



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK

# A Gender Perspective on the use of Public-Private Partnerships in Transnational Development Cooperation

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CASE STUDY OF THE GERMAN CORPORATION FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION GMBH

## **Master Thesis**

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“There is no great force for change,  
for peace, for justice and democracy, for inclusive economic growth  
than a world of empowered women.”

*Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka – Executive Director of UN Women*

## ABSTRACT

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With growing global challenges, transnational development cooperation needs to get creative in its approaches. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals act as normative guide to work towards a more just world. The final goal – number 17 – stresses the importance of partnerships to reach sustainable development. Partnering up with the private sector allows governments to make use of resources and know-how available in the economy while fostering financial contributions and partly outsourcing risk as well as responsibilities. In the development cooperation sector, a specific format has been enjoying great popularity: public-private partnerships (PPPs). At the same time, it has long been known that including women in economics has a powerful boosting effect to global growth. Hence, it is crucial to design such partnerships gender inclusive to harness their full potential.

While PPPs have been explored manifold in academia and policy writing, there is a lack of literature on national approaches to private sector cooperation in development cooperation. National approaches often add a layer of domestic political interest for diplomatic relations to the mix. Diving into one specific case study – namely the German Corporation of Development Cooperation (GIZ), gives the opportunity to explore how German development cooperation includes the private sector in their approach to development cooperation, how PPPs are understood and implemented, and what role gender plays in this context. To examine PPPs, the GIZ's program 'develoPPP.de' [sic] is inspected.

The case study is conducted with a multi-layered literature analysis. It examines official documents by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and GIZ on the topic. The chosen documents consist of strategy papers, promotion brochures and project reports. The analysis is conducted through a coding of the texts, using two sets of codes – one about PPPs and one about gender equality – which are developed within the framework of this thesis.

The research finds that the German approach to PPPs is misleading, as it essentially disguises a different form of private-sector cooperation as PPPs. The develoPPP.de project facilitates projects that differ significantly from the World Bank definition of PPPs. Additionally, the thesis finds an extensive and exemplary strategic approach to gender equality within GIZ. However, a lack of transparency regarding project data on gender equality hinders an in-depth analysis of its implementation.

**Note:** This thesis was not written in collaboration with the German Corporation for International Collaboration GmbH (GIZ). Although the researcher was previously associated with GIZ, this thesis does not make use of internal knowledge or documentation that is not accessible to the public.

This thesis has not undergone the review accorded to official GIZ publications. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author and do not reflect the views of the GIZ and its affiliated organizations, or those of the Executive Directors of GIZ.

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**Disclaimer:** The author of this thesis is committed to the use of gender-inclusive language. However, it is also a priority to maintain readability of this thesis. The author will thus make use of the pronoun “they” with a singular antecedent instead of the third person pronouns she and he.

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## ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

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AWE	German Agency for Economy and Development ( <i>from German: Agentur für Wirtschaft und Entwicklung</i> )
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BRICS	informal group of states comprising the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa
DAC	Development Assistance Committee ( <i>OECD body</i> )
develoPPP.de	Private sector cooperation project commissioned by the BMZ
DEG	German Investment Corporation ( <i>from German: Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft, subsidiary of KfW</i> )
DEval	German Institute for Development Evaluation
E4D	employment for development program
EPW	sector development partnerships ( <i>from German: Entwicklungspartnerschaften mit der Wirtschaft</i> )
EU	European Union
G20	Group of Twenty ( <i>consultation forum between Heads of State, finance ministers and central bank governors of the world's twenty major economies</i> )
G7	Group of Seven ( <i>intergovernmental organization consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States</i> )
GAD	Gender and Development ( <i>theory</i> )
GDP	gross domestic product
GI Hub	Global Infrastructure Hub
GIZ	German Corporation for Development Cooperation
GNI	gross national income
IATF	Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing For Development
(I)NGO	(international) non-governmental organization
IO	International Organization
IR	International Relations
KfW	German state-owned development bank ( <i>from German: Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau</i> )
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MDG	Millennium Development Goal ( <i>UN resolution</i> )
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPIAF	Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility ( <i>World Bank body</i> )

## Abbreviations & Acronyms

PPP	Public-Private Partnership
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals ( <i>UN resolution</i> )
SME	small and medium-sized enterprises
TNA	Transnational non-state actor
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
WSSD	World Summit for Sustainable Development ( <i>Johannesburg, 2002</i> )
ZmW	Private-sector cooperation ( <i>from German: Zusammenarbeit mit der Wirtschaft</i> )

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# 1 INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM FORMULATION

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## 1.1 Background

With the introduction of the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016, the global community set out on an ambitious project of changing the world to a less dangerous, more just, and more sustainable place (United Nations, 2015). With goals permeating every aspect of our lives, from clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), over quality education (SDG 4), to sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) and cross-cutting challenges such as climate change (SDGs 1, 2, 5, 10, 13, 14, 15), famines (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10), or hate and inequalities (SDGs 4, 5, 8, 10, 16), the global community is facing an uphill battle. 17 goals, 169 targets, 531 indicators set the norms for political and private actions around the globe – until 2030. Realising the objectives of an extensive approach for global development like the SDGs, requires global collective action (Paulo, 2014). Due to historically grown imbalances in development, international development cooperation plays an integral role in fulfilling the SDGs. The idea of international development cooperation reaches far beyond the humanitarian concept of crisis response and support in emergency situations only (Barnett, 2013). However, norms are said to not travel well and tend to be reinterpreted to one's individual liking and needs. Hence, SDGs too, are applied differently, depending on the implementing actor, while still adhering to the basic rules' framework.

SDG 9 treats industry, innovation, and infrastructure. The availability of infrastructure plays a crucial role in global economic and social development (SDG 9, United Nations, 2015). As the means to an end, infrastructure provides the resources needed to promote prosperity and development in a society, adding to the overall quality of life by virtue of improving the social wellbeing of communities and their surroundings. Conversely, without proper infrastructure, public good and service delivery is significantly constraint, resulting in a lack of access to proper sanitation, safe drinking water, electricity, or proper roads, and thus severely impacting local communities (GIZ, 2011b; OECD, 2007; World Bank Group, 2020a). With global economic growth and technological advances as well as climate change and urbanization as driving factors, demands for infrastructure are set to be ever growing, thus widening the already prominent infrastructure gap between supply and demand (OECD, 2007). According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), needed infrastructure investments will amount to 3.5% of world gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030. In similar veins, the Global Infrastructure Hub (GI Hub, 2021) projects a \$18 trillion infrastructure investment gap by 2040. The infrastructure spending gap varies geographically, but the consequences are equally severe across the globe (George, Kaldany, & Losavio, 2019). The UN's Addis Ababa Action Agenda (Addis Agenda) delineates the need for international cooperation for infrastructure financing “especially in the poorest and most vulnerable countries with limited domestic resources” (United Nations Department of

Economic and Social Affairs, UNDESA, 2015, p. 26), thus calling on the international development cooperation community.

To bridge this glaring financing gap, resources outside of the public sector must be mobilized. Partnering up with the private sector allows governments to make use of resources and know-how available in the economy while fostering financial contributions and partly outsourcing risk as well as responsibilities. The trend over the past years has shown a decline in government's infrastructure investment, while the share of the private sector has steadily increased (OECD, 2007). One model of fostering private investments in infrastructure are so-called public-private partnerships (PPPs). PPPs have been implemented in multilateral cooperation since the late 1990s (Bull & McNeill, 2019) but have been given international attention first at the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) and later even more extensively by the Addis Agenda (P. H. Pattberg et al., 2012b; UNDESA, 2015). While there is no single universally valid definition of PPPs, the World Bank (2020a) defines them as "a long-term contract between a private party and a government entity, for providing a public asset or service, in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibility and remuneration is linked to performance."

It has long been known that including women in economics has a powerful boosting effect to global growth (Prügl & True, 2014). While feminism has penetrated the multilateral business world with campaigns like Nikes 'Girl Effect' (Nike News, 2015), gender equality in the private sector is continuing to lag significantly, with men still dominating power positions, creating a global gender gap (Prügl & True, 2014). The same is naturally true for public-private partnerships. To ensure gender-fair partnerships, the gender aspect needs to be considered threefold in relation with PPPs: Firstly, there is a need to include the gender equality conversation during the procurement and tendering processes of such projects, thus including women-led businesses or businesses with gender-parity as contractual partners. Secondly, the infrastructure needs specific to women need to be considered in the design and execution of PPPs. Thirdly, we need PPPs specifically targeted towards women. Including women in the economy does not only have the previously mentioned positive effect on the global economy but it also has a possible tangible effect on local communities. By improving women's economic status and their visibility through inclusion in PPPs, power-mechanisms are set into motion that contribute to the change of societal norms (Prügl & True, 2014). Thus, looking at PPPs from a gender perspective gives the opportunity to close two gaps with one approach: the infrastructure gap and the gender gap.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

There have been many policy recommendations written by international institutions like the United Nations or the World Bank Group on how PPPs should be planned and executed, including recommendations on gender. However, in scholarly literature, there is a lack of examinations of actual PPPs on a gender basis. Most literature covering PPPs, disregarding of the perspective taken, approach

the topic quantitatively. Not only is there a scarcity of reliable data which makes this endeavour difficult, but the qualitative approach is only apt for a look at crosscutting patterns and regards the individuality of single cases. What is still missing on the scholarly landscape, are examinations of national strategies. Taking a deeper look into one specific case study – namely the German Corporation of Development Cooperation (GIZ), gives the opportunity to explore how the German development cooperation applies includes the private sector in their approach to development cooperation, how PPPs are understood and implemented, and what role gender plays in this context.

This thesis asks:

- (1) How are PPPs applied in German development cooperation?
  - a. Who are the partners?
  - b. What objectives do the partnerships have?
  - c. With which operational mechanisms are they implemented?

Particularly, this thesis seeks to better understand how women are included in the processes and frameworks of public-private partnerships in German multilateral development cooperation. Thus, this thesis asks a second research question:

- (2) What role does gender equality and specifically women play in PPPs facilitated by the GIZ?

This thesis contributes to SDGs 5, 9, and 17.

### 1.3 Conceptual Framework

#### 1.3.1 The Methodology

The presented thesis explores several layers of questions and thus applies a multi-layered approach. The German approach to private sector cooperation is examined by means of document analysis of official documents by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and GIZ on the topic. To examine the PPPs, the researcher orients themselves on the nine success factors for PPPs introduced by P. Pattberg and Widerberg (2016) and the categorization of PPP's objectives by Bull and McNeill (2019). The gender analysis will be guided by four criteria following the example of Prügl and True (2014) who drew their methodology from the field of feminist research, policy evaluation and global governance studies. This being a qualitative study provides a unique opportunity in deep diving into the mechanisms and workings of PPPs in the context of German development cooperation. By means of a case study, the underlying concepts and key factors that might not be apparent immediately will be carefully uncovered, in a reflective and interpretivist manner.

### 1.3.2 The Case of German Development Cooperation

GIZ is the main implementation agency in German national development cooperation, with most of the commissions coming directly from BMZ. With over 50 years of experience in the field of transnational development cooperation, GIZ offers services in economic development, employment promotion, sustainable development, energy and environment, peace and security, and education. Working closely with civil society organizations, businesses, and research institutions, GIZ implements projects in ca. 120 countries. Under the heading *Zusammenarbeit mit der Wirtschaft* (ZmW, private sector cooperation), GIZ fosters, advises, and implements projects in collaboration with partners from the German and European private sectors. The largest and most long-term project within this framework is 'develoPPP.de', which was founded in 1999 under the BMZ's PPP program. The develoPPP.de [sic] project is jointly conducted between GIZ and the *German Investment Corporation* (DEG), whereas GIZ is responsible for technical consulting and implementation and DEG is responsible for funding.

For full transparency, it should be disclaimed that previous to writing this thesis, the researcher was affiliated with the GIZ as an intern. However, this thesis is not written in collaboration with GIZ. The researcher rather took the internship as an entryway into the topic and let themselves be instilled by the broad range of topics covered by (German) development cooperation. Hence, while the choice of topic for the research project is certainly inspired by this previous affiliation, the content is independent of it.

### 1.3.3 Scope of the Study

Firstly, this thesis will turn to previous works of scholars that have paved the way with literature on public-private partnerships, international development cooperation and gender aspects in both domains. The same chapter will also provide a brief overview of significant reports and policy recommendations by international and multilateral agencies concerning above topics. Then follows the establishing of key theories of constructivism, dependency theory and multilateralism, to build a decent understanding of the development cooperation system internationally and in Germany. Deep diving into the infrastructure gap and theories on how to fill it, the chapter lays out the approach of including the private sector in development cooperation. Moving on, a theoretical understanding of gender and feminist theories is built and then applied to the development sector and PPPs. Then, after building of a methodological framework for the case study, the researcher moves on to analyse the German approach to private sector cooperation in development cooperation, examine the PPP framework as it is executed at the GIZ first generally and then from a gender perspective. Finally, eleven exemplary projects from the GIZ's own develoPPP.de program are analysed. After extensively discussing the findings, recommendations for future research are given in the concluding chapter of this thesis.



## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

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The field of development cooperation is a highly complex one, united by the common goal to reach an equitable, sustainable, inclusive future for all. Academic research in development cooperation and more specific studies about PPPs are as diverse as the field itself. Thus, the review of literature must follow a rigid system in order to make sure to stay within the scope of this thesis. In the following, a rather short look will be taken at the general field of development literature, establishing the need for a new approach to international development cooperation. The remainder of this chapter is then divided into two parts: Before diving into academic literature on PPPs and gender, a brief overview will be offered over the most important policy recommendations and reports by notable international institutions. Establishing the ‘state of the art’ within this chapter will place this research within the field of development and demonstrate how the examination of national approaches to both, PPPs generally and gender inclusive approaches to development cooperation are lacking.

### 2.1 A new Approach to International Development Cooperation

In an extensive exploration of the changing dynamics of development cooperation, Gu and Kitano (2018) discuss the future of international development cooperation, considering economic, as well as political circumstances. They argue that the traditional understanding of development cooperation is outdated and does not adequately address bottlenecks in emerging market economies. Adopting a new understanding of development cooperation will result in an inclusive, innovative, and equitable sustainable growth. They point out four important developments that shape development cooperation: (1) an increase in actors, especially ‘emerging donors’, (2) the diversification of finance, (3) changing policies and laws, and (4) shared knowledge and best practices for development. By understanding development cooperation as an interactive process with dynamic relationships, they argue, it is possible to face new and emerging challenges in the field. Gu and Kitano (2018) point out a lack of research on individual BRICS<sup>a</sup> countries’ approaches to development cooperation, which seem to differ from that of Western<sup>b</sup> donors. However, they also raise the point that this dichotomy between ‘emerging donors’ and ‘traditional (Western) donors’ paints a static picture of development cooperation and diverts from the dichotomy between donor and recipient of development cooperation. This also points to a much deeper problem of a perceived superiority of ‘traditional donors’ over ‘emerging donors’, both in research and in practice. Pointing out apparent tensions between the universalization of development cooperation through frameworks by international organizations on the one hand and the

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<sup>a</sup> informal group of states comprising the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People’s Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa

<sup>b</sup> Following the definition of Oxford English Dictionary (2021b): Europe, North America, and other (often relatively wealthy) countries with populations of mainly European ancestry; the culture and civilization of these regions; including Australia and New Zealand

importance of geographic variation, considering regional differences, on the other hand, Horner (2020) considers the framing of international development as increasingly ill-fitting. They point out the contemporary challenges of the sector: (1) interconnected global capitalism, (2) sustainability as universal challenge, and (3) the changing geographical power-dynamics. With changing geographies and globalization of development, they suggest a paradigm shift towards global development rather than international development, emphasizing the collective nature of the challenges that must be faced, while still regarding local differences.

As it will become apparent throughout this chapter, case studies are a favoured approach to research in the field of international development cooperation. Gu, Chua, and Trebs (2020) examine the new approaches to development cooperation processes on the examples of Sri Lanka and Kenya. They present the cases of Sri Lanka and Kenya, each in trilateral development cooperation with China and the UK, as complex, since all countries involved bring different interests to the table. While finding mainly results specific to the individual countries, they draw generalizable findings from their case studies: (1) the importance country- and case-specific development cooperation, (2) the importance of agency for all stakeholders, (3) the need for technical support, and lastly (4) the need for institutions that build and manage partnerships. With these findings, they are in line with what Gu and Kitano (2018) and Horner (2020) argue: Development cooperation is in dire need for new approaches and a more globalized perception.

## 2.2 Overview of Reports and Policy Recommendations

Under the headline “Financing for Development” (UNDESA, 2015) the United Nations’ member states agreed to a broad range of actions within the Addis Agenda (2015) to close the infrastructure gap, especially in developing countries, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states. An emphasis is herein put on so-called blended finance instruments, including PPPs and on the commitment to achieve gender equality through empowerment of women and girls to enable their full participation in the economy. With regards to PPPs, the member states committed to capacity building and transparency in the process, as well as global knowledge sharing of lessons learned, especially calling on the international development cooperation stakeholders (UNDESA, 2015). To ensure ongoing progress on these matters, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing For Development (IATF) was set up, facilitating the annual meeting of the Global Infrastructure Forum and transparent reporting and knowledge management, by hosting courses and providing reference guides on PPPs amongst other initiatives (IATF, 2016).

With close ties to the United Nations, The World Bank Group plays an important role in the closing of the infrastructure gap, as multilateral financing institution without geographic ties. With their Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility (PPIAF), a trust fund was established that specifically concentrates on all issues surrounding PPPs. The World Bank (2017) and the PPIAF brought together

actors from the biggest development banks, including the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank; and the Islamic Development Bank. Together, they indited an extensive reference guide on PPPs, providing a knowledge tool to guide stakeholders throughout the whole PPP process, from its definition, over financing, legalities, management, responsibilities, governance and contracts. The World Bank and the PPIAF have also published a primer on gender equality and PPPs, providing an extensive overview on the gender-specific issues regarding PPPs (The World Bank, 2019). It provides a conceptual framework for the integration of infrastructure in helping to close the gender gap and introduces a PPP Project Developer tool as well as sample Codes of Conduct for gender-sensitive Indicators in infrastructure PPPs (The World Bank, 2019).

The GI Hub, a Group of Twenty (G20)<sup>c</sup> initiative, has developed a Reference Tool (2019) that summarizes lessons learned and translates them into a framework for inclusive infrastructure. In this tool, which is primarily aimed at governments, eight case studies are presented, and their practices are discussed, five of which are specifically targeted towards women and girls. The Reference tool details six specific action areas for inclusive infrastructure: (1) stakeholder identification, engagement and empowerment, (2) governance and capacity building, (3) policy, regulations, and standards, (4) project planning, development, and delivery, (5) private sector roles and participation, and (6) affordability and optimising finance (GI Hub, 2019).

## 2.3 Examination of the Academic Literature

### 2.3.1 Imbalanced Approaches to PPPs

The realm of public-private partnerships suffer no less from an approach of Western superiority, both in research and in project implementation, than the overarching field of development cooperation, as established by Gu and Kitano (2018) and Horner (2020). The following pieces of research demonstrate this tilt perspective on the issue. In an extensive review of studies on the critical success factors of PPPs from 1990 to 2013, Osei-Kyei and Chan (2015) find that most research was done in Hong Kong, the UK, Australia, Singapore, China and the US, while there are considerably lower numbers of publications on the topic from developing countries. Combined with the finding that research topics have shifted from a country-specific approach to an international approach, this points to an unequal tilt in the implementation of PPPs to developed countries. Bull and McNeill (2019) examine the current PPP landscape, scouring through 3.964 PPPs which were registered in the SDG Partnership Platform at the time of their research. They find strong differences in conduct, backgrounds of stakeholders, and approaches to capitalism. According to their analysis, the field of PPPs is still

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<sup>c</sup> Consultation forum between Heads of State, finance ministers and central bank governors of the world's twenty major economies

dominated by Western actors even though partnerships with emerging and developing economies are ever increasing, which supports Osei-Kyei and Chan (2015) point further. They conclude that most PPPs are still conducted domestically instead of multilaterally, suggesting the term 'market multilateralism' to be obsolete. They also come to the conclusion that the form of partnerships highly depends on the form of capitalism the actors engage in, posing the question of motivation for stakeholders to engage in PPPs. Bull and McNeill (2019) suggest the main motivator for the private side of PPPs to be company reputation.

Gideon and Unterhalter (2017) point to another kind of imbalance in the realm of public-private partnerships: They critique the PPP practice on the basis of opposing interests between public and private sector that might lead to a skewing of the PPPs towards benefitting large corporations instead of disadvantaged communities. On the examples of the health sector and the education sector, they point out considerable divergences between communicated outcomes of PPPs and measurable impact. The frustration is especially with the seeming unwillingness to learn from critiques on the side of international development cooperation entities even though there is little academic support for their success claims. They suggest better assessment of PPPs as a development cooperation tool and an evaluation of PPP's impacts within their sectors and beyond. Along the same lines, Miraftab (2004) critically examines the equity dimension of PPPs in their paper and highlight conceptual flaws in the PPP approach that can be exploited toward a privatization of infrastructure services. Painting a picture of PPPs as "a form of privatization under neoliberal policies of decentralization" (Miraftab, 2004, p. 98), they point out the power-imbalance in between the individual stakeholders and the consequences of actors following differing interests. Even though PPPs tend to be seen as an ease of burden for governments by means of shared responsibilities with the private sector, Miraftab (2004) point to the importance of strong regulation on the part of the public sector. Two elements are put forth as critical for an equitable PPP process: (1) paying attention to local socio-political circumstances, and (2) involving civil society and especially disadvantaged communities in the process.

