

Pathways of Women's Empowerment Research Programme Consortium

Narrative Report 2007-2008



<http://www.pathways-of-empowerment.org/annual-report/annualreport.html>

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Summary

During 2007/2008 the Pathways of Women's Empowerment RPC has been building on the foundations put in place during its first intense and exciting year. A series of high-profile policy-oriented events has been coupled by the start of empirical research projects that draw on the best of the range of disciplinary expertise in the Consortium – from the design of instruments for application in panel and other surveys in Bangladesh and Ghana, to fine-grained participatory and ethnographic fieldwork in poor neighbourhoods in Brazil and Egypt. A Pathways-initiated event that explored what it takes to increase political representation of women in the Brazilian National Congress attracted the attention of national media, as well as featuring prominently in the Congress' own media communications. Coinciding with a much-contested vote on political reform, the timing could not have been better. A Pathways-sponsored exchange between those who design and study Conditional Cash Transfers brought Latin American experience to Egypt at a crucial juncture in the policy process, with the aim of identifying what it takes to make CCT programmes more empowering for women. Fostering these kinds of exchanges lies at the heart of the Pathways approach – opening up spaces and creating opportunities for dialogue and learning, stimulating processes that bring new and fresh perspectives to bear on entrenched problems, and encouraging people to think out of the box.

While it is early days yet, Pathways researchers are finding resonances of approach, questions and framing of the problems we are addressing – if not yet the solutions – with a wide variety of stakeholders. We have seen this in our *Dialogues on Empowerment*, annual events at hub level and for the RPC as a whole, aimed at creating spaces for critical reflection and engagement with those from the worlds of academia, activism and development policy and practice. We have also found this resonance in smaller, more closed spaces of development committees, policy consultations and academic seminars. In these arenas, we've found a conjunction of *ennui* with the old frames of reference and excitement with the opportunity to revisit a more dynamic, engaged approach to the questions with which Pathways is concerned: questions of justice and power that are at the very heart of efforts to bring about social change. We feel both very positive and emboldened by glimpses of the promise that an unconventional approach that deals with "old" questions in entirely new ways can achieve.

Reaching and engaging our diverse audiences has been a key focus of this year. We have started working with Tactical Tech (an international NGO working at the intersection of advocacy and technology). We are building links with journalists at the BBC World Service and the Guardian. We have an on-going partnership with openDemocracy (a current affairs website). In Nigeria, Egypt and Bangladesh, plans are afoot for a range of digital film products, including a pilot TV drama on mythical stories of Nigerian women. In Brazil, interns on the Changing Times, Changing Lives project joined a photography course led by Fernanda Capibaribe, resulting in an exhibition in Salvador and a photoclip on YouTube. In Bangladesh, a photography competition yielded a touring exhibition of everyday images of change in women's lives – the next stop for the exhibition is DFID Bangladesh's International Women's Day celebrations. In West Africa, an exciting capacity development initiative is about to begin with the talented photojournalist collective Documentography (www.documentography.com), working with the Ghanaian Foundation for Female Photojournalists and members of the Pathways teams in Sierra Leone, Ghana and

Nigeria. In association with Screen South – connections made possible by our new Communications and Learning Officer, Tessa Lewin, herself an acclaimed digital artist

- Pathways is supporting an award to a young local filmmaker to work with one of our hubs to produce a series of digital shorts aimed at a TV audience that includes the British public.

The transition amongst many of the RPC's researchers from seeing the RPC as 'just another project' to feeling part of a vibrant network from which they can gain much more than the means to pursue their own research is an indicator of how much we've achieved in the last year. Pathways' hub and theme convenors have played a critical role in establishing an ever-stronger institutional structure for the programme and an ever more coherent and exciting inter-disciplinary and cross-regional research and communications agenda. These are incredibly demanding processes, and the RPC is fortunate to have a team of committed and accomplished leaders who have come to work together effectively in pursuing our overall goals.

Introduction

The narrative report in this section seeks to complement the account given in the previous section of progress against our Logframe outputs and purpose. The aim of this section is to provide the kind of information that is more difficult to accommodate within a results-oriented report, at a point in the Pathways programme where we are one year into our main research phase and therefore still oriented at “doing” rather than being in a position to announce “findings” or “results”.

This section of the report is structured in four sections. The first takes our overall purpose and asks: how are we doing – and, in particular, given our aims, how are we engaging with those with whom we would like to work to see change happen. The second narrates some of the progress we have made with our research. The third focuses on communications, which we see not only as a means of disseminating our learning but also a research topic and method in its own right. And the last section focuses on learning, influencing and change – on building our network, strengthening our own capacities to act and engagement in and creation of spaces for dialogue and debate.

Meeting Our Purpose and Making a Difference

The Pathways RPC aims to generate new thinking – and to ensure that we use diverse pathways to get that thinking taken up in a variety of places, whether in terms of changing representations of women and power, or changing policies so that they enable women to more effectively empower themselves. This first year's research is generating material that we feel will enable us to meet this ambitious aim. We are also making active use of existing pathways, exploring new avenues and building our capacities to reach out to engage and enthuse a variety of potential audiences – and enlist them in changing women's lives for the better.

'The most innovative example heard at the DFID RPC Learning Event'

David Booth, ODI, talking about NEIM's Carnival Parade demand to the Governor of Bahia to keep to his election promise of creating a State Bureau for Women

Outline of Overall Strategy

2006-7 INCEPTION PHASE: generate ideas for research and communications rooted in local realities & agendas; identify changes worth studying and entry points for change; hold workshops to engage stakeholders in defining a policy-relevant agenda for applied research; create thematic clusters; build teams in each of the hubs; develop structures and strategies (communications, M&E, capacity development); develop proposals; conduct peer review and selection process for proposals, assessed according to relevance to themes & hubs; hold cross-RPC collaborative planning & methodology development workshops to map out activities in Phase 1 and what is needed to support them.

➤ ***Done***

2007-9 PHASE I: implement the planned research programme; develop further learning, monitoring and accountability systems; develop and implement communications and capacity development programme; use the Strategic Initiatives Fund for timely investment in a) opportunities for policy influencing; b) opening up new and strategic areas of work; c) responding to emerging research opportunities not encompassed in our 2007-9 plan. Over the second half of 2008, carry out a series of write-shops at hub level and for each thematic group, building up to a cross-RPC conference in January 2009 that will provide opportunities for peer critique of draft book chapters and articles, which will be completed by mid-2009. Link up with other organisations doing work on women's rights and empowerment (i.e. Fawcett, ActionAid, One World Action in the UK, social movements and feminist organisations in the regions). Identify ways of linking what we're learning with DFID's work. Curriculum exchange, methodology training, visiting fellowships and other capacity development activities will seek to build institutional capacity and inter-institutional links. Efforts will be invested throughout 2008 in strengthening *analytical* skills within the RPC, with the aim of getting the most out of the research done in this first two-year phase.

➤ ***Good progress being made***

2009-11 PHASE II: complete and consolidate research projects initiated in Phase I; implement a dual-track strategy of a) a more limited and focused series of research projects that take up issues emerging from Phase I research; b) working with the outputs of Phase I projects to prepare them for publication (with a book series based on pulling together the work produced in each thematic group planned, to come out in rapid succession following panel sessions run by each thematic group at the Jan 2009 conference), to produce versions of the findings for different audiences, and to generate other complementary communications outputs. Opportunities will be identified over the course of 2009-11 to share these outputs with wider audiences, using occasions such as the 30th anniversary of CEDAW, the CSW and Davos, and working with other organisations. Phase II will begin with cross-RPC analysis conference, which will be combined with evaluating progress towards our overall goals to date, and participatory planning of the implementation of plans for this phase. Continued curriculum exchange, exchange of teaching staff to deliver and develop courses, visiting fellowships, production of core teaching materials, development and delivery of new gender training materials and modules will begin to work RPC research up into forms that can be used for teaching and training, incrementally, so as to create a substantial resource base and strengthened skills in delivery by the end of the RPC. Efforts will be invested throughout 2009-11 in strengthening *communications* capacities within the RPC, with the aim of getting the most out of the research done in Phase I and II. A major international conference will take place in 2010, to reflect forward on how to make real gains in justice and equality – and will draw together the best of the RPC's work, showcase it along with invited presentations from key thinkers and movers and shakers in the worlds of policy, activism and practice. A series of volumes in our book series, the RPC working papers series collection and associated policy briefs will be launched at this event, which will mark a grand finale for the RPC. The last quarter will be spent producing syntheses from this event in the form of policy briefs and other communications outputs, and planning next steps to take the agendas identified by the RPC's work forward.

If our purpose is to generate new thinking for a radical shift in policy and practice, then communication becomes not only a way to disseminate what we're learning, but absolutely central to our whole approach. Guided by matching what we're seeking to find out with a sense of why the issue is important, what change is possible and where the direction of change currently lies, our choice of research projects for this two-year phase also took into account the question of what specific kind of research could best support our purpose in different policy areas and contexts. Questions of audience are vital in making this assessment.

Our communications strategy identifies five potential audiences for our work: the general public; those with whom we share common goals; those who have a remit for working on issues of gender; those who work on development issues and are not much concerned about gender but are potentially amenable to being interested; and those who are actively hostile. All of these groups comprise the general public; and our strategies for engaging with the general public also provide us with products that we can use to engage with these groups. A priority for us this year, therefore, has been to further develop our capacities and connections so as to communicate more effectively with a broad audience of people in ways that are informative, accessible and captivate as well as persuade.

Engaging with Policy

Along with more conventional academic and policy publications, presentations at conferences and policy events, and face-to-face engagement in policy processes and with policy networks, we seek to reach the audiences of those tasked with working on gender issues and those committed to working on these issues through accessible, short publications of various kinds. OpenDemocracy articles are very useful for the overworked bureaucrat, as are short pieces such as those published by Andrea Cornwall and Stephanie Barrientos in *Financing Gender Equality: Commonwealth Perspectives 2007*, Commonwealth Ministers for Women's Affairs. IDS Bulletin articles are another relatively accessible source of information, as are IDS Policy Briefings: two are in preparation at the moment, ready for release by the various international meetings of the autumn.

But not everyone has time even to read short pieces. We have sought to engage these audiences through seminars, fora and information exchanges. The West Africa Team organised an information meeting with members of the Gender Equality Group in September at the DFID office in Accra hosted by Sonya Sultan. The group brings together many of the donors as well as the national machinery for women in Ghana including the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. It was agreed to hold these meetings on a regular basis. Naila Kabeer was invited to Brasilia by DFID to be part of a high-level seminar on issues of gender and social policy, and was able to stay on to join the Minister for Women's Policies in opening the seminar at Congress on women and politics. Andrea Cornwall met with Nigerian MPs and DFID staff in Nigeria, met a number of influential Bangladeshi policy actors after addressing the Dialogues on Empowerment event in Dhaka and spent a day with Swedish Embassy staff in Dhaka exploring issues of voice, responsiveness and empowerment in Swedish co-operation in Bangladesh, which provided an opportunity to share Pathways materials and thinking. Naila spoke at a UNIFEM seminar in Mexico in October on 'Gender and Poverty Measurement' and at an open meeting on 'Women Workers and Collective Action'. The largest Mexican newspaper carried an interview with her.

Influencing from the Inside and Outside

NEIM are involved in the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law in the State of Bahia. They have participated in meetings of the Women's Rights Commission of the State Parliament, a public meeting on 'The Reform of the Justice Sector of the State of Bahia and the Creation of the Domestic and Familiar Violence Against Women Courts' in August. But while they make full use of the "invited spaces" into which they gain entry through their expertise and experience in working with issues of domestic violence and women's rights, they recognise that negotiation needs to be complemented with other forms of engagement. In August, they occupied the entrance of the Parliament of the State of Bahia and staged a colourful and lively demonstration to publicise the law to both public and policy actors alike. This created quite a lot of media attention with headlines in regional papers declaiming the lack of courts for victims of domestic violence. After last year's Carnival parade protest against the failure of the State Governor to create a Secretariat for Women's Policies – featured on YouTube, to popular acclaim – NEIM have now been approached to work with the State and Federal Governments on women's policies. Cecilia Sardenberg has been invited to join the Advisory Committees of the Federal Government Special Secretary for Women's Policies, the Pro-Gender Equity Programme and the Women and Science network. Terezinha Goncalves is co-ordinator of the Advisory Group to the Executive Inter-Institutional Executive Group that is putting together the policy implementation plan for women in the state of Bahia. Taking up a place at the table has not stopped them from continuing their protests: this year NEIM went onto the streets again in Carnival, using a traditional protest form to voice the demands of the women's movement for rights and recognition. In February 2008, Cecilia travelled to New York for the Commission on the Status of Women as an advisor to the Minister for Women's Policies.

Rosalind Eyben's participation in meetings of the DAC GenderNet and networking with "femocrats" in international aid offered opportunities for dialogue; her interviews with members of international policy circles on empowerment created reflective space to explore connections between understandings and practices, as well as to share our emerging insights. Informal connections between Pathways researchers, DFID staff members in different countries as well as with a host of other donors, government and NGO staff, can be in themselves a more effective and important channel for changing thinking than written outputs. Our connectedness allows us to make maximum use of them.

Engaging (with) the Media

The opinion-shaping effects of the media make them a very important avenue for the new thinking that we want to promote. If we want the new knowledge we're creating to be taken up and to shake up the kinds of stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices that exist around women and power, then we need to not only *use* but actively seek to engage with and *change* the media.

One focus within our research work is the media itself, and the ways in which women are represented within it. And an important strand of our capacity development efforts is to work directly with the media to seek to change representations of women and power, as well as to engage journalists and film-makers in reporting different kinds of stories. Some examples include: Rose Kutin was the resource person for the Women, Media and Change forum in New York in July with women journalists – many of the journalists publicised the discussions of the forums by writing articles in the newspapers and airing key issues on radio. Tessa Lewin's work with Screen South and the Film Council seeks to engage with young documentary film-makers in a process of learning about development issues, as they make films about the RPC's work; one of these proposals is for an intervention in Second Life, bringing issues of gender and power into the virtual world inhabited by more than 12 million people. Renowned photojournalists Documentography have been commissioned by the RPC to work with

our West Africa partners to build capacities for photojournalism. Hania Sholkamy and partners in Egypt are planning a training workshop for bloggers. These and other initiatives seek to engage directly with those involved in the media – the “new” as well as “old” media – rather than simply giving them material to report on.

We also use the media to communicate with the general public as well as specialist audiences of those interested in international development and feminist issues. Our partnership with the current affairs website openDemocracy has given rise to a series of short, accessible articles which are being widely read, and a set of associated podcasts. These have included features linking in with the Global Conference on Abortion in October and the 16 Days of Activism against gender violence in November/December, which created a vibrant buzz of blogging with around 80 pieces being posted over the period including blogs from Pathways communications officers and advisory group members. Pathways OD pieces are also being taken up by other online current affairs sites – for example, Takyiwaa Manuh's article on the passage of the Domestic Violence Bill in Ghana was taken up by Pambazuka News. Programme length (30 minute) podcasts from six Pathways events or projects are planned for later this year, as is a collection that brings all the Pathways articles together in a publication.

