



**'EQUAL PARTNERS'?: THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIRD WORLD  
WOMEN WITHIN AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES**

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**Abstract**

This thesis seeks to analyse how Third World women are constructed within two Australian development agencies - AusAID and Community Aid Abroad. Beginning with an overview of Women In Development approaches, it then locates the topic within the 'West and the Rest' discourse and the Western feminist discourse. Women and development policies of the two agencies are deconstructed in order to reveal how they reinforce constructions of Third World women. To further illustrate this, four projects funded by Community Aid Abroad are analysed, along with promotional brochures produced by the agency. This textual analysis demonstrates the need for development agencies to recognise how the complex intersections of power and knowledge within a discourse operate to construct Third World women through the eyes of the West. This thesis seeks to show the relevance of feminism and postmodernism to development agencies and their women and development policies.

**Declaration**

*This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any other university or tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.*

*I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.*

*Julie M. Cutten*

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