lead to gender equality. The government will also have to put clear criteria for Gender Mainstreaming, which can help with implementation.

Without a strong political will to create a consensus on, and a culture of, gender equality, the policy of Gender Mainstreaming will not be successful. Without political will, there will be no reallocation of funds for developing knowledge of gender issues or for developing and implementing policies with a gender perspective (Council of Europe, 2004). The Commission of the European Communities states that there is a strong correlation between the political will for Gender Mainstreaming and public awareness of gender equality issues (Council of Europe, 2004). Hence, governments will need to support awareness-raising activities along with dissemination of knowledge regarding gender equality. It can be assumed that given the signature of the Platform for Action and CEDAW, an official political will already exists. This means that the process of Gender Mainstreaming can be started, even if it requires more than political will alone.

*Participation of women.* Another prerequisite stated by the Council of Europe (2004), is the increase of participation of women in political life. Experience shows that in countries where a greater number of women participate in decision-making, changes are greater and

take place at a quicker rate. Participants in this research made the point that the participation of women in the revolution created an opportunity for greater involvement. This involvement is crucial as it will be difficult to achieve political will for Gender Mainstreaming if women are not fully engaged in political and public decision making process (Council of Europe, 2004). Diverse women from all sectors and communities should be involved in crucial political activities, like the writing of the constitution and the parliament, to be able to advocate for the different needs of all women. Unfortunately, this is still not the case in Egypt, as women in the parliament mostly represent conservative groups, like the Muslim Brotherhood, and few women are involved in the process of writing of the constitution.

*Recommendations to Increase the Political Will and Accountability.* Discussions with the conservative groups and parties are very important in the coming phase since they are the current ruling party in Egypt. Civil society organizations need to find new ways to deal with these groups and address them, instead of acting as their enemies and ignoring their existence (Abdel Rahman, 2002). Discussions with parties like the Freedom and Justice party, the party currently in power, need to take place. Civil society organizations need to convince them to put gender on their agenda to be able to achieve political will, hold them accountable and make them keep the agreements and conventions Egypt signed in the past. Gender Mainstreaming as an approach tries to be more culturally sensitive, since it involves both genders, considers their needs and could be introduced under any topic, and could use the differences in experiences and needs of both men and women to actually achieve gender equality. As suggested by one participant, a way to do this might be to use terms other than “gender equality.” For example, advocating for community participation and showing the gains to be made from the participation of women and the costs of their exclusion.

Although Egypt has good gender experts and consultants, there is no buy in, the work is not enforced, and Gender Mainstreaming is often considered cultural imperialism. We need to start establishing, through coalitions and women's networks a unified definition, vision of gender equality that fits our culture. Also, a unified goal of Gender Mainstreaming and culture specific approaches, tailored to our community or region needs to be established. These approaches would be based on research and needs and gender analysis, and people would be trained on them, instead of having consultants trained in western cultures who don't have enough experience with the implementation process and its politics in this region. There is a need to create an Egyptian model of Gender Mainstreaming, with an Egyptian definition of gender equality, a unified vision and goal, and the culturally sensitive tools that could be used in the Egyptian community. All stakeholders should get together, policy makers, consultants, international organizations, ministries and governmental institutions and community based organizations, and reach a common ground regarding the needs, definitions, tools and an action plan to be implemented, taking a participatory approach. A government official along with representatives from organizations needs to be responsible for following up and coordination of the action plan that needs to be implemented.

*Accountability.* The second most mentioned challenge is no buy in from policy makers, governments, or organizations that should be held accountable for implementing Gender Mainstreaming. This leads to Gender Mainstreaming being an activity that is done on the side or is not implemented at all. Karen Nyborg (2003) argues that public policy can only cause a change in behavior or culture if people believe it's for the greater good. Policy makers and governments don't spend time and money for the right implementation of Gender Mainstreaming because they don't believe in it or in gender equality and so it's not a priority for them.