All our hubs are regularly approached by national and local TV, radio and print media. Some examples from the year include: To mark International Women's Day in March 2007, Silvia Lucia Ferreira was interviewed by TV Educativa about how she experienced empowerment from childhood. A full-page spread was devoted to Ana Alice Costa's work on women and politics, and the media coverage for the seminar in Congress included promotion via the Congress' own media people and website. Firdous Azim was part of a panel discussing Women in the Media on local Bangla channel RTV; she also had a phone interview with national newspaper Prothom Alo regarding marriage and culture. Hania Sholkamy's phone would not stop ringing when the Brazilian media learnt of the workshop that was taking place in Cairo, which had brought Brazilian government officials to advise the Egyptians on how to make Conditional Cash Transfer programmes more empowering for women. A mention in the Economist the following week was one of many media features on the event. [Charmaine Pereira](#) was interviewed by the BBC World Service programme 'Africa Have Your Say' on whether women's dress should be controlled by legislation.

Entering Debates and Creating Spaces for Dialogue

Due to their positions and wide network of influence, RPC researchers have been able to gain access to regional and national policy processes. Ana Alice Costa attended a meeting of 13 national networks to propose a counterpoint document to the Brazilian Government's CEDAW paper. Marlene Libardoni, the Latin American Hub advisory committee member participated in its presentation to CEDAW in New York. Cecilia Sardenberg was a speaker at the regional preparatory conference on policy for women in April. The Brazilian team participated in the Municipal conference on Public Policy for Women, Democracy and Citizenship in May. Lea Santana (the Communications Officer) asked the participants their views on empowerment – which they are doing at every meeting they attend. Ana Alice and Cecilia Sardenberg participated in the National Conference for Public Policies for Women in Brasilia in August.

Hania Sholkamy was appointed member of the committee supporting the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity in implementing conditional cash transfers. The Egypt team are working with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to pilot a cash transfer scheme. Hania has written a chapter on welfare and civil society organisations for The Egypt

Human Development Report 2007. As previously mentioned she also organised a workshop on '[Introducing Empowering Conditional Cash Transfers to Egypt](#)' which was attended by various practitioners in Latin America to give their experience of cash transfer programmes there and also Maxine Molyneux and Naila Kabeer. Hania is also a member of the group which drafted a proposal for social policy reform in Egypt, she has been involved in organising an international meeting on integrated social policies and she is a discussant on work and social security for the UNRISD Gender and Equality in an Unequal World report.

Jamesina King from the West Africa Hub has been appointed chairperson of the Human Rights Commission in Sierra Leone. In October Irene Pogonson from the Nigeria team took part in the consultative forum for women's participation in the Nigerian 2007 elections. She has been involved in processes aimed at developing an agenda for increasing women's representation in the Nigerian National Assembly. CEGENSA took part in the Ghana@50; Women@50 events to celebrate Ghanaian Women which included a march and public forum to celebrate 50 years of women's contributions to the political and socio-economic independence of Ghana. In May they attended a public forum under the theme 'Deepening Ghana's Democracy through Strengthening Women's Representation in Institutions of Governance'. Dzodzi Tsikata delivered a lecture on Women and the Informal Economy at the British Council Hall in Accra as part of the ISSER Merchant Bank lecture series in June. She also presented a keynote speech at a public forum of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights. Akosua Adomako presented a paper on CEGENSA's understanding of the challenges and openings within gender and feminist research in Africa at the SIDA and CODESRIA workshop on Support to Feminist and Gender Research in Africa in June. CEGENSA hosted a one day seminar in May sponsored by the Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy on Women's Leadership and Advocacy Skills Development in celebration of Women's Month. The Ghana team are also engaged in following proceedings on the Property Rights of Spouses Bill.

Cecilia Sardenberg and Silvia de Aquino are National and Regional Coordinators of the [Maria da Penha Law Observatory](#) that is monitoring the implementation of this new legislation on all of Brazil's 27 states. They have articulated a consortium of 9 research centres and feminist NGOs, that won a grant from the Brazilian Ministry of Public Policy for Women to create the Observatory. Cecilia Sardenberg is attending the 52nd Session of the CSW as an advisor to the Minister of Public Policy for Women in the Brazilian delegation.

An important aspect of our work is to facilitate reflective practice among those working for women's empowerment in global policy spaces. Rosalind Eyben attended the triennial meeting of the Commonwealth Ministers for Women's Affairs in Kampala from 12-14 June and ran a workshop for twenty ministers to share and learn from each other in a facilitated process, about their experiences as policy practitioners for women's empowerment and gender equality. While many participants commented favourably on the opportunity provided for linking their personal and professional lives, the event also highlighted some of the challenges in facilitating moments for reflection in busy global spaces such as this Commonwealth meeting and the meetings of the Commission for the Status of Women. Rosalind also attended the DAC Gendernet meeting in Paris in June and in October met with the Chair and Director of the DAC in relation to the Hub's work. In the UK she has been working with Laura Turquet and the GAD Network on developing a strategy for policy advocacy and participated in a workshop in July in relation to the new strategy.

Stephanie Barrientos presented to 'Labour Behind the Label' – NGOs and corporate representatives; 'Women Working Worldwide conference on women in African horticulture', International Trade Centre Export Development Forum – commercial and trade delegates; and the Inter Parliamentary Union with parliamentary delegates from 50 countries, based on her RPC research on Women Treading the Corridors of Corporate Power. In all of our work, we seek to combine a passion for pluralism and for facilitating lively dialogue, with the openness to be willing to challenge orthodoxies and seek to untangle some of the knots that the "gender agenda" has got entangled in.

During the year, the RPC organised two one-day workshops in London with Tina Wallace and gender and development policy activists in the UK. The discussion at the first workshop – in association with the GAD Network highlighted the shifts that did take place during the 1970's, 80's and 90's and the changing challenges facing feminists: while gender increasingly became an accepted part of development discourse it appears that the more widely gender rhetoric was used the more instrumental and less radical and transforming it became. While a few individuals, academics and practitioners, and organisations kept their radical edge, for many gender became increasingly an activity of checklists, focal points, and cascading training rather than a prism through which to challenge and change the existing power imbalances so detrimental to women's lives. The second workshop – "Untangling the Knots: Revisioning Feminist Engagement with Development", held under the auspices of the Gender and Development Policy Study Group of the Development Studies Association on February 5 – created a real buzz, generating a series of themes that we hope will help structure a conversation amongst those engaged with gender policy issues in development agencies and universities in the UK. Especially significant for us was bringing those who work on the UK itself into this debate, something we hope to do a lot more of in the future. We have been rather less active in addressing hostile audiences, but are working on this with a series of communications outputs to be launched over the next year that frame our core questions in such a way that makes them harder to brush off or ignore.

Progress on Research

Research has begun in earnest this year, following the methodology and planning workshop in January 2007 and the intensive proposal completion and planning process from January – April 2007. Most of our research projects are up and running, with the last remaining planned projects (some of which have been delayed due to illness or political instabilities, others sequenced to begin later) due to begin in the next few months.

We seek to be more than the sum of our parts at three levels:

- at the level of the **hub**, with an integrated set of projects that have salience and purchase at the regional level, managed by a hub convenor and conducted by teams who are in regular contact with each other to exchange emerging lessons and address challenges they face in their work;
- at the level of the **theme**, with a set of projects that all "speak" to a core set of questions or issues, under the intellectual leadership of theme convenors and with connections being made through thematic workshops, methodology workshops, exchanges and thematic writeshops;
- at the level of the **RPC as a whole**, where connections are constantly being made between themes – taking up opportunities to build intersections, share ideas and lessons – and where our dialogues on empowerment and conceptual

work carried out by RPC members in different thematic groups are building up synthetic narratives that draw together and communicate emerging learning about empowerment.

It is at these three levels that our communication outputs are also aimed: at producing materials at the hub level that communicate with regional audiences, in appropriate languages; at production of overview and synthesis papers, and volumes in the RPC's proposed book series that draw together lessons from the work of each thematic group; and at the production of a few select publications that span the RPC as a whole, communicating through different outputs to different audiences via vehicles such as IDS bulletins, policy briefings, special journal issues, and one or more of the RPC book series. A cross-RPC conference, which will take place in January 2009, will convene the four thematic groups and seek interconnections between the themes and the hubs, drawing out broader lessons and insights for policy. It will be organised like a formal conference with calls for papers to be circulated to all RPC members, abstracts, panel chairs and pre-circulation of papers. Hubs and themes will be invited to convene panels, from which materials for special issues and books will be produced in the first instance. These materials will be mined for further communications outputs over the course of Phase II (see **Strategy**)

The table on pages 24-27 summarises the projects that are being carried out in Phase I, by theme, and offers a brief progress statement on each. The timeline on pages 28-29 gives an overview of the timing and sequencing of these activities.

In addition, we have a funding mechanism that permits us to be responsive to emerging opportunities for research or communications outside our two-year planning frame: the Strategic Initiatives Fund (SIF). The SIF has proven extremely valuable over the last year, ensuring that the RPC is able to respond in a timely manner to opportunities.

'they ... have lived stories of empowerment just by making it to the university'

Cecilia Sardenberg, Latin American Hub Convenor, talking of her research meeting with her student interns on the 'Changing Times, Changing Lives' project

Strategic Initiatives Fund

The SIF exists as a mechanism to fund opportunities for research and communications that were not anticipated when plans were made and budgets established for Phase 1 – and particularly to a) respond to emerging opportunities to influence and engage with policy processes; b) promote cross-RPC collaborations and linkages; c) link the RPC with other promising initiatives that will permit us to have greater leverage or important learning opportunities. It combines the two separate funds (the Director's Strategic Fund and the Strategic Initiatives Fund) that were successfully used in the Inception Phase to fund a host of interesting and innovative activities. Each hub has a SIF of up to £5,000 and there is a £30,000 SIF for the RPC as a whole. It is administered and facilitated by the Director, in consultation with the Management Group.

In this financial year, the SIF was used to support the following initiatives:

- convening a lesson-learning exchange in Cairo on the conditions that make Conditional Cash Transfer programmes more empowering for women – bringing Latin American researchers and policy actors into contact with Egyptian counterparts, in a moment in the policy process where they had the opportunity to influence the CCT design.
- convening Brazilian researchers and activists working on reproductive rights for a strategy workshop prior to the Latin America workshop on women's empowerment and reproductive rights scheduled to take place in the autumn; funding the participation of Brazilian partners in the Marie Stopes International conference on Safe Abortion in London in October 2007, and co-funding an IDS Bulletin on Unsafe Abortion with the Realising Rights RPC; all strategically important for the connections made with other actors in this field, and to make our own research relevant and useful.
- funding a methodology workshop for the Initiative for Women's Studies in Nigeria's IDRC-funded project on women and citizenship in Nigeria, which has strategic value for our work on constituency-building and justice, and also provided us an opportunity to build capacity for life history and case study research, which will feed into the RPC's work on conceptualizing empowerment in Nigeria.
- funding a scoping trip by Brazilian anthropologist Cecilia Sardenberg to the Commission of the Status of Women, to explore the viability of conducting an ethnographic study of Brazil's action in global spaces to advance women's rights and empowerment.

'Media has created new appetites even as it enriches the soil in which fantasies breed.'

Neelam Hossain of Simorgh, Lahore on her 'Changing Narratives of Empowerment' research

Status of Pathways of Women's Empowerment Projects by Theme and Hub






	Middle East Hub	Global Hub	Latin America Hub	South Asia Hub	West Africa Hub
Conceptualising empowerment and change	♀ Tracing and measuring empowerment and change in women's lives Due to begin pending start of Norwegian funding	♀ Conceptualising empowerment in global spaces and the shaping of international policies and practice about women	♀ Changing Times, Changing Lives: Women's Empowerment Through Generations	♀ National Discourses on Women's Empowerment: Enabling or Constraining Women's Choices	♀ Interrogating discourses of Empowerment in Pre and Post-war Sierra Leone Project officially began on 30 th October, with a meeting between Njala University, Sierra Leone, the host institution and the RPC researchers.
	♀ Poor Women's Agency in Gaza: Between 'Doing' and 'Being'				
	Fieldwork begun, due to begin writing up in first quarter of 2008.	Documentary and interview analysis carried out, and draft paper prepared.	The project was launched in the last week of July. There are 9 students participating. They are receiving training in field techniques including a photography course, as well going through a study process of gender issues, with weekly meetings to discuss the basic bibliography.	Project delayed due to illness, but is now being resumed and will be completed by November 2008. As part of this project, Maheen Sultan participated in the Reclaiming Feminisms conference at IDS in July.	
	♀ Talking Empowerment in Plain Arabic				
	1 st Talking Empowerment took place in Cairo, and 2 nd in Sudan, January 2008				
	♀ Qalet el Rawiyah (So Said the Storyteller)				
	1 st Workshop held in Cairo for Palestinian activists – July 2007 2 nd held in Cairo for journalists, actors, poets, students and feminists – January 2008				
	♀ Gender and Everyday Life in a Context of Conflict: Sudan				
Due to begin pending start of Norwegian funding.	♀ Conceptualising Empowerment in Brazil: Policy Discourse and the Discourse of Feminist NGOs	♀ Islamic Feminism: The Afghan Reinterpretation	♀ Expanding the Space for Women's Empowerment in Contemporary Nigeria		
		A survey was carried out amongst the participants of the landless women's movement camp in March. Interviews are also being carried out other meetings and the results are being systematised and analysed by a doctoral student.	Not begun. Waited on outcome of funding proposal to Norway. The South Asia team invited Afghan researchers to the planning meeting in April. Naomi Hossain at BRAC has conducted a baseline survey on gender violence for UNIFEM.	Work on the project began October. A literature review is ongoing and interviews have been held with policy actors. A literature review on mythical stories is also ongoing. Field research will start this year.	

