When Traditional Power Structures are Trembling

A qualitative analysis of aid agencies focus on gender roles and contribution to potential changes in those following the earthquakes in Nepal 2015.

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Abstract

This thesis examines how and to what extent humanitarian aid organizations strategically focus on gender roles following disasters, and how they contribute to potential changes in gender roles. The case selected for the study is Nepal after the 2015 earthquakes where the reports of four international humanitarian aid organizations were examined through a qualitative content analysis. The thesis aims to provide a contribution to the disaster risk reduction literature with a special focus on the possibilities to use disasters as catalysts for changes in traditional gender roles. As humanitarian organizations are major actors in the aftermath of disasters, the purpose is to evaluate their efforts and connect that to previous literature in the field. As a theoretical foundation two contrasting theories are incorporated in the study, the first is the idea that a disaster can be a ‘window of opportunity’ for changes in gender roles whereas the other one is that vulnerable people is often left more vulnerable after a disaster due to secondary consequences, a so called double disaster.

The main findings of the study demonstrate that none of the four international humanitarian organizations incorporated a gendered perspective in their aid efforts following the earthquakes in Nepal 2015. The organizations seldom separate women from men in their reports, demonstrating an unawareness of the gender power structures at play. Few activities had a potential to empower women and the ones that did lacked a long-term perspective to enhance gender equality and lower vulnerability.

Keywords: Disaster, gender, women, vulnerability, humanitarian aid, earthquake, Nepal, empowerment, window of opportunity, double disaster, qualitative content analysis.
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1. Introduction

"Disasters are social and political events that are linked to who we are, how we live and how we structure and maintain our society"

(Fothergill, 1996:11)

Devastating disasters have long been a frequent element in the never-ending stream of news flowing through newspapers, television, social media etcetera. Natural hazards have always occurred, but somehow the occurrence of disasters have been increasing drastically over the past 35 years. An important reason for this increase is the climate change, resulting in more weather-related disasters. However, this is not the only explanation for the escalation. Also socioeconomic and demographic factors such as population growth and ongoing urbanization can help explain the phenomenon, especially when measuring disasters in losses (Hoeppe, 2015).

A natural hazard does not necessarily need to result in a disaster. It is the vulnerability of people that determine whether or not it will be disastrous (Andersson, 1994). Disasters can be viewed as the interplay between hazardous events and the vulnerability of a society (Birkmann, 2006). Due to this, it is possible to reduce the damaging impacts of disasters by addressing root causes of vulnerability (Goldschmidt & Kumar, 2016). Natural hazards are triggering disasters with extensive damages which in turn have reversed years of development work (Shipper & Pelling, 2006). As a result of this more research on vulnerability is needed in order to make development work and disaster response as efficient as possible to reduce future vulnerability.

Social structures in society control peoples’s lives in terms of opportunities and hence certain groups experience greater vulnerability than others (Bondesson, 2017). Gender is one aspect that can implicate more vulnerability and the inequitities in the everyday life of women and girls puts them at greater risk in times of disasters (Bradshaw, 2014). Gender inequalities lead to a lack of access to resources and decision making which leaves women more vulnerable. However, women are resourceful agents that play an important role in the rebuilding, rehabilitation, caregiving and mitigation (Sultana, 2010). This thesis is treating the subject of women’s vulnerability and how disasters can offer a ‘window of opportunity’ to change traditional gender roles. Three possible outcomes was identified: women becomes more empowered after a disaster, women are left more vulnerable or the traditional gender roles remains and reinforces. Through previous research a
number of factors that can potentially influence the outcomes was found, and this paper strives to examine these factors in relation to the actions of humanitarian aid organizations.

Most of the previous research is case studies conducted with individuals and local institutions as main units of analysis, investigating the actual outcomes on gender roles. There is a lack of evaluative research on the efforts and possibilities to use disasters as catalysts for changes in traditional gender roles. In order to fill this research gap, this study evaluates the efforts by aid agencies. Aid agencies are important actors in the aftermath of disasters and it is arguable that they are in a unique position to influence the outcomes on gender roles through the construction of their programmes.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to previous research within the disaster risk reduction-field, and the field of gender in disasters in particular. This yields the following research question:

*How and to what extent do humanitarian aid organizations strategically focus on gender roles following disasters, and how do they contribute to potential changes in gender roles?*

The question will be answered through the examination of four humanitarian aid organizations’ progress reports of their efforts in post-earthquake Nepal. The documents will be studied by the method of qualitative content analysis that will provide a systematic and consistent analysis. The outline of the thesis will be as follows: firstly a brief background to the gender roles in Nepal as well as the earthquakes. In section 2 theoretical concepts and previous research will be presented, divided into four key components: gender roles, vulnerability, gender and disasters, and aid agencies. After this follows a discussion of the research design where the method, case selection and material will be introduced. Section 4 provides the findings of the study together with a discussion of the implications. Lastly, the findings will be summarized and the final conclusions will be presented together with suggested further research.

1.1 Background and context

1.1.1 Gender roles in Nepal at the time of the earthquakes

With a Gender Inequality Index at 0.479 in 2014 Nepal was placed as the 98th most unequal country of 187 in total. Most of the unpaid family work (74.8%) was conducted by women, and girls were expected to help their mothers with the domestic labour from an early age while boys did not have the same responsibilities. This rendered Nepalese women with a much higher workload.

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1 Disclaimer: of course many of these gender roles still remain in Nepal. However, the information is gathered from a 2015 report (CARE, 2015).
than the global average. The gender roles in Nepal varied context to context depending on ethnic
groups, caste, religion and class but the overwhelming tradition was that men had dominance over
women. Nepalese women and girls were disadvantaged by traditional practices such as son-
preference, the dowry system, early marriage, polygamy, family violence, stigmatization of widows,
isolation of women (purdah), and the segregation of women and girls during menstruation
(chaupadi) (CARE, 2015).

1.1.2 The Earthquakes
On the 25th of April 2015 Nepal was struck with an earthquake measuring a 7.8 magnitude, also
causing severe damages in India, China and Bangladesh. On May 12th a second earthquake hit the
country, with a magnitude of 7.3. The second earthquake had its epicenter 78 km northeast of
Kathmandu, an area that was already affected by the first earthquake with its epicenter northwest of
the capital (Reliefweb, n.d.). In between and after the two big earthquakes there was also several
smaller quakes and temblors (OCHA, 2015a; OCHA, 2015b). The Government of Nepal confirmed
that 8700 people were killed in the earthquakes and over 500 000 houses were destroyed. In total
the disaster left 2.8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 2015c).

2. Theory and Previous Research
The first two parts of this section will conceptualize key components to this thesis. Then a review of
previous research within the field of gender and disasters will follow. The section is then finished by
a description of the role of aid agencies .

