



Discursive translations of gender mainstreaming norms: The case of agricultural and climate change policies in Uganda

Mariola Acosta^{a,b,*}, Severine van Bommel^{a,e}, Margit van Wessel^a, Edidah L. Ampaire^{b,c}, Laurence Jassogne^{b,f}, Peter H. Feindt^{a,d}

^a Strategic Communication Group, Wageningen University, Wageningen, the Netherlands

^b International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Kampala, Uganda

^c International Development Research Center, Nairobi, Kenya

^d Albrecht Daniel Thaer Institute for Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Humboldt University at Berlin, Berlin, Germany

^e School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, The University of Queensland, Gatton, Australia

^f Opus Insights, Den Haag, the Netherlands

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ABSTRACT

While the international norm on gender mainstreaming, UN-backed since 1995, has been widely adopted in national policies, gender inequalities are rarely systematically addressed on the ground. To explain this limited effectiveness, this paper takes a discourse analytical perspective on gender policy and budgeting, with a focus on the translation of the international norm into domestic norms and policies. An in-depth, inductive analysis of 107 policy documents in Uganda examines how the gender mainstreaming norm has been translated at three administrative levels: national, district, sub-county. The analysis finds five processes that reduce the norm's transformational potential: neglecting gender discourse, gender inertia, shrinking gender norms, embracing discursive hybridity and minimizing budgets. Overall, gender mainstreaming largely stopped at the discursive level, and often paradoxically depoliticized gender. The findings explain why gender mainstreaming might be helpful but not sufficient for advancing gender equality and suggest additional focus on promising practices, women's rights movements and stronger monitoring.

1. Introduction

'The whole world now eagerly awaits the outcome of this Conference. While the Conference has provided the international community with an opportunity to reflect on our past achievements and failures with regard to the advancement of women, it should in the same breath endeavour to provide solutions. The challenge is to have the Platform for Action translated into concrete programmes that will achieve tangible results for all women at all levels. We should continue to "maternize" globally but act locally'

Statement extract by Specioza Kazibwe, Vice-President of Uganda, Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995)

The extract above conveys the expectation that was created around the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), as an event that would constitute a turning point in how governments address gender inequalities at all scales. The event did not disappoint. The declaration of the conference, known as the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, instituted 'gender mainstreaming' as the new standard that governments

and organizations would follow to address gender issues globally (United Nations, 1996). Two years later, in 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established guiding principles for gender mainstreaming which was defined as *'the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, 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 policies and programmes 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'* (ECOSOC, 1997, p. 3). Since then, this international norm on gender mainstreaming has guided policymaking and development programs' actions on gender around the globe (Moser & Moser, 2005).

In addition to transmitting the expectations raised at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the speech given by the then vice-president of Uganda, Ms. Kazibwe, directed attention to the challenges faced by nations in terms of translating this international norm into

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: mariola.acosta@wur.nl (M. Acosta).

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local actions and concrete programs. These processes of translation, she emphasized, would ultimately constitute the success or failure of the global ambition. Her remarks underlined how negotiation processes involved in the establishment and signing of international norms, together with the translation of the norms into domestic policy, would have to create linkages between international, regional, national and sub-national policymaking.

This paper takes a discourse analytical perspective (Feindt & Oels, 2005; Wagenaar, 2011) and critical policy instrument analysis (Bacchi, 2009; Colebatch, 2014) to analyze processes of gender norm translation in Uganda. We understand norm translation as practices through which norms are negotiated and adapted in different contexts (Draude, 2017). These norm translation processes often imply exercises of meaning molding, i.e. a process in which the meaning of a concept is shaped so that it fits into local discursive and normative contexts (Fejerskov, 2018). Indeed, through the establishment of collective expectations and the processes of norm translation into domestic policy, exercises of meaning molding arise, first to reach international consensus and then to adapt these global norms to the respective local contexts (Gherardi & Nicolini, 2000; de Laet & Mol, 2000). Through processes of meaning molding, policy issues are foregrounded or backgrounded, which also affects the level of ambition of gender mainstreaming efforts (Lombardo, Meier, & Verloo, 2009). Global norms also guide most international development efforts, which organize their programs in accordance to gender equality principles and goals. In many Sub-Saharan countries, this also creates linkages between development organizations and governments, as compliance with gender equality principles is often a conditionality to access development funds (Arora-Jonsson, 2014; Collins, 2018; Miers, 2011; Samarasinghe, 2014).

More than twenty years after the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, Uganda has not only succeeded in introducing a gender discourse in policies and development programs, but has actually become a point of reference for their gender mainstreaming efforts in the East Africa region (The Republic of Uganda, 2013a). The large proportion of areas that are rural in Uganda has made gender issues in agriculture and rural development a priority in policymaking and development programs (World Bank, 2014). More recently, with climate change increasingly threatening many of these rural livelihoods, examining gender issues in agriculture within this context has also gained prominence in the country (Nyasimi, Ayanlade, Mungai, Derkyi, & Jegede, 2018). Notwithstanding these policy efforts, gender inequalities in the agricultural sector of Uganda remain large (UN Women, UNDP, UNEP, & World Bank Group, 2015).

Uganda is not an isolated case but is rather an example of a widespread phenomenon. Gender mainstreaming as a strategy has not yet yielded the desired results, as exhibited by the rampant levels of gender inequality in agriculture still prevalent across Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere (Alston, 2014; Brouwers, 2013; Gumucio & Tafur Rueda, 2015; van Eerdewijk, 2016). To understand this gender implementation gap and to determine the extent and manner to which global gender norms have been translated into domestic policies, numerous review studies, monitoring efforts and evaluation programs have emerged (Allwood, 2013, 2015; Kabeer, 2015; Moser & Moser, 2005; Nhamo, 2014). Often these review and monitoring processes stop at assessing the integration of global norms in national level policies, not looking into the activities and outcomes at the local level. Other studies focus on local situated practices and discuss how gender implementation has failed at this local level (see for example Fejerskov, 2018) or explore how gender mainstreaming policies are performed in informal domains within the context of development interventions (Nandigama, 2012, 2018). What remains largely unproblematized is the role of sub-national level government policies in translating internationally agreed gender norms and the processes through which these norms are translated into policy action and thus their potential in tackling gender inequalities.