Rima Das Pradhan (2004) argues that Gender Mainstreaming is unlikely to be

implemented appropriately throughout a project's phases because technical requirements from the donor would be small, team members responsible for gender are likely to be resistant, or because existing biases within the project country's executing agency, which would lead to Gender Mainstreaming becoming a "mere add-on". She points out that projects are often constructed in a way to provide an opportunity for donors and recipients alike to add "a tick to the gender box." This allows them to show commitment to Gender Mainstreaming, yet without really incorporating gender-mainstreaming strategies into all the necessary sectors, which provide the overall framework for addressing gender inequalities. The participants in the current study confirmed this point, and said that the lack of buy in from all stakeholders results in no enforcement of the work, or just putting Gender Mainstreaming as a side activity to report on and satisfy the donor. For example, when one of the participants in this study was asked whether Gender Mainstreaming is achieving gender equality, she answered,

Not as it should be, no, but that's my personal opinion, but the people, they don't believe in what we do or what they are asked to do, so Gender Mainstreaming ended up actually being an activity on the side, because donors or head offices want it, and what happens is, we get the old documents of the projects and see if we forgot to put a gender component and say well, let's make it gender sensitized and put an activity for it.

Another problem that was mentioned several times by the participants is that the planning, reporting and evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming has all been quantitative, and lacks an in depth analysis of the change that has been caused by Gender Mainstreaming interventions. According to Daspradhan (2004), progress and lessons learned in implementing Gender Mainstreaming strategies need to involve not only quantitative gender-disaggregated data, but also comprehensive, contextual qualitative analysis to be able to



understand whether Gender Mainstreaming is changing the culture of gender inequality or causing no change or actually causing harm.

Achieving political will after the revolution, along with awareness raising to make stakeholders believe in Gender Mainstreaming, will allow us to hold policy makers, organizations and implementers accountable for the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming activities during the post- revolutionary reconstruction process. However, asking organizations and institutions to crosscut Gender Mainstreaming to projects that are not gender specific is not enough. In the interviews, one participant said that organizations have to report on gender specific outcomes, and not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. Moreover, process indicators could help ensure accountability as they can help determine whether or not project implementation, including gender goals and activities are on track, and can also help diagnose problems and fix them. In addition, evaluation of gender results is inhibited by the constant scarcity of gender-disaggregated data and, by the lack of agreed upon gender equality indicators (Mehra & Gupta, 2006). Finally, the role of accountability at the management levels of organizations has to be explicitly established as the need for accountability and may be concentrated at the very top level of implementation.

*Recommendations to increase accountability.* There were some recommendations from some participants to increase accountability of the government or international or national developmental organizations in implementing Gender Mainstreaming. One recommendation was that the composition of the board of directors of the National Council of Women should be the ministers of different ministries (health, education, agriculture, culture, etc.), and they would sit on the board with the head of the council and the prime minister. Having all of the ministries on board would help insure that all their projects and plans include Gender Mainstreaming strategies and activities, and would encourage accountability as they would be required to report back on the implementation. Another

suggestion was that instead of creating initiatives such as economic development or democratization and mainstreaming gender within them, gender should be area of focus, and according to gender analysis and the needs of both genders; we could crosscut any other issue under it.

*Involving men.* Several participants and several Gender Mainstreaming sources mentioned the involvement of men as a recommendation. One participant, when asked if she has any recommendations for other organizations implementing Gender Mainstreaming said,

If they are women organizations, they have to mainstream gender, because if I want to let the women get their rights, I have to involve men with me, because who is that man? It's the husband or the father, the husband who would won't allow her to come to an awareness seminar, a father or a brother who would tell her that she is wasting her time, so if they were not mainstreamed in the foundations work, she would not be able to get her rights much and if they are working on human rights, so we are working with humans, and the humans are not classified, men and women, so there has to be mainstreaming in all the work, all the organizations, whoever her target group is.

Promotion of gender equality should concern and involve men as well as women. In the past years more research has been done focusing on the gender perspective of men. According to the UN, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (2001), there are three main approaches taken in the increased focus on men: First, the need to identify men as allies for gender equality and involve them more actively in this work. Second, the recognition that gender equality is not possible unless men change their attitudes and behavior in many areas. And third, that gender structures present in many frameworks are negative for men as well as for women, which creates unrealistic load on men and requires men to behave in restricted ways. The increased focus on men will have significant

impact on future strategies for working with gender perspectives in development, since they are part of the decision making and policy drafting process (UN, 2003). As mentioned in the quote above, the man is the husband or brother or father that could prevent the woman from participating in the public sphere, the employer who could discriminate against her, preventing her from having same opportunities, or a future president or minister who would ignore her presence in the political restructuring process, thus, we have to raise the awareness of men as men so the women would actually have the space to exercise the rights they gain.

