

Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP): Consistency with feminist approaches to international development and its contribution to the SDGs.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Section 1.1: Context

In 2017, Canada launched its Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), the first substantive overhaul of its aid policy in a decade, aimed at enhancing the country's reputation as a global leader in providing gender-focussed international development assistance. FIAP focused on six interconnected action areas. The 'core' area - gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls - is consistent with the fifth of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Global Affairs Canada, 2017a; United Nations, 2015). The other five areas, which complement the first, are: human dignity; growth that works for everyone; environment and climate action; inclusive governance; and peace and security (Global Affairs Canada, 2017a).

The Policy views the integration of feminism into development projects as critical to effectively addressing large-scale cross-sectional issues such as poverty, conflict and insecurity. This is not a new phenomenon in Canadian aid policies (Swiss, 2012). In fact, Canada has promoted gender equality through its development programming history and recognized the inclusion of women within this process as a prerequisite to sustainable development results since the 1970s (Tiessen, 2014; CIDA, 2010).

The Policy is similar to the 2014 Swedish feminist foreign policy integrating the concern for women and girls' rights across the government's international policies (Government Offices of Sweden, n.d.). However, FIAP's use of 'gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls' to embody the lens through which all of its international assistance endeavours will be realized, is unique. Guay (2017) refers to this 'human-rights based approach' as "more than a means to an end - it's a prerequisite for peace and prosperity" (para. 1).

Section 1.2: Research Questions and Scope of the Study

This MRP critically analyses the link between the literature on feminist international development and FIAP. The two central questions addressed are:

1. Is the FIAP consistent with the core elements of a feminist approach to development?
2. Does or can the implementation of FIAP enhance Canada's contribution to meeting the SDGs?

The first question is fundamental to this study. By comparing the FIAP to accepted understandings of feminist development, one can more adequately examine its stature as a “feminist international assistance policy”. The second question is important because Canada is a signatory to the SDGs. Virtually all the goals are linked with gender contexts and issues. Therefore, the implementation of FIAP should in principle, enhance Canada’s contribution to the SDGs. We examine whether this assertion is true.

Section 1.3: Research Methodology

Analysing FIAP’s consistency with feminist approaches to international development and its potential contribution to the SDGs requires an understanding of the concept of feminist development. The paper identifies five core elements of feminist approaches to international development and juxtaposes FIAP against them in order to ascertain mutual consistencies. The SDGs can be analysed through the same lens, allowing for a juxtaposition of the two sets of findings to deduce how the implementation of FIAP may enhance Canada’s contribution towards achieving the SDGs. The literature provides multiple perspectives based on diverse theoretical paradigms and disciplines, and interpretations of feminist values. The analysis in this MRP will be based on a literature review as well as an examination of secondary data sources.

Section 1.4: Limitations of the Research

The relatively recent introduction of FIAP means that there is limited literature on its theoretical aspects as well as its implementation. Some documents (ie. official Canadian international development policies; detailed FIAP implementation strategies) have not been made public. The MRP relies on existing academic and popular literature in conducting its analysis and offers original insights into the links between feminist principle, the SDGs and the FIAP.

Chapter Two: Feminism and Gender in International Development

The literature review undertaken in this chapter will provide the theoretical foundations for analysing FIAP from a feminist perspective. It considers the diverging perspectives regarding the definition of feminist international development, as well as the use of feminism and gender considerations within international assistance (programming).

Section 2.1: Historical Approaches to Feminism and Gender in International Development

Since the 1970s, gender, women's rights issues, and feminist thought have received increased attention in development literature (Drolet, 2010). Tong and Fernandes Botts (2018) present feminist thought as a collection of diverse yet interlocking perspectives. Common labels for these perspectives include: liberal, radical, Marxist/socialist, postcolonial, ecofeminism and postmodern, all of which can be interpreted as providing "explanations for women's oppression and... solutions for its elimination" (Tong & Fernandes Botts, 2018, p. 1). The more contemporary feminist thoughts (ie. liberal, radical, Marxist/socialist, postcolonial, ecofeminism and postmodern) can also be understood as reactionary to the traditional liberal feminism (Tong & Fernandes Botts, 2018).

The inclusion of gender, women's issues and feminist integration into international development discourses can be discussed using three successive chronological phases - Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), and Gender and Development (GAD]. These phases can be inferred as responding to critical gender-related issues in development as they emerged (Drolet, 2010; Pearson & Jackson, 1998; Chowdhry, 2003; Udayagiri, 2003; Murdock, 2003; Marchand & Parpart, 2003).