Building Constituencies	♀ Between Feminism and Fundamentalism in Palestine	♀ Feminist activists in global policy organisations	♀ Quotas as an Instrument of Change	♀ Women in Local Government	♀ Interrogating Policy Discourses and Practice on Women's Empowerment in Ghana
	Delayed, awaiting Norwegian funding. Literature review begun and preliminary work started on constructing a sample and survey design.	Held meeting in February 2007 for participants and modified research questions and developed code of conduct. Held meeting in February with Gender and Development Network and established closer contact. There are 9 active participants but maintaining regular contact is difficult so adjustments to project design may have to be made.	The project began with interventions in Municipal Conferences for Public Policies for Women in Bahia and in the State Conference with the approval of a new quota system proposed by NEIM. The proposal was included in the Bahia State Report to the II National Conference on Public Policies for Women. The International Experiences on Affirmative Actions Seminar was held in June. The papers presented are being translated into Portuguese for a joint publication.	The team is working on studying the enabling and disabling factors resulting in women's efforts at creating voice. The Bangladesh team started its research in June and the Pakistan component began in December. The 1st phase of the fieldwork included a sample survey of women UP members, interviews of women and male members and focus group discussions with UP councils and local community members. Samples were selected from six divisions.	The first phase of this project is focused on collating gender policy documents from key institutions, NGOs and women groups. The documents are currently being reviewed.
	♀ Female preachers in Gaza	♀ Mobilising resources for women's organising	♀ Pathways of Empowerment through Legal Strategies	♀ Review of Strategic Approaches to Building Constituencies by Women's Organisations	♀ Grassroots Politics (?): The push for women's representation at the ward level in post-war Sierra Leone
	Delayed due to security situation in Gaza.	Funding still being sought	This project was launched with the creation of the Maria da Penha Observatory. NEIM is working with 11 other organisations to monitor this law in 27 Brazilian States.	Delayed due to illness and over-load affecting the principal researchers. A co-researcher is being recruited and the project is due to begin in the near future, and to be concluded by September 2008.	Preliminary groundwork for the project begun, and fieldwork will take place over the next few months.
	♀ Local Governments Between Building the Islamic Nation and Women's Empowerment	♀ Pathways of Empowerment in Countries in Crisis: Implementing Resolution 1325	They have been involved in a great many public and political meetings this year publicising the law and ensuring its implementation.		♀ Measuring Progress on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Sierra Leone
	Began literature review and started work on survey questions.	About to begin, proposals currently being finalised – delays due to awaiting Norwegian funding.	♀ Brazil's Feminist Schools	♀ Traditional and changing spaces for women in local governance	Delayed due to awaiting Norwegian funding. Preliminary meetings have been held and the project is due to begin in the next month.
	♀ Women and the Peace Process in Sudan		Preliminary scoping work carried out, and fieldwork planned for mid-2008.	Initial discussions were held with Afghani researchers in April 2007, and plans are now underway for fieldwork.	
	Not begun. Delay due to waiting for outcome of funding proposal to Norway.				

Empowering Work	♀ Working Group on Gender and Work	♀ Women Treading the Corridors of Corporate Power	♀ Empowering Domestic Work: The Organizing of Domestic Workers in Brazil	♀ Working Women Creating Particular Pathways of Change	♀ Survey – Women’s Everyday Lives
	<p>Group held STATA and training workshop in Cairo in June.</p> <p>Stephanie Barrientos had follow up meeting to Cairo in September to discuss Egypt Labour Market Survey work</p>	<p>Took part in the Work Training in Cairo in June. Stephanie met Heba Nassar in Cairo in September to discuss projects and Egypt Labour Market Survey. Arianna Rossi undertaking garments study in Morocco as comparator for Egypt.</p>	<p>The project is beginning to be implemented. A meeting was held with the president of the National Federation of Domestic Workers - FENATRAD (Brasil) and Andrea Cornwall to discuss the organisation of a workshop with domestic workers of different Brazilian cities which is planned to take place in May this year.</p>	<p>The Census and Household survey questionnaires and sampling frame work are finalised. 2 rounds of pilot-tests have been completed. The Work Sampling framework was agreed upon and the districts, unions, villages to be researched have been selected randomly. The questionnaire is currently being finalised with inputs from the Work Theme Meeting in</p>	<p>The RPC researchers have held a number of meetings to discuss sampling techniques and survey instruments. The team met on 25th September to discuss and adapt the Bangladesh questionnaire for use in the Ghana survey. A subsequent meeting was held on 23rd November, 2007, to agree on a final draft of the instruments. The team also took part in the Empowering Work Theme meeting in Ghana in December.</p>
	<p>♀ Conditional Cash Transfers in Egypt</p>				
	<p>Working with Ministry of Social Solidarity. Completed 1st Phase gathering evidence of needs. Workshop held in January 2008 with Latin American participants to gather experience in design of CCT programmes to influence the Egyptian CCT programme.</p>				
	<p>♀ Poor Women’s Agency in Gaza: Between ‘Doing’ and ‘Being’</p>				
	<p>Fieldwork has begun, despite the severe security problems in Gaza.</p>				
	<p>♀ Empowering Work in Sudan</p>				
	<p>Delayed, due to awaiting outcome of funding proposal to Norway.</p>			<p>Preliminary discussions held with Women for Women International, and plans in place for case study research. Fieldwork due to begin by mid-2008.</p>	

Changing Narratives of Sexuality	♀ Family Courts in Egypt: An Exit from Marriage on a Pathway to Empowerment?	♀ Exploring positive approaches to sexuality	♀ Feminisms and the Struggle for Reproductive Rights in Latin America	♀ Women and Media	♀ Sexuality and Empowerment: The Case of Anita Hogan	
	Completed first 2 phases of fieldwork. Held a workshop in July with stakeholders. Completed background paper and held dissemination workshop in January 2008. A Legal Empowerment Dialogue being held in February with participants from Tunis, Jordan and Morocco.	Global Hub has obtained funding for complementary research projects for looking at global-local interfaces among donors and sexual rights activists in Beijing, and for exploring effects of a Sida programme on sexuality. A joint workshop on Sexuality and Development will be held at IDS in April, as a collaborative initiative between the IDS Sexuality and Development Programme and the RPC.	Silvia Lucia Ferreira, Cecilia Sardenberg and Gilberta Soares took part in the Marie Stopes Global Conference on Abortion in September. A regional workshop on reproductive rights is planned for April this year in Brazil.		A research team planning workshop was held in April. A media literacy workshop was held in November, conducted by Shohini Ghosh, Professor of Mass Communications. A timeline and initial plans for commencing the research have been formulated.	Work on this project has only just begun. A meeting of the two researchers involved was held, setting out a plan for the activities to be carried out. An internet search of material on Anita Hogan is ongoing, to be followed by a search of newspaper archives for reportage of the case.
	♀ Celibacy in Patriarchal Society		♀ Zone: A Study of the Sex Workers' Radio Station in Bahia	♀ Women and Religion	♀ Representations of Women in Popular Culture	
	Work has begun with focus groups both young unmarried women in refugee camps and older unmarried professional women.		Fieldwork for this project has yet to begin, due to the intensity of demands on the principal researcher's time due to the intensive policy engagement during the cycle of consultative policy conferences over the course of 2007.	Field research is in progress. Pilot tests of the focus group discussions and indepth interviews were completed in May. New tools such as community mapping and institutional mapping have been integrated into the research to better understand the contexts of the enquiries. Field work has completed in slum, peri-urban and in metropolitan areas in and around Dhaka. Researchers are attending taleem classes as part of their participant observatory research. The research team have also started a weekly reading group.	A series of planning meetings have been held with resource persons (Professors Akosua Anyidoho and John Collins). Following their input, the research has widened its scope. Currently RPC researchers are collating song lyrics and reviewing related literature.	
				♀ Changing Narratives of Sexuality: Religion and Media in Afghanistan		
				Not begun. Waited on outcome of funding proposal to Norway.		

RPC Timeline – 2007-2008

KEY	 Communications Event	 Capacity Building Event	 Management Event
	 Research Event	 Networking Event	

2007

March	April	May	June	July	August
8 March – RPC Pathways Website launched	7-9 April - Bangladesh Regional Planning Meeting, Dhaka		17-21 June - Gender and Work Statistical Training Workshop, The Population Council, Egypt	1 July - Family Courts in Egypt Workshop, Cairo	30 July to 5 August - Research Methodologies Training with Naila Kabeer, Bangladesh
	10-12 April - Religion and Women's Empowerment Workshop, Bangladesh		19-20 June - Pathways of Women's Power: International Experiences on Affirmative Action, Brazil	4-6 July - So Said the Storyteller workshop, for Palestinian activists, Egypt	7-9 August - Events around Maria da Penha Law Observatory including: 7 August - occupation of the entrance of the Parliament of the State of Bahia 8 August – Meeting of Women's Rights Commission of the State Parliament 9 August - A public meeting on "The Reform of the Justice Sector of the State of Bahia and the creation of the Domestic and Familiar Violence against Women Courts", Brazil
	15-17 April - Work and Empowerment Team Meeting, Dhaka		21-22 June - Dialogues of Empowerment, Municipal Chamber Salvador, Brazil	6 July – Communications Meeting, IDS	10 August - Roundtable Debate: Maria da Penha Law, Brazil
				9-10 July - Reclaiming Feminisms Conference, IDS (co-organised with Birkbeck College), UK	
				11-12 July - RPC Management Meeting, UK	

2008

September	October	November	December	January	February
NEIM – 3 Day course on Monitoring and Evaluation given by OIT Consultant, Brazil	9 October - Podcast Training Coordination Team	27 November - Seminar on the 'Maria da Penha Law - Practice, Challenges and Perspectives', Brasilia	6-7 December – Empowering Work Theme Workshop (Naila Kabeer), Ghana	4-5 January - Talking Empowerment/Women and Memory Forum translating texts on women's empowerment and gender, editors and translators, Egypt	5 February – Dissemination Meeting for Family Courts Project (with Sudanese participants), Egypt
17 September - Informational Meeting with the Gender Equality Group, Ghana	15-17 October - NEIM Coordinating 1 st Workshop for the National Consortium which is creating the Maria da Penha Law Observatory, Brazil	11-15 November – Workshop on Gender, Media and Representation, Dhaka, Shohini Ghosh, Resource Person, Bangladesh	9-11 December – Life Histories Methodology Training, Ann Whitehead: resource person, Ghana	13-15 January - Talking Empowerment, feminists, academics, activists, politicians, and development workers, Sudan	7-8 February – RPC Management Meeting, UK
18-20 September - DSA Meeting, Panel on Gender, Globalisation and Work, IDS, UK	21-26 October - Marie Stopes International Conference on Abortion. Panel on Experiences of Abortion Law Reform, UK	17 November – Real World initiative launch at Brighton Film Festival, UK	12 December – Dialogues of Empowerment Meeting, Ghana	15-18 January - Feminist Storytelling Workshop, actors, journalists, poets, students and feminists, Egypt	11-12 February - Global Hub – Conceptualising Empowerment Conference, UK
	30 October – Launch of Sierra Leone Projects, meeting with Njala University, Sierra Leone		13 December - Photo Exhibition: Changing Images of Women, BRAC (to coincide with 35 th Anniversary celebrations), Bangladesh	20 January – South Asia Hub Advisory Group Meeting, Bangladesh	13 February – Consortium Advisory Group Meeting and Global Hub Advisory Group Meeting, UK
	October – Photography Course – Changing Times, Changing Lives Interns, Fernanda Capibaribe – Resource Person, Brazil			21 January – Dialogues of Empowerment Meeting, Bangladesh	15 February – Legal Empowerment Dialogue Meeting (scholars and activists from Tunis, Jordan and Morocco invited), Egypt
				22-24 January - Building Constituencies Theme Group Meeting, Bangladesh 30 January-1 February - Conditional Cash Transfers Workshop, participants from Brazil, Mexico and Ecuador and the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, Egypt	

We have made good progress in implementing our research programme. The following sections give a brief overview *by theme* of what we have been doing.

Conceptualising Empowerment and Change

The *Conceptualising Empowerment and Change* theme group embraces a series of projects and events that range from micro-explorations of change in women's lives, across race, class and generational differences, to getting to grips with the different understandings of "empowerment" that appear in textual form and in the ways those engaged in policy and practice talk about what they mean by the term, to spaces for dialogue that bring together diverse perspectives on empowerment and change.

In Brazil, Cecilia Sardenberg held a research workshop in November with her young interns on the [Changing Times, Changing Lives](#) project to develop research with them from a feminist epistemology perspective. They met to exchange experiences and the stories of women in their families regarding empowerment/disempowerment. It was revealing that all 11 of them, irrespective of race, class and age, had suffered or witnessed domestic violence within their immediate family. Almost all of the young women come from working class families, and they have lived stories of empowerment just by making it to the university. Terezinha Gonçalves, Ana Alice Costa and other NEIM researchers have been opportunistically interviewing a vast array of women at state-level and national events on their understandings of empowerment, and have been gathering the life histories of women leaders to explore how they turn their own understandings of power and disempowerment into practices that can enable women to empower themselves.

In Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, work is underway on the analysis of policy discourses on empowerment, and fieldwork is under preparation that will move into contrasting textual deconstruction with the ways in which a range of development actors – from state officials to women's groups of different kinds – understand and apply the term in practice. The work in West Africa is taking this exploration of meanings beyond the domain of policy discourse, through exciting projects that seek to engage with popular music and with mythical representations of women. Work with popular artistes in Ghana has generated the idea of a pop song competition, to stimulate the popularisation of songs with alternative and more empowering images of women. In Nigeria, fieldwork is about to start to gather mythical stories about women and power, which will form the basis for a TV pilot – we are currently seeking funding to scale this project up to a series to be screened on national TV, reaching millions of potential viewers.

In Egypt and Sudan, 'Talking Empowerment in Arabic' workshops held early this year explored ways to convey concepts of empowerment and gender in "Plain Arabic". An associated aim of this work was to develop confidence and

capacity for young researchers to interact with Arabic speaking audiences. Bringing together feminists, academics, activists, graduate students, politicians and development workers, these workshops addressed the difficulties of translating gender and empowerment both as a language and as a political project. The Middle East Hub has also been working with the Women and Memory Forum to provide training in feminist story telling: *Qalat el Rawiyah*, "So Said the Storyteller". The first of these took place in Egypt in July for Palestinians focusing on how to rewrite conventional fairy stories. Feedback revealed it gave participants knowledge of how to critically analyse texts and write from a gender perspective. In January they had a second meeting which was oversubscribed and included actors, journalists, poets, students and feminists. It was very well covered in the press and resulted in twenty extremely well written stories, three of which will feature in a special Pathways performance by Women and Memory. Women and Memory will hold their third training with bloggers in Cairo in March. They will then select the materials for their Pathways performance, which we will document and which will be the basis for an animation film.

The South Asia hub has invested their energy this year in getting the research on work, changing narratives of sexuality and building constituencies up and running. Research on policy narratives and practices is due to begin in the next few months. A significant contribution to this theme has come, however, from [a highly successful competition](#) for amateur photographers to submit photos of changing images of women in Bangladesh. A touring exhibition has attracted audiences of different kinds, and provoked debate on what's changed in women's lives. And the competition itself has produced some wonderful visual material for the team to use to promote their work. Across the RPC, we seek to build up a collection of images of women that can be used not only in our work but be a resource for others, as we recognise the extent to which stereotypes continue to dominate representations of women in development publications and would like to actively contribute to changing this. Tessa Lewin has been exploring potential connections with other feminist photography and film projects, which will allow us to broaden the scope of our engagement with changing representations of women.

