



CANADA'S FEMINIST INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE POLICY: FROM PROMISES TO PRACTICE

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PRESENTATION OVERVIEW



INITIAL REACTIONS
AND EARLY INSIGHTS



THE BENEFITS AND
CHALLENGES OF A
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS



MOVING FORWARD:
ANALYSING IMPACT



PERSPECTIVES FROM
PARTNER
ORGANIZATIONS IN
THE GLOBAL SOUTH



WHAT A FEMINIST
APPROACH TO
DEVELOPMENT LOOKS
LIKE



NEXT STEPS

INITIAL REACTIONS

“bold new vision and policy” (CCIC, 2017),

“a strong new emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls” (CCIC 2017)

a return to a real or perceived Canadian area of expertise and leadership in gender equality,

“critical opportunity to right-size our development cooperation” (Sinclair, 2017)

“ambitious” (CCIC 2017) and a “positive shift forward in a journey towards gender transformative change” (CCIC 2017)

holds the promise of being a “game changer” (Brown and Swiss 2018).

emphasis on feminist principles and the commitment to addressing human rights and human dignity

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: SCHOLARLY ANALYSES TO DATE:

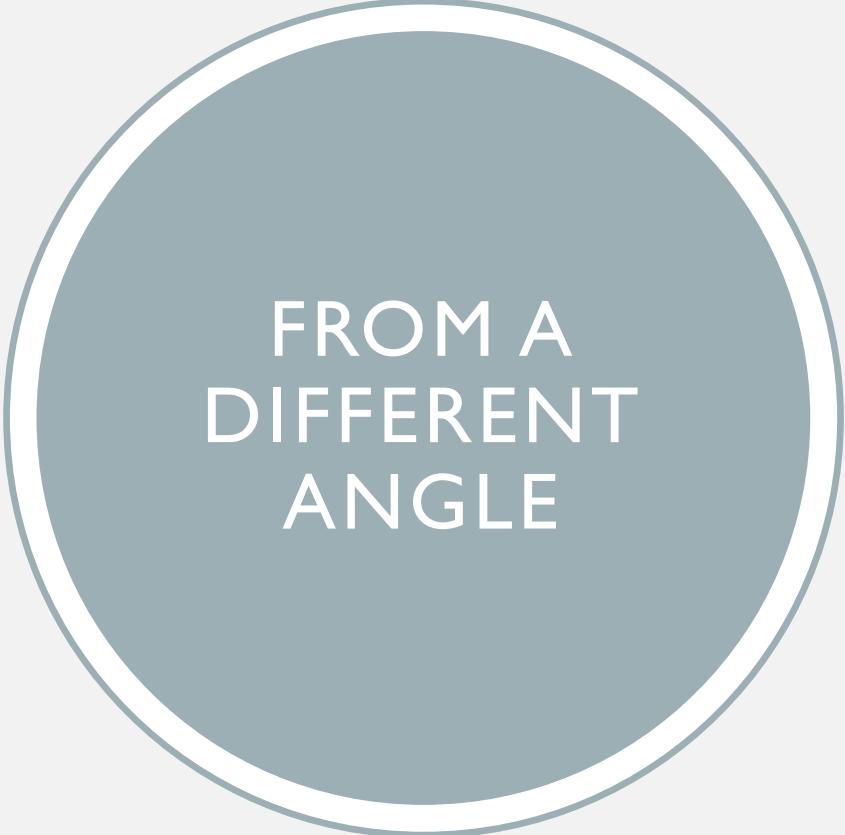
Emphasis on women and girls

Targets

“magic bullet”

instrumentalizes women and girls for other development outcomes

More of the same (WID approach)



FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE

- The FIAP explicitly acknowledges that a feminist approach “does not limit the focus of their effort of women and girls; rather, it is the most effective way to fight the root causes of poverty that can affect everyone: inequality and exclusion.” (FIAP, 2017: vii).
- It could be more explicit and consistent in this theme throughout.

ARGUMENTS CONTINUED



Few references to engaging men and boys



References are few but there are some such as “challenge traditions and customs that support and maintain gender inequalities” (Government of Canada, 2017: 10).



Lack of intersectionality (though does frame the FIAP throughout in relation to a commitment to intersectional feminist approach)



Lack of definition of feminism (and the need for transnational feminist perspectives)

LIMITATIONS OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

- Policy is important, getting the language right is important as it sets the tone but there is so much else we need to pay attention to including how the policy is translating into practice
- You can have a good policy without sound implementation
- You can have a weak policy with possibility of good practice, particularly if you have resources and dedicated staff making it happen.

LISTENING TO PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

- 10 country study
- Examining perceptions of feminist international assistance
- Considering the role of Canadians as change agents in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment
- Qualitative interviews with more than 150 partner organization staff members
- Findings from three countries presented here: Malawi, Kenya, and Uganda

FINDINGS:

*POSSIBILITIES FOR
TRANSFORMATIVE
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMING THROUGH
PARTNERSHIPS AND FOR
BUILDING ON
TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST
APPROACHES.*

In Malawi, 40% of respondents expressed support for a feminist policy, while 60% expressed concerns.

Generally in support of efforts towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

In Kenya, 60% of respondents were in favour of feminist development.

87% were aware of some of its benefits and 40% were more likely to adopt approaches in their own work. In

In Uganda, all organizations were in favour of further supporting programming centred on gender equality and women's empowerment.

85% of organizations were in favour of a feminist foreign policy while 15% saw the use of the term feminist as problematic.

LEAVING MEN AND BOYS BEHIND: STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVITY NEEDED

Support and concern over a feminist policy, recognizing the need for supporting women, but also see it as having a negative impact on men and boys in their community. Or leaving boys and men behind

More than 50% of respondents expressed some concern that feminist development or that gender equality and women's empowerment programming did not benefit, and rather hindered the future livelihoods of men and boys.



DEFINING FEMINISM

- Further dialogue and discussion needed around what constitutes feminism in their own lives, how a feminist approach can be accepted by both men and women in their community, and how it could be potentially more effective.
- Importance of perspectives from the Global South (local context, bottom-up)

IMPLICATIONS
FOR BUILDING ON
CURRENT PRACTICE AND
FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Calls for reflection on transnational feminism and the need for greater understanding of context and locally-based concerns and considerations.

Opportunities for addressing activities that local organizations have been advocating for – programs that engage men and boys and create buy-in across the community for GEWE programming.

WHAT A FEMINIST DEVELOPMENT APPROACH CAN LOOK LIKE

- Tusonge, Tanzania
- Workshop with village community members
- Education and awareness training on women's rights and gender equality





**MEASURING IMPACT:
HOW ARE ATTITUDES
AND BEHAVIOURS
CHANGING?**

**PARTICIPATORY
ACTIVITY AND
DISCUSSION ON
COMMUNITY
ATTITUDES.**

DIALOGUE AS
THE KEY TO
CHANGE.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



A feminist foreign policy must be more than just a discursive shift in language.



Acknowledging and building on best practices in gender equality programming over the past thirty years



Defining feminism matters.



Turning feminist principles into concrete strategies for advancing gender equality (time bound).



Engaging knowledge experts in the design and implementation of gender equality programming - working closely with locally-based women's rights organizations

NEXT STEPS: A FEMINIST APPROACH TO FOREIGN AID AND DEVELOPMENT

Not just about what we do: promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through targeted programming

A feminist approach is about HOW we do our work.

Approaches to funding (who we fund and how).

How we measure impact (participatory ways)

How we research and analyse change (qualitative feminist methodologies).

THANK YOU

Reach

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