### **2.3.2 Looking at Recipients and Donors**

Although the term development cooperation suggests a mutual effort, the dichotomy between donors and recipients is still present in research and practice of PPPs. The following case studies examine precisely this duality and the inherent power mechanisms. Khaderi, Abd Shukor, Bakri, and Mahbub (2019) take a close look at the tendering process of PPPs in Malaysia. By means of a literature analysis they determine major problems in the complexity of the process and hereby point to a problem that PPPs globally face: the requirement for extensive planning, negotiations, and documentation throughout the different stages of PPPs. By comparing the tendering processes between Malaysia and the UK, they find major differences in the national approaches to the implementation processes of PPPs and suggest a standardization of the PPP process (Khaderi et al., 2019). Houdret, Büntrup, and Scheumann (2020) come to an opposing conclusion in their exploration of PPPs for irrigation projects

in Zambia and Morocco: While they also point out the necessity for support in comprehensive design, monitoring, and capacity development, they emphasize the importance of “country- and site-specific solutions” (Houdret et al., 2020, p. 20). Kaplan, Herforth, and Büntrup-Seidemann (2019) examine the German approach to private-sector involvement in development cooperation in the agriculture sector. While agriculture is not an infrastructure service, the cooperation they examine are not technically PPPs. However, they conclude that their findings are equally applicable to infrastructure projects. The paper rises the issue of inadequate impact monitoring and evaluation practices resulting in a lack of reliable measurements of benefits and drawbacks of this mode of cooperation. They especially point out the danger of unintended consequences such as human rights breaches if not monitored closely. To reach the ultimate goal of development cooperation – namely to reduce poverty by benefitting the most disadvantaged – development cooperation is tasked to provide an equal playing field for the private sector, where all stakeholders can meet each other on equal footing.

### **2.3.3 The Role of Gender in PPPs**

Approaches to gender equality are as manifold as there are PPPs. These approaches are mostly examined in case studies as these provide the means to apply a gendered lens to individual projects. Prügl and True (2014) examine four transnational PPP initiatives that integrate gender equality, applying feminist evaluation criteria and evaluating their processes as well as their effects. The four initiatives analysed differ in the kinds of stakeholders, in their purposes and methods applied. As they are trying to “provide a conceptual understanding of them from a feminist political economy perspective that is informed by democratic and feminist ethical criteria” (Prügl & True, 2014, p. 1155), they come to rather ambiguous conclusions, identifying the individuality of each program and pointing out the complexity of the investigated topic. Thus, a more targeted approach to the topic is suggested.

The field of research on gender in PPPs can be divided into different areas of infrastructure services, the most prominent being the health sector. Hawkes, Buse, and Kapilashrami (2017) investigate PPPs in the health sector for gender blindness, establishing the importance of the gender in health issues and identifying 18 PPPs in the field, conducting a gender analysis for each. Their methodology relies on the review of publicly available documents. They find that half of the PPPs examined do not even mention gender in their strategy at all and only three of the PPPs have a gender strategy. They propose gender mainstreaming in health PPPs to ensure accountability specifically point out the lack of attention, that is given to non-communicable diseases. While Hawkes et al. (2017) explored the whole health sector, Gideon, Hunter, and Murray (2017) dive into gendered health systems. They develop a framework to approach PPPs in the healthcare sector from a gender lens, stipulating a general lack of research on the topic. They find that PPPs with a gender approach in the health sector tend to be focussed only on issues related to reproduction. In their approaches these PPPs generally tend to neglect questions about gender equality and fail to address the gendered norms deeply embedded in the sector completely. As it is not only important to carry out projects geared towards women, but also

to include women's voices in the implementation of projects, Storeng and Bengy Puyvallée (2018) analyse the 18 biggest global PPPs for health on their involvement of civil-society, including women's cooperatives, as one possible solution for including the voices of the affected communities in the PPP process. They find, however, largely varying levels of involvement of civil society. Especially formal representation relative to other stakeholders on boards and in decision-making bodies are notably low. Additionally, a lack of transparency in the appointment of civil society representatives is criticized.

Another infrastructure sector receiving academic attention is women's empowerment through girl's education. Fennell (2014) analyses PPPs in the education sector in India and Pakistan, looking specifically at their contribution to reducing the gender gap. They allude a failure of translating gender equality efforts from schooling into employment opportunities, thus lacking a long-term effect on affected girls and women. Along the same lines, Unterhalter (2017) shows how PPPs in the education sector put forth girls education only one-dimensionally, not concerned with further-reaching gender equality questions. Analysing articles on PPPs concerned with girls education in developing countries, they discuss whether PPPs set a framework for in-depth exploration of gender-equality issues. While they ascertain that it is impossible to judge impacts of a programme without taking into account the views of the people affected, they stipulate that much more investigation of PPPs effects on gender equality needs to be conducted.

Lastly, in all contemporary studies of gender, intersectionality has to be addressed. In their analysis of a 'best-practice' land investment PPP in Ghana, Lanz, Prügl, and Gerber (2020) point at the complete disregard of an intersectional approach to gendered power relations. In semi-structured interviews with affected women, they uncover that the commitment to gender equality is more an attractive buzzword rhetoric than a delivery promise. They criticize the PPPs reduction of equality to numbers leading to an exacerbation of already-existing inequalities.

## 2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has demonstrated the vastness of the field of research on international development and in particular public-private partnerships as one of its many tools. However, some common themes were found. The field of international development cooperation is ever changing along with significant global and local changes. In recent years, the most notable changes have been an increase in stakeholders, especially so-called 'emerging donors', and the diversification of finance. However, practices and research are still dominated by traditional approaches to development cooperation and its implicit Western superiority. Scholars suggest an overdue change of paradigms from international development to global development, emphasizing the universal nature of the challenges that must be faced collectively (Gu & Kitano, 2018; Horner, 2020).

The perceived Western superiority is also apparent in PPPs, both in research and implementation (Bull & McNeill, 2019; Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2015). Another imbalance, specific to PPPs is the dichotomy of opposing interests between the public and private stakeholders (Gideon & Unterhalter, 2017). A flaw in PPPs that is repeatedly pointed out, is the general lack of research on them and thus a lack of academic support for their success claims. While some call for a standardization of the PPP process, others emphasize the need for site-specific approaches. However, all agree that there is a need for extensive monitoring and evaluation for better understanding of PPPs impacts (Gideon & Unterhalter, 2017; Houdret, Büntrup, & Scheumann, 2020; Kaplan, Herforth, & Büntrup-Seidemann, 2019).

The scarce research on gender in the field of PPPs accuses the studied cases of shallow, one-dimensional, and short-sighted approaches to gender equality, some being completely blind to gender. It is suggested that for many, gender equality is used more as a buzzword rhetoric to foster reputation than as a genuine prospect (Fennell, 2014; Hawkes, Buse, & Kapilashrami, 2017; Lanz, Prügl, & Gerber, 2020; Prügl & True, 2014; Unterhalter, 2017). Committed to capacity building and transparency, international organizations like the United Nations, The World Bank Group and the GI Hub provide important knowledge tools for stakeholders. Laying frameworks as orientation for the conduct of PPPs, these guides also include gender-specific approaches to PPPs (GI Hub, 2019; The World Bank, 2017, 2019; UNDESA, 2015). To sum up, the challenges presented in academic literature can be summarized into three dichotomies: (1) traditional donors and international development vs. emerging donors and global development, (2) donors' intent vs. recipient's needs, and (3) public vs. private interests.

### 3 THEORY

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To come to a true understanding of things, it is crucial to be aware of paradigms within which an understanding is built (Maxwell, 2009). This chapter essentially serves as the foundation upon which the analysis is built. To exploit this handy metaphor further, the foundation needs to be solid and leakage-proof, otherwise the structure will collapse, even if built with the best tools. As this study is of interdisciplinary nature, the theory built in this chapter draws from different strands of research. All of these strands contribute to inform the understanding and theorization about their individual topics, which are: (1) global development cooperation, (2) the infrastructure gap and how to fill it, (3) Germany's development cooperation, and (4) gender equality in the development context.

Good infrastructure, including water and sanitation, energy, and transportation, which is manifested in SDG 9, serves as a cross-cutting prerequisite for most other SDGs to be achieved. At the same time, SDG 5, gender equality, is strongly intertwined with all other SDGs, too. A means to achieve these goals is formulated in the last goal: SDG 17 'partnerships for the goals', promoting partnerships between development sector actors to reach the SDGs (United Nations, 2015). The overlap of these three SDGs serves as the main theme guiding this chapter and overall thesis.

As a foundation for dependency theory, which essentially describes the power relationships between developed, developing, and under-developed countries, a constructivist perspective on global power relations is introduced first. The following break-down of the highly complex global development system helps to better understand Germany's role within this system. Moving on, an explanation of the afore-mentioned infrastructure gap is compiled and the motives behind PPPs as one possible solution for this gap will be explored. Finally, an understanding of gender and the relationship between feminism and the development sector is built, before scrutinizing the implications gender perspectives have on PPPs.

#### 3.1 Global Development

The closely connected fields of international relations (IR) and global development cannot be understood as coherent academic disciplines. Instead, they are both vastly interdisciplinary, drawing from an array of epistemological approaches (Maxfield, 2008). Development theory, however, has evolved around two continual themes: Interaction between international circumstances and political interests, and the appropriate role of the state. At the same time, the field of global development is rather torn between policy-oriented practitioners and innovation-oriented theorists (Maxfield, 2008). Throughout the intellectual history of the field, four main theories have emerged: (1) development economics, (2) modernization theory and its counterpart (3) dependency theory, and lastly (4)



neoclassicism. To understand these interactions studied by development theorists, one has to take a step back first, and look at the overarching parent-theories.

### **3.1.1 A Constructivist Perspective on Global Power Relations**

Through the lens of constructivist theory, we understand international relations as socially and historically constructed rather than consequences of an underlying unchangeable truth of the world (Omelycheva, 2011). Constructivists understand interaction as the main factor through which meaning and collective understanding is created (Wendt, 1999). Thus, the relationship between individuals, states, and other actors is reciprocally influencing and shaping the other through interaction. Constructivists believe that knowledge is socially constructed and so is social reality. Thus, knowledge is both a scientific resource, that serves to interpret social reality, and a collective resource, that serves to construct social reality. (Adler, 2008). This ongoing process of interaction and constant reproduction of subjective meanings creates objective social facts over time. While other political theories see social and political realities as much more static, the constructivist approach allows for change in behaviours, goals, structures, and strategies of states due to their perpetual creation of new meaning through ongoing interactions (Wendt, 1999). The constructivist understanding of reality implies the absence of a perfect correlation between 'hard facts' and our perceived 'social facts' that emerge from interaction between the world, subjective knowledge and intersubjective understandings (Adler, 2008). Thus, constructivist theorists acknowledge that the social facts studied by their discipline differ fundamentally from the 'hard facts' of natural scientists, since social facts depend on interpretation (Searle, 2010). In this understanding, the interpreting individual's context and background has to be taken into account, since intersubjective understandings depend highly on them (Adler, 2008). Essentially, constructivism is more occupied with understanding past and present realities than with predicting the future (Adler, 2008).

Different actors of world politics show a reciprocity in their relationships among each other. It appears, that all influence is always exerted in both directions. In this process, norms are constructed and through several stages of construction, from denial to adoption and from local to global, finally become defining features of either actor's identities (Omelycheva, 2011). In fact, norms are an essential subject within constructivist theory. A present example for norm adoption is the global Agenda 2030 with the Sustainable Development Goals as a formulation of norms that representatives of the global community have agreed upon. However, the implementation of such norms is highly dependent on the properties of the implementing political system, including governing bodies and civil society (Omelycheva, 2011).

### **3.1.2 Multilateralism**

The concept of multilateralism is an essential value of the development system and thus at the core of this thesis. It refers to interstate behaviour that is guided by norms and rules which were collectively agreed upon and ratified by three or more states (Hampson & Heinbecker, 2011; Ruggie,

1992). John Ruggie (1992), one of the pioneers of constructivism, writes that multilateralism is based on two generalized principles of conduct: indivisibility and reciprocity. As an 'ism', multilateralism assumes the form of an ideology, which is based on the basis of interstate cooperation (Caporaso, 1992).

The interstate system is commonly divided into three elementary domains: international orders, regimes, and organizations (Ruggie, 1992). Established after the devastation of World War II and the Great Depression, international organizations (IOs) became the institutional manifestation of multilateralism. These institutions apply different extents of multilateralism, from a 'minilateralist' approach of exclusive Group of Seven (G7) or G20, to a universal approach of the UN General Assembly (Hampson & Heinbecker, 2011). On the one hand, multilateral institutions tend to aim at stabilizing the world order and its transformation by means of coordinating and resolving international problems with as many actors as possible (Ruggie, 1992). On the other hand, research has shown that it is generally easier to generate consensus in smaller groups, which holds true for the minilateralist approach (in most cases) (Hampson & Heinbecker, 2011). Generally, multilateralism demands participants to abstain from immediate or situational national interests for the long-term 'greater good' (Caporaso, 1992). However, individualistic and strategic approaches of members in multilateral institutions cannot be obliterated (Caporaso, 1992). The imbalance and perceived disempowerment of developing countries, created by the multilateral system, can be best explained through dependency theory.

### 3.1.3 Dependency Theory & Paternalism

To understand dependency theory, it is best to contrast it with the counterpart out of which it developed: modernization theory. Contrary to dependency theory, modernization theory sees a linear process that is irreversibly pushing towards economic growth in the sense of the Western model, and democratization. The ultimate goal of development is understood to be the complete adoption of Western values, such as urbanization, rule of law, rigid political structures, flexible social structures, and economic diversification (Walker, 2011). This notion essentially represents the West as 'end of history' and the only desirable future (Barnett, 2013). The failure to adopt these values and to develop 'properly' is seen as self-inflicted and not connected to external influences. Dependency theorists are fundamentally opposed to these notions of self-infliction and of Western values as the only desirable goal (Walker, 2011). Contradictory to the Eurocentric approach, dependency theory emphasizes the interdependency of societies and their development and argues that the global South<sup>d</sup> has had a very different experience than the Western states (Maxfield, 2008). International markets and non-state actors are emphasized as important political actors by the proponents of dependency theory, so-called '*dependentistas*'. Especially patterns of interaction between international markets and domestic

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<sup>d</sup> Following the definition of Cambridge Dictionary (2021): the group of countries that are in Africa, Latin America, and the developing parts of Asia

economies are studied as well as the governments' dependency on these circumstances. The main argument is that there is little to no national choice in the international system (Maxfield, 2008).

Underdevelopment is generally seen as a security threat by the global community, since it is perceived to fuel terrorism, migration (voluntary and involuntary), trafficking, and social and political unrest that can easily spread across national borders (Duffield, Macrae, & Curtis, 2001). This serves as one motivator for richer/global north states to get involved in development cooperation. Additionally, it has become a norm of good practice to be involved in humanitarian and development practices: Following the constructivist understanding of the identity-building, norms play an essential role as social control mechanisms for 'good practice'. In a peer pressure-like effect, if a country is not on the list of givers or only gives little money to prominent causes, it leads to bad reputation internationally and at times public expression of disagreement. Following the constructivist notion, it is a natural development that states want to see themselves as humanitarian actors, the more their identity building is based on welfare and humanitarianism. This has led to states not only acting as donors but also introducing their own state-led aid agencies to respond to humanitarian emergencies and situations of need more effectively (Barnett, 2013). While on the one hand more actors and donors can help more people in more places, this approach politicizes aid in such a way that states use it as a strategy to act in their own interest, even beyond national borders. Hence, scholars ask the question whether these developments "humanize the world of politics, or [whether] they politicize the world of humanitarianism" (Barnett, 2013, p. 5).

The biggest risk that inherits the politization of the aid and development sector, is the loss of impartiality and neutrality by subordinating humanitarian objectives to politically strategic ones. This threatens the security of personnel on the ground, impedes access to affected communities, and can jeopardize complete missions (Duffield et al., 2001). The approach to development is also of paternalist nature, when states assume that they are able to better assess the needs of local populations than the affected communities and trained field personnel (Duffield et al., 2001). Escobar (1995/2012), an avid proponent of the poststructuralist post-development theory, criticises the role of the 'expert' in the development discourse: The white Western experts apply their Western scientific knowledge 'on site' in the 'Third World', imposing the Western capitalist paradigm on local communities in 'their own best interest'. This narrative ascribes an inferiority to local belief systems and customs and can only be overcome by proper incorporation of the native culture into development projects through grassroots work. Of course, what it comes down to ultimately, is the outcome of development cooperation efforts. However these outcomes transpire, the mindset and intention of such initiatives is still of utter importance, since any intervention is an act of control and power exertion (Barnett, 2013). While paternalism has a bad connotation for a good reason, however, Barnett (2013) emphasizes that the ethics of care originate from a paternalist approach, without which development cooperation would not exist at all.

### 3.1.4 The Global Aid and Development System

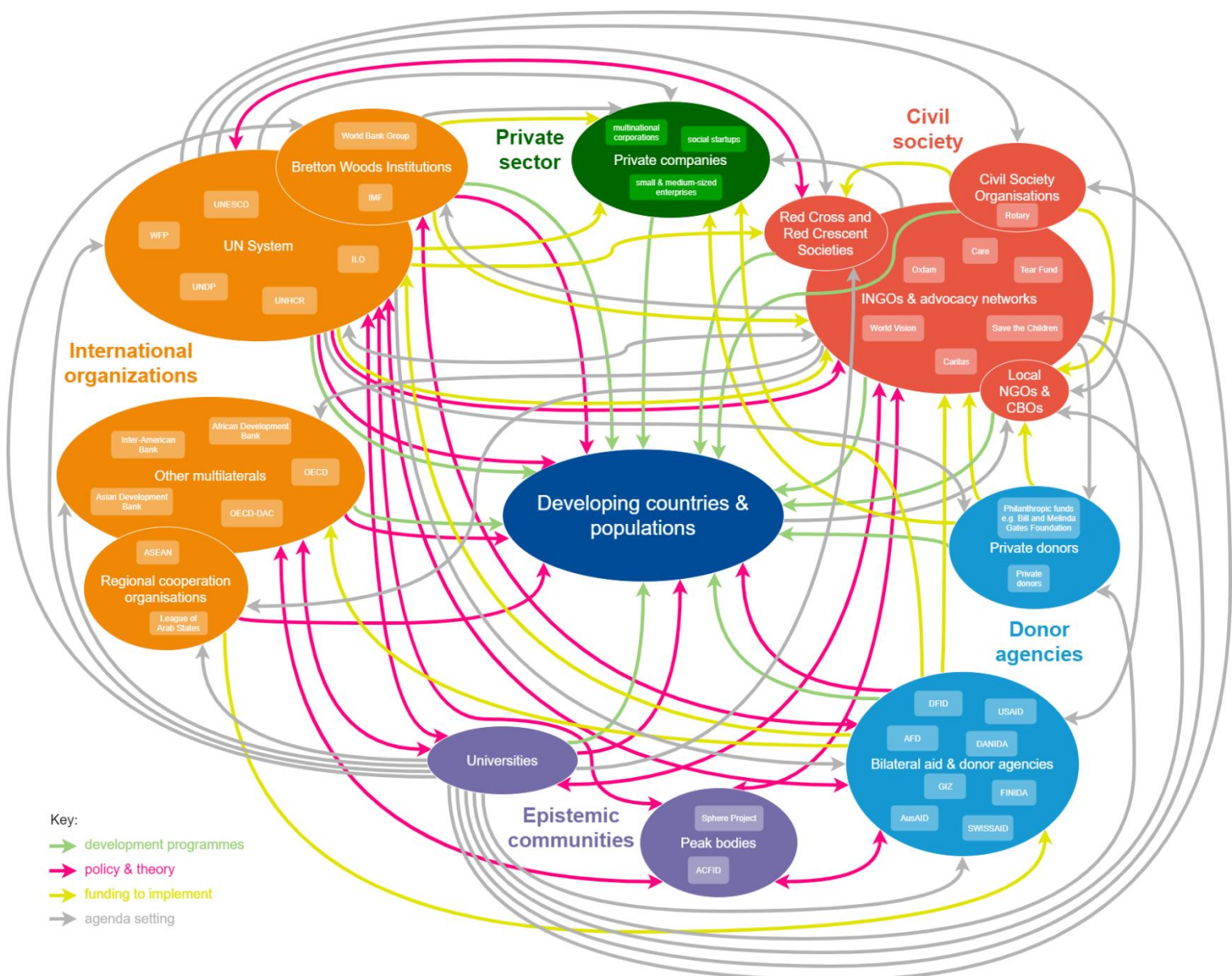
Until recently, the academic debate around multilateralism was focussed on intergovernmental cooperation only and failed to recognize other players in the field, like civil society (Hampson & Heinbecker, 2011). The global aid and development system is governed by two main groups of actors: governments and non-state actors. While governments are national by nature, they have departments that deal with transnational relations. Transnational non-state actors (TNAs) can be distinguished on the basis of several different factors: (1) focus (regional vs. global and issues vs. multipurpose), (2) structure (formal vs. network), and (3) motivation (instrumental goals vs. common good) (Risse, 2008). Examples for TNAs are international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), value-based advocacy networks, or epistemic communities<sup>e</sup>. An overview of TNAs and their interrelations is depicted in **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**, versions disaggregated by type of interaction are attached in Annex 1: Transnational non-state actors of the aid and development system, adapted from Ware (2013), Risse (2008), and Simmons and Martin (2008) – development programmes (development programmes), Annex 2: Transnational non-state actors of the aid and development system, adapted from Ware (2013), Risse (2008), and Simmons and Martin (2008) – policy & theory (policy & theory), Annex 3: Transnational non-state actors of the aid and development system, adapted from Ware (2013), Risse (2008), and Simmons and Martin (2008) – funding to implement (funding to implement), and Annex 4: Transnational non-state actors of the aid and development system, adapted from Ware (2013), Risse (2008), and Simmons and Martin (2008) – agenda setting (agenda setting) for better comprehensibility.