The Global Hub research on [conceptualising empowerment](#) has combined documentary review, quantitative analysis of bibliographic and internet sources, and a wide range of interviews with politicians, policy actors and practitioners. Engagement with the DAC Gendernet on meanings of empowerment triggered internal discussion on what empowerment means and whether it is a useful concept for them. The project's principal finding is that since the 1995 watershed of the Beijing Platform for Action ideas of solidarity and justice have declined in the policy texts of development agencies in relation to meanings of women's empowerment. On the ascendancy are meanings associated with technocratic efficiency and economic instrumentalism - part of a wider shift in international aid policies away from the visions of global social justice articulated at the great United

Nations conferences of the last decade towards a revival in the centrality of growth as the engine of development. The researchers, Rosalind Eyben and Rebecca Napier-Moore also found that women's empowerment is a fuzzy concept with many over-lapping meanings. The fuzziness can carry strategic advantages for savvy politically active feminists working in often unfriendly organisational environments. An unambiguous and radical rights based agenda may not only win little support but risks creating an anti-feminist backlash. Deliberate fuzziness helps enrol those colleagues who might shy away from such a more radical agenda. The research report argues that civil society and scholar activists with clearly articulated goals need to develop a politics of solidarity with those feminists within international development organisations who may well be choosing their words with care, even if what they say and write appears ambiguous.

Dialogues on Empowerment

The *Conceptualising Empowerment and Change* theme hosts an annual series of Dialogues on Empowerment, at hub-level and across the RPC as a whole, aimed at sharing and shaping emerging analysis together with policy and practitioner actors and researchers and activists. In July, Pathways held an international conference on 'Reclaiming Feminisms: Gender and Neo-liberalism' at the Institute of Development Studies, which was co-organised with Birkbeck College. Participants included researchers from Pathways, members of the advisory committees, academics, donors and activists. Papers from the conference will be summarised on the Siyanda website and an IDS Bulletin will be produced later on this year. The Conference was much appreciated, by practitioners and policy actors especially, for opening up a frank and exciting space for dialogue. Podcasts and blogs of the conference were posted on the openDemocracy website. A further Dialogues event was held in London on February 5, under the auspices of the DSA's study group on gender and development policy, and was aimed primarily at UK NGOs and academics in the gender and development field. This was also a very successful event, which generated a lot of energy, ideas and enthusiasm.

The Latin America Hub held its Dialogues on Empowerment event at the Municipal Council Chamber in Salvador, bringing together local municipal councillors and activists with Palestinian film-maker and activist Suha Barghouti, and IDS' Naila Kabeer and Andrea Cornwall. The West Africa Hub convened their Dialogues on Empowerment meeting to coincide with the Empowering Work theme and Life Histories workshops held in December. The enthusiasm generated by the workshops helped contribute to the success of the meeting which was well attended and received. Charmaine Pereira and Takyiwaa Manuh presented. There was newspaper and video coverage. DFID, UNICEF and CIDA were represented as well as the Women's Ministry, the Attorney General's Department (which is currently working on a Property Rights of Spouses Bill) and other civil society groups. Similarly, the South Asia Hub used the occasion of the Building Constituencies Theme workshop in Dhaka in January to schedule their Dialogues on Empowerment. A well-attended event, the Dialogues brought together prominent feminist activists, leaders from some of Bangladesh's most prominent feminist NGOs such as Njera Kori and Naripokkho, with representatives from international development agencies, researchers and practitioners from BRAC and other NGOs.

Empowering Work

The *Empowering Work* Theme Group met in Ghana in December, convened by Naila Kabear, to coordinate methodologies including the survey work, which is being undertaken in Bangladesh, Ghana and Egypt. [The Bangladesh team](#) had already finalised their questionnaire and begun pilot testing in October and had shared this with the Ghana team. They have established a link with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics for collaboration on the panel work. The South Asia Work Theme Team is investigating whether earning income automatically brings about empowerment for women – as is often assumed by development agencies. Initial findings here suggest there is a continuum between women fully employed outside the home and women carrying out various activities inside the home with more or less of the production being for sale. Depending on the definitions of paid work, women's degree of participation also varies and this variability has not been captured by official statistical definitions of labour force participation.

In Brazil, participatory research with the leader of the National Federation of Domestic Workers, Creuza Oliveira, on the life histories and everyday struggles of domestic workers in Brazil has informed themes to be explored further through focus groups with domestic workers in Salvador. Emerging issues will be explored further in a national workshop of leaders of the movement for domestic workers' rights, for which the planning process has been initiated.

Market Women's Rights in Ghana

Rose Mensah Kutin and Dzodzi Tsikata addressed a press conference on 14 November, organised by three coalitions – the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana, The Coalition on Domestic Violence Legislation in Ghana and the Women's Manifesto Coalition – to protest at the demolition of stalls and the destruction of goods of women market traders in the central business district of Accra by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. A statement condemned the demolitions and drew attention to the fact that they contradict government policy on poverty reduction. Dzodzi and Rose were part of a delegation that visited the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs to discuss the problem and seek redress for the women. The protests received widespread media attention.

Pathways researchers are making the most of the international connections the programme offers to inject new ideas into ongoing policy processes. Linking global debates with highly localised and finely grained ethnographic work, the Middle Eastern hub is conducting an action research project designing a pilot Conditional Cash Transfer scheme (CCT) in Ain el-Sira, a slum area of Cairo, and then studying what effects it has on the lives of women who participate in it. The project is being developed under the auspices of the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, who will be responsible for supplying social workers and providing the cash transfers. This pilot is intended to inform government plans to scale-up CCTs in different geographic regions. Maxine Molyneux has prepared a bibliography and review

of lessons from CCT programmes in Latin America for the RPC, which will shortly appear in the Pathways working papers and bibliographies series.

Building Constituencies for Equality and Justice

The *Building Constituencies* theme group had a very productive meeting in Dhaka in January 2008, which synthesised emerging findings and consolidated a broad conceptual framework that enabled the group to build on synergies and resonances between their research. Of particular interest in the group was the theme of religion: Islah Jad was able to share her extensive knowledge of the history of women's engagement with Islam in the Middle East with Pathways researchers from Bangladesh and Pakistan in a meeting after the workshop finished, which gave rise to plans for exchanges between the regions and translation of key progressive interpretive texts addressing women's rights out of Arabic into English and Bangla.

Changing the Face of Brazilian Politics

In Brazil, Ana Alice Costa sought to turn an emerging influencing opportunity into an action research project aimed at enhancing women's representation in national politics. In collaboration with AGENDE (Actions in Gender, Citizenship and Development), Casa da Mulher do Nordeste's *Mulher e Democracia* (Women and Democracy) project, the network of women representatives in the National Congress, the Commission on Participatory Legislation (CLP), the Commission on Social Security and the Family (CSSF), the Commission on Human and Minority Rights (CDHM) and the Commission on the Constitution, Justice and Citizenship (CCJ) of the Chamber of Deputies and with support from DFID-Brazil, she co-organised a seminar that brought together international experiences of the successful implementation of quotas to explore lessons that Brazil might take into the political reform process. The seminar, 'Women's Pathways into Power: International Experiences of Affirmative Action', took place inside the National Congress itself, on the very day that delegates were due to vote on proposals for political reform. Speakers included Julie Ballington of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Rwandan MP Juliana Katengwa, IDS researcher Naila Kabeer and Palestinian women's rights activist, Suha Barghouti. The vote was adjourned, but the buzz the seminar generated will continue to fortify efforts to change the face of Brazilian politics in favour of women.

In Pakistan and Bangladesh political instability has had a direct effect on the viability of research. However, despite these difficulties, the teams have been able to begin their work and are making good progress. Research on women in local government in Bangladesh is addressing a gap in knowledge of the kinds of women who are entering these institutions, complementing a quantitative survey with qualitative research with a sub-sample of these women. The survey instrument used in Bangladesh and the checklist used in Ghana in the work the team there has done with newly elected District Assemblywomen are being shared with other members of the group, who are yet to begin their fieldwork, to maximise opportunities for building the basis for comparative analysis. In Palestine and Sierra Leone, there has been a delay in beginning the research as we were awaiting news of the promised Norwegian funds for our work in conflict countries. Preparatory work has, however, been undertaken and we have now received the first six months' funding, and are able to proceed.

The global hub has completed its first year of research with feminist policy activists working inside global development organisations. Designed as a process of facilitated self-enquiry into their own practice, some interesting findings are emerging in relation to how feminist bureaucrats understand policy processes and are able to learn and apply political skills in environments where there is considerable resistance to the idea of women's empowerment as a process of social transformation. It is particularly striking how the older and more experienced of the research participants have an enormously strong feel for the game and how to play it while the others reflect on the journey they are making and the lessons they have learnt. Effectiveness appears to be associated with understanding and getting the most out of the environment one is working in and secondly, at a more psychological level, not being discouraged but rather energised by one's mistakes. The more favourable the political environment the more opportunities present themselves but that climate is insufficient without the passionate femocrat to push things forward. This is where alliances come into play to create a critical mass, with people pushing for the same change from different locations in the system – "to have a sufficient number of people who keep plugging away".

Changing Narratives of Sexuality

The *Changing Narratives of Sexuality* theme encompasses an exciting set of projects which range from those exploring major forces in shaping women's lives – religion and the media – to ones which seek directly to engage in changing representations of women's bodies and sexualities. In Nigeria, theme convenor Charmaine Pereira and her team have begun work on researching representations of women in the popular media. In Bangladesh, Firdous Azim, Samia Huq and their colleagues have done some fascinating work on young women and religion, uncovering perspectives on the empowering effects of religious practices that are rarely seen in this way from an external viewpoint. In the Middle East, Pathways partners Women and Memory Forum have run two story-telling workshops with women in Palestine and Sudan, gathering a wealth of new material that will form the basis for a performance in June and a publication. Sexuality is inevitably a theme in these stories, which rework traditional Arab folk tales to imbue them with new feminist intent – and as such are at once an opportunity to explore narratives of sexuality, and to seek to change them. In Palestine, Penny Johnson is working on social representation and sexual fulfilment of unmarried women in the context of conservative culture that does not allow pre-marital sexual relations. In Egypt, Mulki Al-Sharmani held a workshop on 1 July on her 'Family Courts in Egypt: An Exit from Marriage on a Pathway to Empowerment?' project which was attended by researchers, policy makers, women's organisations and legal figures including three judges. She finalised her background paper in July and presented this at the AAA meetings in Washington DC on 28 November. Her paper has also been featured on the openDemocracy and Women Living Under Muslim Law websites. She gave a presentation on the project to the Network of Egyptian Women's Rights Groups on 5 December and attended a meeting in which they discussed an

initiative to draft a new comprehensive Family Code. The Middle East Hub held a workshop on legal pathways to empowerment on 5 February 2008. Mulki has also contributed to the write-up of a policy paper on reforming Personal Status Law No. 100 of 1985. This paper is the collective work of the Committee for Policies for Women within the ruling National Democratic Party.

Changing Narratives of Sexuality in Bangladesh

Research in Bangladesh is exploring how women's identities are constructed in a changing cultural world, and how women themselves negotiate their way around these changes – and is focusing on issues such as the role religion plays in their lives, and whether they feel that their religious faith and their every day practices support or contradict each other. Focus group discussions, participant observation in Quran classes and interviews reveal that religion itself is not questioned, even when it is perceived as being unjust to women; it is often said that it is a wrong reading of the Quran that leads to these misunderstandings, and hence a greater need for religious knowledge is expressed. Religion is no longer seen as something that is learned within the family (and hence traditional) but something that needs to be actively sought out and "learned". Religion is moving out of the private into the public domain. What is perceived as religious duties, piety - in the sense of saying your prayers and so on, but also duty to family - husband, children and in-laws - which is uttered practically in the same breath as the need to pray and observe religious practices - reinforcing patriarchal family norms. Romance and courtship have become more a part of the way relationships between women and men are talked about; the 'love' that is celebrated is always monogamous, heterosexual and ideally leads to marriage. Modesty is emphasised, though changing fashions - in veiling, burqa and hijab as well as 'trendy' punk fashions - are also talked about. The stress on women's bodies as symbols of modesty and respectability remains. In writing up the research, the team will focus on exploring whether there is indeed a new woman emerging from this new discourse around religion.

Susie Jolly, of the Global Hub, explored the local dimensions of global development framings of sexuality in fieldwork in China in January 2008 with sexuality activists and development practitioners. Preparations are underway for an international conference, at the beginning of April 2008, on sexuality and the development industry that will bring together sexual rights activists and sexuality researchers from all over the world to explore global narratives of sexuality in relation to development, and address what's needed to change these narratives so as to create a more positive, dynamic and pro-actively pleasurable way of working with sexuality in development. The *Changing Narratives of Sexuality* theme group plans to meet at this conference to share and consolidate research to date.

Exploration of the intersections of our work with broader debates on gender and power was taken further in Dakar in October, at the symposium "[Politicising Masculinities: Beyond the Personal](#)". Samia Rahim from the South Asia Hub attended along with Andrea Cornwall and Tessa Lewin. Hosted by the Alliance National Contre le Sida (ANCS) and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance office in Senegal, the workshop was co-organised by Andrea Cornwall and Jerker Edstrom of the IDS HIV and Development

Programme, with funding from a variety of sources including Sida, NORAD, UNAIDS, SDC and the Ford Foundation. The RPC was able to make a modest financial contribution to the symposium, principally in the form of staff time and a contribution to communications outputs. The symposium drew together some of the leading people in the field, including Raewyn Connell, Robert Morrell and Alan Greig, along with activists and practitioners from all over the world. It was an incredible event, sparking off a series of plans for activism and action to address the need for dialogue and engagement between those working with masculinities and other social movements, especially the feminist and women's movements.

Progress on Communications

Our commitment expressed in the inception phase to producing and working on innovative communications products has deepened with the appointment of a new Communications and Learning Officer for the team, Tessa Lewin. Tessa brings with her a wealth of experience and technical know-how on visual media and has been able to assist us with planning our strategy in this area. She also has an impressive network of contacts within the communications and media industry and has been proactive in linking these contacts with Pathways work. She instigated a partnership with Screen South which will produce four 3 minute documentaries on Pathways research which we are hoping will be broadcast to a wide audience – Tessa is currently in talks with Channel Four on this. She is also working with Hania in the Middle East Hub on producing an animated film from their feminist fairy tales work and has been looking at the possibility of working with film for mobile phones in the future. The Palestinian team also plan to produce a documentary on different forms and facets of women's empowerment.

Research on and with Communications

As a topic of research, the Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nigerian teams have been progressing their research into women and the media. The South Asia team held a workshop on Gender, Media and Representation conducted by Shohini Ghosh, Professor of Mass Communications, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi in November. At the workshop, participants critically engaged with issues around media, representation, censorship, pornography and popular cinema. In Nigeria, Charmaine Pereira has formed a young women's discussion group which involves showing videos to young women to explore the appeal to this audience and to encourage critical viewing through discussion of the film's content and its implications for gender, sexuality and power relations. Her aim is to fuse this field research with mythical stories to produce a 12-part television series.

As a method for research, the Latin American Hub has been making extensive use of video and photography within their research. At the annual encampment of women rural workers and indigenous women in Bahia, NEIM communications officers used the opportunity to ask 'what does

empowerment mean to you?'. They have been doing this at all the seminars and events which they organise and take part in. They are also training young interns in the use of photography to record their lives in the 'Changing Times, Changing Lives' project.