2.1 A background to gender roles
When the topic of gender found its way into academia, it was first conceptualized as a synonym for
sex. The discourse has transformed over the years and gender is now understood more as culturally
specific dynamic interactions. The categories ’male’ and ’female’ do not automatically generate any
particular practices or meanings and therefore they do not directly embody neither politics, nor
political practice. Whatever meaning the categories may encompass are constructed and not
biological (Beckwith, 2005). Feminist scholars have increasingly been using gender to describe the
social organization of the relationship between sexes (Scott, 1986). Stemming from this, gender can
be defined as ”a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between
the sexes” and ”a primary way of signifying relationships of power” (Scott, 1986:1067).
Feminist scholars have developed a theory of gendered institutions, or feminist institutionalism, to outline all the ways that gender power and gender disadvantage are produced and sustained by both formal institutions such as laws and formal processes as well as informal institutions such as ideologies, images, practices etcetera. This theory have shown that organizational practices have a central role in strengthening gender hierarchies, gender identities and gender symbols. The way gender power works is that it "generates and sustains practices of inequality that advantage men and disadvantage women. Embedded in organizational rules, routines, and policies, gender power normalizes male dominance and renders women, along with their needs and interests, invisible" (Hawkesworth, 2005:147). It is therefore effective to use gender as an analytical category to illuminate gender power and gendered institutions (ibid).

In practice, gender roles are a set of expectations of how women and men respectively should act, speak, dress, and conduct themselves. Women and girls are generally supposed to be feminine, polite, considerate and caring while men are expected to behave more aggressively, more ambitiously and be more dominant and risk-taking (Carranza & Prentice, 2002). Though they can vary between different groups, every society has gender roles. All over the world, women carry out at least two and a half times more unpaid work in the household than men, such as cooking, cleaning and caring. This have the effect that women cannot engage in paid labour to the same extent, and if they do they often have to work double to cover both paid and unpaid labour. Though women's unpaid labour subsidizes the cost of families, it is rarely considered as "real work" (UN Women, 2018). A clear majority of the worlds poor are women, something scholars have begun to call the "feminization of poverty" This gendered poverty is a result of gender power inequalities and as the deputy director of UN Women stated in 2016, it will not be possible to achieve sustainable development if this feminization of poverty continues (Bradshaw, Chant & Linneker, 2017).

2.2 Socially differentiated vulnerability

A natural hazard do not necessarily have to become a natural disaster. In order for an event to become disastrous a vulnerable society must be exposed to a hazard. This can be illustrated in a conceptual equation: disaster risk = hazard x exposure x vulnerability (Albrecht, 2017:15). Birkmann (2006) argues that disasters should be viewed as a result of the interaction between physical events that could result in damage (e.g. floods or earthquakes) and the vulnerability of a society’s infrastructure, economy and and environment. In order to promote disaster resilience there
is a need to shift the focus away from natural hazards and towards the identification and assessment of vulnerabilities (ibid).

Vulnerability can be defined as ”exposure to risk and an inability to avoid or absorb potential harm” (Pelling, 2003:5) which can be further divided into social, physical and human vulnerability. Social vulnerability refers to the vulnerability people experience in their social, economic and political systems whereas physical vulnerability apply to the risk exposure in built environment. Human vulnerability is a combination of the previous two (ibid). Vulnerability can have different social origins and exist in several forms. One aspect that can make people more vulnerable is gender. Previous research and practical experience have shown that women are more vulnerable to hazardous events than men. This vulnerability is said to be the result of the pre-existing structures in society that yields social and economic disadvantages of women through limited material assets, their lack of state support and gender norms and responsibilities (Horton, 2012). Since the vulnerability of women extends from the physical to the social space human vulnerability is the type of vulnerability that is relevant when researching women's exposure to risk.

To explain the socially differentiated vulnerability, Bondesson (2017) uses a structural perspective of power. It is the social structures in society, government programs, schools, healthcare systems etcetera, that control peoples’s lives in terms of opportunities and hence make certain groups more vulnerable. This differentiated vulnerability is closely linked to powerlessness since the under-privileged groups generally lack influence in decision-making processes. Vulnerability and risk exposure are the results of political decisions. This creates a double burden for some social groups because at the same time as they ”are most heavily affected by the effects of disasters, they are the ones with the least to say about how society is organized, including how risk is produced and managed” (ibid:46).

There are also other ways to be marginalized and hence more vulnerable. Also social markers such as race, ethnicity and class have an impact on vulnerability and they have a complex interrelationship with gender (Fothergill, 1996). When poverty and race/ethnicity intersect it may combine to disadvantage women. Researchers have found that women who are already marginalized due to economic exclusion or racial/ethnic bias are less likely to be active participants in long-term recovery efforts after disaster than privileged women (Enarson, Fothergill & Peek, 2006). It must be acknowledged that though this thesis is focused on the power structures of gender it cannot be understood in isolation from other power structures. Intersectionality explains the
conclusion that different power structures such as gender, race, class, sexuality and functionality interact with each others in way that create further inequalities and oppression (Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, 2016).

2.3 Previous research on gender roles and disasters

According to the definition by UNISDR (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) a disaster is a “serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources” (UNISDR, 2004:17). This means that the hazard leading to a disaster can be either natural or man-made, what makes it a disaster is not the event itself but rather the implications it has due to different degrees of vulnerability. There are many ways to be vulnerable, but something most scholars seems to agree on is that women and men are subject to socially differentiated vulnerability in a way that often leaves women more vulnerable to disasters than men. The greater vulnerability among women is likely a result of unequal gender power relation resulting in the limitation of women's access to and control over resources (Bradshaw, 2014).

There is a profusion of ways in which the structures of societies make women more vulnerable to hazards. Due to women’s social roles they are often restricted to the domestic spaces and never learn skills that can be used to survive in disasters, for example to swim and climb trees. Women also have less education. Two thirds of the 876 million people in the world who are illiterate are women, a situation that leads to women being less likely to receive and understand important information and early warning messages. The burden on women in times of disaster is particularly hard due to their generally poorer health. Women have special nutritional needs (especially when being pregnant or breastfeeding) and in many cultures they are the lowest on the food hierarchy of the household, meaning that they are the last to eat. This in combination with women being more susceptible to infections and the risk of indoor pollution due to cooking render women with a significantly poorer health than men (UNISDR, UNDP & IUCN, 2009).

There are also structures that can make men more vulnerable in certain situations. Men have to live up to norms of masculinity as much as women have to those of femininity. In some contexts this expose them to greater risk. For example, men are expected to be more risk-taking in the search and rescue after a disaster (Fordham, 2012). Another example is a refugee camp in Ethiopia where sudanese men who escaped being drafted to the army were gathered. The men were in critical
condition and food were directly provided. In spite of the aid given the men were not getting better, it was then discovered that they could not make use of the food they received because their gender roles had prevented them from learning how to cook (Andersson, 1994).