International Organizations (IO, orange in **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**), such as the European Commission, the World Bank, or the United Nations system enable the interaction between TNAs and state actors by providing a forum to meet and interact (Risse, 2008). From a constructivist viewpoint, this function has a high implication on the identities and interests of states that are created through this interaction (Simmons & Martin, 2008). This mechanism or moral and policy pressure on states to conform creates a norm ‘cascade’ by means of which international policies and standards change (Simmons & Martin, 2008). This norm cascade works only if the targeted states have subscribed to the overarching norm of multilateralism and collective action. (I)NGOs (red in **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**) are often subcontracted for humanitarian aid and development projects by International Organizations or states, since (I)NGOs have the advantage of being experts on certain issues, less bureaucratic, and to have better access to impacted communities as they are non-state actors. Advocacy networks and epistemic communities (purple in **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**) have been found to be fundamental influencers of state policies and the creation of international norms (Risse, 2008). Many TNAs are highly dependent on public funding for their projects, some rely on the state for up to 80-90% of their funding. Thus it

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<sup>e</sup> Defined by Haas (1992) as networks of professionals with an authoritative claim to knowledge relevant to policy

cannot be claimed that they represent civil society 'in opposition to' the public system (Risse, 2008). However, researcher have also found, that there is no positive or negative correlation between the impact of TNAs' work and their governmental funding (Risse, 2008). Bilateral aid and donor agencies (blue in **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**) act in a dichotomous way. While on the one hand they act similar to IOs, they are, on the other hand, the state's institutionalized development cooperation agencies and thus are highly dependent on political agendas. In contrast to the multilateral approach, bilateralism "differentiates relations case-by-case based precisely on a priori particularistic grounds or situational exigencies" (Ruggie, 1992, p. 571). However, having agreed to global norms in the shape of the SDGs frames the approach to development globally. Bridging the distance between aid recipients and taxpayers, bilateral donor agencies usually orient themselves more by these global norms than on the local needs (Risse, 2008).



**Figure 1: Transnational non-state actors of the aid and development system, adapted from Ware (2013), Risse (2008), and Simmons and Martin (2008)**

International relations scholars have divided the international policy cycle into three phases: (1) agenda-setting, (2) international norm creation, and (3) norm implementation. TNAs have proven to be most influential in the agenda-setting phase, as they tend to provide case-specific knowledge and moral authority. In fact, there are little cases where it was not a TNA to put a new issue on the international agenda by advocating for it (Risse, 2008). TNAs exert their influence in three ways: through lobbying in powerful states, coalitions with IOs, and through coalitions with smaller states (Risse, 2008). While TNAs have little influence on the second phase of the international policy cycle, they become crucial actors for the last phase of norm implementation. This is due to their previously mentioned role in the international aid and development system, which gives them better access to affected communities and fewer bureaucratic boundaries. Thus, TNAs are an essential factor in the global development system. Research has uncovered three relevant factors that account for the impact TNAs have: (1) TNA characteristics, (2) target characteristics, and (3) communication in between TNA and target. When it comes to the necessary characteristics of a TNA, it is important for them to have material resources as well as a dense network with many strongly connected actors, to ensure reliable information flow. Additionally, moral authority and the quality of knowledge are important factors. When it comes to the second characteristic, TNAs effectiveness is also highly dependent on the vulnerability of their target. These vulnerabilities may include reputation concerns, knowledge gaps, or normative commitments. Finally, the communication of TNAs is crucial and unique. While INGOs tend to apply communication techniques of pressure through shaming and re-framing as well as social mobilization, epistemic communities tend to use argumentation and discourse. (Risse, 2008)

The compartmentalisation of the development sector into many smaller realms, agencies, and actors, has multiplied the approaches to development cooperation. The SDGs and the predecesing Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) constitute attempts to coordinate development practices and establish a universal framework of 'good development'. However, norms set in a homogenous context tend to be adapted when they travel into heterogenous contexts (Engberg-Pedersen, 2018). Comparing the approaches of different development agencies it has become clear, that these global norms are reframed and suited to individual circumstances and dominant views of the agencies (Cold-Ravnkilde, Engberg-Pedersen, & Fejerskov, 2018). Depending on the donor organizations' background, the stakeholders, and the general normative environment, these norms are applied differently. Additionally, short-term circumstances, like organizational priorities, emotions, relationships, or actor strategies, influence the implementation of development projects. These circumstances often lead to differing interpretations of global norms, while still adhering to the basic rules framework these norms set in order to remain credible development actors (Cold-Ravnkilde et al., 2018).

### 3.2 Filling the Infrastructure Gap

#### 3.2.1 The Infrastructure Gap

The availability and state of infrastructure plays a crucial role in global economic and social development. Infrastructure provides the resources needed to promote prosperity and development in a society. By virtue of improving the social wellbeing of communities and their surroundings, infrastructure adds to the overall quality of life. Conversely, public good and service delivery is significantly constrained without proper infrastructure. This results in a lack of access to proper sanitation, safe drinking water, electricity, or proper roads, and thus severely impacts local communities. Governments are responsible for delivering such public services, since infrastructure financing is part of the social contract between citizens and their government. (GIZ, 2011b; OECD, 2007; World Bank Group, 2020a). With global economic growth and technological advances as well as climate change and urbanization as driving factors, demands for infrastructure are set to be ever growing, thus widening the already prominent infrastructure gap between supply and demand (OECD, 2007). According to the OECD (2007), required infrastructure investments will amount to 3.5% of world GDP by 2030. In similar veins, the Global Infrastructure Hub (GI Hub, 2021) projects a \$18 trillion infrastructure investment gap by 2040. The infrastructure spending gap varies geographically, but the consequences are equally severe across the globe (George et al., 2019). Such a gap results in congestion of services, lower quality of a service, or complete absence of a service (World Bank Group, 2020a).

The Addis Agenda lays out the need for infrastructure investments along with infrastructure plans and capacity development measures (UNDESA, 2015). The SDG 9, “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation” (United Nations, 2015), with its eight targets and twelve indicators puts specific emphasis on “[f]acilitate[ing] sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support [...]” (United Nations, 2015, 9.a). Current figures suggest that between 2010 and 2018, financial assistance for economic infrastructure in developing countries increased by 32.6%, with most investment in the sectors transportation and energy (ECOSOC, 2020). However, a report by McKinsey finds that while there seems to be significant up-stepping in infrastructure investments, up to 38% of global infrastructure spending is not invested effectively, due to a lack of innovation, bottlenecks, or market failures (Woetzel, Garemo, Mischke, Kamra, & Palter, 2017). The United Nation’s Addis Agenda delineates the need for international cooperation for infrastructure financing “especially in the poorest and most vulnerable countries with limited domestic resources” (UNDESA, 2015, p. 26), thus calling on the international development cooperation community to find solutions.

#### 3.2.2 Including the Private Sector in Development Cooperation

Immanuel Kant famously wrote that the “spirit of trade cannot coexist with war, and sooner or later this spirit dominates every people” (Kant, 1795/2003). They hereby put transnational economic

relations and world peace into a causal relationship. In other words, the private sector is an essential player in creating world peace and solving global problems (Eweje, Sajjad, Nath, & Kobayashi, 2021). To bridge the glaring infrastructure financing gap, resources outside of the public sector are mobilized and the resources and expertise the private sector brings to the table are invaluable. Recognizing this opportunity, the United Nations' (2015) Global Agenda included partnerships with the private sector in their final crucial goal. SDG 17, "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" (United Nations, 2015), is broken down into 19 targets and 25 indicators. Target 17.17 prompts the international community to

*"[e]ncourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships  
Data [sic], monitoring and accountability" (United Nations, 2015, 17.17).*

By partnering with the private sector, the multilateral system is increasingly shifting to a collaborative model that includes the private sector (green in **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**) in global policy-making and development cooperation (Andonova, 2017). While authority and thus hierarchy is upheld from states towards the private sector, the cooperation opens a new horizontal opportunity for coalition building (Andonova, 2017). It has even been implied, that such partnerships are not only encouraged by the SDGs but are even an essential requirement for the successful fulfilment of the SDGs by 2030 (Eweje et al., 2021). Andonova (2017) specifies five premises under which international agents, either states, TNAs, or IOs, engage in partnerships with the private sector: organizational turmoil, structural deficits, diverging state preferences, policy salience, and institutional expertise.

### 3.2.3 PPPs as a Financing Tool for Development

PPPs are one approach to close the infrastructure gap. They are loosely defined as "a long-term commercial arrangement for the delivery of public services" with "a significant degree of risk-sharing between the public and private sectors" (Yong, 2010, p. 3). This high degree of risk-sharing is the distinguishing factor from other financing approaches, such as outsourcing. Apart from this feature, PPPs differ, as they embed performance standards in their framework and usually include long-term maintenance and operation requirements in contracts (Schwartz & Grown, 2019). Hence, PPPs comprise "the institutionalization of hybrid authority at the international arena" (Andonova, 2010, p. 26). Partnering up with the private sector allows governments to make use of resources and know-how available in the economy while fostering financial contributions and partly outsourcing risk as well as responsibilities (Chao & Toro, 2016; GIZ, 2011b). While there is no single universally valid definition of PPPs, the World Bank (2020a) defines them as

*"A long-term contract between a private party and a government entity, for providing a public asset or service, in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibility and remuneration is linked to performance."*



PPPs have a reputation as a highly successful way of raising funds for development projects beyond traditional donors such as states and international agencies. Additionally, they are hailed to be contributing to successfully improving public service delivery (Yong, 2010). Described as 'soft' regulation mechanism for global capitalism, PPPs are said to contribute to the protection of workers' rights and sustainable business practices by means of the regulatory public sector involvement (Bull & McNeill, 2019).

PPPs have been implemented in multilateral cooperation since the late 1990s (Bull & McNeill, 2019). They were given special attention for the first time at the 2002 Johannesburg WSSD (P. H. Pattberg et al., 2012b) and later even more extensively by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (P. H. Pattberg et al., 2012b; UNDESA, 2015). Hailed as the new posterchild of global development measures, in academia and practice alike, PPPs have a reputation of bridging the gap between overly bureaucratic agencies and capitalist private sector actors, all while helping to reach the SDGs (P. H. Pattberg et al., 2012b). To date, there is no exhaustive registry of all active and completed PPPs but the SDG Partnership Platform (UNDESA, 2016), which was set up after the WSSD in 2002, has seen a significant growth of PPPs in total numbers since its implementation, from 345 registered partnerships in 2009 to 5,365 partnerships for sustainable development as of March 2021 (Bull & McNeill, 2019; UNDESA, 2016). The World Bank's Private Participation in Infrastructure project database has tracked a total of 8,315 PPPs since 1990 in 137 low- and middle-income countries across the sectors of electricity, water and sewerage, transportation, waste, and telecommunication (The World Bank, 2021).

Critics fear that PPPs give an unfair advantage to Western powers and big businesses by adding to the privatization of services in an unhealthy amount, while lacking democratic legitimacy (Bull & McNeill, 2019; Mirafteb, 2004; P. H. Pattberg, Biermann, Chan, & Mert, 2012a). However, proponents of PPPs stress the significant difference between PPPs and privatization, as the private sector only takes on a partial role in the public project and does not assume ownership of it (Levy, 2011). Additionally, critics have found that PPPs do not necessarily emerge where the biggest gaps need to be filled but rather in countries that are members of international organizations and thus diplomatically interesting (Chan & Müller, 2012; P. H. Pattberg et al., 2012a). Hence, instead of seeing a magical solution to combat the infrastructure gap, critics see PPPs rather as pursuing purely political objectives (Mert & Chan, 2012). Evidence has shown that private sector partners at times put their economic interests before that of the project and thereby exploit the good name of multilateral institutions (Bull & McNeill, 2019; Kaplan et al., 2019). This results in a potential 'blue-washing' on both sides of the partnership, by using the UN's good reputation for their own interests (P. Pattberg & Widerberg, 2016). Lastly, the praise that PPPs get throughout policy recommendations and reports of international organizations is denounced to be purely rhetorical and not based on facts (Compagnon, 2012; P. Pattberg & Widerberg, 2016). Most projects are lacking the monitoring mechanisms and data needed to properly evaluate their impact (Gideon & Unterhalter, 2017; Kaplan et al., 2019).

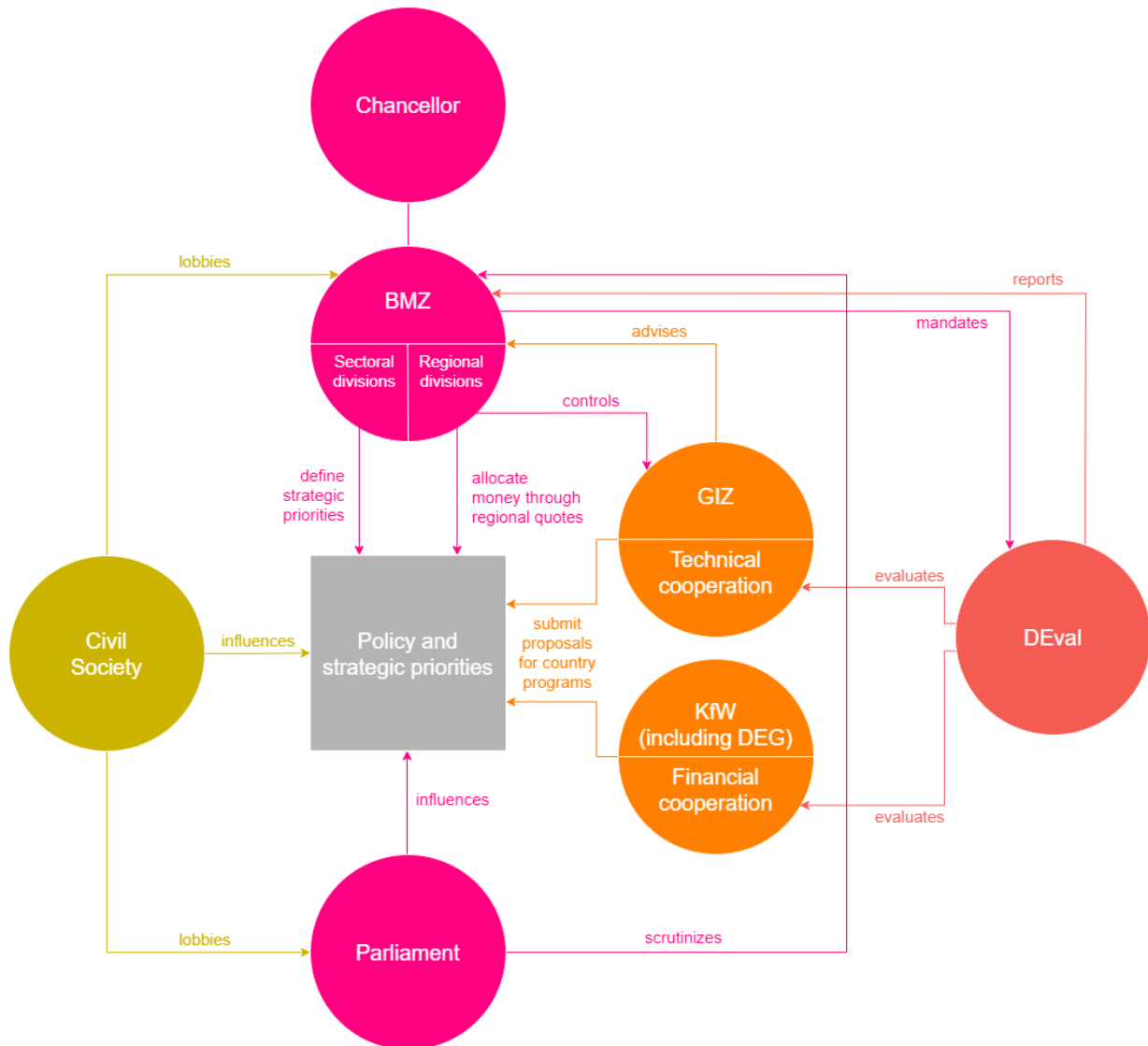
From a theoretical point of view, the emergence of partnerships can have different inducing factors, depending on the paradigm perspective one takes on (Chan & Müller, 2012). While rationalists attribute this emergence to the goal-oriented self-interest of actors, functionalists attribute it to perceived needs and identified governance gaps that are intended to be filled. These gaps can be in different governance functions such as agenda setting; monitoring; norm development; capacity building, or financing (Chan & Müller, 2012). Others suggest partnerships emerge as part of a “transnational, neoliberal transformation of governance and embedded in political struggles” (Prügl & True, 2014, p. 1156). Lastly, institutionalists question rational reasons behind the emergence of partnerships and instead attribute this development to the organizational context in which the partnerships emerge. They argue that the PPP method was born out of a lack of resources and time to search for ideal solutions and an institutional need for best practice that can easily be copied and pasted unto other contexts (Chan & Müller, 2012). In summary, PPPs foster private contributions to public services by contracting public sector actors to finance and implement infrastructure services. While this format of cooperation is hailed as highly successful throughout policy recommendations, scholars perceive them much more critically throughout academic writing.

### 3.3 Germany's Development Cooperation

Since this thesis is based on a case study of the German Corporation for Development Cooperation, it is essential to zoom in from the global development cooperation system to the role Germany plays within this system and how Germany's development cooperation system is built. Out of the OECD's 30 Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members, Germany is the second-largest donor country with 23.8 billion USD in 2019, engaging in development assistance in all regions and across all sectors (OECD, 2020). In official development assistance (ODA) to gross national income (GNI) relation, Germany ranked sixth of the OECD-DAC members, with 0.6% of its GNI invested in ODA in 2019. Germany's overall ODA budget has increased by 93% since 2014 with 14.7 billion USD spent in 2020 (Donor Tracker, 2020).

A simplified depiction of the main actors of the German development cooperation system is shown in **Figure 2**. The biggest part of Germany's ODA is co-ordinated by the BMZ (49%, pink in **Figure 2**), which is responsible for Germany's development cooperation (OECD, 2020). Humanitarian and emergency aid budgets and policies are directed by the German Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The BMZ's regional divisions develop strategies for their respective region and priority countries. The sectoral divisions develop sector strategies and advise multilateral and bilateral development cooperation (Donor Tracker, 2020). The two big implementation agencies are GIZ and the German state-owned development bank KfW (*Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*, orange in **Figure 2**), whereas GIZ is responsible for technical cooperation and KfW for financial cooperation (OECD, 2020). Both influence policy development, projects, and priority setting. The main evaluation unit for all German development

activities is the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval, coral in **Figure 2**), mandated by the BMZ and includes members from civil society, academia, and parliament in its advisory council. GIZ and KfW have additional internal evaluation systems in place (OECD, 2020). The German Parliament (pink in **Figure 2**) scrutinizes policymaking and budgeting for development cooperation. Civil Society (yellow in **Figure 2**) interacts through petitions, conferences, and in NGO networks with the policy-making entities, lobbying for the topics on their agenda.

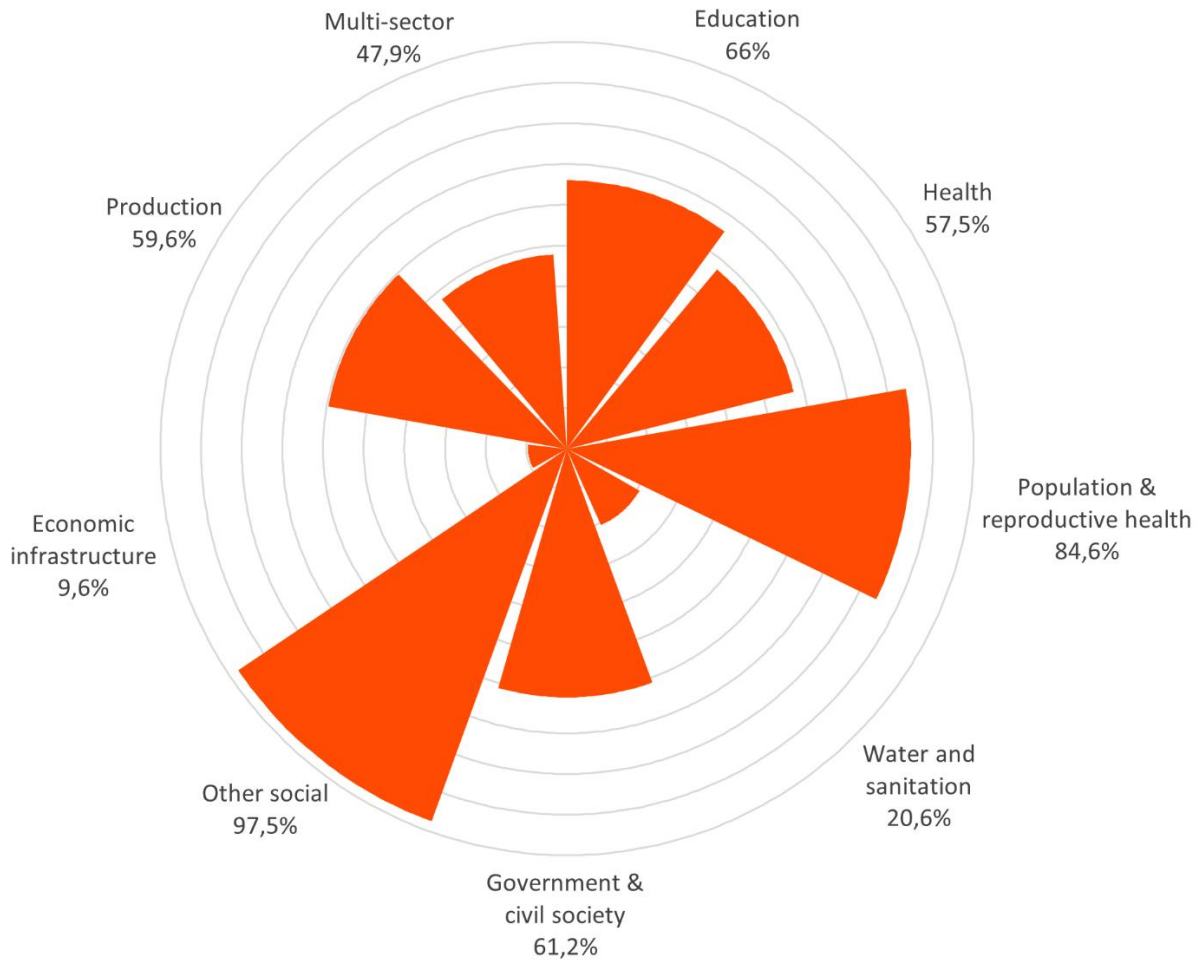


**Figure 2: The main actors of German Development Cooperation, adapted from The Donor Tracker (2021)**

Germany prefers one-on-one cooperation between governments with 78% of its ODA being allocated to bilateral cooperation in 2018 (DAC average: 59%) and 17% contributed to multilateral institutions (DAC average: 23%), such as the European Union (EU), UN agencies and the World Bank (OECD, 2020). This preference is motivated by better visibility of Germany as a direct donor rather than Germany as one of many in multilateral cooperation (BMZ, 2021a). Germany's primary focus of ODA are Asia (7.4 billion USD in 2018) and Africa (4.9 billion USD in 2018). The top ten recipients are:

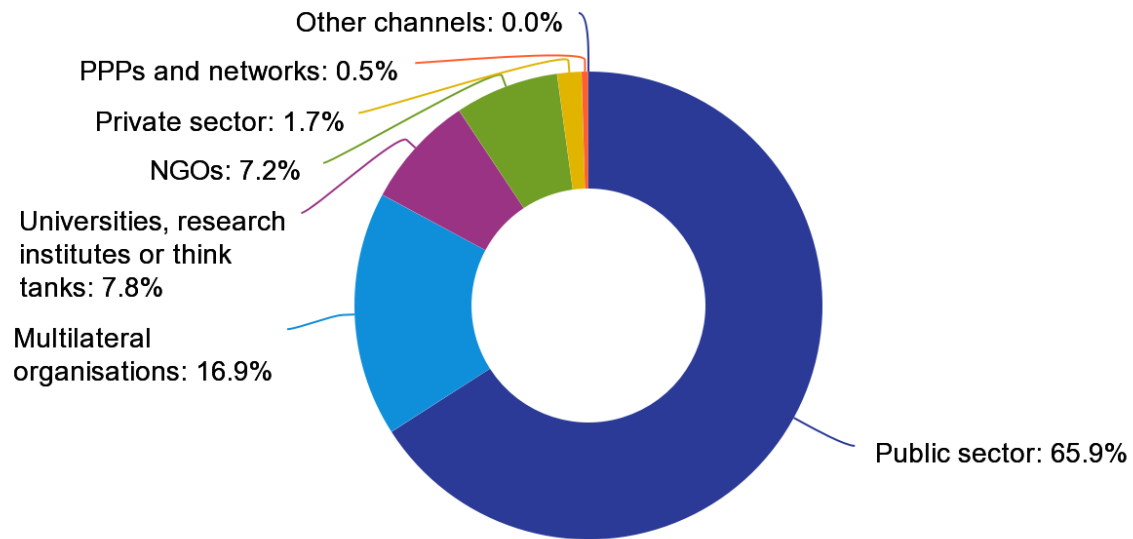
Indonesia, India, People's Republic of China, Syrian Arab Republic, Colombia, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Jordan (OECD, 2020). Thus, most of Germany's bilateral funding goes towards middle-income countries. In the newly published strategy for German development cooperation 'BMZ 2030', the number of bilateral partners is significantly reduced from currently 85 to 60 (BMZ, 2020).

Germany's commitment to gender equality is strong, as it screens nearly all ODA activities against a gender marker (99.4% in 2018). In fact, during the SDG negotiations, Germany advocated strongly to manifest gender equality both as its own goal and as cross-cutting goal throughout all SDGs (Donor Tracker, 2020). However, with 40% of its bilaterally allocable aid committed to gender equality, Germany stays below the average of 42% among other members of OECD DAC (OECD, 2020). Only 2% (DAC average: 6%) of Germany's bilateral ODA is allocated towards programs that treated gender equality as their principal goal (OECD, 2020). In its strategy paper on gender equality, the BMZ committed to a Gender Action Plan, prioritising (1) rural development, agriculture, and food security, (2) education, (3) economic empowerment, (4) health, (5) water and sanitation, and (6) climate change (BMZ, 2014). As shown in **Figure 3**, the social sectors (population and reproductive health, education, and other social) are allocated the biggest share (in 2018). Guided by the BMZ's Gender Action Plan, the two main implementing agencies, GIZ and KfW, both have developed their own gender strategies.



**Figure 3: Bilateral allocable ODA committed to gender equality by sector in 2018, according to OECD (2020), commitments per cent**

As can be observed in several policy papers, partnering with the private sector has become more important in recent years. Also, the Agency for Business and Economic Development (*Agentur für Wirtschaft und Entwicklung* – AWE) was established in 2016, which as its main task bridges the German development cooperation and private sector (Kaplan et al., 2019). AWE is mandated by the BMZ and implemented by GIZ and KfW together. In comparison to other states, Germany has only cautiously adopted the PPP framework (Levy, 2011). As depicted in **Figure 4**, the channels of PPPs and the private sector only account for slithers of the overall attributed ODA. BMZ, KfW and the development finance institution DEG acquired 448.4 million USD from the private sector in 2018, most of it allocated to the energy sector (68%) (OECD, 2020).



**Figure 4: Germany's bilateral ODA b channel of delivery in 2018 according to OECD (2020), gross disbursements per cent**

### 3.4 Gender Equality in Development Cooperation

#### 3.4.1 Understanding Gender

SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls with nine targets and 14 indicators (United Nations, 2015). However, to understand the notion of gender equality, a common understanding of gender needs to be established. The Oxford English Dictionary defines gender as:

*“The state of being male or female as expressed by social or cultural distinctions and differences, rather than biological ones; the collective attributes or traits associated with a particular sex, or determined as a result of one's sex.”*  
(2021a)

This dichotomized understanding of gender is one of the categories, besides e.g., age, class, and ethnicity, that are built deeply into the institutional systems, some even determining ones legal status (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003). Limiting the concept of gender has proven as a politically useful categorization, as it creates two clearly distinguishable groups. In feminist theories however, the notion of gender has been highly contested. Second-wave feminists see it as the “social construction, premised upon the female body” (Code, 2002, p. 220). Feminist theorists challenge the notion of gender as a natural dichotomous division and aim at uncovering the construction of the gender power imbalance (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003). According to Judith Butler's (1990/2015) words, gender is not something we are born with, it is something we ‘perform’. Generally it is understood, that “sex is a biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003, p. 2). However, biology does not work in such a strictly polar distribution, either, which makes it a social construct, too. Linguistic researchers

have found, that rhetoric around gender and sex differences has been heavily influenced across cultures and history, thus disproving the biology argument (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

While the researcher is aware of and subscribes to intersectional and non-binary understandings of gender, this thesis deals with gender understandings in a multilateral institutionalized context. Hence, the definition applied will be the academically questionable yet widely used dichotomous understanding of gender of the SDGs:

*A social and cultural construct, which distinguishes differences in the attributes of men and women, girls and boys, and accordingly refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women. Gender-based roles and other attributes, therefore, change over time and vary with different cultural contexts. The concept of gender includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). This concept is useful in analysing how commonly shared practices legitimize discrepancies between sexes. (UNICEF, 2017)*

### 3.4.2 Feminist International Relations

Feminist perspectives entered into international relations only in the 1980s, which was due to the previous conception of the international space of being gender neutral (Tickner, 2008). In 1979, 189 states ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and hereby put the topic of gender equality on the world stage. In this convention, discrimination against women was defined as:

*Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.*

*(OHCHR, 1979, § 1)*

Feminist theories entered the realm of IR and development around the time the post-development paradigm emerged, which is why there are many parallels between them. While post-development theory is preoccupied with the interdependence between the local 'subject' of development and the Western 'expert', feminist theories have at their core the concern for the asymmetry of women's and men's positions in society (Tickner, 2008). By understanding their unequal power relationships throughout all domains of social, political, and economical life, feminist theory seeks to find a remedy against the ongoing oppression (Tickner, 2008). IR feminists draw from different theoretical traditions of the feminism discipline while resisting the notion that women as a category can plainly be added to previously existing IR theories (Tickner, 2008). Instead, IR feminism researchers look for explanations for the unjust subordination of women in the global economy and international governance system. Especially in the developing world, gender inequality remains a constraining and pervasive reality of life. Following postmodern feminist traditions, many IR feminists engage in research specifically on

groups at the periphery of IR topics, such as victims of rape or trafficking, issues around domestic work, or prostitution. (Tickner, 2008).

Globalization has supported the emancipation of women worldwide and the spread of feminist epistemes.” In this process, new taxonomies about sex and gender are created. One such example is the globalization of human rights, including gender equality. This development was accompanied by the growing number of NGOs focusing on women’s issues and the international governance strategy for ‘gender mainstreaming’ (Caluya, Germon, & Probyn, 2014). However, the narrative remains a largely western one: the Global North is portrayed as the pioneer of women’s rights, the Western liberal political framework is seen as necessary precondition for gender equality, and Western powers are celebrated as benevolent teachers of gender equality to the less educated (Caluya et al., 2014). In recent years, feminist theorists from the South were given more attention. Post-colonial and postmodernist? approaches demand analyses that are informed by locally and historically specific factors instead of blundering into the all-too-common trap of western-centric universalism (Tickner, 2008).

### 3.4.3 Gender and Development

Feminist development scholars envision an international anti-colonial and feminist space beyond a division between West and non-West, that is based on rules of social justice and self-determination (Chowdhury, 2016). While the earlier approaches to development saw women merely as mothers and focussed on issues like reproductive health, the emerging women's movements in the global North led to the integration of women into economic development (Coles, Gray, & Momsen, 2015). However, by generalizing the experiences of all women into that of unified gender equality, one runs the risk of denying women cultural and individual agency (Code, 2002). The Gender and Development (GAD) theory opposes treating women as one homogenous category (Coles et al., 2015). As much of the gender equality rhetoric is still used only descriptively, referring to the empowerment of women, leaving out the relation to men, essential power relations are being ignored (Tickner, 2008). GAD theorists propose the inclusion of men in the narrative of gender equality to explore power relations from the perspectives of both genders as an essential prerequisite to achieve gender equality (Coles et al., 2015). GAD feminists, although having developed many sub-theories, all fundamentally agree on three premises: (1) gender relations are power relations, (2) gender is not biologically given but socio-culturally constructed, and (3) gender roles and relationships are not static (Coles et al., 2015)

SDG5, which sets norms adhering to gender equality as including men and boys, substantially supports a shift from focusing exclusively on women in both theory and development policy. However, norms set in a homogenous context tend to be adapted when they travel into heterogenous contexts (Engberg-Pedersen, 2018). Comparing the approaches of different development agencies it has become clear, that these global norms are reframed and suited to individual circumstances and dominant views of the agencies (Cold-Ravnkilde et al., 2018). ‘Meanings of self’ are fundamentally intertwined with the production of knowledge related to gender (Lund, 2015), thus, not only heterogenous development



agencies but also the policy-writer, development worker, and even the researcher always put their own truths as a filter upon gender equality. It remains a challenge for current development programs to match the situatedness and complexity of gendered lives, with respects to intersectionality effects between gender and other oppressions, such as ethnicity, class, or caste (ibid.).

#### 3.4.4 Feminism & PPPs

It has long been known that to include women in economics brings about a powerful boosting effect to global growth (Prügl & True, 2014). While feminism has penetrated the multilateral business world with campaigns like Nike's 'Girl Effect' (Nike News, 2015), gender equality in the private sector is still lagging significantly for the most part, with men still dominating power positions, creating a global gender gap (Prügl & True, 2014). The same is naturally true for public-private partnerships. One might think that infrastructure services like the electricity grids, roads and transportation, water supply and sanitation are basic needs of everyone and thus gender neutral. However, women have significantly different roles within their social structures, face different constraints and have different needs (World Bank Group, 2019). These gender-specific requirements are needed to be included throughout the PPP process, from tendering, over implementation, to monitoring and evaluation. The different needs can include location of a service, certain design features, accessibility, and safety (Foerster & Rigby Delmon, 2019). Additionally, a PPP's reach, quality and price play an important role (Schwartz & Grown, 2019). Gender equality cannot simply be broken down into hard numbers, especially not when intersectionality and individual experiences are included. Thus, close attention needs to be paid to companies' practices and approaches regarding gender equality (Lanz et al., 2020).

Literature on the gender impact of PPPs suggests, that they do not create equal access to opportunities for both genders, unless a gender strategy is incorporated into the project (IFC, 2012). In such a strategy, the World Bank has identified five specific ways in which PPPs can promote gender equality: (1) consider gender-specific infrastructure needs, (2) eliminate gender bias in legal framework, (3) gender specific affordability analysis, (4) include women's voices in stakeholder consultation, and (5) contractual output requirements (Shepherd, 2016). In the following, these five markers for more gender conscious PPPs are explained further and finally summarized in **Table 1**.

##### *(1) Consider gender-specific needs*

Evidence suggests that women and men benefit unevenly from infrastructure services (IFC, 2012). Men and women tend to have different roles in societies, as well as different preferences. This results in differentiating needs in terms of infrastructure services between the genders. For example, women's usually stronger involvement in reproductive processes makes for often higher and pivotally different needs for health facilities. Also, when it comes to transportation, women tend to make shorter trips and even choose their workplace factoring in the distance to their home more prominently in order to be able to handle all other responsibilities ascribed to them, too. (Shepherd, 2016).

### *(2) Eliminate gender bias in legal framework*

Legal systems across the world are riddled with overt and concealed gender bias. Legal requirements for PPPs may lead to the exclusion of women from access to the services provided, for instance if they require ID or papers for access. Women are not granted papers in some parts of the world or simply cannot afford them. In some countries, women are not legally allowed to obtain, own, or transfer land, and are precluded from obtaining loans (World Bank Group, 2020b). Thus, requirements like these would prevent them from accessing the service (Shepherd, 2016).

### *(3) Gender specific affordability analysis*

Similarly to the previous point, women in many parts of the world are not granted financial autonomy or have access to fewer financial resources than men. Thus, conducting an affordability analysis in a gender-disaggregated way helps to understand what prices both men and women are able or willing to pay for a service. (Shepherd, 2016)

### *(4) Women's voices in stakeholder consultation*

To include the gender equality conversation during the procurement and tendering processes of projects is crucial. This way, rather than paternalizing them, women's voices can be heard and opinions can be included in the design of the PPP. If women are included in this process, the PPP's result will automatically be geared towards a larger share of the population, by incorporating gender-specific needs (Shepherd, 2016). Including women-led businesses or businesses with gender-parity as contractual partners, will economically strengthen women, too. In fact, literature shows that when women are included in all steps of a value chain, they become game changers and multipliers of the positive effects (Grown, 2018)

### *(5) Output requirements in contract*

Output requirements are a standard element in PPP contracts. They also pose an opportunity for the public authority to include gender-specific requirements. They can be either output-based Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), that are specifically geared toward women, or complete PPP project designs that target women. (Shepherd, 2016). With gender-specific KPIs, the effects are passed down throughout the supply-chain of PPPs, including executing units, contractors, and users (Foerster & Rigby Delmon, 2019)

**Table 1: Gender-specific action points throughout the PPP project phases**

Action point	Specific activities	Project Phase
<b>consider gender-specific infrastructure needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collecting sex-disaggregated data</li> <li>including women and men at an early stage in the community-wide consultations</li> </ul>	preparation and appraisal stage

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management strategies and community benefit plans that show how bidder plans to ensure compliance with gender-related commitments of the project</li> </ul>	
<b>eliminate gender bias in legal framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• designing gender-responsive policies, bidding documents and contracts</li> <li>• implement minimum standards into PPP policies and legislation</li> </ul>	<p>policy and legislation phase</p> <p>preparation and appraisal stage</p>
<b>gender-specific affordability analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gender-specific affordability analysis</li> </ul>	preparation and appraisal stage
<b>include women's voices in stakeholder consultation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• including women at an early stage in the community-wide consultations</li> <li>• encourage procurement of women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as subcontractors, suppliers or vendors</li> </ul>	<p>preparation and appraisal stage</p> <p>implementation stage</p>
<b>contractual output requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize meaningful performance indicators to monitor and evaluate actions designed to narrow gender gaps</li> </ul>	<p>preparation and appraisal stage</p> <p>monitoring and evaluation stage</p>

(World Bank Group, 2015, 2019, 2020b)

### 3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown the vastness and complexity of the issues this thesis tackles. Not only does the interdisciplinarity of the endeavour prove as source of complexity but so does each individual discipline, be it global development, or feminism. However, building on a constructivist paradigm helps to understand all things as relational and dependent on historical, cultural, and social context. Looking at global development cooperation, the dependency theorists offer a highly critical view of development cooperation and the politization of aid. Understanding how the highly complex development sector works – on a global and a German national level – gives insight into the institutionalization of a sensitive matter. Zooming into one area of development cooperation, the infrastructure gap, it was explored how the inclusion of the private sector has great potential as well as menace for society, local communities, and the development sector. The cross-cutting theme of gender was explored through feminist IR theory and the GAD approach, pointing at the importance of understanding gender equality as including both, women, and men. Additionally, it was pointed out, how infrastructure, too, is gendered. Finally, a comprehensive list of five ways in which PPPs can promote gender was presented.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

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### 4.1 Research Design

If the previous chapter outlined the foundation upon which the analysis will be built, this chapter essentially serves as toolbox, assembling all the tools with which the research of this study will be conducted. The presented thesis explores several layers of questions and thus applies a multi-layered approach. The German approach to private sector cooperation is examined by means of document analysis of official documents by the BMZ and GIZ on the topic. To examine the PPPs, the researcher orients themselves on the nine success factors for PPPs introduced by P. Pattberg and Widerberg (2016) and the categorization of PPP's objectives by Bull and McNeill (2019). The research of this thesis further aims at understanding how women are included in the processes and frameworks of PPPs in German multilateral development cooperation. Thus, we ask what role gender and specifically women play in PPPs facilitated by the GIZ as the main agency for German development cooperation. As the objective of this thesis is not to come to definite answers, an exploratory case study will be conducted. In this chapter, the case study method will be explained, and it will be carefully dissected how the study will be conducted, including the unit(s) of analysis, data collection, measurement, and analysis. Finally, the researcher will engage with ethical considerations surrounding the research topic and design, as well as clearly demarcate the scope of this study by discussing the limitations of it. This being a qualitative study provides a unique opportunity in deep diving into the mechanisms and workings of PPPs in the context of German development cooperation. By means of a case study, the underlying concepts and key factors that might not be apparent immediately will be carefully uncovered, in a reflective and interpretivist manner.

### 4.2 Conducting a Case Study

Case study research seems to be the most preferred method adopted to study PPPs (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2015). As this thesis is occupied with answering a "how" question about a contemporary phenomenon, its ultimate aim is to come to a meaningful understanding of the presented topic. The case study methodology offers the opportunity to understand complex phenomena on a deeper level without disregarding how they are tied into larger constructs and processes (R. K. Yin, 2014). While the absence of 'hard' theory makes it difficult to prove anything in the social sciences, learning from explanatory findings is certainly possible and asked for (Flyvbjerg, 2006). A major concern preceding this research were the prevalent prejudices against case studies as solitary method in the scholarly community. However, upon extensive engagement with this method, it became clear that case studies can produce generalizable results that provide valuable insights into a chosen topic (Flyvbjerg, 2006; R. K. Yin, 2014). Flyvbjerg points out the value of case studies as producers of exemplars for any given discipline,

providing existential knowledge, since “a discipline without exemplars is an ineffective one” (2006, p. 219).

To ensure this thesis does not contain bias toward verification, the analysis of the case will be done critically aware of this factor. For a lack of a standardized case study research process, the researcher has to design their own framework for data analysis and interpretation (R. K. Yin, 2014). Between this process and the development of a theory prior to data collection, the case study method lends itself to rigid theory testing. R. K. Yin (2014) points out the importance of this process especially for research on publicly supported programs, as an evaluation of such a programme can only be meaningful, if the theory delineates how such programmes are supposed to work generally. However, it is essential to differentiate between the theory of the program's content and the theory for program implementation, as has been done in the previous chapter (Bickman & Rog, 2009). The established conceptual framework provides the structure within which the case study will be analysed.

#### 4.3 Methods of Data Collection

As previously mentioned, judging the effectiveness of a PPP without hearing the voices of the ones affected by it, is only possible to a limited extend (Unterhalter, 2017). However, it is virtually impossible to gain access to these communities, not being able to do physical field research due to the currently ongoing global pandemic on the one hand and limitations of the general project scope on the other hand. To not fall victim to the strengthening of power imbalances between donors and recipients of development cooperation initiatives, the researcher has decided to not include the voices of members of the GIZ either. This measure was also taken to ensure that the affected communities will not be “spoken for” by members of German development cooperation. This thesis will instead make use of the plenty available publications that have been made by GIZ and BMZ on the topic of PPPs and Gender. The researcher is aware, that this again only sheds light on the donor's viewpoint, however, the main research question aims precisely at uncovering the role gender plays in PPPs facilitated by the GIZ. As the GIZ's approach is examined however, the one-sided approach to the topic and the implications for its analysis have to be kept in mind, as well as possible biases included in the evidence. Ethical considerations will be explored at a later stage in this chapter.

Using official documents and open documentation, the researcher ensures accessibility of material, while also foregoing lengthy contractual proceedings about confidentiality of inside information. With this approach, the researcher makes sure that no influence is exerted on study participants, since all documentation was intended for different use and not specifically issued for this study. By scrutinizing the material before they are chosen, the representativeness of the documents is provided. The authenticity and representativeness of these official documents will contribute to the meaningfulness of this research (Raptis, 2010). It should be noted that most documents of interest are

published in the German language, however, the researcher is a German native and will thus not suffer from language barriers. The researcher will provide translations in-text or in endnotes where necessary.