The international norm on gender mainstreaming is embedded in a

policy discourse that emphasizes gender inequality as a policy problem and presents gender mainstreaming as the policy solution that allows countries and communities to live up to the norms of gender equality (Woodward, 2008). Policy actors on lower levels of the hierarchy have to adopt a gender discourse in policy documents, partly as a pre-condition of access to funds, and have to build this discourse into their existing discourses and practices. However, gender equality norms might conflict with other norms dominant among local communities or policy-makers at sub-national levels. The question is how, depending on the local context, 'global' discourses that challenge locally prevalent norms are translated so that they make sense and fit within the local context (Zimmermann, 2014). A related question is whether the adoption of a gender discourse will affect the thinking (cognitive and normative beliefs) of local actors and their practices, or whether local actors merely pay lip service to imposed requirements but insulate their local discourse and practices from the external discursive intervention, or perhaps, a combination of both.

Using Uganda as a case study (Yin, 2002), this article examines what happens to gender issues in agriculture and climate change adaptation when they are mainstreamed and domesticated in different governance levels (i.e. national, district and sub-county). It investigates the processes through which global gender mainstreaming norms are translated into policy programs by national governments and decentralized administrations. In trying to answer the research question: "How do processes of international norm translation into domestic policies in Uganda affect the transformative ambition of gender mainstreaming?", we examine how discursive translations of gender norms affect the meanings of gender equality and its transformational ambition. Understanding this process of norm translation can contribute to explain how the apparent mismatch between the adoption of global gender norms and the limited visible effects at the local level comes into being. The findings from the case study suggest that a focus on the gender mainstreaming policy discourses and policy instruments being implemented in national and sub-national governance levels is fundamental to understanding their links to the global discourse, and how they can produce policy change.

2. The domestication of international norms

Norms are generally understood as 'standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity' (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 891). When standards are negotiated and agreed upon by numerous states, an international norm is formed. Krook and True (2012, pp. 103–104) define an international norm as 'organizing principles or standardized procedures that resonate across many states and global actors, having gained support in multiple forums including official policies, laws, treaties or agreements'.

International norms involve establishing collective expectations and standards, which inherently imply the creation of shared understandings and meanings as to what is considered legitimate, feasible, and appropriate to attain pre-determined goals (Altinay, 2013; Cold-Ravnkilde, Engberg-Pedersen, & Fejerskov, 2018). Within the realm of women's rights, international norms prescribe what is considered to be 'adequate policy' and 'adequate development' to advance the status of women globally. They establish commonly expected patterns of behavior that nations and international organizations ought to follow in order to meet women's empowerment and gender equality goals. In this way, a sense of individual and common obligations are set between agents (Pettenger, 2007). International norms are often formalized in the international community through the signing of an agreement (e.g. a convention or treaty). The signatory nations are then expected and encouraged to adopt these international norms in their territories. In this way, international norms influence and shape national policy making and agenda setting (Krook & True, 2012; Martinsson, 2011).

As international norms emerge, nations embark on processes of norm translation into domestic policy (Risse, Ropp, & Sikkink, 1999). Linguistically, to translate is to make two words equivalent (Law,

2009). However, as Law (2009, p. 144) points out, considering there is no such thing as two completely equivalent words, 'translation is both about making equivalent, and about shifting. It is about moving terms around, about linking and changing them'. Kjær and Pedersen (2001, p. 219) describe translation as a process 'whereby concepts and conceptions from different social contexts come into contact with each other and trigger a shift in the existing order of interpretation and action in a particular context'. Following this definition, the translation of international norms into domestic policy involves (1) a translation of discourse (interpretation), whereby international norms are translated into domestic norms; and (2) a translation of these domestic norm interpretations into policy instruments, whereby domestic norms are translated into actual policy action. Policy instruments constitute in this way the 'end point' of processes of international norm translation. Analyzing these processes will offer an understanding on how the international norm has been ultimately disseminated and problematized at the local level, establishing in this way specific relationships between the 'governing and the governed' which express specific social theories of control (Lascombes & Gales, 2007, p. 11).

Acts of norm 'translation' entail processes of reconstruction and meaning molding, where struggles over meaning often arise (Lombardo et al., 2009). In particular, through these translation processes, governments and organizations interpret international norms in particular ways that prioritize and/or downplay specific discursive elements in a way that can both resonate with international norms and be adjusted to domestic norms and logics (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004; Petersen, 2018; Zimmermann, 2014). In this way, practices of norm translation can be considered as processes of discursive maneuvering at work, through which non-coherent normative environments are navigated (Law et al., 2014). Silencing specific issues or part of the discourse, for example, is a common discursive mechanisms of control in policymaking processes (Schröter & Taylor, 2018).

These dynamics expose the need to understand norms as processes, whereby norms are constantly subjected to exercises of meaning molding and meaning negotiation between actors (Krook & True, 2012). As Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, p. 893) point out international norms always 'work their influence through the filter of domestic structures and domestic norms, which can produce important variations in compliance and interpretations of these norms'. Krook and True (2012) argue that this is possible because of the ambiguity in which these international norms are often negotiated, which allows for these norms to be 'domesticated' in different ways in different contexts, with processes of meaning molding and adjustment evolving over time. Domestication is used here to refer to processes through which a country adapts international policy norms to be used within their territory (i.e. to bring into domestic use), and through which non-coherent normative environments are made to work within these differences (Law et al., 2014).

Additionally, government and development organizations normally navigate through, and operate within, different normative environments, so that they can satisfy different 'audiences' (Cook, Turnhout, and van Bommel, Forthcoming; Goffman, 1959; Petersen, 2018). However, these processes of translation and navigation within different normative environments (e.g. international and domestic) imply that international norms are often not implemented in full to local contexts. Martinsson (2011, p. 1) asserts that few translated domestic norms 'lead to transformational change on the ground because of (the) cultural and political economy challenges that were not considered in the (international) norm formation'.

An examination of the translation mechanisms involved in the domestication of international norms – namely (1) the translation of discourse and (2) a translation of domestic discourse into policy instruments – can help uncover the ways in which these translation mechanisms affect the transformational ambition of international norms. For example, Lombardo and Meier (2009) warn that reductionist or simplistic 'translations' of international gender norms in

policy could reduce the transformational potential from the onset. Understanding processes of 'translation' thus becomes important in contexts where internationally well-established discourses, such as gender equality in development, are adopted and molded in ambivalent political contexts.

