

CAN GENDER (IN)EQUITABLE ORGANIZATIONS DELIVER FEMINIST
PROGRAMMING?
AN EXAMINATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CANADA'S FEMINIST
INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE POLICY IN UGANDA

by

Nevena Vucetic

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Ljubica and Predrag, who have shown by example the value of continuous education and hard work. My parents completed their own Master's degrees as new immigrants to Canada, with two young children. After undergoing this process now myself, I respect them infinitely more for having survived (and thrived) throughout those years, under conditions far more challenging than I've faced. It is thanks to their hard work that I was able to see this as a potential path for myself and one that I was able to complete with few hurdles due to their support and commitment to my education. I would not be the person I am today without the perseverance they instilled in me. Hvala vam puno mama i tata, ovo je za vas.

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Abstract

Through a focus on Ugandan civil society organisations (CSOs) receiving funding from the Government of Canada (GOC) for gender equality programming under the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), this research aims to uncover: how “feminist” this programming is; and the gendered reality facing women and gender-diverse persons working in the CSOs. This is used to gain an understanding of whether the state of gender equality within an organization impacts the organization’s ability to deliver gender equality programming that meets the GOC’s feminist goals for its international assistance. Findings are shared from interviews and focus groups with 14 staff members at 4 Ugandan CSOs and 7 Canadian officials, at headquarters in Ottawa and the High Commission in Nairobi, where the Ugandan programming is overseen. With interviewees consisting of different genders and positions along organizational hierarchies, a variety of perspectives are compared and contrasted to uncover a diversity of lived experiences.

List of Abbreviations Used

ADM	Associate Deputy Minister
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AWID	Association for Women’s Rights in Development
CFLI	Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
CFP	Call for Proposals
CHC	Canadian High Commission
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DG	Director General
DM(O)	Deputy Minister (‘s Office)
EE	Employment Equity
FIAP	Feminist International Assistance Policy
FFP	Feminist Foreign Policy
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GAD	Gender and Development
GBA(+)	Gender-Based Analysis (Plus)
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
GOC	Government of Canada
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IAWJ	International Association of Women Judges
ILO	International Labour Organization
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
LBQ	Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MSFSS	Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance

PSES	Public Service Employee Survey
PSHEA	Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse
QES	Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SRH(R)	Sexual and Reproductive Health (and Rights)
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TBS	Treasury Board Secretariat
UBoS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WID	Women in Development
WHO	World Health Organization

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In June 2017, the Government of Canada (GOC) released its new Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) committing Canada to increase the percentage of its international assistance focused on gender equality and women's empowerment to 95% by 2022 – making it the largest donor, by percentage, of targeted gender equality aid in the world (GOC, 2017). This ambitious policy has an overarching goal to “eradicate poverty and build a more peaceful, more inclusive and more prosperous world” via its commitment to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GOC, 2017). To help meet this goal, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) is increasingly partnering with local civil society organizations, as stipulated under the Civil Society Partnerships Policy (GOC, 2017). While these are positive and timely changes to Canada's international assistance and set the country apart on the world stage, it also begs the question: if the FIAP commits the Government to an openly feminist policy for their development projects, how does this translate for those working in the very organizations funded by GAC under this same policy? The Policy fails to stipulate requirements for gender equality within the funded organizations delivering gender equitable programming.

Purpose and Importance of Proposed Research

The purpose of this study is to investigate the state of gender equality within organizations funded under the FIAP. This study aims to uncover the explicit and implicit gendering of organizations, their innerworkings, and their staff. This will be used to gain an understanding of how the state of gender (in)equality within an organisation impacts its ability to deliver the gender equitable outcomes set out for projects by GAC and informed by the FIAP. Conclusions can then be drawn about whether the FIAP sets a realistic and attainable feminist goal. This research is important because it will provide a timely investigation into the potential impact of this new policy and hopefully point to areas requiring improvement. As the policy was only released in 2017, little-to-no research exists on it, and no research that I am aware of examines the linkages between gender in the workplace and the FIAP's gendered programming.¹

¹ For more on the existing research, please see Chapter 3.

Research Question and Thesis Argument

This thesis aims to answer the following question: How is the FIAP's gendered development programming impacted by the gendered nature of GAC's implementing partner organisations in Kampala, Uganda?

In order to answer this, two main sub-questions will be explored in this thesis:

- 1) How “feminist” is the FIAP programming being implemented by Ugandan organizations?
- 2) What is the gendered reality facing women and gender-diverse persons working in local development organizations in Kampala, Uganda funded by the Government of Canada under the Feminist International Assistance Policy?

The argument presented in this study is that organizations receiving funding from GAC under the FIAP are inherently gendered. This is informed by Joan Acker's (2012) concept of a “gendered substructure²” existing within organizations, I believe that this substructure limits them in implementing, to the best of their ability, the stated project outcomes. This, in turn, limits the impact of the FIAP and its ambitious goals. Moreover, this leaves long-lasting gendered impacts on people's lives, or at least ensures that there is a likelihood that there could be in the future if nothing changes. Thus, I argue that the internal operations and functioning of an organization cannot be separated from their external programming work.

Scope

This research focuses on six civil society organizations in Kampala, Uganda receiving funding from GAC, through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI)³ program. Amongst other priorities this program “provides direct funding assistance to local non-governmental organizations... for small projects addressing gender equality and women's empowerment...” (GOC, 2018). Since the implementation of the FIAP in 2017, six local organizations have received funding under the CFLI program – which provided me with a manageable number of potential interview participants for my field research

² A detailed explanation of the “gendered substructure” is provided in Chapter 2.

³ For more on the CFLI program, please see Chapter 4.

timeline and budget. These local organisations are overseen by the High Commission in Nairobi.

Personal Interest in the Topic

My inspiration for this study stems from various places; as a woman and someone concerned with social justice issues, gender inequality and its multitude of manifestations are always on my mind. As a Canadian studying and having worked in the international development sector, how the Canadian government and its partners frame, assess, and work on development issues related to gender sparks further curiosity. I spent a year working at GAC as a Policy Analyst directly researching and writing content related to Canada's FIAP⁴. Undertaking my Master's degree has allowed me to step out of this role, take on a more critical lens and recognise some potential downfalls of an otherwise very strong development policy. Furthermore, as a woman who has also spent some time working in local organisations in the Global South, the inherent gendering of the workplace, no matter the geographic location, is strikingly clear to me. However, several events in 2017 really pushed my interest in gender issues and especially sexual violence, with personal experiences and the #MeToo movement⁵ awakening me to the reality plaguing our society. When I started my Master's degree in 2018, I had an entirely different topic in mind for my thesis, however, one particular week of a Gender and Development course in the early Fall semester connected these various interests and experiences in a way that I could no longer ignore or consider as separate issues. My professor connected what occurs within an organization to the work the organization undertakes on the ground and moreover, identified many gendered realities of working in the sector – she put words and theory to what I had experienced, witnessed and heard quietly whispered about in private conversations. For instance, I was made aware of Alice Gritti's research into female aid worker's resiliency, which identified factors of gendered stress in women's lives when

⁴ See later in this chapter for an introduction to the FIAP and Chapter 3 for a full background on this new Policy.

⁵ It should be noted that the #MeToo movement was started in 2006 by Tarana Burke, a Black woman activist who wanted to find a way to bring survivors of sexual violence - and especially Black women and girls – together (Ohlheiser, 2017). The “modern” movement arose from a series of scandals rocking the entertainment industry, which brought many high-profile celebrities to come forwards with their own experiences, using the hashtag “MeToo” on social media, which soon-after spread outside of the industry to gain worldwide traction (Ohlheiser, 2017; Harris, 2018).

working on-the-ground, which included situational factors such as, sexual violence, and gendered organizational factors (2015, 459). I was also introduced to theory around why these sorts of experiences occur in the first place and what can be done to overcome them.

Of course in retrospect, it seems inconceivable to me that I had never fully connected sexual violence and broader gender inequality to the inner-workings of the development sector, however, it is also telling that I managed to complete an entire undergraduate degree in this field without the topic having ever being brought up albeit, by my mainly white male professors. Gender issues were often presented as an issue “out there”, in the developing world, and the western part of the sector uncritically presented as offering a paternalistic helping hand to solve their issues, without mention of their own internal practices or behaviours. The gender of a development worker was briefly touched upon when travelling abroad for school-related research or internships, but mainly to warn us of how to protect ourselves – never in a more critical fashion. While there is a gap in the research to examine this issue, there is also a lack of awareness and attention being given to this topic within the field.⁶ The gendered reality of working in the sector is seemingly brushed off as a price to pay for doing meaningful work that “helps” people. It is my hope that this study can address these unfortunate realities in academia and bring light to why not only development programming “out there” needs to be feminist, but also, why those delivering said programming need to hold those same values and act upon them. As a Canadian, I am interested in having the best international assistance policy possible – one that lives up to its “feminist” title and goals, and does justice to the gendered reality of working in the sector.

Gender and Work: Defining Key Terms

Our society is organized in ways that allow us to make sense of daily interactions. This is influenced by norms such as those around gender⁷, and plays out in terrains such as

⁶ The remainder of this chapter, alongside the other chapters of this thesis will make these gaps clear.

⁷ While a person’s sex is determined at birth by physical characteristics (their sex organs), gender is a much more complex set of socially constructed norms around the roles, behaviours, expressions and identities that each sex “should” hold (Government of Canada, 2018; Planned Parenthood, 2020). In reality, gender goes much further than the binary of sex, where there is just men and women in juxtaposition to one another. One’s gender can be anywhere along the spectrum of male to female, or completely outside of it (GOC, 2018).

the workplace, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs). If we consider gender to be the “patterning of difference and domination through distinctions between men and women that is integral to many societal processes” (Acker, 1992, 565), gender is understood as something that is always present, and influencing processes, whether we realize it or not. This understanding of gender inherently recognizes the power relations at play within the hierarchy of gender. As this definition is from 1992, it is important to recognize that current gender discourse has moved beyond the man-woman binary of gender to view it as a spectrum. In my thesis, I specifically use LGBTI to describe groups often facing discrimination on the basis of their gender identity/expression and/or sexual orientation - this specific acronym is used by relevant rights-groups in Uganda, and therefore, is the term I use to be contextually appropriate. What remains constant however, is that society holds one gender and its associated norms on a pedestal, unreachable by other genders. Sociological understandings of gender understand it as a recurring accomplishment, that is focused on interactional and institutional arenas, with some referring to it as a process of “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Any theories that are gender-blind and therefore, fail to mention gender, are considered “fundamentally flawed” for ignoring this reality (Acker, 1992). Efforts aimed at alleviating gender inequality can generally be categorized into one of two groups: those aimed at gender equality and those aimed at gender equity. Gender equity is broadly understood as the process through which gender equality can be achieved (UNFPA, 2005; and Roy, 2017). It takes into account different gendered needs based on systemic barriers and aims to address them so that there can be a more level playing field between the dominant and marginalized genders (UNFPA, 2005; and Roy, 2017). This does not however, always entail equal treatment, but rather, treatment “which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities” (Pavlic, Ruprecht and Sam-Vargas, 2000, 5). Focusing on equality treats all genders equally, which ignores the inherent structural barriers facing non-dominant genders, and thus, assumes that all genders will benefit equally (or at all) from such treatment.

While this thesis does focus on gender, given then parallels to Canada’s gender-focused *feminist* policy, one cannot (and should not) separate gender from other overlapping factors of one’s identity that may serve to bring benefits and/or oppressions

depending on their context (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). This of course, refers to the concept of “intersectionality”, coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), to understand the intersectional experience of black women to be “greater than the sum” (140) of multiple oppressive systems (i.e., racism and sexism), but rather, a particular situation of subordination due to the unique interaction of these systems. This inherently recognizes that women, for instance, are not a homogenous group, which has implications for how one approaches practices aimed at equality and equity. Crenshaw (1991) further argues that when approaches to liberate one group (i.e., women) ignore this reality, that they will actually “replicate and reinforce the subordination” (1252) of the diverse set of people who encompass that group, for example, women of colour. As such, similar to the pitfalls of being “gender-blind”, failing to use an intersectional lens within a gendered analysis will lead to harm for those marginalized in society. The concept of intersectionality has now been further expanded to go beyond gender and race and consider other overlapping systemic oppressions, such as those on the basis of one’s ability or sexual orientation and gender identity. This thesis will use this lens throughout its analyses and will more deeply engage with contemporary debates around intersectionality in Chapter Three, under “How Feminist is the FIAP”.

Cecile Jackson (1997), citing Giddens (1984), understands “institutions”, or organizations, sociologically, as “sets of rules, norms, and procedures that come into being historically through the aggregate and cumulative actions of individuals, which thereby reproduce or reinforce these institutions” (162; as cited by Goetz, 1997). When this definition is put together with Acker’s definition of gender, it provides an overview of the process of gendering within organizations, understanding that the “pattern” of difference and domination amongst genders plays out in organizations via the accepted norms and behaviours of the dominant gender. Non-governmental organizations⁸ are an

⁸ Please note that in my thesis, I may use non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) interchangeably. However, by definition, NGOs are understood to be a type of civil society. The OECD DAC Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness uses the following definition: “CSOs can be defined to include all non-market and non-state organisations outside of the family in which people organise themselves to pursue shared interests in the public domain. Examples include community-based organisations and village associations, environmental groups, women’s rights groups, farmers’ associations, faith-based organisations, labour unions, co-operatives, professional associations, chambers of commerce, independent research institutes and the not-for-profit media” (2011, 10).

especially relevant terrain to study from the lens of gender and work because they consist of a relatively small number of staff, who work closely together to meet their goals. In the context of this research, this goal would be the delivery of gendered programming, which will be influenced by the gendered context of the workplace⁹. I would argue that because the workplace context is so compact, that gendered inequalities are heightened and explicitly clear, providing an ideal terrain for a case study.

Research Methods

In order to capture and prioritize the views and experiences of historically marginalized social groups, particularly women, girls and gender diverse persons working in development organizations, this research was informed by feminist methodologies (Beetham, G. & Demetriades, J., 2007). I undertook my research in four phases. The first phase consisted of document review and analysis, which involved me reading and analyzing policy documents, statements, articles, academic literature, and books related to my research topic. This process was undertaken before, during, and after the field research as new topics, theories, and arguments presented themselves to me through the thesis writing journey. The next phase of my research consisted of semi-structured interviews in Ottawa, Canada and Nairobi, Kenya with staff at GAC. I interviewed a total of seven GAC employees – five in Nairobi at the Canadian High Commission (CHC)¹⁰ and two in Ottawa at GAC's headquarters offices. The third phase of this research consisted of semi-structured interviews and focus groups with staff at CSOs funded by GAC in Kampala and Entebbe, Uganda. Focus groups were used with the CSO staff in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the interactional and relational gendered and hierarchical dynamics at play amongst interview participants. Individual interviews alone would not allow for such complex dynamics to be captured and would limit the depth of the gendered analysis of the reality of working in each organization. Focus groups are understood to provide an opportunity for a plurality of voices to emerge and build off of one another, supplementing

⁹ For more on the connection between gender in the workplace and gender equitable programming, please see Chapter 2.

¹⁰ The Canadian High Commission in Nairobi oversees Canada's involvement in Uganda (alongside several other countries in East Africa) - there is no official Canadian representation in Uganda.

and potentially challenging information gained from interviews, and thus, provided a unique opportunity to observe non-verbal communication and interaction (Breen, 2006).

The field research phase of my research took place over a 14-week period, from July to October 2019. The interviews and focus groups undertaken in phases two and three were, to the best of my ability, split along gender lines and organizational hierarchy in order to gain the perspectives of a variety of people. I primarily used purposive sampling because it allowed for the inclusion of a range of informants across intersections of marginalization that go beyond gender, including age, education level, wealth, and social status (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2014, 163). As the goal of this research was to investigate the state of gender equality within the organization, and not simply within the project cycle, participants were sourced from throughout the organization (i.e., key decision makers, policy makers, project implementation officers, and support staff), providing a fuller picture of the gendered reality. In order to recruit research participants, I started by reaching out to each of the organizations via a formal email introducing myself and my research project and followed-up with a call when necessary. After this, I was usually invited for an initial meeting with the management of the organization, which then led to interviews and focus groups being scheduled either later that same day, or at a later date. At GAC, snowball sampling was especially useful, as I was able to use my connections as a former Policy Analyst to gain access to informants who then also suggested additional potential informants. Due to time constraints (both on my end and at the CSOs), I was only able to undertake three of the planned four focus groups while in Uganda. Nevertheless, the focus groups consisted of the same staff who took place in the individual interviews, and in two of them, additional staff members joined in as well. The groups ranged from two to five staff members. In total, I interviewed 21 people – 14 worked at Ugandan CSOs and seven were GAC Officials. Four of the interviewees self-identified as LGBTI. Of the CSO workers, 10 were women and four were men. Of the GAC Officials, five were women and two were men. I was able to hold focus groups with three different CSOs, consisting of a total of 11 participants – seven women and four men. Of these 11, five were individuals who did not take part in the individual interviews because they were either not interested or unavailable. While I did try to split my participants evenly by gender, the staff at the

CSOs and officials at the CHC were largely female, and thus, there were sometimes few-to-no men with whom to speak.

To ensure I was able to capture the perspectives of the diversity of people working in development organizations, I framed my research questions to specifically relate to relevant intersections of identity, as recommended by Acker (2012). The interviews and focus groups each lasted between 30 minutes to one hour in length, and followed a similar interview guide¹¹, while allowing space for the conversation to flow as the staff directed it. My field research was possible due to funding provided by the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship (QES) Program and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) through their Canada Graduate Scholarship-Master's Program in addition to the Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement (MSFSS). The QES funding was stipulated for research in Uganda however, beyond this, these funding agencies did not have an influence on my research nor how I present/frame my results.

Phases two and three of my research also included dedicated time to keeping Field Notes¹², where I would try to keep a regular record of my initial reactions and thoughts following interactions, meetings, interviews and focus groups with CSO staff and GAC officials, alongside any informal analyses I undertook of what I was hearing in the field. As I was also living in a foreign country, I also sometimes used these notes to describe the context within which my research was taking place – helping me to better understand why certain phenomena around me were occurring, the role my identity and bias¹³ may have played in to my experiences, and considering the impact on my research (Creswell, 2013, 251-252). These notes were very useful during my field research because they allowed for space to explore where my expectations about my topic were not being met. I walked away from many of my interviews feeling perplexed about what I had heard, because it did not always live up to my rather positive expectations around the FIAP or the blatant examples of gender inequality I expected to find within organizations. It was not until I took some time to reflect and read further academic material on the topic at hand that I gained some

¹¹ Please see the Annex for my interview and focus group guides.

¹² Field Notes are understood to be another form of qualitative data collection. I undertook notes as an “observer”, which can be useful to make note of “unusual aspects” of the research context/participants (Creswell, 2013, 239-241).

¹³ More on this in the following section on ethics.

clarity about what I had (or had not) heard, and developed a strong argument to explain it. What I discovered through this research process was to push aside my own expectations and ideas of what I thought the gender and development discourse had taught me, and to let my interviewees' perspectives speak for themselves. It was at that point, that was able to go back to the theory and re-conceptualize what I had (and had not) heard from my participants, to understand how it fit in with my overarching argument. Researching a topic as sensitive as sexual violence, I also discovered that culturally, we might approach the discussions of certain topics in different ways, and that imposing a western approach would not be successful. It was only after a discussion with my local supervisor, Dr. Sarah Ssali of the School of Women and Gender Studies at Makerere University, where we shifted how I spoke about and asked about sexual violence in the workplace in a less direct manner, that participants started providing more detailed responses to my questions. While I had gone into my research knowing that such reflexivity was imperative to feminist methodologies, it was not until I was in the field and had my own assumptions challenged that I really had to put my reflexivity into practice. Thus, I discovered that our preconceived notions about our research are rather deeply rooted, and until we are presented with facts that starkly go against these, our research cannot fully develop. Interacting face-to-face with people in a manner that is respectful and professional really challenged me and allowed me to grow my understandings of my research topic. I believe that my research process was enriched via my regular practice of taking field notes where I not only described what I saw/heard, but also checked-in with my thoughts, feelings and understandings about each interaction with my interviewees.

The fourth and final phase of my research consisted of data analysis and interpretation. Where I received consent, interviews were audio-recorded, and transcriptions typed-up shortly after. Upon return to Canada in November 2019, I analysed my interview transcriptions, allowing the data I collected to inform and focus my theoretical framework¹⁴ based on the issues that were brought to light. I organized my analyses by key and re-occurring themes related to gender and other inequalities and dynamics in the workplace, as informed by my research question, hypothesis, and existing literature on gender and organizations and gender and development. Where themes came

¹⁴ For a detailed explanation of my Theoretical Framework, see Chapter 2.

up that I did not expect, I used these to inform further literature reviews to understand how they fit into my predicted themes and key issues. Transcriptions from the same organization were compared to identify key themes across interviews and focus groups. This was then compared to the themes identified in other organizations, drawing conclusions around the gendered dynamics at play within the CFLI-funded organizations in Kampala and their programming. Transcriptions from interviews with Officials at GAC were analyzed using a similar method, comparing the responses given by Officials to the reality faced by the CSOs. This analysis was then be used to draw conclusions about what this could mean more broadly for the implementation of gender-focused programming and finally, the implementation of Canada's FIAP.

Throughout this thesis, I will not be naming the civil society organizations where or individuals with whom I undertook my field research, nor providing them with "codes" or pseudonyms in an effort to maintain their confidentiality to the best of my ability (Creswell, 2013, 237-238). I will rather, where useful, refer to the organizations by the focus of their GAC-funded project, i.e., LGBTI rights, or girls with disabilities, as I believe there exists a link between the work the organization does "out there" and their internal operations. Otherwise, I will simply discuss their work, and vaguely refer to them, for instance, as "one organization" or "the majority of the organizations". Maintaining the anonymity of these organisations in this manner is important since all GOC-funded projects are posted publicly. While some individuals may be able to connect the dots between some of the information I present and potential organizations, my aim is to lessen this risk. I, therefore, will not be making conclusions based on each organization and their work, but rather on my analyses of their collective work, and what this tells us about the FIAP. Furthermore, I will only specify whether I am referring to staff from the Canadian High Commission (CHC) in Nairobi when appropriate/useful to the argument being made, given how small a sample I interviewed. I will otherwise simply refer to staff from GAC. The confidentiality of my research participants is the utmost importance to me, especially considering some of the topics discussed in my research.

Positionality, Reflexivity and Ethical Issues

The primary ethical issue of concern is that of my identity in relation to my research subjects. This is especially relevant for phases two and three of my research, but also informs the lens I used throughout the research process. I am a white, able-bodied, straight, cis-gendered, post-secondary-educated young woman from Canada, from an upper-middle class family. While my own family did come to Canada as refugees and does face a certain amount of marginalization in Canadian society based on this factor, I still have an immense amount of privilege in comparison to some of my research participants from Uganda. The main concern in phase three of my research is that the responses I received from research participants may have been skewed due to my positionality in comparison to my research participants. However, as I was speaking with staff and management at numerous CSOs, their education levels were sometimes higher than my own, especially as I went up the hierarchy of an organization. Different ethical concerns came up in phase two of my research with GAC employees, where my identity, especially as a white, educated Canadian who had previously worked at GAC may have played in my favour. I had relatively easy access to the research participants, and although many of them had equal/similar post-secondary education, I was treated more-or-less as an equal, irrespective of the hierarchy in the organization. I felt that my position as a former employee of GAC was especially impactful, as staff had very open and frank discussions with me (on and off the record) about working in the department – staff spoke to me as if we were colleagues. Throughout my thesis, and especially in Chapters four and five, where I present and analyse my research findings, I further examine the role my identity played in the research. I strongly believe that such reflexivity is necessary to do my due diligence as a foreign researcher, who cannot, and should not, separate themselves from their research given the power dynamics at play between the researcher and the researched.¹⁵

Another issue concerns the topics of discussion that arose during my interviews with staff, and specifically, sexual assault and harassment in the workplace, which may have been triggering to research participants (Jewkes, et al., 2012). To mitigate this risk, I

¹⁵ This is a key component of feminist methodologies and epistemologies, which hold that the power relations between the researcher and the researched influence the “knowledge production and construction process” (40) and thus, require constant interrogation to avoid “othering” and imposing the views of the researcher (Doucet and Mauthner, 2006).

took particular care to provide a locally curated list¹⁶ of services and supports for survivors and encouraged participants to access them. As exposing such information through my thesis may also place participants in a vulnerable position, this required me to take extra care to “do no harm” and omit details about their identity and organisation from my thesis to ensure their anonymity. As explained previously, I do not use names or identifying factors when discussing what respondents conveyed to me. I ensured I received the clear and informed consent from my research participants and informed them that their consent could be withdrawn at any time.¹⁷ In respecting the confidentiality, well-being, and livelihoods of research participants, prior to starting my field research, I decided I would not contact local authorities if cases of abuse in the work place are brought forwards.¹⁸ Lastly, I ensured that all interview transcripts and recordings were saved electronically, on a password protected server that only I have access to.

Thesis Outline

The remainder of this thesis is organized logically to provide an overview of the theory and context necessary to fully grasp my research topic and then flowing into a critical examination of my research findings. Chapter Two presents and critically engages with the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of my study, exploring ‘gendered organizations’, ‘organizational change/transformation’, and ‘gender and development’ scholarship. The chapter also provides key definitions of terms this thesis will be using and is rooted in, namely, ‘feminism’ and ‘feminist approaches’. Chapter Three goes on to explore the context within which my research takes place, providing an overview of Canadian international development policy and practice over the years, including an examination of their current policy. This is followed by a brief analysis of the Ugandan context, where I undertook my field research. Chapter Four is the first exploring my field research, and critically engages with my findings on gender programming implemented in

¹⁶ See Appendix for the list.

¹⁷ For a copy of my Consent Form, please see the Annex.

¹⁸ It is common knowledge that reporting sexual violence to authorities such as police may lead to further stigmatization of survivors, especially where patriarchal norms are prevalent and survivors are part of a marginalized group. Furthermore, according to Ellsberg and Heise (2005) in their World Health Organization (WHO) report, *Researching Violence Against Women*, there is vast consensus amongst researchers to avoid breaching an adult woman’s “right to make autonomous decisions about her life”.

Uganda. My second analytical chapter, Chapter Five, presents my findings on gender in the workplaces of the CSOs and GAC, with a specific focus on sexual violence. Lastly, Chapter Six consolidates my theoretical and analytical findings to make conclusions about the connection between (in)equitable workplaces and gender programming. In the Annex, you will find my research/focus group guides, list of resources for survivors, and the consent forms.

Chapter 2: Gender Equality and Organizational Change: A Theoretical and Conceptual Examination

Introduction

In order to examine my research question, I will consider the insights and arguments provided by the ‘gendered organizations’ and ‘organizational change/transformation’ scholarship. These perspectives inform the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study. These areas of discourse allow me not only to understand how and why organizations are gendered spaces, but also, how one can effectively transform organizations into gender equitable institutions. First, I will examine gendered organizations, establishing what they are and how they manifest in reality, before delving into the debate on whether organizational *reform* or *transformation* (or a combination of the two) is the more effective method to bring about change to the gendered reality within development organizations. I will also present the evolution of the discourse surrounding “gender” within international development policy and practice, to provide a theoretical understanding of how organizations work towards gender equality with their beneficiaries. This will include a presentation of my conceptualization of “feminism” and “feminist approaches” to international development work. A solid understanding of the varying perspectives in organizational change theory alongside gender and development discourse are important when considering my research topic. In order to assess the reality facing women and gender-diverse persons working in NGOs, I need to understand what *truly* gender equitable policy and practice looks like – both internal to the organization and in their service delivery. This chapter will also explore how the practices internal to an organization may, in theory, influence their service delivery, providing a basis for my thesis argument.

Gendered Organizations

The idea of a “gendered organization” is best articulated by Joan Acker, who argues that there exists a ‘gendered substructure’ within organizations that contains hidden and visible processes, practices and behaviours continually recreating gender inequalities and preserving the power of particular groups (Acker, 1992 and 2012). These are seen to be a direct product of the attitudes, stereotypes and beliefs of wider society and, therefore,

intrinsically link what happens in the organization, due to the gendered substructure, to broader contextual issues. This becomes especially important when we later consider how to go about changing organizations to bring about gender equality. It is through this gendered substructure that the assumption that organizations are comprised of gender-neutral workers, who have no body or obligations outside of the workplace and are therefore able to separate “work” from “life”, is unravelled (Acker, 2012 and Rao et al., 1999). Examining organizations from the standpoint of the substructure, we can begin to understand that the misconception of the gender-neutral worker inevitably favours male workers, who often do not take on the same reproductive roles outside of work as women particularly in patriarchal and capitalist societies. This explicit divide between reproductive, or “women’s”, work and productive, or “men’s”, work is a distinguishing feature of capitalist societies. This separation is argued by Acker (2012) to promote gender inequality by the broader separation of roles of women and men and as a result, the creation of distinct and marked roles embodying femininity and masculinity which extend into institutions.

The gendered substructure of the institution allows the gender-neutral worker to thrive and is both constructed and reproduced through: 1) organizing processes; 2) organizational cultures; 3) interactions on the job; and 4) gendered identities (Acker, 2012). At the same time, it causes the non-gender-neutral worker, the woman, to suffer. Through the gendered subtext of the organization, explicit and implicit texts in the organization shape gendered processes and structures which inevitably are disadvantageous to women (Acker, 2012). This is reinforced by the gendered organizational logic, which envelops the common-held understandings of an institution’s bureaucracy and hierarchy, which are dominated by men and therefore, exclude women (Acker, 2012 and 1992). Acker sees the four aspects listed above, alongside the gendered subtext and organizational logic, as interacting and mutually reinforcing one another and thus, the substructure.

Similarly, Anne Marie Goetz (1997) sees eight aspects making up a “gendered archeology” of organizations. Especially important is her inclusion of the role of institutional history in shaping current inequalities and the impact of gendered incentives and accountability systems under neoliberalism on the lack of attention to gender issues within organizations (Goetz, 1997). This concern with instrumentality (i.e., the preference

for quick and easy fixes) is shared by Rao, Stuart and Kelleher (1999), who include it in one of four ways that gender inequality is perpetuated by the structure of organizations. These inherently gendered inequalities occur because organizations are largely made and run by men, based on the male experience, and remain gender-blind¹⁹ when it comes to understanding that women, in all their diversity, have different needs and experiences.

Fowler (1997) refers to these processes as either covert or overt obstacles to “gender-fair” organizational culture. Covert obstacles arise from deeply-rooted attitudes held by those with power in organizations and are greatly influenced by patriarchal culture, while overt obstacles result from covert “feelings” and lead to more visible actions that prevent women from fully participating in an organization (Fowler, 1997). Covert obstacles to gender equality include sexist and discriminatory prejudices, stereotypes, behaviours and assumptions leading to clearly visible injustices or overt obstacles. These result in many challenges for women in the workplace, if they are even hired in the first place. They include having few women in decision-making roles, the over-representation of women in roles of support-staff, often undertaking sex-typed tasks, and a high risk for sexual harassment and assault (Goetz, 1997; and Tiessen, 2004). Tiessen (2004) also finds that even when women are included in the project cycle in development NGOs, they take on different roles from men, never making policy or project design decisions, simply implementing and monitoring projects and, therefore, using their gendered role as a caregiver to work with beneficiaries. Fowler (1997) further finds that women are seen by their male colleagues first as women and second as workers, resulting in them often acting as “servers of men” (Fowler, 1997 as cited by Tiessen, 2004). It is important we keep in mind that for certain women, these inequalities overlap with marginalization and discrimination they face for other aspects of their identity including their age, race, sexual orientation, religion and/or ability.

These practices become so normalized within organizational cultures that they are questioned by few, especially not by those with power, as they are the ones benefitting at the expense women and gender-diverse persons. Patriarchal norms envelop everyone in

¹⁹ Unlike a “gender-neutral/sensitive/fair” organization, a “gender-blind” organization would fail to “take into account ... [the] different roles and diverse needs” of various genders, and thus, works to “maintain the status quo”(UNESCWA, 2020).

society and can be difficult to identify and unpack. In fact, NGOs and their workers fail to even consider the gender inequalities at play within organizations, focusing only on gender with respect to their work with beneficiaries and seeing gender as something performed “out there” in the field (Lewis, 2006 and Tiessen, 2004). Even in organizations comprised mostly of women or of women in positions of leadership, the gendered substructure lives on as these women are inevitably still influenced by the patriarchal society within which they exist and may still operate in a gender-blind manner (London and Müller, 2018; and Ahmed, 2002). Simply adding women to an organization will not fix the problem as gendered substructures are always present and influence the ways both men and women work, think and operate. However, an overarching assumption of ‘sainthood’ amongst NGOs disguises these realities and the pervasive cultures of ‘masculine exclusiveness and sexual harassment’ within organizations and allows them to continue occurring without questioning from those within organizations or those looking in (Ashworth, 1996 as cited by Lewis, 2006). This translates into the assumption that NGOs, as opposed to state-led institutions, are more receptive to the needs of the historically marginalized, in this case women and gender-diverse persons (Goetz, 1997). This perceived separation of organizations from broader societal and cultural patriarchal norms dangerously allows organizations to continue operating as-is, rather than questioning the status-quo and holding them accountable.