The documents were accessed through the websites of BMZ, GIZ, and develoPPP.de. The sourcing process followed two approaches. First, the researcher looked at available publications linked on topic sites and the GIZ publication database. Second, the researcher used the website's internal search function to look for publications, using the terms 'private sector', 'partnerships', 'ZmW', 'PPP', 'Gleichberechtigung' [equal rights], and 'gender'.

#### 4.4 Measurements & Techniques

To come to answers to the research questions, the researcher proposes several questions drawn from academic literature, to ask to the examined texts. To systematically analyse the texts, the researcher will code them qualitatively. Therefore, the questions will each be translated into codes with which the analysed documents will all be codified. A complete list of the used codes can be found in Annex 5: Coding System.

Focussing first on private-sector cooperation, Bull and McNeill (2019) propose five main objectives of such partnerships, by which they can be categorized: (1) local implementation partnerships, (2) resource mobilization partnership, (3) advocacy partnerships, (4) policy partnerships, and (5) operational partnerships. Through reiteration, the researcher found a sixth objective frequently used, which was then added to the framework as (6) skills and knowledge transfer partnerships. P. Pattberg and Widerberg (2016) draw from lessons learned of past partnerships and determine – through a systematic review of research – nine success factors of PPPs in terms of problem-solving capacity. These nine success factors spread across three categories: actors, processes, and contexts. When it comes to actors, the partners have to be chosen well and good leadership is essential. In terms of processes, the effectiveness of partnerships highly depends on realistic yet also ambitious goal setting, sufficient funding, a solid management structure, and transparency and thorough monitoring, reporting, and evaluation mechanisms. Lastly for context, successful partnerships require meta-governance in the form of minimum criteria of conductiveness, an enabling political and social context, and solvable problems.

**Table 2: Measurement of Objectives and Success Factors of PPPs on Different Layers**

Layer	Questions to be examined	Codes
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the main objectives the partnership wants to achieve?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local implementation</li> <li>Resource mobilization</li> <li>Advocacy</li> <li>Policy</li> <li>Operational</li> <li>Skills &amp; knowledge transfer</li> </ul>
<b>Actors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What values and identities does/do the private partner/s bring to the partnership?</li> <li>What are the services offered and roles taken by the public partner?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private partners chosen</li> <li>Public leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the goals formulated clearly, ambitiously, and yet, realistically? Are the set goals aligned with international norms?</li> <li>Is adequate funding secured for the project?</li> <li>Is the internal organization of the partnership clearly formulated, yet not too bureaucratic?</li> <li>Are rigid monitoring practices being applied and reported?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Realistic but ambitious goal-setting</li> <li>Sufficient funding</li> <li>Solid management structure</li> <li>Monitoring, reporting, &amp; evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Context</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the meta-governance of the organization set basic rules of conductiveness for PPPs?</li> <li>Does the social and political context in the country of implementation allow for changes?</li> <li>Are the problems tackled in the partnership neither too malign nor too benign? And is a PPP the appropriate tool as a solution?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum-criteria of conductiveness</li> <li>Enabling political and social context</li> <li>Solvable problems</li> </ul>

*Note. Adapted from Bull and McNeill (2019) and P. Pattberg and Widerberg (2016)*

As a second question, the presented thesis explores the role of gender in PPPs through an analysis of seven criteria drawn from the field of feminist research, policy evaluation and global governance studies. This approach is adapted from the methodologies of three studies on gender and PPPs. Prügl and True (2014) assess transnational PPPs governing gender, Gideon et al. (2017) analyse underlying assumptions on gender in PPPs on sexual health, and Hawkes et al. (2017) engage with PPPs in one sector and conduct an analysis of the role gender plays in it. As shown in **Table 3**, different layers of the programmes will be examined. Firstly, it is of interest to understand underlying notions and understandings of gender and gender equality. The documents will be examined for working definitions of gender as well as common sense assumptions about gender. Secondly, the operational application of gender is examined by analysing the gender strategy (or the lack thereof), mechanisms to handle gender

exclusion and other operational mechanisms that are concerned with gender. Thirdly, if available, the gender balance of the executing unit will be analysed. Lastly, programme reflexivity will be explored in terms of transparency (is gender-aggregated data presented?), evaluation (what are judgement criteria of programmes concerning gender?).

**Table 3: Measurements of Gender Awareness in PPPs on Different Layers**

Layer	Questions to be examined	Codes
<b>Understanding of gender and gender equality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are 'common sense' assumptions about gender?</li> <li>• Is there a working definition of gender presented?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common sense assumptions</li> <li>• Definition of gender</li> </ul>
<b>Programme Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a specific gender strategy presented?</li> <li>• How is gender addressed? What are the operational mechanisms in place to deal with gender inequality, biases, discrimination?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender strategy? y/n</li> <li>• Operational gender mechanisms</li> </ul>
<b>Gender Balance in the executing organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the gender balance within the executing unit?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender balance of organization</li> </ul>
<b>Programme Transparency and Reflexivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the programme present gender-disaggregated service delivery data?</li> <li>• What are judgement criteria about gender aspects for programmes in evaluations?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disaggregated gender data? y/n</li> <li>• gender evaluation aspects</li> </ul>

*Note. Adapted from (Gideon et al., 2017; Hawkes et al., 2017; Prügl & True, 2014)*

#### 4.5 Unit of Analysis

The main unit of analysis is the GIZ. As was established in the previous chapter, GIZ is the service provider for development cooperation projects mostly commissioned by the BMZ. Hence, the GIZ's approach builds upon and represents the German national understanding and strategies of development cooperation. For this unit of analysis, the research will be based on the GIZ integrated company report for 2019 (GIZ, 2020b). To take a closer look at the approaches to private sector cooperation, the units of analysis will be:

- (1) a BMZ strategy paper on private sector cooperation (BMZ, 2016b),
- (2) its accompanying flyer (BMZ, 2016a),
- (3) a recent overview document of BMZ services for the public sector (BMZ, 2019),



- (4) a publication on the GIZ advisory service for public sector partnerships (GIZ, 2011a), and
- (5) a booklet presenting the develoPPP.de program (GIZ, 2020a).

Additionally, two evaluation reports will be consulted but not coded, in order to not manipulate the patterns: (1) a GIZ commissioned evaluation of its private sector cooperation strategy by an independent agency (GIZ, 2018) and (2) an evaluation of the develoPPP.de program by DEval (2017). Examining the gender approach, the units of analysis will be (1) the current GIZ gender strategy (GIZ, 2019) and (2) a toolkit for creating a gender sensitive impact-oriented monitoring of GIZ projects (GIZ, 2014). Within the case-study of the GIZ, a subunit of analysis will be incorporated. This approach offers the holistic analysis of the GIZ approach to gender and PPP while also providing an embedded analysis of exemplary cases. However, the researcher has to make sure, that neither the holistic nor the embedded analysis should overshadow the other. The subunits of analysis in this case will be eleven develoPPP.de project reports published between 2016 and 2020.

#### 4.6 Data Analysis

Case study research needs to follow certain procedures to assure its quality. Firstly, the theoretical framework has to be solid to guide data collection and analysis (R. K. Yin, 2014). The theory plays an essential role for the generalizability of the case study. Though no statistical generalization is possible in this method, an analytical generalization helps to put the findings into a meaningful context and at the same time test the established theory (R. K. Yin, 2014). As this research is not aiming at establishing causal relations, it is not to be seen as an explanatory case study. The data analysis rather aims at exploring the issue at hand and can thus be located in the exploratory approach methodology.

To ensure validity of results, R. K. Yin (2014) suggests four tests: (1) construct validity, to establish correct operational measures, (2) internal validity, to establish a causal relationship, (3) external validity, to establish generalizability of findings, and lastly (4) reliability, to establish repeatability of the study. As shown in **Table 4**, these tests will be applied throughout different phases of research. Construct validity is established by using multiple sources of evidence and presenting the evidence first, before interpreting and assessing it (R. Yin, 2009). Since it has been established that this research is not of explanatory kind, the need for causality is not given. Hence, the internal validity test will not be applied. The external validity test can only be followed to a small extent, as the scope of this work does not allow a replication of the research on a different case. However, the description of the research design in this chapter and the theory building in the previous chapter lay the groundworks for replicability of this study on a different case. A certain degree of external validity will be maintained by analysing eleven project descriptions, as this will allow to identify patterns and outliers. Lastly, as this case study does not apply interviews or observations of humans in any way, there is no need for an extensive protocol. The researcher ensures replicability of this exact study on the same case by means

of elaborate descriptions of the process and findings in chapter 5, additionally a list of all codes is attached in Annex 5: Coding System and an overview of coded results is attached in Annex 7: Code Matrix General Documents. To build a thorough argument, alternating or rival explanations will explicitly be named and entertained (R. Yin, 2009).

**Table 4: Case Study Tactics for Four Design Tests**

Tests	Case study tactic	Research phase
<b>Construct validity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use multiple sources of evidence</li> <li>• Present evidence</li> </ul>	Data Collection
<b>Internal validity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do pattern-matching</li> <li>• Do explanation-building</li> </ul>	Data Analysis
<b>External validity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use replication logic</li> </ul>	Research Design
<b>Reliability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use case-study protocol</li> </ul>	Data Collection

*Note. Adapted from R. K. Yin (2014)*

As this thesis will be dealing with textual documents within an interpretivist approach, the methods to interpret the findings will be suited to this specificity. Drawing from the hermeneutical tradition ('hermeneus' Greek *interpreter*), that has a long tradition to uncover the original meanings of texts from a holistic approach, special attention will be given to two relationships: (1) the relationship between author and text, and (2) the relationship between text and interpreter. Assessing the relationship between author and text includes attending to the author's historical location, social positioning, mindset, cultural milieu, and targeted audience. Following the teachings of Habermas on critical hermeneutics, a process-oriented critique will be applied to uncover any underlying relations of power concealed in the studied texts. When it comes to the relationship between text and interpreter, it is important to take into account the presuppositions and intentionality (Hope & LeCoure, 2010).

#### 4.7 Ethical Considerations

It has to be made sure that personal bias of the researcher does not influence the direction of the finding's interpretation. For full transparency, it is important to mention at this point again, that the researcher has previously worked for the GIZ, however the work relationship was determined after successful completion of the fixed-term contract. Hence, this previous affiliation does not inflict on the analysis of the case study.

To not only avert negative outcomes for stakeholders of this research (including the reader), but even produce a benefit, the researcher will entertain the following ethical considerations. As no human subjects are directly involved in this research, there is no need for considerations about privacy, confidentiality, or anonymity (Sieber, 2009). However, this research is concerned with vulnerable

populations by analysing development cooperation programmes. Cultural sensitivity must be applied throughout the research project, as it is placed within a multicultural field of study, even though no direct interaction with these groups is given (Banister, Begoray, & Nimmon, 2010). As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the research design was specifically constructed in a way to avoid anyone 'speaking for' affected communities. This approach also aims at avoiding a Eurocentric view on the studied phenomena and thereby underscoring non-Western experiences. Especially in the field of development cooperation, post-colonial Eurocentric concepts tend to implicitly underlie programmes originating from hegemonial organizations. Throughout the analysis of this case study, an effort will be made to uncover hierarchical dichotomies originating from Eurocentrism. The researcher is aware, that epistemologically, social science in itself and the concept of development originate from a Eurocentric view of the world (Altamirano-Jimenez, 2010).

#### 4.8 Limitation of the Study

As outlined in this chapter, the research conducted will be based on publicly available documents. Thus, only data that is readily available will be interpreted, no new data will be collected or produced. That said, data of concern would be the voices of those affected by the PPPs studied, which was proven to be impossible to realize within the scope of this thesis. This being a case study, it must be always remembered that the sample size is very small, rather serving as exemplary case than as a representative case for all PPPs. Due to the scope of the thesis, the study must stay within rigid limits, when it comes to exploring the studied texts for meaning. The data analysis will not be able to cover layers of interpretation of certain living circumstances of affected people and communities that might impact the outcomes of projects: (1) conflict and post-conflict, (2) displacement, (3) migration, (4) marginalized or indigenous groups, (5) marginalized sexual identities and the queer community. This study will also not go into sector-specific interpretations. When it comes to the understanding of gender, even though it was established in the previous chapter that sex is not binary and gender contextual, this thesis will not be able to cover gender fluidity in its analysis.

#### 4.9 Chapter Summary

To sum up, in this chapter it was laid out how the case study will be conducted. Specifically, the case of GIZ will be studied with the subunit of a PPP program the organization has conducted. The collected will be in the form of official documents available through the GIZ Publication Database. These documents will be analysed in four areas of inquiry, drawn from feminist research, global governance studies, and policy evaluation. In the data analysis, a hermeneutic approach will be used that gives attention to both relationships a text has, the one to the author and the one to the audience. Additionally, ethical concerns, bias and possible limitations were laid out transparently.

## 5 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

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### 5.1 Introduction

Now, that the architects of previous research and policies have been consulted, the theoretical foundation has been laid and the tools have been chosen, it is time to build this study. The original research question was how the German development cooperation includes the private sector in their approach to development cooperation, how PPPs are understood and implemented and what role gender plays in this context. As described in the previous chapter, this question will be answered through the analysis of strategy documents and project reports of BMZ, GIZ and develoPPP.de. For the analysis, a set of codes has been developed and applied, which can be found in Annex 5: Coding System. In this chapter, the results of the coding process will first be presented, before we move on to analysing patterns, significant findings and unexpected findings. Finally, the findings will be put in context by consulting the research presented in the literature review and theory chapters.

### 5.2 Presentation of Results

As outlined in the preceding methodology chapter, the analysis of the documents is based on a set of codes deducted from questions and categories from academic literature. Two sets of codes were applied to all documents: those geared towards analysing the PPP system and those used to conduct a gender analysis of the documents. The overall distribution of codes throughout the documents shows a clear distinction between gender topics and cooperation with the private sector. While throughout all documents, all codes were used a total of 885 times, the code system specific to PPPs was used exclusively on the documents treating PPPs and the gender code system was used almost exclusively in documents on the gender strategy and the integrated company report of GIZ. Only on 24 instances were gender codes used on PPP documents, 13 of which were in the ‘understanding of gender’ category. For an overview of all codes and their overall frequency, see Annex 5: Coding System, for a disaggregated matrix of codes and their distribution throughout the documents, see Annex 7: Code Matrix General Documents

#### 5.2.1 German Development Cooperation Meets Private-Sector Cooperation

For the general approach to including the private sector in German development cooperation, a strategy paper on the private sector and its opportunities for sustainable development<sup>1</sup> and two flyers on the range of services<sup>2</sup> for the private sector by BMZ were coded (BMZ, 2016a, 2016b, 2019), as well as a strategy paper on the consulting service<sup>3</sup> for partnerships with the private sector by GIZ (GIZ, 2011a), and a brochure of the develoPPP.de program (GIZ, 2020a). A recent evaluation of the GIZ approach to private sector cooperation commissioned by GIZ to Como Consult GmbH (GIZ, 2018) and an evaluation of the

develoPPP.de program (DEVal, 2017) were referred to as an additional level and inside look into the workings of GIZ.

#### 5.2.1.1 BMZ

The BMZ publications show a general understanding of collaboration with the private sector as an opportunity for investments in foreign markets and a strengthening of development projects as well as foreign political relations. Throughout all three documents, the BMZ repeatedly addresses small and medium-sized enterprises<sup>4</sup> (SME), especially referring to businesses with high innovative strength<sup>5</sup>. The BMZ offers two main services to the public sector: consultation and funding. With networks in “more than 130 developing countries and emerging markets”<sup>6</sup> (BMZ, 2019, p. 3), these services are offered locally in developing countries as well as in Germany. A special focus is put on the African continent in two out of the three documents, whereas the strategy paper specifically mentions a focus on “countries of origin and host countries of refugees”<sup>7</sup> (BMZ, 2016b, p. 12).

The strategy paper of BMZ explains the opportunities and motivations for partnering with the private sector in development cooperation and lays out the goals for German development cooperation in cooperating with the private sector, as well as measurements the BMZ is taking to reach these goals (BMZ, 2016b). It emphasizes the importance of the private sector for development cooperation by pointing out that development goals – referring especially to the SDGs – can only be reached together with an active participation of the private sector<sup>8</sup>. The goals of BMZ's endeavor to cooperate with the private sector in developing countries consist of (1) promoting sustainable growth and development, (2) creating jobs and income for local communities, as well as taxes for the state, (3) combating poverty, (4) reducing risks of combat, conflict, and displacement, (5) building resilience against natural disasters, and (6) heightening education levels and enhancing vocational trainings. Especially the transfer of knowledge and technologies<sup>9</sup> is mentioned repeatedly. In their paper, BMZ lists six measures they are taking to reach the set goals: (1) establish new partnerships, (2) expand advisory services for interested businesses, (3) improve economic conditions in partner countries, (4) set incentives for the private sector to engage in developing countries and emerging markets, (5) expand the German involvement in Africa, and (6) reduce causes of flight by creating prospects locally<sup>10</sup>. The accompanying flyer that was published just weeks apart from the strategy paper, is addressed directly to potential partners in the private sector. It summarizes the main points of the strategy paper and adds a section of incentives for private companies to engage in developing countries by pointing out the different services and funding opportunities the BMZ has to offer (BMZ, 2016a). Besides three consulting programs, two of which are executed by the GIZ (EZ-Scouts and ExperTS), six support programs are mentioned, two of which are part of the GIZ portfolio (develoPPP.de and Lab of Tomorrow).

The most recent publication of BMZ in the topic gives an overview of the range of services by BMZ and is geared towards the private sector as recruiting material, as it directly addresses potential partners with “do you want to get involved in a developing country?”<sup>11</sup> (BMZ, 2016a, p. 1). The BMZ lists different motivations for the private sector to get involved: (1) market entry and export (2) ethical investment<sup>12</sup>,

(3) import of goods, and (4) Corporate-Social-Responsibility engagement. The BMZ then lists the different available services that are commissioned by the BMZ for each category. The GIZ is herein referenced in multiple functionalities: (1) as experts and consultants for engaging in developing countries and emerging markets (2) as instructors and advisors for the preparation of managers before they go abroad<sup>13</sup>, (3) as local contact persons with expertise in respective foreign market and with local networks, and (4) as trainers for employees of local partner businesses. The develoPPP.de project is prominently placed on the first page as its own category, promoting it as funding opportunity for business projects in developing countries.

#### 5.2.1.2 GIZ

Without referring to the private sector directly, the GIZ 2019 integrated company report speaks about the importance of reliable partnerships to reach development goals, political, economic, and social change (GIZ, 2020b). Prominently placed in the GIZ profile, the report refers to business partners, civil society actors, and research institutions “fostering successful interaction between development policy and other policy fields and areas of activity” (GIZ, 2020b, p. 6). New partnerships and alliances with the private sector are presented as a means to respond to changing forms of bilateral development cooperation. Cooperating with other actors is formulated as a success from past strategy cycles and put forward as an objective for a successful future of GIZ.

In the information document on the GIZ's consulting service on partnerships with the private sector which was published in 2011, notably before the BMZ strategy mentioned above, three kinds of cooperation with the private sector are differentiated: (1) development partnerships with the private sector (EPW 'Entwicklungspartnerschaften mit der Wirtschaft'), (2) PPP, and (3) stakeholder dialogue (GIZ, 2011a). Throughout these types of partnerships, the GIZ offers consulting services (concept, strategy, implementation), match-making services (local and international networking, stakeholders), technical support (tendering, controlling, auditing), and workshops (awareness-raising, stakeholders, monitoring-tools). These services are offered in eight different programs, that are listed but not presented further or explained, except for develoPPP.de, which is mentioned separately in the introduction to the paper. GIZ identifies not only private companies as partners for cooperation but also aims at helping other entities cooperate with the private sector, such as ministries of partner countries, government implementing agencies, associations, funding agencies, and NGOs<sup>14</sup>. The motivation and goals for such cooperation are shortly summarized in the overlap of interests of development cooperation projects and private interests and the potential synergies a successful cooperation can create.

For the lack of a current official private sector cooperation strategy document of GIZ, the relatively recent program evaluation paper will be consulted (GIZ, 2018). The 2018 evaluation of GIZ services for private sector cooperation shows a significantly broader range of programs that engage in private sector cooperation: bilateral programs, global programs, private-sector cooperation programs, and direct commissioning. The understanding of private sector cooperation was defined as “a joint planning and/or financing and/or implementation of activities with private sector stakeholders (companies, the private sector,

associations and business-related foundations)”<sup>15</sup> (GIZ, 2018, p. 4). The evaluation found that partners differ throughout the programs. While bilateral programs partner mostly with local companies, global programs and private-sector cooperation programs like develoPPP.de tend to partner with international companies. Through interviews with GIZ employees and an analysis of internal documentation, the evaluation concludes the main motivation for private sector cooperation projects throughout all programs is to contribute to development projects and boost their impact. This overarching goal is split into several impact hypotheses: Private corporations (1) create jobs and sustainably secure income<sup>16</sup>, (2) frame business processes in the partner country sustainably, (3) improve products and services locally, and (4) enhance sectoral and structural frameworks locally. GIZ aspires to reach these goals by way of different cooperation formats: (1) EPW & integrated EPW, (2) multi-stakeholder partnerships, (3) co-financing agreement, (4) strategic alliances, and (5) direct commission from private businesses. **Table 5** gives an overview of the differentiating factors between the different cooperation formats. Most private sector cooperation programs make use of several of these cooperation formats.