The general consensus concerning women’s greater vulnerability culminates at the event of a disaster, after that the development can go either way ranging from an increase in the vulnerability of women to a ”window of opportunity” for gender roles to be altered.

2.3.1 Empowerment
One study focusing on women's empowerment following disaster carried out a longitudinal study on what changes in gender relations that could emerge following a disaster in Chile and if those changes could be long-lasting. The study concluded that there can be long-lasting changes in the historical patriarchal relations following a disaster. Women were empowered by making their roles visible when their domestic capacities were extended to the community level by organizing community kitchens. By tackling women’s psychological barriers to develop leadership skills a ripple effect can be initiated leading to new women's interests arising (Moreno & Shaw, 2018). Other research that share similar view on the potential increase in women’s empowerment following a disaster is Birkmann et al. (2010) that concludes that disasters can function as catalysts for irreversible structural change by initiating new relationships within environmental, socioeconomic and political institutions. Also a study of the hazardous waterscapes of Bangladesh concluded that in times of disasters, necessity rather than traditions guides what needs to be done. Due to this it is possible to reverse and change gender roles. Women are not only victims but also resourceful agents that are imperative to the phase of rebuild and rehabilitation (Sultana, 2010). The empowerment of women can be advanced by an emphasis on women's advocacy and representation to counteract the fact that women are seldom included in disaster management which leaves their needs and interests overlooked (Pittaway et al. 2007).

2.3.2 Increased vulnerability
Other research concludes that disaster can generate effects in the other direction. Horton (2012) claims that disasters do not offer a clean slate for social and economic inequalities but rather that in the period after a disaster, the gender conflicts and inequalities may be aggravated. With the case of the Haitian earthquake as an example it is argued that disasters should be ”de-exeptionalised” and the gendered impacts need to be understood in a broader historical and social context. Though the author stated that disasters can create potential spaces for women's empowerment, it is concluded in
this study that women became more vulnerable due to exclusion from the post-disaster recovery work in Haiti. Another way that disasters can contribute to the increased vulnerability of women is by the "double disaster" they may endure. There is a risk that the post-disaster deterioration will lead to an increase in gender based and sexual violence as well as a decline in the economic and social well-being of women (Bradshaw, 2014). A study by Felten-Biermann (2006) concluded that a consequence to the 2004 Asian tsunami was an increase in sexualized violence. Women reported rapes and violence by both rescuers and in the refugee camps afterwards. The true numbers of the hidden statistics are not known since women were frequently blamed for the rapes as the societies put a high value on virginity and purity. There were even some incidents reported when women who intended to report their violators were raped again by police officers. Also the destruction of health and sanitary facilities can result in increased sexual violence. One study in India concluded that women who had to use open defecation were twice as likely to face non-parter sexual violence than women that had a household toilet (Jadhav, Weitzman & Smith-Greenaway, 2016). The instability and breakdown of social structures that follow a disasters can lead to increases in traditional forms of sexualized violence. In the case of the tsunami, an increase in forced marriages of young girls, honor killings and domestic violence was observed (Felten-Biermann, 2006). Also in other types of disasters it has been observed that early and forced marriages increase, something that have impacts on girls’ health through for example deaths in childbirth and also restrains in their education and future employment opportunities. In times of disasters girls are more likely to be withdrawn from school to replace mothers who have died, migrated or are needed elsewhere. They might also have to leave school in order to help provide for their families, often through insecure employment such as sex work or begging. Women’s economical wellbeing is often more severely impacted than men’s due to the losses they might suffer to their asset base. One example is the loss of kitchen utensils that might have been income generating for the women through cooking and selling food (Bradshaw & Fordham, 2013). In times of crises it is common that women’s assets are sold before men’s, leading to increased impoverishment of women (Sultana, 2010) Another problem is when women are left behind when their men migrates to find new sources of income. The men might not send money as promised and sometimes start a new life somewhere else, leaving the women without proper means to survive since the household assets have often been sold to finance the migration (Bradshaw & Fordham, 2013).
2.3.3 Status quo

One article claims that disaster setting can produce an atmosphere where stereotypical gender roles prosper as people tend to embrace traditional patterns of behavior in times of danger (Pittaway et al. 2007). According to Bradshaw (2014) the growing discourse on the ”window of opportunity” has led to more disaster relief resources being allocated to women. This is not necessarily something that will produce long-term changes in gender roles. Targeting women with resources in the aftermath of disaster will likely produce little to no change in structural and historical inequalities. As illustrated by one project that granted cows to women where the outcome was that women had their cows and the men got to drink the milk, ”projects that address women’s practical needs may change gender roles, but do not necessarily bring changes to gender relations” (Bradshaw, 2014:64). Hence, if activities that could be used to empower women are lacking a long-term perspective, gender relations will likely remain the same in the long run.

2.4 The role of aid agencies

In 2016 donors from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) distributed over 16,7 billion USD in humanitarian aid. These funds are designated to save lives, to alleviate suffering and uphold human dignity in conflict, shocks and natural disasters (OECD, 2018). Due to the amount of funding that flows through humanitarian aid projects it is clear that international humanitarian aid is an important aspect to consider when studying disaster relief work.

According to Pittaway et al. (2007) international aid workers have a chance to challenge the structural issues related to power, class and patriarchy that surface in times of disasters and increases vulnerability. By inviting local people and communities and allowing them to determine the direction of interventions and advocacy, aid workers have a chance to adress social oppression, marginalization and exclusion. By extension this will decrease the vulnerability of marginalized people. Also other research emphasize aid agencies opportunity to tackle structural inequalities by for example building women’s confidence to encourage them to take on leadership roles (Moreno & Shaw, 2018). However, as one study concluded NGO’s could not respond to women’s long-term needs as that were beyond their scope and had to be adressed by the state (Horton, 2012).

The need to take the different needs of women, men, girls and boys into account in humanitarian assistance is increasingly acknowledged. However, a common argument in disaster relief is that there is no time to focus on gender issues in times of crisis. However, there is evidence that the consideration for different needs is imperative for effective relief and lifesaving assistance. Failing
to include a gender perspective may put beneficiaries' lives at risk and the programmes “risk being off-target, not reaching the most excluded, providing support in an inadequate manner or even inadvertently causing harm” (Sida, 2015:1).