3. Methodology

To study processes of gender norm translation in agriculture and climate change policy in Uganda, we used discourse analysis (Feindt & Oels, 2005; Wagenaar, 2011) and critical policy instrument analysis (Bacchi, 2009; Colebatch, 2014) at three different governance levels, namely national, district, and sub-county. The discourse analysis was conducted at a macro-textual level, i.e. we were concerned with an intertextual understanding (i.e. interrelationship between texts) of discursive elements taking into account the institutional, political and socio/cultural context within which they were produced (Barry, Carroll, & Hansen, 2006). For the policy instrument analysis we focused on an examination of budgets, as elements that reflect governmental priorities and financial means to implement policy instruments (Bacchi, 2009; Colebatch, 2014).

We examined how discourses and policy instruments addressing gender issues in relation to agricultural development and climate change materialized in policy documents and budgets at the three governance levels. For this purpose, we followed the inductive codes-to-theory model described in Saldaña (2013), supported by the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti (version 8.1.2). In a first round of coding, we assessed (1) whether documents mentioned gender mainstreaming, gender, gender equality, women and men; (2) how gender issues were contextualized, problematized and diagnosed and (3) what gender issues were budgeted and what amounts were allocated to the policy instruments. Through category building, we then grouped the initial codes into themes and concepts that related to ideas of policy translation and diffusion, through a process of consolidation of conceptual thinking with the data. Finally, we examined how the themes and concepts interrelated and allowed us to inductively identify different processes of norm translation through which gender policies were domesticated.

To contextualize the policy documents, the analysis built on the main author's contextual observations during a thirty-month research stay in Uganda that included frequent interactions with policy, development and advocacy actors. The study was embedded within a wider project on climate change policymaking that was implemented by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in four districts of Uganda: Nwoya (Northwest), Luwero (Central), Rakai (Southwest) and Mbale (East).

Table 1 provides an overview over the documents included in the analysis. At national level, we selected key policies in the realms of agriculture, climate change and development. At sub-national level we assessed an 8 to 10-year period of local development planning, which allowed to compare how gender issues are addressed at two different points in time. We selected districts and sub-counties because they are the lowest levels in Uganda's decentralized governance system that are required to produce annual action plans and five-year development plans. Thus, the documents allowed us to examine the translation of norms in national policy into sub-national governance structures. Working within the framework of IITA's project provided us with contextual knowledge of the different territories; gave us access to state agencies at the district and sub-county level; and allowed for frequent interactions with policy officials which in turn provided us access to policy documents. Within each district, three sub-counties were selected on the bases of the ease of accessibility to the development plans and budgets¹: Nwoya (Alero, Anaka, Purongo sub-counties), Luwero

¹ Even if Ugandan sub-national policies and budgets are public documents,

Table 1
Policy documents analyzed.

Sources	Docs	Documents
National	13	Uganda Succession Act Amendment Decree (1972) The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995) National Development Plan (NDP) 2010/11–2014/15 Uganda Vision 2040 (2013) National Land Policy (2013) National Agriculture Policy (2013) Local Government Development Planning Guidelines (2014) Guidelines Integration of Climate Change in Sector Plans and Budgets (2014) National Climate Change Policy (2015) Second National Development Plan (NDP II) 2015/16–2019/20 Uganda Climate-Smart Agriculture Country Program 2015–2025 Agriculture Sector Strategy Plan 2015/16–2019/20 Agriculture Sector Budget Framework Paper Financial Year 2017/18
District	23	5-year Development Plan 2009/10–2014/15 (n = 4) 5-year Development Plan 2015/16–2019/20 (n = 4) Principles and Practices of Customary Tenure in Acholiland District Annual Actual Budget Financial Years 2010–2015 (n = 14)
Sub-county	71	5-year Development Plan 2009/10–2014/15 (n = 8) 5-year Development Plan 2015/16–2019/20 (n = 11) 3-year Development Plan 2010/11–2012/13 (n = 2) Sub-county Annual Actual Budget Financial Years 2010–2015 (n = 50)

(Makulubita, Kamira, Zirowe), Rakai (Lwanda, Dwaniro, Kasasa), Mbale (Bufumbo, Busoba, Namanyonyi). The sub-counties selected represented more than half of the population in each respective district.

4. Findings

4.1. Setting the scene

As a signatory of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), Uganda's national regulations establish that gender should be mainstreamed in all policies and policy instruments (The Republic of Uganda, 2010, 2013b, 2014). In 2004, a budget call circular instructed all ministries, departments, agencies and local governments how they would address gender and equity issues through their budgets. More recently, the Public Finance Management Act (2015) made it compulsory for ministries, local governments and other agencies to address gender and equity issues in their activities and plans. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) assesses the budget framework paper (BFP) and other policy statements of these institutions and then advises the Ministry of Finance to issue a certificate of compliance of Gender and Equity issues, if they have attained certain minimum standards. The institutions' BFP that are considered non-compliant are then rejected by Parliament, their funding is withheld, and the BFP referred back to the corresponding institution. The agricultural sector scored 54% in the BFP of Financial Years 2016/17 and 51% in the Financial Year 2017/18, signaling a decline in the gender responsiveness of the sector, and barely passing the bar for compliance (> 50%). Local governments had not yet been assessed for their BFP at the time this article was written.

The governance system of Uganda comprises central and local governments, which operate through a decentralized system. Local governments are mandated to develop their own development plans through the guidance of nationally set strategic directions. In rural

(footnote continued)

we encountered many officials who were unwilling to make them freely available.

areas local governments are composed of district councils, which in turn consist of sub-county councils, parish councils and village councils. The key national documents that guide local government policy are (1) the Uganda Vision 2040, which provides long-term (30 years) development paths and strategies, and (2) the Second National Development Plan (NDP II), which provides planning frameworks and sets specific goals and strategies for a ten year period (2015/16–2019/20). At the same time, these national guiding documents affirm to comply with international mandates such as the Sustainable Development Goals (The Republic of Uganda, 2013b, 2015a). In this way, local governments at district and sub-county level are expected to translate national priority areas to the realities of their territories, which at least to some degree should reflect international agreements.