**Table 5: Overview of GIZ cooperation formats for private sector cooperation**

<b>Format</b>	<b>GIZ role</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Regional Focus</b>	<b>Contextual Focus</b>
<b>EPW &amp; integrated EPW</b>	financing and/or implementation and/or consulting	single private sector partner	bilateral, multilateral, regional	Education, knowledge and technology transfer, product and process innovation, certification of standards, market access for smallholders, access to services for disadvantaged populations
<b>Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships</b>	implementation, agenda-setting, policy preparation	Multiple stakeholders from politics, civil society, the private sector, and academia	Bilateral, multilateral,	Set sectoral standards and thematic priorities
<b>Co-financing Agreement</b>	implementation, financing	single private sector partner or private association	-	Strengthening existing projects through additional funds
<b>Strategic Alliances</b>	consulting, financing, implementation	one or several private sector partners	cross-regional	Same as EPW, except on a sectoral level, enhancing institutional and systemic frameworks
<b>Direct Commission</b>	implementation	single business partner	-	Non-charitable projects

### 5.2.2 What About Public-Private Partnerships?

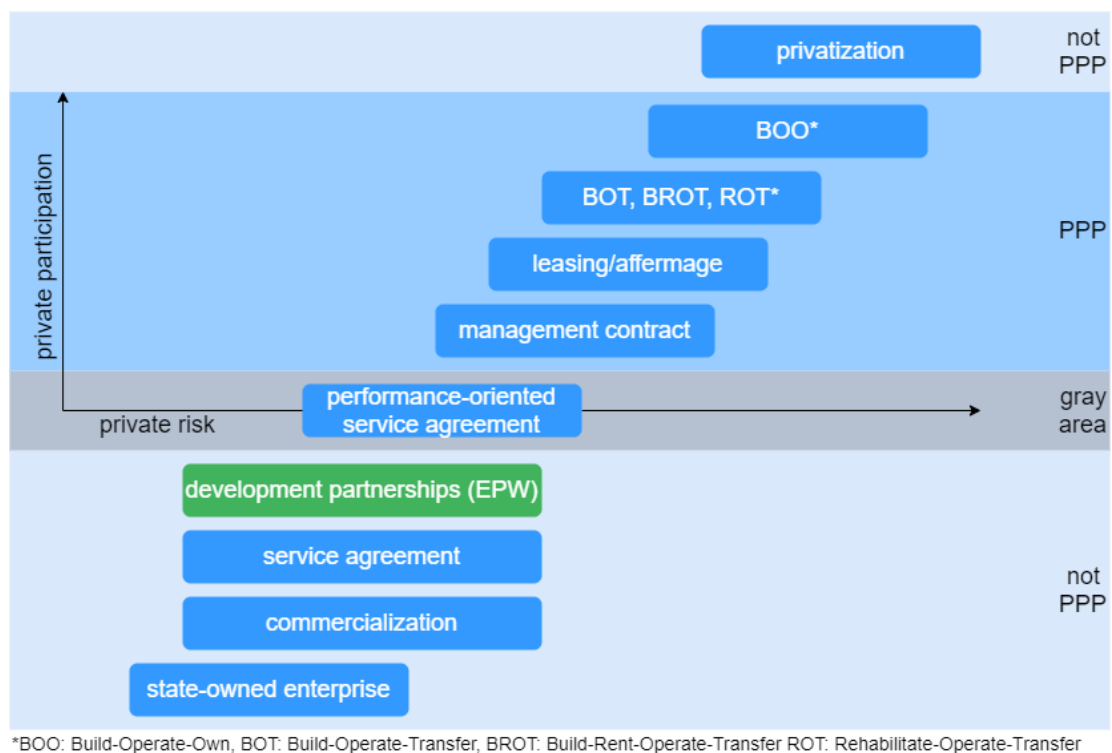
Generally, there is no mention of PPPs in the analyzed BMZ documents. However, in their online *glossary of development policy*, a short definition of PPPs is presented that reads

*„Public-private partnerships are cooperations between the public authorities and the private sector in the design, planning, creation, financing, management, operation and utilization of public services that were previously the sole responsibility of the state.”<sup>17</sup>*  
(BMZ, 2021c)

In the continuation of the glossary entry, reference is made to development cooperations with the private sector as “a special form of collaboration with the private sector”<sup>18</sup> (BMZ, 2021c, Public Private Partnership) for short- to medium-term joint projects. While EPW are not mentioned in the analyzed documents, the BMZ describes them on their website. As a goals of EPWs, four points are mentioned: mobilizing additional funds for development cooperation, facilitation knowledge and technology transfer to developing countries, improving working conditions, and protecting resources and the environment. The BMZ website links to four EPW programs: (1) integrated EPW, that are integrated directly into bilateral cooperation, to implement large-scale projects of infrastructure enhancement, (2) develoPPP.de, a project where financial and technical support is provided for commercial projects in developing or emerging countries, (3) Employment and Skills for Development in Africa (E4D), through which PPPs in eight African countries are supported, and (4) the Fragile States of West Africa Fund<sup>19</sup>, which supports EPW in four western African states. All four of these EPW types are implemented by GIZ, according to BMZ. However, as mentioned above, integrated EPW are understood by GIZ as a format for private sector cooperation, not a program. develoPPP.de and E4D are both active and ongoing projects within the GIZ. The Fragile States of West Africa Fund could not be found on the GIZ website.

In the 2011 strategy paper on private sector cooperation, GIZ mentions PPPs, differentiating it clearly from EPWs. While development partnerships are initiated by the private sector partner with an interest in developing countries and emerging markets, PPPs are commissioned by the public sector in economic and social infrastructure projects. **Figure 5** demonstrates which types of cooperation with the private sector can be classified as PPPs and which are not PPPs according to the 2011 GIZ strategy. Infrastructure, another indicator of PPPs as it is the main sector of activity, barely gets mentioned at all throughout the analyzed documents. The 2018 evaluation of the GIZ private sector cooperation measured the involvement of projects disaggregated for sectors and found that out of nearly 700 analyzed projects, only 33 were engaging in infrastructure development. The three top sectors were (1) rural development and food security, (2) energy, and (3) education. The BMZ documents do not mention infrastructure at all.





**Figure 5: Types of cooperation with the private sector depending on private risk and involvement according to GIZ (2011a)**

However, the 2018 evaluation of the GIZ private sector cooperation strategy ascribes EPW to the PPP funding scheme:

*“Initially, the most important format were the “development partnerships with private corporations” (EPW) under the PPP-Facility, a program that specifically supports cooperation between the private sector and development cooperation (nowadays develoPPP.de).”<sup>20</sup> (GIZ, 2018, p. 12)*

Hence, here the develoPPP.de program is – like the name suggests – counted as a PPP facilitation program. The report mentions a PPP-identifier which is attributed by the BMZ to projects in the private sector cooperation realm. However, there are no sources attributed to this information through which it could be verified or analyzed further.

### 5.2.3 develoPPP.de-Program

The develoPPP.de program, disguised as PPP program and defined as implementing project for EPWs by the BMZ, only provided a single program flyer on their website. All other documents were project reports. Applying the PPP codes to the develoPPP.de program brochure (GIZ, 2020a), resulted in the use of each ‘objectives’ code except for ‘advocacy’, as shown in **Figure 6**. The private partners it refers to are businesses with project ideas to be implemented in developing countries and emerging markets. The brochure highlights the package of a funding opportunity and the 20 year-long experience<sup>21</sup> of the program as features of partnering with a public partner. The funding structure is laid out by defining a minimum private investment

of 100.000 € and a maximum funding of 50% (but no more than 2 Mio. €) from the public side. Additionally, it is defined as essential feature to identify a long-term business interest in the project, that goes beyond the funding period. The problems the program seeks to solve in the development realm are not mentioned.



**Figure 6: PPP code distribution in the 2020 develoPPP.de booklet**

#### 5.2.4 Gender Equality at GIZ

To examine the GIZ's approach to gender equality, the company's current gender strategy was examined (GIZ, 2019), as well as a tool-kit for creating gender sensitive impact oriented monitoring systems for GIZ projects (GIZ, 2014). The analysis was based on codes, examining the general understanding of gender, the company's operational mechanisms to deal with gender, the gender balance within the organization, and the reflexivity of gender which is implemented through gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation processes.

The GIZ published a 'reloaded' – hence revised – gender strategy in 2019. Herein, the basic gender definition that was adopted company-wide reads:

*“Unlike biological sex, the term gender refers to social sex. This refers to socially constructed gender roles and relations, ideas and expectations. They are context-dependent, dynamic and changeable and are reflected, for example, in social norms, legislation, traditions and religions.”<sup>22</sup> (GIZ, 2020b, p. 16)*

In this strategy, the GIZ points out the importance of gender competences like critically reflecting on gender relations and stereotypes, sensitivity to inequalities and unequal power relations. It is pointed out how not only effects of gender inequality need to be combatted but the root causes need to be eliminated<sup>23</sup>. According to

the gender strategy paper, GIZ cultivates an inclusive understanding of gender, which means a non-binary understanding of gender. However, they acknowledge that a binary understanding of gender usually forms the basis of law and the prevailing social order<sup>24</sup>. The GIZ formulates gender equality as an essential attribute of GIZ as a company and of its work (GIZ, 2020b). GIZ as a company employed a percentage of 58.8% women in their workforce in 2019, 50% of the management board are women, 40% of the corporate unit heads, and 48% of department heads are women (GIZ, 2020b).

The operational mechanisms to deal with gender equality throughout the work of the GIZ are not made public. However, what is made publicly available in the depths of the GIZ publication database is a tool kit for designing a gender-sensitive impact-oriented monitoring system<sup>25</sup> (GIZ, 2014). In the foreword to this toolkit, it explains the commitment of GIZ to conduct a gender analysis for each project before its launch and include gender-disaggregated aspects in the obligatory project monitoring system. By anchoring gender aspects both, KPI and monitoring systems, GIZ ensures working towards gender equality in all project phases through controlling, implementation and reporting<sup>26</sup> (GIZ, 2014). While the gender analysis tool is not further explained, this toolkit gives an introduction and overview of the monitoring of gender relevant impacts. It is differentiated between non-personal indicators (e.g., measuring the impact of gender policy) and personal indicators (e.g., measuring individual perception, satisfaction, access to services). The personal indicators are divided into three types: (1) gender differentiated, which measures disaggregated changes specific to one gender group, (2) gender selective, which measures changes only in one gender group, and (3) gender open, which does not differentiate between genders and does not necessarily require gender disaggregated data.

### **5.2.5 Project Reports**

To not constrict this research to only systemic analysis, but also understand the implementation of set strategies, the analysis was further conducted on eleven develoPPP.de project reports, published between 2016 and 2021.

**Table 6** provides an overview of the project's topics, the partners they were/are implemented with, their timeframe and the countries of implementation.

Even though the gender strategy requires all GIZ projects to collect project relevant gender disaggregated data, these are not published in public project reports of develoPPP.de projects. The gender analysis found that two of the eleven analysed project reports presented gender disaggregated data in their goals & results section (organic avocado & sesame in Ethiopia (develoPPP.de, 2020b) and youth unemployment in MENA<sup>f</sup> (develoPPP.de, 2020a)). A third project (e-waste in India (develoPPP.de, 2020a)) mentions that women are especially affected by the problem the project tackles, however, no gender-disaggregated data is presented.

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<sup>f</sup> Middle East and North Africa

**Table 6: Overview of develoPPP.de project reports published between 2016-2021**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Private partner</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Country of Implementation</b>
<b>Cardiology Services for Children</b>	Drägerwerk AG & Co. KGaA	2013-2016	Bolivia
<b>Furniture Industry</b>	Häfele Vietnam LLC	2012-2015	Viet Nam
<b>E-Waste Recycling</b>	Microsoft Corporation India	2013-2015	India
<b>Clean Water</b>	ST Umwelt Systemtechnik GmbH, Ingenieurgesellschaft für Umwelt-schutz und Geotechnik mbH (GeoConsult), LITHEC GmbH	2013-2016	Tanzania
<b>Valerian Value Chain</b>	Dr. Willmar Schwabe, Galenpharm	2012-2016	Kyrgyzstan
<b>Clean Water &amp; Solar Energy</b>	German Water and Energy Group (GWE) pumpenboese GmbH, Bauer Water	2014-2016	Ghana
<b>Coffee Value Chain</b>	Original Food GmbH	2010-2018	Ethiopia
<b>Solar Power</b>	Solinc East Africa Ltd.	2014-2016	Kenya
<b>Vanilla Value Chain</b>	Symrise AG, Unilever, Save the Children	2014-2016	Madagascar
<b>Organic Avocado &amp; Sesame Oil</b>	Tradin Organic Agriculture B.V.	2018-2022	Ethiopia
<b>Youth Unemployment &amp; Digital Skills</b>	Orange S.A.	2020-2022	MENA (Ethiopia, Tunisia, Senegal, Cameroon, Jordan, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Guinea, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Sierra Leone)

However, when it comes to codes on PPP success factors, all projects provided material for coding in each of the categories: (1) objectives, (2) actors, (3) process, and (4) context. As shown in **Figure 7**, where a block grows each time a code is used, the most used codes were allocated from the objectives section. The most used codes are ‘objectives/skills & knowledge transfer’ and ‘objectives/local implementation’ with a total use of 48 and 46 times respectively and a peak use of 7 (skills & knowledge transfer for cardiology services for children in Bolivia (develoPPP.de, 2016d) and organic avocado & sesame in Ethiopia (develoPPP.de, 2020b)) and 6 (local implementation for coffee value chain in Ethiopia (develoPPP.de, 2018b) and vanilla value chain in Madagascar (develoPPP.de, 2018a)). The codes advocacy (11 instances) and policy (5 instances) were least used in the objectives section. In the actors’ section, the code ‘private partners chosen’ was used 41 times, while the code ‘public leadership’ was applied 26 times. The project reports barely described funding or operational features, hence the codes ‘sufficient funding’ and ‘solid

management structure' were only used very little. The report structure obliges to write a short evaluation of the project, which is why the respective code was applied about once in every document. Lastly, the context was described in some of the reports shortly, which is why some codes were used but all of them were used little.



**Figure 7: Code Matrix: PPP Success Factors of Recent develoPPP.de Projects**

*Note. For larger depiction, see Annex 6: Code Matrix PPP success factors of recent develoPPP.de projects*

Generally, seven of the presented projects were conducted with one private sector partner, four with multiple (clean water in Tanzania (develoPPP.de, 2016a), valerian value chain in Kyrgyzstan (develoPPP.de, 2016e), solar power in Kenya (develoPPP.de, 2018c), and vanilla value chain in Madagascar (develoPPP.de, 2018a).

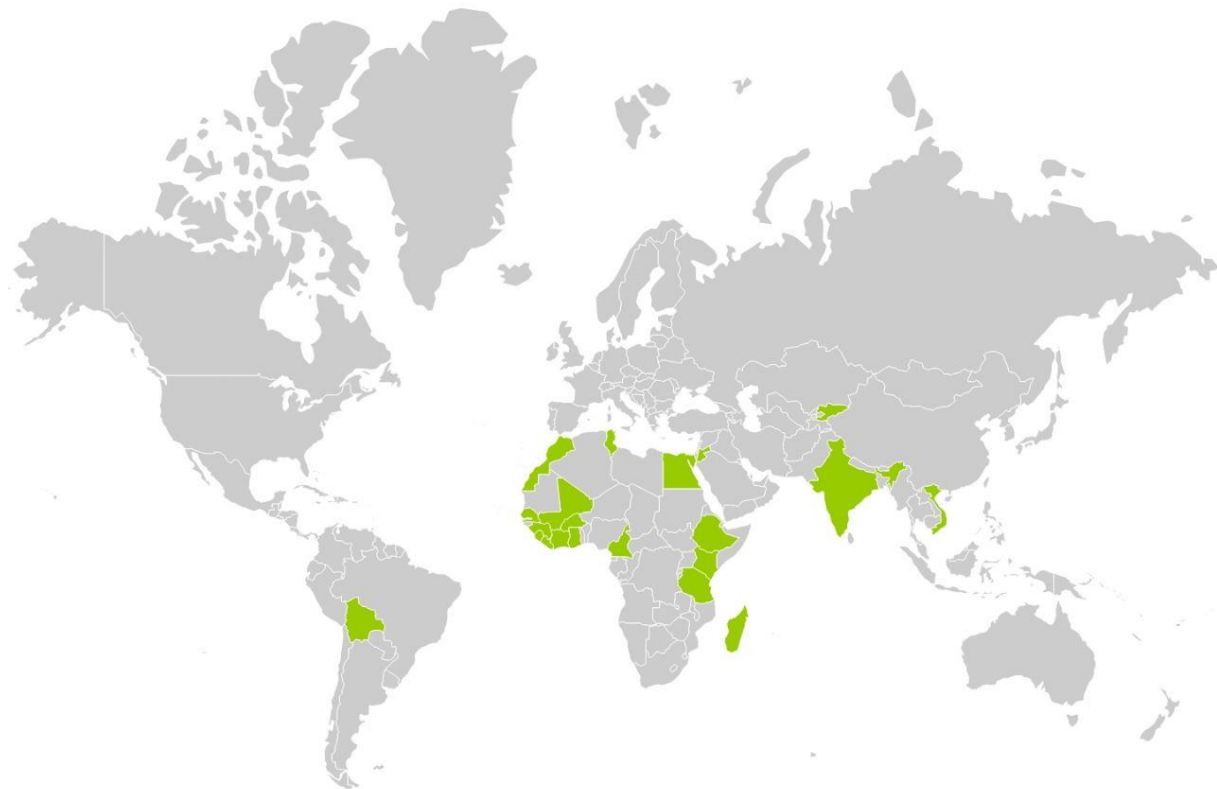
Some projects partnered with local organizations, such as

- (1) NGOs: cardiology services for children in Bolivia (develoPPP.de, 2016d), e-waste in India (develoPPP.de, 2016b), vanilla value chain in Madagascar (develoPPP.de, 2018a),
- (2) associations and unions: furniture industry in Viet Nam (develoPPP.de, 2016c), e-waste in India (develoPPP.de, 2016b), coffee value chain in Ethiopia (develoPPP.de, 2018b),
- (3) universities: cardiology services for children in Bolivia (develoPPP.de, 2016d), furniture industry in Viet Nam (develoPPP.de, 2016c), clean water in Tanzania (develoPPP.de, 2016a), or

(4) local public agencies: clean water & solar energy in Ghana (develoPPP.de, 2017).

Seven out of the eleven projects were commissioned for a period of three to four years, three were commissioned for five to six years and one project had a lifespan of nine years (coffee value chain in Ethiopia (develoPPP.de, 2018b)). Overall, the projects span from 2013 to 2022. The geographic distribution of projects is depicted in **Figure 8**.

**Figure 8: Geographic Distribution of develoPPP.de Projects From Reports Published 2016-2021g**



### 5.3 Analysis of the Case Study

#### 5.3.1 Findings, Patterns, and Relationships

Firstly, it is to be addressed how the private sector cooperation strategy paper (GIZ, 2011a) and the toolkit for gender sensitive impact-oriented monitoring of GIZ projects (GIZ, 2014) are rather old – seven and ten years. Hence, they are not the most current versions. But the time difference in publication dates lends itself to the analysis of changes in strategy over time. The most notable change in regard to the private sector cooperation strategy is the vast expansion of offered services. This holds true for both, BMZ and GIZ. Even within the short timeframe of three years, between the publication of the BMZ strategy on private sector cooperation and the BMZ overview of services for the private sector, shows that there have been many new

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<sup>g</sup> Note: this map is modelled after the commonly used Mercator projection, which distorts proportions increasingly with growing distance from the equator. Please refer to [thetruesize.com](http://thetruesize.com) for accurate size depictions.

services added. The previous mentions five points of contact, whereas the latter offers 31, spread over nine different areas of action. The sheer increase in numbers, points to an expansion not only in the number of services but also in the topics they cover. This indicates the success of private sector cooperation for German development cooperation. The same pattern can be observed when it comes to cooperation formats offered by the GIZ: From three listed opportunities for cooperation (EPW, PPP, stakeholder dialogue) in the 2011 strategy paper to five cooperation formats as laid out in **Table 5** previously. This development points to a broadening of offers, potentially to please increasing demand for different types of cooperation. It is to note, that the develoPPP.de program has been a steady part of the BMZ and GIZ strategies. However, the increase in numbers of both, cooperation formats and cooperation programs has led to a lack of coherence in the strategy for private sector cooperation. The abundance of cooperation offers is not only confusing for the researcher but was also noted as main critique by the 2018 private sector cooperation strategy evaluation (GIZ, 2018). The different programs and formats lack an overarching strategy as well as a coherent presentation to the public.

The targeted private sector partners remain the same throughout all analyzed documents: German SMEs. This is justified by BMZ in mentioning the strength of the German middle class<sup>27</sup>. The BMZ puts forward its motivation to export the “Made in Germany” concept, referencing to expertise and high quality. Its ‘selling point’ to the private partners are ethics and expansion. The ‘good deed’ is put forward, to appeal to the conscience of the private sector. It puts an ethical spin on expanding businesses in the hopes that this is motivation enough to overcome the potential difficulties of expanding into a developing country. As pictured above, in **Figure 8**, the regional focus has shifted more and more towards the African continent and the MENA region. This reflects the overall German development cooperation strategy which aims at strengthening German-African relations. In the analyzed flyers, Africa is highlighted as ‘regional focus’<sup>28</sup> and described as “continent of opportunity”<sup>29</sup> (BMZ, 2016b, p. 6). This narrative points at the same framing as described before: the BMZ wants to ‘sell’ development cooperation as lucrative opportunity for the private sector. Expanding into Africa is described as a win-win situation for both: the private sector gets an early foothold in emerging economies while on the receiving end, developing countries benefit from German expertise. Regarding the objectives formulated throughout the documents, the same pattern is confirmed again: skills- and knowledge transfer is by far the most mentioned objective throughout all documents on private sector cooperation, followed by local implementation of projects. Hence, businesses are recruited to expand sustainably into developing countries mainly to share their expertise. Thematically, this expertise permeates all sectors, with most projects treating rural development and food security, directly followed by energy and education (GIZ, 2018). According to the evaluation of the GIZ private sector cooperation strategy, only few projects are active in the sector of peace and security or have no sectoral focus. The examined develoPPP.de projects focus mostly on rural development and food security, too, with five agricultural projects.