Reaching Our Audiences

The third way we're using communications is to disseminate our work. We have been using whatever opportunity is afforded to us to present the work of the RPC to our five types of audience and to involve them where possible. Regional press have been present at meetings in Bangladesh, Ghana, Egypt and Brazil. Mulki Al-Sharmani presented her Family Courts study to policy makers in April and invited researchers, policy makers, women's organisations and legal figures, including three judges, to her workshop held in July. Aisha Fofana Ibrahim from Sierra Leone attended a workshop on 'A Woman's Place is in Parliament' and talked about the RPC's work and she also wrote a piece for the national newspaper on Pathways. Our partnership with Open Democracy has resulted in monthly articles by RPC members and wider networks being posted on their website. In November we joined with them on their 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence blog initiative and contributions included those from Takyiwaa Manuh, Tessa Lewin and other RPC members. Takyiwaa's piece on domestic violence was taken up by Pambazuka News. Links are provided to the Pathways website from Open Democracy. Islah Jad from Palestine gave a presentation on the RPC initiative as a different form of doing research and activism to the Arab Women's Organisation and the Middle East Research Centre joint conference in Damascus, Syria in July.

Engaging Potential Audiences in Framing Our Research

We are ensuring engagement with our audiences from the outset of the research. Charmaine has interviewed policy actors from ECOWAS, the MDGs office and the Ministry of Women's Affairs for her work on 'Expanding the Space for Women's Empowerment in Contemporary Nigeria'. The Head of the Ministry of Women's Affairs has said she is interested in the project for the possibility of the findings being used to build capacity of staff in the ministries to engage with gender. The Bangladesh Team are doing pilot tests of focus group discussions for their Changing Narratives of Sexuality work. Focus group discussions are new to many of the team as a methodology and the researchers are developing their skills in this. They have also attended Taleem classes (lectures on the mores of Islam) as part of their participant observatory research. Mulki Al-Sharmani interviewed judges and employees of legal firms as part of her family law research – specifically those who address gaps in the legal system with innovative approaches. Penny Johnson in Palestine has also been using focus group discussions to engage with her stakeholders from the beginning of her research. Initially she interviewed older unmarried women, many of whom have professional careers and a number of who have participated in the nationalist movement of their times and following this she conducted discussions with young unmarried women in refugee camps and villages. The results will go into planning her project.

Engaging Stakeholders as Co-Researchers

Joanne Sandler from UNIFEM hosted a meeting in New York for some of the participants of the Global Hub's co-enquiry project on feminists working in global policy organisations at the beginning of the project in February 2007. There were representatives from UNDP, UNIFEM, ILO, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs present and the group modified the central research questions and drew up a code of conduct for the research process.

Optimising Responsiveness

Our communications strategy needs to be extremely flexible and adaptable to deal with the inherent fluidity of its subject. This means keeping our finger on the pulse, tracking trends and adapting as necessary to specific contexts. For example the Nigerian team have decided to switch from their original plan of producing a Nollywood DVD to using material from their field research and stories to produce a pilot for a potential 12 part television series.

Subverting Stereotypes through Popular TV Drama

In Nigeria the team are planning to fuse material from their field research and mythical stories to generate drama programmes for a 12 part television series. The new stories will be produced by reworking or adapting existing mythical stories from different parts of Nigeria with contemporary content from field research with a view to subverting existing misogynistic representations of women. They will be producing a pilot from this, which will form the basis for raising further funds for the television series. They have modified their original plan from approaching 'Nollywood' as these films tend not to circulate in all parts of the country so television affords the possibility of reaching a broader audience, once national, continental and ultimately international channels are targeted.

Increasing Capacity

Increasing communications capacity and learning has been a key element of this period of the Pathways Programme. The hubs emphasise the importance of setting communications strategies for each of their projects. In Brazil, the team have established an audience map for each project they are engaged in and both their researchers and communications officers undertook a course in monitoring and assessment in October. We have continued to build the capacity of our Brazilian team in English: Silvia Lucia Ferreira from Brazil attended a two-week intensive English course in Brighton in July and this allowed her to participate more fully in the Global Conference on Abortion in which she participated in September. Using a dedicated translator has made an important difference to the capacity of the Brazilian team to communicate; ongoing language training for the team as a whole is yielding results and we hope that by the end of the programme, we will have equipped the whole team with sufficient skills in English to participate fully in international dialogue in English, and to read and use English-language materials in their research and teaching.

Tessa and Jenny attended a podcasting training in October and are using this for communications work. Tessa has since trained other partners and

communications staff in podcasting. Cecilia Sardenberg participated in a workshop on Feminist Strategies in ICTs in India in October looking at creating a feminist network to empower women in terms of ICTs. As previously discussed, the media portion of the Changing Narratives theme South Asia team held a media literacy training in November. Nine student interns from the 'Changing Times, Changing Lives' project in Brazil took part in a photography course in October, together with Communications Officers, Lea Santana and Nadja Ferreira. They held an exhibition at the Faculty of Philosophy and Human Sciences and they have also placed their photographs in slide show format on YouTube.

Expanding Possibilities

The teams have also been learning what is possible and for what more assistance is needed. For instance, the Bangladesh Team have been struggling with capacity to keep a website running and updated and also to realise their ideas of more innovative communication plans like photography and video than they have previously experienced. They have been using assistance from Tessa in the Coordination Team and also outside consultants with expertise in communications to help them put these ideas into implementation. Communications tools and methods have very much depended on the context in which the various RPC members work – the kind of innovation we've seen from the Brazilian team's use of the traditional [Carnival space](#) for protest to the use of performative spaces for retelling traditional stories with a twist in the Middle East, to the competition the Ghanaian team are hosting for popular songs with lyrics that are more respectful of women is something we're excited about and hope will continue to flourish.

Enhancing Access to Information

We have built on coordination with Bridge and the British Library of Development Studies (BLDS), which we began at the Communications Exchange last year. We meet regularly with BRIDGE, have collaborated with them on the Politicising Masculinities conference and are working closely with them to disseminate summaries of the papers from the Reclaiming Feminisms workshop in July. BLDS are providing the RPC Direct service to some of our partners and are also working on literature searches on specific Pathways themes. Members of our research team have taken advantage of this service and, following discussions between the Pathways Coordination Team and the Head of BLDS, BLDS have been providing a literature search service on specific topics relevant to the Pathways themes. The first of these was produced on women's participation in politics and was provided to the Building Constituencies Theme Group to coincide with their meeting in Bangladesh in January. We have also prepared a number of Pathways bibliographies, and will continue to develop our bibliographies series over the coming year matching thematic overviews with thematic bibliographies and putting together other bibliographic materials.

Sharing Ideas

Pathways researchers have been active in sharing ideas in a variety of forums over the last year. A key principle of the programme is that of creating space for dialogue, bringing multiple perspectives and plural voices together to explore questions of gender and power. Engagement in these kinds of events is, therefore, not only part of our communications strategy but is also important for our research – as it becomes part of shaping our own narratives so as to engage more effectively with our multiple potential audiences.

The Global Hub are working with staff in a host of development institutions of different kinds, as well as with corporations and other private sector organisations. In April, working with a steering group from UNIFEM, the World Bank and DFID, Rosalind organised in Bangkok a dialogue between recipient government and donor staff from four countries in the region concerning the challenges and opportunities of integrating gender equality and women's empowerment into the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Overall, the global hub is learning how to respond to the challenge of the busy-ness of global policy actors resulting in their frequently having to abandon at the last minute opportunities for ideas sharing in order to respond to the urgency of senior management's demands. The kind of long term planning of conferences and workshops that is necessary and appropriate for academics does not seem to work so well for policy people who are constantly having to shift their priorities.

Disseminating and Learning through Conferences

The conferences at which Pathways researchers have spoken run the gamut from huge international events to small local workshops. Some examples are listed here. Mulki Al Sharmani presented her family courts paper at the AAA meetings in Washington in November. She also gave a presentation on the project to the Network of Egyptian Women's Rights Groups in December. They have discussed an initiative to draft a new comprehensive Family Code. And she participated in a conceptual workshop organised by Sisters in Islam in collaboration with New Woman on an initiative to reform Muslim Family Laws. Naila Kabeer spoke at a conference at the University of Santa Cruz, California about her paper on '[Marriage, Motherhood and Masculinity](#)' and the insights into the gendered nature of poverty. In October Akosua Adomako delivered a series of four presentations on the Domestic Violence legislation in Ghana in four institutions in the US. Takyiwaa Manuh presented two lectures on 'Empowering Women? Passing Domestic Violence Legislation in Ghana' at Indiana University and Hunter College Women's Studies Programme. Her presentations received widespread interest and discussion. At IDS-WIEGO conference (Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising), Brighton, October 2007, Dzodzi presented on Gender and Labour markets. Islah Jad gave a paper on 'Women and Citizenship in the Arab World, in a 'Women and Public Life: Empowerment and Participation in Public Studies and Research' seminar, organised by the Middle East Research

Centre (MERC) and the Arab Women's Organisation (AWO) of the Arab League in Syria in July.

Pathways Conference Fund

Pathways has a dedicated conference fund that supports our researchers to present their work at international conferences, enabling them to enter a field that remains dominated by northern academics, as well as to receive peer feedback and also to enjoy the kind of publishing opportunities that arise from being part of panels at major conferences. This year, the following conference grants were given -

- Mulki Al-Sharmani, Middle East Hub, American Anthropological Association Meeting, Washington, November 2007. To present a paper on family courts in Egypt.
- Silvia Lucia Ferreira, Cecilia Sardenberg, Latin America Hub and Gilberta Soares, Advisory Group Committee, Latin America Hub, Marie Stopes Global Conference on Abortion, London, October 2007. To take part in a panel on 'Experiences of Abortion Law Reform' (in conjunction with a SIF grant).
- Aisha Fofana-Ibrahim, West Africa Hub, Feminist Pedagogy Conference, New York, October 2007. To present a paper on 'Decentering a 'Traditional' Classroom through War-Talk and/or Trauma', on her work in Sierra Leone.
- Perween Hasan, South Asia Hub, to attend 'Feminism, Sexuality and the Return of Religion', Syracuse University, April 2007
- Charmaine Pereira, West Africa Hub, to attend 'Feminism, Sexuality and the Return of Religion', Syracuse University, April 2007
- Dzodzi Tsikata, West Africa Hub, Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, New York, October 2007. To present a paper on 'The Politics and Practice of Gender Equity within the Rights-Based Approaches'.

In addition to participating in these conferences, we have held a number of events ourselves. One of the main ones was the 'Reclaiming Feminisms' conference held at IDS on 9-10 July, co-convened by Andrea Cornwall, in partnership with Jasmine Gideon and Kalpana Wilson from Birkbeck College. Participants included academics, activists and donors as well as members of the RPC management team and communications officers from the Latin America and West Africa Hubs and members of the Pathways regional advisory committees. In November, The global hub organised a two day conference to discuss the research on meanings of women's empowerment in global policy organisations, which was held in February 2008 in conjunction with the Global Hub Advisory Group and Consortium Advisory Group meetings. Naila Kabeer organised an ESRC seminar with LSE in London around the RPC themes of body, voice and work. Dzodzi Tsikata from our West Africa Hub and Ratna Sudarshan from the South Asia Advisory Committee attended this seminar. As noted earlier in this report, Andrea Cornwall co-organised the "Politicising Masculinities" symposium in Senegal, and, with Tina Wallace, the "Untangling the Knots" DSA event in London.

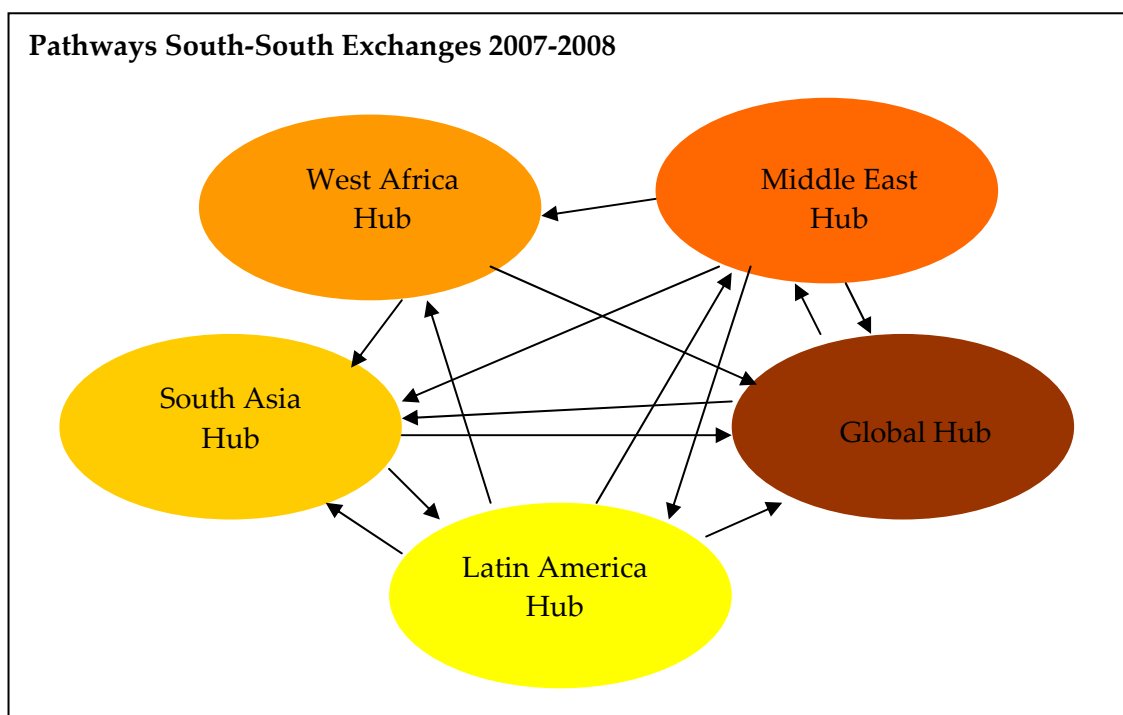
'I love photographs, and I love teaching because they are always an opening paragraph of someone's life, the opening line.'

Margaret Waller, Feminist Photographer, interviewed by Silje Troseth

Progress on Building our Capacity, and Strengthening our Network

Building a Community of Practice

Our strength lies in our diversity. Making the most of that diversity in building a community of practice that can reach out to and engage with others in transforming approaches to women's empowerment is an explicit goal of the RPC. Over the last year, we've sought wherever possible to stimulate and strengthen opportunities for exchange and mutual learning.



Continuing the work we began in the inception phase to make opportunities for exchanges across the Consortium's hubs and to convene dialogues between a range of stakeholders that would, in part, serve to enlist a wider network of people in our project, this last year has presented a number of opportunities for strengthening our community and our capacity. Hub researchers have been working cross-regionally to provide advice and give input on research methodologies. This has been facilitated by our institutional architecture, with the intersection of hubs and themes to connect people at different levels. But it's also taken the shape of greater connectedness between individuals located in different parts of the world contacting each other directly to seek advice, share materials and ideas, and visit each other independently of Pathways events.