According to Bradshaw (2014) gender have been more effectively incorporated into projects within the development sector than within disaster relief and recovery efforts. Through efforts by for example the World Bank to adopt a gender mainstreaming strategy, gender have been integrated in the development field. Also the International Monetary Fund, a very man-dominated agency, have proclaimed the benefits of empowering women. Not only has the integration of gender gone further in its evolution within development, it is also far more documented than the process of integrating gender into disaster projects (Bradshaw, 2014). A gendered perspective can function as a strategic link between disaster response and long-term development. Gender equality can help mitigate risk and build resilience against recurrent crisis (Sida, 2015). Hence, more studies on gender in disasters is called for.

2.5 Summary of framework

Previous research has demonstrated how a disastrous event can have several outcomes on gender roles. Firstly, it will either be a change in gender roles or the situation will remain the same. Secondly, if there is a change in gender roles, which previous research conclude is likely, the shift can go in both directions. Either the disaster will lead to women being more empowered, supporting the idea of a ‘window of opportunity’, or women’s vulnerability will increase as traditions are strengthened in times of crisis. The analytical framework is further described in section 3.3.3 and Figure 1 illustrates the possible impacts that disasters can have on gender roles.

3. Research Design

This section will present the research design of the thesis. Followed by that the case selection will be motivated together with the material of the analysis. Lastly, the method of choice, qualitative content analysis, is described followed by the operationalization and analytical framework.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how and to what extent humanitarian aid organizations strategically focus on gender roles following disasters, and how they contribute to potential changes in gender roles. In order to do so a close examination of the projects carried out in the aftermath of a disaster is called for. To identify activities that lead to changes in gender roles the design of a single
case study is adopted. A single case study is used when the aim is to describe a unit of analysis in detail which can be useful for example in a sequence of events containing several interrelated actors (Teorell & Svensson, 2007:82) which is the case in disaster relief and recovery work. A common critique of the case study design is its generalizability, meaning that it is questioned how a single case study can yield results that are applicable for other cases than the one examined (Bryman, 2016:62). However, it is arguable that it is not the main purpose of the case study to produce findings that can be generalized to other cases or populations (ibid: 64).

The research that exists on gender roles and disasters has mainly been focusing on local residents, community leaders, relief workers and grassroots movements. There is a need for more research on the impact of aid activities on gender roles. The intention of this study is to contribute to the field of research by making an empirical contribution in order to increase insight on the subject of gender roles following disasters. Hence, it is not the main ambition to be able to generalize it to a broader population. Case studies like this could inform policy-makers and practitioners in the field about the potential impact of their activities on gender roles.

3.1 Case selection

The case selected for this thesis is the disaster that Nepal suffered from after being hit by two big and several smaller earthquakes within a few weeks in 2015. This particular case was selected on the grounds that it is a severe disaster that affected millions of people. Due to its severeness, many different organizations engaged in and implemented disaster relief and recovery projects (Reliefweb, n.d.). It is arguable that a severe disaster demanding lots of activities in the relief and recovery period is the most favorable case in order to examine the activities carried out by aid agencies.

The case selection can be motivated as a typical case of humanitarian aid assistance after disasters. It was a severe disaster that affected a lot of people and generated an immense response from the international community. In spite of the seriousness of the disaster the humanitarian aid effort were neither commonly known as a failure nor as a great success. There were lessons to be learned but it is not described as a total failure (see Alnap, 2015). Hence, it is a case that does not vary considerably from the population of humanitarian aid after a drastic disaster and there is reason to believe that this case could be representative also for other cases (Esaiasson et al. 2007:165).
3.2 Material

The material used in this study is evaluative reports from aid agencies treating their efforts in the aftermath of the Nepal earthquakes. The aid agencies that have been selected is Save the Children, UN Development Programme, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and PLAN International. They were chosen due to their statuses as big, international and well-known organizations. To select international organizations over local ones provides a chance to analyze methods and activities that are likely implemented also in other places where the organizations are active, something that could help develop the construction of future disaster relief and recovery projects. This strategic selection could be motivated as typical cases that do not differ systematically from other disaster relief and recovery efforts around the world (Esaiasson et al., 2017:164f).

3.2.1 Source criticism

Source criticism is relevant for all social researchers and it helps to determine the credibility of the material. There are four criteria of source criticism that should be taken into account when assessing sources: authenticity, time, dependency and tendency (Esaiasson et al., 2017:288). The documents will now be reviewed in relation to these criteria, however they will not be reviewed separately due to their similarity on all four criteria.

There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the reports as they are official documents published by the respective organizations and can easily be found on official web pages or other reliable sites of publication. These reports were written as evaluations after the projects were finished or as a part of the progress report which means that risk of inaccurate information due to the time aspect is very little. The organizations' reports are independent, as they evaluate their own work and that also means that they are central to the events they are describing. However, the criteria where the reports are most easily criticized is the one of tendency. As it is assumable that all organizations want to be able to present positive results there is always a risk that the reports produced by the executive organizations themselves are distorted. There is a problem within international development project management that aid agencies must report their result back to external stakeholder which results in a accountability-for-results trap. When the focus is on results-based management there is a risk that more focus is on what results you can report than the actual management of the projects (Lavagnon, 2012). Hence, it would be optimal to use additional sources as a complement to the organizations’
reports but this will not be done within the scope of this study due to restrictions in time and resources.

3.3 Method of analysis

The method used in this study is a qualitative content analysis, or document analysis. This method is favorable when you need to gain understanding, elicit meaning or develop empirical understanding from written documents. Documents can function as tools to track change and development. By examining reports they can provide a picture of how an organization or program progress over time (Bowen, 2009). The qualitative content analysis is a time efficient method that makes it suitable for the scope of a bachelor thesis. It is also a stable source of information as documents will not change due to the presence of a researcher. However, a disadvantage with the method is that the documents are not made for research purpose which may make them insufficient in answering a research questions (ibid). Since the purpose with this study is to examine the activities carried out by aid agencies finding these activities is not a problem as they should be adequately described in the agencies’ reports. However, relating the activities to the categories that are pre-made in the operationalization is a potential issue since they might not be described in a way that allows them to be sorted into the categories.

Qualitative content analysis consists of an investigation of underlying themes in the analyzed materials (Bryman, 2009:563). Content analysis can be defined as ”any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (Holsti 1969:14, cited in Bryman, 2009:284). In this definition two qualities are important, that the analysis is objective and systematic. This can be done through clearly specify the rules for the interpretation of the material in advance by creating a observation schedule. To be objective it is crucial to be transparent in the processes of assigning raw material to categories. This will help minimizing the impact of the analyst’s biases. The application of the rules should also be done in a consistent manner in order to fulfill the systematic quality of a content analysis (Bryman, 2009:284).