Although hardly any mention was made of women and gender equality throughout the private sector cooperation strategy documents or develoPPP.de project descriptions, the GIZ has a wide-reaching gender



strategy. It became evident when analyzing the current GIZ gender strategy paper, that it permeates each single project conducted by the GIZ. However, the lack of mentions of gender or women in particular point to an internal gender strategy only, that is not actively communicated to the public. While the strategy lays out the obligatory gathering of gender-sensitive impact data, this data is not publicized, maybe for data privacy concerns or for ethical concerns. Since there is no official statement on this, the researcher can only guess what motivates the GIZ not to publicly promote their exemplary and far-reaching approach to gender. The GIZ obviously takes gender equality exceptionally seriously, presenting an immaculate gender balance of their own organization in the 2019 company report. Each of the GIZ documents uses gendered language following the recent standard. In fact, the GIZ does so more rigidly than BMZ publications. Their understanding of gender is intersectional and holistic, as they understand the social and cultural construction of gender in relation to other aspects of cultural and social life, intersecting with categories like sexual identity, sexuality, class, civil status<sup>30</sup>, worldview, (dis-)abilities, skin color, and age. This approach is not only implemented internally to the organization but also operationally in all projects conducted. In the Introduction to the tool kit for gender sensitive impact-oriented monitoring, GIZ appeals to its employees, putting forward how the involvement of everyone is crucial to stop gender-based discrimination<sup>31</sup>. Going back to the measurements laid out in the methodology chapter, it can be concluded that the GIZ approach to gender equality is extensive, as it goes inside and outside, and profound, as it pertains different levels of gender. Operationally, GIZ makes gender strategies mandatory for each project in their portfolio. Even though gender data are not regularly published, they are collected. Hence, they use a reflective approach but lack in transparency.

### 5.3.2 EPW vs. PPP

Without a doubt, the most significant finding of this analysis were EPWs. While this research set out to uncover the strategic implementation of PPPs in the context of German development cooperation, it can be deducted from the results outlined above, that there is little to no presence of PPP to be found. However, it is debatable, whether the German EPW approach is to be seen as surrogate, additional offer besides PPP, or imitation. The 2011 GIZ strategy clearly differentiates EPW and PPP, as was shown above in **Figure 5**, based on private risk and private participation. For both categories, it attributes too little to EPWs to be counted as PPPs. Revisiting the official World Bank definition of PPP, their key parameters become clear:

*“A long-term contract between a private party and a government entity, for providing a public asset or service, in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibility and remuneration is linked to performance.”*  
World Bank (2020a)

Comparing it to the BMZ definition of EPW, the main differences can easily be identified, as shown in **Table 7**:

*“EPWs are short- to medium-term joint projects between companies and development cooperation implementing organizations. In a development partnership, both partners act on an equal footing: Both anticipate benefits from the partnership, but both also share in the costs and implementation of the projects.”<sup>32</sup>*  
(BMZ, 2021b)

**Table 7: Differentiating Factors Between the World Bank's PPPs and BMZ's EPWs**

	<b>PPP</b>	<b>EPW</b>
<b>Time Frame</b>	long-term contract	short to medium-term project
<b>Partners</b>	a private party and a government entity	companies and development cooperation implementing organizations
<b>Initiation</b>	by the government	by the private entity
<b>Sector / Activity</b>	infrastructure	no sectoral focus
<b>Risk</b>	significant private risk, remuneration linked to performance	equally shared costs and benefits, funding independent of performance

As shown above, the EPW and PPP approaches differ significantly in timeframe, initiation, sectoral framing, and risk-sharing. However, in the online glossary of BMZ, the PPP entry redirects directly to the entry describing EPWs. This fact lends itself to the interpretation that BMZ understands PPPs not as an additional offer besides PPPs. This still leaves two options for the relationship from EPWs and PPPs: surrogate and imitation. The 2018 evaluation of the GIZ's private sector cooperation describes EPW as part of the BMZ's PPP-facility. Additionally, the naming of their main EPW program as 'develoPPP.de' points to an imitation rather than a surrogate. However, the significant differences in approaches as shown in **Table 7**, seem to point at the provision of a 'cooler cousin' standing in for PPPs. The program seems to have a wider audience, since it does not restrict itself to the infrastructure sector. Additionally, the risk-sharing and funding scheme of EPWs is economically more attractive than that of PPPs.

### 5.3.3 Unexpected Findings

It should be noted how difficult it was to attain sufficient public information documents for an analysis of the German development strategy for private sector cooperation. While the GIZ gender strategy (GIZ, 2019) and integrated company report (GIZ, 2020b) were prominently placed on the website, it took some significant digging to obtain the private sector cooperation strategy paper (GIZ, 2011a) and the toolkit for gender sensitive impact-oriented monitoring of GIZ projects (GIZ, 2014). What is unexpected about this is the perceived reluctance of communication about private sector cooperation – be it in the form of EPWs or PPPs – since literature paints a different picture. As laid out in both, the literature review, and the theory chapter, private sector cooperation – and PPPs specifically – are often criticized for their overly positive rhetoric and performative action rather than true impact (Compagnon, 2012). This led to the assumption that

documentation would be easy to find. However, it seems like only selected documents are made available. From their personal experience working with the GIZ, the researcher knows for a fact that there are more documents rotated internally than presented on the website.

A possible reason for the scarcity of strategic documents on private sector cooperation is most likely the lack of a coherent strategy as noted above. This connects to the next unexpected finding: the relative absence of PPPs in German development cooperation. Even though [develoPPP.de](http://develoPPP.de) prominently puts 'PPP' in their title, it becomes clear from the analysis, that these projects cannot be categorized as PPP. Relating back to the previously presented literature, PPPs were presented as a poster child of private sector cooperation (P. Pattberg & Widerberg, 2016). EPWs being presented as the German version of PPPs, created a considerable amount of confusion in the research process. Due to the incoherence of the private sector cooperation strategy, this resulted in more extensive focus on understanding this strategy than previously anticipated. From an analytical point of view, this incoherence points to the attempt of BMZ to put their own spin on private sector cooperation. From a constructivist standpoint, this approach indicates an attempt a shaping the set norms of the SDGs to a point where it suits the national German cultural, social and political identity. This can have different motivators: Either BMZ disagrees with the PPP approach or it wants to prominently place a counterexample. An overlap of both is possible and likely. Putting a 'German approach' out into international development cooperation can result in diplomatic identity building and re-shaping of private sector cooperation norms. However, if this is the motivation, the BMZ should revisit their strategy and reformulate it to be more coherent.

Lastly, the lack of sectoral definition of both, the GIZ strategy and the projects was not previously anticipated. This goes hand in hand with the absence of coherence in the overall strategy for private partner cooperation in German development cooperation. As it was shown in

**Table 6**, some of the projects do work on infrastructure projects but there is no strategic limitation to only infrastructure projects. While infrastructure projects are in no way excluded, the evaluation report on private sector cooperation finds that out of 12 thematic sectors in which projects were implemented, ranging from rural development/food security, to health, infrastructure only ranks ninth (GIZ, 2018). However, it is unclear how 'infrastructure' is defined here, since projects on technical infrastructure like energy, water and sanitation, or waste management, and projects on social infrastructure, like education, and health are listed separately. The report gives no further explanation for this separation or an underlying understanding of infrastructure. As little as it was anticipated to not find a PPP strategy, the encompassing cross-sectoral approach was also a surprising find. However, to not focus on one sector only does not necessarily have negative effects. It allows private sector partners from all sectors to engage in development projects and thus opens up the opportunity for more private development funding, possibly resulting in more enhanced lives and circumstances.

### 5.3.4 Hermeneutical Considerations

Following the hermeneutic tradition of considering a text in its parts and as a whole in and in relation to historical and cultural context, the researcher examines the two relationships a text has – to its author and to its reader. As it was pointed out above, the GIZ private sector cooperation strategy paper was published in 2011. Hence, it describes their strategy at a historical point in time, when BMZ had been using PPPs in their work for 13 years (GIZ, 2018). Although PPPs were officially introduced at the WSSD in 2002, BMZ adopted the concept already in 1998. However, in 2011, the SDGs had not yet been formulated and the preceding MDGs focused more on developing countries and aimed at solving poverty only, as opposed to the universal and holistic approach of the SDGs. Fast-forward to the documents published 2016-2020, these are all based directly or indirectly (through BMZ strategy) on the SDGs. Since the signing of the accompanying Agenda 2030 resolution, the SDGs have been setting the agendas of the world's nations. This allows to draw conclusions from both, adherence and neglect, of set norms. In development cooperation, a nation never acts isolated since this field of politics is inherently multinational. Thus, the choice of Germany to rephrase PPPs into their own version points to a diplomatic strategy, supporting the previously outlined point above. When interpreting the chosen documents, it is important to keep in mind the intended audience, as they were not originally written for academic research. Based on to the direct address of companies, they are the primarily intended reader. Accordingly, it can be deducted that the analyzed material is mainly formulated as promotional material, most likely by a public relations professional, to gain new cooperations. Therefore, the relatively high number of mentions of funding and support as opposed to policy and advocacy objectives does not necessarily signify the absence of these objectives in the BMZ and GIZ strategy. Rather, it shows an adaptation to the 'attractive' buzzwords for the private sector. Reading through the *develoPPP.de* project reports, it becomes clear that besides the economic motivation, the projects put a focus on local objectives, too.

Regarding the relationship between text and interpreter, it is to note that the researcher is well phrased handling such documents and fluent in 'policy speak'. This makes the confusion around the BMZ and GIZ's strategies for private sector cooperation even more significant. Additionally, being societally read as a woman and identifying culturally as a woman, the applied gender lens in this research is supported by a personal interest in gender equality. However, the researcher tried their best to keep a professional distance. That said, in the search for understanding in the hermeneutic sense, the theories adopted for this thesis were naturally influenced by the researchers own stance on feminism, not only academically. Hence, the interpretations of phrases might over-assimilate concepts of feminism, like for example taking textual signs like gendered language as indicator for a lack of gender equality.

## 5.4 Discussion

In the beginning of this thesis, there were three dichotomies presented from academic literature which shall be used to structure the following discussion: (1) traditional donors and international development vs. emerging donors and global development, (2) donors' intent vs. recipient's needs, and (3) public vs. private interests.

### 5.4.1 International Development vs. Global Development

Since Germany historically is a traditional donor and not an emerging one, this part of the first presented dichotomy will be omitted. The German approach to development, however, seems to be guided by mostly bilateral projects and relations. This becomes especially clear with the definition of a fixed set of partner countries in the newly published BMZ strategy (BMZ, 2020). Hence, the German understanding of development cooperation is one of international development, since strategically, they place high importance on the state relationships. Earlier in this thesis, it was established that generally, multilateralism demands participants to abstain from immediate or situational national interests for the long-term 'greater good' (Caporaso, 1992). However, the German approach observed here seems to not be free of strategically diplomatic intentions. As a prime example, the geographic focus on countries of origin and host countries from which refugees enter Germany<sup>33</sup>, cannot be solely attributed to selfless aid allocation. Rather, it points directly to domestic political aims of reducing the refugee flow to Germany. Duffield et al. (2001) describe the biggest risk that inherits the politization of the aid and development sector, to subordinating humanitarian objectives to politically strategic ones. However, while Germany is actively pursuing international development with own political interests in mind, it is also the second largest overall contributor in terms of total ODA and has been found to have positive impact overall (OECD, 2020).

### 5.4.2 Donor's Intent vs. Recipient's Needs

While Khaderi et al. (2019) found extensive tendering processes of PPPs a problematic hindrance, EPWs tend to solve this problem by shifting the responsibility for project initiation to the private sector. However, the complex process observed by Khaderi et al. (2019) is replicated in the case of BMZ and GIZ in an incoherent strategy for private sector cooperation within which private partners can easily get lost, as it was found by the strategic evaluation of GIZ (2018). To fulfil recipient's actual needs, the need for rigid monitoring and evaluation processes, and the necessity for support in comprehensive design, and capacity development structures was pointed out, to ensure site-specific solutions (Houdret et al., 2020, p. 20). The criticism for a lack of monitoring mechanisms of PPPs (Gideon & Unterhalter, 2017; Kaplan et al., 2019) cannot be applied to the GIZ. However, the lack of transparency with the collected data makes it difficult to assess their impact from the outside.

Since this thesis does not include the voices of affected communities and individuals, the recipient's needs can only be examined through secondary sources. In the German approach to private sector cooperation and specifically EPWs, evaluations found that the outputs and outcomes have positive effects on local

communities. However there was no noticeable impact found (DEval, 2017; GIZ, 2018). The develoPPP.de program was found to contribute little to systemic changes, whereas it does help to establish strategic and sustainable strongholds for further development cooperation (DEval, 2017). However, even though these evaluations were conducted through external agencies, DEval is still part of the German development sector, as was explained in the theory chapter previously. Both evaluation bodies are located in Germany and evaluated the impact of the projects only through GIZ sources. Hence, Duffield et al.'s, (2001) observation of development being inherently paternalist when states assume that they are able to better assess the needs of local populations than the affected communities and trained field personnel, holds true here. The focus on skills and knowledge-sharing in the BMZ's and GIZ's approach to EPWs corroborates this point further, by painting a picture of German businesses as the 'expert' and developing countries as the 'students'. The white Western expert applies their Western scientific knowledge on 'site' in the Third World, imposing the Western capitalist paradigm on local communities in 'their own best interest'. Escobar (1995/2012), an avid proponent of the poststructuralist post-development theory, sees the role of the 'expert' in the development discourse as highly critical, as it strengthens uneven power relations further, instead of deconstructing them.

#### **5.4.3 Public vs. Private Interest**

In the analysis, it was found that the way EPWs and develoPPP.de specifically are portrayed by the BMZ and GIZ, the main interest may be perceived to be on the public side. However, since the analysed documents are mostly advertising material to recruit partners, the communication is of course geared towards their interests. Since the evaluations of both, the GIZ strategy on public sector cooperation and the develoPPP.de program, found significant effects of their work, it can be said that the public interests are met, too. Bull and McNeill's (2019) suggestion of company reputation to be the main motivator for the private side of PPPs can neither be confirmed, nor denied. However, from the material analysed, it seems like the main motivator for private companies would be the expansion into new markets. But since EPWs do not deal with infrastructure projects that were previously conducted by public actors only, the previously discussed concern against privatization of government services is not met (Bull & McNeill, 2019; Miraftab, 2004; P. H. Pattberg et al., 2012a).

#### **5.4.4 Gender**

Lastly, as the gender lens was applied to GIZ, a thorough strategy taking on gender equality within GIZ internally and externally was found. Other researchers found a complete disregard of gendered power relations and intersectionality in development cooperation projects (Lanz et al., (2020), which cannot be confirmed for GIZ. However, the units of analysis were GIZ's own documents, hence, likely shortcomings are not pointed out. Here, again, the voices of the affected communities would be of incredible value. Storeng and Bengy Puyvallée (2018) suggest the inclusion of local civil society organizations specifically geared towards women as one solution, giving better access to women and their voices. A shortcoming in the GIZ's approach to gender can be observed: western-centric universalism. The standards and measurements applied are the gender understandings formulated in Western feminist scholarship and translated into German

domestic policies and norms. Post-colonial and postmodern approaches demand analyses that are informed by locally and historically specific factors (Tickner, 2008; (Cold-Ravnkilde et al., 2018). This is an area in which BMZ and GIZ still need to improve.

## 5.5 Chapter Summary

Coding and analysing the chosen documents led to the understanding that the German approach to private sector cooperation offers a high number of opportunities for cooperation that have all been evaluated to have positive outcomes. However, the strategic approach was found to be incoherent. Especially the disguise of EPWs as PPPs led to confusion initially. Through analysis, it was determined that PPPs and EPWs are essentially two different approaches to cooperating with the private sector. Other than PPPs, EPWs put much emphasis on the equality between partners and the economic interests of the private stakeholder. The objective, which was named most throughout all documents, which had originally not been part of the code-set, was 'skills and knowledge-transfer'. This poses a dilemma for poststructuralist post-development theorists, as it imposes Western values on local communities.

As for the approach of projects to gender equality, the project reports themselves did not offer any conclusion. But the GIZ-wider gender strategy offered the explanation, that their gender concept is so deeply engrained in the company's identity through mandatory operational processes including gender sensitive approaches. However, even though gender disaggregated is said to be collected, it is not published and thus lacks transparency



## 6 CONCLUSION

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### 6.1 Understanding the Role of Women in Private Sector Cooperation Projects

This thesis addressed several complex issues at the intersection of an interdisciplinary research question. The researcher set out to understand private sector cooperation in transnational development cooperation through a gender lens. Introduced at the 2002 Johannesburg WSSD, PPPs were considered the new way of saving the world (at least a little bit). They are supposed to solve two problems at once: helping to close the growing infrastructure gap while at the same time taking some of the pressure away from the public sector by sharing risks and costs with the private sector. By studying the German Corporation of Development Cooperation's approach in a case study, the thesis wanted to examine the national strategy to private sector cooperation. For this purpose, the GIZ's private sector cooperation program *develoPPP.de* lent itself perfectly. Motivated by little found information on PPPs effect on gender equality, the researcher set out to uncover gender relations in German PPPs. The gender approach taken, however, was not intended to be one only looking at equal representation. Its ambitious intent was to uncover the deeper understanding of gender and its operational implications. Concretely, the research questions that laid at the basis of this thesis asked what the German approach to PPPs is, by inquiring who the partners are, what objectives these partnerships set out to reach and with what operational mechanisms these partnerships are implemented. Particularly, this thesis sought to better understand how women are included in the processes and frameworks of public-private partnerships in German multilateral development cooperation.

The main challenges for PPP projects were identified in three dichotomies: (1) traditional donors and international development vs. emerging donors and global development, (2) donors' intent vs. recipient's needs, and (3) public vs. private interests. Starting from a common ground – the UN Sustainable Development Goals – the interdisciplinarity of this thesis demanded theory and methodology to bridge the fields of international relations, development cooperation, feminism. Looking at global development cooperation, the dependency theorists offer a highly critical view of development cooperation and the politization of aid. Understanding how the highly complex development sector works – on a global and a German national level – gives insight into the institutionalization of a sensitive matter. Zooming into one area of development cooperation, the infrastructure gap, it was explored how the inclusion of the private sector has great potential as well as menace for society, local communities, and the development sector. The cross-cutting theme of gender was explored through feminist IR theory and the GAD approach, pointing at the importance of understanding gender equality as including both, women, and men. Additionally, it was pointed out, how infrastructure, too, is gendered.

## 6.2 Results obtained – Where are the German PPPs?

With a multi-layered approach, the thesis examined several types of documents (strategic papers, promotion flyers, evaluations, and project reports) from three different sources (BMZ, GIZ, and develoPPP.de) by applying two sets of codes, one regarding PPPs and the other regarding gender equality. These codes were developed by combining the approaches of several scholars to one coherent framework. The code set examining PPPs explored the objectives, context, actors, and processes. The set of codes inspecting gender equality inquired about the understanding of gender, gender balance, gender strategy and reflexivity.

Through this strategy, the thesis found that instead of applying PPPs, the German development cooperation approaches private sector cooperation with a different format, disguised as PPPs: development partnerships with the economy – short ‘EPWs’. However, since the BMZ pretends they are PPPs – by calling the project surrounding them develoPPP.de and in their strategic approach, the PPP analysis was helpful to understand what differentiates them from the PPP approach. Hence, to answer the first set of research questions, PPPs will be exchanged with EPWs: German development cooperation partners mostly with German ‘Mittelstand’ [SMEs]. Other than PPPs, EPWs put much emphasis on the equality between partners and the economic interests of the private stakeholder. The two main objectives found are (1) skills and knowledge sharing and (2) local implementation. Hence, EPWs help private businesses expand into developing countries while at the same time encouraging them to share their expertise with local populations. Especially the objective of skills and knowledge sharing that most of the examined EPWs had is of interest here, as it was not included in the initial coding system. This was mainly due to it not being discussed in the literature used to build the framework. However, its prevalence in the sources could not be ignored and the coding system had to be informed by the process.

Further, to answer how women are included in PPPs – hence EPWs – at GIZ, the answer must be given somewhat cautiously. The thesis found an extensive and exemplary approach to gender equality within the company. Exemplary, because it upholds a progressive and intersectional company-wide understanding of gender, shows an impressive gender balance throughout the company, and takes a gender sensitive approach to operational processes. That said, the researcher was confronted with a lack of transparency regarding project data on gender equality. Hence, theoretically, gender considerations are included in every single GIZ project. However, the implementation of this could not be verified.

## 6.3 Recommendation & Concluding Remarks

To conclude, this thesis found two major areas in which enhancements are needed: the incoherent strategic approach to private sector partnerships at BMZ and the transparency regarding operational gender equality in GIZ. Especially the confusing disguise of EPWs as PPPs should be addressed strategically. Of course, a rebranding of an established program like develoPPP.de after more

than 20 years in existence is not an easy task. But essentially disguising business expansion into emerging markets as PPPs is simply factually wrong. The positive developmental effect of develoPPP.de programs is not to be undermined and has been extensively examined, discussed and confirmed in a recent evaluation by DEval. However, continuing this route could lead to an accusation of 'blue-washing' in German development cooperation. To end on a hopeful note, the researcher expects a change in the strategy by BMZ within the next year, possibly months. Based on the recent publication of a new BMZ strategy, combined with the evaluation of GIZ's private sector cooperation which came to the same conclusion, it is likely, that the current approach is being revised as we speak. So, maybe – hopefully – an improvement in coherency and designation is near.