By understanding that social institutions are indeed gendered, we no longer need to consider why women and gender-diverse persons are excluded, as it is evidently largely a product of patriarchal culture, exhibited through the substructure. The question rather becomes investigating to which extent the substructure has been formed by and through gender (Acker, 1992). Once we do this, we can begin to consider how to change the structure and, in turn, the experiences of female and gender-diverse workers.

Gendered Organizational Change

The gendered organizations literature typically refers to two approaches to improving the state of gender inequality of an organization—organizational reform or transformation. Using the analogy provided by Patti O’Neill and Rosalind Eyben (2013), the reform approach can be best understood as “renovating the master’s house”, while the

more radical transformative approach involves “digging away at the foundation” of the “master’s house”, in order to rebuild it. An important concept to keep in mind when considering these two approaches is Maxine Molyneux’s theorization of gender interests and specifically, strategic gender interests and practical gender interests. Gender interests are understood as “those that women...may develop by virtue of their social positioning through gender attributes” (Molyneux, 1985, 232). Strategic gender interests focus on those interests related to overcoming women’s long-standing subordination, such as the sexual division of labour (Molyneux, 1985, 232-233). In particular, they arise by identifying the root cause of the problem and working to formulate an alternative and better reality as a strategic goal (Molyneux, 1985, 232). Practical gender interests on the other hand focus on concrete interests held by women as a result of their position in the social division of labour (Molyneux, 1985, 233). They focus on meeting an “immediate perceived need” (233) stemming from inadequacies in living conditions such as, a lack of healthcare (Molyneux, 1985). As such, practical gender interests do not go as far as to challenge women’s position in society via a strategic goal, they accept this position as a given and their solutions are derived from within the very systems that cause their problems (Molyneux, 1985, 233). In the remainder of this section, I will show that the inadequacy of a reform approach is that it solely focuses on meeting practical gender interests while ignoring the importance of strategic gender interests. I also extend Molyneux’s analysis beyond just women, to include gender-diverse persons.

Organizational Reform

Organizational reform for gender equality can be described as focusing on the fulfilment of practical gender interests and, therefore, not working to address the root causes of gendered subordination in organizations. It does so by focusing on initiatives that provide women/gender-diverse persons with “simple access” to organizations by, for example, the hiring of greater proportions of women under a quota system (Molyneux, 1985 and Jonasdottir, 1988, as cited by Goetz, 1997). This approach is further plagued with focusing on issues with easy to fix solutions via technocratic tools, assuming this will be enough to change the prejudice plaguing organizations (Goetz, 1997). This is a very narrow conception of what it takes to change an organization and the predominance of the gender-

neutral worker. It is often, however, the more desirable option since it takes little time and risks less internal conflict due to the limited institutional change it requires. While on the surface the increased presence of women/gender-diverse persons in organizations may seem like a positive change, as it fills an immediate need of employment, we must continuously consider what this does to change the gendered substructure of the organization and further, what the experience of employment will be for the woman/gender-diverse person. In other words, we need to consider what this approach *is not* doing and what effects it has on the rest of women's/gender-diverse person's lives. For instance, what does the hiring of women do to change behaviours, stereotypes and attitudes towards women within an organisation? Are these women treated with respect in the workplace? What sort of roles these women will have in the organization; and by extension, what level of agency and decision-making power will they hold? While providing women/gender-diverse persons with access to social institutions is important, we cannot assume that women's access to an organization will translate into a "strategic presence...where women are influencing policy-making with a vision of gender equality in mind" (Goetz, 2001, 44). Instead, as Goetz (1997) argues, it is possible that the reform approach alone does nothing to consider strategic gender interests and, therefore, we can argue that it does not advance the needs of women/gender-diverse persons for their emancipation. This is where organizational transformation, rather than reform, is useful, because it is able to go beyond practical gender interests.

Organizational Transformation

From the background provided on gendered organizations, it is clear that organizations are gendered in deeply-rooted ways and, therefore, providing "simple access" to women is not enough to dig down and make changes to established norms. The transformative approach to making organizations more gender equitable focuses on radically altering the gendered substructure of the organization. In doing so, it challenges and changes forms of organization and social interaction which discriminate against women and gender-diverse persons in the workplace (Goetz, 1997). While the reform approach is understood to provide a band-aid solution, the transformative approach consists of an analysis of women's (and gender-diverse persons') subordinate position in

organizations to identify their strategic interests and then develop improved alternatives to the existing norms (Molyneux, 1985). This approach works to transform organizational cultures, values and practices and goes beyond simply “adding gender” into the existing structure and work of an organization (Tiessen, 2004; and Rao & Friedman, 2017). It involves the reconceptualization of the organization, what it does and how it works, in order to better address gender injustice (Rao & Friedman, 2017). This cannot be done without changing the constraining gender roles and ideologies that inherently influence an organization’s structures, values and behaviors (Rao & Friedman, 2017).

Rao and Friedman (2017) see institutional transformation, rather than change/reform, as central to development because the institutional principles underlying organizations and the way they work are gendered in ways that are often invisible. This often prevents gender equality and social transformation both within the organization and in its beneficiary communities. In fact, some scholars believe it is impossible to deliver gender equitable outcomes whilst an organization is gender-biased (Rao et al., 1999)²⁰. This begs the question: how does one transform an organization? According to Rao et al. (1999) this requires dismantling and rebuilding the gendered substructure in order to change the way an organization works. Rao et al. (1999) recommend a two-pronged approach which involves: 1) surfacing multiple perspectives and 2) developing new work practices. The first step entails undertaking an exercise that provides an opportunity for the voiceless to be heard, for instance via a needs assessment or interview process, which then informs the development of their own conception of gender equity and what it means within their organization (Rao et al., 1999). With this contextually-specific understanding of gender equity, action can be taken to make progress towards achieving this progressive vision (Rao et al., 1999). This aligns with Molyneux’s approach to making strategic gender interests visible via a deductive analysis of women’s (and gender-diverse persons) subordinate position in order to formulate alternative realities (1985, 132-133). In order for this to happen, one must deal with the issue of power and find ways to use it to leverage new organizational norms.

²⁰ For more on gender and social transformation in programming, see the below section on “Gender and Development Discourse Over Time”. To better understand this connection between internal and external practices, see the discussion in later sections of this chapter around “Gender Mainstreaming”.

Penny Plowman (2000) reiterates that the process of change for gender equality must be approached with a long-term vision. The first step she considers is an analysis of the context within which the organization exists – i.e., the broader social, political and economic spheres directly influencing the institution and its workers (Plowman, 2000). In understanding the broader context within which development NGOs exist, we can begin to fully comprehend the root causes of gender inequality in its substructure, or to use the analogy of the ‘master’s house’, the materials making up the foundation of the house. Goetz (1997) specifies that NGOs exist, are enabled and constrained in three institutional arenas: the state (dictates public policy in the country), the market (the framework for organizations) and the community (within which NGOs exist). These arenas work to structure social transactions and maintain social order by supporting dominant patriarchal norms (Moore, 1992 as cited by Goetz, 1997).

This includes the role that neoliberalism plays within the international development sector. David Harvey (2005) understands neoliberalism as “in the first instance [,] a theory of political economic practices that proposes human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (2). This is “founded on an assumption about the inherent nature of human beings... as ‘egotistic and self-interested’”, and presents free markets as being able to “harmonize these selfish choices” for the benefit of all (Peet and Hartwick, 2015, 112). Since the 1980s, this sort of thinking has influenced international development policy and practice as well, as it has been argued that “the way forward for these countries [i.e., developing countries] was to institute measures that created favourable conditions for market-led development” (Sahle, 2012, 69). Key tenets of a neoliberal approach to development have included privatization and the “rolling back of the state”, for example, by cutting social funding, in an assumption that people should meet their own needs via the market (Sahle, 2012, 69). However, these approaches inevitably ignored the “social processes” that allow only some to have access to entrepreneurial freedom: those privileged few who already have money in a capitalist society and thus, are set up to earn higher incomes under a neoliberal state (Peet and Hartwick, 114-115). In juxtaposition, those who are not able to seize the *inevitable* benefits of the free market under neoliberalism are themselves to blame for not working hard

enough - there is no recognition of interlocking systems that leave some in marginalized positions. Feminist scholars, for example, have highlighted that such approaches have been gender-blind and “were seen to generate economic practices that contributed to the marginalization of women in the differentiated Global South” (Sahle, 2021, 70). In the absence or outsourcing of the state under a neoliberal system to provide services to support such suffering individuals (for instance, via social funding for childcare), NGOs are understood to play a prominent role to fill this void, and are fully supported by international funders, who often support the notion that many developing country governments are corrupt and not to be trusted (Adunbi, 2016; Bezanson and Luxton, 2006). This is not however, a neutral relationship - the “international environment for financing development”, inevitably consists of imposed interests and priorities from more powerful, often western, development organizations dictating how local NGOs are to operate (Goetz, 1997). From a political economy perspective, it could be argued that the neoliberal and patriarchal norms existing within the context of the funder are transferred to the NGO via the demands and the strategic interests of the funder (Merz, 2012). In fact, Adunbi (2016) refers to this process as “the transplantation of neoliberal ideals to the local patrons” (416), which Merz (2012) understands as influencing “a neoliberal reformulation of [local] society” via “govern[ing] from a distance” (52 & 53). This concept becomes important when we consider the relationship and influence of GAC on local organizations and their operations. For instance, in the workplace, the intersection of neoliberalism and gender manifests itself in specific ways, including the additional tasks only women in development organizations are asked to take on due to their “natural care-taking role”, such as fetching tea for clients. (Tiessen, 2007, 29; Bezanson and Luxton, 2006; Davies, 1996, 667-668). Under neoliberalism, women have also experienced a rise in precarious work (part-time hours and unstable non-permanent positions) which provides them with low job satisfaction and very limited career prospects (Bezanson and Luxton, 2006). This essentially leaves them stuck in a marginalized position, as they cannot move up the hierarchy of an organization without relevant work experience, which they lack due to the precarious nature of work, the gendered nature of the jobs women are given when they can

find work²¹, and the time they may spend away from work to fulfil biological roles (i.e., childbearing and rearing). Not to mention that the women may not have any (or substantial) influence on the programming their organization undertakes given the nature of the positions they are in and the decision-making power they are granted within those roles.

Another aspect to consider is that of the market, or more specifically, capitalism, which strives to separate reproductive and productive work and by extension, the roles of women and men, creating distinct roles which embody femininity and masculinity and thus, promoting gender inequality in organizations (Davies, 1996, 667-668; Acker, 2012). The gendered substructure creeps into the design and categorization of jobs based on gendered perceptions of the value of certain work and which genders are perceived (subconsciously or not) as better suited to fulfilling these roles (Acker, 2012). For example, women are often seen as natural care-takers, and related jobs are valued far less than “male” jobs consisting of physical or material tasks, regardless of their actual value to society or the organization (Acker, 2012). Capitalism, therefore, works to separate the roles of men and women, while neoliberalism furthers this separation by over-burdening women with care work and precarious work, ensuring their subordination. International funders, on whom NGOs rely to operate, also fall into the control of these systems, and due to the power imbalance they possess, could further impose these values and ways of working onto NGOs, which have no choice but to comply if they wish to stay afloat and support their communities. While it may not be realistic to aspire to dismantle systems as large as capitalism and neoliberalism, it is important to remember the role they play in the gendering of organizations as we consider transforming them from the inside-out.

Making Transformative Change a Reality via Gender Mainstreaming?

A strong case has now been made for a transformative approach for organizational change. In summary, although transformation of an organization is a longer process than

²¹ For context, in the American non-profit sector, women consist of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the workforce, but less than a quarter of upper-management (Kenny and Jaluka, 2018). In the American development sector specifically, women make up less than a third of key/high paid employees and even when in these positions, are generally paid less than key/high-paid men (Kenny and Jaluka, 2018). In Australia, a similar pattern follows, where although women make up the majority of aid NGO staff, men still are over-represented in CEO/director positions (Wood, 2017). Unfortunately, there appears to be little data on this issue in general in the development sector, and especially with respect to staff not in management positions (i.e. those with precarious work). This is a major gap in the literature.

reform, it allows for the dismantling of the very structures leading to the gendered substructure in the first place. But an issue emerges: with the long-term and radical nature of the transformative approach, how can it actually be implemented? How realistic is transformation given the environment within which NGOs exist (the state, market and community)? How does one convince upper-management of its value as compared to the shorter-term and surface level reform and less expensive initiatives that look good on paper? More importantly, how does one convince women and men in these organizations that changing their long-held attitudes, perceptions and behaviours is what is best for them? I will consider these issues through an examination of several case studies dealing with Gender Mainstreaming (GM) in NGOs. This will allow for a further exploration of the debate on reforming vs transforming organizations for gender equality.

What is Gender Mainstreaming?

Gender mainstreaming (GM) can be understood as a twofold process of integrating gender into development programming and ensuring that organizations implementing gendered programming are themselves equipped to promote gender equality internally (Tiessen, 2007). Strategies of GM include “changes to mainstream policies, practices, and resource allocations”, with the overarching goal of achieving gender equality within the workplace (Tiessen, 2007, 12). In this way, it is considered a transformative approach in the development industry (at least on the surface). In reality however, a focus tends to be placed on integrating gender in programming, as equipping an organization and its workers to work and think in a gender equitable manner is a more difficult, timely and costly endeavor (Smyth, 2007). However, even this focus on gender within programming is problematic. Tiessen (2007) argues that the activities development NGOs engage in with regards to GM end up re-enforcing patriarchal norms via an avoidance of political change and rather, a focus on instrumentalist/technocratic initiatives, such as providing women with supplies for cooking for their families. As a result, the GM strategies NGOs take on rarely “confront the contentious nature of what they are revealing” (Crewe and Harrison, 1988, as cited by Tiessen, 2007, 17). In other words, they fail to be transformative but rather, focus on reform. They do so by prioritizing gender equality (treating men and women equally) over equity, which fails to consider the underlying systemic barriers facing

women and gender-diverse persons, which can be understood as the root cause of their position in society (UNFPA, 2005; and Roy, 2017). In doing so, efforts to advance gender equality may face challenges as practical gendered interests will be ignored via a focus on being equal to men, potentially having unintended negative implications on target beneficiaries²² (Molyneux, 1985, 232-233). Such programming cannot achieve transformation because the most basic gendered interests cannot be met, which are necessary to advance to transformation via the attainment of strategic gender interests (Molyneux, 1985, 232-233).

To better understand what GM within programming looks like and why it may be problematic for beneficiaries, the next section will provide an overview of the discourse of gender within international development practice. The way the industry considers and works on “gender” has impacts of course on the beneficiaries in the field receiving gender programming, but also on the organizations themselves, who in a process of gender mainstreaming, should also be incorporating and interrogating concepts and norms around gender themselves. The way they “do” gender externally in their service delivery, should give insights into how they themselves understand gender within their own lives. This section will provide an overview of the evolution of theories of gender within development, so that a thorough analysis of GM as a tool to transform the industry can be considered.

Gender and Development Discourse Over Time.

Gender theory entered development discourse in the early 1970s with the realization that the economic growth-oriented modernization focus of development practice at the time failed to acknowledge the experience of women (Rathgeber, 1990). From this, Women in Development (WID) discourse emerged, focusing on integrating women into existing processes and systems of economic, political and social growth and change (Rathgeber, 1990; Cornwall, 2014, 128). This approach has been heavily criticized and yet, is still widely used in development practice under the guise of other names, as it is easy to implement and non-confrontational. WID’s focus on technocratic solutions to women’s problems, all the while ignoring the root causes of them, takes no issue with systems of oppression, including capitalism, and, therefore, is thought to provide a band-

²² More on this in the section immediately below.

aid solution to much larger issues and even add additional burdens to women's time (Rathgeber, 1990; Kabeer, 1994; Martinez, 2012, 94; Moser, 1989, 1802; Molyneux, 1985, 232). You will also notice that WID makes no mention of gender or gender relations, simply focusing on women as a separate unit of analysis.

In the early 1980s, as a direct criticism to WID, Gender and Development (GAD) discourse emerged, focusing its analysis on the relations between men and women (Samarasinghe, 2014). GAD discourse is inherently intersectional, recognizing that gendered norms within society are produced and upheld by different elements of one's identity coming together and overlapping, creating their unique experience based on factors such as their age, class, or ethnicity (Samarasinghe, 2014). Rooted in socialist feminism, GAD goes much further than WID by fully questioning gender roles, bridging the divide between the public and private spheres of people's lives, and examining structures and institutions in order to shift power from elites (Rathgeber, 1990; Beck, 2017, 143-145). Most importantly, GAD sees women as active participants in their lives, capable of bringing about change themselves - rather than waiting passively to be recipients of western development assistance (Rathgeber, 1990).

Following the momentum of GAD, in the 1990s, "women's empowerment" emerged as a radical notion established by Third World feminists, focusing on transforming gender subordination, breaking down oppressive structures, and collective political mobilization (Moser, 1989; Eyben, 2011; Batliwala, 2007, 558). This original conceptualization of GAD was multi-pronged, focused on women taking collective action to demand justice, and considering empowerment in three spheres: political, social and economic (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009; and Eyben, 2011). Many feminists in development believe the GAD discourse of empowerment has been coopted by the mainstream development to simply imply individual economic empowerment, with women and girls being shown as the magic bullet solution to the world's largest issues²³ (Kabeer, 2005, 4718; Batliwala, 2015; McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 370; Beck, 2017, 147). Development projects for empowerment use GAD terminology to appear radical, while largely falling into the trap of implementing instrumentalist programming inherently embedded within WID discourse. At the same time that empowerment discourse was

²³ See content on "the girl effect" for more, including on pages 42-43 in this thesis.

making headway, “gender mainstreaming” began to take over the development planning sphere of discourse. While Gender Mainstreaming (GM) is meant to occur both in development programming and within the organizations delivering said programming, the focus tends to be placed on the programming portion of GM, as equipping an organization and its workers to work and think in a gender equitable manner is a more difficult, timely and costly endeavor (Smyth, 2007). This makes sense when we consider the previously established constraints within which the industry lives: those of the state, the market and the community. Various demands by neoliberal and capitalist forces will arguably prioritize fast and efficient initiatives which show tangible results, over the slower-paced results organizational GM might achieve (Goetz, 1997). This is especially important for my thesis, because the amount of attention, time and resources the funder provides to address GM within the workplace is telling, and particularly interesting given the previously established connection between internal operations and external programming work. Given that the mainstream interpretation of the Gender and Development approach has failed to be as transformative in practice as it is on paper, it will also be interesting to see what the implications are for the Canadian Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP)²⁴. The FIAP claims to be a “feminist” policy, influenced by a “feminist approach” to development. Feminists have been at the forefront of much of the more radical and transformative thinking around gender and development work and practice – focusing not just on the programming itself, but also how it is delivered²⁵. With a thorough understanding of the evolution of gender and development discourse and the emergence of gender mainstreaming within it, the following sections will outline some findings of the implementation of GM in NGOs and in doing so, make observations about what does and does not work. This is important for my thesis as GM is seen as a process to tackle the gendered substructure within organizations that have heavily influenced development discourse in recent decades, and will thus, likely be informing any existing strategies organizations have in place regarding gender equality.

²⁴ In Chapter 4, I present and analyse my findings around the gender programming implemented under the FIAP.

²⁵ For more on feminist approaches to development, see the last section of this chapter, which outlines how feminist thought has interrogated development practice and defines how I understand and frame a “feminist approach” with respect to my thesis.

Gender mainstreaming as “imposed”.

Upon examining research on the origins of resistance to gender equality in NGOs undergoing GM in Zambia, Rwanda, Uganda and Gambia, Wendoh and Wallace (2005) uncovered that GM was seen as a concept coming from the west/foreign donors, and therefore, not of value to the local context. In a similar examination of the challenges to implementing GM caused by staff behaviours and attitudes in a Malawian NGO, Tiessen (2004) also found that many staff members (male and female) viewed GM as an imposition by the west and refused to accept it. They felt GM entailed a loss of control over the women in their organizations (Tiessen, 2004). The failure to acknowledge gender inequality in development organizations leads to negative implications for program delivery (Wendoh and Wallace, 2005). Also impacting the success of GM is the pervasive nature of societal gender norms and the inability of common instrumentalist GM initiatives such as training programs and the recruitment of women, to change deeply rooted attitudes (Tiessen, 2004, 706). Wendoh and Wallace (2005) make a similar observation, adding that GM efforts are often implemented in a rush, leaving little-to-no time for the necessary behavior and attitude changes related to gender norms to take place, and therefore, causing the efforts to fail. According to Cold-Ravnkilde et al. (2018) the trick is finding appropriate entry-points to construct these global gender norms into local understandings and interpretations. A key part of their analysis is the understanding that organizations respond differently to the pressures of global gender norms, shaped by four dimensions: organizational history, culture and structures; actor strategies, emotions and relationships; organizational uncertainty, pressures and priorities; and the normative context and stakeholders (Cold-Ravnkilde et al., 2018). Due to this, norm translation is unlikely to undergo a similar process in different organizations, as they are each made up of their own unique histories, people and contexts. Cold-Ravnkilde et al. (2018) emphasize that the translation of global norms is not a singular process but rather, a continual process, impacted by continually “changing circumstances, power relations and ideational contexts” (91). Wendoh and Wallace (2005) call for contextualizing the GM process with local norms, beliefs and understandings, with Tiessen (2004) adding to this by suggesting an “awareness raising process” (706) within organizations, alongside fostering opportunities for staff to critically reflect upon their own attitudes, helping them to identify what they need to do, both

personally and collectively, to change their behaviours. This echoes some points raised by Ines Smyth (2007) around the lack of success of GM due to an overarching hesitation and reluctance within organizations to fully implement change. These results are interesting because in the theoretical debates above, these findings align more with what one would expect from a reform approach given the limited transformation. A GM approach is expected to focus on behavior change from the beginning - what is not clear in these case studies is whether they did but failed, or if the focus was on other aspects of change. Nevertheless, it is important we consider that the meaning of the term “gender mainstreaming” has changed considerably in its practical application from its original conceptualisation. Somehow, GM is taking place without key components (i.e., behaviour changes) that were considered to be at its core when it was initially envisioned. It appears that perhaps it has become a “buzzword”, “distant from the theoretical debates with which... [it] was originally associated” (Cornwall, 2007, 472).

NGO-led GM.

Next, I will examine whether having GM as an organization-led initiative is more effective and considered less of a western/donor imposition by looking at several cases. Bydawell (1997) examined the experience of an NGO in South Africa, which made the choice to adopt a GM policy themselves after the emergence of gender issues, which differs from many other organizations that undergo GM at the demand of donor organizations. Interestingly enough, when this NGO used workshops on gender issues to further their GM goals, they found immense success, whereas Tiessen (2004) argues that such instrumentalist initiatives are ineffective because they do not tackle deeply rooted attitudes. Perhaps having the organization themselves take the lead in the GM process, rather than at the demand of a donor, has impacts on the effectiveness of such strategies for GM. The NGO used this workshop to completely change their response to gender inequality from being reactive in nature (where they used to deal with issues only if they came up), to being proactive; a major outcome of the workshop being the staff-led development of a gender strategy for the organization’s internal operations (Bydawell, 1997). Particularly useful insights from this research include the explicit emphasis placed on the fact that NGOs are made up by and run by people whose political views are inherently part of their work

(Bydawell, 1997). It is, therefore, suggested that space be made for these views and their accompanying feelings and fears be explored, shared and discussed to move forwards with a coherent collective vision for the organization (Bydawell, 1997). This ties into Tiessen's (2004) suggestion for staff's critical reflections, adding political views to gender views in forming a new organizational logic.

This next case examines the reflections made by Penny Plowman (2000) following the "successful" gender transformation of an NGO in South Africa for which she acted as a gender consultant. What is unique about this case is the willingness and interest of the NGO to facilitate a change process within their organization after an international funder started a conversation on the topic. The Director of the organization specifically sought out a gender consultant to review the organization's mission and vision and work towards gender transformation with staff (Plowman, 2000). While the Director did wish to change staff attitudes towards gender equality, this was all with respect to their work "out there", rather than internally – leading me to question how transformative this work really was. Plowman (2000) made the conscious decision not to use the word "gender" in the initial stages of conversations with staff, rather referring to differences between men and women, due to an understanding she had of the stigma related to the term. This particular understanding of the context by Plowman, alongside the support of the Director, allowed this transformation to take place far more smoothly than in the Malawian example presented by Tiessen (2004). Plowman (2000) identified the fact that this organization already worked on issues of gender inequality as a major reason for facing little resistance to change. Plowman (2000) took the staff through a "process of analysis", where they identified key events that had taken place nationally over a period of approximately a decade, and then considered how they may have had gendered results. This led staff to identify intersectional and gendered disparities in society that then informed their thinking and reforming of their mission, vision and work (Plowman, 2000).

In another context in which an organization was already aware of gender issues, Rao and Kelleher (1997) reflected on an initiative to alter relations between men and women so that the analysis, recognition and negotiation of their respective needs could occur. Rao and Kelleher (1997) were themselves skeptical of how transformative this method was, as it focused on the very specific task of fostering dialogue, as opposed to

Acker's (1992) call for a more radical approach to systemic change that dealt with larger deeply-rooted issues and the reorganization of systems. While I do agree with Acker, I do not think Rao and Kelleher's approach should be dismissed as untransformative, as without this important work to change how men and women understand and relate to each other's needs (and by extension, interests), how can we expect large structural changes to happen? In fact, allowing space for this important process of analysis and discussion to occur between men and women around gender norms seems like a very important stepping stone towards other forms of transformation that we may consider more radical or impactful. Rao and Friedman (2017) focused on transformation rooted in supporting the "learning process that accepts the psychological resistance to the change of fundamental attitudes". This approach could offer some insight as to how to successfully change behaviours and attitudes to allow more radical change to follow suit, which was called for by both Tiessen (2004) and Bydowell (1997). However, something concerning about Rao and Kelleher's (1997) approach was an overarching assumption that it was acceptable and necessary for "managers and programme personnel" to define priority issues. While it is important that management be on-board with the change process, one must ask how people in these roles, who are predominantly male, are supposed to understand the issues faced by women/gender-diverse persons working in these organizations and the particular ways the organization is gendered? Plowman's (2000) case, where the Director left the priority-setting up to the staff, and Bydowell's (1997) case, where the organization as a whole led the call for change, were much more in-line with emancipatory, bottom-up approaches. Nevertheless, Rao and Kelleher (1997) did highlight an important struggle many may face when implementing similar learning processes - the fact that the involvement of men requires them to "participate in a process aimed at dismantling their privilege" (138) and hence, explaining why this process is inherently difficult. To remedy this, Plowman (2000) suggests conflict management strategies to work with and transform resistance to gender inequality expressed by predominately men.

Gender mainstreaming in international development institutions.

This last example is less of a case study per say, but an examination of some revealing analyses undertaken by Jane Parpart on GM in international development

agencies. I am including this particular example because my research aims to understand how policy at the level of a governmental donor translates to NGOs on the ground. This example reveals that many of the issues plaguing smaller NGOs are shared by larger organizations such as donors. Parpart (2014) revealed that the implementation of GM policy in the development sector had been “disappointing” (384) to say the least, with solutions being technocratic in nature and situated within institutional structures and practices and, therefore, failing to be transformative in nature. The true challenge to their implementation had, however, been hostile institutional cultures and skeptical leadership (Parpart, 2014). Parpart (2014) argued that within the broader discourse, gender had been reduced to women and girls (this issue plagues the development industry more broadly) and gender mainstreaming, therefore, became about inclusion (i.e., reform) rather than transformation. Furthermore, Parpart (2014) makes an important connection back to the fact that development institutions exist within and therefore accept and support the neoliberal values associated with global capitalism. As explored earlier in this chapter, such neoliberal values include the promotion of privatization and the removal of the state, with full faith in the forces of the free-market to bring about equal benefits for all. In supporting such ideals, development institutions take an apolitical and non-confrontational approach to their work, ignoring the very problematic role that these very systems have had on the lives of non-elites globally, especially on women (Parpart, 2014, 390, citing Chant, 2012). GM initiatives that fail to notice this reality nor try to address or at least respond to such inevitable flaws of a neoliberal system cannot succeed in their goal of transformation. This is because the organizations risk placing a minimal focus on the role of power in the unequal structuring of society and in this context, the organizational hierarchy (Parpart, 2014). Parpart (2014) made a connection between this and the failure of GM, stating that because of its intricate relationship with neoliberalism, the conceptualization of gender as just women and girls prevails and, as a result, women are seen as the agents necessary to bring about change, deeply simplifying the root cause of the problem. While perhaps a depressing account of reality, it is useful to consider that even the most “transformative” policies on paper may face immense difficulties in their implementation. You will notice that in none of the case studies discussed above does an explicit analysis of the transformation of the organization’s context within capitalism/neoliberalism occur. Gender

equality initiatives remain blind to this reality. Parpart (2014) called for a return to a focus on the deep structures of gendered oppression, led by “gender-sensitive women and men working in organizations”. This directly links to the concept of a “tempered radical”, as conceptualized by Debra Meyerson and Maureen Scully (1995), and also suggested as a solution by others including, Nuket Kardam (1997). “Tempered Radicals”, are “individuals who identify with and are committed to their organizations, and are also committed to a cause, community or ideology that is fundamentally different from, and possibly at odds with the dominant culture of their organization” (Meyerson and Scully, 1995, 586). In this way, they are understood to be working to change the status quo - both through their explicit actions and simply their presence in the organization - thus, fuelling organizational transformation from the margins, as their radical identity inevitably does not fit in with the norm (586). Tempered radicals, therefore, can lead the way for organizational change, by renovating the master’s house and slowly digging away at its foundations simultaneously. Considering the connection between organizational cultures and programming, it could then be extended that a tempered radical could also bring simultaneous reform and transformation to programming - meeting both practical and strategic gender needs of beneficiaries.

Defining Key Terms: “Feminism” and “Feminist Approaches”

Given the focus of Canada’s *Feminist International Assistance Policy* (FIAP), it is important I provide an overview of what feminism and feminist approaches to development, outside of the Canadian policy context, ideally look like. This then allows for a deeper engagement with the policy and practice on the ground, with a thorough understanding of what other scholars in the field understand as a theoretically sound feminist approach to international development. Chapters four and five will have analyses flowing from this conceptualization.

I understand “feminism” as the recognition that women face overlapping systemic oppression due to their gender, and that they should be seen and treated as equal to their male counterparts (who in a patriarchal world, hold a position of privilege in a gender binary) and by extension, should gain equitable access to their human rights (economic, social and political) (van der Gaag, 2004, 19). As follows, I understand “feminist

approaches” to development as the aspiration for radical collective change to address the overlapping and intersecting marginalizing factors holding women back in every aspect of their lives. I align this definition with the original radical definition of Gender and Development (GAD) and “empowerment” theorizing – as I’ve shown earlier in this chapter, these approaches have been coopted within development and largely been depoliticized, losing their transformative edge (Martinez, 2012, 91 & 96-97; Batliwala, 2007, 559; McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 371). As GAD theory was greatly informed and influenced by feminist thinking and movements, I see it as an appropriate extension to then refer to the radical parts of GAD as feminist approaches. I also purposely use “feminist” rather than GAD, to make a clear comparison to Canada’s feminist policies but also to avoid confusion that could arise if using GAD terminology that has been argued to have lost its radical origins (Batliwala, 2007, 559). Feminist approaches hold at their core an understanding that “the personal is political”, and thus, do not limit the areas of intervention to solely productive work, for instance, but push the margins further to all aspects of women’s lives and consider often “taboo” topics that inevitably harm women’s lives, such as violence against women (Beck, 2017, 143-145). The focus of a feminist approach is not, however, women per say, but rather, “...questioning the validity of roles that have been ascribed to both women and men in different societies” (Rathgeber, 1990, 494). A feminist approach, therefore, goes *much* further than simply including women in an existing project, as WID approaches are widely criticized for (Cornwall, 2014, 128). At the root of this approach is an analysis of the role that inequitable power relations play in women’s lives (Rathgeber, 1990, 494; Smyth, 2007, 586). In doing so, this helps us to understand why women are facing marginalization in the first place, rather than taking their subordinated position in society as a given. With such a focus, there also exist roles for men and the state in the gender equity because power must be shifted between men and women. Furthermore, the state must be held accountable to help its citizens reach their rights, for instance by providing social services such as childcare to aid this process (Rathgeber, 1990, 495). I also understand a feminist approach to engage with men and boys in a meaningful way. It is an approach that represents men as more than just villains in women’s lives, and sees their engagement as not only for the betterment of women’s lives, but also their own

well-being²⁶ (Cornwall, 2014). Within a feminist approach is also an inherent understanding of the power that must be shifted amongst groups of women, as some are inevitably better off than others based on the inequality they experience as a result their unique identity factors and their relation to interlocking systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989 & 1991). Thus, it recognizes that women are not one homogenous group, but rather, unique individuals requiring unique supports. A feminist approach is therefore, inherently an intersectional and human rights-based approach (HRBA), because it aims to shift power from elites to others – this makes it a highly politicized approach to doing development (Rathgeber, 1990, 495; and McIlwiane and Datta, 2003, 371). An HRBA is supported by feminists due to its ability to bring about transformative change via shifting power relations to alter institutions and processes at the root of injustices and for allowing bridges to be built across intersections often working in isolation from one another (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014; and Correa and Jolly, 2008). Beyond this mode of analysis of the problem at hand and thus, how to fix it, a feminist and rights-based approach also drastically changes the working relationship within a project, placing power back in the hands of the marginalized, rather than having the (often western) development practitioner/project officer lead the program design, implementation and evaluation (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Cornwall, 2000, 28-29; Porter, 1999, 4). A project then is fully participatory, and the women involved are understood to be agents of change in their own lives and do not require “saving” by western development practitioners²⁷ who misunderstand their context and/or misrepresent the issues they face (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Batliwala, 2007, 560; Mohanty, 1984, 338; Cole, 2012; Cornwall, 2000, 7-8). If anything, a project under a

²⁶ In *Taking off International Development's Straightjacket of Gender*, Andrea Cornwall (2014) provides an excellent overview of how harmful the predominant development discourse's representation and engagement with men is. She calls for a re-engagement focused on our “shared humanity” to escape the straightjacket of the gender binary of “engaging men and boys” and “empowering women and girls” (Cornwall, 2014, 137). Otherwise, it appears the discourse is trending towards a superficial engagement of men and boys, similar to the engagement of women and girls within the WID-era of development.