3.3.1 Validity

Validity refers to the question if the study is measuring what it actually claimed it would measure, something that is determined by looking at how well the theoretical definition works in accordance with the operationalization (Esaiasson et.al., 2017:58). This study aims at examining how and to
what extent humanitarian aid organizations strategically focus on gender roles following disasters, and how they contribute to potential changes in gender roles. Through previous research a framework of possible outcomes of a disaster was formed. In order to see how the projects by aid agencies play into these scenarios an operationalization (table 1) with influencing factors and examples of activities within those was created based on the previous research of gender roles and disasters.

The operationalization in this thesis is based on previous research, however the operationalization might be incomplete due to lack of research on the subject which could be a validity concern. The main validity issue is that this study is restricted to the type of material and method that are subject to the researcher's interpretation. To deal with this issue the ideal method would be to use triangulation. The content analysis would then be combined with other qualitative research methods to draw conclusions upon several sources of evidence. This could be done by using for examples interviews and observation to strengthen the credibility of the study and reduce the impact of potential biases (Bowen, 2009). Due to the restrictions in time and resources this will not be done within the scope of this paper but it could constitute a ground for further research on the subject.

To minimize the impact of potential biases and strengthen the capacity of providing a systematic analysis a set of rules for the interpretation was used (see section 3.3.3). As mentioned above, by creating a observation schedule with a set of questions the raw material can be sorted into categories in a consistent manner.

### 3.3.2 Reliability

The absence of unsystematic or random mistakes in a study is called good reliability. This means that in theory the study could be replicated many times with the same result as long as the same material and operationalization are being used (Teorell & Svensson, 2016:56f). The optimal way to achieve high reliability in this study would be to use methods to increase intercodar reliability. This can be done by two or more analysts coding the same material using the same coding scheme in order to see if they categorize the material the same way (Lavrakas, 2008:344; Esaiasson et al., 2017:65). Within the scope of this paper, it is not possible to get a second coder and thus achieve intercodar reliability. To heighten the reliability of the study the method test-retest is used with a variation in time instead of variation between coders. This means that parts of the material will be reanalyzed again after letting some time pass from the first coding to confirm the results, something that can also be called intracodar reliability (Esaiasson et al., 2017:65).
3.3.3 Operationalization and analytical framework

The following operationalization in Table 1 have been based on previous research and constitutes the three categories of changes in gender roles that are examined in this study. It outlines the different influencing factors that have been identified through preceding studies and gives examples of what activities contributing to those factors could look like.

### TABLE 1. OPERATIONALIZATION OF CHANGES IN GENDER ROLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influencing factors</th>
<th>Activities (examples)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empowerment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase women’s visibility</td>
<td>• Move women’s domestic roles to the community level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen women’s agency.</td>
<td>• Activation of women’s grassroots movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include women in planning</td>
<td>• Include women in planning and implementation of projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and implementation of projects.</td>
<td>• Address psychological barriers to help women develop leadership skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address women’s strategic interests</td>
<td>• Focus on providing long-term resources that will tackle unequal power structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increased vulnerability</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and girls subject to ”double</td>
<td>• Create spaces where women are vulnerable and potentially subject to gender based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disaster”</td>
<td>violence such as refugee camps with insufficient lighting and bad sanitary facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allowing/Not preventing forced</td>
<td>• Allowing/Not preventing forced child marriages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child marriages</td>
<td>• Allowing/not preventing girls to leave school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allowing/not preventing women’s</td>
<td>• Allowing/not preventing women’s loss of economic assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of economic assets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the operationalization, following analytical framework in figure 1 functions as a guide for analyzing how activities carried out by aid agencies influence gender roles. As previously mentioned it is imperative to create an observation schedule to be able to assign the material into categories that can then be analyzed. This will be done by creating a set of rules, or questions, that will be used for coding the material in order to fulfill the systematic quality of a content analysis (Bryman, 2009:284). This study is using following questions when assessing the material:

- What activities increased women’s visibility?
  - Did they have a long-term perspective?
- What activities strengthened women’s agency?
  - Did they have a long-term perspective?
- What activities addressed women’s strategic interests?
  - Did they have a long-term perspective?
- Are there factors described that suggests that women are subject to a "double disaster"?
  - How did they deal or plan to deal with this?
- What activities reinforced traditional gender roles?

**Status quo**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional gender roles prosper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Assemble rescue/rebuild teams solely consisting of men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women targeted with short-term resources that emphasizes their traditional, domestic role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prosper
4. Results and Analysis

This section describes and analyses how and to what extent humanitarian aid organizations strategically focused on gender roles, and how they contributed to potential changes in gender roles after the earthquakes in Nepal 2015. The findings is presented under three headings representing the possible outcomes on gender roles that was identified in previous research. In each section the results will be described and followed by an interpretation of their impact. The complete table of results can be seen in Appendix I.

4.1 Empowerment

This study identifies three influencing factors that could lead to women’s empowerment following a disaster: to increase women’s visibility, to strengthen women’s agency and to address women’s strategic interests. Activities within these factors are expected to strengthen women’s position and contribute to gender equality. One important aspect is also whether or not the activities have a long-term perspective. From previous research (see Bradshaw, 2014) it is evident that activities that have a potential to empower women will not do so if the efforts are only short-term. The risk is that
gender roles is loosened in times of disaster only to revert to the previous state once the acute danger is relieved.

None of the four organizations examined described activities or future efforts that could contribute to an increase in women’s visibility. One way of increasing women’s visibility is by moving tasks that usually belong to the private sphere to the public which was the case in Chile when community kitchens were established, allowing women to extend their domestic capacities to the community (Moreno & Shaw, 2018). Traditional gender roles have marked the public sphere as the male sphere where institutions such as the government, trade, business and law are being handled. Women on the other hand are constricted to the private, domestic sphere where their responsibility is to take care of the family and the children (Kuersten, 2003:16). Hence, it is arguable that in order to move towards gender equality women cannot be restricted to the domestic sphere and their visibility must be prioritized. That humanitarian aid efforts do not work in favor of enhancing women’s visibility means that women are likely to continue to be confined to the private sphere and men will continue to have a power advantage as they roam around the public sphere. In extension this means that women will continue to have less of a voice in decision making and their interests will be left unaddressed.

One of the organizations, UNDP, stated that they included women in the promotion and implementation of safer construction practices. However, only 141 out of 1200 people that were included in mason training were women and out of the 711 District Support Engineers only 100 were women (UNDP, 2018). According to this the great majority of the people employed in construction practices were men even though women were included to some extent. This inclusion can strengthen women’s agency as the included women have a chance to raise their interests and needs. However, they are still outnumbered which means that the power structures are likely to exist also in that setting. The activity was not described through a long-term perspective which means that the potential momentum gained through including women could diminish once the main operation is finished. However, there is also the possibility that the women included will gain skills and contacts that can facilitate their roles as active agents in the future. 4 350 people got emergency employment following the earthquakes, 40 % (1740) of those were women (UNDP, 2018). This suggests that women’s agency were strengthened through inclusion in the process. However, this source of employment will vanish when the emergency is gone and the women will likely be left without employment once again, forcing them into unsafe employment and/or unpaid domestic work. According to the framework both of these activity offers a possibility for empowerment but
as they are lacking long-term perspective the outcome that is most likely is that it will not produce any changes on existing gender roles.