Learning through Exchange

RPC thematic group meetings have also included a learning element. At the Empowering Work Theme meeting in December 2007, Naila Kabeer facilitated a hands-on process of working through survey designs and instruments, and Ann Whitehead from the University of Sussex (and member of the Pathways Consortium Advisory Group) ran a very well received training in life history research methodologies. The Building Constituencies Theme meeting in Bangladesh in January 2008 included field visits for researchers and communications officers from other hubs, which also served as a way of enhancing capacity for comparative analysis. Out of this has grown a proposal for a series of South-South exchanges between activists and practitioners in politics, government and NGOs, that can help build connections, learning and capacity between countries within the South Asia region and with the Middle East, West Africa and Latin America.

The four Pathways theme convenors continue their role of coordinating the research themes between the hubs and are using dedicated email distribution lists to provide updates on thematic research and provide guidance and advice to other researchers within their themes.

Responding to Emerging Opportunities, Adjusting to Unforeseen Circumstances

We have used bi-yearly Management Group meetings to track progress and revise research plans as necessary, and have a quarterly internal newsletter that reports progress to all Pathways members across themes and hubs, drawing on quarterly updates from the hub convenors. This allows us to incrementally adjust the overall strategy to respond to emerging opportunities as well as unforeseen circumstances.

Outside of cross-hub and theme group meetings, which have enabled adaptive adjustment of research plans to seek greater coherence as well as to incorporate exciting ideas that emerge through comparative analysis and dialogue, hubs have also held their own internal research meetings to review progress, and adjust research plans as necessary. "Critical friends" and resource people have often been invited to join these meetings. BRAC held a regional planning meeting in April with Pakistan partners and also met with Afghan researchers to discuss potential work with them, dependent on funding. They also held specific project meetings in April on their religion and work components. Former IDS fellow Samer Al-Samarrai participated in their work research meeting and provided guidance on their research plans.

What Does a Feminist Conditional Cash Transfer Programme Look Like?

Poised in a position to influence the design of a new Conditional Cash Transfer programme in Egypt, Hania Sholkamy and her colleagues were able to make direct use of the international connections afforded by the RPC to invite those involved in designing, monitoring and researching CCT programmes in Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador and Chile to a workshop in Cairo in January 2008. The challenge they faced was thinking through in practical terms what design features would help make Egypt's CCT programme as empowering as possible for the women who would benefit from it. Participants included Naila Kabeer from the Pathways programme and Maxine Molyneux from University of London.

The Middle East Hub also held a work research meeting in June at which Ragui Assaad from the Population Council provided training in Stata software to researchers. Ariana Rossi, an IDS DPhil student supervised by Stephanie Barrientos participated in this meeting and reported on her and Stephanie's research plans for the Global Hub on garments work in Morocco, which they will then be comparing with Egypt.

Adjusting Plans in Uncertain Environments

Research plans have also had to be adjusted due to problems outside our control. The state of emergency in Bangladesh for much of the first half of 2007 and the impact of the floods meant that some research activity had to be curtailed or postponed. In particular participating in religious classes led by members of political groups was stopped under the ban on political activity. Research projects were also delayed and suspended due to serious health problems in the team, but are now back on track. We have also taken active advantage of opportunities. For example, in March 2007 NEIM were invited to be part of the consortium monitoring the Maria da Penha Law and adjusted their planned research on gender violence to link in with this opportunity. They have since been involved in a great deal of activism and policy influencing opportunities within this role, benefiting in this from support from DFID-Brazil.

Learning for Change

The Pathways programme began with a commitment to connecting action- and policy-oriented research to the academy, and to strengthening our own capacity to teach as well as to learn. Many members of the Consortium are actively engaged in teaching and training in their own and other institutions. From the very beginning, we have placed learning at the heart of our work together.

Over the last year, we have seen Pathways members increasing their opportunities to use their research in the development and shaping of gender courses and curricula and to facilitate learning and training for students. Beginning with the curriculum exchange and collation of teaching materials on methodologies for researching empowerment with which we began 2007, we have continued to exchange curricula, and to commission and produce bibliographies that can be used to enhance our teaching, as well as inform our research. The writings of Pathways researchers on empowerment and on the key thematic areas with which our research is concerned are being collated, for use on reading lists and as material with which to construct curricula for teaching and training.

A pledge that we made at the outset and to which we remain passionately committed is to change the balance of all of our reading lists from featuring North American and British theorists with case material that is largely drawn from our regions, to internationalising the mix of materials and building up a resource of readings and writings by theorists from the global South. We will work towards this not only through curricular exchange and the production of

materials that can be used for teaching by Pathways researchers, but also through a wider programme of support for the production of theoretical/conceptual writing that has its origins in the global South.

In each of our hubs, efforts are underway to connect what we are learning from our research and exchanges across the RPC, with what we are teaching. The Social Research Center (SRC) and Law Departments at the American University, Cairo linked up with the Cynthia Nelson Institute for Gender and Women's Studies to organise a conference on Gender in the Global South in October in Cairo. A wide circle of gender scholars met to discuss gender theory. Islah Jad and Hania Sholkamy are also members of the BCBCB Initiative coordinating on gender and women's studies between University of California Davis, American University in Cairo and Beirut, Birzeit University and the Lebanese American University. SRC have also provided support for students to conduct social research within the Middle East. This has included:

- Abeer Badran: 'How cultural changes affect childhood abuse'. Her work is intended to spur the legislation of new laws that provide Egyptian children with protection against sexual abuse. Abeer has also looked at the influence media has on the poor representation of women.
- Lenka Benova: 'HIV/AIDS in Egypt and Sudan'. She examines the influence of NGOs, donors and state agencies in shaping HIV/AIDS support.

The Egypt Team also supported Sara Callegari, an IDS MA student, during her internship with them when she worked on cash transfers and micro credit. Sara has written a report on her work for the Pathways website.

The American University in Cairo have created a colloquium on gender and development for their Masters in Gender Studies. The course description has generated strong interest among students and Hania Sholkamy will be teaching on this during the spring term. Pathways related and generated materials have featured in presentations and training activities within the Middle East Hub including:

- A presentation on women's empowerment at a training workshop on Women's Empowerment and Human Rights sponsored by the Walberg Institute at Lundt University and Zenid (Queen Zein el-Sharaf Foundation)
- The launch of the Arabic version of the UNRISD report on 'Equality in an Unequal World' sponsored by the Organisation of Arab Women of the Arab League
- Training sessions at the SRC workshop on 'Research Methods for Guiding Policy and Evaluation with Special Application to Population and Health'
- The Lebanese-American University in Beirut and Bir Zeit University in Palestine are organising an international conference on 'Feminisms and

Feminist Movements in the Arab World'. This will be in collaboration with the Women and Memory Forum in Egypt

CEGENSA organised its second curriculum development workshop in May in Ghana. Faculty from both public and private universities attended to finalise work on two Foundation Courses on Gender and Development in Africa and Gender and Culture in Africa. The courses are designed so they can be adopted and adapted by sister universities. Akosua Adomako from CEGENSA also presented a concept paper on CEGENSA's understanding of the challenges and openings within gender and feminist research in Africa at a SIDA-CODESRIA Workshop in June to 'Support Feminist and Gender Research in Africa'.

BRAC University are integrating the findings from Pathways research into a Masters Course in Development Studies. Fatima Seema Jahan is developing a syllabus with the assistance of the lead researchers and many of the researchers will be teaching on this course.

In Brazil, researchers at NEIM are continuing to develop the new PhD programme, which is the first on the continent to address explicitly questions of feminism and development. Plans are underway to run an entire stream of undergraduate teaching on gender, which will elevate NEIM from a specialist unit to an Institute in its own right. The team has experienced a concomitant fall in the amount of time available for research as the teaching programme has expanded, but is making the most of opportunities to engage students directly in the RPC's work, thus building up a generation of young feminist researchers. Within IDS, Pathways researchers are bringing ideas and materials from the programme to bear on teaching on IDS' new flagship MA programmes. Initiatives are underway to engage more actively with the student body on questions of gender, feminism and empowerment, including a proposal for a student-led conference on feminist engagement with development.

Training is a vitally important part of our work. We see it as part not only of building our own capacity as a programme, but that of others and of engaging a new generation of researchers and communicators with the issues with which our work is concerned. Our training work captures an enormous range from skill building in quantitative data analysis to engaging with bloggers, artists and film makers to challenge stereotyped representations of women and engage them in finding new ways of conveying a positive approach to empowerment. We plan to consolidate our experience with training and produce materials that our hubs and others can use to run similar trainings, as well as to expand our training work as a way of engaging those in policy and practitioner communities and as a contribution to revitalising gender training more broadly.

South-South Exchanges and Inter-regional Research Opportunities

Our South-South exchange programme, a crucial component of our research, has been progressing well this year. Our exchanges have included:

- Susie Jolly from the Global Hub attending an international conference on 'Gender and Sexuality' hosted by BRAC which involved Firdous Azim from the Pathways RPC and was organised by the Realising Rights RPC. Maheen Sultan also presented at the workshop.
- Arianna Rossi from the Global Hub attending an empowering work methodologies workshop in Cairo on 17 June to discuss the work she and Stephanie Barrientos are doing in Morocco.
- Naila Kabeer from the South Asia Hub went to Brazil in June to participate in the International Seminar on the Experiences of Positive Actions in Brasilia at the National Congress.
- Heba Nassar from the Middle East Hub and Stephanie Barrientos met in Egypt in September to discuss comparative analysis of projects on the textiles and clothing sectors.
- The Empowering Work Theme workshop in Ghana in December which included Middle East, Latin American and South Asian Hub members as well as West African Hub members from Nigeria and Sierra Leone.
- The Building Constituencies Theme workshop in Bangladesh in January which included Middle East, Latin American and West African Hub members and South Asian Hub members from Pakistan.
- Global Hub Conceptualising Empowerment conference in UK in February which included Middle East, Latin American and West African Hub members.

The communications function has been progressing with a mini communications exchange with West Africa and Brazil in the UK prior to the Reclaiming Feminisms conference in July. The Middle East Hub Communications Officer, Kristina Hallez also took part in the media literacy training in Bangladesh along with Tessa Lewin from the Coordination Team in November. Lea Santana, Communications Officer from the Latin America Hub, participated in the Building Constituencies theme workshop in Bangladesh in January which also involved her making a field visit to a research site.

Engaging Our Advisory Groups with Our Work

Following discussions at last year's Consortium Advisory Group (CAG) meeting, we have initiated 3-monthly e-bulletins which are circulated to the CAG to provide updates on our work as well as a wider network of people including academics, NGOs and donors. We have also tried to include CAG and regional advisory members in our events where possible. Some examples include:

- Various members of the Global Hub advisory group and Shireen Huq from the South Asia advisory group attended the Reclaiming Feminisms workshop in July
- Ratna Sudarshan from the South Asia advisory group attended the ESRC Seminar at LSE on the RPC's themes of body, voice and work
- Gilberta Soares from the Latin America advisory group participated in a Pathways/Realising Rights panel at the Global Conference on Abortion in the UK in October
- Hameeda Hussain from the South Asia advisory group has been attending various Pathways South Asia events
- Shireen Huq was also involved in the interviewing and selection of proposals to carry out the photography exhibition and video on stories of change
- The South Asia advisory group took part in the Dialogues on Empowerment workshop in January
- The Latin American team have various interactions at conferences with their advisory group members – Luiza Bairros, Vera Soares and Marlene Libardoni. They also sponsored Marlene Libardoni's participation in the presentation of Brazil's alternative report to the CEDAW committee in New York in July
- Marlene Libardoni took part in the Cairo Conditional Cash Transfers workshop
- The Global Hub have timed their conference on Conceptualising Empowerment to coincide with their advisory group meeting and members of the Consortium Advisory Group meeting will also be attending.

Engaging with Other DRCs/RPCs

One of our logframe OVIs is that our way of working attracts interest from other research consortia; fulfilling this requires us not only to enable others to find out about us, but also to actively engage with other consortia and to create opportunities for exchange.

We are engaging in inter-regional research opportunities and increasingly arranging coordinating opportunities with other RPCs and DRCs. DFID's Learning Event in September 2007 provided those of us who went – Andrea Cornwall, Rosalind Eyben and Simeen Mahmud - with a chance to meet people from other RPCs and DRCs, and some useful connections were made. We are in close and regular touch with the Women's Empowerment in Muslim Contexts RPC. Vivienne Wee and Homa Hoodfar attended the Reclaiming Feminism conference in July 2007, and the two RPCs met and worked intensively together in September to put together an exciting proposal for a series of collaborative activities – recognising the considerable commonalities of interest and purpose that we could capitalise on.

Andrea Cornwall, Naila Kabeer and Simeen Mahmud remain active members of the Citizenship DRC, where there is considerable interest in learning from our hub-based approach and what it implies for developing a decentralised

regional strategy to extend and deepen the work of the Citizenship DRC in the future. Andrea and Simeen were able to attend the inaugural meeting of the teaching and learning network of the Citizenship DRC and contribute lessons from the RPC's capacity development programme, especially in relation to curriculum and bibliographic exchanges and support. Rosalind Eyben has made contact with Angela Little of the RPC on education and inequality (CREATE) and has discussed potential cross-RPC collaboration on understanding policy processes. Andrea is exploring potential areas of mutual interest with the Chronic Poverty and Future State DRCs, both in terms of methodological commonalities and also substantive areas of potential future collaborative engagement. Andrea and Susie Jolly are involved with the Realising Rights RPC, and Andrea Cornwall and Hilary Standing are currently working closely together on outputs from the MSI conference on abortion in October, at which a joint panel was presented. Tessa Lewin has been working closely with Communications Officers from other RPCs including the Realising Rights and Citizenship DRC, who, along with IDS Communications and Information staff more broadly, have shown an interest in our creative communications work.

Interactions between the Pathways team and other DRCs and RPCs – as well as other multi-country research programmes - are also being actively fostered at country level. The Bangladesh Pathways Team is now sharing offices with the BRAC Citizenship DRC, which offers them more opportunities to interact. Cecilia Sardenberg, Silvia Lucia Ferreira and Gilberta Soares from the Latin America Hub participated in a joint panel with the Realising Rights RPC at the Global Conference on Abortion in October which will lead to a joint IDS Bulletin on Safe Abortion Rights. BRAC have been working with Simorgh in Pakistan on collaboration on the experiences of Islam in Women's Daily Life Work and Amena Mohsin and Zarina Khan, lead researchers on the local governance theme met with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Shirkat Gah, Aurat Foundation and Simorgh in Pakistan on a comparative analysis of Bangladesh and Pakistan through the study of enabling and disabling factors in women's efforts at creating voice. Firdous Azim from BRAC has also been in discussions with Sarah White from the University of Bath regarding possible collaboration between Pathways research on religion and development and ESRC research on Wellbeing in Developing Countries.

Challenges

Political instability poses a challenge to the RPC's work in some countries – Bangladesh and Pakistan, in particular, this year. The ongoing hostilities in Palestine and Afghanistan make research difficult, and our colleagues in these contexts have done remarkably in continuing their work in these conditions. The backlash against women's rights is evident the world over, and affects our everyday work in all kinds of ways.