²⁷ This is understood as the “white saviour complex”, in which predominately young white westerners (often females) who have little formal work experience in their home country, go to an arbitrary third world country to “save” the “helpless” non-whites (Cole, 2012; Heron, 2007). It is understood in the western world to be a life altering experience for the westerner, as they “selflessly” go to the third world and “help” others (Cole, 2012; Heron, 2007). What is missing however, is any attention to the negative implications the actions of the white saviour have on locals – whether intended or unintended (Cole, 2012; Heron, 2007; No White Saviors, 2018). White saviours fail to recognize their privilege, or the role of broader systems of oppression (Akumu, 2019; No White Saviors, 2018).

feminist approach is intended to provide momentum for women to accelerate work they are already undertaking to improve the inequitable share of power relations within their unique lives – women in the developing world are not passively sitting around as one coherent group waiting to be discovered for a development project (McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 376; Rathgeber, 1990, 494; Mohanty, 1984, 344; Cornwall, 2000, 28-29).

There are, of course, critiques of this understanding of and approach to development work - some say it aims too high, and that such radical and transformative change is realistically impossible (Jaquette, 2017). While a valid concern, maintaining the status-quo of WID-style development programming has proven to inflict harm and is therefore, also far from perfect. Studies have shown that when real effort is not made to transform deeply rooted gender norms, that well-intentioned “gender” programming can lead to the “triple-burden” on women’s time, increase conflict and potentially even violence in the household, and most importantly, not even meet women’s “prioritized interests” (see Hughes et al., 2015, 284; Fries and Finigan, 2014, 6; Moser, 1989, 1802; Molyneux, 1985, 232). Knowing all this and ignoring its existence would be harmful and not within the scope of good development work. There is also the argument that “feminism” is a product of the western world, and a neo-colonial tool (Zuercher, 2018; Brown and Swiss, 2017, 124). While it is always important to question Western “aid” and its intentions, feminism (in its radical sense) cannot and should not be shrugged off by disbelievers as an import²⁸. Third World Feminists have been at the forefront of feminist and women’s rights struggles and theorizing around key concepts and terms such as empowerment (Moser, 1989; Eyben, 2011; Batliwala, 2007). Without the voices and views of such women, the movement would be nowhere near as enriched as it is now. Around the world there exist feminist and women’s rights movements, and while they might be louder in certain parts of the world, they exist everywhere and a feminist approach is meant to elevate such voices in order to build transnational solidarity to advance the struggle for women’s rights (McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 376-377). While a focus on human rights and a human rights-based approach (HRBA) is supported by many, Batliwala (2007) raises the important criticism that HRBAs actually shift agency to professional intermediaries (such

²⁸ See Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s (2015) “We should all be feminists” for a Nigerian perspective on the matter.

as NGO workers) focused on formal structures and inequalities, completely ignoring informal or cultural systems and not directly giving power to marginalized groups (563). This raises an important reminder that those working to deliver programming to the marginalized cannot be assumed to be objective in their role and thus, we must remain critical of their work²⁹. Further, as informal and cultural systems hold important power relations that impact the day-to-day lives of the marginalized, efforts need to be made within feminist work to raise consciousness within communities about this reality, and work to transfer the power within them (Batliwala, 2007, 560).

There also exist concerns amongst women's groups and feminist circles that placing too much of a focus on men and boys may divert already limited funds away from helping women in dire need around the world (Cornwall, 2014, 134; Jewkes, Flood and Lang, 2015, 1580). I agree that these are valid and worthy concerns, however, I also strongly hold that unless men are genuinely engaged within "gender" programming, that efforts will be ineffective, even possibly harmful. Gender programming inevitably challenges men's power in spaces they have long-dominated – unless engaged appropriately, this alteration to the gendered norms can be dangerous (Moser, 1989). Moreover, this also ignores that patriarchy has disadvantages for men via its promotion of harmful norms around masculinity, which could be remedied via gender programming that would benefit society-at-large (Ruane-McAteer et al., 2019, 2; Grieg, 2008, 144-145). I would also like to note that in a patriarchal world, not only women are held back by their gender, but that gender-diverse persons also suffer, thus, expanding this understanding of a feminist approach to go beyond just women and girls, to include, for instance, trans women, or non-binary persons. It is unfortunate that much of the literature I have come across focuses solely on women and girls, rarely going beyond the gender binary.

Conclusion

This chapter began with an examination of why and how organizations are gendered spaces, and the multitude of ways the gendered substructure reveals itself. When

²⁹ This becomes especially important when considering the connection between who works in an organization and the quality of the gendered programming the organization delivers to beneficiaries. See the concluding chapter of this thesis, for an in-depth exploration of this idea.

we consider how to change this reality, the transformative approach to organizational change seems perfect theoretically, but in reality, the case studies show it can be difficult to implement. Key factors necessary for transformation to take place appear to be: the support of leadership, the clear conceptualization of gender (and by extension, gender mainstreaming), and change led by workers and “tempered radicals”, based on local conceptualizations of gender issues. With the change process often left in the hands of the powerful (heads of the organization or a donor organization and often male), little is done to effectively dismantle the gendered substructure and the attitudes, behaviours and stereotypes that result from it. When change is pushed from the top down, and especially from an international donor onto its local implementing partners, there is a risk that the conceptualization of “gender equality” may have little relevance/applicability to the context. This could leave staff to not connect to the concept of gender equality and therefore, put gender projects in danger of being undermined or poorly implemented. Considering what we know about the political economy context within which NGOs exist, it is likely that this is more often than not the case, as local NGOs would have very little bargaining power to demand their own understanding of gender be taken into account. More importantly, with a focus in the development industry on efficiency and projects that show results quickly, donors would likely not allow the time necessary to bring about the behaviour and norm changes necessary to bring about internal gender equality in organizations. While organizations do tend to focus their efforts on programming, the progression of gender and development history and discourse shows that this too is imperfect and far from my conceptualization of a “feminist approach”. These initiatives often focus on reform while using the language of transformation. It would appear that unless the donor understands the need for transformation and values the input of local voices, that they would likely not follow this path, and thus, derail the success of their own gender projects in beneficiary communities.

How then do we deal with this reality? I ended the examination of gender mainstreaming cases with Jane Parpart’s insights, as it brings us back to an important point about the broader context within which development agencies and by extension, NGOs on the ground, exist - the global capitalist system and its embedded neoliberal policies and ways of organization. It is enticing to simply say that a transformative approach dealing

with the constraints of capitalism is the solution, but in reality, I believe that a combined reform and transformative approach is necessary, led by “tempered radicals”. Molyneux (1985) called for the politicization of the practical interests the reform approach seeks to achieve, in order to transform them into the strategic interests the transformative approach aims for. As Jane Parpart (2014) explained, “change is possible but it has to be understood as an ongoing struggle rather than a battle to be won or lost” (392). To tackle the gendered substructure of development NGOs, one must not allow the pursuit of strategic interests to endanger women’s/gender diverse persons’ practical interests necessary for their survival in the male dominated workplace and society at large. In doing so, incremental change can be brought to workers and their organizations, eventually leading to the transformation the industry so desperately needs to make progress.

This chapter serves as the theoretical and conceptual basis for my research. It informed my initial research question and helped me to formulate interview and focus group questions for my research participants. With this rich theoretical basis in mind, the remainder of the thesis will examine my research findings - starting with the gender programming implemented on the ground and moving to gender within local organizations. I will show how the gendered substructure exists in this context and links what occurs within the organization, to the “feminist” work they do “out there” on gender equality. Before I delve into my findings however, it is important I provide a brief overview of the history of Canadian international development assistance and development and gender in Uganda.

Chapter 3: Gender Equality and International Development: Canada and Uganda

This brief chapter will set the scene for the remainder of the thesis. It will put the gender and development theory presented in the previous chapter into context, outlining the history of Canadian international development policy and practice and providing an analysis of the new Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP). The chapter will end with a section on the history of gender and development in the Ugandan context. A brief overview of both contexts is necessary to understand the context within which my primary research was collected, as well as the overarching policy and programming I assess throughout subsequent chapters in further detail.

Gender and Development in Action: The Canadian Context

When I refer to the Canadian context, I am referring to the Government of Canada and its international development policies, as this is most closely related to the scope of my research. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was established in 1968 with the mission of overseeing Canadian co-operation with developing countries and those in transition (The Canadian Encyclopedia, 2019). In 1976, Canada became the first country to adopt a set of guidelines on Women in Development and built upon this momentum in successive years, with the establishment of a WID directorate and policy in 1984, a WID Action Plan in 1986 to integrate WID policy into all projects, and by the mid-1990s, a WID and Gender Equality Division (Tiessen and Baranyi, 2017; and CIDA, 1995). In 1995 an updated policy on “Women in Development and Gender Equity” was released, with the goal of achieving “the full participation of women as equal partners in the sustainable development of their societies” (CIDA, 1995). Notably, the Policy committed Canada to an approach rooted in meeting women’s short-term practical needs (the specific needs of individuals to survive within oppressive systems) alongside their longer-term strategic needs (those needed to overcome subordination), specifically identified the role of systemic discrimination in worsening women’s position, and focused on a relational notion of gender (CIDA, 1995). The Policy also clearly stated the importance of capacity development and institutional strengthening within CIDA and its partner organizations, ensuring both were equipped to deliver gender programming (CIDA, 1995). In 1999,

CIDA's "Policy on Gender Equality" emerged with the goal of "equality of men and women to ensure sustainable development" and an increased focus on women's human rights, decision-making, and access to and control over resources (CIDA, 1999). It committed the Government to integrate gender equality as a "cross-cutting theme" across programming areas, ensuring gender was considered in every project going forwards (Tiessen and Baranyi, 2017). While the Policy was considered to be quite strong, both Liberal and Conservative governments at the time were criticized for failing to match policy to practice (Tiessen and Baranyi, 2017). Much of the criticism of this failure stems from the fact that internally, CIDA was ill-equipped to deliver upon its gender equality targets - from a problematic organizational culture, to a lack of funds, lack of management support and insufficient expertise. As a result, the Policy was doomed to fail (Tiessen, 2007; Manepong and Stiles, 2007; Kelleher and Stuart, 2008; and Tiessen, 2015). This Policy informed CIDA's work until it was evaluated and revised in 2008.

In 2006, the Harper Conservatives came into power, shifting the discourse of Canadian gender and development policy for years to come. Most notably, the "erasure of gender equality" in 2009 from Canadian development terminology and successive adoption of "equality between men and women", showed a troubling ideological shift that rid CIDA of its previous focus on equity, prioritizing a focus on equality³⁰ (Carrier and Tiessen, 2015). Analyses of the negative impact of Harper's Conservatives on Canadian development and gender policy, discourse and international reputation are well documented³¹. It can, however, be summarized as focusing on "superficial approaches to protecting women and girls [as a homogenous group] instead of addressing the deeper attitudes and structures reproducing gender inequalities" (Tiessen and Baranyi, 2017), and only when "it serves an instrumental purpose or Canadian interest" (Swiss, 2012, 136). Also noticeably absent is reference to gender beyond this strict binary. This defining era came to an end in 2015, with the election of Justin Trudeau's "Feminist" government.

With the release of Canada's "Feminist International Assistance Policy" (FIAP) in June 2017, the Government committed itself to a radically different position than that of

³⁰ See Chapter One for a definition of the two terms and Chapter Two for a discussion of the difference between the two in the section on Gender Mainstreaming.

³¹ See: Tiessen and Baranyi, 2017; Carrier and Tiessen, 2013; Brown, 2012; Brown, den Heyer and Black, 2015; and Swiss, 2012.

the previous Harper Conservatives. The FIAP is an explicitly human rights-based, feminist, intersectional, transformative and activist Policy, meaning it aims to tackle the root causes of gender inequalities (GAC, 2017). Albeit a newly-released Policy, emerging analyses have identified gaps between its “feminist” intentions and less radical reality. Main arguments include: a lack of feminist principles of transformative change including a failure to politicise gendered power relations; a weak conceptualization of “intersectionality”; a failure to define key concepts such as “feminism”; a focus on the empowerment of women and girls rather than gender relations and equality; the lack of increased funding commitments to support the policy’s implementation; the imposition of “Canada’s feminist priority” on partners; and a lack of policy coherence across Canadian aid, foreign affairs and trade (Lee, 2018; Brown and Swiss, 2017; O’Dell, 2017; Swiss, 2018; Zuercher, 2018; Mason, 2019; Tiessen, 2019; Nacyte, 2018; Cadesky, 2020; Rao and Tiessen, 2020). Combined, these issues send mixed signals to policy makers, program officers and international partners and, thereby, threaten the trust and buy-in required from developing nation partners to work with GAC, and ultimately, the potential of the Policy.

The Government of Canada’s “Feminism”

Upon reading Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) and seeing its flashy marketing pieces, it is easy to get excited about the potential for real change to Canadian development work. The promises of a focus on the vulnerable and marginalized answers a call the industry has been making for years, and the explicit use of “feminist” terminology is exciting for those concerned with gender equality and women’s rights. A further connection to a broader Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) is reassuring for those who understand the need for a whole-of-government approach to solving global inequality. However, with the FIAP being unveiled in mid-2017, little-to-no work has been done to evaluate the nature of “FIAP-style” programming, leaving us with a lot of promises around what this work should/could look like. A closer look at the policies, promises and programming is necessary to understand whether the FIAP and broader FFP are something actually worth being excited about – or whether they are just business as usual under a fancy new title. This next section will delve into the policy itself, to better understand its “feminist” goals.

Defining Canada's "Feminist" Foreign Policy.

Upon glancing at the FIAP and statements that have been made about Canada's FFP, it became clear that there were no actual definitions provided for "feminism", "gender", or "empowerment". The FIAP also did not clearly define intersectionality with respect to the feminist approach. I would argue that the "fuzziness" surrounding these definitions serves to provide strategic ambiguity and manage internal tensions surrounding the actual meanings of these terms, and thus, pleases as many people within and outside of the organization as possible, as predicted by Eyben and Napier-Moore (2009). In fact, while working at Global Affairs Canada (GAC) from 2017-2018, I noticed there were many instances where various groups within the department did not agree on what gender equality and intersectionality meant with respect to the FIAP, due to this lack of clear definitions. Different teams worked from different perspectives, meaning one could be using a "rights-based" lens and focusing on intersectionality and power, while another could be using a "women-first" lens and equating gender to women and girls. Corinne Mason (2019) raised concerns that in the case of the FIAP and Canada's broader FFP, this fuzziness harms the potential for progressive policy and programming. For instance, how policy makers and program officers understand "feminism" or "gender equality" influences the type of analysis they undertake to inform their work. A lack of clarity surrounding these foundational terms within the policy may even render them meaningless, or at least detached from their original radical meaning (Smyth, 2007, 583). Ill-informed analyses can result in the stereotyping of women in the developing world, where if intersectionality is ignored by parts of the department, an overly-simplistic representation of women can be portrayed - for instance, one which ignores the multiple and intersecting identities of women (i.e., race, class, etc.) and depicts a traditional nuclear family, with submissive women always caring for and giving their resources to their families and communities (Mohanty, 1984, 338). Although still placing the focus on women and girls, this places all women in one homogenous group, rather than seeing them each in their unique diversity. Fuzziness in this context can, therefore, be considered quite harmful for programming.

Eyben and Napier-Moore (2009), however, also argued that fuzziness can be used strategically by feminists within development organizations, if they are able to assess each situation and find appropriate entry points for more radical notions and approaches, within

the “acceptable” discourse. In doing so, the feminists could ideally push for feminist and human rights-based work, without using the language as explicitly, and therefore, risking push-back (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009; Smyth, 2007, 584). This was something that I saw feminist colleagues and management within the department employ on a regular basis - analysts would constantly scan the environment for acceptable entry points to insert improved language in policy documents, speeches, etc. around intersectionality and human rights. While it may seem minor, I believe that overtime, the consistent pushing of these terms and overall feminist values may lead to change, as the concepts become normalized and part of the everyday discourse within the department. Conversely, I also noticed that some senior officials were openly uncomfortable with the idea of a “feminist” approach and encouraged staff to just see it simply as gender equality and a focus on women and girls, while engaging men and boys. In a department-wide meeting, a senior official stated that she had a lot of trouble calling herself a feminist because she herself had “never experienced inequality because of her gender”. When asked to provide a definition, she provided a very basic statement that women and men should be treated equally. While on the surface this is okay, to many colleagues around the department who were feminists themselves and trying to push for a true feminist approach, it was very telling. It was no wonder colleagues were having trouble pushing language surrounding intersectionality or more rights-based concepts of structural inequalities when those in decision-making positions did not seem to share the same vision. Another senior official said that he did not see it necessary for the department to work in a feminist way to effectively deliver a feminist policy. The messaging from senior officials matters, as it often dictates which work is prioritized, and most importantly, which work is inevitably approved to move ahead on the ground (Smyth, 2007, 583). Without clear definitions to guide their work, fuzziness around “feminism” becomes an important factor to consider when further assessing the impact of the FIAP. The use of this “fuzziness” will be explored throughout the chapter, to understand whether it would be useful for the GOC to define feminism, or whether it goes far enough for “tempered radicals” to lead the way.

How “feminist” is the FIAP?

Now that the case has been made that there is explicit fuzziness around key terms within the FIAP, including feminism, it is important to consider what this actually means for the Policy itself. This next section will delve into the FIAP, analysing the language and messaging being put forward from a feminist and rights-based lens, to understand how progressive the policy is (or has the potential to be). I will show that there are parts of the Policy that send very strong and clear feminist messaging, while others leave room for improvement. I will also question whether this is intentional, to allow for more people to get on board with this progressive vision for Canadian international development assistance.

The goal of the FIAP is to “eradicate poverty and build a more peaceful, more inclusive and more prosperous world” (GOC, 2017d). The FIAP states that “promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls is the most effective approach to achieving this goal” (GOC, 2017d). This stands out to me because it seems to equate gender equality with women and girls (as a homogenous group), rather than including broader groups such as gender-diverse persons, and men and boys, who inevitably play an immense role in and have much to gain from the attainment of gender equality. The Policy does later on go on to outline that men and boys have a role to play in the process, but it is significant that within these high-level statements about the Policy’s goals, the focus remains women and girls. Rather than making the focus of the policy clearly on gender relations (and the necessity to alter them), the focus is dangerously simplified. This language and messaging resonate with discourse around “the girl effect”, in which women and girls are presented as the “magic bullet” solution to extremely complex issues (Cornwall, 2014, 131-132; Kabeer, 2005, 4718; Batliwala, 2015; Morton et al., 2020, 333). In fact, the FIAP specifically states that “women and girls can change the world” by “transforming their households, their societies and their economies” (GOC, 2017d). The FIAP places several rather large transformative outcomes on the backs of “empowered” women and girls, including: strong economic growth, longer-lasting peace and empowering all those who face discrimination (GOC, 2017d). The idea behind “the girl effect” is that through empowering just one woman or girl, she is able to “call the shots” and the entire world can change (The Girl Effect, 2010). While a nice message, this view falls short for failing to

consider the complexity of inequality. For instance, the role that power hierarchies within and between societies play is not highlighted here – which is a key pillar of feminism and feminist approaches (Rathgeber, 1990, 495; Morton et al., 2020, 334). Furthermore, there is no recognition of the role that men and boys play in women’s empowerment, beyond that of an implied “obstacle” (133) to women reaching their full potential (Cornwall, 2014). In this way, women and girls and men and boys are pinned against each other and gender is presented in a strict binary. It is overly simplistic messaging, but perhaps this is the point. It is nice and short and easy to “sell” to GAC’s partners, who for several decades now, have likely already been working with women and girls as their primary beneficiaries (as the development discourse has been moving in this direction since the 1990s). It could also provide an appropriate entry point for Canadian diplomats to then introduce more “controversial” and radical ideas around feminist and human rights-based approaches if partners are already comfortable with language around “women and girls”. It is also likely an easier sell to the Canadian public, whose taxpayer dollars fund the country’s development work overseas. Women and girls presented as vulnerable and only with Canadian funding, capable of saving themselves and their communities, is a message many will resonate and agree with – gaining buy-in from the public (Cameron, 2017). Whether or not this type of messaging is “right” or “ethical” is, however, another question altogether, and one that has been raised by many in the Global South, most famously perhaps by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in *The Danger of a Single Story*³². Representing women and girls as vulnerable, lacking agency, and in need of saving with Canada’s feminist policy and programming is not exactly in line with feminist principles or even principles of good development work, where participant agency is meant to be central to initiatives, and neo-colonial discourses of hierarchical difference/ “othering” with the west are ideally avoided (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Batliwala, 2007, 560; Mohanty, 1984, 338; Cole, 2012; Morton et al., 2020, 333-334). This sort of language, even if well-

³² In her [TED Talk](#), Adichie (2009) calls out the dominant representations of Africa (and extends this to other developing countries), where a single simplified story is established, which “show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become”. In doing so, this story “robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It emphasizes how we are different rather than how we are similar” (Adichie, 2009) and thus, homogenizes the multitude of experiences across numerous continents, countries, and regions, to one simplified story.

intended, has negative and potentially harmful implications for those on the ground and the overall representation of the developing world it promotes. This is indicative of an instrumentalist approach to development work, which entails that gender equality and women's empowerment are seen as a means to achieve other development outcomes, rather than having them be goals in and of themselves (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009; Smyth, 2007; and Zuercher, 2018; Morton et al., 2020, 333-334). Within an instrumentalist approach, a focus tends to be placed on individual economic empowerment, through a rational choice lens, while social and political empowerment remain on the sidelines (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009). The FIAP's approach is justified using an argument for the efficiency that women and girls bring to development (GOC, 2017d), rather than what development can do for the women and girls. This sort of instrumentalist thinking presents the focus of programming on technocratic and measurable solutions to show what women and girls bring to development – for instance, the number of women “empowered” via a microfinance program (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009). The “girl effect” is, thus, understood by Cornwall and Anyidoho (2010, 145) to be a “resurgence of the WID approach” (as cited by Caron, 2018, 232) to development work, and it seems the FIAP may fall into this trap as well.

My main critique of the FIAP, however, is that there exist inconsistencies within the discourse flowing throughout the Policy. Perhaps the most striking example of this I can provide is from GAC's policy statement on its Feminist Approach, where they state that the FIAP's “...core premise is that promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity is the right thing to do and the smart way to reduce poverty and inequality and build prosperity” (GOC, 2019c). While starting off strong and pulling away from the dangerous “girl effect” discourse, they seem to fall right back into its trap by further justifying their approach within instrumentalist terms. I assume this could be purposeful, potentially allowing groups with varying appetites for “feminism” to grasp on to different parts of the Policy, and thus, garner wider support. It is, however, important to further interrogate these inconsistencies, because they may leave the reader, policy makers, project officers, and partners confused about what feminism means under the FIAP. For instance, the FIAP contradicts the previously established WID-style discourse by committing to “providing feminist international assistance that is human rights-based

and inclusive; strategic and focused; transformative and activist; and evidence-based and accountable” (GOC, 2017d). By bringing the focus now onto transformation and more relational notions of women’s empowerment, the approach aligns more with a social change approach, in which the focus is to make the world more just, rather than simply adding women to existing inequitable systems and stirring (Porter, 1999, 8-11). The commitment to a human rights-based approach (HRBA) to their work reiterates this. GAC understands an HRBA to development as a “tool to help countries meet their human rights obligations and assist people in knowing their human rights and the processes available to claim them” (GOC, 2017c). The premise behind an HRBA is that when peoples’ human rights are respected and fulfilled, “equitable and sustainable results” are possible – which GAC claims “reinforces a feminist approach, as human rights are at the foundation of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls” (GOC, 2017c). An HRBA inherently places power at the centre of its analysis, and works to transform and redistribute power at all levels, including transforming existing systems and structures that marginalize certain groups (GOC, 2017c). Using an HRBA should then allow for gender equality to happen through a redistribution of power not just between men and women but between different groups of women as well. Several academics have called for the use of HRBAs to bring the relational and transformative aspects of change back into gender equality work (Freeman, 2002, as cited by Smyth, 2007, 587).

The FIAP also repeatedly mentions its focus on the inclusion of the poorest, the most vulnerable and the most marginalized – thus, aiming to reach groups who are often left behind in more traditional WID-oriented development projects. In fact, the FIAP specifically lists the identity factors that may lead some people to face intersectional discrimination. These include sex, race, ethnicity, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, or migrant or refugee status (GOC, 2017d). This language is, therefore, very positive to see in a policy document and sets the discourse of the FIAP in a truly politicised GAD approach. Particular language and the frequency of its use is telling in a policy document – it shows the true focus of a policy, based on what is given “priority and air space”, and thus, the key messaging a government wants to display to the public

and its partners (Smyth, 2007, 583). A key word search within the Policy³³ reveals that “women and girls” appears 161 times, while “gender equality” appears 77 times and “men and boys” a mere nine times, while “LGBTI” is not even used. Not surprisingly then, “intersectionality” is only mentioned twice, and that detailed list of identity factors only appears four times in the entire policy, always in reference to additional personal identity factors a woman or girl may face to worsen her plight beyond her gender. The message I take away from this is that the focus and target audience of the policy is individual “women and girls”, rather than the relational aspects of gender equality (i.e., the role of men and boys), or even non-binary understandings of gender (Aylward and Brown, 2020, 317-18). This sort of “gender-first” intersectionality is called into question by many experts for prematurely narrowing-in the scope of analysis of marginalization to focus on gender and then add-on other identity factors, such as disability or sexual orientation (Stienstra, 2017; Mason, 2019; Aylward and Brown, 2020, 316-17). Further, truly intersectional policy and program making is meant to “...leave open the category of analysis, rather than to assume that one set of power relations, such as gender, is the primary set of inequalities...” (Stienstra, 2017, 188). This can then expose “...less visible or completely overlooked social locations...” (Hankivsky, 2014, 260-261). It seems that such an approach would allow for the identification of the most vulnerable and most marginalized in a particular context – an expressed goal of the FIAP. The FIAP clearly (and proudly) places gender at the centre of its analysis, ignoring that this factor may not actually be the most marginalizing factor in a person’s life, and further assuming that a gender-first approach is the best policy response (Stienstra, 2017). This is not the first time this has occurred within Canadian international development assistance. In an analysis of GAC’s work on disability in the Harper years, Stienstra (2017) showed very few projects considered disability and gender as “mutually constituting relationships of inequality” (135). Rather, there tended to be a gender-first approach, which was not always effective in solving these unique layered power inequalities (Stienstra, 2017). Morton et al. (2020) liken such an approach to “mainstream liberal feminism focused on women as a largely homogenous category” (342). The implicit issue with this form of misused intersectionality is that it can easily cause unintended harm

³³ For a full discourse network analysis of the FIAP and the language used across its Action Areas, see Morton et al., 2020, 340-343.

due to the assumptions it makes about the hierarchy of inequality in someone's life (Carastathis, 2013, 712, as cited by Mason, 2019, 214). Considering that "do no harm" is a major tenant of good and sustainable development work, this seems like an area GAC should look to address. Furthermore, if a gender-first intersectional lens is being imposed on beneficiaries or partners who identify other priorities, this could go against the participatory nature of truly feminist ways of working (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Cornwall, 2000, 28-29; Porter, 1999, 4). This will become important in the following chapter, where I explain what focus my research participants felt the FIAP should take.

In listing a set of personal identity factors that may marginalize an individual, there is also an inherent focus on individual, rather than collective struggle, which falls out of line with feminist approaches and much better aligns with notions of individual empowerment (Martinez, 2012, 94). The radical edge intended within Crenshaw's (1989) conceptualization of intersectionality is inherently then removed. This sort of conceptualization or rather, simplification of intersectionality, understands the multiple identity factors as the inherent cause of the discrimination women and girls face, rather than recognizing the structures of power that make the discrimination possible and interlock to compound harm (Mason, 2019). Mason (2019) takes issue with the simplification of intersectionality, arguing that it leads to a "flattening" of the transformative potential of the FIAP, because it fails to focus on "mapping the intersections of oppressive systems" (216), ridding the concept of a focus on multiple layers of power. Inevitably, this simplification makes it easier to design programming, because there is an "easy" problem to be fixed via a project, or in this case, an easily identifiable target beneficiary. For example, a microfinance project may be used to help a poor rural woman earn an income. This sort of project and target beneficiary fits in with the discourse of the FIAP, as it provides "empowerment" for a woman facing intersectional marginalization. However, it does so without considering the systemic issues, such as capitalism and globalization, that create a demand for such programming in the first place. A key word search within the Policy for these terms comes up empty. Another key word missing from the policy: patriarchy. Why is such a basic feminist term absent from a feminist policy? I agree with Smyth's (2007) assertion that, in "loosely and inappropriately" using concepts that otherwise have strong theoretical underpinnings, "that words are left empty of

meaning” (583). In fact, Mason (2019) states that “intersectionality is ripe to become a new buzzword in Canadian development” (211) because of the inherent separation of the term from the radical theory from which it emerged. In failing to even mention systems of oppression, it brings into question the validity of other concepts the FIAP uses, including an HRBA. An HRBA requires that one identifies multiple levels of power relations and inequalities – if the FIAP ignores the power inherent within our global systems, it is not naming the true oppressors of women, gender-diverse persons and the poor in general. How then, are this Policy and the approaches it calls for meant to address global inequality?

While these criticisms may appear to be true from the language used in the FIAP, it has not stopped some really strong feminist ways of working from coming to the surface, and this deserves celebrating. For instance, the FIAP was developed not just by GAC’s policy analysts, but rather, through an intensive world-wide consultative process consisting of Canadians, development “experts”, people in developing countries and partners (GAC, 2017d). At the core of feminist approaches is the importance of centering the voices of those on the ground throughout the entire project cycle, and if the consultation process did successfully take these voices into account (and took the “right” voices into account), this was an excellent starting point (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Cornwall, 2000, 28-29; Porter, 1999, 4). Cornwall (2000) does remind us however, that simply speaking does not translate to being listened to or heard and thus, more research into the actual consultation process would be necessary to interrogate how participatory this process truly was (19). Some of the more radical language that I have applauded has actually been elevated by “tempered radicals” within the department and their CSO colleagues around the world - and this is excellent news. It tells us that while the “fuzziness” can allow some to get away with WID-style programming under the guise of “feminism”, it can also allow more radical colleagues to implement truly “feminist” programming and ways of working, while also fitting into the discourse of the FIAP (Smyth, 2007, 584). For instance, the Women’s Voice and Leadership Program, which was announced alongside the FIAP, provides local “women’s rights organizations and networks with direct funding”, thus, reducing funding gaps and supporting capacity building of these important organizations already on the front lines of pushing for gender equality in their countries (GOC, 2017d). In this way, it is not the GOC determining the priorities for these organizations, they are simply providing

funding to accelerate their movement building for social change – this is truly transformative work. Beyond this unique funding opportunity, the relationship between the Government of Canada and these partners is different than the “norm” between partners. Interviewees at the Canadian High Commission (CHC) in Nairobi told me that within project steering committees, where priorities are set for funded projects, the power dynamics between the funder and funded organization under the Women’s Voice and Leadership program were flipped, with decision-making based on consensus, rather than GAC having the final say. I was told that it was not always easy, nor desired by everyone at GAC - because this went against the bureaucratic norms set within contracts, finance and accountability, and that GAC was just simply not set up to operate in such a feminist manner³⁴. However, the feedback the CHC had received on this mode of operating from the partners was much more positive. A stark reality, however, remains that innovations such as the Women’s Voice and Leadership Program stand out from the norm at GAC. Staff spoke of these initiatives with pride, as they should, but can such initiatives led by innovative “tempered radicals” do enough to off-set the arguably un-feminist and inconsistent nature of the FIAP discourse? Or can transformative initiatives such as the Women’s Voice and Leadership Program create momentum within the department and within civil society to successfully demand more programming follow this model? Only time will tell, but my hope is that the remainder of this thesis can begin to look into the issue more in depth through an examination of another locally-based programming initiative.