A number of activities can be connected to women’s strategic interests. Conditional cash grants were provided to small traders in order for them to start their businesses (Save the Children, 2016). Women were not mentioned in particular as beneficiaries of this but an example illustrates the impact these grants could have for women. Devi Rimal was a woman who were able to start a business breeding goats thanks to the cash grants provided (ibid). This allows women to have an income of their own and reduce their dependency on husbands or fathers. As have been shown in previous research, it is crucial for women to have their economic assets in order to reduce their vulnerability (Bradshaw & Fordham, 2013). However, it is arguable that it is not enough to offer grants or loans that are open for both men and women. This activity builds on an important assumption that women have an interest and a will to start businesses but their positions in society may prevent them from applying to the same extent as men. To allow cash grants to women is a way of changing formal rules so that in formality women have the same opportunities as men, however, the societal norms and values will remain if they are not addressed meaning that women’s opportunities may be restricted by informal rules. One way to deal with this issue is to address psychological barriers to help women develop leadership skills. This is detected in previous research as a way to strengthen women's agency (see operationalization and Moreno & Shaw, 2018) and when women’s agency is strengthened in this way it is arguable that they will be more likely to take on new roles in society, also this would provide long-term changes that would last beyond the immediate disaster.

PLAN international is planning to “tackle gender inequality and work with communities to transform the gender disparity that predominates in much of Nepal” (2016:3). The report does not provide any strategies as to how this will be implemented which means that it is a rather vague ambition. A planned activity without structured strategies will be harder to implement. However, the organization is also planning to provide quality psychological and emotional support, life skills, and reproductive health education to children and youths, with a special focus on adolescent girls (PLAN, 2016). This could help in providing the next generation of women with crucial resources such as skills and education that will make them more empowered in their adult life.

In summary, there are a few activities that could result in the empowerment of women through strengthening their agency and addressing strategic interests. However, none of the activities
include a pronounced long-term perspective. According to the analytical framework these activities are unlikely to result in the empowerment of women due to their lack of long-term aspects, they are more likely to keep gender roles the same. It is discussable whether or not these activities are meant to be empowering for women or if that would be just a by-product of other objectives. Few of the activities mention women separated from men which suggests that gender was not an aspect taken into consideration when designing the activities. If projects are implemented without any focus on gender roles it means that both men and women can be left more vulnerable due to their different needs. It can also mean that resources are not being used as efficiently as possible. A project will come to its best use when it is adapted to the people it is targeting, this includes considering social markers such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality et cetera as well as how they intersect. Only when understanding how people can have different experiences of the same activity it is possible to provide the optimal aid. As policy documents state (see Sida, 2015) it is crucial to have a gendered perspective in order to avoid doing harm. To increase future resilience and enhance development, the root causes of vulnerability must be dealt with and gender is one of those causes which is why a gendered perspective can help prevent disasters from reoccurring to the same extent.

4.2 Increased vulnerability

One factor evident in the reports that could potentially lead to women and girls being subject to a double disaster were the damages of the earthquakes on the education system (PLAN, 2016; IFRC, 2016). Nearly 7000 schools were damaged rendering one million children without permanent classrooms (Save the Children, 2016). One aspect of the double disaster that women and girls may endure is that girls often leave school after a disaster help provide for the family and/or replace mothers who died (Bradshaw & Fordham, 2013). Even though rebuilding schools will not tackle the issue of withdrawing girls from school, it will at least alleviate the efforts to keep them in school as they will not stay if there are no schools available. The activities to manage the destroyed schools include the immediate provision of temporary learning centers and later the construction of permanent, resilient and safe schools (PLAN, 2016; IFRC, 2016; Save the Children, 2016; UNDP, 2018). PLAN international (2016) also planned to initiate safe and inclusive back-to-school campaigns that could potentially address the issue of withdrawing girls, however girls are not mentioned in particular. All reports described the issues with maintaining education after a disaster but none of them mentioned girls as a particularly vulnerable group that needed extra attention. This suggests that girls could very well be exposed to this double disaster and be left more vulnerable than before the earthquakes. If the special needs of girls and boys are not taken into account when
initiating campaigns to keep kids in school it is likely that the result is far less successful. When girls are taken out of school they are being deprived of important knowledge and education that could serve as crucial resources to reduce their vulnerability as adults. In order to have an inclusive school environment there must be a strategy for the underlying causes of vulnerability. In the case of schoolgirls any activity meant to keep them in school should address the reasons why girls are withdrawn in the first place. As mentioned, it is common that girls are taken out of school to help provide for the family, so one way to address the issue would be to create incentives to allow girls to stay in school. An example of an effort to create such incentives are the UN’s project to provide food in schools. This have shown that when children get food in their school their attendance increases as the school food becomes part of the households’ livelihoods (Svenska FN-förbundet, 2018). By focusing on the special needs of girls and boys respectively the humanitarian aid organizations could create specialized incentives that would keep children in school. When girls are withdrawn from school they are often forced to unsafe employments (Bradshaw & Fordham, 2013), if they for example could learn vocational skills in school that might be an incentive to allow them to continue going there.

Following the earthquakes there was a problem with health and sanitary facilities since many of them got destroyed (PLAN, 2016; IFRC, 2016; Save the Children, 2016). This can put women and girls in vulnerable positions for example for sexual violence and/or health issues (see Jadhav, Weitzman & Smith-Greenaway, 2016). In response to this, safe latrines and other health related facilities were reconstructed (IFRC, 2016; Save the Children, 2016; UNDP, 2018). Most of the health-related efforts were not specified for any particular beneficiaries and the needs of women were not discussed. However, the exposure that women and girls are subject to when there is a lack of these facilities decreases when families and communities are provided with safe and adequate facilities. PLAN international also distributed emergency menstrual hygiene kits to women and girls, decreasing the health risks that comes with menstruating in unsanitary environments. Save the Children (2016) also initiated efforts to help breastfeeding mothers find a safe space to feed their children as well as learning about feeding habits and cooking techniques. Also infection prevention kits was distributed and Female Community Health Volunteer kits was provided to health facilities. This suggests that women’s special health needs were taken into account to some extent.