*Recommendations for involving men.* A suggestion that was again mentioned by several participants on how to increase men's support for and involvement in Gender Mainstreaming is making them understand the cost of gender inequality and the gains of gender equality, whether political, economic, social or psychological. This will also eventually challenge the negative concepts of masculinities (ex: domination, violence, etc.). To do that, organizations need to convince men in their institutional structures with Gender Mainstreaming so they would have enough men to address men in other institutions and communities. Moreover, feminist organizations in Egypt and worldwide have been criticized for being biased towards employing women and not employing enough men in their organizational structure. These organizations need to increase the participation of men so they would again address men in other organizations and communities. One example mentioned by a participant that demonstrates the importance of the involvement of both genders even on the program and community level, in an education project their organization was working on. The participant from this organization stated

You can't just work with women, men are crucial to be able to change the whole community and prepare it for women empowerment, let me give you an example, in an education project we were working on, working on accessible school for girls, we were working in an area where there are few schools and they are far, boys go to

school but because they don't have enough capacity not everyone goes to school, when we built these schools and there was enough capacity for enough girls, families realized that now the girls get to go to schools and their sons won't, so they refused to send the girls to school, so we had to make the schools, instead of 100% girls, 80% girls and 20% boys. So you see here, if we didn't work with the men, we wouldn't have empowered the girls; you have to empower their 'superiors' to be able to empower them. To empower women you have to prepare the community because empowerment means you're taking power from someone, you have to let them know how will this de-powerment [sic] benefit them.

The participant here is trying to say that if they didn't work with the men, they wouldn't have provided education opportunities to the girls. This example illustrates the importance of considering men and the power relations in the society to be able to benefit both genders, hence, achieve gender equality.

*Pairing Gender Mainstreaming with other approaches.* Gender Mainstreaming post revolutions is essential, as it decreases the chance of future violence and enables an establishment for systematic gender equality (Harclerode, 2012). However, it may not be the only strategy that should be employed. Participants in the current study felt that women's empowerment and women rights approaches need to also be used with Gender Mainstreaming to address specific discrimination or violence against women issues. Patti O'Neil (2004) argues that organizations need to readopt the women's rights approach and developmental organizations should stop shying away from it. She argues that Gender Mainstreaming provided a better analysis of the situation of both genders and the power relations between them, but provided relatively little evidence of practical approaches to address them. In her opinion, the women's rights approach provides us with a clearer set of goals to work towards gender equity. She makes the point that we need both approaches in

order to respond properly to specific circumstances. Given that Egypt is in now working toward the reconstruction of the nation post revolution and new political groups and systems are emerging that are dominated by conservative groups, it makes sense to pair these approaches. The top down approach of Gender Mainstreaming as a public policy concept can help change beliefs about gender equality as well as behavioral norms, and the women rights approach can help fight for the sustainability of the steps already taken and give special attention to gender issues and combating violence against women.

Feminist and women's rights approaches have made great progress in Egypt throughout the years. For example, Muslim and secular feminists worked together to introduce a new Islamic marriage contract, and they have also worked together on campaigns against female genital mutilation (Moghadam, 2004). In 1999, they modified Article 291 – which exonerated rapists who married their victims (Moghadam, 2004). According to Moghadam (2004) Islamic feminists and reformists have an important role to play in showing that cultural diversity is in fact part of the history and make-up of the Middle East. However, there is no single Middle Eastern response to feminist activism. For example Palestine and Lebanon have been indifferent to feminist initiatives, states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia were hostile to these initiatives, and states like Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco were receptive (Moghadam, 2004).

In Egypt, feminist initiatives were critiqued as they caused women to be marginalized because they worked with them on the margins or separately, without considering gender relationships (Mehra & Gupta, 2006). According to participants, the community is resistant to feminist initiatives and they are not aware of the definition of gender equality. Some initiatives caused women to take on double roles, as employees and housewives, because the whole society was not prepared and they didn't work with men, so feminists received higher resistance from the community. Feminism is also criticized for not addressing economic

issues of women and focusing on violence and family law. Feminists in Egypt throughout the years had to work independently from the government because of the increase of conservatism in the governments and the resistance of the governments towards them. Also, Moghadam (2004) says it should be noted that the activities of secular feminists tend to represent the worldview of the educated, upper middle class. These are challenges that will have to be addressed if feminist initiatives are to be successfully implemented in conjunction with Gender Mainstreaming.