The Ugandan Context

It is important to recognize the impact of Uganda’s colonial history in shaping the current (gender) inequalities, norms, attitudes and beliefs prevalent in the country (Nyanzi and Karamagi, 2015, 27). Following political independence in 1962, women's issues were addressed under a WID framework, with the government encouraging women’s participation in the formal economy as a form of economic development, but at the same time, fully expecting women to take on their traditional homemaker role (Kyomuhendo

³⁴ Note that this was not verified by any of the partners as they were not asked in the interviews whether they felt GAC was operating in a feminist manner.

and McIntosh, 2006). Following the Nairobi World Conference on Women in 1985, a strong women's movement gained momentum, leading to a number of advocacy groups, NGOs and CSOs addressing rights issues and pushing the government to establish the National Gender Machinery in 1989 (Coffey, 2014). This later became the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), with the mandate to "spearhead the national agenda, and establish mechanisms for gender mainstreaming at different levels of national and subnational government" (Coffey International Development, 2014). In 1997, the MGLSD released Uganda's first stand alone "National Gender Policy" (NGP) and an updated version in 2007 (Kewsga, 2018). This Policy stipulates concrete ways the broader national development process can be gender responsive across all key Ministries and programs (Coffey International Development, 2014; and Kewsga, 2018). Its overall goal is "to evolve a society that is both informed and conscious of gender and development issues and concerns... [calling for the] equal participation of both men and women in economic, political and social cultural development" (MGLSD, 2007). Uganda's national development vision itself lists "gender issues, negative attitudes, mindset, cultural practices and perceptions" among some of the key challenges to meeting its overall vision of "a transformed Uganda", bringing gendered issues to the forefront of its priorities (Coffey International Development, 2014). The Government of Uganda is however, criticized for adopting an understanding of women's empowerment with an instrumentalist focus, and therefore, sidelining the importance of social change, rights and collective action (Coffey International Development, 2014). In this way, it is aligned with a WID approach to gender and development, with some scholars referring to it as an "adding women and stir" approach (Datzberger and Le Mat, 2018).

Beyond policy, Uganda has made significant legal progress with regards to gender equality, recognizing the equality of men and women in the Constitution in 1995, and passing laws against Female Genital Mutilation and Domestic Violence in the 2000s (Datzberger and Le Mat, 2018). Although the MGLSD appears to have the support of Government leadership, it receives little funding from the Government itself, totaling less than 1% of the national budget between 2009 and 2014 (Coffey International Development, 2014; and Datzberger and Le Mat, 2018). Funding is not, however, the only constraint facing the Ministry – its "gender" staff are overworked, underfunded and undertrained to

meet the demands of its large mandate (Kewsga, 2018). Despite these constraints, it is praised for successfully legitimizing gender within the broader public and in the public sphere (Kewsga, 2018).

Even with seemingly strong policy and legal frameworks, Uganda remains a country with deeply embedded patriarchal norms, influencing the gendered attitudes and behaviours dominant in society (Oxfam, 2018; 12; UBoS, 2013). For instance, the burden of care work continues to fall predominantly on women and girls, even if they take part in formal paid work, keeping them from reaping the full benefits of the growth Uganda has undergone in recent decades (Oxfam, 2018, 12 & 27; UBoS, 2013, 84-87). While norms have been improving in recent years around key harmful gender issues such as domestic violence, progress remains centered in heterosexual spheres of “gender” (i.e., on the plight of straight, cis-gendered women). Homophobia and overall discrimination against LGBTI persons is rampant and an extremely sensitive topic politically under the Museveni government (UBoS, 2013, 51-52; Nyanzi, 2014, 36-40; Tamale, 2013). Uganda is also predominantly a conservative Christian country, which when combined with overarching patriarchal norms, leads to certain especially stringent heteronormative gender scripts that influence not just norms, but also official government policy and stances which have dire impacts on people’s lives (Nyanzi and Karamagi, 2015, 32; Tamale, 2013, 33-34). For instance, in 2014 the Anti-Homosexuality Act was adopted in Parliament³⁵ – criminalizing homosexual activity and the overall existence of LGBTI individuals (Nyanzi and Karamagi, 2015, 25-26). This creates an interesting terrain for gender and development work, as the norms and attitudes are indeed widespread, but also originating from various interwoven spheres of influence, both internal and external to the country³⁶. As an international donor, tackling these norms in a manner that is contextually appropriate and that does not bring potential harm to locals (i.e., by not rocking the boat too extensively) is important³⁷. I was proud to undertake research with four local organizations working

³⁵ A few months after adoption, the Act was annulled in a petition filed in the Constitutional Court (Nyanzi and Karamagi, 2015, 26). The impact on real people’s lives however, remains.

³⁶ The role and influence of American Evangelical Christian groups within Uganda is well-known and documented, shaping dangerous beliefs and norms around heteronormative gender norms (Sharlet, 2010; and Kaoma, 2009, as cited by Nyanzi and Karamagi, 2015, 35; Tamale, 2013, 33-34).

³⁷ Key international donors to Uganda called-out the Government for their Anti-Homosexuality Act (including Canada’s former Minister of Foreign Affairs, John Baird, under the Harper Government), with many retaliating by withholding or redirecting aid – the Museveni Government however, reframed this

extremely hard on the ground to change the gendered reality in Uganda. Their work to overcome stringent gender scripts reminds us that culture within Africa, and Uganda more specifically, is diverse and contested internally, and that it is far from static - although western development discourse often says otherwise (Tamale, 2013, 38).

Conclusion

Through my brief examination of the history of Canadian international development discourse, I have shown that while there have been positive evolutions in the gendered and transformative language used by the Government, in reality there have been challenges bringing these to life. With little-to-no research on the implementation of the FIAP existing, my analysis of the policy itself suggests some theoretical weaknesses to attaining its feminist goals. The subsequent chapters will try to understand whether this troubling trend continues with the Trudeau government's new Policy and approach. My brief overview of the Ugandan context shows that the country has achieved progress towards some forms of gender equality, but that for individuals existing outside of or questioning the "norm", life remains challenging. Whether Canada's feminist approach has influence and is even desired in Uganda, given this multi-layered context, will be examined in the following chapter.

within neocolonial terms, maintaining that homosexuality was a western import, distant from Ugandan religious and cultural values - thus, framing homosexuality as a threat to Ugandan Nationalism and invigorating anti-gay sentiment in the country (Nyanzi and Karamagi, 2015; Tamale, 2013, 34-35). Local Activists were further outraged by the conditionality placed on aid by many in the west - stating that it not only removed agency from local civil society, but reinforced the Government's message that homosexuality was a western-supported concept (Tamale, 2013, 41).

Chapter 4: Mixed Messages:

The not-so “feminist” nature of the FIAP and programming in Uganda

Building off of the analyses of the FIAP and FFP in the previous chapter, this chapter will examine Global Affairs Canada-funded programming in Uganda since the 2017 launch of these policies through interviews with key informants working in development. The aim is to understand how “feminist” this programming is in reality and, therefore, whether the FIAP and FFP have managed to have influence on the ground, where high-level statements regarding Canada being a feminist leader are put to the test. In examining the nature of programming funded under the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) program, I hope to uncover how closely aligned work in Uganda is to the FIAP and broader concepts of gender equality and feminism. I will use these analyses to build an argument that un-feminist programming is informed by un-feminist policy which is designed, implemented and overseen by individuals in organizations lacking a feminist lens or the lived experience necessary to understand the complexity of certain symptoms of global inequality – as predicted in the Theoretical Framework. In chapter six, the conclusions made in this chapter will be combined with those in chapter five, to understand whether there is in fact a link between the internal operations of an organization and their work “out there”. Following a brief description of the funding mechanism, I turn the focus to Uganda, showing whether funded organizations share an understanding of feminist values, followed by the perceived relevance of the FIAP in the Ugandan context, and lastly, a specific focus on what the programming does and does not do well with respect to achieving transformative gender equality. The analyses in this chapter draw heavily from the gender and development discourse and feminist critiques presented in the previous two chapters. For a brief recap, my understanding of a radical “feminist approach” is one which is intersectional and human rights-based, and focuses on transforming inequitable gender relations through the meaningful inclusion and participation of women, girls, men and boys throughout the course of a development project.

The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives

My thesis focusses on one specific GAC funding mechanism from which I selected potential organizations to participate in my research project. Through the Canada Fund for Local Initiative (CFLI) Program, the Government of Canada is able to support a handful of Ugandan organizations to further development work in their communities, where the Canadian Government would otherwise have no presence. The CFLI program operates in over 125 countries and “provides direct funding assistance to local non-governmental organizations... for small projects addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment...” among other issues (GOC 2018c; GOC, 2019f). It provides an average of \$25,000 CAD per 1-2 year project, totalling about 600 projects annually (GOC, 2020b). What is unique about this Program, is that it is fully operated and managed regionally, in this case out of the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi, where the Ugandan programming is overseen, rather than from headquarters in Ottawa. Arguably, this makes the program more suited to local needs, and thus, contextually appropriate, as compared to if it was managed solely from Headquarters. Since the release of the FIAP, CFLI projects have been required to include a gender-based analysis (GBA) to “enhance the gender equality outcomes of the CFLI program” (GOC, 2019f). This is defined by the Government as “an analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary people may experience policies, programs and initiatives” (GOC, 2018a, 2018b). The latest Call for Proposals (CFP) for CFLI projects in Uganda required that applicants: consider the different impacts of their project on “women, girls, men and boys”, ensuring they do not “cause harm”; that they “consult women and/or girls in the development of their project proposal”; and “ensure that the views of those women and/or girls inform the project’s design” (GOC, 2019f). Also worth noting is that the CFP specifically asked for a GBA, rather than a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), which is the more intersectionality friendly version, and the analysis required across the GOC. Paying particular attention to the language used here reveals that gender equality is largely made synonymous with women and girls as a homogenous group in this context - this will become clear as this chapter and its analysis of this programming unfolds. Since the FIAP’s implementation in 2017, 6 local organizations had received funding under the CFLI program at the time I undertook my research. I spoke with staff at four of these organizations. As outlined in the

introductory chapter, I will not be naming the organizations to protect the confidentiality of my research participants

Findings and Discussion: Shared feminist values?

Definitions of Gender Equality

To better understand the values held amongst CSO and GAC staff, I asked participants to explain how their organizations understood and defined “gender equality”. Upon speaking with staff at the four CSOs, it became clear that none of the four organizations had a definition of gender equality that led their work. Instead, the female head of one organization told me: “it’s one of those topics we never really discuss... just ’cause we work with girls”. There was an inherent assumption that because the target of much of their programming was women/girls, that all staff knew what gender equality was and that they understood it in the same way. When pushed further to define “gender equality”, staff across the four CSOs were able to identify the following as key components: equal opportunity and equal access to opportunity, “balancing” between men and women equally, girls viewing themselves as equal to boys, girls not fearing abuse, and equality for all. What was clear from these definitions, was a lack of consistency in understandings of gender equality when organisations were compared to one another, as well as within the organizations. Only one organization understood gender to be a social construct, influencing norms and dictating how certain genders were treated, which they stated, “limited their work”. The other three organizations failed to use explicitly human rights-based language, meaning their conceptualization, and in-turn their work surrounding gender could be argued to be depoliticized and not transformative (Smyth, 2007). These three organizations also failed to justify their work on gender equality as the “right thing to do” but rather, found some sort of justification for why they needed to work with these groups, falling into the trap of instrumentalism (Beck, 2017, 147; Smyth, 2007, 587, citing Kabeer, 2003). All of the organizations did, however, at least informally, seem to understand the concept of intersectionality, and that women and girls and gender diverse persons faced different and overlapping discrimination based on their identity factors. For instance, staff recognized that older persons, persons with disabilities, orphaned children and those living in rural areas faced increased marginalization. An important, but not

shocking, finding was that staff at three of the four organizations viewed gender as a strict binary, between male and female, while staff at an explicitly LGBTI rights organization viewed gender as a spectrum. I cannot say I was surprised by this, as even the FIAP fails to include strong language explaining gender as a spectrum, nevertheless, it was, disheartening.

Another important finding was that three of the four organizations strongly believed that simply having women take part in their programming at the same rate as men was enough to consider themselves as having gender equitable programming. There was a belief that women's participation would lead to gender equality or in and of itself was gender equality - this was rooted in outdated and disproven WID-style conceptualizations around how change occurs (Rathgeber, 1990, 492; Martinez, 2012, 94). One interviewee told me that "in all our committees, we ensure both male and female are equally represented", other participants spoke about ensuring a "gender balance" in their programming or ensuring they were asking "where are the women?" upon arrival in communities. While the programming at some of these organizations did go beyond this conceptualization, it was disheartening that this belief was still widespread amongst staff. More shocking was that at one organization this sort of reasoning informed programming that was deemed sufficiently gender equitable by the CHC. At this organization, when asked to describe the scope of their project, not a single respondent mentioned gender equality without being prompted - it was an afterthought to them. I was told by the programs officer that "we are automatically gender mainstreaming... women are already there". Therefore, they simply counted the women who participated in the project and considered this to be a sufficient action towards gender equality. This conceptualization of gender equality, and how to achieve it, ignored the larger context within which gender inequality occurs, failing to identify gender relations and power relations at play, which could not be addressed through women's participation alone (Martinez, 2012, 94; Rathgeber, 1990, 491). The use, or rather misuse, of the term "gender mainstreaming" also demonstrates how the term becomes coopted and misused on the ground, backing-up

existing claims made by numerous other researchers³⁸. It has completely lost its radical meaning. The Programs Officer at this organization was also unfamiliar with what a Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) entailed and shared that until failing to secure another round of CFLI funding this past year, no one from the CHC had ever brought it up. This leads me to believe that the CHC was slow to implement FIAP requirements into all of their programming, but also that staff failed to effectively communicate with existing partners about priorities and opportunities to update their programming to make it more FIAP compatible, including in failing to offer training opportunities for the CSOs. Speaking with this organization opened my eyes to the standard the CHC was holding for funding “gender equality” programming under a “feminist” policy - it was far lower than I would have expected to find.

Comparing these findings with those at GAC (Ottawa and the CHC) proved to be an interesting exercise³⁹. While GAC does not have a singular definition of gender equality guiding its work either, staff understandings of the concept were all similar and built off of one-another, with everyone stressing that it was not just about women and girls, but also the involvement of men and boys, and expanding gender to a more non-binary definition. Words staff used to describe gender equality signalled a WID-focus and included: ‘equal opportunity’, ‘representation in decision-making processes’, ‘removing hurdles’, and ‘leaving no one behind’. This cohesion fell apart, however, when I asked staff to justify why GAC focused on gender equality: some regurgitated the FIAP discourse, telling me that in looking at intersectional marginalization, it was found women and girls were most disadvantaged, and therefore, the GOC worked with them. Another official told me that

³⁸ Tiessen (2007) and Parpart (2014) offer especially insightful analyses of this. See the Theoretical Framework Chapter for a full discussion of the history, issues with, and potential for gender mainstreaming in the international development sector.

³⁹ Please note that some authorial control had to be promised to GAC participants in exchange for their participation. They agreed to participate and be quoted only if they were able to review and approve the selected quotes in my thesis. As such, all quotes of GAC officials have been approved, however, this also entails that many of the quotes have been altered (sometimes significantly) to meet their desired messaging. While the general message of the quotes remains, the significance of some of the wording has been lost. As such, in the sections outlining data collected from GAC officials, I relied heavily on paraphrasing or summarizing what I heard from these officials to get around this. Additionally, some participants did not wish to be quoted, so they have been paraphrased as well. If it had been possible to include more direct (and unaltered) quotes, I would have relied more heavily on first-voice, however, given the constraints, you may note a lack of quotes vis-a-vis the sections outlining findings with the CSOs.

women must participate in programming because, they were needed to make progress towards broader development goals- essentially describing “what women can do for development”, rather than “what development can do for women” and echoing the girl effect (Kabeer, 2005, 4718; Batliwala, 2015; McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 370; Beck, 2017, 147). Another official told me that this focus was in line with progressive foreign policy, and therefore, Canada worked to address this need/gap in the global arena. This sort of justification placed the focus on the image the GOC portrayed to the world, rather than on the beneficiaries themselves, who in true feminist approaches, should be the centre of attention (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Cornwall, 2000, 28-29; Porter, 1999, 4). Similarly to the CSOs, no one said they worked on gender equality because it was the “right thing to do” - it was always justified as a means to reach other, more important goals.

FIAP Familiarity

With these varying understandings of and justifications for gender equality, I was curious about how staff understood the FIAP and its focus, as these were understandably linked. Across the four CSOs, only one of the 14 interviewees was familiar with the FIAP, the others had never even heard of the Policy or its goals. My impression going into the research was that Canada was proudly discussing the FIAP with its partners. The one person who was familiar with the FIAP had been part of the international consultation process led by GAC, which informed the focus of the FIAP. When asked what she thought of the Policy and its focus, she said, “I think the policy is really spot-on, because if you are not making a deliberate effort to change that [gender relations/inequalities], it is going to fall through the cracks, it becomes the norm, everybody believes it is normal, and people just move on”. Another interviewee who had not heard of the FIAP explained that gender more generally was discussed in contracts from the CHC, but not specifically the FIAP: “I think the question that came out [in the proposal process] was how is gender going to be included in this process or mainstreamed into this process. And then the reporting actually also targeted that specifically in terms of numbers, but I don’t remember this policy being mentioned”. This was unexpected considering the CSOs were implementing programming under the FIAP and a feminist foreign policy. If they had no familiarity with the Policy and

it was not being discussed with them by their funder, how could GAC expect to meet its ambitious gender equality goals?

At GAC, all staff were aware of the FIAP and its goals; however, they differed in how they described them. One official told me the goal was “reducing gender inequalities in order to better achieve poverty reduction targets”, thus, falling into the trap of seeing women and girls as the magic bullet solution to ending poverty (Kabeer, 2005, 4718; Batliwala, 2015; McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 370; Beck, 2017, 147). This reflects the understanding of gender I found most staff to hold. Three staff members explicitly described the focus as the “empowerment of women and girls”, and one expanded on this, saying that “my understanding of the FIAP is that it’s not about women and girls simply because it’s about women and girls – rather, using a feminist lens means that you need to look at the root cause of inequality, see who is being disadvantaged, and then seek to address that inequality”. She went on to explain that it tends to be women and girls who are most disadvantaged in most contexts, and thus, this is who Canada provides programming for, as women are the “low hanging fruit for making good progress towards the SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals], given the scale of inequality women and girls face”. While it may be true that they face inequality globally, simplifying complex systemic issues and assuming they can be easily solved by achieving a flawed version of “gender equality” that was taken to mean “women and girls”, was problematic. While staff at GAC may have understood the gist of the FIAP, they were missing a shared nuanced understanding of its rationale. Their understanding of the FIAP and its goals was also closely aligned to their understanding of gender equality, showing the influence of definitions (or the lack thereof) on interpretations of policy. What this also shows, is that the lack of definitions and ambiguity around key messaging allows the FIAP to be accepted by a very wide range of people, with varying appetites for gendered language and concepts.

Relevance of FIAP goals in Uganda

After asking CSO staff whether they were familiar with FIAP, I described the Policy and its goals to each interviewee, and asked them to share their thoughts on the relevance of the Policy in the Ugandan context. My intention behind this was to understand local impressions of the Policy. I found that staff were very supportive, and able to quickly

identify linkages between the work they did with marginalized groups, and the focus of the FIAP, especially the focus on “the most vulnerable and most marginalized” regardless of gender. In this way, it seemed many interviewees aligned conceptually with a human rights-based approach to development, rather than the gender-first approach that the FIAP was taking (Mason, 2019; Stienstra, 2017). While the “women and girls” focus resonated with everyone, the majority of interviewees pointed out the importance of intersectionality in taking the policy a step further. In one of the focus groups, staff had an in-depth discussion around the challenges marginalized boys in their beneficiary communities faced, but that were ignored or sidelined by a focus on only women and girls, which created push-back from boys and their parents. There was concern that in focusing so strongly on gender (which most took to mean women and girls), other key populations also facing severe marginalization would be left behind. One participant shared that in some beneficiary communities, “there are some people who are arguing that the focus on the women is also creating some disparities”. Her manager chimed in, stating that “...if for example, a project only comes to target girls, it is good, but then again, another [also marginalized] group is left out”. This aligns with calls outlined in the previous chapter that Mason (2019) and Stienstra (2017) have made for scrapping “gender-first” intersectionality, and rather using an HRBA to evaluate each context and design programming from that standpoint. It also aligns with Rao and Tiessen’s (2020) findings from a study of Ugandan, Kenyan and Malawian CSO staff perceptions of the FIAP, which highlighted concerns that a focus on women and girls could mean the “disempowerment of men and boys” (364). Several interviewees stated that having a policy that focuses on women/gender would, however, help progress their existing work by: “starting conversations about gender”, “changing perceptions”, and “giving social movements momentum”. Thus, there were different appetites amongst CSO workers for a gender-first intersectional feminist approach, which was also found in Rao and Tiessen’s (2020) study. But overall, the general idea of the FIAP was very well received – staff seemed excited about it. Explicitly using “feminist” was however, not perceived well, and the majority of interviewees recommend using more socially acceptable language, such as “gender equality”, instead. One interviewee explained the Ugandan context well, stating that “it’s complex when you refer yourself as a feminist - everyone is like ‘oh they’re crazy women’,

the women who are trying to destroy families, cause divorce, etc. So, the feminist concept hasn't been fully understood [in Uganda], cause everyone tries to paint a very bad picture of it". She then went on to explain that it is often seen as a western import: "They'll say like 'oh now you're trying to be like white people' – but, like what do you mean, fighting for women's rights doesn't mean I want to be a Mzungu [foreigner or white person] or something. So its attributed to that. We just need people to understand the concept and what it stands for." This could then confirm claims that GAC's fuzzy definitions of key terms allowed for a general acceptance of the idea of the Policy, with particular groups of people grasping on to particular radical language more than others, depending on their context (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009). This study did not have the scope to explore beneficiaries' understandings and acceptance of FIAP terminology, but this would prove another interesting and relevant terrain for future research.

The CHC staff told me that the response they received in Uganda, and East Africa more broadly, had been very positive, but there were several caveats to this. Staff told me that CSOs just "aren't there yet" in terms of having the capacity to implement FIAP-style programming and not all view social issues (such as gay marriage and LGBTI rights) the same way as Canada. This was then used to excuse the nature of some of the programming because it was deemed not contextually appropriate to push such strong feminist ideals. While I understand the need to shift programming to fit each unique context, I do question how appropriate it is to alter inherent tenants of feminism, knowing that strong (feminist) civil society movements exist and thrive worldwide, it is simply ill-informed to view the concept of feminism as contextually inappropriate. It appears, however, that there were different appetites for feminist terminology, with one GAC (CHC) staff member telling me that partners had been very comfortable with feminism, while another told me they explicitly avoided using the term "feminism", opting for "gender equality" to open up conversations. While this matched what the CSOs recommended, I do wonder whether as a "feminist" government with a feminist foreign policy, is it acceptable to equate a term as transformative as feminism with gender equality when it is so often further equated with just women and girls? Smyth (2007) argued that the language used by development institutions and their clarity around certain terminology was worth paying attention to – watering down certain concepts could lead to confusion which could have dire impacts on

the programming it informs (583-584). On the other hand, it could be that this approach provides strategic ambiguity, bringing as many people on-board with the FIAP as possible, as explored in the previous chapter (Eyben and Napier-Moore (2009). While not as radical as sticking to “feminism”, using “gender equality” could bring new people into the discussion for transformation to gendered norms, paving the way to slowly change the status-quo. This is similar to the discussion in chapters two and three around renovating the masters house versus tearing it down; it could be possible that realistically, both need to happen at the same time.

Also worth noting is that I noticed a disjuncture between staff at the CHC - specifically, among staff who had been at in Nairobi for some time versus those who had recently come to Nairobi following an annual rotation of staff. The new staff members seemed to more informed about the FIAP or at least were able to speak about it in a more nuanced fashion. This could very well have been due to my small sample size; however, it was notable to me that the staff who had been in charge of implementing the CLFI programming I was evaluating seemed to have different understandings of the FIAP as compared to the new colleagues who came in to oversee a new programming cycle. It raised questions for me around how policy changes are communicated with staff at mission, and how GAC ensures all staff hold the same understanding of key concepts and policy documents. Furthermore, it made me wonder whether the types of programming would change going forward because of the new staff.

Findings and Discussion: Far from feminism

With staff at the CSOs and GAC⁴⁰ holding various understandings of and appetites for the FIAP, feminism and gender equality, I was interested to see whether this influenced the programing being implemented in Uganda. As previously discussed, feminists have found that different interpretations of key terms, concepts and norms in policy can influence how or whether they are translated into local programming (Tiessen, 2004; Cold-Ravnkilde et al., 2018; Bydawell, 1997; Plowman, 2000; and Wendoh and Wallace, 2005).

⁴⁰ As explained in the Methods section of Chapter 1, where helpful/appropriate, I specify whether I am referring to someone from the CHC or GAC more generally. In some instances, I simply refer to GAC given requests made by interviewees to maintain as much anonymity as possible.

I have also shown that this has been found to be a challenge previously for Canadian international development programming, where the influence of changing discourses around “gender equality” within GAC has had dire consequences for the types of gender programming implemented on the ground (Carrier and Tiessen, 2015; Tiessen and Baranyi, 2017; and Tiessen, 2015). This section will examine two troubling trends I found within the descriptions staff at the Ugandan CSOs provide about the programming they implemented via the CFLI program.

Working within Traditional Gender Norms

The first trend I noticed while speaking with CSO staff emerged while listening to them describe the programming they undertook to promote gender equality. As I described in an earlier part of this chapter, three of the four organizations understood women’s participation in programming as sufficient to bring about gender equality. Staff explained to me some of the measures they undertook to ensure there was equal participation amongst women and men within the programming. In fact, staff were thrilled to tell me that they often had very little trouble getting women to participate as they were “already there”, gathered together and ready for programming. The women were, therefore, presented as having little else going on in their lives, and that including them in programming would automatically improve their well-being. This description was indicative of WID-style programming, which is known for failing to consider the multiple roles women take on, and focusing only on their practical gender needs/interests, and assuming no extra burden would come from programming (Moser, 1989; Molyneux, 1985; and McIlwaine and Datta, 2003). Staff told me it was more challenging to bring equal numbers of men on board because they were often not present in the village, as they left for long periods of time to find work. Even with this recognition, staff at two of the four organizations did not seem to question why there were so many women readily available to take part in their programming. One female participant happily explained to me that, “here, we have been sort of automatically gender mainstreaming [be]cause many of our programs are female-headed or female-based. The majority of participants are women...”. While it was positive that they were able to easily access the women without much resistance (arguably because norms around gendered roles were not challenged), it was alarming to me that staff failed

to recognize that these women were present because of the nature of the programming they were implementing. The programming these two organizations undertook dealt with women within their traditional gendered roles - women preparing briquettes for cooking (and selling them for income) and women caring for their children. In working on projects within these domains, it was no wonder that women were readily available and able to participate, as this was work they were likely already doing based on the accepted gendered division of household labour. When further pressed on the question of *gender* (rather than women's participation), I was given some interesting reasoning for why staff might try to engage men in these projects. One male participant told me, "A woman must be with a man, so [we] need to work with both", while a female participant at the same organization told me that the income generating activity they were engaging the women with (making briquettes) required "manpower, on the side of the men, so we encourage them to be part of it...cause the women can't". In this way, justifications within very traditional gendered roles and norms were being used for men's engagement. Ultimately, staff across the organizations told me they wanted men to participate in the projects so that the ratio of male-to-female participants would be equal, with one female participant explaining that "in these groups we go to [i.e., the groups they engage for their programming] we try to see that there is gender balance, that no one is left out along the way, because everyone has their own potential". At another organization, a female interviewee explained that, "I think it so happens that certain tasks are more attractive to certain genders. In Uganda, care is dominated by women, so while we are conscious of gender, you will find that many times in our activities in the field, we tend to have more females, so we have to think about how we can get more men". The reasoning behind their inclusion of men is then non-transformative – it focuses on a balance in participants rather than lessening the burden on women, or ultimately, shifting gendered norms. This superficial engagement of men within "gender" programming is all too common within development work, Cornwall (2014) asserts that men are often represented as an "obstacle" (133) to women's empowerment, and by extension, included in programming to overcome this and limit their "negative effects" (133) on women, rather than to improve their well-being via a shift in gender norms. For example, a male interviewee at one of the organizations explained that, "we try to ensure men's participation in any of these traditional roles [specifically referring to care

work], so that women can also go to the other [traditionally male] role [i.e., paid work], earn, and have the control over money, but that is something that takes time”. While they did aim to have the men participate in care work that women traditionally undertook, they only did this so that the women were able to leave the home to undertake income-generating activities. Men were not engaged in care work because it was the right thing to do, or simply, their responsibility as an adult and parent. They were filling-in while their spouse was earning money. WID-style programming has been criticized for some time now for ignoring the fact that women play multiple roles throughout their day: care/reproductive work, productive work and volunteer/community work (Moser, 1989, 1801; and Molyneux, 1985, 233). Providing women with income generating activities without considering these multiple roles (and shifting norms so that men play their fair share) can create a double or triple burden on women’s time, as they will be expected to complete all of these roles, with less time (Rathgeber, 1990; Peet and Hartwick, 2015, 288; Tinker, 1977; Moser, 1989, 1801). While norms might have been shifted around the fact that women were out earning an income, without engaging men in this process to change their perceptions and behaviours regarding care work and truly shifting power via the sharing of such roles, the problem was oversimplified and only part of the puzzle was being addressed (Peet and Hartwick, 2015, 288). Moser (1989) likened such work to only addressing practical gender needs, rather than working towards strategic gender needs. Without adequately engaging with men and women to raise their critical consciousness to the negative role that patriarchal oppression plays in their lives and on their well-being, such efforts will fail to lead to the structural change the FIAP calls for (Cornwall, 2014, 133). Moreover, they fall out of line with many of the tenants of truly feminist and human rights-based programming I outlined previously, leading me to question the potential for true transformation.

Women and Girls as Victims of Sexual Violence

One of the more striking findings from my research was the fact that girls were represented by one of the organizations as being helpless victims of sexual violence. I recall walking away from my interviews with this organization with an overwhelming sense of disappointment and confusion surrounding how programming with such a message could

be funded in a FIAP era. While it is true that women and girls face sexual violence worldwide, including in Uganda, where statistics from the UNFPA (2020) show that 60% of women have experienced violence, and one in four women have reported that their first sexual intercourse experience was forced against their will. It is also true that women's sexual bodies are far more than just victims (or survivors) - they can and should have their own agency. In fact, key tenants of feminism, human rights, and feminist sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) include the notion that all people have "full autonomy over their lives, bodies and sexuality" (Oxfam Canada, 2018, 2).

This organization was funded for a project that focused on girls with disabilities, who often face sexual violence due to their systemically marginalized position in society as not only a girl, but also a person with a disability, and a person living in a rural part of Uganda. In focusing on a group facing intersectional marginalization, this project had the "ideal" target audience under the FIAP – I was initially excited to hear more about their programming. I was told the organization held workshops with these girls and their care-takers (who were often their mothers), on sexual and reproductive health (or SRH). This is considered an ideal area of focus under the FIAP as SRH and rights are integral to feminist gender equality programming (Oxfam Canada, 2018, 1; Beck, 2017, 143). The FIAP makes specific commitments to SRHR in support of Action Area 2: Human Dignity, including closing gaps in access to specific health services, joining global partnerships, and providing services in humanitarian contexts (GOC, 2019d, 23-25 & 31). The GOC has released multiple high-level statements and pledged millions of dollars towards both SRHR programming⁴¹ and programming for persons with disabilities⁴² (GOC, 2017b, 2019e,

⁴¹ In 2017, US President Donald Trump reinstated and expanded the "global gag rule", also known as the "Mexico Policy", which "prevents foreign organizations receiving US global health assistance from providing information, referrals or services for legal abortion or advocating for access to abortion services in their country - even with their own money (Planned Parenthood, 2020b). In this context, the Government of Canada has been praised for stepping up, and filling part of the gap left behind by the Trump government's policies (Action Canada, 2017). In June 2019, Canada hosted the Women Deliver Conference, the largest conference on the health, rights and well-being of women/girls in the world, and made a massive funding announcement, pledging a ten-year commitment of \$1.4 billion annually to support women and girl's health globally (GOC, 2019d). Notable within this funding announcement is that annually, \$700 million of the investment will be directed to SRHR, as of 2023 (GOC, 2019d). This made Canada one of the largest international funders of SRHR (CCIC, 2019; Aiello, 2019).