4.2. Translation of discourse into policy action

In line with international norms on gender mainstreaming, all national and sub-national policy documents reviewed incorporated certain references to gender issues. In the sub-national development plans reviewed, gender issues were listed as one of the development priorities and were given a prominent place throughout the document. Analyzing these national and sub-national gender discourses and the translation of the discourses into policy action, we identified five main processes through which the international norm of gender mainstreaming was molded in domestic policy: neglecting gender discourse, embracing discursive hybridity, shrinking gender norms, gender inertia, and minimizing budgets.

4.2.1. Neglecting gender discourse

The domestication of gender mainstreaming in the climate change discourse in Uganda involved instances of neglecting gender discourse in sub-national policy documents. We found a progressive disappearance of the gender discourse in climate change policymaking as it translated to lower governance levels. A gendered climate change discourse was prominent in Uganda's national policies, with key national policies including gender connotations: NDP II (2015/16–2019/20), Agriculture Sector Strategy Plan (2015/16–2019/20), Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) Country Plan (The Republic of Uganda, 2015b), Uganda National Climate Change Policy (The Republic of Uganda, 2015c), Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (Ministry of Water and Environment, 2015) and the Guidelines for the Integration of Climate Change in Sector Plans and Budgets (The Republic of Uganda and Ministry of Water and Environment, 2014). The attention to gender issues in national climate change policymaking became also clearly tangible in December of 2017, when members of the Ugandan Parliament rejected the much-expected Climate Change Bill partly due to its insufficient consideration of gender issues (Namuloki, 2017).

However, in the sub-national policies reviewed, the translation of a gendered climate change discourse did not materialize to the same extent as at national level. In district policies, the climate change discourse, while generally present, presented very limited gender connotations. All former (2009/10–2014/15) and current 5-year development plans (2015/16–2019/20) incorporated a climate change discourse. In the districts of Luwero and Rakai this did not include any gender connotations. In Nwoya, while the 2009/10–2014/15 development climate change discourse did not consider gender, the 2015/16–2019/20 plan advocated for the promotion of 'gender-sensitive climate change local government interventions', although the discourse was not further elaborated (Nwoya LG, 2015, p. 285). The plans of the Mbale district acknowledged that women, due to their reproductive roles, could be more adversely affected by climate change than men (Mbale LG, 2010, 2015) and also highlighted the low involvement of women and youth in climate change activities (Nwoya LG, 2015).

The sub-county development plans presented a total absence of any gendered climate change discourse: only 38% of the plans considered

climate change issues, and in none of these instances was gender mentioned. When climate change was acknowledged as a constraint to sub-county development and a matter that needed urgent adaptation and mitigation strategies, it was disentangled from gender – farmers were mentioned in general without consideration of gendered effects or the need to consider gender issues when designing climate change policies. Gender issues in climate change adaptation and mitigation processes were in this way neglected from sub-county policymaking processes.

The absence of gender considerations in the climate change discourse at sub-county level and the very limited gendered discourse at district level exemplify the disconnect between national and sub-national policymaking. The translation of gender mainstreaming in climate change discourse was in this way neglected as the norm advanced through the different levels of policy-making. At the local level, where climate-specific interventions are to be implemented, the gendered discourses largely disappeared, leaving gender issues unproblematicized and excluded from policy considerations and this way rendering the gender in climate change discourse unpoliticized.

4.2.2. Embracing discursive hybridity

The existence of different normative environments with regards to gender issues was evident in the policy documents reviewed. Even though gender language had been translated and adopted at national and sub-national policy, the policy discourse explicitly acknowledged that gender equality policies and programs operate within entrenched patriarchal cultural norms (Alero LG, 2011, 2016; Luwero LG, 2010, 2015; Purongo LG, 2010, 2015; The Republic of Uganda, 2013a, 2013b). Critical among these were the constraints that Ugandan women face in relation to access, control and ownership of productive resources, such as land. These constraints were framed by national and sub-national policy as being the result of engrained cultural beliefs and traditions, in which women do not normally inherit land and are not considered as co-owners of their husband's properties. For example, the Bufumbo development plan (2010) identified 'culture and tradition' as a main factor constraining women's access and control of productive resources, and provided the following example to substantiate how patriarchal traditions affected intra-household power relations: "paying of bride price make (sic) women feel that they are owned by men and the men to feel that the women have no say in what happens to them and their households, after all 'he paid a high bride price for her'". Even though discriminatory traditions and customs are banned in Uganda's regulatory frameworks, several policies acknowledge that the custom has not yet substantially changed (Alero LG, 2011, 2016; Luwero LG, 2010, 2015; Purongo LG, 2010, 2015; The Republic of Uganda, 2013a, 2013b). In this regard, the National Land Policy (The Republic of Uganda, 2013a, p. 6) for example emphasizes that "although traditions, customs and practices which discriminate against women in matters of access, use and ownership of land have been outlawed by the Constitution, the practice does not acknowledge these changes". Culturally embedded practices and norms co-exist in this way with formal regulatory frameworks.

In some cases, these cultural norms were even further institutionalized through formal clan statutory regulations, exposing cases of legal pluralism (i.e. cases in which multiple legal systems co-exist). For example in Nwoya District, inhabited mostly by Acholi people, land tenure was regulated through the "Principles and Practices of Customary Tenure in Acholiland" (Ker Kwaro Acholi, 2008). These regulations establish that a married woman's land rights are lost when she leaves the clan by divorce or death (Ker Kwaro Acholi, 2008, sec. 2C).² This implies that widows lose all rights (e.g. access to land) that

were previously granted to them by marriage. This is in contradiction to Uganda's Constitution (The Republic of Uganda, 1995), the National Land Policy (The Republic of Uganda, 2013a) and other national laws such as the 1972 Succession Amendment Decree, which acknowledges women's right to inherit from their husbands, allowing them to remain in their marital homesteads after the passing of their spouses (The Republic of Uganda, 1972). These contradictions between formal governmental and established exceptionalist laws exemplify the different normative environments in which policy actors often operate, i.e. one in which gender equality is framed within international norms of gender mainstreaming and one in which gender inequalities are naturalized by cultural norms and written statutes.

The co-existence of these two normative environments are at times also enshrined in policy. For example, in a sub-section called 'Gender in relation to agriculture' of both Kasasa and Lwanda sub-county development plans (Kasasa LG, 2015; Lwanda LG, 2015), we found the following extract:

"Because it is mostly women are engaged in this business [agriculture] and they are naturally weak, they cannot do much. They end up producing very little and at times they are limited by the scarcity of land. This ultimately means that very little will be earned from this business and therefore low income for the households. Men should also wake up and start involving themselves in agriculture in their households if poverty is to be kicked out of the sub-county in particular and Uganda in general."