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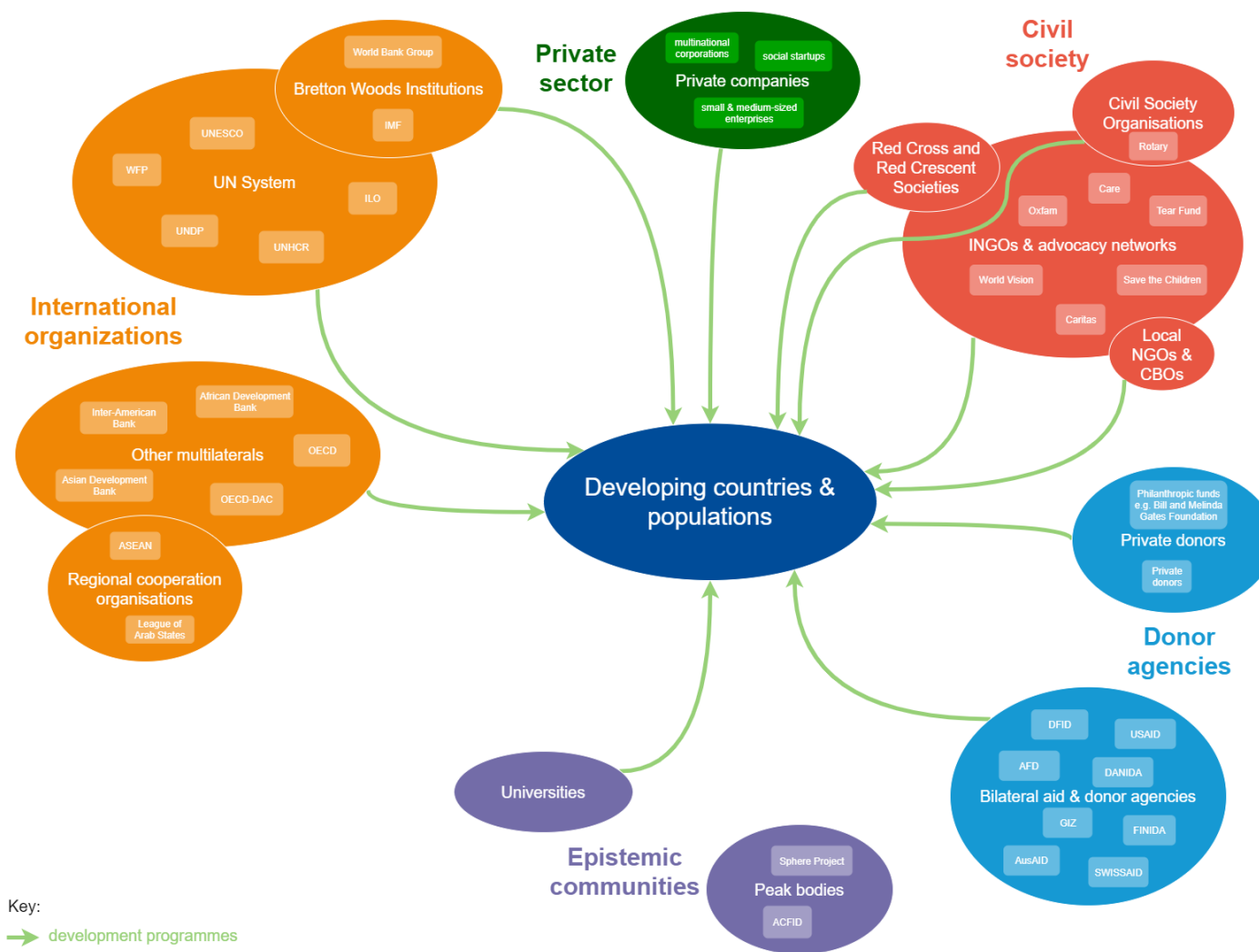
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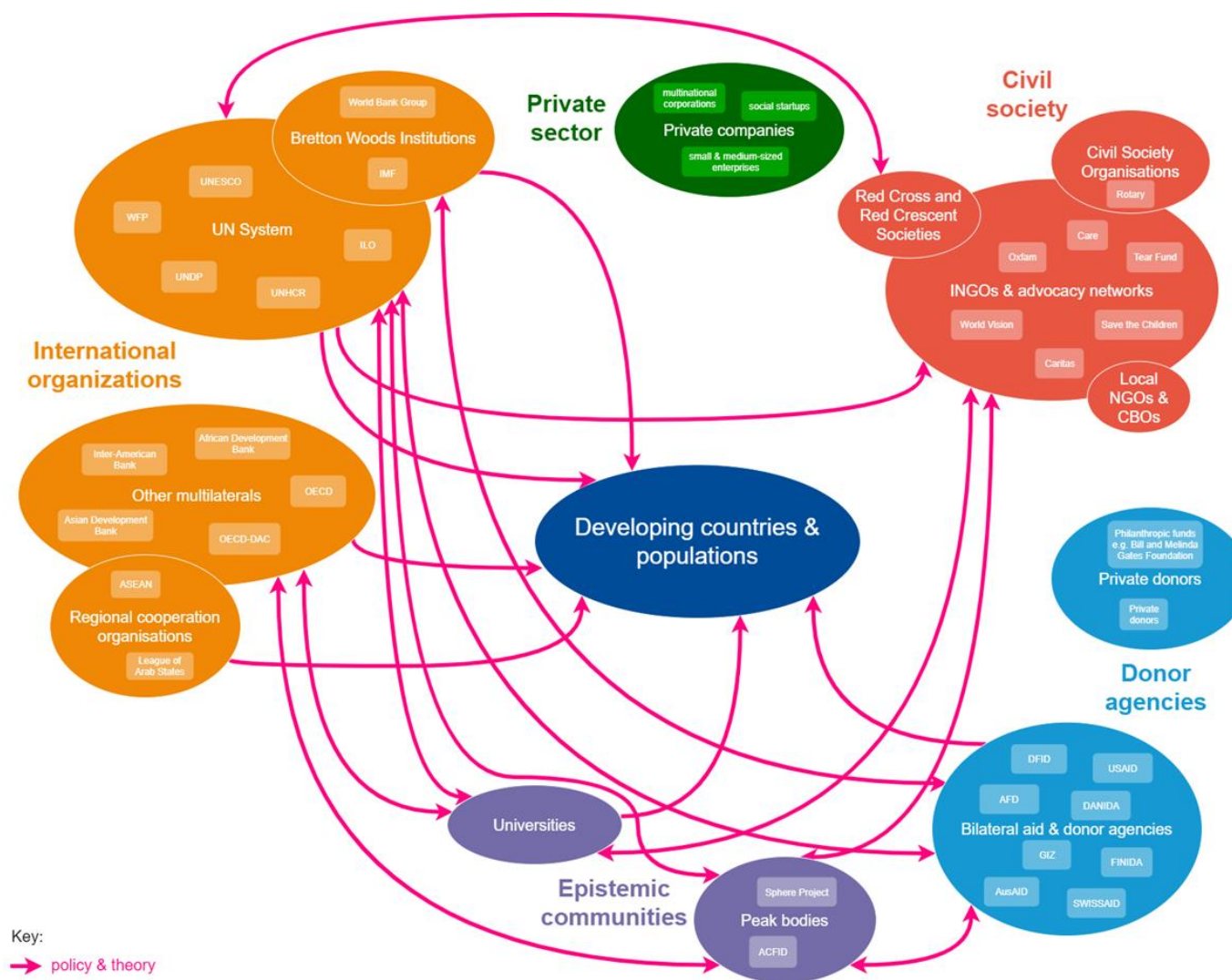
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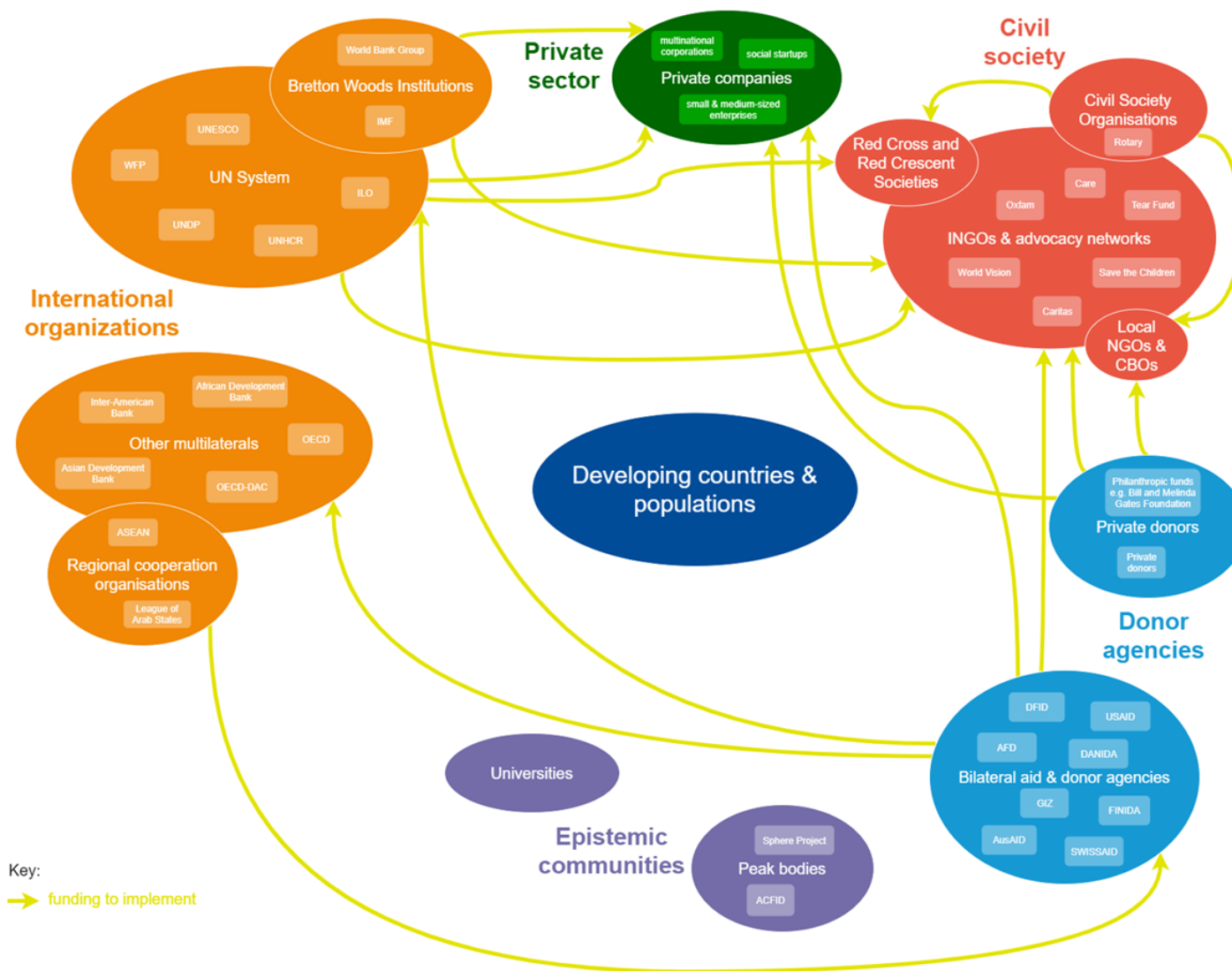
# ANNEX 1: TRANSNATIONAL NON-STATE ACTORS OF THE AID AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, ADAPTED FROM WARE (2013), RISSE (2008), AND SIMMONS AND MARTIN (2008) – DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES



## ANNEX 2: TRANSNATIONAL NON-STATE ACTORS OF THE AID AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, ADAPTED FROM WARE (2013), RISSE (2008), AND SIMMONS AND MARTIN (2008) – POLICY & THEORY

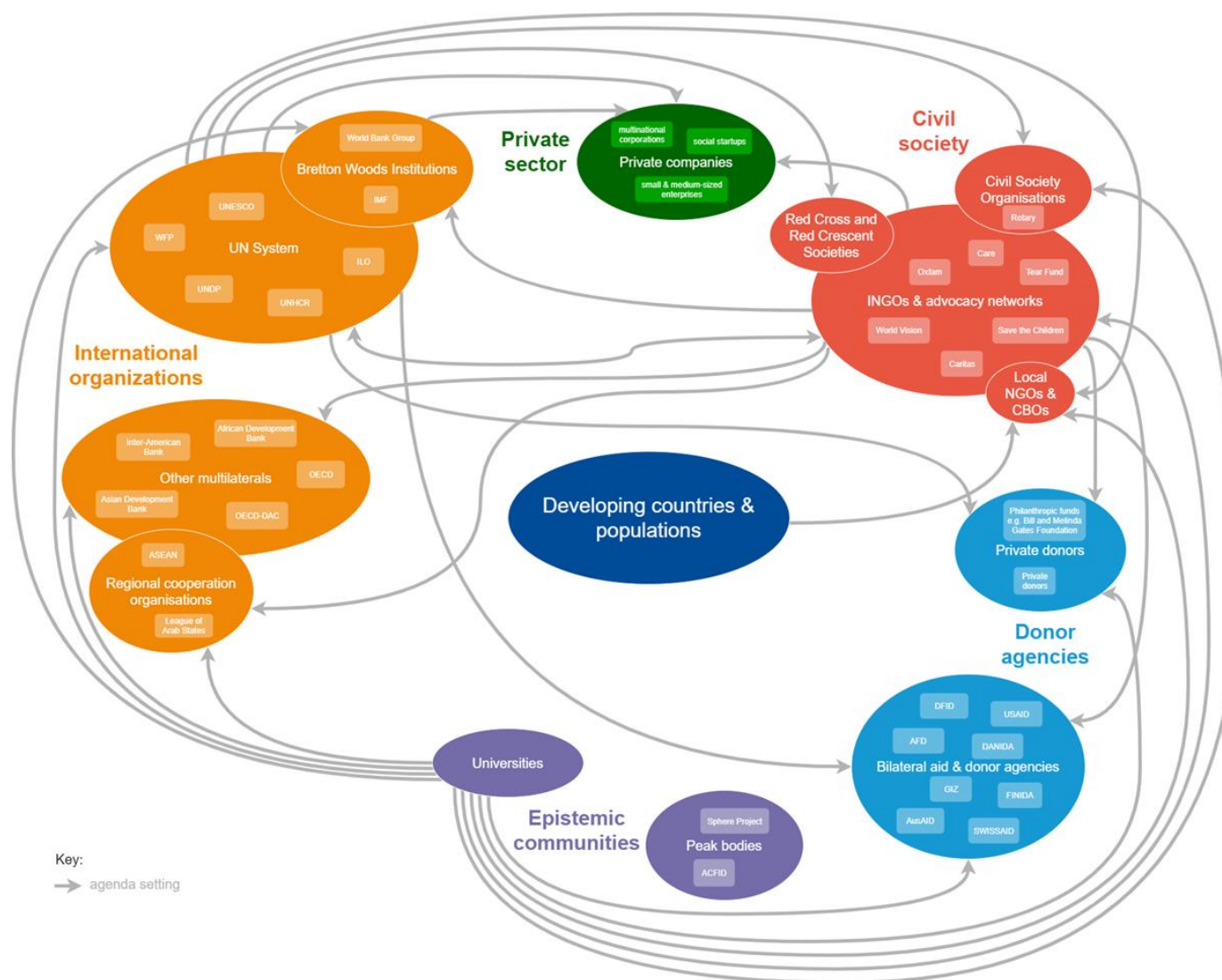


# ANNEX 3: TRANSNATIONAL NON-STATE ACTORS OF THE AID AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, ADAPTED FROM WARE (2013), RISSE (2008), AND SIMMONS AND MARTIN (2008) – FUNDING TO IMPLEMENT





# ANNEX 4: TRANSNATIONAL NON-STATE ACTORS OF THE AID AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, ADAPTED FROM WARE (2013), RISSE (2008), AND SIMMONS AND MARTIN (2008) – AGENDA SETTING





## ANNEX 5: CODING SYSTEM

Codes	Frequency
Total Codesystem	885
<b>GENDER total</b>	<b>253</b>
Gender balance of organization	74
Understanding of Gender	
Common sense assumptions	27
Definition of Gender	22
Programme Operations	
Gender Strategy? y/n	19
Operational gender mechanisms	78
Transparency & Reflexivity	
Disaggregated gender data? y/n	15
Gender evaluation aspects	18
<b>PPP total</b>	<b>632</b>
objectives	
skills & knowledge transfer	71
local implementation	66
resource mobilization	32
advocacy	16
policy	11
operational	45
actors	
private partners chosen	80
public leadership	68
process	
realistic but ambitious goal-setting	71
sufficient funding	32
solid management structure	20
monitoring, reporting & evaluation	20
context	
minimum-criteria of conductiveness	14
enabling political and social context	59
solvable problems	27

## ANNEX 6: CODE MATRIX PPP SUCCESS FACTORS OF RECENT DEVELOPPP.DE PROJECTS

		cardiology services for children Bolivia (2013-2016)	furniture industry Viet Nam (2012-2015)	e-waste recycling India (2013-2015)	clean water Tanzania (2013-2016)	valerian value chain Kyrgyzstan (2012-2016)	clean water & solar energy Ghana (2014-2016)	coffee value chain Ethiopia (2010-2018)	solar power Kenya (2014-2016)	vanilla value chain Madagascar (2014-2019)	organic avocado & sesame Ethiopia (2018-2022)	youth unemployment MENA (2020-2022)
objectives	skills & knowledge transfer	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	local implementation	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	resource mobilization	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	advocacy	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	policy	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	operational	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
actors	private partners chosen	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	public leadership	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
process	realistic but ambitious goal-setting	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	sufficient funding	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	solid management structure	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	monitoring, reporting & evaluation	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
context	minimum-criteria of conductiveness	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	enabling political and social context	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	solvable problems	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

## ANNEX 7: CODE MATRIX GENERAL DOCUMENTS

[illegible]

## ENDNOTES: GERMAN ORIGINAL FORMULATIONS

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<sup>1</sup> Chancen für nachhaltige Entwicklung

<sup>2</sup> Leistungsspektrum

<sup>3</sup> Beratungsangebot

<sup>4</sup> Mittelständische Unternehmen, kleine und mittlere Unternehmen, KMU

<sup>5</sup> Hohe Innovationskraft

<sup>6</sup> Die Deutsche Entwicklungszusammenarbeit ist mit ihren Durchführungsorganisationen in mehr als 130 Entwicklungs- und Schwellenländern vor Ort vertreten.

<sup>7</sup> Herkunfts- und Aufnahmeländer der Flüchtlinge

<sup>8</sup> Nur gemeinsam mit der Privatwirtschaft können wir in unseren Partnerländern breitenwirksames und nachhaltiges Wachstum [...] erreichen.

<sup>9</sup> Technologie- und Wissenstransfer

<sup>10</sup> Fluchtursachen bekämpfen – Perspektiven vor Ort schaffen

<sup>11</sup> Sie wollen sich in einem Entwicklungs- oder Schwellenland engagieren?

<sup>12</sup> Ethisch motivierte Kapitalanlage

<sup>13</sup> für Ihr Management zur Vorbereitung auf einen Einsatz im Ausland

<sup>14</sup> Ministerien, staatliche Durchführungsorganisationen, Verbände, Fördereinrichtungen, Nichtregierungsorganisationen, etc.

<sup>15</sup> eine partnerschaftliche Planung und/oder Finanzierung und/oder Durchführung von Aktivitäten mit Wirtschaftsakteuren (Unternehmen, verfasste Wirtschaft, Verbände und unternehmensnahe Stiftungen)

<sup>16</sup> Unternehmen schaffen nachhaltige Arbeitsplätze + Einkommensmöglichkeiten

<sup>17</sup> Public Private Partnerships (öffentlich-private Partnerschaften, PPP) sind Kooperationen von öffentlicher Hand und privater Wirtschaft beim Entwerfen, bei der Planung, Erstellung, Finanzierung, dem Management, dem Betreiben und dem Verwerten von zuvor allein in staatlicher Verantwortung erbrachten öffentlichen Leistungen.

<sup>18</sup> eine spezielle Form der Zusammenarbeit mit Unternehmen

<sup>19</sup> Der Fonds Fragile Staaten Westafrikas

<sup>20</sup> Wichtigstes Format waren anfangs die „Entwicklungspartnerschaften mit der Wirtschaft“ (EPW) im Rahmen der PPP-Fazilität, einem Programm, das speziell die Kooperation zwischen Wirtschaft und Entwicklungspolitik unterstützt (heute [develoPPP.de](http://develoPPP.de)).

<sup>21</sup> Seit 20 Jahren unterstützen wir Unternehmen

<sup>22</sup> Anders als das biologische Geschlecht (engl. sex) meint der Begriff Gender das soziale Geschlecht. Damit sind gesellschaftlich konstruierte Geschlechterrollen und -verhältnisse, Vorstellungen und Erwartungen gemeint. Sie sind kontextabhängig, dynamisch und wandlungsfähig und spiegeln sich z.B. in gesellschaftlichen Normierungen, Gesetzgebungen, Traditionen und Religionen wieder [*sic*].

<sup>23</sup> Ein gendertransformativer Ansatz fokussiert also nicht allein auf die Symptome [...], sondern setzt bei den Ursachen [...] an.

<sup>24</sup> [...] bildet ein binäres Geschlechterverständnis i.d.R. die Grundlage des Rechts und der vorherrschenden Gesellschaftsordnungen

<sup>25</sup> Arbeitshilfe zur Erstellung eines gender-sensiblen wirkungsorientierten Monitoringsystems

<sup>26</sup> in der Steuerung und Durchführung sowie in der Berichterstattung

<sup>27</sup> Mittelstand

<sup>28</sup> Der regionale Fokus: Afrika

<sup>29</sup> Chancenkontinent

<sup>30</sup> Familienstand

<sup>31</sup> Die Beseitigung geschlechtsspezifischer Benachteiligungen und Diskriminierungen

<sup>32</sup> Entwicklungspartnerschaften mit der Wirtschaft (EPW) sind kurz- bis mittelfristig angelegte gemeinsame Vorhaben von Unternehmen und Durchführungsorganisationen der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Im Rahmen einer Entwicklungspartnerschaft handeln beide Partner gleichberechtigt: Beide versprechen sich einen Nutzen aus der Partnerschaft, aber beide beteiligen sich auch an den Kosten und der Durchführung der Projekte.

<sup>33</sup> Herkunfts- und Aufnahmeländer der Flüchtlinge