⁴² During Canada's G7 Presidency in 2018, the *Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries* was adopted, with Canada making specific commitments for girls with disabilities (GOC, 2019a&b). In early 2018, the Minister for International Development also attended the first ever Global Disability Summit in the UK, and pledged commitments

2020a; Global Disability Summit, 2018). The combination of these two files made this the *perfect* FIAP project on the surface. However, when pressed on what issues these SRH workshops discussed, it was revealed that the project focused on hygiene, “stopping unwanted pregnancies”, “how to handle sexual abuses” (with a focus on the parents “safeguarding” the girls from such acts), and menstruation. While these are important parts of SRH, I was uncertain of the exact details of the programs, as staff seemed reluctant to provide details. I was especially interested in how the programming went about discussing “stopping unwanted pregnancies”, as under a feminist and rights-based lens, the language used around this is extremely important. For instance, the difference between a discourse rooted in population control versus one rooted in the idea of women having the right to choose when, whether, and with whom they have a child, is dramatically different, with the latter being more feminist (Beck, 2017, 143-145; Jaquette and Staudt, 1985, as cited by Beck, 2017, 145). I also was interested in understanding whether, under the FIAP, the representation of women within SRHR programming had improved and moved beyond the Harper government’s reduction of women as a “walking womb”⁴³ (Tiessen, 2015). Given the FIAP’s rooting in feminism, HRBA and intersectionality, I was interested in whether the focus of programming would be feminist in nature and more inclusive of the diversity of the female sexual experience.

After some hesitation, a couple staff members revealed to me that the focus of the workshops was abstinence. One respondent explained to me that this was for the girls’ safety, “...because they can’t decide [when to have sex], so the parents have to make sure it does not happen”. This statement was problematic in many ways, but what struck me was the inherent assumption that these girls could not possibly have the ability to decide when or whether they wanted to have sex. In this way, they were assumed to have no agency, and in focusing on abstinence, their autonomy was limited as the information necessary to make informed decisions about their bodies was removed from them (Oxfam Canada, 2018, 1; Orza et al., 2017, S10-S14). While I understood the organization felt it

for Canada’s international assistance with respect to persons with disabilities (Global Disability Summit, 2018).

⁴³ Tiessen (2015) was critical of the focus the Harper government took (under the Muskoka initiative) on mothers, rather than women, which led to the homogenization of women and exclusion on women who did not identify as heterosexual or conform to the “gendered expectation of motherhood” (Tiessen, 2015, 75-85).

was best to focus on abstinence, I also knew that such programming was ineffective, and wanted to know whether other information was provided to the girls in case they did not comply with abstinence, as the evidence shows they likely will not (UNESCO et al., 2018, 29, 84; Santhya and Jejeebhoy, 2015, 204; Kirby, 2008, 24). When asked whether contraception was discussed in the workshops, another respondent told me that because the girls were *so* young, “we didn’t give them an option... the only contraception that we were advising them was abstinence”. The reasoning behind this was a belief that had they told the girls about the various types of contraception, they would “most likely use the others that are not applicable to their years” [i.e., that they would have sex with condoms, rather than abstain from sex all-together]. This staff member also told me “...we were trying to show them that when they come to the right time, they can have the sex, but protective sex, but at the moment, it is only abstinence”. Contraception was, thus, only discussed within the context of pregnancy, leaving out important information about STIs, which disproportionately affect young people worldwide, but that when discussed within SRHR programs, lead to successful outcomes (UNESCO et al., 2018, 24 & 29). Sex was being presented to the girls as something with the sole purpose for men and women to procreate within the context of marriage, rather than as a regular, healthy and normal experience/practice that should consist of pleasure, with or without a partner and that does not have to lead to pregnancy (Cornwall et al., 2008, 32 & 36-37; Sheill, 2008, 84). Cornwall et al. (2008) have been critical of such presentations of sex because they remain within strict “gender and sex orders” (32), rendering invisible those whose experiences and lives do not conform to the cisgender and heterosexual married norm. It is clear that no one benefits from such sexual education (Correa and Jolly, 2008, 51; Correa and Jolly, 2011, 103; Lind, 2009, 35). Lind (2009) has argued that such actions are an inherent act of control of people’s intimacy, especially because they (persons with disabilities) do not fit within the “norm”.

Based on my conversations, I assumed that the girls must have been extremely young for the organisation to have kept such important SRHR information from them and that such information was not “age-appropriate”, a key aspect of comprehensive SRHR programming (UNESCO et al., 2018, 84). I was however, later told that the girls were “*very* young...14-20 years old”, which left me quite shocked. In a country where it is reported

that more than half of women have had their first child by the age of 19, and that this age only decreases for rural, uneducated and poor women, this seemed extremely irresponsible (UBoS, 2006). To have withheld information from these girls - or more accurately, young women - could be quite harmful to their health (Esiet, 2008, 275). It likely kept them from being able to make an informed choice about their body – a key pillar to feminist sexual and reproductive health programming (Beck, 2017, 145; Oxfam Canada, 2018, 2). The explicit focus on “sexual and reproductive health”, rather than “sexual and reproductive health and *rights*” was also notable to me. In removing the girls’ human rights from the discussion, the nature of the programming was able to move away from their autonomy over their bodies and the inherent agency that they have the human right to exercise (Orza, 2017, S11). Due to their disability, these young women were further infantilized and assumed to be asexual (or at least that they ought to be) and thus, lacking their own desires - something that commonly occurs in SRHR programming with persons with disabilities (Addlakha et al., 2017, 4; Jolly Cornwall and Hawkins, 2013, 32). The young women were inadvertently taught to hide their sexuality by failing to discuss sex with them outside of the context of them being a victim of a sexual act or engaging in sex for the purpose of procreating (Jolly, Cornwall and Hawkins, 2013, 31). Welborn (2013) referred to this failure to discuss alternative sexual realities with people outside the norm (they were specifically referring to HIV positive women) as “forced asexuality”, because of the inherent failure to provide such women with rights to their own autonomy over their “sexual – and reproductive – pleasure” (200-201). However, assuming people are asexual and ignoring that they have sexual and reproductive health needs creates and perpetuates harm (Coultrick and Cowan, 2013; Jolly, Cornwall and Hawkins, 2013, 23).

In addition to a focus on abstinence, the young women were taught they should avoid sex because they were likely to be “taken advantage of [due to their disability]” (note that this exact wording was used by multiple people in the organization) and thus be victims of sexual violence, placing the onus on them (and their caretakers) to ensure they were not in a situation where they could be sexually exploited. Meanwhile, there was no effort made to address the cause of sexual violence against these young women with disabilities and deal with the people who were sexually violent towards them. As part of the project, the organization did engage two key groups of people who hold power in this context: the

parents and community decision-makers. One interviewee explained the parent's engagement, stating that they were engaged "to make sure it [sexual violence] does not happen", and another interviewee expanded on this, saying that they would explain to the parents, "how do you take care of them". Such statements demonstrate that these key power-laden groups were engaged to ensure they were "protecting" the young women from sexual violence, rather than to shift their perceptions and behaviours towards women, as required within an HRBA. There was no discussion about how this issue was gendered and the role men and boys within a patriarchal culture may play in this issue. In portraying the young women as requiring protection, rather than having their own agency, two important stereotypical representations were made: 1) women/girls (especially those with disabilities) were helpless victims requiring saving; and in juxtaposition, 2) those with power over the girls needed to protect them from sexual violence (Cornwall, 2014, 130, 133-135; Bakare-Yusuf, 2013, 53-55; Stienstra, 2017, 131). There was also no attention given to the positive side of sexuality - women and girls' rights to pleasure, which leaves a major gap in their SRHR understanding. This could have had implications for how the young women saw themselves and their bodies and the perceptions the community had of these young women and of the perpetrators, who were not part of the conversation in this project, but nevertheless, a key part of a larger discourse around sexual violence (Bakare-Yusuf, 2013, 55-56; Cornwall, 2014, 133-135; Jolly, Cornwall and Hawkins, 2013, 23-25; Cornwall et al., 2008, 36-37; Grieg, 2008, 143-154). The lack of engagement with the broader community to change its behaviours and deeply rooted assumptions and norms about gender, masculinity and sexual relationships, meant that this project was not tackling the proper cause of the problem (Jewkes et al., 2015, 1585; and Grieg, 2008, 143-154). Rather, it asserted a harmful message that the young women were victims of sexual violence, caretakers needed to protect them, and by extension, they were both to blame if the young women faced sexual violence from community members. This is, unfortunately, not a new revelation within development. Correa and Jolly (2008) highlighted that this sort of discourse flowed from the Beijing Declaration, where "sexual rights" were used within a "victimization framework that restricted the application of sexual rights to a positive perspective that would also address pleasure and well-being" (54, citing Petchesky, 2000). The strong influence of the Beijing Declaration on gender and development, as well as the

patriarchal nature of most societies, has resulted in development practitioners often shying away from addressing SRH outside of the context of “unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease”, seeing the positive side of sexual rights as a “frivolous add-on rather than something that is intimately entwined in with core development concerns of poverty and marginalization” (Cornwall et al., 2008, 23-24). In offering the SRH programming only to the young women, it also sent the message that men and boys need not learn about sexual health; meanwhile, it has been shown that a lack of understanding of SRH and specifically SRHR, leads to harm (Jolly, Cornwall and Hawkins, 2013, 25; Hook et al., 2018, 12). It is not enough to teach young women some semblance of SRH, if the other half of the population remains uneducated within patriarchal structures that teach them how to (mis)treat women. Such programming has a limited transformative potential, as it fails to address the root causes of the issue at hand and avoids talking about the real systemic and structural problems and limits the target of the intervention to meeting the practical gender needs of the young women, i.e., avoiding sexual violence or focusing on menstruation. In doing so, it inevitably falls directly into the trap of WID-style programming.

I was shocked that this SRHR project received funding in a FIAP era, however, given the context in Uganda, where the National sexual education curriculum⁴⁴ is *very* closely tied to Christian religious values, how far can Canada push its “feminist” agenda?

Findings and Discussion: What the programming does well – Changing Norms

Critical assessments of the programming funded under the CFLI program are important in order to understand the influence of the FIAP and the challenges to the feminist policy; however, it is equally important to highlight areas of excellence. Two projects stood out for involving men and boys and decision-makers to make transformative changes to societal gender norms - key tenants of human rights-based, feminist and ultimately, transformative gender programming.

⁴⁴ The Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sport (2018) unveiled a new [National Sexuality Education Framework](#) in 2018, which clearly promotes traditional heteronormative gender norms and harmful SRH practices including abstinence until marriage (de Haas, 2018).

At one of the organizations, their CFLI-funded project focused on creating safer routes to school for girls, who often faced sexual violence as they traveled to and from the school. This organization had a proud history of providing empowerment programming for school-aged girls; however, this project was the first where they focused on the involvement of boys. The head of the organization explained this:

But one of the things we were conscious about last year, was that we cannot work with girls in isolation. In the past we have tried to involve the parents or the communities, but now we also are making intentional efforts to involve the boys. One of the things we have been discussing with some of the board members is the issue of behavioural change when it comes to understanding and appreciating issues of gender... so we are being very cautious in balancing the gender and not just focusing on the girls, cause then the girls might know what to do [speaking specifically about sexual violence], but if the boys are not sensitized, it is still going to affect them.

This explanation demonstrates the shift in understanding of the root causes of gender inequality, and that they require involving boys from a young age, to shift their behaviours before they fully develop. Staff spoke about this project with immense pride, as they recognized the transformation in their thinking around the issue of gender inequality, but also the transformative nature of their programming. As part of the project, the organization held workshops at schools, and one staff member explained to me that, “at times we would speak to the girls alone, then the boys alone, then we would bring them together”. This way of working is important and informed by feminist understandings that the power relations existing between the genders in addition to social norms around what can/cannot be discussed in the presence of another gender, can influence what and how much students reveal in front of each other (Eade and Williams, 1995, 124; Esplen, 2006, 12-13). In separating the two groups, multiple perspectives were given the ability to come to the surface and then when the groups were brought back together, they could be discussed and further interrogated (Eade and Williams, 1995, 124). The workshops covered what sexual violence was, because as one interviewee explained, the students greatly misunderstood the concept:

Many of them just thought it was about penetration, they didn't know that it's [also] someone catcalling, just insinuating that they can do something with your body verbally, that is sexual assault on its own. Telling them [that an unwanted] touch as they go home and they pass by the boda boda stages [a motorcycle taxi stand in Uganda] and they tap them and things like that. So we had to explain to them what it is, [that] it's not just sex, it's everything that will end up leading to sex.

Making this clear distinction for both the girls and boys was extremely important - it made clear what kind of behaviour was and was not consensual and thus, appropriate, and reinforced feminist SRHR principles of bodily autonomy (Orza, 2017, S11; Grieg, 2008, 144). This discussion led many of the girls to reveal to the workshop organizers instances of sexual violence they had faced that did not consist of penetration, but that were nevertheless unacceptable. The interviewee went on to explain that upon learning the proper definition of sexual violence, that the girls "...were shocked, and then they start telling you, 'this happened to me' and that they didn't know [at the time that it was sexual violence]". With many of these sorts of revelations, the organization then adapted the project to help these girls with filing formal reports and connected them with organizations providing pro-bono legal work to assist in the justice process. The ability of the workshop organizers to shift the area of focus of the project shows adaptability within their approach and an attention to the needs of their beneficiaries, which are key tenants of feminist and rights-based approaches to doing development work (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Eyben, 2003; Oxfam GB, 2014, 1-2). The workshops also went further than the "victimization framework" (Correa and Jolly, 2008, 54), and covered SRH issues, as organizers found that the education the students received in school via the formal curriculum was insufficient, and that the students did not feel comfortable asking their teachers questions in such formal settings. One interviewee explained that they also engaged teachers to try improve their approach and fix this gap: "[we would ask them] are they doing enough to speak to the boys and the girls on things like SRH? Or do they just have sessions during the science class, where children they never understand and they will never put up their hands to ask. So we kept advocating for more sessions outside of class, so the children don't feel like it's a class session, things like that". My research underscores

findings made by de Haas et al. (2017), that teachers in Uganda acted as important “gate-keepers” to information on SRHR, and when that information was limited to abstinence, students were left with unanswered questions and harmful misconceptions, while still navigating their sexuality. The organization also worked with local leaders, “to understand their role as duty bearers for the protection of children’s rights... we just want them to understand, as duty-bearers, what is their role in this whole process [specifically discussing sexual violence]”. The strong use of language associated with an HRBA is important for the transformative potential of such programming. Furthermore, they engaged school teachers and parents to understand the root causes of sexual violence and how they could help raise a better generation via the information and norms they pass on to the students. One interviewee explained the reasoning behind this, “it all came down to society, and as parents to raise your sons well, raise your daughters well, cause if you don’t, you’ll find that your sons who are raised like in a certain way, if you are harsh or violent towards them, they are going to grow up to be violent people”. This project really stood out to me because it went beyond looking at sexual violence facing girls in a vacuum and understood the many factors that lead people to abuse their power over girls and made efforts to shift the norms underlying them, in individuals and the community as a whole (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016, 7-8; Jewkes et al., 2015, 1585). By teaching boys appropriate SRH and about sexual violence, they also ensured that not just the girls were aware of the issue, but that boys also knew what was and was not okay, avoiding the trap of framing this as just a “women’s issue” (Cornwall, 2014, 128; Greene et al., 2019). While I did not have the time to get into details with this organization about the focus of their SRHR workshops, I was hopeful speaking with them that through their engagement with boys around key feminist ideas such as consent, that they were working to build a generation of boys that treats women better. This project certainly met much of the discourse within the FIAP with its strong analysis of and engagement with the full context within which the issue of sexual violence facing girls occurs.

The second organization that stood out for its programming worked to bring sexual health screenings to lesbian, bisexual and queer women - groups often left out in LGBTI programming, which tends to focus on men who have sex with men (MSM) (Lind, 2009, 34-37). This was chosen as the focus of the project after months of internal advocacy by a

lesbian woman in the organization, who noticed funders were not focusing on lesbian, bisexual and queer (LBQ) women, despite their particular needs. She noted this to management and took action. She explained her approach to me: “while you are in the field with your MSM-focused program, [you can] collect data also on LBQ women, to sort of get an idea, just in case there is another funder... cause sometimes if you have this data, you can also twist the arm of the donor”. After some time, she was able to collect sufficient data to make the case that there was in fact a gap in health care for these women, and thus, push for a project to focus on their needs. Lind (2009) understood this “invisibility” of lesbian women to exist as a result of them not being seen as “‘in need’ of development interventions”, as within a heteronormative representation of sexuality and the family unit, these women were considered asexual and thus, “unlikely to get pregnant or unlikely to get AIDS” (35-37). In collecting real data on the numbers of lesbian, bisexual and queer women existing in Uganda, and their needs, this staff member was able to provide quantitative data showing the need for an intervention. The technocratic nature of the development industry often demands this sort of data in order for an issue to be legitimized (Ferguson, 1990, 73). In making visible the problems facing these women, a dynamic project was constructed to address their needs. Sexual health screenings were set up to provide STI/HIV and ovarian cancer tests/screenings, and women with abnormal tests received support (monetary and emotional) to go for further consultations and treatments. I was told heartwarming stories about how these tests allowed people who otherwise would have never gone for a screening (due to their gender, gender identity, gender expression and/or sexual orientation) to receive treatment for painful infections and even ovarian cancer. While this aspect of the project was phenomenal in and of itself, the organization also worked to sensitize local health care providers to be more aware of the needs of lesbian, bisexual and queer women, and to change perceptions and remove the stigma that many of these women faced when trying to access health care. In doing this important work, the organization worked to shift norms within the health care community, thus, addressing a major barrier to accessing health care safely as a LGBTI person in Uganda (Thapa, 2015, 3-4; Okiror, 2019). They also opened a conversation with the women themselves around why it was important to access sexual health screenings. One interviewee explained why this was necessary, stating that “many people fear going as they

felt it was invasive and would take away from their sexuality, much of this is due to the stigma attached to going”. Without recognition of this and action to confront it the project could not have been successful. Beyond meeting the practical gender needs of the lesbian, bisexual and queer women via the sexual health screenings and sensitization of health care providers, the organization also worked with LGBTI advocates to provide “communications training and work as a group to assist each other with advocacy for LGBT organizations around health”. This allowed them to better advocate for the sexual health needs of under-represented groups and enabled them to spread the message further and inform the broader public about health care challenges facing LGBTI groups in Uganda. This recognized a significant barrier to feeling safe when accessing health care within Uganda, where I was told the government did not allow any formal news agencies to report on LGBTI issues as they were seen to “promote” homosexuality - resulting in mass unawareness and thus, stigmatization (Kushner, 2019; Burke and Okiror, 2019). This project was able to change norms within the LGBTI community itself, amongst health care service providers, and hopefully in the broader public - in a difficult context where being LGBTI was often seen as going against “traditional” values and thus, could lead to imprisonment and even death (Thapa, 2015, 1; Burke and Okiror, 2019; Shuchman, 2014, 661; Cheney, 2010, 30). This project was a phenomenal example of simultaneously working to meet practical gender needs while also pushing for transformational changes to norms to allow for strategic gender needs to be met (Moser, 1989). In supporting advocates, it supported movement building and societal change, which are important aspects of a feminist approach (including under the FIAP) that none of the other CFLI-funded projects addressed (McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 376; FRIDA and AWID, 2016, 13).

In the critiques presented above, the organization that worked on LGBTI health screenings stood-out for their approach to rationalizing and solving issues. They worked from a human rights-based perspective and were involved in activism alongside their needs-based programming - thus, they challenged norms and centered the voices of the most marginalized. As explained earlier, in this way, they worked towards transformation while simultaneously ensuring the well-being of their beneficiaries. Something I noticed almost immediately when meeting with this organization was that the staff that worked on their programming were diverse and consisted of the very groups of people they were

creating programming for – they proudly told me about this too. Could it be that centering the voices and experiences of those most marginalized leads to better programming? This is certainly in-line with feminist ways of working, which call for participatory approaches, but generally, simply call for the subaltern groups to be *part* of the project conceptualization, rather than undertaking the entire project themselves (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Parpart, 2002 and Cornwall 2003, as cited by McIlwaine and Datta, 2003, 371). It appears that having an organization made up of the very people you aim to help may be even more effective, but this leads to other questions about the role and necessity of the development industry, which are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored how the FIAP has been implemented on the ground in Uganda. The goal of this chapter was to examine the impact of this shift in GOC development policy, to understand whether it resulted in real changes to Canadian international development assistance. Through my examination of CLFI-funded programming in Uganda, I found that there were massive disparities amongst the types of programming that were considered feminist under the FIAP and in turn, the types of organizations that received funding. These organizations themselves had vastly different understandings of gender, feminism, and how to achieve equality. There appeared to be a lack of coherence amongst funded organizations, with some holding very “feminist” views, in line with or even beyond the discourse of the FIAP, and with others holding more simplistic views of the role of gender in the development process, more in line with WID discourse. A stark example of this being how the various organizations addressed and represented the issue of sexual violence and broader SRHR. However, this lack of coherence did not end with the CSOs, but extended to their funder, Global Affairs Canada, as well. The understandings of feminism, the FIAP and gender equality held by staff varied drastically, with concerns being raised about how policy changes in Ottawa are disseminated to staff at mission and leaving many questions about the feasibility of the meeting the goals of this new Policy given these challenges.

The next chapter takes broader questions about (gender) equitable workplaces into consideration - turning the lens inwards and looking at the organizations themselves. This

includes GAC, where all staff members I interviewed agreed that a feminist approach was necessary and appropriate, but who evidently held very different interpretations of what this meant, especially at the CHC - as clearly demonstrated by the different types of “gender” programming that were permitted to move forwards at the CHC. This was a stark reminder that organizations are made up of people with different lived experiences and that ignoring this reality (by not working to ensure a coherent understanding of feminism, for instance) has been shown to lead to poor gender equality programming (Rao et al., 1999). In the theoretical framework I demonstrated that broader societal inequalities permeate the walls of organizations and influence who makes decisions, who works on policy and programming and thus, whose voices are represented (Acker, 2012; Goetz, 1997; Lewis, 2006; Tiessen, 2004). The following chapter will interrogate this concept further to expose the gendered substructure at play within these organizations. The concluding chapter will then interpret the analysis of the gendered programming alongside the analysis of gender within the organizations, uncovering whether there is in fact a connection between the two.

Chapter 5: “Not in our workplace, but in others”: Gender (In)equality in the Workplace

This chapter explores workplace gender equality in organizations involved in overseeing and implementing programming under the Feminist International Assistance Policy: the Ugandan civil society organizations, the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi, and Global Affairs Canada more broadly. I explore gendered workplace dynamics, how gender equitable participants perceive their organizations to be, what policies and training the organizations have in place to support gender equality, and how each of the organizations respond to incidents of sexual violence involving their staff, partners and beneficiaries. In particular, this chapter aims to answer one of my central research questions: What is the gendered reality facing women and gender-diverse persons working in local development organizations in Kampala, Uganda funded by the Government of Canada under the Feminist International Assistance Policy? As outlined in the theoretical framework, I understand sexual violence to be a stark example of gender inequality in the workplace setting, and, therefore, focus much of this chapter on organizations’ responses (or lack thereof) to the issue. As in chapter four, I compare and contrast responses from staff at Ugandan Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) officials.

Gender in the CSO Workplace

I start this chapter with an examination of how civil society organization (CSO) workers perceive their own workplaces. When I asked about the state of gender equality at each of the CSOs, interviewees were almost all certain that their workplaces were gender equitable⁴⁵, and that gender-based discrimination did not exist in their workplace. Instead, they stated that team-work, the sharing of formal and informal roles regardless of one’s gender, respect regardless of hierarchy, and diverse representation within a “family”-like environment, kept everyone included. Such assumed gender neutrality by CSO staff was also found by Tiessen (2004) in the Malawian context. While on the surface these assumptions appeared to be true, from the stories shared with me and observations and

⁴⁵ One interviewee feels their workplace is not gender equitable.

analyses I made on gendered roles and formal gender equality initiatives in the workplace, I found that this was not always the case.

Gendered Roles

When looking at representation throughout the hierarchy of each organization, I found that only one of four CSOs had a woman at the head of the organization - and this was an organization she established herself. I would argue this suggests men are leading the final decisions on programming directly aimed at women, girls and LGBTI persons. This is not to say that there were *no* women in management positions, in fact, just under the head of each organization, was a woman in a next level down management position. I found however, that women were hired not because it was the “right thing to do”, but rather, because it was considered good for the nature of the work being undertaken, mirroring Tiessen’s (2004) findings. Women often remained in their traditional care-providing role, working with beneficiaries on gender issues. As such, no traditional gender norms were challenged, beyond the fact that women were working, and a clear separation of femininity and masculinity in the workplace was visible, as Davies (1996) and Acker (2012) asserted is prevalent in capitalist and neoliberal societies. Sometimes this division of roles was rationalized to create a safe space, for example, one interviewee told me that at their organization, the lack of men interacting with beneficiaries was, “...intentional, cause there are a lot of visits with the girls, and we want the girls to be free to share what’s going on with them [referring specifically to SRHR programming, including sexual violence], we try as much as possible not to bring in the men in the activities, especially for school visits”. Other times however, stereotypically gendered excuses were used. One female interviewee shared that they preferred to have women speak to boys about SRHR issues “so they feel like okay its like a motherly talk. Usually it’s a man, a senior man like a male teacher talking to them, and for them they will be very harsh on them. For us, we are just talking to them as women”. Meanwhile, men took on other roles, including management, accounting, and engaging with community leaders/decision-makers – they rarely engaged with beneficiaries on gender issues, or more specifically, issues that did not directly impact their lives. None of the interviewees took issue with the breakdown of roles within their organizations, demonstrating a potentially internalized belief that certain roles at the

workplace should naturally be gendered and remain unquestioned. These sorts of explicitly gendered roles and staff attitudes are not surprising given what we know about the gendered substructure and its categorization of jobs based on gender (i.e., who is deemed as best suited for a role) and the perceived value of certain work in broader society (Acker, 2012). The substructure is clearly evident among these CSOs.

Formal Gender Equality

Formally, the CSOs were not aligned in terms of initiatives undertaken to promote gender equality in the workplace. I was interested in understanding what formal policies and trainings the organizations had with respect to gender equality in the workplace because as a common part of gender mainstreaming processes, policies and their language can be a good indication of how equitable an organization is or has the potential to be, while remaining cognizant of the fact that a policy or training alone is not nearly enough to rid an organization of its gendered substructure (Tiessen, 2007; Smyth, 2007). At two of the organizations, no policies on gender equality existed, although they were desired by staff. One female respondent told me that “[we] don’t have to wait for something to happen” to have a gender policy. At a different organization, a woman reiterated the value of such a policy, so that the organization was “walking the talk” between their work with beneficiaries and internally. At a third organization, upper management insisted there were policies in place for staff to “feel safe”, but others lower in the hierarchy were not aware of their existence – or at least their connection to gender equality, indicating that existing policies and their scope were not communicated well enough with staff. At the fourth organization, there were promising inklings of the start of a formal gender equality policy, with lines entrenched in staff contracts on treating each other with respect and entitlements employees had, regardless of gender. With respect to gender equality training, three of the organizations had never held training for their staff. It appeared, as one respondent eloquently stated, that “the assumption is, we know [about gender equality]”. Another respondent told me that because “gender issues do not come up”, there was no need for training, “until issues arise”. The assumption of a gender-neutral organization was once again prevalent through these responses (Tiessen, 2004). Two organizations told me that because they were small, they did not have the capacity to hold training, and at the fourth

organization, only the person in charge of gender equality in programming seemed to be aware of any sort of training existing. These reflections from staff regarding gender policies and trainings reveal a lack of coherence across the organizations but also, a diverse set of understandings of and importance placed on gender issues in the workplace context. This reveals a challenging set of gendered attitudes and norms one would need to tackle to establish a more gender equitable organizational culture. It also highlights the need for time and resources to be allocated towards education and changing attitudes, norms and behaviors of staff, as explored in the theoretical framework chapter (see Wendoh and Wallace (2005), Tiessen (2004), Bydawell, (1997), Plowman (2000), and Rao and Kelleher (1997)).

It is also important to note that the CSO working explicitly on the rights of girls with disabilities did not appear to have any staff with (visible) disabilities, nor speak about their staff being diverse in this sense. This is alarming for numerous reasons, including that it would be the “right thing” to have a staff representative of the people you’re working for, but also, that formally it appeared they were not “walking the talk”. In a stark contrast to this, the LGBTI-rights organization consisted of almost entirely LGBTI identifying staff, and even some staff who were not, ensuring vast representation. As identified in chapter two, my understanding of a “feminist” approach includes the authentic participation of the people one aims to help through their initiative (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Cornwall, 2000, 28-29; Porter, 1999, 4). We also know that theoretically, (gender) inequitable organizations cannot deliver equitable programming, and as such, true intersectionality is required (Rao et al., 1999). What the organizations did do well in terms of formal gender equality, was providing maternity/paternity leave, as it was mandated by the National Policy in Uganda. Two organizations went beyond this, with one providing flexible work schedules to accommodate breastfeeding, and another providing supplies and even time off for menstruation. While these are impressive initiatives to support practical gendered needs in the workplace, it is important to keep in mind that these sorts of initiatives do not tackle women’s and gender-diverse persons’ more strategic gender needs, and as such, work remains to be done to undo the gendered substructure (Molyneux, 1985).

Informal Gender Equality

My interviews included a series of questions to uncover whether there are informal roles, such as making tea, that women are expected to undertake in the workplace simply because of their gender and given “care-taking” roles. I was interested in uncovering informal roles because within a capitalist and neoliberal society, it was theoretically understood that societal norms around gender roles would transcend organizational walls (Goetz, 1997; Acker, 2012; Davies, 1996). To my pleasant surprise, staff generally insisted that such roles were shared by staff, regardless of gender or even hierarchy in most cases. For instance, a middle-aged female staff member at one CSO explained to me how informal roles were shared, “... if we come in the morning, I might be busy working on my issues... if someone wants tea, they get the water and make the tea by themselves... we are free [to do as we please] and we coordinate with each other”. This sort of sentiment was shared with two other organizations, where staff and management insisted that the sharing of these roles transcended organizational hierarchy. In one focus group, colleagues joked that you would even find the head of the organization making his own tea, and that they felt this really pushed the norm in Ugandan workplace culture. At the LGBTI-rights organization, however, there existed a “welfare officer” explicitly in charge of organizational care-work, such as preparing meals and cleaning the workplace, their identity as a trans man may or may not have played into this role (it remains unclear to me). Given that care work is a gendered task often falling on women, it is positive to see this organization potentially recognizing this and being proactive by paying for the completion of care work in their organization thus, ensuring it does not fall on one gender to complete (Tiessen, 2007, 29; Bezanson and Luxton, 2006; Davies, 1996, 667-668; Acker, 2012). It was clear when speaking to this officer that they were treated poorly in this role due to the hierarchical nature of the organization, with opportunities to expand their skillset beyond this care work being limited and kept out of reach. They shared an example:

I always tell them that I also want to travel [to the field to engage with beneficiaries] and get exposed and I know how to do things, you never know, they might not be around and they send me to the field where they’ve been working. There are some people, they think my work is to cook and clean, so

they think I'm supposed to be here all the time, instead of getting exposure to do more things, so I'm not all the time cleaning – I will not die cleaning here.

They also expressed that they were often treated poorly by staff and external visitors to the organization, stating that “some of them use the toilets badly, even though they are mature people. Some of them come and use as if he is a young two-year-old. And he does it to hurt you, because he knows it's you who cleans it”. They told me how hurt they felt by this behavior and hoped that change would come. While their identity as a trans man in this organization largely run by gay men may play into the treatment they receive, it appears that this is compounded by the hierarchical nature of the organization to worsen their status.

It appears that efforts were made in some of these organizations against clearly visible informal gender inequality, but that the same did not extend to the roles and duties individuals took on formally in the workplace, with a gendered divide clearly distinguishable in comparison. This seems to support arguments explored in the theoretical framework that truly transforming deeply rooted norms (as would be required to change these more formal gendered inequalities) requires more time and money than changing more trivial informal inequalities (Smyth, 2007; Goetz, 1997). From the LGBTI-rights organization, we have learned that being progressive on gender issues in most aspects of your work and internal practices does not make you immune to inequalities. An equitable workplace requires constant and on-going attention, to both formal and informal roles and behaviours, due to the deeply rooted nature of the substructure and its influence on all aspects of an organization (Acker, 2012; Goetz, 1997; and Rao et al., 1999). This also tells us that simply having a policy of “treating each other with respect” is not enough to change attitudes. It is clear that there was no coherence amongst the funded organizations on what gender equality and broader intersectional equality looks like or needs to look like at their workplace, raising questions around whether the Government of Canada considers these issues when providing funding?