In this case, we see how exercises of gender mainstreaming co-existed with a discourse that used certain gender stereotypes (i.e. 'women are naturally weak') to account for the low agricultural productivity of households, while the action of men was presented as being required to reverse the situation. In this way, the quote simultaneously constituted an exercise of gender mainstreaming and an expression of patriarchy, through which local gender stereotypes (e.g. women as weak, men as saviors) were reproduced. This apparent incoherence was not problematized and both realities existed side by side. This allowed two very different logics – gender mainstreaming as means for gender equality and a reproduction of local unequal gender relations – to co-exist (*embracing discursive hybridity*). It allowed for policies to comply with gender mainstreaming norms while not altering already pre-existing gender relations in these territories. The potential for transformation of gender mainstreaming strategies was in this way limited.

In some other cases, e.g. in Dwaniro, women's views were regarded as important to development, while certain gender stereotypes (i.e. 'women inferiority complex') also appeared in the discourse to explain the underdevelopment of the sub-county: "Women inferiority complex is another very big problem that has retarded development in the sub-county because women's views are rarely brought forward yet some of their views can contribute much to the development of the Sub-County and the District as a whole" (Ddwaniro LG, 2010, p. 86). Similarly, in Bufumbo sub-county, gender stereotypes (i.e. 'lack of courage and knowledge') were used to describe the lack of action on gender and development in the region: "Lack of courage and knowledge by women voters to support candidates with clear political agenda on gender and development. Their husbands or significant males in their lives influence most of their voting choices" (Bufumbo LG, 2010).

What we find in these local gender diagnoses (i.e. statements about the gender issues that require policy intervention) is that, implicitly (and sometimes explicitly), gender stereotypes are employed to explain low agricultural productivity rates, environmental degradation or the underdevelopment of the sub-county. Hence, paradoxically, in these cases the process of translating the gender mainstreaming norms

(footnote continued)

Women from outside the clan, marrying someone in the clan, do not have land ownership rights from their spouses either.

² Acholiland is governed by a customary system in which land is transferred through a male line of inheritance. Women born within a clan are expected to marry outside the clan, and do not retain land rights from their ancestral clan.

involved naturalizing certain cognitive and normative beliefs (e.g. women as weak, with limited agency and subordinated to men) rather than a politicization of gender equality issues.

4.2.3. Shrinking gender norms

The translation of gender mainstreaming norms into national and sub-national policies in Uganda has in practice implied that documents largely incorporate a 'gendered' language, both in terms of problematizations (*diagnosis*) and proposed prescriptions. However, this process of norm translation implied that certain key gender issues that were highlighted by domestic policies (diagnosis) were not necessarily directly addressed by the proposed prescriptions, especially when it came to sub-national policy.

In national level policies, five main gender problematizations were highlighted for the agricultural sector, namely (1) women's limited ownership and control over land; (2) insufficient access to financial credit; (3) limited access to extension services and formal training; (4) time-poverty resulting from productive and unpaid care work; and (5) limited decision making over agricultural incomes and women's consequent economic dependence. Overall, national prescriptions remained at a very generic level. For example, women's time poverty was proposed to be tackled through 'gender-responsive mechanization' (The Republic of Uganda, 2015a) and 'gendered innovation in agricultural research centers' (The Republic of Uganda, 2015a, 2016), without offering further elaboration on their operationalization and thus remaining abstract 'ideals'. It was therefore unclear through which pathways the proposed strategies would lead to policy change in this regard. Compared to national policies, sub-national policies presented similar problematizations concerning gender issues in the agricultural sector. Districts presented more varied prescriptions than those of sub-counties, which placed a stronger focus on the unequal ownership of productive resources. Analogous to what we found in national level policies, the proposed strategies for both district and sub-county were phrased in very general terms, often given as bullet points, and no pathways of change were provided. For example, the district of Nwoya proposed the 'promotion of equal ownership of assets between men and women' (Table 2). However, the prescription stopped with this statement. It remained thus unclear through which mechanisms this would be operationalized or realized, even more so considering the Acholi institutionalization of loss of land rights by death of the spouse and

divorce. While the Rakai District addressed issues beyond the unequal ownership of productive assets (e.g. access to credit, decision-making), the proposed prescriptions remained equally abstract (Table 2).

While sub-county plans also placed a clear emphasis on the unequal ownership of productive assets, the prescriptions offered did not directly address this. For example, in Bufumbo sub-county the low participation of women in fish farming was problematized by men's ownership of fishponds, but the proposed 'sensitization' activities were directed to women in order to improve their 'morale' (Table 2). This mismatch between problematizations and prescriptions and the emphasis on 'sensitization' activities were also found in Namanyoni, Bufumbo, Busoba and Lwanda sub-counties (Table 2). Gender inequalities were in this way problematized as an issue of ownership and access to productive resources while the prescription framed the issue as an education problem, with sensitization activities implicitly assumed to trigger attitude change within the communities.

Less frequently, sub-national policies proposed the implementation of agricultural programs targeting women. For example, the Busoba sub-county development plan (Busoba LG, 2010, 2015) stated that '*improved seeds and breeds of poultry and goats may empower women because they have ownership and access over these resources*'. Similarly, the Kamira development plan advocated for training groups of women in poultry keeping (Kamira LG, 2010). However, the transformative potential of these interventions remained limited, as they tackled enterprises on which Ugandan women already had a certain degree of agency (i.e. poultry and small animals). While the increased income might have reduced material inequalities, the program reinforced pre-existing gender roles rather than opening up new fields of activity for women.

Overall, the translation of the gender mainstreaming norm in sub-national policy involved the introduction of a gendered language. In the agricultural sector, the unequal ownership of assets held a central place in the gender diagnosis for the sector. However, the prescriptions proposed – centering largely on sensitization of gender roles – confined the problem of gender inequalities in ownership of resources to the policy area of education, portraying a particular interpretation of the issue and thus backgrounding other structural areas (e.g. discriminatory patterns of inheritance), and consequently shrinking the meaning of the gender mainstreaming norm, as means of equality, to one of education.

Table 2

Gender problematizations and prescriptions for the agricultural sector in Uganda (Selection Sub-counties, Districts).