At the hub level, over the last year, three specific challenges have arisen that call for particular mitigation strategies:

Protecting and Supporting Time for Writing

Paradoxically, the growing visibility of the RPC has meant greater demands on people's time leading to some difficult trade-offs between engaging with influencing and doing field research and writing. For some of our southern researchers, the RPC has opened up new opportunities nationally and internationally. But this has meant more time spent travelling to meetings, more time taken up in advisory work to government, more deadlines and less time for writing and reflection. Mitigation strategies are needed that actively reclaim this time and restore to it the preciousness that it holds for us as a Consortium and for our overall purpose. These include:

- funded writing and reading retreats (where the RPC will support members of the team to take a retreat, removed from the demands of their everyday work, to complete writing projects); these will be used in the run up to our cross-RPC analysis workshop in January 2009;
- visiting fellowships, which can be taken up at any of our institutions, and would involve a mini-sabbatical with time to read, write and think, and also to test out ideas on new audiences via seminars and other interactions with researchers in the host institution. These will be used over the course of 2009 and 2010 for researchers to write up more substantial pieces of work, or to work on producing materials for different audiences from their research;
- an application to Bellagio is to be made in early 2009 for a write-shop in late 2009 that will bring together those involved with the thematic group on Conceptualising Empowerment, with leading feminist thinkers, to have time to assess what the RPC's work to date signals for how empowerment is conceptualised and to begin to shape some substantive conceptual writing on emerging possibilities.

Working in Multiple Languages

The complexity of dealing with working in multiple languages has become more evident this year. Last year, it became clear that hiring casual translators when non-English speaking Brazilian colleagues attended meetings was not an adequate solution. We developed a two-tier strategy: to engage a regular translator for the Brazil team, who would accompany them to meetings and acquire the technical language of the RPC, to enable our Brazilian colleagues to participate as fully as possible; and to intensify English language training for our Brazilian colleagues, with two members of the team doing an intensive immersion course in the UK and, along with other members, receiving regular lessons in Brazil. These strategies have made a huge difference. Our next hurdle is translation of texts, especially from Portuguese to English. We are investigating a range of possibilities, and plan to experiment with different options over the course of the first half of this year.

The challenge of working in multiple languages does not just apply to Portuguese and Spanish, of course, and this year we plan to do a lot more

work on how to translate some of the main outputs from the programme into a range of other languages, including Bangla, Arabic and Urdu. The Middle East hub has taken up the question of translation in some depth, and in the process generated some fascinating debate about how key terms – like “empowerment” itself – might be conveyed in different political and cultural contexts.

Empowerment found in Translation! Talking Empowerment in Arabic

Straight talk, plain talk, actionable words, and stories that inspire and challenge require fluency and ease of expression. Translating words that are meant to encourage action and change from one language to another can create a halting narrative and a hiatus of misinterpretation. Gender, empowerment, and women's activism are an example of the difficulties of translation. The critique of women's empowerment as alien, imperial or western has partly to do with the power-relations that govern international development discourses but also relates to the difficulty of translating words and concepts without adding or losing values and meaning.

Could the faltering and awkward way by which research and activism are expressed help explain why women's empowerment has a limited audience amongst non-specialists? Can this lack of engagement by native Arabic speakers explain why there is barely any literature in Arabic that speaks to this paradigm? Is language one of the most formidable and challenging of ‘the master's tools’¹?

The Middle East hub has undertaken a series of workshops and activities that seek to investigate language as a pathway of empowerment. The workshops are meant to ‘comfortably and honestly’ discuss terms, theories, programmes and projects in a language with which participants communicate more often with their students, constituencies and peers than with other feminists. Three workshops were planned and so far two have taken place. The first looked at translating key gender texts for undergraduate Arabic speaking students. There are seven texts that are currently being collated, translated and edited. This is an initiative undertaken by the Women and Memory Forum and in which the RPC is participating. The seven collections are on Gender and: Religion, Psychology, literary criticism, politics and political sciences, history, social sciences and law. Each is a collection of key critical texts all of which have never been translated into Arabic and therefore have been inaccessible to non-English speakers. A member of the RPC Middle East hub is selecting and editing the volume on Gender and the Social Sciences.

The articles were selected for their content and contribution but their transferability poses a set of difficult challenges. The concept of transferability means rendering the articles conceptually meaningful and representative of intellectual production and of the context in which such thinking and production are undertaken.

The first challenge then is how to transfer through translation the meaning, significance and value of these articles. The collections *transfer* the articles into Arabic and in so doing maintain the meaning and value endowing context within which articles must be considered. ***The principle is to empower not confound young students and scholars; to enable them to engage with and to challenge and critique these texts.***

Present at this first workshop held in Cairo on 4-5 January and co-sponsored by the Women and Memory Forum were six of the editors and translators of the texts as well as guests from academic and activist backgrounds (including Mona Baker, professor of linguistics from Manchester University and Amal Abdel-Hadi and Nawla

¹ In reference to Audre Lorde's essay “The Master's Tools will never Dismantle the Master's House”

Darwisch from the New Woman Centre).

The range of issues discussed and decisions taken went from the technical (how to translate the political as well as the intellectual meaning of feminist terminology?) to the political (are texts celebrated in a western context at all relevant or meaningful to students who have very little access to the history, dogmas, struggles or liberation achieved in that context?). Participants shared anxieties about translating texts on feminism and religion and on the degree of sexual know-how readers need to navigate some feminist texts, particularly in psychoanalysis. The editors and translators agreed that they want to encourage readers to not only read but also use these texts to produce their own gendered research and narratives.

The meeting provided a unique opportunity for translators (highly regarded and in demand in the field of gender and women's studies and all feminists themselves) to debate language and writing and agree on principles and innovations which in themselves will change the Arabic narrative on gender. They have always worked closely with the texts they translate and the editors with whom they work but have rarely had a chance to sit together and express their views and positions with editors so as to collectively, hopefully, effect a paradigm shift in how we talk empowerment in Arabic.

The second workshop was held on 13-15 January in Khartoum and attended by students, researchers, activists, development practitioners and politicians from all over Sudan. This meeting was devoted to the difficulties of programming gender projects and women's empowerment programmes in the fields of development and activism. Participants discussed the challenges of building constituencies for gender and women's empowerment using words and concepts that seem imported.

Due to the current regimes religious doctrines the word empowerment has been deemed preferable and more meaningful than gender equity or women's rights, because it is mentioned in the Holy Quran. The verse refers to the elevated status in which God has placed human beings and is not specifically about women. However the fact that the word *Tamkeen* (meaning: to enable) is associated with a positive value in the Holy Quran has made empowerment plausible and desirable as a development agenda. This seems to be a preference specific to Sudan and to Islamists. Female politicians who are contesting the coming election found a strong relationship between the crisis that they perceive in the agendas of women's empowerment and gender equity and the awkward lingo through which these agendas are expressed. The head of the Sudanese Women's Union, herself a southerner, drew attention to the 400 or more languages of the Sudan and the importance of empowering women to express their agendas in the same language as that in which they undertake their activism. Two southern Sudanese graduate students emerged from a working group saying how much they felt relieved to be talking about "these things" in Arabic!

Human Resource and Funding Issues

Over the course of this year, some of our hubs have needed to grapple with more than the expected flux of staff and difficulties with recruitment. The Global Hub has lost two of their four researchers to other institutions, and the third is about to go on maternity leave – leaving only one of the original research team. Through a change in the Global Hub's strategy, agreed with the Global Hub Advisory Group, a creative solution has been found to this dilemma, which has the added advantage of enabling us to work more closely in partnership with other institutions active in work on global policy spaces. The South Asia hub has had difficulties recruiting mid-level

researchers who are able to lead research projects, and faces competition from national and international institutions for staff of this kind. The West Africa hub lost their administrative co-ordinator, and has just recruited a new person; a recent reconfiguration of research staff, including the recruitment of a new member of the team, has helped deal with some of the overload that they were experiencing.

Sustainable solutions to these dilemmas need to be pursued. These include:

- the RPC's capacity development programme will help, over time, to generate some of the people who we currently need for our research – but we may need to consider other short-term strategies, such as creating post-doctoral fellowships in our hubs to encourage newly graduated research students to spend some time with us before seeking permanent jobs and contributing to our research;
- there are complex reasons for the overload that most of the hub and theme convenors currently experience and mitigation strategies need to be put in place on a case by case basis – measures taken this year include providing additional funding for administrative assistance for two of the hubs, supporting a reconfiguration of the way the hub works in one case, and providing some financial support to bring in other staff to support areas of work that are currently under-resourced;
- there is no doubt that additional resources would make an important difference, and we continue to pursue all avenues to generate more funding for our work. We have a commitment from the Norwegian government to support our work in the four countries in conflict/post-conflict situations, and part of this will be used to support a dedicated communications officer for each of our southern hubs. Discussions have taken place with donors like IDRC and SAREC about institutional support, in particular for our capacity development work; while we have not yet been successful, there is great interest in what we are doing which may bear fruit in the future.

'Violence, including domestic violence, deprives women of their ability to achieve their full potential by threatening their safety, freedom and autonomy'

Takiywaa Manuh, Open Democracy 16 Days of Activism, 26 November 2007

Annex: Products and Publications

1. Policy Influencing Events and Conference Presentations (by theme)

Conceptualizing Empowerment

CEGENSA, Gender Equality Group Meeting, DFID Office, Accra, September 2007

Andrea Cornwall, Untangling the Knots: Revisioning Feminist Engagement with Development, DSA Study Group on Gender and Policy, London, February 2008

Andrea Cornwall, 'Conceptualising 'Gender': Insights for Development from African Studies', AUC, Cairo, October 2007

Andrea Cornwall, Takyiwaa Manuh, Charmaine Pereira, Cecilia Sardenberg, Hania Sholkamy and Maheen Sultan, presentations at Reclaiming Feminism: Gender and Neo-Liberalism, IDS, July 2007

Ana Alice Costa, Women's Empowerment, Brazilian Electric Enterprise, Rio de Janeiro, March 2007

Ana Alice Costa, Women and Equity, Military Police of Bahia, August 2007

Rosalind Eyben, Gender Equality and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, DFID, World Bank, UNIFEM, Bangkok, April 2007

Rosalind Eyben, Commonwealth Ministers for Women's Affairs, Kampala, June 2007

Rosalind Eyben, DAC Gender Net meeting, Paris, June 2007

Silvia Lucia Ferreira, State Council for the Defence of Women's Rights, (elected President), May 2007

Rose Mensah-Kutin, The Millennium Development Goals and the Role of Female Journalists, Women Media and Change (WOMECA), New York, July 2007

Hania Sholkamy, Training Workshop on Women's Empowerment and Human Rights, presentation on women's empowerment, Walberg Institute at Lundt University and Zenid (Queen Zein el-Sharaf Foundation)

Hania Sholkamy, Launch of Arabic version of UNRISD report 'Equality in an Unequal World', sponsored by the Organization of Arab Women of the Arab League

Dzodzi Tsikata, Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, presented paper on 'The Politics and Practice of Gender Equity within the Rights Based Approaches', New York, October 2007

Building Constituencies for Equality and Justice

Akosua Adomako Ampofo, 'Women's Well Being and Gender Activism: The Domestic Violence Bill becoming law in Ghana' four presentations at institutions in the USA, October 2007

Balghia Badri, Friedrich Ebert Workshop for Sudan elections, presented paper on Women Quota in Elections, Sudan, May 2007

CEGENSA, Women's Leadership and Advocacy Skills in Development, sponsored by Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy, May 2007

Ana Alice Costa, Gender and Public Policies, Projeto Viver, Bahia, March 2007

Ana Alice Costa, Municipal Conference for Public Policy for Women of the Municipality of Camacari, gave the opening conference speech, Camacari, April 2007

Ana Alice Costa, State Conference for Public Policy for Women of the State of Pernambuco, key speaker, Recife, June 2007

Silvia Lucia Ferreira, State Conference for Public Policy for Women of the State of Bahia, president of the organizing committee, Salvador, June 2007

Aisha Fofana Ibrahim, A Woman's Place is in Parliament Workshop, Sierra Leone, March 2007

Aisha Fofana Ibrahim, Feminist Pedagogy Conference, presented a paper entitled 'Decentering a "Traditional" Classroom through War-Talk and/or Trauma', CUNY Graduate Center, New York, October 2007

IWGDS, Women in Political Participation from the Islamic Perspective conference, in collaboration with UNDP and the Local Action Organisation, Kassala, Eastern Sudan and Elfashir, Western Sudan, May 2007

Islah Jad, presented a paper on 'Donor Aid and the Creation of an Imagined Independence in Palestine' in Radical Histories of Aid: Postcolonial Perspectives Seminar hold at the School of Environment and Development, University of Manchester, UK, 4 October 2007. Convenors Rosalind Eyben (IDS, University of Sussex) Uma Kothari (IDPM, University of Manchester) and Fiona Wilson (Roskilde University).

Islah Jad, presented a paper on 'Women and Citizenship in the Arab World, An Analytical Frame', at the Women and public life: Empowerment and participation in public studies and Research seminar, organised by Middle East Research Centre (MERC) and the Arab Women's Organisation (AWO) of the Arab League. Hold in Damascus, Syria on 23-26 July 2007.

Islah Jad, presented a paper on What was not said on Arab Women Development in the Arab Human Development Report of 2006, in Arab Women: Future Perspectives seminar, organized by Arab Thought Forum, hold in Amman on 5-6 November 2007.

Islah Jad, presented a paper on Women's Rights and Citizenship in the Arab World, in Women's Rights and Citizenship seminar, organized by IDRC's Women's Rights and Citizenship (WRC) Program and the Middle East Regional Office (MERO), regional consultation for the Middle East and North African (MENA) from December 9th-11th, 2007. Cairo.

Islah Jad, presented a paper on 'The Demobilisation of Women's Movements: the Case of Palestine', in AWID Building Feminist Movements and Organizations (BFEMO) strategic initiative. The international advisory group meeting. Feb 18-19/2008. Cape Town. RPC suggested Islah to be a member of the international advisory group and she will be presenting at AWID in November 2008.

Islah Jad, 'Women's Empowerment in Political Spaces and Institutions: The Use and Abuse of Women's National Machineries, the case of Palestine', in Dialogues on Empowerment, Pathways of Women's Empowerment Research Programme, South Asia Monday 21 January, 2008 BRAC Inn. Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Islah Jad, presented a theoretical frame for Building Constituencies for Equality and Justice, thematic meeting, Dhaka, Bangladesh, Jan. 21-23/2008.