Gender in the Global Affairs Canada Workplace

At GAC (CHC and Ottawa), the officials I spoke with were able to instantly recognize ways in which their organization was gendered, and overall inequitable. The contrast between their ease at answering my questions about this topic as compared to the

CSOs could not have been any clearer. This could of course have been due to my position vis-à-vis my research participants, but it also could indicate a more in-depth understanding of gender issues and acceptance within the workplace setting to discuss potentially controversial topics. It is worth noting that none of the GAC staff I spoke with were gender specialists but rather, generalists. GAC staff spoke to me mainly about formal gender equality measures in their workplaces, and how they were/were not effective due to the underlying attitudes, behaviours and beliefs held by their colleagues and management. The remainder of this section will explore these formal approaches to gender equality in the GAC workplace, which extends also to the CHC workplace.

Employment Equity Groups

As a department of the Government of Canada, and therefore under the influence of the *Employment Equity Act*, GAC recognizes and positively discriminates on the basis of the four employment equity (EE) designated groups: persons with disabilities, women, visible minorities and Indigenous peoples (Government of Canada, 2007). They have done so since the 1980s, when formal legislation was Nationally recognized in Canada. This allows the department to hire staff based on their identity, who would otherwise be overlooked in hiring processes. Multiple GAC staff brought this measure up without being prompted and told me that while it is a well-intentioned initiative to bring about increased diversity, they found that oftentimes people would be hired based on their identity, regardless of whether they were a good fit for the position. As a result, my interviewees told me that EE staff were sometimes ill-equipped for their position, making the workplace dynamics more challenging for other staff (who would have to pick up the slack), and most strikingly, making it appear that women, for instance, make bad managers. Negative perceptions towards “diversity hires” or those hired under “affirmative action” are not uncommon. Heilman, Block and Lucas (1992) showed that employers often perceived women hired under this notion as incompetent., In an earlier study, Heilman, Simon and Repper (1987) found that these sentiments were internalized by these employees, who had negative perceptions of themselves due to this label. What I gather from these statements is not that positive discrimination itself is bad, but that positive discrimination that ignores the gendered substructure existing within an organization sets people up for failure by only

addressing a practical gendered need for employment without consideration of more strategic gendered needs to change systems that keep women (and other EE groups) out of the workplace in the first place (Molyneux, 1985). With what we know about the pervasive nature of the substructure (Acker, 2012; and Goetz, 1997), we must recognize that EE groups may require additional support to be fully-equipped for and supported in their position. Efforts need to be made to educate the workplace on why EE groups require positive discrimination to be hired in the department so that negative perceptions about them can be challenged (Crawford, 2020). It is also important to keep in mind that EE groups are not just discriminated against in hiring processes. Throughout their entire career they would face barriers based on their identity, including being taken seriously in the workplace and having an influence, or being held back from (in)formal mentoring opportunities or trainings due to perceptions about their abilities, or even lacking the necessary social contacts that their privileged white male colleagues are privy to (Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Ridgeway, 1997; Acker, 2001; Heilman et al., 1992; Sloan et al., 2013). Hochschild (1979) even points to the fact that the way different social classes are socialized to manage their emotions as they grow up grooms them for certain fields and positions. If we add a further intersectional lens to this analysis, we can extend the argument to the GAC workplace, understanding that an immigrant woman, for instance, would have been socialized differently than her Canadian-born white, male colleague, giving him another upper-hand, beyond just his gender, in the employment process and workplace context. Positive discrimination practices which ignore these realities will not only fail the very people they aim to help, but also harm the organizations' progress towards positive change in their workplace, which we can assume is motivating them to positively discriminate in the first place.

At GAC, each of the EE groups also have an informal, employee-run network, advocating internally for positive changes in the workplace, arguably allowing them to go “further” than the formal practices do by advocating for change from the bottom-up, as suggested by Meyerson and Scully (1995), Parpart (2014) and Kardam (1997). It was not until 2017, however, that any sort of formal employee network for LGBTI persons (a

discriminated group but still not a Federally recognized EE group⁴⁶) was established. One interviewee told me that even upon the establishment of the network, not a single member of senior management would accept the position as a Champion for LGBTI issues – meanwhile other employee-run networks had easily attracted senior management to represent and vocalize their struggles. As explored in the theoretical framework in Chapter Two, and especially the Plowman (2000) case study, the support of management in organizational change processes can be extremely important as it provides the necessary space for important conversations to take place, without having to overcome mass resistance from management. In an in-depth conversation with one interviewee regarding the toxic internal environment facing LGBTI persons in the department, discrimination was described as being widespread and included issues such as harassment and the vast ignorance of colleagues and management, and unnecessary red-tape facing colleagues even trying to have conversations around progressive change. For example, just exploring the idea of the installation of gender neutral bathrooms in the department was met with hostility and push-back based on outdated and harmful information. Moreover, without formal legislation (as an EE group) recognizing their marginalized status, LGBTI persons' mistreatment can be said to be easily swept under the rug and ignored. This then creates a culture of acceptance of such behaviours and attitudes, which are perceived as the norm, and questioned by few (Acker, 2012). Similarly, a female manager I spoke to seemed to accept the regularly occurring micro-aggressions against women in the workplace because they were deemed an improvement on the previous (worse) workplace culture. She told me that "Global Affairs used to be an all-boys club [and strongly felt it no longer was], but that people still sometimes say stupid [gendered] stuff that they don't realize is inappropriate". The presence of these sorts of microaggressions supports Fowler's (1997) theorizing that "covert obstacles" to gender equality exist in workplaces and lead to clearly visible injustices. The female manager's acceptance of this further demonstrates how deeply-entrenched gendered workplace norms are, and that they also influence women in positions

⁴⁶ LGBTI persons are not currently considered a group in the *Employment Equity Act*, which was established in 1986. Employment data is also not collected on these groups, making it challenging for a case to be brought forward to Parliament to demonstrate that this group is under-represented in the workplace, as compared to their availability in the workforce, and thus, in need to provisions under the Act (PSAC, 2017).

of power and do not simply disappear when women break certain glass ceilings (i.e., are granted ‘simple access’ to organizations) (London and Müller, 2018; and Ahmed, 2002; Goetz, 1997). It is also worth noting that this female manager strongly asserts that she has “never felt disadvantaged being a woman [at GAC]”. While it is easy to judge from a distance and question why staff simply let certain things go, it could be that in order to survive in such a workplace culture, women and gender diverse persons may have to resort to acceptance (consciously or unconsciously), rather than risk their reputation or even employment status. Afterall, it takes a certain amount of privilege to be able to openly confront authority, as it requires potentially sacrificing one’s practical gender needs (i.e., employment) for the attainment of more strategic gender needs (Molyneux, 1985). It is also worth noting that this female manager was a white woman, which begs the question, if she accepts and does not challenge these sorts of microaggressions, what is the reality for women of colour, for instance, in this workplace? If a white female manager cannot/does not speak out, can they?

Representation

With Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s election in 2015, came the explicit appointment of a gender equitable cabinet of Ministers, with Trudeau famously justifying this with a simple statement: “because it’s 2015”. While this was a positive political move for Canada’s outward image, the reality facing those actually working on the policy that eventually makes its way to cabinet was (and remains to be) less than perfect when it comes to equality. While there have been multiple ministerial changes, the Minister for International Development has been a woman since 2015, and so has the Deputy Minister (next in rank). This file could be argued to be “suited for women”, as Paxton et al. (2007) would say, while others such as defense remain managed by men under the Trudeau “feminist” liberals. The majority of people in positions of power GAC (Associate Deputy Minister (ADM), Director General (DG), Director, and Deputy Director), come from a similar hegemonic class and background - white, upper/middle class and non-immigrant⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ At a November 2020 Anti-Racism Training for GAC presented by Larissa Crawford of Future Ancestors Services Incorporated (a consulting firm), it was revealed that GAC has never had a Deputy Minister who was a person of colour or an ADM who was Black or of East Asian or Middle Eastern heritage. Across the broader Federal Government, we were also told that there exist 5800 executives, of which: 96 are Black,

One high-level official I spoke with who fits this description told me about how her father had been a diplomat in the foreign service and so a similar career was easily within reach for her. This again brings me back to my earlier remarks about how our socialization grooms us for certain pathways in life, making our “choices” more constrained and planned, but also more accessible, than we may realize (Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Hochschild, 1979). It certainly appears that for certain people (i.e., white women), simple access to GAC (and the broader GOC) is easier than for others, based on their personal identity characteristics.

One would perhaps expect that with such high-ranking female leadership, this department would be a beacon of hope for “proper” workplace culture within the Government of Canada. The stories I just shared, in addition to those in the following section of this Chapter, however, paint a much bleaker reality, backing up the argument presented in Chapter 2: “equitable” representation alone is not enough to rid workplaces of gendered norms and inequality (Goetz, 1997 & 2001; Rao & Friedman, 2017). Using the High Commission as an example, because it provides a good case study that is potentially representative of the greater GAC workplace, I find that marginalized groups are well represented in leadership positions. For instance: the High Commissioner is a woman; the head of the political section is a gay visible minority man; and the head of the development section is a woman. A local Kenyan woman also works directly on the CFLI programming, ensuring it is contextually appropriate. Besides her key role, leadership remains largely white and western, all the while operating in an international context on very local issues. As explained in Chapter Two, this is problematic from the perspective of a true “feminist” approach, because the decision-making around the CFLI programming is not inclusive of those it aims to serve, which goes against participatory ways of working (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Cornwall, 2000, 7-8 & 28-29; Porter, 1999, 4; Batliwala, 2007, 560; Mohanty, 1984, 338; Cole, 2012).

268 are Indigenous and 268 disabled (Crawford, 2020). These numbers are telling of how far the Government has to go in promoting intersectional inclusion. It was explained that these statistics were obtained through working with departmental representatives, as such numbers disaggregated by identity factors are not available publicly. Available statistics from the Treasury Board Secretariat (2019c) do however, show that 55.6% of GAC’s workforce is female and that 61.5% of staff are over the age of 39. In a presentation on August 25th, 2020, Canadian Consul General to the Southeast United States, Nadia Theodore, revealed that she is only the second Black woman leading a Canadian mission abroad (University of Alberta, 2020).

Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) results.

An examination of the 2018 Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) results for GAC provide additional insights into the lived reality for women, men and gender diverse persons working in the department, providing additional depth to my research findings. While the survey covers vast workplace issues – I focus my analysis on responses capturing the reality surrounding harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Harassment is understood in the survey as “improper conduct by an individual that is directed at and offensive to another individual in the workplace...and that the individual knew or ought reasonably to have known would cause offence or harm”. Discrimination is understood as “treating someone differently or unfairly because of a personal characteristic or distinction, which, whether intentional or not, has an effect that imposes disadvantages not imposed on others or that withholds or limits access that is given to others” (TBSa, 2019). A quick glance at the statistics on harassment show that 15% of female staff versus 10% of male staff report experiencing harassment, with the majority of male (75%) and female (65%) respondents stating that the harassment is perpetrated by someone with authority over them (TBSb, 2019). It appears that overall, there is not a gendered difference in the *types* of harassment experienced, with a few exceptions: 50% of men and 40% of women experience “excessive control”; 55% of women and 48% men experience “offensive remarks”; and 58% of men and 44% of women experience “unfair treatment” (TBS, 2019b). The percentage of those affected that actually file a grievance or formal report is staggeringly low (only 6% of affected males and 5% of affected female staff), with reasoning ranging from concerns over the process, fear of reprisal and not believing it would make a difference (TBS, 2019b). Satisfaction with how harassment is resolved does, however, appear to be gendered, with 47% of male, 37% of female and 32% of gender-diverse respondents who had claimed to have experienced harassment responding positively (TBS, 2019b). However, even with these concerns, 50% or more of staff, regardless of gender, believe GAC works “hard” to create a workplace that prevents harassment (TBS, 2019b). The statistics on discrimination are especially interesting, with a clear gendered experience of what *types* of discrimination women versus men face in the workplace. More women face discrimination on the basis of their age, sex, marital status and family status - all characteristics that may be related to societal gender norms and

expectations (TBS, 2019b; Planned Parenthood, 2020c). The reported perpetrators of this discrimination also appear to differ based on the gender of the reporter, with 42% of women versus 21% of men stating co-workers are to blame. However, we once again see the role hierarchy plays, irrespective of gender, in inequality in the workplace, with a whopping 78% of women and 83% of men stating it is an individual with authority over them perpetrating discrimination in the workplace (TBS, 2019b). When asked about their satisfaction with how discrimination is resolved, 52% of men provide a positive response, compared to 42% of women and 30% of gender diverse persons (TBS, 2019b). Similarly, when asked whether they believe their organization tries to create a workplace that prevents discrimination, 65% of men provide a positive response, compared to 58% of women and 32% of gender diverse persons (TBS, 2019b). What this tells us is that although the statistics show both men and women are experiencing discrimination, men seem to perceive the situation to be less severe than women, while both women and men perceive it as much less of a problem than their gender diverse colleagues. These statistics, in addition to the stories I collected, paint a different picture of working at GAC than would appear on the surface and that some staff members report to be the reality. This could of course be a reflection of the staff members I interviewed - recognizing that those who “make it” to the Foreign Service, and therefore work at the High Commission, or those who are in upper-level/management positions (as my interviewees in Ottawa were), may not represent the views and experiences of the diversity of staff working at GAC headquarters. It is logical to suggest that this same culture of discrimination and harassment would extend beyond the walls of GAC’s official Canadian-based workplace to relations with their partners. When the data shows that the majority of respondents at GAC claim perpetrators exist within a power hierarchy, it is imperative this situation be taken seriously.

Culture Change

Respondents indicated that existing policies around harassment in the workplace were insufficient (backing up the PSES findings), and that in order to be effective, were highly dependent on individual managers taking action. To remedy this, an interviewee reported that in the Deputy Minister’s Office (DMO), a new initiative was being undertaken to assess and address harassment in the workplace and overall workplace

culture at GAC. While some of the initiatives they are undertaking may bring about awareness (such as information campaigns), it appears many of these initiatives are being implemented from the top-down, rather than being employee-led. As explored in the Theoretical Framework, while support from management and recognition of the problem from the DMO is important, transformative change is most successful when led by employees themselves, as tempered radicals (Meyerson and Scully, 1995; Parpart, 2014; and Kardam, 1997). Perhaps, however, if these top-down initiatives are combined with efforts undertaken by the employee networks at GAC, which I argued earlier could be seen to be more transformative in nature, this could lead to success through a dual approach of organizational transformation and change (ibid.). I did not have the scope to explore this in depth in my interviews, but it was a notable topic worth highlighting.

GAC's Gender Requirements for CSOs

When I asked officials at the Canadian High Commission (CHC) whether there were gender requirements for the organizations applying for funding, staff were unable to give me a direct answer. One official told me she would “informally assess” what gender equality looked like within the organization. In this case, she would look at the proportion of men versus women. Deciding on whether an organisation was gender equitable or operating in a gender equitable manner was dependent on the personal interpretation of an official. If this were an organization where we knew all staff held the same understandings of key concepts and issues, this would not be an issue, however, given my earlier findings of a lack of coherence amongst staff around understandings of gender, this may prove problematic. While such fuzziness around terms and concepts and when to apply them may in fact allow some to act more radically (i.e., to informally assess an organization) it appears it also allows for inaction (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009). Officials at the CHC also told me that a key pillar of the CFLI program was meant to be capacity building for its partner organizations, with gender equality trainings being very common practice at other Canadian missions. Lack of capacity at the CHC in Nairobi resulted in no gender trainings having been held with any of the CFLI-funded organizations. Although these trainings are not a solution to creating gender equitable organizations, they are certainly a start, and at minimum what I would have expected to find GAC and the CSOs undertaking

based on the literature (Tiessen, 2004). This shows that GAC/ CHC lack coherence not only in their selection of organizations based on internal gender equality, but also in their ability/willingness to help these organizations improve upon their internal gender inequality. It puts into question their commitment to advancing a “feminist” policy/approach and highlights the potential impediments to overarching goals that occur when key terms and approaches are not effectively defined and communicated with staff (Smyth, 2007).

Although the staff at GAC seem to be more aware of gendered and intersectional inequalities existing within their workplace and have multiple formal policies and processes to improve the situation, we see that these are not enough to address gender inequality in their own workplace or those of their partners. If GAC is unable to operate in an equitable manner itself, what does this mean about their relationship with their partners? I would assume that this inequality would transfer in their interactions with partners, especially when you consider the power dynamics explicit within such partnerships with government donors, including the GOC (Goetz, 1997). The next section of this chapter delves into this, linking the gender inequitable CSO and GOC workplaces together through a case study of sexual violence within the workplace.

Sexual Violence in the Workplace: A Case Study

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that globally about one in three, or 35%, of women have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime (2017). Sexual violence is defined as “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting” (WHO, 2002, 149). It is an abuse of power by a perpetrator (the person exhibiting violence), against a survivor (the person experiencing violence). In the international development sector, issues of sexual violence have arguably always been present, but came to light alongside the momentum of movements such as #MeToo, with various high-level exposés rocking the industry in early 2018⁴⁸. The response of key actors, especially donors such as the Government of Canada who hold the

⁴⁸ See content related to the “Oxfam Scandal”, where it was revealed that Oxfam staff in Haiti and Chad sexually exploited women (Perez-Pena, 2018; BBC News, 2019; Gayle, 2018).

power, has however been limited. For instance, the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) makes no mention of sexual violence in its workplace or of a gendered workplace in general. Sexual violence is only mentioned as it relates to beneficiaries. This issue is explicitly linked to my thesis argument because for sexual violence to occur within a workplace context, it is understood that the workplace must be gender inequitable and likely hierarchical (i.e., unequal power dynamics exist), both of which I've now shown exist within in the GAC/CHC and CSO workplaces (Fowler, 1997; Goetz, 1997; Tiessen, 2004; Parpart, 2014; Acker, 1992 and 2012). As such, an act of sexual violence is not simply the result of an individual "bad apple", it is a result of the existence of a toxic work culture due to the gendered substructure (Parpart, 2014; Acker, 2012; Fowler, 1997; Ashworth, 1996 as cited by Lewis, 2006). When we take this a step further and consider the inequalities that can exist within the hierarchical relationship between GAC/CHC and these CSOs, it would be naïve to assume that the inequalities that exist within the walls of their offices would not or could not extend further. This chapter will explore the existence of and response to sexual violence in each of the workplace contexts and then connect the two together, showing the potential impacts on the well-being of workers and the gender programming.

Sexual Violence in the Civil Society Organization Workplace

There was one reported incident of sexual violence in the CSO workplace shared with me, and this was only when I asked indirectly about it. When asked directly whether sexual violence was an issue in the workplace, or if conversations around sex or a demand for sex occurred in the workplace, overwhelmingly responses were a quick, "no", "nope" or "no, not here". However, almost every woman and gender diverse person I spoke with was able to identify that sexual violence was an issue either in Uganda generally, or specifically in other workplaces, or previously in their own life or the life of someone they know. One interviewee captured it best when she said that it occurs "not in our workplace, but in others", and interviewees were able to speak about these issues in-depth. Many interviewees said it was an issue in "larger" organizations, or something faced by young women entering the field, where sexual favours were demanded and exchanged with male bosses in order to advance in the workplace. For example, a female interviewee explained

that “people are having scandals with big organizations in Uganda where women are being asked for sex before they can actually get up. What they deserve actually, a position she deserves, that she has worked for, has the papers for, the experience for it, but still, there is no gender equality”. A female interviewee at another organization echoed this, explaining that “you can hear someone [share that], ‘I went to look for a job, the manager told me to do this and this’, it’s not good, it’s as if you are selling off your body to get a job”.

While I was relieved that few people reported issues of sexual violence in their current workplace, considering what I knew and was told about the context in Uganda, I was also rather surprised and concerned that perhaps I was not able to accurately capture the reality. There were many things that could have played into this, including my position as a white researcher from Canada, the same country providing their programming funding. This inevitably could have influenced what they disclosed to me and how they approached discussing the topic of sexual violence in their workplace. If interviewees believed that reporting an incident to me could have jeopardized the organizations’ future ability to secure funding, and potentially lead their boss to find out they reported an incidence, it is understandable they would have been hesitant to tell me. Although I made it explicitly clear that I was in no way affiliated with the GOC, nor would the identities of their organizations be shared with the GOC following the publication of my thesis report, there seemed to be a belief that my research would somehow impact their ability to secure funding in the future. The specific topic of sexual violence in the workplace may have also been deemed as inappropriate or taboo to discuss, especially with a foreigner (Isaqzadeh, Gulzar and Shapiro, 2020, 174-176). However, my identity as a *female* foreign researcher may have had other impacts on this research, as either a “limiting factor” if I was not taken seriously due to my gender and young age, or as a “considerable opportunity”, if I was perceived by participants as an unthreatening outsider who evaded the constraints of local gender norms and thus, was granted access to otherwise taboo topics (van den Boogaard, 2019, 260-264). Finally, while I did attempt to make the interview space as open and safe a space as possible, to my surprise few respondents wished to hold their interview away from the office, and often had co-workers in close proximity.

Silence: an act of resistance?

Despite the ethical issues which may have influenced the responses I received, it is also important to consider why so many respondents would have stated sexual violence was not an issue in their workplace. Roberta Sigel (1996) coined the idea of the “not-me syndrome”, to describe “a woman’s tendency to perceive gender-based discrimination in the society-at-large but to perceive herself as exempt from it” (43). In this way, it is considered a defense mechanism by women (and I would extend the argument to gender-diverse persons) within workplaces where sexual violence may very well be present, to deny this reality and say, “not me” or “not here”, in an effort to “protect their self-respect” (Sigel, 1996, 65). This sort of denial is understood by others as a silencing of survivors, whether by a choice to be silent or an imposed silence. As a researcher existing within a power hierarchy between myself and my interviewees, it is a fine line to interpret what this silence might mean. This section will explore a *possibility* of why silence may have been used. I am in no way trying to speak over or on behalf of my research participants, but to read between the lines of what was (and was not) said during the interviews - thus, offering my thoughts on what this silence could mean within the context of their gendered workplace and the hierarchical relationship between the CSOs and GAC. Whether or not this analysis reflects the current reality, from the arguments put forwards by the “gendered organizations” literature, it is clear that this sort of reality could present itself in future interactions within or between these workplaces. In this way, this analysis could then present a cautionary tale worth our attention. After this theoretical examination, the following section, “*Silence: an act of resistance? The findings*”, will apply the theory to further interview findings on sexual violence in these workplaces.

Jill Stauffer (2015) established the conceptual framework of “ethical loneliness” to understand the silencing of survivors of sexual violence through not only the act of sexual violence itself, but also the layered and compounded effects of multiple potential support networks failing to listen to, believe and support the needs and desires of a survivor (Stauffer, 2015, 1). In this way, it is considered *ethical*, because these institutions are explicitly set up as bodies intended to support survivors, or at least listen to them (Schulz, 2018, 589). This in turn results in a profound *loneliness*, because in the process of being “abandoned” by these institutions, one is silenced and thus, harmed beyond the act of

sexual violence itself (Schulz, 2018, 589). Others understand this as “institutional betrayal”, because of the harm institutions inflict on survivors who place trust in them to respond in a reasonable way (Freyd, 2018; Parnitzke Smith and Freyd, 2014). This sort of betrayal has been shown to cause harm beyond the sexual violence itself, exacerbating common negative health outcomes amongst survivors, including disassociation, anxiety and sexual dysfunction (Freyd, 2018; Parnitzke Smith and Freyd, 2013 & 2014). Thus, speaking out could lead to ethical loneliness due to the profound betrayal survivors would experience, in addition to the exacerbation of existing negative health outcomes a survivor could already be experiencing.

Others understand silencing to occur within an institutional environment where one is not only silenced by the institution to not come forwards (i.e., structurally silence), but that they also deliberately choose silence for “self-preservation” (i.e., strategic silence) (Burnet, 2012; and Thomson, 2019). At the root of this silence, therefore, is fear – a fear of the ethical loneliness and other harms that could occur if one did come forward (Burnet, 2012). I, therefore, understand there to exist a duality to silence, one that forces us to move beyond the strict dichotomy of the “silencing” perpetrator and the “silenced” survivor. Thinking of silence in this way allows us to think of the traditionally “silenced” survivor in all their complexity. It follows then, that it would be ill-informed and harmful to consider this silence exhibited by survivors as a complete lack of voice or agency, a trap Jane Parpart (2010) asserts empowerment literature too often falls into. Rather, a growing number of academics push for silence to be taken seriously, with Kimberly Hutchings (2018) stating that “silence...is a present absence. It invites reading and translation”, as opposed to being ignored or chastised. Harel-Shalev and Daphna-Tekoah (2019) also remind us that women are not a homogenous group, and that silence can mean different things, for different women. Parpart (2010) argues that it is under neoliberal (and western) assumptions that in openly challenging “masculinist privilege” that survivors will undoubtedly be “protected by international and national institutions devoted to democracy, freedom of speech and human rights” (citing Bishai, 2004). As such, the explicit linking of “...voice and agency presumes the ability to speak out against tyranny and injustice” (8), thus, ignoring the complex inequitable context within which the majority of the world’s women and gender-diverse persons live (Parpart and Parashar, 2019). Within the

developing country context, where these very institutions are either non-existent, ill-equipped or corrupt, Parpart (2010) claims that silence can be a calculated expression of agency, because to speak out could lead to the ethical loneliness Stauffer (2015) warns of. While this particularly impactful quote from Chanel Miller (2019) (also known as “Emily Doe” in the Brock Turner sexual assault trial) is about the American justice system, it is also applicable to justice systems the world over:

When society questions a victim’s reluctance to report, I will be here to remind you that you ask us to sacrifice our sanity to fight outdated structures that were designed to keep us down. Victims do not have time for this...It is not reasonable to casually demand that victims put aside their lives to spend more time pursuing something they never asked for in the first place. This is not about the victims’ lack of effort. This is about society’s failure to have systems in place in which victims feel there’s a probable chance of achieving safety, justice, and restoration rather than being retraumatized, publicly shamed, psychologically tormented, and verbally mauled. The real question we need to be asking is not, *Why didn’t she report*, the question is, *Why would you?* (288).

Viewing silence as a potential form of agency is contested in the field of gender studies, because it goes against the hegemonic discourse that equates voice to agency and therefore, empowerment. One key voice questioning Parpart’s view is Naila Kabeer, who strongly asserts that empowerment requires the ability to exert choice and “challenge rather than reproduce inequality” (2010). She worries that remaining silent does little to nothing to change the state of inequality, and therefore, cannot be considered an empowering act. Kabeer (2010) goes on to argue that at the heart of empowerment, is a “critical consciousness” and tied into this, the “willingness and ability to protest injustice”. Under this understanding, silence is then the absence of protest where there is injustice. Susan Thomson (2019) however, reminds us to read each individual’s silence “...as part and parcel of a broader continuum of violence and communication”, and therefore, pay particular attention to how systems of oppression overlap and silence an individuals’ life before, during and after their assault” (120). When we consider the role that layers of situational and relational norms and oppressions such as capitalism, neoliberalism and

intersectional discrimination play individuals' lives, it is clear that survivors face various barriers to directly/loudly speaking out (Parpart and Parashar, 2019; Thomson, 2019; Wilson, 2007, 2008; Leach, 2005). While it is tempting to suggest that women and gender-diverse persons facing sexual violence in their workplace should recognize this as an injustice, envision what a better future could look like, and fight for it, to realistically act upon those thoughts is more challenging and even potentially dangerous. Molyneux (1985) specified that in order to make progress towards more strategic interests (such as challenging norms that allow for sexual violence to occur), that "full account" be taken of practical interests (those required for survival) so that there would be no loss of existing "forms of protection" (234). In contexts where your mere survival in society (i.e., having a stable job and therefore, income, and ability to provide for your family) require you to prioritize your livelihood⁴⁹ over seeking justice for yourself, how can you simultaneously protest that injustice in the "loud" fashion Kabeer calls for? Thus, without taking this into consideration, there are potential risks to people's practical interests, or their basic needs for survival in a patriarchal world. Furthermore, there may be other societal risks to speaking out in a patriarchal context like Uganda, where perceptions, attitudes and beliefs around sexual violence often blame the survivor. A senior officer with the Ugandan Police, Emilian Kayima, released an article in early 2020 explicitly blaming women for their experiences of sexual violence (Odwe et al., 2018; Birungi et al., 2011, 491-492; Wabwire, 2020). Additionally, Ugandan norms of societal collectivism, as opposed to Western liberal individualism, which value social harmony over individualism, would encourage avoiding the potential social strife that could come from reporting a perpetrator, especially if within one's social circle (Schulz, 2018, 596; Birungi et al., 2011, 491-492). In an Eritrean case study examining the effects of sexual violence during conflict, female survivors were found to have "either been silenced or [to have] had silenced themselves for fear of immediate household and communal consequences, or due to the burden of having to show appropriate female behaviour" (Gruber, 2005, 71). This reiterates the deeply engrained

⁴⁹ The impression I got from many of my research participants was that it was not necessarily easy to get a full-time job in the sector in Uganda. Many mentioned starting off as volunteers or working part-time before being offered a full-time position. Uganda is known for having a major youth bulge, with more than 75% of their population being below the age of 30 (the average age for my participants was 32) and having one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Sub-Saharan Africa (13.3%) (Among and Munavu, 2019). As such, the risk of losing a job, especially for younger staff members, may be high.

societal norms for acceptable female behaviour⁵⁰ and use of voice in collectivist societies, highlighting the fact that there are numerous pressures on female survivors that may lead them towards silence (Gruber, 2005). Liz Kelly (2000) captures this best in stating that: “The choice between silence and stigma is one every woman who has been raped has to negotiate...Self-blame and the absence of justice...connect work on rape across locations and contexts” (55, as cited by Gruber, 2005, 71). It is clear then that the debate around silence is nuanced and that there is more to silence than simply choosing not to speak. There are overarching systems of oppression that may keep some from speaking loudly; however, what remains unclear is whether we can consider such silence to be empowering or to lead to empowerment?

What I draw from Parpart’s analysis is a call to recognize and remember that survivors have agency, whether or not they boldly speak out the way western feminism often prescribes, and to remember that they are not agency-less victims, but rather, that the full extent of their agency may be constrained in their context. Just as I suggested above that there may be a duality to silence, I would also like to explore the possibility of there being a duality to empowerment. Mosedale (2005) understands empowerment as “...an ongoing process rather than a product. There is no final goal. One does not arrive at a stage of being empowered in some absolute sense. People are empowered, or disempowered, relative to others or, importantly, relative to themselves at a previous time” (244, as cited by Smyth, 2007, 585). I find this understanding of empowerment particularly insightful, because it highlights that empowerment for one woman may look different to empowerment for another, based on their unique circumstances and context, reiterating Harel-Shalev and Daphna-Tekoah’s (2019) conceptualization. Under this understanding, a survivor’s silence could be considered empowering if they themselves feel this action builds progress in their life, because after all, empowerment should be considered a process. This has links back to Parpart’s (2010) claim that silence can be a calculated expression of agency given a survivor’s context, with an “empowering potential” (22),

⁵⁰ Patriarchal norms for female behaviour vary across cultures and time, but often women and girls are expected to be passive, polite, accommodating, emotional and nurturing while men are expected to be ambitious, strong, aggressive and bold, amongst others (Planned Parenthood, 2020c). As discussed throughout this thesis, deviating from deeply rooted norms is understood to be very challenging, but necessary to transform society towards one that is more equitable.

building incremental change in their life. However, other scholars see empowerment as much more than this. Kabeer (2010) argues that “choice is clearly only meaningful if it is possible to have chosen otherwise” (17) and only empowering if you have “some degree of control over the issues that matter” (17) and are able to “challenge rather than reproduce inequality” (17) through that choice. As such, according to Kabeer (2010), “choosing” silence regarding sexual violence (an issue that presumably would matter in a survivor’s life) when you really have no other options due to your context, is not empowerment, as it does nothing to challenge the norms that allowed the violence to occur in the first place. This sort of understanding is shared by Eyben (2011), who argues that empowerment occurs when “individuals and organized groups are able to imagine their world differently and to realise that vision by changing the relations of power that have kept them in poverty, restricted their voice and deprived them of their autonomy” (2). At the root of this definition is an analysis of power and an understanding of how it may impact what Kabeer (2010) referred to as one’s “willingness and ability to protest injustice” (19). This certainly has roots in a much more transformative approach to bringing about change as it tackles the root causes of the issue – i.e., digs away at the foundations of the “master’s house”. Thus, if a survivor was lacking the *ability* to take action to change the relations of power in their life given their context, could we really consider their act of silence as empowerment if it does little to challenge the status quo? This is where I understand there to be a duality to empowerment. Kabeer (2010) suggested moving away from the strict dichotomy of empowered versus disempowered, because it fails to consider that women may stay silent because the “costs of [using one’s] voice are too high” (19), but this does not mean there is no *willingness* to see change. As such, a survivor choosing to remain silent reveals that they have an understanding of their inequitable context and such an act may bring them a personal sense of empowerment as they are able to make a choice (although constrained by their circumstances) and make progress towards the long-term process of empowerment, all the while protecting their practical gender needs (Molyneux, 1985; Parpart, 2010; Mosedale, 2005). On the other hand, empowerment for a survivor could also look like having the ability and unconstrained choice to speak out and challenge inequitable gender norms in their context that created an environment that allowed for sexual violence to take place thus, working towards their strategic gender interests (Kabeer, 2010;

Molyneux, 1985). When we are able to consider that there may be a duality to the process of empowerment, there is space to consider silence and the contextual agency that survivors hold. It becomes clear that a more nuanced understanding and appreciation for the relationship between voice, agency and empowerment from a survivor-centered lens is thus, imperative. This also appears to be an under-researched area of the literature, which deserves greater attention to do justice to the variety of experiences of survivors.