Development plan	Gender problematization	Prescription
Sub-county		
Namanyoni 2010/11–2014/15	- Women have no ownership and control over land, cattle, farm produce	- Sensitize the community about gender roles
Bufumbo 2010/11–2014/15	- Low participation of women in fish farming. The existing five fishponds in the sub-county are owned by men	- Sensitize women about fish farming in order to boost their morale
Busoba 2015/16–2019/20	- Women have less ownership and control over high value factors of production	- Sensitize women about their potential to raise household incomes
Lwanda 2015/16–2019/20	- Women's lack of control over resources like land - Denying women chances of engaging in income generating activities since men are the bread winners	- Sensitization of men and women on their responsibilities - Sensitization of community on the roles of women in development
Kamira 2015/16–2019/20	- Men put little or no labour on farm. - Women are denied access to resources and are refused to participate in decision-making. Gender inequality has led to low agricultural production and persistent poverty	- More sensitization of communities on gender issues - To promote equity in access to opportunities and control of resources
Districts		
Nwoya 2010/11–2014/15 & 2015/16–2019/20	Women own no assets (land) but work the land owned by men	- Promotion of equal ownership of assets between genders
Rakai 2010/11–2014/15 & 2015/16–2019/20	- Women do not own land or any other productive assets - Culturally women are not adequately empowered in income generating activities - Accessibility to credit is more skewed to men than women - Women culturally are inhibited from fishing activities - Limited decision-making over incomes generated from agricultural produce in households - Unequal distribution of productive and reproductive work	- Gender sensitization and advocacy - Recruitment of more female extension workers - Establish women credit schemes - Women group formation - Mobilization and sensitization of women councilors on skills enhancement and income generating activities - Training women in resource mobilization and savings

4.2.4. Gender inertia

The analysis of two consecutive 5-Year development plans allowed to compare how gender issues were examined and addressed at two different points in time, and to identify certain discursive patterns. Within each district, the discourse analysis revealed little change in the way gender was incorporated and addressed. For example, the Luwero and Rakai DDPs presented a section where the strategies to address gender inequalities in the district were listed. For both districts, the proposed gender actions were exactly the same in the 2010/11–2014/15 and the 2015/16–2019/20 plans. Similarly, in Nwoya the 'proposed strategies to overcome gender disparities' were identical in the two consecutive DDPs. Furthermore, the two consecutive DDPs in Rakai highlighted the same gender issues and proposed activities in the productive sector, using exactly the same wording. As we found in the case of the districts, the 'situation analysis of gender' and the 'gender priorities and objectives' in the sub-county development plans were often "copy-pasted", either from one development plan to the other, or from the district to the sub-county plans. Evidence of this practice was found in ten out of the twelve sub-counties analyzed for this article.

Perhaps even more revealing were instances in which the reported gender achievements, which normally reflect progress in addressing gender inequalities identified in the preceding development plan, were also copy-pasted. In Kamira sub-county, both development plans also reproduced word by word their 'Gender, Equity and Equality Achievements' from the previous plan as: (1) gender awareness training (2) having specific programmes targeting women, training of women in chicken rearing skills among others, and (3) NGOs support gender. Similarly, in Makulubita sub-county, identical issues were reported as gender achievements as in the implementation of the previous year's development plan: (1) Each parish received goats (women groups), coffee, maize, beans; (2) funded Women's Day celebrations; (3) gender training workshop for technical staff and councilors. Also in Luwero District the section 'Achievements in Gender Mainstreaming' in 2010/11–2014/15 and 2015/16–2019/20 plans was reported in an identical fashion. Finally, in the Lwanda development plan of 2015/16–2019/20, the section 'Gender in relation to agriculture' reported as their own an analysis from another sub-county, signaling that the analysis was copy-pasted from elsewhere, but failed to change the name of the sub-county: *'The main economic activity in Byakabanda sub-county is farming and it is mostly women that are engaged in ...'*

This stale reproduction of set pieces of text and measures in gender planning and reporting at sub-national level points to significant levels of inertia in thinking and practice around gender mainstreaming issues. Furthermore, the static translation of gender norms into district and sub-county plans also hints to a practice of including gender issues merely as part of a bureaucratic requirement in order to comply with international gender norms and budgeting requirements.

4.2.5. Minimizing budgets

The analysis of budgets at national and sub-national level revealed a limited translation of gender mainstreaming into policy instruments. For example, while the national agricultural sector budget for the financial year 2017/2018 highlighted the importance of promoting labor-saving technologies for women, increasing women's access to agricultural finance, and women's engagement in agro-processing; the budget did not contain any gender-sensitive performance indicators and outputs ([The Republic of Uganda, 2017](#)). A similar situation was found in the Operation Wealth Creation Program (OWC), the main program for farm input delivery and agricultural extension services in the country. The program guidelines emphasized inclusion, gender equity and non-discrimination in the delivery of inputs and services. However, the annual review report of the Equal Opportunities Commission ([Equal Opportunities Commission, 2016](#)) found that the OWC had no firm arrangements to ensure gender equity in receiving inputs, with records of beneficiaries remaining as 'number of people benefited' without further disaggregation by gender. This hints to an exercise of norm

translation where gender mainstreaming was largely limited to the discursive level, with the inclusion of gender considerations in national policy, but was generally absent from the translation of discourse into graspable policy instruments.

A similar situation was found when analyzing district and sub-county budgets. Under the 'key achievements' that sub-national budgets highlighted, we found no mention of gender. This contrast with the central role given to gender issues in the objectives of the district and sub-county development plans indicates again a norm translation exercise that largely stopped at the discursive level. Similarly, in the agricultural sector (production department), no gender activities were reflected in the district budgets for the different financial years analyzed, nor were there any gender-disaggregated data for the sectoral achievements that were highlighted in the budget.

On average, for the five consecutive financial years analyzed (2010/11 to 2014/15), the districts allocated between 0% and 0.06% of the total budget to gender issues. Gender activities that received funding were labelled under three different categories: 'workshops and seminars', 'women's councils' and 'gender'. Sub-counties allocated between 0% to 1.208% of their budgets to gender issues, and the most common activities budgeted were labelled as: 'women', 'gender', 'international women's day', 'gender workshops', and 'women's affairs'.