The earthquakes severely disrupted livelihoods in the affected areas (IFRC, 2016). Even though women’s loss of assets were not specifically addressed there are reasons to believe that also women
were severely affected by this. The measures that were taken to counteract this were to restore, strengthen and improve affected communities’ food security and ability to generate income by having agricultural and vocational skills training as well as providing cash grants for small businesses (IFRC, 2016). The risk is that women will not benefit to the same extent as men as it is arguable that no changes in power relations will occur if women’s interests are not specifically addressed. Also the power relations between men and women is exacerbated during crisis which means that extra attention is needed to counteract this (Sida, 2015). One strategy could be to use quotas in order to make sure that female beneficiaries are allowed as much rooms as the males. While providing vocational skills training it would also be beneficial to continuously working with strengthening women’s agency. If the disaster-oriented actions are paired with efforts for a more long-term change then the activities have a potential to not only help at the moment, but assist in development and empowerment for the future as well.

A breakdown in the law and order and community system following the disaster lead to a number of safety threats (Save the Children, 2016; UNDP, 2018). For example there were incidents of gender-based violence, including trafficking (PLAN, 2016). When law enforcement is weak abuse, exploitation and violence should reasonably intensify as impunity increases. This in turn puts already vulnerable people at larger risks. To deal with trafficking, anti-trafficking booths was implemented at district borders and by the time of the report 247 children had been saved. There are also plans to ”work with communities on the prevention and response to child protection and gender-based violence issues, including child marriage, child labour and child trafficking” (PLAN, 2016:4). Again, these planned activities are rather vague and are lacking strategies, hence it is more difficult to measure success and implications. UNDP provided mobile human rights clinics with the intention of ensuring that aid distribution and reconstruction did not violate human rights and aggravate inequalities. 20 000 vulnerable people, women included, benefitted from mobile legal aid clinics (UNDP, 2018). While this is not the type of activity that is likely to empower women it is a tool for women and other vulnerable groups to make sure that their positions will not be degraded more as a secondary effect of the earthquakes.

To summarize, most of the response actions to issues connected to a double disaster were not specifically designed based on consciousness of gender structures. This means that it is impossible to know how these secondary consequences are affecting women in the cases where the activities does not separate women from men. A few of the activities target women and vulnerable groups explicitly, such as maternity centers, menstrual hygiene and human rights clinics. However, it can
be argued that these actions only covers a small portion of all the secondary issues that women may endure and hence the response can be deemed not effective enough. Since close to no discussion is being conducted concerning special needs of individuals there is a risk that women are subject to more secondary effects that are not brought up in the reports, these will not be adequately dealt with and possibly leave women more vulnerable. As gender mainstreaming literature emphasizes, it is crucial to base response on the needs of individuals to avoid being off-target and not reaching the most excluded, something that could severely impact the effectiveness of live-saving assistance (Sida, 2015). From the results the reports were able to provide it is problematic to draw conclusions on whether or not the response leads to increased vulnerability. According the the analytical framework elements of a double disaster will lead to gender roles remaining in status quo if they are being properly handled and if they are not they are likely to result in increased vulnerability. Due to the lack of consciousness concerning these issues it is arguable that there is a possibility that women will be left more vulnerable after the disaster response. However, interpreting the material and results provided by the organizations the issues they brought up as problematic are being dealt with and the outcome is then no changes on gender roles. To determine the actual outcome further research is needed.

4.3 Status quo

No activities that explicitly reinforced traditional gender roles were identified in the reports. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to draw conclusions about the effects of many of the implemented and planned activities since the activities seldom separates men from women. Most of the activities described in the reports states that the beneficiaries are 'families’ or ‘households’ and the descriptions rarely provide any information as to how the aid is divided between the genders. For example, PLAN international (2016) states that they provided over 14 000 families affected by the earthquakes with unconditional cash grants to meet basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. Since no information is given concerning how the money and responsibility were divided, little can be said about the contributions to changes in gender roles. It could very well be the case that the money, a short-term resource, emphasizes women’s traditional, domestic role where she have the main responsibility for the domestic labour and might be the last one to eat due to hierarchies within the household. In order for this to work as a long-term resource the cash grants should work as something that relieves the family of their hardships to the extent that women can, for example, focus on other commitments that strengthen their agency and their strategic interests. One way to solve that issue is by having conditional cash grants where the conditions are designed
based on individual needs and have the objective to decrease vulnerability. When results are reported as in these reports there is little to tell about how the aid affects individuals and hence it might be difficult to measure progress and success. An effort that is assessed as a success due to its reach might have unforeseen implications that contributes to the reinforcement of traditional gender roles.

The design of the activities suggests that the organizations are not aware of the gender power structure. None of the programmes include a gender mainstreaming perspective and in the activities ‘families’ are interpreted as a cohesive unit rather than a set of individuals with different needs and vulnerability due to power structures. This has the effect that if there are changes on gender roles after the disaster response, it is not due to the organizations actively including a gendered perspective. As a result of the lack of gender discussions in the reports it is possible that a lot of information and implications are left outside of the reports, leading to inconclusive results. By not including a gender mainstreaming perspective the organizations are missing out on an opportunity to make their efforts more efficient and far-reaching. In order to reach the people that need it the most it is imperative to take individual needs into consideration.

5. Conclusion

The results of the content analysis show that none of the organizations had a specific focus on gender in their relief and recovery efforts. Only a few activities separates men and women while most of them only refers to ‘households’ or ‘families’. Due to this it is impossible to know which activities that women enjoyed the benefits from and from which they were excluded. One can conclude that the gender perspective is lacking from the reports since no consideration or strategies for the different needs of women, men, girls and boys are evident in the documents. As discussed in The Role of Aid Agencies, it is crucial to include a gender perspective to ensure the effectiveness of relief and recovery programs. A gendered perspective can also be an advantageous strategy for long-term development that will help build resilience and reduce vulnerability. Hence, the organizations lack of a gender perspective is making them miss out on an opportunity to reduce gender inequality at the same time as they are risking to do harm by not assessing the needs of individuals. Despite policy recommendations and research that proves the efficiency of including a gendered perspective, none of four international, well-known organizations implemented it into their programmes in Nepal. This suggests that gender issues continue to be a neglected subject in humanitarian assistance. Due to the organizations’ positions as actors that operate all over the world
it is assumable that their efforts in Nepal is generalizable to their efforts in other places as well. In order to maximize the effects of disaster relief and recovery a gender perspective is called for to increase gender equality and hence strengthen resilience in the long-term.

Some of the activities identified could be assigned to categories connected to the empowerment of women. However, few of those targeted women and those that did were vague and lacked clear strategies, such as plans to work with communities to transform gender inequality. It is difficult to measure the effects of that kind of activity, it is obvious that transformed inequality would function in favor of women’s empowerment so the interesting information would be the methods of how to get there. The other activities that seemed to target both men and women have the potential to increase women’s empowerment by for example cash grants for starting businesses. On the other hand, it is impossible to know how much of this went to male beneficiaries as it was not separated by gender.