Silence: an act of resistance? The findings.

When applied to my research findings, the notions of the “not-me” syndrome and of ethical loneliness, combined with Parpart’s claims of silence as agency, open up some very interesting and disturbing findings. My interviews included a series of questions around existing policies and responses to sexual violence in the workplace. A formal reporting procedure existed in only one of the organizations, which interestingly fell under the umbrella of a larger international NGO that dictated their policies on such issues. But even having this reporting procedure and an accompanying policy was not enough as the only staff who seemed to know about it were management and those engaged directly on gender programming, other staff were left out of the loop. For example, when asked whether this organization had a reporting procedure, one male interviewee involved with the operations side of programming responded, “I have not witnessed one”. Another organization had a few clauses on sexual harassment in the workplace within other policies, but it remained unclear when speaking to staff exactly where this information could be found, what the procedure was for reporting incidents or even what sexual harassment entailed. In the other two organizations, management openly admitted they had not thought much of the issue until I brought it up, but that staff obviously knew how to respond to an incident. For instance, one male manager told me that “it depends on the level - if it is me who has perpetrated the crime, then they [staff] would go to the police - they know that one.” My findings, however, show that this is not the case. The procedures for reporting sexual violence in the workplace shared with me varied drastically within organizations and among staff members. From survivors directly engaging with perpetrators to solve their own issues, to other staff members sitting survivors and perpetrators down to talk and come to a solution, to going to the head of the organization and board of directors, or to the

authorities or to local human rights groups. It was rare for two members of the same organization to give me the same response. There was an obvious divide between what management considered an appropriate procedure and what staff lower in the hierarchy would actually consider doing. Management seemed to trust those in positions of power (i.e., police) would seek justice on behalf of survivors, while women and gender diverse persons lower down the hierarchy argued the opposite, supporting Goldsmith's (2005) argument that those in lower social positions cannot afford to trust police when their lived experiences with police have previously seen them as untrustworthy and thus, unhelpful or even harmful (i.e., via widespread police impunity or petty corruption). This concept was explored by multiple female interviewees, one explained why she did not suggest going to the police for an incident of sexual violence:

I would have said the police, but its unreliable, it's who has more money. If someone heads the organization and they of course have more money than you, the staff, so if they have more money then it's easy to go and kill that case. So the police is very unreliable, and then if you take it to maybe other people of authority, then its dragged around. I feel like your own actions are more helpful than outside help.

Another female interviewee added to this idea of corruption, explaining that, "...the truth is, many times here, even if you report someone, that person will come [to the police], they'll have money and not a lot of it, just 50, 000 [equivalent to approximately \$18 CAD], and they'll throw out an entire case". This helps to explain claims that the Ugandan Police Force is "regarded as particularly corrupt" (Wambua, 2015; Basheka, 2013; Transparency International-Kenya, 2013, as cited by Wanger et al., 2019, 65), with "a majority of Ugandan citizens perceiv[ing] the police as the most corrupt institution in the country" (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, 2006, as cited by Wanger et al., 2019, 65). Interestingly though, while female staff reported they would not go to the police themselves, they did still see the authorities as suitable for solving cases of sexual violence involving their female beneficiaries. When speaking about her beneficiaries, one interviewee explained that "these are people we have sworn to protect and so I feel that would warrant a police case", but she did recognize the corruption within the police force and said that to try get around this:

We [CSO workers] always have to have a good relationship with certain officers...within the [corrupt police] system we have to find a way to make it work... even when you go to see them and you know you are able to give him 10,000 shillings [approximately \$3.45CAD]...you don't give it to him first cause then it really looks like a bribe, [you give it] at the end, like thank you for working on this case, to keep the relationship going. It really sounds like corruption but...

This is interesting because it clearly shows the hierarchical divide between whose dignity is worth protecting from the unreliability and corruption of the police. The one outlier in this was staff at the LGBTI advocacy organization, who shared that, “going to the police would open a door to other things minus sexual harassment - so police would be the last, last, last resort. And we also have partners [named a local human rights group] who can also mediate such scenarios. And that's why there are paralegals as well to deal with things like this instead of going to police. I mean you are opening doors for them [the police] to start nosing on the issue and before you know it, the issue is bigger than it should be”. They explained that going to the police would likely do more harm than good, in a context where homophobia was rampant and being LGBTI could lead to imprisonment. Their engagement with rights groups and trusted people in their community to mitigate issues is understood by Goldsmith (2005) as understandable where trust in police is low and “security needs and interests are better served by other arrangements” (450). I would argue that their lived experience and thorough understanding of the issues facing people within their community when navigating oppressive structures and systems seems to have given them a more nuanced understanding of how to productively help survivors. This is in line with feminist ways of working, to center the experiences of the marginalized in formulating a response to their issues (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Cornwall, 2000, 7-8 & 28-29; Porter, 1999, 4; Batliwala, 2007, 560; Mohanty, 1984, 338; Cole, 2012). However, it is interesting that women in the other CSOs did not share this sort of understanding and still considered the police a useful resource. One examination of the Ugandan police force found that people continued to go to the police (in increased numbers in recent years) partially because of their vast availability/accessibility and a lack of other alternatives (Biecker and Schlichte, 2013, 15 & 18-19). Perhaps LGBTI groups in Uganda have been able to create alternatives

out of sheer necessity given the context. However, this specific organization still did not have an explicit policy or procedure to follow to report sexual violence in the workplace, it was however, enshrined in other policies and staff contracts that such behaviour was unacceptable. One interviewee explained that, “we are cautioned against any form of sexual harassment be it verbal, physical or text etc.”, and another added that they “constantly bring it up, even when we are joking, we keep reminding ourselves [what is and is not appropriate behaviour]”. In this way, the impression I got was that even without a procedure in place, to staff, responding to an incident appropriately was more or less “common sense” given the work place culture.

Given the lack of policies and procedures, and in some instances, lack of clarity around the implementation of existing procedures, I would argue that reporting an incidence of sexual violence would be a highly risky action to take for a survivor, possibly leading to a situation of ethical loneliness, as potential support networks do not appear to be sufficiently in place or trustworthy enough to support a survivor (Stauffer, 2015; Wanger et al., 2019, 65; Goldsmith, 2005). It would thus, appear that their organizations are inadvertently silencing their workers. To use one’s voice and speak out about sexual violence in this context could lead to ethical loneliness, especially with decision-makers (managers) seeing the Ugandan police as an appropriate mediator of incidents, who in early 2020 was called out by Human Rights Watch for explicit victim blaming within its ranks (Wabire, 2020). It makes sense then, that my respondents said, “not me”. Whether this silence was an act of empowerment for my research participants is not as clear.

In “high risk” contexts, Parpart (2010) understands silence and secrecy to “offer one of the few possibilities for rebuilding lives and regulating gender relations” (19). Where multiple systems of oppression work against a survivor and “chronic violence” exists throughout their lifetime, their silence may in fact be imposed on them, but they also may choose to remain silent to exhibit their own power (Thomson, 2019, 121). To claim that my research participants lacked the agency or voice necessary to share their own stories with me (if they had any to share) would thus, be ill-informed, as there is much more nuance to silence than appears at first glance, as discussed in the previous section. These choices of silence as a form of resistance are “often the best (and sometimes the only) tactics available” given their circumstances (Parpart, 2010, 20, citing Sagot 2005 and Silber

2005). Where survivors' voices have no 'institutional or collective power', being silent can provide protection (from social stigma, their oppressors and even from themselves fully understanding their reality) but the very act of silent resistance can also lead to 'incremental change' by providing space for new visions and patterns of empowerment to be born (Parpart, 2010; Parpart and Chatterjee, 2019; and Stone, 2002, 20, citing Lorde, 2007). Susan Thomson (2019) understands this view of silence as resistance to connect the "personal to the political" (121), because it provides survivors with the space necessary for reflection along the process of empowerment (Mosedale, 2005). Within this reflection and space for envisioning a better future, survivors are arguably able to connect their personal struggle to that of the masses, and work towards a better future - for themselves and/or a collective. When we connect this back to the duality of empowerment I presented in the previous section, this aligns with the first definition, as survivors' actions are in recognition and response to their inequitable context, and in protection of their practical gender interests (Molyneux, 1985; Parpart, 2010; Mosedale, 2005). Theoretically, this is a wonderful idea, and I would like to see further research on what this sort of resistance/empowerment looks like in reality in the workplace context, as much of the available literature focuses on post-conflict contexts⁵¹. This is not an area I gave attention to in my research, and therefore I cannot speak directly to how my respondents use their silence to advance gender issues. I can say that through the stories that were shared with me in interviews, it seems that personal experiences and connections to injustice inform and act as an inspiration for these CSO workers to advance gender equality in their work with beneficiaries. My findings in Chapter Four, however, show that this work may not be as progressive as one would imagine feminist international development assistance to look like. Their silence around the sexual violence they may experience does not render them incapable of understanding and speaking to gender issues, as my conversations with staff show, but the duality of having silence potentially imposed on them by the organization could be argued to impact the progressive nature of their work with beneficiaries, as this

⁵¹ In such contexts, examples of silence as resistance/empowerment/agency include, for an older Hutu woman in Rwanda, sitting quietly (rather than loudly protesting) in the face of government officials at recruitment meetings for mandatory re-education camps on what it means to be Rwandan, so as to not make her presence known and be forced to attend and have her lived experience of the genocide erased (Thomson, 2019, 115). This sort of silence is used as a deliberate strategy to defy the government, without putting oneself at risk (Thomson, 2019, 115-116).

reflects poorly on the equitable nature of one's organizational structure (Rao et al., 1999). This silencing does not however, stop within the CSOs. The following section shows that it extends beyond these institutions, to a higher level: the funder.

Global Affairs Canada's Response to Sexual Violence in the CSO Workplace

When discussing sexual violence in the CFLI-funded CSOs, multiple CHC officials assured me that they have never heard of this happening either within the organizations or between the organizations and the CHC, and that it was next to impossible for it to occur. They claim that the “nature of the relationship, the people involved and professionalism, as funding decisions are made by a committee,” ensure there is “limited opportunity” for sexual violence to take place between a GAC official and staff at a partner organization. What was evidently missing was a recognition of the inherent power relations at play in this funder-implementing partner relationship. Two CHC staff were able to provide examples of when sexual violence had occurred previously within beneficiary communities, showing that they too could identify the problem as existing “out there” in the field where their CSO-led programming took place, but not within their relationship with the CSO itself. GAC actually has a new unit addressing the prevention of sexual violence between development workers (its own staff and partner organizations' staff) and beneficiaries (they refer to it as the “prevention of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse” or PSHEA), but I was explicitly told that they do not look at the issue internally or in its relationships with the organizations it funds⁵². This suggests GAC also does not see sexual violence as an internal issue. When considering the relationship between a Government of Canada official and an implementing partner in a Ugandan CSO, it is important to remember the inherent power imbalance between the two. Within such a relationship, it is understood that a very specific form of sexual violence can occur: sextortion. The International Association for Women Judges (IAWJ) describes sextortion as “a form of corruption in which sex, rather than money, is the currency of the bribe” (2012, 5). The perpetrator is therefore understood to abuse the power entrusted onto them

⁵² As of September 1, 2019, GAC required partner organizations to have a Code of Conduct for the prevention of sexual violence in order to apply for development and humanitarian funding (GOC, 2020d). Staff I spoke with at the CHC were unaware of this new requirement at the time of our interviews that summer. It remains unclear whether this impacts the CFLI program.

(i.e., a police officer, supervisor, judge) to obtain a sexual favour via coercion, in exchange for something the survivor wants/needs (i.e., position, raise, visa) (IAWJ, 2012, 9-11). I especially like this understanding of sexual violence in the development sector, because it recognizes the inherent power relationship between international partners. It could also easily be extended to the relationship between officials and beneficiaries.

Furthermore, staff at the CHC seemed to think CSO staff knew Canada's stance on the issue of sexual violence (i.e., that it is unacceptable) and that they would know who to contact within the CHC to report an incidence. I was explicitly told by CHC staff that conversations around sexual violence did not occur with CFLI-funded organizations unless an incident occurred. There was an assumption by some CHC staff that the CSOs had their own existing reporting mechanisms and that they were required to report in writing to the CHC on incidents. My earlier findings show that this is terribly inaccurate. In speaking with CSO staff, no one was able to confidently say that CHC staff had ever even discussed this issue with them or that they would know how or to whom to report. When speaking to staff at GAC about what they would hypothetically do if there was an incident of sexual violence with a CSO partner organization, one manager stressed that "GAC takes such incidences seriously, and that depending on the nature of the offense there would be a variety of potential approaches or responses". They also distinguished between the types of responses necessary with an "isolated incident/poisoned apple in an otherwise solid organization" and "an organization where there were repeated and chronic incidences", with the latter likely resulting in an organization losing funding. However, upon reflection, the respondent recognized that the funding was meant to benefit beneficiaries, and that they would suffer in this case, thus, acknowledging that this was likely not the ideal solution, but not offering any alternatives. What was clear from this response is that: a) there was a lack of understanding regarding the gendered and hierarchical nature of the workplace environment within which sexual violence occurs, because given the gendered substructure, it is understood that this is not as simple as having one "bad apple" (Lewis, 2006; Fowler, 1997; Acker, 2012), and b) that these were not discussions that were taking place in the CHC, as this seemed like the first time many staff members had considered these issues. This matches Smyth's (2007) observation that, "if words are important, silences are important too and a reflection of what is excluded from daily exchanges -

verbal or written – among development practitioners and policy makers” (538). The explicit silence around sexual violence occurring within the workplace context, within GAC or between GAC and its implementing partners, is telling. Parpart (2010) asserts that in development agencies, silence is used to “stonewall controversial policies, especially regarding gender” (21). It could be that admitting sexual violence could occur within GAC and between funding partners is controversial – after all it erodes the image of “sainthood” amongst development organizations working for the betterment of humanity. It is important to highlight that staff had no problem identifying sexual violence could happen between a GAC worker and a beneficiary, signaling that they could easily see the unequal power relationship in this context. While it is important to recognize who holds more power in any given situation, this also entails that they recognized their beneficiaries as powerless, which adds to my analyses in Chapter Four, which found an example of Canadian-funded programming that viewed young women as helpless victims of sexual violence. As explored in Chapters Two and Four, this stereotypical representation of third world women implies they lack agency and require saving, often by external interventions (i.e., a development worker) (Bergenfield and Miller, 2014, 7; Batliwala, 2007, 560; Mohanty, 1984, 338; Cole, 2012; Cornwall, 2000, 7-8; Cornwall, 2014, 130, 133-135; Bakare-Yusuf, 2013, 53-55; Stienstra, 2017, 131). It is very interesting that beneficiaries were assumed to lack agency and seen as potential victims of sexual violence while those working within local CSOs, who relative to the CHC staff also can be understood to possess less power, were not considered to be vulnerable. Given the decision-making power held by CHC staff around funding local CSOs, it is theoretically possible that “sextortion” could occur, however, staff clearly do not believe this to be the case (IAWJ, 2012, 9-11; Goetz, 1997). It could be that GAC and CHC staff are naïve about the power imbalance inherent in a funder-implementing partner relationship and fail to understand how this power could be abused, and thus, do not speak of it. Kabeer (2010) did see an explicit link between the critical consciousness, or the awareness of oppression and injustice existing, and empowerment, and thus, using one’s voice to take action to bring about change (18-19). This would entail that staff were oblivious to the “environmental constraints” (Goetz, 1997) within which the CSOs existed and did not recognize the context within which they operated (i.e., neoliberalism and capitalism), as explored in Chapter Two (Plowman, 2000).

This seems unlikely given the depth of many of the conversations I had with staff around issues of equality as they related to their beneficiaries (as per the results demonstrated earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Four). It could then be that staff exhibited an explicit silence regarding this topic, as suggested by Parpart (2010), because this topic was controversial and would require truly transformative change within the organizational context to eradicate the gendered substructure that allows for this sort of behaviour to take place (Rao & Friedman, 2017; Tiessen, 2004; Goetz, 1997; and Acker, 2012). Thus, speaking about it would have acknowledged it existed as a problem to be fixed, within an organizational environment where a gendered substructure is present, as outlined above. GAC/CHC staff's silence on this matter could have also had an impact on the silence within the CSOs themselves, as there was no clear path for survivors to follow to seek redress and a potential for ethical loneliness, as established above (Stauffer, 2015; Wanger et al., 2019, 65; Goldsmith, 2005).

Sexual Violence in the Government of Canada Workplace

While assuring me that sexual violence did not occur within the GAC-implementing partner relationship, staff openly admitted that abuses of power (including sexual violence) were common at GAC itself and discussed the challenges the issue brought to the organization. One male survivor of workplace harassment told me that the policies in place to address these issues are ineffective and that there is a “lack of will to name and remove from power people who are abusive [and therefore, you must] resort to informal methods [of resistance], such as corridor talk or tarnishing reputations”. The unit within the Deputy Minister's office set up to change workplace culture is also looking at harassment in the workplace, but when I spoke to a person involved with this initiative, she failed to see the relationship between harassment in the workplace and gender, explicitly telling me her work was not on gender, which was alarming to say the least. Dealing with sexual violence and other abuses of power in the workplace gets especially difficult in the international contexts within which GAC operates. Staff at GAC rotate in and out of positions (internationally and at headquarters) on an annual basis, meaning there is regular turn-over of staff, making it potentially difficult to hold perpetrators accountable if they were to rotate out of a position. One potential stop-gap measure to this, suggested by an

interviewee, was to keep a record/register of aid/development workers that would bar perpetrators from continuing to work in the sector, something the United Kingdom's Department for International Development has adopted (Naik, 2020). Unfortunately, this does not get to the root of the issue. Furthermore, when working on development issues in the international context, the workplace often extends beyond the walls of the Canadian office space (i.e., the High Commission itself) to partner organizations, the field with beneficiaries, formal events, etc. One interviewee explained it was challenging to handle incidents where the "workplace" is not clearly defined and as such, neither is the role of authority figures. I was also told it was unclear how managers should handle instances of sexual violence that if addressed, could harm Canada's relations with another country, while still recognizing that something needed to be done to address the situation. Later in the interview, however, this same manager told me that a more stringent policy on harassment in the workplace was unnecessary, as managers should be able to use "common sense and judgement" to intervene and address issues. Once again, we see the idea that personal will and awareness is all that is required to operate in an equitable manner in the workplace. However, given previously presented findings on staff's varying understandings of gender, and even the FIAP, is it adequate to assume staff (and especially management) will all understand the intricacies of sexual violence, harassment and broader workplace abuse the same way when a policy does not exist? It is understood that policies are important because they demonstrate "the organization's political will and institutional commitment" (AQOCI, 2019, 3) to sexual violence, and make any procedures and definitions of key terms/concepts clear (i.e., avoid "fuzziness"), ideally then avoiding the potential of ethical loneliness (Eyben & Napier-Moore, 2009; Stauffer, 2015). As explored in the Theoretical Framework, a common tool used to ensure staff are on the same page about key issues relating to gender and development are gender trainings (Tiessen, 2004); however, I was told in interviews that formal training on gender equality did not exist (nor was it required) for all staff members. Given that we saw that the Ugandan CSOs with workforces as small as 5 had varying understandings of key gender issues, how can we expect an organization as large and international as GAC to be on the same page and thus, respond uniformly to incidents of sexual violence? It is also important to keep in mind that the existence of policies and trainings on gender issues is not enough to address the

gendered substructure, which requires tackling deeply rooted norms, behaviours and assumptions (Tiessen, 2004; Wendoh and Wallace, 2005; Bydowell, 1997; Rao and Friedman, 2017).

Conclusions: Gender Equality in the Workplace

This chapter has shown that the CSO and GAC workplaces are both gender inequitable, in a number of ways. While unlike the CSOs, GAC and the GOC more broadly might have the policies and practices in place to ensure equitable representation, we see that this does not necessarily translate into an equitable workplace. What unites the Ugandan CSOs and the GAC workplace is that the societal inequities inevitably influence the workplace. They dictate who works there, who has decision making power, and, thus, what kind of work the organization does or does not do. This also means that stark injustices such as sexual violence exist or clearly have the potential to exist within these workplaces, both separately, and when put together in a donor-funded partner relationship. The explicit silence around these sorts of inequalities existing in the CSO workplace and in the relationship between the CSO and GAC is problematic, but not shocking, when the inherent power relationship between the two is considered. This case study shows that the gendered and intersectional inequalities existing on the surface in both workplaces go much deeper and serve to systemically silence those with less privilege, by creating an environment within which ethical loneliness is plausible. The silence on this matter combined with the lack of clear policies and procedures for survivors to follow, nor trustworthy alternatives (i.e., Ugandan police) create a situation where potential support networks are likely to fail to listen to, believe and support the needs and desires of a survivor (Stauffer, 2015, 1). However, if we consider the potential duality to silence and empowerment, we know that survivors inherently have agency, even if constrained within this context, and as such, their silence can be considered a choice that may bring them some sense of empowerment (Molyneux, 1985; Parpart, 2010; Mosedale, 2005; Kabeer, 2010). I have shown that these organizations are inherently gendered, as are most organizations, and we must do better to change organizational structures and national and international institutions so that more people feel comfortable to say, “me too”, if they wish. With the new International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 190, on violence and harassment

in the workplace having been brought into motion in 2019, and civil society widely calling on Canada (and all countries) to ratify it swiftly, this will be an issue the Government will have to grapple with and can show real feminist leadership on (ILO, 2019).

Simply hiring more women will not rid these workplaces of this problem: systemic change is needed both in society at large, but also within the workplaces to rid them of their gendered substructure (Goetz, 1997). The question remains, how can such change occur while protecting the immediate practical gender needs of those who are marginalized in the workplace? At GAC, staff have the ability to organize and raise their concerns through their employee networks - although imperfect, these are promising vessels for change when combined with initiatives coming from above. How can such practices be supported in Canada and extended or even shared with GAC's partners overseas, who inevitably would have similar concerns about their own workplaces? Surely GAC can also learn from the workplaces of these CSOs, where staff insist that they have an excellent working relationship with each other, despite the gendered inequalities I observed. If GAC is to seriously look at operating in a feminist manner, it would also be important that they provide the space for dialogue and listen to the real issues facing their implementing partners on the ground, especially with regards to gender in their workplace and their working relationship with one another. Pretending these inequalities do not exist does not make them disappear, if anything, it allows for them to compound and eventually flourish into increasingly harmful acts including, sexual violence (Fowler, 1997). In the final chapter I will bring these findings together with the findings from chapter three, showing the connection between workplace gender equality and gender equality programming, making a plea for Canada to do better.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has sought to investigate how “feminist” programming in the era of the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) has been in reality and, therefore, to understand whether the FIAP and the broader Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) have had an influence on the ground, both in programming and internally with partner organizations. Specifically, it has aimed to answer the following research question: What is the impact of gender (in)equitable organizations on the implementation of gendered programming funded by the Government of Canada under the FIAP in Kampala, Uganda? As initially explored in my theoretical and conceptual framework presented in chapter two, I have argued throughout this thesis that the internal operations and functioning of an organization cannot be separated from their external programming work. My findings show vast disparities amongst CFLI-funded programming and varying understandings of key issues and concepts related to the FIAP by staff within the organizations and at GAC. They also show the specific ways the gendered substructure existed within the Ugandan organizations, GAC, and within the working relationship between them. When critically examined, it becomes evident that the poor quality of some of the gender equality programming could have been a result of GAC ignoring that organizations are made up of people with varied lived experiences (and thus, understandings of social issues such as gender equality), who may also have negative experiences working in these organizations as a result of their unique identity (Rao et al., 1999, Acker, 2012; Goetz, 1997; Lewis, 2006; Tiessen, 2004). As supported by the Theoretical Framework, my findings show that overarching patriarchal (and other) structures influence who is hired, what roles they hold, and how much decision-making power and influence they have in the organization.

Significant Research Findings

As one of the first studies to examine the implementation of the FIAP in a recipient country, this research has many important findings. Firstly, it provides insights into the local, on-the-ground perceptions and understandings of the FIAP and its key themes. It uncovers that while staff at local organizations are supportive of the general idea of the FIAP, they seem to push for more of a human rights-based approach (HRBA), rather than

a gender-first intersectional approach to programming, supporting theoretical arguments presented by Stienstra (2017) and Mason (2019). This presents potential challenges for the implementation of the FIAP in similar contexts elsewhere, where gender may also be understood to simply refer to “women and girls”, due to a lack of clear definitions of key concepts by the funder. As seen in this study, only one funded organization saw gender as encompassing gender-diverse persons, limiting the scope of the FIAP to focus on programming largely centered on women and girls. However, it is also possible that this ambiguity allows for the FIAP to reach and have relevance to broader groups of organizations around the world, as it did in Kampala for both an activist LGBTI-rights organization and an organization focused on empowering girls. This research also uncovers that staff at GAC may be aware of the varying appetites for the FIAP and that they shift how they discuss it with different partners in an effort to advance the Policy’s objectives. However, the CLFI-funded programming I examined in Uganda also shows that these varying understandings lead to programming that is sometimes far from feminist. This research shows that further efforts are needed to specify the type of programming that is deemed “acceptable” under the FIAP.

As (one of) the first studies to consider the relationship between the workplace and FIAP programming, this thesis presents novel findings around the state of gender equality in organizations, which is often overlooked due to the nature of their work. In showing that there exists a lack of coherence amongst CFLI-funded organizations’ internal gender equality and broader equity programming, this study provides insight into the possible gendered dynamics in other GOC-funded organizations. Similarly, this study undertakes a brief examination of existing efforts to address equity within the global GAC workplace, revealing through testimonials and observations from staff that there remains an immense amount of work to make the workplace equitable and safe for all. My in-depth case study on sexual violence in the GAC and CSO workplaces is especially revealing, examining for the first time what is (and is not) being done to protect staff from sexual violence. My discovery and analysis of the silencing of survivors of sexual violence, and the duality of silence (i.e., their choice to stay silent under structures that silence and likely harm them for speaking out), spells out the inherent power relationship within workplaces and between a funder and its implementing partner. While it is known that a power difference exists

between the two, this connection to sexual violence between these specific groups, and the lack of attention being given by GAC to this potential abuse of power, is a revealing finding, and one of particular interest considering the funder is operating under an explicitly “feminist” policy. In the post #MeToo era, these findings should especially be of interest to feminists working in the development sector. This chapter reveals that long-held assumptions around “sainthood” (Ashworth, 1996 as cited by Lewis, 2006) amongst these organizations needs to be revisited, supporting the argument that a gendered substructure in fact exists, and presents itself in ways that have real and lasting impacts on people’s lives.

The most significant finding of this research is the link between the gender equitable nature of a workplace and the gendered nature of the programming an organization undertakes. The starkest example of this that I can provide from my research is a comparison of two CFLI-funded organizations: one that did not think gender equality was important in their workplace and considered their project gender equitable for simply having women present, undertaking traditional gender roles; and another, which worked to provide sexual and reproductive health services to LGBTI individuals and whose staff consisted of the very groups of people they aimed to serve. The first organization’s programming and thinking about gender equality was deeply in-line with approaches from the “women in development” era of international development work, and was far from being “feminist”. This organization also had no existing policies around gender or broader equity in the workplace. On the other hand, the LGBTI-rights organization truly “walked the talk” and was comfortable discussing both their internal equity practices and those within their programming, as shown with various examples throughout chapters four and five. For instance, this was by-far the organization with the most in-depth internal policies/practices related to equity and safety in the workplace, because they used their lived experiences as LGBTI persons to inform their organizational practices. Their work also thoroughly impressed me by crafting together innovative programming that served to meet the immediate (practical) and longer-term (strategic) needs of their beneficiaries (Molyneux, 1985). The staff seemed to do this because they had a deeply-personal understanding of gender issues and the local context within which their programming would be undertaken, and they told me personal stories to prove this. This awareness

allowed them to do as little harm as possible within their programming, which I've stressed throughout this thesis is a major tenet of good development work.

To further emphasise the connection between equity in the workplace and programming, it is useful to highlight the different sexual violence programming offered by two of the CFLI-funded organizations. One organization presented young women with disabilities as being helpless and asexual and focused programming on abstinence and protecting them from harm; another organization actively worked to educate the whole community, including boys, on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and sexual violence. The latter organization was started and led by a woman, and consisted of a mainly female staff. The other organization was led by a man and staff who held traditionally gendered positions (i.e., women as the gender analyst and the people interacting with beneficiaries, and men working on logistics and finance). It is logical to assume that the staff an organization comprises, their understandings of social issues, and the positions they hold have an impact on their programming.

This study reveals that the gendered substructure exists in organisations and that it has an inherent impact on the gendered nature of the programming undertaken, supporting Rao et al.'s (1999) findings. The two examples above show that the more "feminist" an organization is in its internal operations and understandings of gender issues, the more "feminist" their programming will be. This then raises another important observation: if I have shown that GAC's workplace is gender inequitable, is it possible for their programming to be feminist? This is arguably the most significant finding of my research, because it raises important questions about the potential of the FIAP. Having shown that a relationship exists between the workplaces of GAC-funded organizations and the gendered nature of their programming, it is understandable then, by extension, that GAC's workplace must influence their policy and programming work, and thus, likely that of their partners'.

Limitations of Thesis

As with other qualitative MA-level research, a lack of time and resources to examine the issue in as much depth as ideal provide a major limitation to my research findings, as I collected a very narrow and limited set of views on my research topic. My identity also poses an interesting limitation: as a white, upper-middle-class, Canadian

female who had previously worked at GAC, I was able to gain access to spaces that are reserved for few, and had opportunities to hold conversations around topics that not all researchers would be able to explore with ease (Hastrup, 1992, as cited by England, 85, 1994). It is also true however, that given the power dynamic this posed vis-à-vis some of my Ugandan interviewees, that the information I collected from them may have been skewed if they did not feel comfortable or fully trust me to protect their confidentiality (Seidman, 99, 2006). The timing of this research is also of concern. Given that the FIAP was released in June 2017, there exists little-to-no other research on FIAP implementation to compare my findings to, which may put into jeopardy the validity of my findings (Creswell, 2013, 252). With this research taking place in the summer/fall of 2019, the CFLI programming selected may not have all transitioned fully to “FIAP-friendly” programming. While ideally, all programming should have made the switch to FIAP-style programming immediately after the release of the new Policy, it is possible that there was a delay in translating this into reality on the ground, which could explain some of my findings. Lastly, this thesis research presents a case study in a very particular context which likely cannot be generalized to other (similar) contexts; however, this is something that can be said of much qualitative research (Creswell, 2013, 253; Gibbs, 2007, 100). Despite such limitations, this thesis has explored themes that have yet to be considered as related to one another with respect to Canada’s new international development policy. It presents new ideas and possibilities for the future of this policy – and these are things to be excited about, because they offer insight into what future studies could explore.

Areas for Improvement in Development Scholarship, Policy and Practice

This thesis reveals numerous gaps in scholarship around gender and development in the Canadian context and specifically with respect to the FIAP. I believe that my research findings make the case for greater attention to be paid to the relationship between gender (in)equity within an organization and the impact this has on the organization’s policy and programming development, and on the implementation of the policy on the ground. My research and the theory certainly suggest a relationship exists, but a more in-depth look at GAC itself and a larger set of implementing partners (i.e., multilateral organizations or larger international NGOs) is merited.

Future studies could also delve more deeply into a truly intersectional approach to better understand, for example, the role that race plays within the gendered substructure of development organizations. Since undertaking my field research and the majority of the analyses of this thesis, mass movements have started around the globe to recognize the inherent racism within institutions world-wide⁵³. It appears we are in a unique moment in time where diversity and inclusion more generally are of heightened interest. In the development sector, it has started some conversations around the roles of race, (neo)colonialism, and power, which could lead to deeply-needed changes to how and why the sector operates⁵⁴. Under a lens of intersectionality, there is also then a potential to examine what this means for gender relations and the possibility of a “feminist” workplace to advance true inclusion in the office. For instance, the interplay of the #MeToo movement with this current movement for racial justice provide a really rich potential area of consideration for future studies. While this thesis has certainly made some new revelations, it also largely supports what existing gender and development scholarship has been saying for decades now about gender-mainstreaming, which I would argue shows that this concept, in its radical sense, deserves to be re-considered in this unique moment in time.