The amounts allocated to gender within the sub-national budgets remained limited, likely constraining the outreach of the activities. For example, in the Financial Year 2013/2014 the Luwero District allocated 883,600 Ugandan shillings (Ugx), the equivalent of USD235,³ to 'workshops and seminars', which theoretically had to be able to cover these activities for a population of 458,158 people (according to the August 2014 census). Similarly, several sub-counties reported an annual gender budget of just 200,000Ugx, the equivalent of USD53 (e.g. Zirobwe FY 2011/12; Alero FY 2014/14, Busoba and Namanyonyi FY 2014/15), with other sub-counties not having any budget for gender activities in some of the financial years (e.g. Kamira FY2014/15, Zirobwe FY2012/13, Anaka FY 2013/14, Alero FY2014/2015).

Outside of the established budgets for gender, sub-counties also managed the Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Program (UWEP), a national initiative of the Government of Uganda that aimed at improving women's access to financial services, providing skills for enterprise growth, value addition and marketing. Groups of women of 10 to 15 people were provided a loan to start and finance their operations. The average loan per group was 4,000,000 Ugandan Shillings, the equivalent of around USD1064 ([Equal Opportunities Commission, 2017](#)). Though the program was not exclusively designed for the agricultural sector, the rural nature of most districts in Uganda meant that in the financial year 2016/2017, 77% of all UWEP groups were related to agriculture or wholesale and retail trade ([Equal Opportunities Commission, 2017](#)). However, this program encountered several difficulties. While it had a national reach, only 56.6% of the total allocation of funds were realized in the FY 2016/2017 and 44 districts (out of 121) had not been allocated any funds ([Equal Opportunities Commission, 2017](#)). This practically meant that the group of beneficiaries had to be greatly reduced. Indeed, in the sub-counties considered in the study, the number of financed women's group ranged from 1 to 4, implying that a maximum of 60 women in any given sub-county were able to benefit from the program. Furthermore, within the funds that were officially released by the central government, serious cases of corruption in district and sub-counties across the country were reported ([New Vision, 2017a, 2017b](#)).

The broad denotation of the items that were listed in sub-national level budgets ('women', 'gender', 'women's affairs') and the restricted resources that were allocated to them indicate that – similar to what we found at national level – the translation of gender mainstreaming norms

³ 1USD = 3758,75Ugx Exchange rate for 31st August 2018. Source: Bank of Uganda.

largely stopped at the level of the policy discourse and did not translate to the same extent to government policy instruments. Furthermore, the ambition of national gender initiatives such as the UWEP program was not fully realized at local level, with < 1% of the women in the districts being able to benefit due to insufficient funds, delay in releasing the available funds and corruption (New Vision, 2017a, 2017b). It is worth nothing, however, that this study did not assess non-governmental work on gender, such as NGOs and development partners, which may have complemented the sub-national budgets allocated to gender issues.

5. Discussion

This study has adopted a discourse analytical perspective (Feindt & Oels, 2005; Wagenaar, 2011) on gender policy and budgeting, with a focus on the notion of norm translation (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Krook & True, 2012; Zimmermann, 2014). Our data show that the national and sub-national governments translated the international norms of gender mainstreaming into all policy documents that we analyzed, thereby seemingly complying with the treaty obligations of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. However, this study revealed five processes that collectively contributed to weakening the potential for transformation of this internationally recognized norm.

First, *neglecting* gender and climate change discourses at sub-national level policies, notably in sub-county plans, suggested a certain level of disconnect between national and sub-national policy, where localized systems of governance left climate change and gender issues unproblematic and thus unpoliticized. Neglecting specific aspects of the discourse – a common discursive mechanism of control in policy-making (Schröter & Taylor, 2018) – are important to consider and can help us to understand why and what gets excluded in gender policy exchanges (Smyth, 2010). Second, cases of *discursive hybridity* allowed us to examine how policies that seemingly embraced a gender mainstreaming discourse, simultaneously perpetuated gender stereotypes, not challenging pre-existing unequal gender relations and, consequently, dampening the gender equality ambition of gender mainstreaming strategies. These cases of adoption of a hybrid discourse are enabled by the generic terms in which the gender mainstreaming norm was crafted, which has allowed governments and development organizations to engage with gender mainstreaming discourse while at the same time maintaining the incumbent local social order (Krook & True, 2012; Lombardo et al., 2009). For example, Nandigama (2012) shows how a gender-equal participatory mechanism in India promoted through a development program, was perceived, contextualized, adapted, and used in different terms by men and women in the community. Unequal distributions of power and agency between men and women, and between castes, restricted a gender-equal participation which was ultimately perceived to alter the local social order (Nandigama, 2012).

Third, cases of *shrinking norms* revealed that while gender inequality was discussed as a legitimate object of governance, at no level of administration was this language ever sufficiently elaborated. This was especially notable in policy prescriptions, often given as bullet points, presented without any envisioned pathway for change. This 'shopping list' approach to gender is not unique to Uganda but has also been observed in a study examining gender equality policies of the Netherlands and Spain (Lombardo & Meier, 2009). The simplification of discourse in processes of norm translation between different contexts, as Fischer (2003, p. 155) reminds us, often imply a 'reduction of complexity and loss of information'. Fourth, pervasive cases of *gender inertia* – stale reproduction of text in the gender analysis from development plans at sub-national level – hints towards acts of purely symbolic politics in the mainstreaming of gender in sub-national policy as a compliance to bureaucratic requirement. The institutional engagement with gender mainstreaming as part of everyday bureaucracy, or as symbolic politics, is also widely reported in the development

literature (Arora-Jonsson, 2014; Collins, 2018; Miers, 2011; Samarasinghe, 2014). Finally, the abstract nature of budget items coupled with the restricting budget allocations to gender issues revealed that the translation of the gender norm largely stopped at the discursive level and did not extend to meaningful policy instruments. Colebatch (2014) and Bacchi (2009) assert that indeed government budgets may reveal specific choices of problem-solving strategies and the relative importance given to them. From this, the abstract nature of the gender activities budgeted at the sub-national level points to a clear disjunction between gender discourse and action. Together, these five processes illuminate how the transformative ambitions of gender mainstreaming norms are diluted during the process of domestication.