*An Example from Tunisia.* Other countries in the region with similar social and gender roles and political situations like Egypt have reported having positive experiences with Gender Mainstreaming. For example, a project that has been successful in Tunisia, done by the International Development Research Center (IDRC), is the Integrated Agricultural development Project in a village in Tunisia, called Zaghuan. The project was set-up to alleviate poverty with a special focus on gender equality and women empowerment. Thus, it aims at enhancing women's participation. A special focus of the project is to enhance women active participation in decision-making fields. Throughout the implementation, the project introduced different economic development, vocational training, and access to credit activities. All activities shared a common goal: decreasing women's workload for household needs and improving their living conditions. The project took a participatory approach, involving all stakeholders, management of NGOs and local community members and adopted Gender Mainstreaming in all its activities from the start. All the stakeholders were trained on Gender Mainstreaming before the implementation of the project. The documents and reports on this project tell the story of Seham, a woman from this village who was chosen to be part of the local development committee. Siham received training on participatory approach and Gender Mainstreaming, sponsored and organized by Zaghuan Project. In 2003, Siham participated in the awareness raising sessions about micro-credit and the Credit Component

of Zaghouan Project. The project helped in her economic development, and helped alleviate the poverty from her and her family and other women like her.

The reports on the project stated that an important factor that contributed to the success of the project, was national support. The project can flourish very well if it operates in an environment where there is a national support for women development, or if the project's objective is in line with the current national policy. At that time, the project corresponded with a national policy aiming at combating unemployment and supporting NGOs and facilitating their ability to acquire funds. The activities of the project were mainly implemented through NGOs and recorded a significant progress with 176 men and 550 women participating. The IDRC gave some recommendation built on the lessons learnt from the success of the project. One of these recommendations was the involvement of men. The report stated that men must always be put in the picture and it is preferable to enter any community through its men community leaders, as they need to be persuaded first before any work is introduced to that community. Another recommendation was that all stakeholders should be included in the process so the sense of ownership is developed, thus insuring accountability. They also mentioned one major challenge they faced, which was using the word "gender," which appeared to be misunderstood in the society. Therefore, they suggested using the concept of "women issues" instead. The following quote, made by a project staff, illustrates this point very well saying,

Gender is often understood as women only... It is best to explain gender in the context of our own culture and social norms, promoting equality among men and woman... It is better to use familiar terminology to leave no room for misconception... Include religious scholars to clear any possible religious misunderstanding.

This project example in Tunisia in conjunction with the findings of the current study, supports the idea that all areas in the region might be facing the same problems when it

comes to Gender Mainstreaming interventions. It also shows that when the prerequisites mentioned in the results of the discussion are available; which are national support (political will), involvement of men and the consensus of all stakeholders along with awareness raising and capacity building, the project is more likely to succeed (Ibrahim, 2009).

Gender Mainstreaming was adopted mainly to address the perceived failure of previous strategies such as women-specific and feminists projects. Gender Mainstreaming was designed to overcome the marginalization of women and to bring gender equality issues into the core of development activities (Mehra & Gupta, 2006). Aligning Gender Mainstreaming with political will; the efforts of Islamic and secular feminists, human rights activists and women rights activities, cultural support for the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a foundation for gender equality could be built.

### **Limitations**

There are some limitations to this research, as only a small sample of gender experts and organizations were interviewed. During the data collection, examples from private sectors (e.g., banks) implementing Gender Mainstreaming were mentioned, so there is still a need to explore the experience of the private sector in implementing Gender Mainstreaming. In addition, research is needed to widen the sample of community-based organizations in order to discover the status of Gender Mainstreaming in these organizations. In addition, because the sampling method was snowball sampling, the majority of the research sample was consultants; this could be because consultants tend to give contacts from their own network, and this type of sampling could miss specialists from other professional networks. In addition, there might be issues of generalizability, since findings of qualitative studies have been criticized for not being generalizable (Gobo, 2003).



More research needs to address the effectiveness of the Gender Mainstreaming interventions, and systematic implementation and outcome evaluations are needed. In addition, further research might be done on a model of Gender Mainstreaming that is specific to the MENA region, one which has been developed with the involvement of all stakeholders in order to create a unified vision with common ground to achieve ownership and accountability. Furthermore, a recommendation for more research would be focusing on a certain Gender Mainstreaming project, like the project implemented by the National Council for Women and assessing it in order to measure its effectiveness and challenges of implementation.