Takiywaa Manuh, 'Empowering Women? Passing Domestic Violence Legislation in Ghana' lectures presented at Indiana University and Hunter College Women's Studies Programme, USA, October 2007

NEIM, Municipal Conference for Public Policy for Women Preparatory Conferences, Ana Alice Costa and Cecilia Sardenberg spoke on 'Power and Women's Political Participation', Salvador, April 2007

NEIM, Municipal Conference for Public Policy for Women of the Municipality of Lauro de Freitas, Bahia, key speaker: Ana Alice Costa, Silvia Lucia Ferreira spoke on Gender Mainstreaming and Terezinha Goncalves spoke on Gender and Work, Lauro de Freitas, April 2007

NEIM, National Conference for Public Policy for Women, Cecilia Sardenberg (delegate) and Ana Alice Costa (work group reporter), Brasilia, August 2007

NEIM, Municipal Conference for Public Policy for Women of the Municipality of Salvador, Salvador, May 2007

Charmaine Pereira, International Women's Day Policy Dialogue, organised by the Centre for Democracy and Development and Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative, key note address on 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls: What Role for Institutional Mechanisms?', Abuja, March 2007

Charmaine Pereira, Action Methodology Workshop on the Politics of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Nigeria University Life, coordinated by Charmaine, May 2007

Charmaine Pereira, Methodology Workshop for Women's Citizenship Project (coordinated by Charmaine), IWSN, September 2007 (Dzodzi Tsikata was resource person for this)

Irene Pogoson, Consultative Forum for Women's Participation in the 2007

Nigerian Elections, organised by LEDAP and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa, October 2007

Irene Pogoson, Training Workshop on Gender Budgeting for State Female Parliamentarians from the South-South and North East Zones, organised by the Centre for Democracy and Development on behalf of the Nigeria Gender Budget Network, Abuja, November 2007

Dzodzi Tsikata, Public Forum of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR), keynote speech 'Relevance of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in the United States of America', June 2007

Dzodzi Tsikata, Women, Militarism, Resistance and Peace-building, African Gender Institute, University of Cape Town, October 2007

Empowering Work

Stephanie Barrientos, European Academy of Business in Society conference on 'Strategic Choices on Global Sourcing from Emerging Markets', Copenhagen, March 2007

Stephanie Barrientos, Gender, Globalisation and Work Panel, DSA Conference, September 2007

Stephanie Barrientos, ESRC/TUC seminar series entitled, 'Richer or Poorer? Globalisation, International Trade and the Challenges of Organising and Defending Women Workers' Rights, Jobs and Livelihoods', London, March 2007

Stephanie Barrientos, Labour Behind the Label, a workshop in London, bringing together NGOs and corporate representatives to discuss company purchasing practices, London, 2007

Stephanie Barrientos, Women Working Worldwide conference on Women in African Horticulture, London, 2007

Stephanie Barrientos, International Trade Centre (WTO/UNCTAD) Export Development Forum, bringing together commercial and trade delegates from around the world, Switzerland, 2007

Stephanie Barrientos, Inter Parliamentary Union conference, on Women, Work and Globalization, with parliamentary delegates from 50 countries, Switzerland, 2007

Rosalind Eyben, 'Richer or Poorer? Globalisation, International Trade and Women's Work', ESRC Research Seminar, June 2007

Naila Kabeer, 'Gender and Poverty Measurement: The Challenge', organised by UNIFEM, Mexico, October, 2007

Naila Kabeer, Open Meeting, organised by UNIFEM, on 'Women Workers and Collective Action: Lessons from the Informal Economy', Mexico, October 2007

Naila Kabeer, Conference at the University of Santa Cruz in California, spoke about the insights into the gendered nature of poverty, November 2007

Heba Nassar, National Council for Women Annual Conference, (responsible for the strategy for women empowering and economic participation which was presented), March 2007

Heba Nassar, UNECA meeting on migrants with a focus on women, Morocco, April 2007

NEIM, Systems of Activities of Family Agriculture from the Perspective of Gender and Generations, promoted by NEIM with the sponsorship of the Ministry of Labour, Cecilia Sardenberg participated in the roundtable on public policy for women and Ana Alice Costa spoke on Gender, Social Organization and Power, Salvador, March 2007

NEIM, Seminar on Informality, Domestic Work and Women, promoted by the Nucleus of Feminist Reflection on Productive and Reproductive Work, Recife, August 2007

NEIM and Naila Kabeer, 4th Dialogue Gender and Inequality: Economic Empowerment and Gender, sponsored by DFID Brasil, Naila Kabeer presented and Cecilia Sardenberg was discussant, June 2007

Cecilia Sardenberg, First Meeting of Women Workers in the Shoe Industry of Bahia, spoke on 'Empowering Work', Bahia, May 2007

Dzodzi Tsikata, 12th Institute of Social Statistical and Economic Research (ISSER), Merchant Bank Lecture Series, 'Women and the Informal Economy: A Special Relationship?', Accra, June 2007

Dzodzi Tsikata, IDS-WIEGO Workshop on Labour Markets, Employment and Social Protection, presented a paper on 'Informal Economy, Precarious Employment and the Challenge of Social Protection in Ghana', workshop organised by Naila Kabeer, IDS, October 2007

Dzodzi Tsikata, ESRC Seminar on Gender, Work and Life, presented paper on 'The Informal Economy, Livelihood Insecurity and the Challenge of Voice', London, LSE, October 2007

Changing Narratives of Sexuality

Mulki Al-Sharmani, American Anthropological Association meeting, presented paper on Family Courts in Egypt, Washington DC, November 2007

Mulki Al-Sharmani, Network of Egyptian Women's Rights Groups, Cairo, December 2007

Mulki Al-Sharmani, Conceptual Workshop, organised by Sisters in Islam in collaboration with New Woman (an Egyptian women's rights group), December 2007

Firdous Azim and Seema Jahan, Sexuality and Rights Workshop, Realizing Rights

RPC, Dhaka, July 2007

Andrea Cornwall, Tessa Lewin and Samia Rahim, Politicising Masculinities: Beyond the Personal, IDS and HIV/AIDS Alliance, Dakar, October 2007

Terezinha Goncalves, Public Policies for Women, Regional Seminar of Sex Workers of the Northeast promoted by the Association of Sex Workers of Bahia, Salvador, May 2007

Perween Hasan and Charmaine Pereira, Feminism, Sexuality and the Return of Religion, Syracuse, April 2007

Susie Jolly, Dis/organised Pleasures conference of the International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society, Lima, Peru, May 2007

Susie Jolly, China Sexuality Research Conference at the People's University Sexuality Centre, China, May 2007

Charmaine Pereira, Gender, Sexuality and Politics research methodology seminar (co-facilitated by Charmaine), University of Cape Town, June and November 2007

Cecilia Sardenberg, Silvia Lucia Ferreira, Gilberta Soares, Marie Stopes Global Conference on Abortion, presented on panel on Experiences of Abortion Law Reform, London, October 2007

General

Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Support to Feminist and Gender Research in Africa, (presented concept paper), SIDA and CODESRIA, Dakar, June 2007

Balghis Badri, Celebration of the centennial of women's education in Sudan held by the Nahda Women's Association, Saudi Arabia, May 2007

CEGENSA, 2nd Curriculum Development Workshop, Ghana, May 2007

Heba Nasser, ESCWA Meeting, paper on 'MDGs with a special focus on youth and women in education and work', Jordan, April 2007

Charmaine Pereira and Irene Pogoson, Perspectives on Feminism and the Politics of Identity: Finding Common Ground, Summer School, (Irene was resource person and Charmaine made a presentation), Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, August/September 2007

Irene Pogoson, Gender in Organisation, Summer School organised by Ahfad University for Women and Humboldt University, March 2007

Cecilia Sardenberg, Meeting of Researchers from Maranhao on Gender, Women and Citizenship, keynote speaker on 'Feminisms, Science and Universities', Maranhao, March 2007

Cecilia Sardenberg, Delegates from the Federal Government to II CNPM (National Conference for Public Policy for Women), plenary presided over by Minister Nilceia Freire, Brasilia, August 2007

Cecilia Sardenberg, Meeting of the MEC Delegation to the II CNPM, presided over by the Director of the Secretariat for Continuing Education and Diversity, Brasilia, August 2007

Cecilia Sardenberg, Feminist Strategies in ICTs conference, New Delhi, October 2007

Hania Sholkamy, Gender in the Global South, AUC Law Dept and Cynthia Nelson Institute for Gender and Women's Studies, October 2007, Egypt

2. List of RPC Publications and Media Opportunities

Mulki Al Sharmani, 2007, ['Egypt's Family Courts: Route to Empowerment?'](#), openDemocracy article, 7 September

Mulki Al Sharmani, 2007, 'Egypt's Family Courts', paper presented to American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 28-30 November

Firdous Azim, 2007, panel discussion 'Women in the Media', Bangla TV Channel, RTV, January

Firdous Azim, 2007, ['Women and Religion in Bangladesh: New Paths'](#), openDemocracy article, 19 December

Srilatha Batliwala, 2007, ['Putting the Power Back into Empowerment'](#), openDemocracy article, 30 July

Andrea Cornwall, 2007, ['Pathways of Women's Empowerment'](#), openDemocracy article, 30 July

Andrea Cornwall, 2007, 'Conceptualising 'Gender': Insights for Development from African Studies', paper presented at AUC Workshop on Gender in Africa

Andrea Cornwall, 2007, 'Reclaiming the Radical Promise of the "Gender Agenda"', under review by *Development in Practice*

Andrea Cornwall, 2007, 'Revisiting Feminist Understandings of Empowerment', paper prepared for conference *Reclaiming Feminism: Gender and Neo-Liberalism*, IDS, July 2007

Ana Alice Costa, 2007, Various as a result of International Experiences of Affirmative Action Conference, including:

- National Radio of Amazonas
- Radio Brasilia
- TV Globo de Brasilia
- 40 minutes interview show for TV Senado
- Talk Show of TV Congress
- 4 Brasilia Newspapers

- Bahian Newspaper and TV for International Women's Day in March

Silvia de Aquino, 2007, Interview with Local Bahia TV Station about Maria da Penha Law, August

Rosalind Eyben, 2007, 'Conceptualising Policy Practices in Researching Pathways of Women's Empowerment', *Pathways RPC Working Paper 1*, Brighton: Pathways of Women's Empowerment

Silvia Lucia Ferreira, 2007, Interview to TV Educativa, 8 March; News Spot on TV Educativa; Participation in the Debate on Legalization of Abortion on TV Educativa, 25 August

Anne Marie Goetz and Celestine Nyamu Musembi, 2007, 'Voice and Women's Empowerment: Mapping a Research Agenda', *Pathways RPC Working Paper 2*, Brighton: Pathways of Women's Empowerment

Aisha Fofana Ibrahim, 2007, Article on the RPC for Sierra Leone National Newspaper

Aisha Fofana Ibrahim, 2007, 'Decentering a "Traditional" Classroom through War-Talk and/or Trauma', paper presented at the Feminist Pedagogy Conference, New York, 12 October

Naila Kabeer, 2007, '[Marriage, Motherhood and Masculinity in the Global Economy: Reconfiguration of Personal and Economic Life](#)', IDS Working Paper 209, Brighton: IDS

Naila Kabeer, 2008, '[Marriage, Motherhood and Masculinity in the Global Economy](#)', openDemocracy article, 29 January

Tessa Lewin, 2008, Pathways Article, *Gender and Development*, forthcoming July 2008

Takiwaa Manuh, 2007, '[African Women and Domestic Violence](#)', openDemocracy article, 26 November

Takiwaa Manuh, 2007, 'African Women and Domestic Violence', *Pambazuka News*, 28 November, <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/44706>

Maxine Molyneux, 2008, 'Conditional Cash Transfers: A Pathway to Women's Empowerment?', *IDS/Pathways Working Paper* (forthcoming)

Cecilia Sardenberg, 2007, '[The Right to Abortion: Briefing from Brazil](#)', openDemocracy article, 26 October

Cecilia Sardenberg, 2007, Various TV, Radio and Newspaper interviews, including iBahia and Correio da Bahia

Hania Sholkamy, 2007-8, Various as a result of Latin America-Egypt exchange on Conditional Cash Transfers, Cairo, Jan-Feb 2008, including mention in *The Economist*, and in Brazilian and Egyptian press.

Dzodzi Tsikata, 2007, 'The Politics and Practice of Gender Equity within the Rights Based Approaches: Some CSO Experiences in Ghana' paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, New York, 18-21 October

Dzodzi Tsikata and Rose Mensah-Kutin, 2007, Press Conference organised by the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana, The Coalition on Domestic Violence Legislation in Ghana and the Women's Manifesto Coalition to protest at the demolition of stalls and the destruction of goods of women market traders, 14 November

3. Other Related Publications by RPC Researchers

Akosua Adomako Ampofo, 2007, 'My Cocoa is Between my Legs: Globalization, Social Change and Sex as Work: Ghanaian Women in Accra, Kumasi and Abidjan', in Sharon Harley (ed.), *Women's Labor in the Global Economy: Speaking in Multiple Voices*, Rutgers University Press

Akosua Darkwah, 2007, 'Work as a Duty and as a Joy: Understanding the Role of Work in the Lives of Ghanaian Female Traders of Global Consumer Items', in Sharon Harley (ed.), *Women's Labor in the Global Economy: Speaking in Multiple Voices*, Rutgers University Press

Stephanie Barrientos, 2007, 'Female Employment in Agriculture: Global Challenges and Global Responses', in *Financing Gender Equality - Commonwealth Perspectives*, London: The Commonwealth Secretariat

Andrea Cornwall, 2007 'Addressing the Preconditions: Women's Rights and Development', in *Financing Gender Equality - Commonwealth Perspectives*, London: The Commonwealth Secretariat

Andrea Cornwall, 2007, 'Of choice, chance and contingency: 'Career strategies' and tactics for survival among Yoruba women traders', *Social Anthropology* 15(1):27-46

Andrea Cornwall, 2007, 'Buzzwords and Fuzzwords: Deconstructing Development Discourse', introduction to *Development in Practice* special issue, August 2007.

Andrea Cornwall, Sonia Correa and Susie Jolly, eds. *Development with a Body: Sexuality, Human Rights and Development*, Zed Press (in print)

Andrea Cornwall and Maxine Molyneux, eds. *The Politics of Rights: Dilemmas for Feminist Praxis*, Routledge, January 2008

Islah Jad, 2007, 'NGOs between Buzzwords and Social Movements, *Development in Practice*, 17(4&5): 622-629.

Islah Jad, 'Palestinian Women's Movements: From Active Militants to Stateless Citizens', in 'Crossing Boundaries: New Perspectives on the Middle East', *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, <http://web.mit.edu/cis/www/mitejmes/> (forthcoming)

Naila Kabeer, 2008, 'Gender, Labour Markets and Poverty: An Overview', in *Poverty in Focus: Gender Equality*, January, No 13

Takyiwaa Manuh, Sulley Gariba and Joseph Budu, 2007, *Change and Transformation in Ghana's Publicly Funded Universities A Study of Experiences, Lessons and Opportunities*, London: James Currey Publishers

Charmaine Pereira, 2007, *Gender in The Making of The Nigerian University System*, London: James Currey Publishers

Hania Sholkamy, 2007, 'Welfare and Civil Society Organisations', in *The Egypt Human Development Report 2007*, UNDP

Dzodzi Tsikata, 2007, 'Informal Economy, Precarious Employment and the Challenge of Social Protection in Ghana', IDS-WIEGO Workshop on Labour Markets, Employment and Social Protection, Brighton, 22-24 October