Most of the activities could be categorized as responses to elements of a ‘double disaster’. As previously discussed double disaster refers to the secondary effects of a disaster that women and girls may endure due to their greater vulnerability. The fact that the main focus of the activities is to counteract immediate and secondary effects of the earthquakes suggests that the projects are almost entirely disaster-oriented. Little effort is made to improve long-term development and decrease vulnerability. It might be argued that a focus solely on immediate needs following a disaster is highly justifiable since the situation is acute. However, one can argue that in order to increase efficiency of responses, a long-term perspective is imperative. Without measures taken that deals with sources of vulnerability, disasters will continue to occur. With a long-term perspective, resilience can be built and the risk of disasters will be reduced.

It seems like a success that no activities could be connected to the strengthening of existing gender roles (status quo). This might be the case but since the beneficiaries of most activities are not specified it is impossible to know if some of the activities strengthened or contributed to existing gender roles. Here it is possible to make a distinction between efforts that actively and passively strengthen gender roles. None of the activities could be linked to actively strengthening gender roles, however there is a possibility that some of the activities inadvertently contribute to the reinforcement of traditional gender structures. This is especially true as the activities does not make a distinction between the different needs of men and women.
When analyzing the results with the assistance of the analytical framework it is possible to draw the conclusion that the efforts by aid agencies in Nepal following the 2015 earthquakes are not likely to contribute to changes in gender roles. The activities that has a potential to empower women are interpreted as to few and to vague to make a substantial contribution. Out of the five activities identified, four uses measurable indicators and only three separates women from men. In the cases where women are separated from men they are still lacking a discussion of gender based special needs. Instead most of the activities were focused on dealing with new issues that occurred as result of the earthquakes. However, it is important to emphasize that the activities can have effects on gender roles that can not be seen through the description of activities in the reports. This is particularly true in this case where the description of the activities seldom include a distinction between men and women. Also there is a possibility of increased vulnerability depending on what elements of a double disaster that are left out of the reports.

As has been established, a long-term perspective in disaster response is crucial to reduce vulnerability and enhance development. A gendered perspective is one of the tools that can be used in order to work for long-term change. There is a need for future research within this field to evaluate and analyze the work of humanitarian aid organizations in disaster settings. In order to see what substantial effects aid activities have on gender roles, there is a need for in-depth studies of the organizations work. It would be beneficial to combine content analyses of reports with interviews and observations to see the effects the activities have in real life and how those effects are perceived by beneficiaries. Though a few longitudinal case studies of the effects of disasters on gender roles exist there is a need for more studies with a focus on the efforts from aid organizations in order to make future efforts more efficient and successful.

6. List of references


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# Appendix I. Qualitative Content Analysis: Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities that increased women’s visibility</th>
<th>No activities identified</th>
<th>Did they have a long-term perspective?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities strengthened women’s agency</td>
<td>Women included in promotion and implementation of safer construction practices through activities such as mason trainings (141/1200 were women), deployment of District Support Engineers (100/711 were women), and livelihood recovery and community infrastructure restoration initiatives (UNDP, 2018).</td>
<td>Not stated in report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 350 people got emergency employment, 40 % (1740) were women (UNDP, 2018).</td>
<td>Not stated in report. Emergency employment suggests that it is short-term.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Activities addressed women’s strategic interests | Planned: Work with communities to transform the gender inequality that is noticeable in much of Nepal. (PLAN, 2016) | Yes, working with communities to transform gender roles. |
|-------------------------------------------------| Planned: Provide quality psychological and emotional support, life skills, and reproductive health education to children and youths - with focus on adolescent girls. (PLAN, 2016) | Yes, provide life skills and education that girls can use throughout their lives. |
|                                                 | Conditional cash grants provided to 384 small food and non-food traders. Both men and women. Example: Devi Rimal (woman) was able to start a business rearing goats (Save the Children, 2016) | Yes, long-term resources that can tackle unequal power structures by giving women a chance to have an income of their own. |
### Are there factors described that suggests that women and girls are subject to a "double disaster"?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did they deal or plan to deal with this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, earthquakes destroyed much of the education system (PLAN, 2016; IFRC, 2016)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Girls will not be kept in school if there are no schools available.</em></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, bad health and sanitary facilities (PLAN, 2016; IFRC, 2016; Save the Children, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Puts women and girls in a vulnerable position for sexual violence and/or health issues. | Rebuilted schools and health facilities have safe latrines and hand washing facilities (IFRC, 2016). 
*Note: does not mention women/girls in particular* |
| 70,454 families received access to adequate sanitation facilities 233 community facilities provided with improved water and sanitation facilities (IFRC, 2016) 
*Note: does not mention women/girls in particular* |  |
|  |  
| • 27,002 hygiene kits distributed.  
• Hygiene promotion activities: raise awareness of maintaining personal hygiene.  
• 238 community water supply systems repaired.  
• 4,929 latrines constructed (Save the Children, 2016) 
*Note: does not mention women/girls in particular* |  |
|  |  
| • 26 Mother-baby areas established for a safe place to breastfeed and learn about feeding habits and cooking techniques.  
• Infection prevention kits distributed  
• Female Community Health Volunteer kits provided to health facilities (Save the Children, 2016) |  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, gender-based violence including trafficking (PLAN, 2016)</td>
<td>Planned: Work with communities on the prevention and response to child protection and gender-based violence issues such as child marriage, child labour and child trafficking. (PLAN, 2016)</td>
<td>247 children saved through anti-trafficking booths at district borders. (PLAN, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, livelihoods severely disrupted (IFRC, 2016)</td>
<td>Aim to restore, strengthen and improve affected communities’ food security and ability to generate income: training in agricultural and vocational skills, cash grants for small businesses (IFRC, 2016)</td>
<td>61 child friendly spaces established to ensure safety, security and psychosocial support. This included specific schedules based on gender and age groups (Save the Children, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s loss of economic assets.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakdown in the law and order and community system following a disaster leads to safety threats (Save the Children, 2016; UNDP, 2018)</td>
<td>61 child friendly spaces established to ensure safety, security and psychosocial support. This included specific schedules based on gender and age groups (Save the Children, 2016).</td>
<td>Mobile human rights clinics provided monitoring to ensure that aid distribution and reconstruction did not violate human rights and aggravate inequalities (UNDP, 2018).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of abuse, exploitation and violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities that reinforced traditional gender roles</td>
<td>No activities identified</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

20,000 vulnerable people, women included, benefitted from mobile legal aid clinics (UNDP, 2018)