Final Reflections

I started this thesis with the aspiration to better understand the gendered reality within development organizations because I was fascinated with connecting theory to situations I had heard about, experienced and witnessed in my short career in the field prior to starting my Master’s degree. It is only now, many months into this degree and writing process that I realize that I had personally connected these dots myself previously. In fact,

⁵³ Following the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis, Minnesota police in late May 2020, mass public outrage and protests began across the United States and around the world in solidarity and recognition of localized issues with racism (Sindhu, 2020;). The New York Times reported that these protests were “the largest movement in the country’s history”, showing solidarity across the country that had not been seen since the Civil Rights Movement (Buchanan, Bui and Patel, 2020; Sindhu, 2020). In Canada, protests took place across the country, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau participated in Ottawa, taking a knee in an act of solidarity, although he did not directly call out US President Donald Trump (Asmelash, 2020). Since these events took place, companies and organizations around the world have put out statements of solidarity and committed themselves to change their internal diversity and inclusion practices.

⁵⁴ For more on this, see: The Guardian, 2020; Magendane and Goris, 2020; Hickel, 2020.

while completing an internship in Tamale, Ghana in 2017, I was struck by how misogynistic some of my fellow Canadian volunteers were and that they were expected to deliver capacity building for gender equality in their local organizations. I even recall discussing this concern with the NGO that had sent me to Ghana upon my return to Canada, because it seemed inconceivable to me that these people would have been allowed to go overseas to deliver equitable programming. I was equally critical of some of the programming I had witnessed, because I did not understand how it was meant to be “transformative”. I was, however, missing the rigorous theoretical understanding of why this was truly problematic, and why this phenomenon was able to take place. It was not until that fall semester of my Master’s degree during my Gender and Development course where I fully connected these dots. Given the #MeToo movement and Canada’s new *Feminist* approach to international development, it seemed like the perfect “moment” to connect these areas of scholarship, and truly delve into them. While not everyone I interviewed or told about my research was as wildly excited about it as I was, people were intrigued by the concept. It was not as if I was the first person to connect these two realms, but perhaps it was the first time some of my interviewees had connected the dots. I ended several of my interviews with informal conversations with interviewees about the concept I was exploring. They were genuinely interested in why and how I wanted to connect those dots. Similarly, when presenting my research at a handful of conferences in late 2019 and early 2020, other academics, activists, and policy makers were equally interested in the fact that this was a topic with relevance to the development/aid sector, which they often did not think of as problematic. It is perhaps these informal conversations around my thesis topic that have motivated me the most to thoughtfully engage with the analyses in this thesis. Their curiosity further sparked my own, and pushed me to consider various angles and perceptions of my research topic. It is my hope that this thesis strikes further curiosity on this topic and leads others to interrogate this connection as well, whether through further research or personal introspection.

Just as Chandra Mohanty called for the formation of solidarity amongst western and “third-world” women based on “common differences” (502, 2003), I hope that this thesis has effectively revealed what commonalities exist across workplaces connected to Canada’s international development work. Whether working in Kampala, Uganda at a

small CSO, or at GAC HQ on Sussex drive in Ottawa, women and gender-diverse persons are experiencing mistreatment based on their gender and other intersecting factors. While the form and particularities of this mistreatment may differ across (and within) these contexts, what holds is that within a patriarchal, capitalist and neoliberal world, the gendered substructure reveals itself no matter your location (although to differing degrees based on one's relative privilege). This is not therefore, only a problem in developing countries, where the west often assumes inequality thrives, but also, here at home, within our very institutions. As such, solidarity across these contexts to share experiences and lessons-learned by tempered radicals could be an effective way to work towards a solution that brings transformative change to the system without immediately endangering people's safety and well-being. What this solidarity could/should look like remains out of the scope of this thesis. It does, however, open the door to consider what truly feminist approaches to development work could look like, and how they can go beyond simply trying to achieve programming that is feminist, but that the workplace is as well. It is my view that it will only be then that we can call ourselves, as Canadians, and our international development programming, *truly* feminist.



**The Gendered Experience of Working in Development NGOs in Kampala Uganda
INFORMATION SHEET: GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA OFFICIALS**

Introduction:

My name is Nevena Vucetic and I am a Graduate student in International Development Studies at Dalhousie University in Canada, inviting you to take part in my research study. This research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada alongside the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship Program. Neither of these funding bodies, however, have any influence on this research or the anticipated analysis of results. Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw your participation at any point in time. As a participant in this study, you would join approximately 20 individuals from multiple local civil society organizations in Kampala taking part in individual interviews and focus groups, and a handful of Global Affairs Canada Officials taking part in individual interviews. There will be no compensation provided for participating in this study. Your individual data is free to be withdrawn from the study up until two-weeks following the receipt of your interview transcription.

Study Purpose and Outline

The purpose of this research is to examine the gendered experience of working in international development organizations that receive funding from the Government of Canada through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) program. You were selected as a potential respondent for this study because of your position at Global Affairs Canada and relation to the CFLI program in Uganda. As such, you are able to speak to the gendered criteria set out by Global Affairs Canada for CFLI-funded programs.

The individual interview will last approximately one hour in length and take place in a location of your choice. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and notes will be taken throughout to ensure your responses are captured accurately. Direct quotations, using your name and position as a Global Affairs Canada Official, may also be used with your consent. Direct quotes will be sent to you for review and you will have until November 8, 2019 to withdraw them from the report.

Research will be conducted by myself and I will be the only person with access to the data collected, including audio recordings and notes. I will work under the guidance of my research supervisor, Dr. Theresa Ulicki of the Department of International Development Studies at Dalhousie University, and my local supervisor, Dr. Sarah Ssali, of the School of Women and Gender Studies at Makerere University.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

Any information shared during the interview will remain confidential. Any identifying information including your name, will not be used in the final research report or shared with anyone beyond myself unless you consent to the use of direct quotes using your name and position.

Potential Risks and Benefits:

It is not anticipated that participating in this research project will bring any risk to you however, if there are topics of discussion that you are uncomfortable with, you are welcome to skip over them, end the interview, or withdraw your participation at any time during the interview. These options also hold if there are topics that leave you distressed following the interview. Please see the *Resources* section below if you have any concerns about these risks. All data collected during this research will be electronically stored on an encrypted and password protected device, which will be stored in a secure location. Any research notes will be electronically transcribed as soon after the interview as possible, and destroyed thereafter.

This research study is not anticipated to bring you any direct benefits, but will allow you to contribute to the limited knowledge that exists on the gendered nature of working in international development organizations and the implementation of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy.

Voluntary Participation and Consent:

Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary and may be withdrawn for up to two weeks following the receipt of your interview transcription. If you are interested in participating in this research study, you may review and sign the *Consent Form* on the following page.

Research Results:

I would be more than happy to share the final report that is produced from this research study with you upon its completion in August 2020. If you would like to be sent an electronic copy of it, please indicate so on the *Consent Form*. I would encourage you to get in touch with me if you have any comments or concerns throughout the research process or would like to discuss research findings. You may find my contact information below.

Problems or Concerns:

If you have any concerns throughout the research process, please do not hesitate to contact:

Catherine Connors
Director of Research Ethics
Office of Research Services
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Canada
000-1-902-494-1462
catherine.connors@dal.ca

Dr. Theresa Ulicki
Professor and Department Chair
Department of International Development Studies
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Canada
000-1-902-494-1377
ulickit@dal.ca

Dr. Sarah Ssali
Associate Professor and Dean
School of Women and Gender Studies
Makerere University
Kampala, Uganda
+256-414-531-484
deanswgs@chuss.mak.ac.ug

Resources:

As topics of discussion may leave participants distressed, please refer to the below resources if you are in need of support. As the lead researcher my focus is the complete respect for your confidentiality, and as such, it is not my role to provide counselling or contact local authorities on your behalf. I encourage you to explore the following:

The Coalition on Violence Against Women Kenya, Service Provider Contacts:
<https://covaw.or.ke/resource-center/all-downloads/>

Sincerely,

Nevena Vucetic
Graduate Student
Department of International Development Studies
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Canada
WhatsApp: +1-613-700-4666
Nevena.Vucetic@dal.ca / nevenavucetic@yahoo.ca

**The Gendered Experience of Working in Development NGOs in Kampala Uganda
INFORMATION SHEET: LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

Introduction:

My name is Nevena Vucetic and I am a Graduate student in International Development Studies at Dalhousie University in Canada, inviting you to take part in my research study. This research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada alongside the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship Program. Neither of these funding bodies however, have any influence on this research or the anticipated analysis of results. Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw your participation at any point in time. As a participant in this study, you would be one of approximately 20 individuals from multiple local civil society organizations in Kampala taking part in individual interviews and focus groups. There will be no compensation provided for participating in this study. Your individual data is free to be withdrawn from the study up until two-weeks following the receipt of your interview transcription.

Study Purpose and Outline

The purpose of this research is to examine the gendered experience of working in international development organizations that receive funding from the Government of Canada through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) program. You were selected as a potential respondent for this study because of (insert name of organization)'s project: (insert project name), which draws from this funding. As an employee at (insert name of organization), you are able to speak to the day-to-day reality of working there based on your unique identity.

[if applicable]: (name of gatekeeper) passed on your contact information given your (current/previous) working relationship together. I do not have any relationship with (name of gatekeeper), nor will they be involved in any further stage of this research or have access or control of research results.

The individual interview will last approximately one hour in length and take place in a location of your choice. The focus group will also last approximately one hour in length and take place at Makerere University, alongside several colleagues also participating in the study. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and notes will be taken throughout to ensure your responses are captured accurately.

Research will be conducted by myself and I will be the only person with access to the data collected, including audio recordings and notes. I will work under the guidance of my research supervisor, Dr. Theresa Ulicki of the Department of International Development Studies at Dalhousie University, and my local supervisor, Dr. Sarah Ssali, of the School of Women and Gender Studies at Makerere University.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

Any information shared during the interview and focus group will remain confidential. Any identifying information including your name, the name of the organization you work at, and your position there, will not be used in the final research report or shared with anyone beyond myself. Where direct quotations are used, a pseudonym (false name) will be used to protect your identity.

Potential Risks and Benefits:

It is not anticipated that participating in this research project will bring any risk to you however, if there are topics of discussion that you are uncomfortable with, you are welcome to skip over them, end the interview, or withdraw your participation at any time during the interview. These options also hold if there are topics that leave you distressed following the interview. Please see the *Resources* section below if you have any concerns about these risks. Your participation in the focus group discussion will entail sharing your views about issues with colleagues, who may have differing views. All data collected during this research will be electronically stored on an encrypted and password protected device, which will be stored in a secure location. Any research notes will be electronically transcribed as soon after the interview as possible, and destroyed thereafter.

This research study is not anticipated to bring you any direct benefits, but will allow you to contribute to the limited knowledge that exists on the gendered nature of working in international development organizations and the implementation of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy.

Voluntary Participation and Consent:

Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary and may be withdrawn for up to two weeks following the receipt of your interview transcription. If you are interested in participating in this research study, you may review and sign the *Consent Form* on the following page.

Research Results:

I would be more than happy to share the final report that is produced from this research study with you upon its completion in August 2020. If you would like to be sent an electronic copy of it, please indicate so on the *Consent Form*. I would encourage you to get in touch with me if you have any comments or concerns throughout the research process or would like to discuss research findings. You may find my contact information below.

Problems or Concerns:

If you have any concerns throughout the research process, please do not hesitate to contact:

Catherine Connors
Director of Research Ethics
Office of Research Services
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Canada
000-1-902-494-1462
catherine.connors@dal.ca

Dr. Theresa Ulicki
Professor and Department Chair
Department of International Development Studies
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Canada
000-1-902-494-1377
ulickit@dal.ca

Dr. Sarah Ssali
Associate Professor and Dean
School of Women and Gender Studies
Makerere University
Kampala, Uganda
+256-414-531-484
deanswgs@chuss.mak.ac.ug

Resources:

As topics of discussion may leave participants distressed, please refer to the attached resources if you are in need of support. As the lead researcher my focus is the complete respect for your confidentiality, and as such, it is not my role to provide counselling or contact local authorities on your behalf. I encourage you to explore these.

Sincerely,

Nevena Vucetic
Graduate Student
Department of International Development Studies
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Canada
+256-757-345-254
Nevena.Vucetic@dal.ca / nevenavucetic@yahoo.ca



**The Gendered Experience of Working in Development NGOs in Kampala Uganda
INTERVIEW GUIDE: GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA OFFICIALS**

Interviewee Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Date: _____ **Interview Location:** _____

Interview Time - Start: _____ **Finish:** _____

Section A: Background Information

A1: Tell me a bit about yourself:

- a) What is your age?
- b) Education level?
- c) Marital status?
- d) Do you have children? How many?
- e) If you have children, tell me about your role in their care?; What about your spouse's role? (if applicable)
- f) Where are your children while you are at work?

A2: Where else, in this same field, have you worked before working at this organization?

A3: Tell me a bit about your position with the Government of Canada and the duties that it entails.

A4: How long have you worked in this position, with the Government of Canada and Global Affairs Canada, more specifically?

A5: What is your educational background, as related to this position/work?

Section B: Gender Programming

B1: How does Global Affairs Canada define and understand the concept of "gender equality" under the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP)?

- a) How does GAC justify the need for a focus on gender equality?
- b) If you could summarize the focus of the FIAP in one sentence, what would it be?
- c) Describe the response that you have gotten from local civil society organizations in Uganda or East Africa more broadly, with regards to the FIAP and its goals.

B2: Who are some of GAC's major partners in Uganda?

- a) What sort of criteria do these organizations need to meet with regards to gender equality to receive funding from GAC under the FIAP?
- b) In reality, do they meet these requirements?

B3: Describe the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) Program.

- a) What is your role in this Program?
- b) What are the gender equality requirements for local civil society organizations applying for this funding?
- c) How would you describe the success of this Program in promoting the FIAP's goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?
 - i) What changes could be made?

B4: What influences GAC's funding in Uganda?

- a) Is there pressure from civil society to pursue certain issues in support of the FIAP?

- b) Are there competing interests from funders that support/undermine the FIAP? Will this affect the success of the FIAP?

Section C: Gender at Work

C1: How do you, personally, understand gender equality?

C2: Do you feel this understanding of gender equality is shared and supported by your colleagues?

- a) What about upper management - do they support gender equality? Provide specific examples.

C3: What policies, guidelines, etc. does GAC have regarding having gender equality in the organizations it funds? Explain.

C4: Are there policies on addressing harassment, abuse or assault of workers in the organizations GAC funds? Explain.

C5: Does GAC have internal policies regarding the harassment, abuse or assault of employees?

C6: Do these translate to relations between GAC staff and their partner organizations?

C7: Are such policies effective? Are they used? Explain why/why not with specific examples.

C8: Do you see a need for such policies to exist?

- a) Have any organizations you work with discussed the harassment, abuse or assault of workers with you?
- b) If you were writing these policies, what would you like to see included in them?
- c) What would you like to see in terms of the implementation of such policies – in terms of training and shifting organizational cultures?

C9: With the FIAP calling for a feminist approach to international assistance, do you see any value in GAC and its funded organizations operating in a “feminist” manner? Why or why not?

C10: Do you see any value in a feminist approach? Will it change anything?

Section D: Concluding Remarks

D1: Is there anything else that is relevant to this discussion that you would like to add?

D2: Do you have any questions for me regarding this study or the discussion we have just had?

**The Gendered Experience of Working in Development NGOs in Kampala Uganda
INTERVIEW GUIDE: LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

Interviewee Code: _____ **Organization Code:** _____

Date: _____ **Interview Location:** _____

Interview Time - Start: _____ **Finish:** _____

Section A: Background Information

A1: Tell me a bit about yourself:

- a) What is your age?
- b) Education level?
- c) Marital status?
- d) Do you have children? How many?
- e) If you have children, tell me about your role in their care?; What about your spouse's role? (if applicable)
- f) Where are your children while you are at work?

A2: Where else, in this same field, have you worked before working at this organization?

A3: What is your position in the organization?

A4: Where does this position lie in the hierarchy of the organization?

A5: How long have you worked in this position? With the organization?

A6: How did you hear about/attain this position?

A7: Tell me about your job? (what do you do?)

A8: What sort of training/schooling do you have that supports your work in this position?

A9: Do you have any decision-making power in this position? Explain.

A10: Do you manage other employees in this position?

- a) If yes, how many?
- b) What are your responsibilities?

Section B: Gender Programming

B1: How does your organization define and understand the concept of "gender equality"?

- a) How does it justify the need to work on gender equality?
- b) How long has the organization been working on gender equality issues? Why did it start to address them?

B2: How does your organization work towards gender equality in its programming? Describe some of the projects you work on.

B3: Who are your organization's funders?

- a) Does their understanding of gender equality fit the organization's? Explain.
- b) What sort of influence do funders have on the projects your organization focuses on?
- c) Are there competing demands between funders? How do you respond to these?

B4: Do/did you work directly on the (insert name of CFLI-funded project)?

- a) If yes, could you describe the project, its goals, target audience, etc.?
- b) If yes, please describe the team that worked alongside you on this project – what were their roles? Who had decision-making power?
- c) What sort of influence did those outside of your organization have on this project?

B5: Are you familiar with the Government of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP)?

(If no: In June 2017, the Government of Canada (GOC) released its new Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), which commits Canada to increase the percentage of its international assistance focused on gender equality and women's empowerment to 95% by 2022 – making it the largest donor, by percentage, of targeted gender equality aid in the world (GOC, 2017). This ambitious policy has an overarching goal to “eradicate poverty and build a more peaceful, more inclusive and more prosperous world” (GOC, 2017) in part, by increasingly partnering with local civil society organizations (CSOs). The focus of the FIAP is the most vulnerable and most marginalized in society.)

- a) If yes, could you explain what you know about it, its goals and focus?
- b) Do the goals of the FIAP fit in with the goals of your organization and its work? Give specific examples.
- c) Do you think the FIAP is relevant to the Ugandan context? Explain. (i.e. its focus, feminist stance, etc.)
- d) Are Ugandan civil society organizations open to “feminist” policies?
- e) Do you see any challenges to implementing the FIAP in the Ugandan context?

Section C: Gender at Work

C1: How do you, personally, understand gender equality?

C2: Do you feel this understanding of gender equality is shared and supported by your colleagues?

- a) What about upper management - do they support gender equality? Explain.

C3: Who is responsible for gender equality in programming?

C4: Would you describe your workplace as “gender-equitable”? Explain. (having equality among male and female staff at all levels, sufficient policies on gender, family friendly work practices, etc.)

C5: Do you feel that you have the opportunity to share your opinions on gender equality in a way that influences the work of the organization? Explain.

C6: Does the organization provide any training to staff on gender issues?

- a) If yes, describe the training and some of the topics covered.
- b) If yes: who takes the training? how often? what does it entail?
- c) If yes, is the training offered effective? Explain with examples.
- d) If no, is there a reason why?
- e) What would you like to see included in training on gender issues?

C7: Are you aware of your organization having any policies, guidelines, etc. related to gender equality in the work place? What about harassment, abuse or assault? Explain.

- a) If yes, explain how staff and management understand and use these policies.
- b) If yes, are they effective? Provide specific examples.
- c) If yes, do people use them? Why or why not? Provide specific examples.
- d) Have you ever heard of incidences of sexual harassment, abuse or assault in this organization? Give examples.
- e) Have you ever heard about conversations in the workplace about sex or a demand for sex?
- f) At what point does a colleague's behaviour become sexual harassment? Where do you draw that line?
- g) If you were to witness, experience or hear about the mistreatment of a staff member by a colleague, is there an internal procedure to follow to report such instances? Explain.
- h) What about if it was a partner organization/ donor as the perpetrator?
- i) What about if the victim was a project beneficiary?

C8: Do you see a need for such policies to exist?

- d) Have any of your funders discussed the harassment, abuse or assault of workers with you?
- e) If you were writing these policies, what would you like to see included in them?
- f) What would you like to see in terms of the implementation of such policies – in terms of training and shifting organizational cultures?

C9: Are there any demands made of you in the work place that go outside of your work description? What are they? Who makes these demands?

C10: What would you say are the biggest workplace challenges you face?

C11: Does your organization have a diverse set of employees? (re: age, religion, gender, etc.)

- a) Do you think any changes should be made to this?

C12: What are the gender roles in this organization?

- a) Is there a gender division of labour in your organization? Explain with specific examples. (Do women and men take on different roles (formal/informal))
- b) Are there expectations surrounding the roles men and women should take? Are people able to work around these? Explain.
- c) Does the organization provide parents with any of the following support: maternal/parental leave; child care; breastfeeding facility; vacation/sick days, etc. (if only maternity leave, why?)

Section D: Concluding Remarks

D1: Are there anything important that I've missed that you would like to discuss?

D2: Do you have any questions for me regarding this study or the discussion we have just had?

**The Gendered Experience of Working in Development NGOs in Kampala Uganda
FOCUS GROUP GUIDE**

Organization Code: _____

Date: _____ **Focus Group Location:** _____

Focus Group Time - Start: _____ **Finish:** _____

1. What are the most important aspects of gender equality for your organization(s)?
2. Do expectations of what men/women should be doing influence your work? Explain with specific examples.
3. Describe the workplace culture you work within. How does this influence gender roles? Explain with specific examples.
4. What should a “gender-equitable” workplace look like? Compare this to your organization at this point in time, providing specific examples.
5. What impedes gender equality in your workplace(s)?
6. Is gender equality in the workplace important? Explain why or why not.
7. Do you have any questions for me about this study or the discussion today?

Appendix C: List of Local Resources

This list was available online for free from a local Ugandan organization, The Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP) (2015). A printed copy was shared with each CSO interviewee.



REFERRAL LIST FORM

NO	INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION	TYPE OF SERVICES	PHYSICAL LOCATION	CONTACT PERSON	HOURS OF SERVICES	COST OF SERVICES	PHONE NUMBER
ORGANISATIONS/INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE MEDICAL SERVICES							
1	Mulago Hospital	PEP services for rape and defilement and other medical services	Ward 5A Annex Building, Mulago referral Hospital	Prisca Muringi	24 Hours Monday to Sunday	Free	0414533151 075553370
2 KCCA HEALTH CENTERS							
2.1	Komamboga Health Center	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement and other medical services	Kawempe division, Komamboga parish, Gayaza road, after Mpererwe trading center	Sr. Nabanja Catherine	Monday to Sunday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0794661195
2.2	Kawala Health Center	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement and other medical services	Rubaga division Kawala near Kawala police Kasubi	Sr. Nalwoga Teddy	Monday to Sunday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0794661178
2.3	Kitebi Health Center	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement and other medical services	Rubaga division, Kitebi-Wankulukuku Stadium road	Sr. Ajilong Dorothy	Monday to Sunday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0794661097 0701661040 0393110454
2.4	Kisenyi Health Center	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement and other medical services	Central division Kisenyi, next to Twahid Mosque ,Mwanga 2 road	Sr. Achan Rose Evelyn	Monday to Sunday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0794661179
2.5	Kiswa Health Center	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement	Nakawa division Kiswa ,along old	Sr. Nabukwasi Irene	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0794661136

		and other medical services	port bell road opposite shell Bugolobi					
2.6	Kisugu Health Center	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement and other medical services	Makindye division, Kisugu trading center, Namuwongo road below IHK Namuwongo branch	Sr. Molly Businge	Monday to Sunday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0794661124	
3	Kamwokya Christian caring community	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement, Medical treatment, transport to legal entities and legal service partnership with UGANET	Central division, Kamwokya Kyebando Rd Opposite the catholic church	Gertrude Atyero and Muhumuza Joseph	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm Saturday 8:30am-12:00 noon	Free For PEP and treatment at a fee	0782865286 0781556153 0414532600	
4	Reproductive Health Uganda	VCT, family planning services, referrals, counseling	Plot 2 Katago , Turfnell drive Kamwokya	Lucy Kabateembe	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Some free and subsidized price	0414540658 0700390226	
5	The AIDS control program clinic	PEP for survivors of rape and defilement	Police training school Kibuli - Near Kibuli Dipo stage	SP Mbabazi Francis	Monday to Friday 8:00am-5:00pm	Free	0772428671 0718790601	
6 POLICE SURGEONS								
6.1	Police surgeon	Medical examinations	Mulago Hospital	Dr. Sylvester Onzivua	Open all day	Free	0772414040	
6.2	Police surgeon	Medical examinations	Kibuli Police Clinic	Dr. Luke Balaba	Open all day	Free	0772562334 0711042393	
6.3	Police surgeon	Medical examinations	Nsambye Police Clinic	Dr. Nuwamanya Emmanuel	Open all day	Free	0712668823	

6.4	Police surgeon	Medical examinations	Mayfair Clinic Naljanankumbi, Nakulabye Kawenpe	Dr. Ojara Muhammed	Open all day	Service is at a fee	0772834882
OGANISATIONS/INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES							
7	FIDA Uganda	Legal Aid to women and children, counseling, mediation and referrals	Kanjokya street	Stella Biwaga	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0414530848 0772451905
8	Legal Aid Project	Legal Aid to women and children	Acacia Avenue	Aaron Besigye	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0414530532
9	Administrator General of Government	Property inheritance wrangles	Amamu House George Street	Rogers Bogere	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0712588682 0702306078
10	Muslim Center for Justice and Law	Legal services	Kusatu Bwaise round about Basement of UJMEME building	Nulu Kavuma Nakalanzi Jaffer Senganda	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	07700151957 0772616221 0414531084
11	Justice centers Uganda	Handle criminal cases Give legal Aid ARD (Alternative Dispute Resolution)	Chief magistrate Court ,Mengo 2 nd floor	Michael Karubanga	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0800100210 0751039938
12	Uganda Network on Law, Ethics and HIV/AIDS(UGANET)	Legal Aid to women, children and PLHIV	Ministers' Village, Valley Road Plot 19 From Old Kira Road Plot 194. next to Center For Justice Studies & innovations	Owornugisha Immaculate Joyce Achola	Monday to Friday 8:30am – 5:00pm	Free	0414574351 0772946360 0757665865

13 POLICE CFPU & CID							
13.1	CIID headquarters, Police Training School (PTS), Kibuli	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	PTS Kibuli	In charge Sexual Gender Desk CP Okot Florence Rose Nalubega	Open all day	Free	0711042254
13.2	Police headquarters CFPD-Naguru	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Naguru next to Ntinda Police barracks	Atulhaire Maureen (Ag. CFPD)	8:00am-5:00pm week days,	Free	0714668030 0718792417
13.3	Central Police Station – Kampala	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Buganda road opposite City square	OC CID OC CFPU SP Nandi Ketty	Open all day	Free	0714667773 0752927099 0711042338

13.4	Old Kampala Police	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Old Kampala	OC CID OC CFPU Asp	Open all day	Free	0714667785 0711042336
13.5	Wandegeya Police Station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Wandegeya trading center next to YMCA	OC CID D/ASP Uwela Esther OC CFPU ASP Stella Asio	Open all day	Free	0714667778 0711042086
13.6	Jinja Road Police station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Jinja road	OC CIID OC CFPU ASP Hallango Jessica	Open all day	Free	0714667791 0717072307 0711042335
13.7	Mulago Police station	Listening to,	Mulago next to	OC CIID D/ASP	Open all day	Free	0774056403

		Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Baylor clinic and Assessment center	Nailie Halima OC CPU CPL Kellen			0702248729
13.8	Mawanda Road Police station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Kamwokya Mawanda around Denero building	OC CIID CPL Tibaiwa Monica	Open all day	Free	0772307421
13.90	Kisugu Police station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Kisugu road near Mirembe Nursery School	OC CPU Apio Miriam	Open all day	Free	0782598989
13.91	Kitintale Police station	Listening to, Documenting and	Kitintale TC opposite Luzira	OC CIID Akankwasa	Open all day	Free	0711626937

		Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Prisons	Herbert OC CFPU Ibiara Janet			0782305379
13.92	Kawaala Police Station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Next to Kawaala health center	OC CID Maria Turnuhaise OC CFPU CPL Kiliza Agnes	Open all day	Free	0713117987 0713117985 0773112384
13.93	Katwe Police Station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Katwe next to Kibuye round about Entebbe road	OC CID ASP Aye bale OC CFPU Ndirikuwa Sarah	Open all day	Free	0714668079 0772827420 0711042330
13.94	Kabalagala Police Station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV	Kabalagala	OC CID ASP Kemigisha Nusra	Open all day	Free	0715989998

		cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.		OC CFPU Edith Komuswa			0711042332
13.95	Kawempe Police Station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Kawempe, after growers market	OC CIID ASP Deo Eboong OC CFPU Judith Kabajurizi	Open all day	Free	0714667781 0717651179
13.96	Kira Road Police Station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Kira Road	OC CIID D / ASP Kanzira George William OC CFPU IP John Mugerwa	Open all day	Free	0714667789 0711042121
13.97	Nateete Police station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV	Nateete	AIP Namale	Open all day	Free	0772385110 0759387383

		cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.						
13.98	Najjanankumbi Police Station	Listening to, Documenting and Investigating GBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable, support victims to plan for their safety, advise victims on criminal proceedings and make referrals.	Najjanankumbi	OC Station ASP Biira Nurat	Open all day	Free	0714401479	
INSTITUTIONS/ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELING								
14	Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence (RECESVID)	Counseling/ psychosocial rehabilitation and economic empowerment(soft loans to survivors of DV)	Bombo Road, opposite YMCA, Silva arcade, Basement floor, room b8	Sharon Lamwaka	Monday to Thursday 8:30am-5:00pm Friday 8:30-12:00 noon	Free	0312108608 0704335445	
15	Naguru Teenage Center	counseling for teenagers and reproductive health (ASRH), HIV testing, referrals	Kiswa, along old port bell road opposite shell Bugolobi	Martin Byamugisha	Mon-Friday 8 to 5pm Saturday 8:30am-3pm	Free	0414288304 0782573616	
16	Communication for	Counseling for	Kira road	Julius Sekinkusa	8am- 7pm	Free	0800 200 600(Toll	

	Development Uganda (CDFU)	survivors of Domestic Violence and referrals	Opp KCCA Flats before Denmark building	Owornugisha Catherine			free hot line) 031226394 0702180001 0774529374
17	Acid Survivors foundation Uganda	Psychosocial support ,financial (economic empowerment), and medical guidance(work with medical facilities to provide best treatment) to acid survivors	Namuwongo,Bukasa Road at Friends Medical Center Building	Sanyu Ritah	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0774157903 0414581088
18	The MIFUMI Project	Counseling, legal Aid, Psychosocial services	Ntinda, Martyrs drive Next to Ntinda Doctors family clinic	CharlotteAsimwe	24hrs	Free	077245422
ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE SHELTER							
19	God's Mercy Children's home	Temporary Shelter for survivors of DV	Kawempe Mbogo Kakungulu Zone, Tula/Kilokole, Road.	Hillary Basirika Kyambadde Peter	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0701303066 0772454228
20	Action Aid Women Protection Center	Legal aid, counseling, monetary support, shelter for survivors	Sir Apollo road, after Bwaise near MBI	Irene Ahimbisibwe Nulu Nabunnnya	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0706453033 0772669129

				Joyce Nabwire			0312517484
ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE EMERGENCY FUND TO THOSE IN DIRE NEED.							
21	Raising Voices	Referral for children experiencing Violence, advocacy, trainings, emergency funds	Plot 16 Tufnell Drive, Kamwokya	Tabitha Suubi Gladys Rachi	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0414531186 0752500345 0712274663
22	Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP)	Advocacy, referrals to police and other institutions, emergency funds	Plot 16 Tufnell Drive, Kamwokya	Ann Nassamula Olive Nabisubi Grace Lwanga Yvette Alal	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0414531249 0776920103 0750794211 0704628009 07533380673
23	TUSITUKIREWAMU WOMEN'S GROUP	Economic empowerment through giving life skills to survivors of DV	Bwaise off Nabweru road Kafene stage	Florence Masulia Rukia Ramathan	Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm	Free	0759958375 0752800294
TOLL FREE LINES							
No	Organization	Type of services	Hours of work	Cost of service	Toll free line		
1	Communication for Development Uganda (CDFU)	Telephone Counseling for survivors of Domestic Violence and referrals	8am - 7pm	Free	0800 200 600		
2	SAUTI	National children's helpline for reporting cases of violence against children	24 hrs	Free	116		

3	The MIFUMI Project	Counseling, legal Aid, Psychosocial services	24 hrs	Free	0800200250
4	Naguru teenage center	Counseling for teenagers and reproductive health (ASRH), referrals	8:00am-5:00pm	Free	0800112222

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