### **Conclusion**

The results of this research demonstrate that Gender Mainstreaming needs to be implemented in the national reconstruction process in post- revolutionary Egypt. However, Gender Mainstreaming will not be effective without the appropriate environment and the right prerequisites. Given that Gender Mainstreaming is a top down public policy concept, it would not cause a change in the culture, behavior or attitude without establishing the belief that's its implementation and its goal (i.e. gender equality) would benefit the society. Achieving the political will and accountability of all stakeholders is a must. Discussions with the new government and the conservative groups have to take place. Awareness raising and training should be the introduction of the process but it should not stop there, using tools like gender analysis, gender audits, gender desegregated data, policy research, proper evaluation and gender budgeting is important. Moreover, Gender Mainstreaming helps fill the gap that has been ignored by previous approaches but it cannot work alone. Feminist, women's rights and women in development approaches need to complement Gender Mainstreaming as they focus on areas that Gender Mainstreaming might ignore. In addition, all stakeholders need to reach consensus on the definition and the goal of Gender Mainstreaming and adopt a

culturally sensitive model so community-based implementers won't reject it. Finally, it is essential that men be fully involved in the process of Gender Mainstreaming in order to be able to achieve gender equality.

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## Appendix A

### Consent Form



*THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO*

### **Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study**

**Project Title:** An Assessment of the Use of Gender Mainstreaming to Promote Equality in Pre and Post 2011 Revolutionary Egypt

**Principal Investigator:** Farah Shash, [f.shash@gmail.com](mailto:f.shash@gmail.com), 01001180446

\*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to assess how Gender Mainstreaming has been implemented in Egypt, and the findings may be presented and/or published, the expected duration of your participation is about an hour.

\*The procedures of the research will be an unstructured open interview where you will be asked about your experiences with Gender Mainstreaming.

\*There are no risks or discomforts associated with this research.

\*There may be benefits to you from this research, as it will give you an opportunity to think about the process of Gender Mainstreaming, and the research results will be sent to you if you wish to have them so that you can make use of the results and recommendations if you so desire.

\*The information you provide for purposes of this research is confidential. No names or organization titles will be mentioned, instead, they will be written in codes. All the research data will be kept in a locked cabinet and will be kept for a year after the interview and they will be disposed after this year is over.

\* For questions about the research or the results please contact the researcher, Farah Shash, email: [f.shash@gmail.com](mailto:f.shash@gmail.com), phone number: 01001180446.

\*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

\*The interview will be audio-recorded. You have the right to accept or refuse the recording.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Interview Questions

- How do you or your organization define Gender Mainstreaming?
- Could you tell me the history of GMS in your organization?
- Could you describe for me how are you currently implementing GMS?
  - Institutional level or Program level?
  - Who is responsible for implementing it?
    - *Gender Focal Points?*
    - *Gender unit?*
      - How many people work in the gender unit? Do they do capacity building training?
- Were these projects evaluated?
  - What kind of evaluation?
  - What were the results?
- How well did the implementation go?
- For you, what does gender equality look like?
  - How well do you think GMS works to move your organization towards this goal?
- What do you think are the opportunities and challenges facing GMS in Egypt now?
- How do you see the future of GMS in your organization/ through your projects?
- What are your recommendations for the implementation of GMS in other organizations?

**Follow up questions:**

Do you have any evaluation of these projects that you might be willing to share with me?

Do you know anyone how is implementing GMS who might be willing to talk with me?

Would you like a copy of my results?

## الجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة

### دراسة بحثية للمشاركة في مسابقة استمارة موافقة

تقويم لإستخدام دمج النوع الاجتماعي لتعزير المساواة قبل و " عنوان البحث :  
" ٢٥ يناير في مصر دبع

فرح شاش :الباحث الرئيسي

البريد الإلكتروني: f.shash@gmail.com

الهاتف: 01001180446

انت مدعو للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية عن تقويم كيفية تنفيذ  
دمج النوع الاجتماعي في مصر  
مفتوحة وأسئلة غير معدة سابقا مقابلة يكون إجراء البحث سوف  
سوف تكون الأسئلة عن خبرتك في دمج النوع الاجتماعي  
في دوريه متخصصه أو مؤتمر علمي يمكن عرضه أو نشره ا نتائج البحث  
أو ربما كليهما.