Phase I: Women in development (WID).

In her 1970 publication, Boserup (2007) questioned modernization theory and the inequitable consequences of gender marginalization in economic development. Alongside work by liberal feminists seeking greater gender equality, this can be viewed as instigating the WID phase, which aimed to have women's role in (economic) production recognized and their access to resources improved (Boserup, 2007; Chowdhry, 2003; Drolet, 2010; Pearson & Jackson, 1998). WID considered sustainable development as achievable only through the inclusion of women as active economic agents (Drolet, 2010). However, this approach has been criticized as presenting an 'add women and stir' type of essentialism, by addressing issues of oppression and gender discrimination only through the integration of women into the paradigm and programming of international developmental assistance (Pearson & Jackson, 1998). Chowdhry (2003) argues this essentialism as rooted in the intersection of the phase's liberal and colonialist foundation. The former disempowered "Third World nations in the international political economy" (p. 26), while the latter privileged Western ('developed') populations while homogenizing Third World women (Chowdhry, 2003). This simplifies the

roles and capabilities of Third World women and generalizes their individual and collective identities.

Phase II: Women and development (WAD).

WID's lack of attention to "inherent social and gender inequities" (Drolet, 2010, p. 214), inspired the WAD phase of the 1980s. It is grounded in more socialist and Marxist thoughts (Pearson & Jackson, 1998) and questions the structures of patriarchy and capitalism that effectively limit the integration of women into development (Drolet, 2010; Pearson & Jackson, 1998; Udayagiri, 2003). The Marxist and socialist foundations are centred around the belief that women's oppression emanates from "introduction of private property" (Tong & Fernandes Botts, 2018, p. 3), as it perpetuates inequality between genders and classes. Here, these structures are interpreted as constituting a patriarchal system by critical feminists, as defined by "power, dominance, hierarchy, and competition" (p. 2). As argued by Tong and Fernandes Botts (2018), the WID-paradigm requires social and cultural transformation (not just dismantling) of said structures (and patriarchal systems). The ability to incite progressive transformation will depend on the degree to which structures of patriarchy have become entrenched within society. In addition, WAD, grounded in postmodernism and poststructuralism, challenged modernization, forcing greater disciplinary focus towards the perspectives and experiences of Third World and poor women, highlighting "politics of representation and difference" (Udayagiri, 2003, p. 159).

Phase III: Gender and Development (GAD).

GAD, emerged out of and in response to both WID and WAD, recognizing the deeply rooted nature of (structural) gender inequality issues, and the burden (rather than support) of neoliberal economic policies on marginalized groups (Drolet, 2010). Aguinaga et al. (2013) interpret the feminist thought in GAD as constructivist and "rooted in socialist feminism and post-structuralist critique,... look[ing] at the whole of political, economic and social organisation of society" (p. 44). The phase arose out of concern for the uncritical and universalist use of the word 'woman' and subsequent lack of attention towards societal inequality as created and perpetuated through social structures (Murdock, 2003; Aguinaga et al., 2013). It explored the structural embeddedness of such social and gender inequalities by challenging hegemonic/normative language, and knowledge and practices, while honing-in on power dynamics and the social construction of inequality and reality (Drolet, 2010; Murdock, 2003; Marchand & Parpart, 2003). This illuminates the "categories of domination,

such as... ethnic and cultural origin,... sexual orientation and age” (Aguinaga et al., 2013) facing women, beyond the socially constructed category of gender, as dynamic and diverse. Furthermore, it recognized the “empowerment of women and gender equality” (Drolet, 2010, p. 215) as fundamental human rights, inextricably linked to the achievement of sustainable development (United Nations, n.d.b). Finally, GAD also goes beyond feminist development efforts of WID and WAD by recognizing and integrating the efforts of men who are committed to gender equality (Aguinaga, 2013).

This chronology provides an understanding of diverse feminist approaches grounded in social action and justice, gender equality, human rights, language, and challenging the androcentric structures and normative knowledge that support forms of oppression and dominance (Boserup, 2007; Drolet, 2010; Everett & Charlton, 2014; Pearson & Jackson, 1998; Kabeer, 2015; Marchand & Parpart, 2003; Momsen, 2004; Murdock, 2003). In addition, concepts such as female empowerment, deconstruction (sites of dominance and oppression) and intersectionality are essential to any conceptualization of feminist development (Biewener & Bacqué, 2015; Drolet, 2010; Pearson & Jackson, 1998; United Nations, n.d.b). Here, intersectionality is understood as “the complex and cumulative way that the effects of different forms of discrimination combine, overlap and intersect” (Merriam-Webster, 2017).