In this way, our discursive approach to norm translation has specified some of the processes through which gender norms are translated in a way that simultaneously resonates with international discourses and permits adjustment to domestic norms and logics, which was a phenomenon commonly highlighted in the gender in development literature (Barnett, 2018; Petersen, 2018; Smyth, 2010). While from our findings we cannot infer causation, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) have explained this phenomenon by the fact that international gender norms have often clashed with strongly held domestic norms, and thus governments had no apparent interest in the adoption of such norms. The fact that policies have incorporated a 'gendered' language might reflect a state interest in engaging in international discourses, either to gain international credibility and reputation (Krook & True, 2012; Ssewakiryanga, 2002) or to comply with donor's normative requisites (Collins, 2018; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Miers, 2011; Samarasinghe, 2014), or both. Finnemore and Sikkink have further referred to this as processes of 'strategic social construction' in which 'actors strategize rationally to reconfigure preferences, identities or social context' (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 888). This strategic social construction resonates with other literatures, including Scott (1985) on everyday forms of resistance, the work of Li (2016) on the dynamics established between actors in development projects, and the work of Tsing (2005) on friction.

Our findings differ from the idea proposed by Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, p. 893) which asserted that domestic influences over international norms are strongest at early stages, but that they 'lessen significantly once a norm has become institutionalized in the domestic system'. In the case of Uganda, while the influence of international gender mainstreaming discourse was clear, processes of norm translation showed that local norms and patriarchal settings were still very powerful. This finding is consistent with research showing that informal and local gender norms can affect the performance of success of gender mainstreaming strategies and development programs (see for example Fejerskov, 2018 and Nandigama, 2012, 2018). In the case presented here, the observation that documents incorporated a 'gendered' language, but the discourse remained at a prescriptive and abstract level, could be attributed to the influence of local norms. Through the five identified mechanisms, the translation processes – either unintentionally or intentionally – enacted, naturalized or favored certain realities over others. This created the overall performative effect (Arts & Babili, 2012; Nandigama, 2012, 2018) of limiting the transformational potential of the proposed gender actions, and ultimately depoliticizing gender (Jalušič, 2009; Manicom, 2001; Smyth, 2010).

6. Concluding remarks

Although gender mainstreaming has been globally accepted as an international norm to achieve gender equality, the strategy to establish an international norm that is then translated into local contexts has not yet succeeded in reducing the gender inequalities as envisioned (Alston, 2014; Brouwers, 2013; van Eerdevijk, 2016; Walby, 2005). Previous research has suggested that existing gender inequalities are partly reproduced in translation processes of international norms into national and sub-national policies, where implementation mostly takes place

(Allwood, 2013; Krook & True, 2012). Through an in-depth inductive analysis of policy documents in Uganda, this study found that, while the international norm of gender mainstreaming had been formally adopted, its transformational potential was reduced through five distinct processes during norm translation.

In particular, during the process of drafting national and sub-national documents, certain gender discourses were either overlooked or completely ignored (*neglecting gender and climate change discourse*), gender discourses at sub-national level remained static (*gender inertia*), prescriptions remained at a very generic level (*shrinking gender norms*), and gender mainstreaming exercises co-existed with certain contradictory normative cultural understandings (*embracing discursive hybridity*). Finally, the lack of relevant budgets indicated that gender mainstreaming largely stopped at the discursive level and did not extend to meaningful policy instruments (*minimizing budgets*). Taken together, these five processes greatly reduced the potential for transformation of the international norm on gender mainstreaming. The transformational potential of international norms on gender mainstreaming should however not be taken as given, nor should be stipulated as the only or most obvious source of transformational change in gender relations. In this sense, due importance should be also placed to examining the influence of local norms and situated practices of actors in the performance of success of gender mainstreaming strategies (Nandigama, 2012, 2018).

Examining acts of norm translation from a discursive perspective opened up the possibility of understanding norms as processes (Krook & True, 2012). From this angle we were able to reconstruct the mechanisms through which international norms are hedged in, defusing their transformational potential when translated to local contexts. While our results can only speak for the Ugandan context, given the extensive academic literature reporting a gap between formal adoption of gender mainstreaming strategies and their limited effects at local level (Alston, 2014; Brouwers, 2013; van Eerdewijk, 2016; Walby, 2005), we can expect that similar processes of defusing norm domestication are also occurring elsewhere.

Our findings suggest that the formulation of a global strategy will likely not suffice in dealing with highly localized and context specific gender dynamics, and in dealing with structurally embedded gender inequalities that are often spread through all aspects of a society. In this way, the assumption that international gender norms could significantly affect local patriarchal contexts needs to be reassessed. While the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming might be helpful for gaining legitimacy and public awareness on the matter, other strategies will likely need to be in place for its success. The effects of gender mainstreaming exercises in policy could be enhanced, for example, by placing a stronger focus on promising practices already shaping gender relations in specific territories (Njuki, Parkins, & Kaler, 2016); by increasing the attention to women's rights movements (Tripp & Kwesiga, 2002); by establishing stronger monitoring and evaluation processes of gender transformative programs (Hillenbrand, Karim, Mohanraj, & Wu, 2015); or by lessening the influence and dependence on donor gender requirements, and prioritizing policy action on context specific gender issues constraining local equitable development (Siachitema, 2010). This, however, would require willingness for gender transformative change and strong gender analysis capabilities from policymakers at all levels. The latter, in Uganda is still largely deficient, with officials at sub-national and national level having declared insufficient skills to support meaningful gender analysis in agricultural development and climate change issues (Acosta, Ampaire, Okolo, & Twyman, 2015).

The findings suggest several avenues for future research. First, research on international norm translation could benefit from linking up to the work of Scott (1985), Tsing (2005) and Li (2016) to examine the ways in which local policy actors and development practitioners might shape the meanings of international norms and devise strategies to maintain the incumbent local social order and operate amidst highly fixed bureaucratic development policies. Research should thus also

assess what kind of locally-crafted strategies could help gender mainstreaming strategies thrive (i.e. success factors) and support the renewed politicization of gender issues. Finally, considering that non-government organizations often receive funds from donor organizations and thus need to guide their gender work in accordance with international standards and expectations (Ssewakiryanga, 2002; Tortajada, 2016), they are consequently active actors in international norm translation and domestication processes at the local level and might also contribute to processes of either re-politicization or de-politicization of gender issues (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; True & Mintrom, 2001; Zwingel, 2005). Further research would therefore benefit from examining the interactions of these organizations with national and sub-national governments to obtain a more complete picture of processes of gender norm translation on the ground. This, in turn could help identifying possible entry points and strategies to move towards more effective strategies to address gender issues.

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