ساعة تقريبا . المدة المتوقعة للمشاركة في هذا البحث

يقات متوقعة من هذا البحث لا يوجد مخاطر أو مضار

قد تكون هناك فوائدها لك من هذا البحث، لأنه سوف يعطيك فرصة للتفكير في و تقويم دمج النوع الاجتماعي. أيضا، سيتم إرسال نتائج البحث لك إذا ترغب في استخدامها لتوصيات

السرية واحترام الخصوصية: المعلومات التي ستدلى بها في هذا البحث سوف لن يذكر أسماء أو عناوين منظمات في البحث، وسوف يتم كتابتها في رموز، تكون سرية. وسيتم الاحتفاظ بجميع بيانات البحث في خزانة مقفلة، وسيتم التخلص منها بعد عام من عملية جمع البيانات

قوة بهذه الدراسة أو حقوق المشاركين فيها أو عند حدوث أي إصابات أي أسئلة متعل

01001180446 فرح شاش، ناتجة عن هذه المشاركة يجب ان توجه الى

ان المشاركة في هذه الدراسة ماهي الا عمل تطوعي، حيث أن الامتناع عن المشاركة ف عن لاي تضامن أي عقوبات أو فقدان أي مزايا تحقق لك. ويمكنك أيضا التوقيع المشاركة في أي وقت من دون عقوبة أو فقدان لهذه المزايا.

سوف يتم تسجيل هذه المقابله صوتيا، ولك الحق في رفض التسجيل.

الامضاء: .....

اسم المشارك : .....

التاريخ : ...../...../.....

## Arabic Interview

- الإجماع؟ النوع دمج عن مفهومك هو ما
  - مؤسستك؟ في النوعي الدمج تاريخ عن تخبرني ان الممكن من هل
  - مؤسستك؟ في النوعي الدمج بتفعيل تقويم كيف لي توصف ان يمكن هل
    - النوع دمج مشاريع في مؤسستك بها تقويم التي الانشطة أنواع هي ما الإجماع؟
    - البرامج مستوى و المؤسسي المستوى على
    - التطبيق؟ عملية عن المسئول من
      - الإجماع؟ النوع متخصصين
      - الإجماع النوع الوحدة
- الإجماع؟ النوع بوحدة العاملين عدد كم
- الكفاءات؟ لتنمية تدريبية ببرامج يقومون وهل
- التنفيذاً؟ عملية جرت كيف
  - الجنسين؟ بين المساواة لك تعني ماذا
    - أهداف تحقيق في الإجماع النوع دمج تفصيل يساعد مدى أي إلى المؤسسة؟
- المشاريع؟ هذه تقيّم تم هل
- التقييم؟ نوع كان ماذا
  - النتائج؟ كانت ماذا

- الان؟ مصر في النوعي الدمج تواجهه انها تعتقد التي الفرص /التحديات ماهي
- التي المؤسسة في مشاريعكم خلال من الاجتماع النوع دمج مستقبل ترى كيف لها تتبع ؟
- الاجتماع النوع دمج لتفعل الأخرى المؤسسات /الجمعيات توصري ان يمكنك بماذا

لي؟ تقدمها ان تود المشاريع لهذه تقييم لديك هل

بالتحدث ممن غير يكون النوعي للدمج بمنفذ توصلني ان الممكن من هل

معني؟

؟ البحث هذا نتائج من نسخة على الحصول تود هل



### Appendix B

Question 1:

Definition of Gender Mainstreaming

Theme	Code	Feminist/ human rights	International	Local Org.	Governmental	Consultants
Gender within everything,	GWE	N1,	G1, G2	H1,		S1
Mainstreaming gender in places where gender is not on the agenda	GNA	N1,				
Integrating gender sensitive policies in institutions	GSP					C2,
Gender M is an entry point to working on gender issues	GMEP					A2,

Policies, programs, legislation taking in consideration gender issues	PPCG					F1, H2
Gender a crosscutting theme through out all activities	GCC					S1
Both genders having the chance to contribute to the society and address social problems / same chances and opportunities,	GCS	C1, A1		H1,		

same rights						
Women being available in all fields	WAF				N2,	

Question 2: Gender Mainstreaming on

Theme	Frequency	Feminist	International	Local Org.	Governmental	Consultants
Institutional Level (their or others)	50%	N3, N1			N4, M1	F1, C3, S1
Program Level	25%	C1,	U1	H1,		
Both	18.5%		G1, C2			H2, A2

## Question 3: GM project evaluated

Theme	Frequency	Feminist	International	Local Org.	Governmental	Consultants
Process Evaluation	18.5%		G1, G2		N4,	
Outcome Evaluation	31.25%		N4, G2,		N4,	A2, S1
Impact Evaluation	6.5%			H1,		
Not Evaluated  (only the organization, it could be just an indication in their strategy, on the	43.7%	N3, C1	U1,		M1,	C3, F1, H2,

organizational level)						
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