In these perspectives, women are featured as indispensable actors in enhancing the effectiveness of development interventions and feminist international development as indivisible from sustainability. For example, effective poverty reduction depends on the existence of equity between genders and economic inclusivity. Harcourt (1994) argues that the unique issues and perspectives of marginalized women were often excluded from discussions on sustainable development, yet it was these individuals that had to “bear the brunt of ... ecological and environmental crises” (p. 2).

It is important to recognize feminism and gender are two distinct concepts and disciplines. The former originated out of feminist thought and the women's movement, and its concerns extended beyond gender as the object of analysis (ie. social injustice, dimensions of inequality, marginalized and disempowered populations) (Podems, 2014). Gender, on the other hand, arose out of feminist thought but focused specifically on gender as the analytical object (Podems, 2014). However, both are framed, within ‘empowerment’ and gender equality discourse, as the starting point for improving development effectiveness (Drolet,

2010; Everett & Charlton, 2014; Jerneck, 2018; Kabeer, 2015; Momsen, 2004; and Osamor, 2018).

Everett and Charlton (2014) discuss how feminist thought has been central to navigating the interdependent consequences of globalization in a alternative framework to that of the traditional liberal approach. Momsen (2004) highlights development issues being intimately linked with those of gender, as the mainstreaming of gender equality into development interventions was believed to strengthen results. Modern feminist development has also increased focus on 'intersectionality', acknowledging the complexity of structures and sources of oppression, privilege and inequality (Drolet, 2010). Here, the concept of deconstruction can be similarly defined as encouraging the rejection and challenging of dominant, traditional structures, assumptions, and concepts that foster oppression (Pearson & Jackson, 1998).

Section 2.2: The Importance of Language

GAD with its feminist lens on international assistance, places significant importance on (inclusive) language. Discourse and choice of language (ie. avoiding binary categorization, racism, sexism, victimization and homogenization of its subjects) are presented as either fostering female empowerment, gender equality and inclusivity or, reinforcing systems of gender inequality, domination, and oppression. Understanding various forms of inequality (ie. gender, economic, and societal) as entrenched within community (as well as macro-level) structures and institutions, requires consideration of the role of power dynamics. The use of normative expressions strengthens social and gender divides and negative stereotypes, thereby minimizing space for diversity, inclusion, peace and prosperity. This is because normative forms of communication have been historically entrenched in discursive traditions of masculinity, inequality, oppression and domination (Brisolara, 2014). One must also consider the link between language, knowledge, rationality and subjectivity (all of which postmodern and poststructuralist feminist thought perceive to generate power and domination), and how it affects the formation of opinions (Brisolara, 2014). Use of normative language can, thus, act as a tool for asserting power, through the extension of dominant (hegemonic) discourse (Brisolara, 2014).

Biewener and Bacqué (2015) and Drolet (2010) note the significance of 'empowerment' note a link between 'empowerment' (and its objective of addressing underlying social and gender inequities and further human rights), and GAD's understanding

of sustainable development. This is clarified in the understanding of women's agency and empowerment as enhancing economic growth and reducing poverty (Biewener & Bacqué, 2015), which succeeded failed structural adjustment programs. Furthermore, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action portrayed women's empowerment as a prerequisite for "political, social, economic, cultural, and environmental security" (Drolet, 2010, p. 215). Women's empowerment, thus, goes beyond that of economic empowerment in "includ[ing] transformation of the power relations throughout society" (Drolet, 2010, p. 219).

Intersectionality, can be understood as the acknowledgement of oppression, privilege and inequality as highly complex systems, reinforced by equally complex structures/institutions (Drolet, 2010; Everett & Charlton, 2014; Momsen, 2004). This renders confrontation (deconstruction) a challenging task.

Section 2.3: Applications of Feminist Interpretations of International Development: Sweden and Other Donors

Sweden.

Sweden is the only country with a feminist foreign policy. Implemented in 2014, it "appl[ies] a systematic gender equality perspective throughout the whole foreign policy agenda" (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018a, p. 6). The policy aims to "change structures and enhance the visibility of women and girls as actors" (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018a, p. 11), while combatting discrimination and gender inequality in all forms. It is based on the belief that by having all foreign policy objectives focus on gender equality, wider "economic development, prosperity and security" (para. 4), will become more attainable (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018a). The feminist foreign policy is consistent with the government's national gender equality policy, embodying Sweden's historical attention to feminist concerns and gender (equality) issues (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018a).

The articulation of female empowerment, gender equality and women's rights in this policy has been formulated based on three Rs: Rights (counter violence and discrimination to ensure women and girls' full human rights), Representation (promoting women's voices throughout civil society and their participation in decision-making processes) and Resources (promoting gender-equal resource allocation) (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018a). These are supplemented by a fourth R, Reality (tailoring foreign policy activities to be context-specific and attentive to intersectionality) (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018a).

To implement this feminist foreign policy, the Swedish Foreign Affairs Handbook specifies six objectives for its 2015-2018 action plan: (i) full enjoyment of human rights; (ii) freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence; (iii) participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding; (iv) political participation and influence in all areas of society; (v) economic rights and empowerment; and (vi) sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018a). These objectives are further articulated in 'Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy: Examples from three years of implementation' (2018b). Here, highlighted efforts include: "continuous strategic analysis, alliance-building,.. advocacy... [and] systematic internal efforts characterised by leadership, ownership, governance and support" (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018b). More specifically, the country has supported the "involvement of women in peace processes in Latin America,... Asia, Africa and the Middle East[,...]... established[/]encouraged networks of women mediators" (p. 24), and contributed to the implementation of "national action plans for women, peace and security" (p. 24).

Other Donors.

Governments are increasingly adopting feminist lenses and strategies in their foreign policies. Seventy-nine countries have now, "adopted national action plans to elevate the role of women in peace and security processes" (Vogelstein and Bro 2019, para. 5). Some states (ie. the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and Finland) have created ambassador-level positions targeting global women's issues, and Australia and France have "created explicit gender equality and women's empowerment strategies to guide their foreign aid programs" (Vogelstein & Bro, 2019, para. 5).

UN Women is a prominent example of a multilateral donor using a feminist approach. Acting as a "global champion for women and girls" (UN Women, n.d.a, para. 1), UN Women aims to improve gender equality by empowering women to progress towards achieving the SDGs. Echoing the broader literature on feminist approaches to international development, UN Women (n.d.a) asserts gender inequality as having "enormous socio-economic ramifications" (para. 4). It focuses on four priority areas that ensure women (and girls): (1) lead/participate in and equally benefit from governance systems; (2) acquire income security, decent work and economic autonomy; (3) must not experience violence; (4) contribute to/have influence over creating sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from natural disaster- and conflict-prevention and humanitarian action (UN Women, n.d.a).

Implementation of Feminist Policies.

In the five years since its introduction, Sweden's feminist foreign policy has received praise, support and criticism (Vogelstein & Bro, 2019). Praise has focussed on the "wider adoption of feminist foreign-policy strategies" (Vogelstein & Bro, 2019, para. 7) and Sweden's advocacy work in multilateral fora (ie. United Nations Security Council). This has prompted more nations to utilize laws and legislation to ensure "foreign and national security policies incorporate a gender perspective" (Vogelstein & Bro, 2019, para. 8). Criticisms have focussed on the fact that the Policy was declared before being fully formulated, as well as on the hypocrisy between its implementation and "Swedish arms exports and migration policy, both of which have gendered consequences" (Irwin, 2019, para. 3).

Section 2.4: Core Elements of Feminist International Development

The academic literature and past practices suggest five core elements necessary for a feminist approach to international development. These elements are critical in answering the two research questions about consistency between the FIAP and feminist international development principles and FIAP's ability to contribute to the SDGs.

The identification of these five core elements was influenced by the work of Brisolará (2014) who outlined eight principles (see Appendix A for the full list) for feminist evaluations of international development initiatives. Some of these can be considered as core elements in that evaluation guidelines are often the 'flipside' of policy principles, as both are rooted in a "common ancestry with regard to methods" (Mathison 2014, p. 56) - both feminist social science research and feminist evaluations broadly interpret feminism and feminist lenses as "challenging gender inequality" (p. 52) and consequent forms of oppression and exploitation.

It is also worth noting Moser's (1989, 1993) work in "[d]evelop[ing] a differentiated gender planning model for development programmes and projects, which distinguished between women's practical [ie. basic services, food, etc.] and strategic needs [ie. demands for equal work or against gender violence, etc.]" (Aguinaga et al., 2013, p. 45). This model adopted by international organizations including the United Nations and the World Bank, proved to be ineffective as it acted as an instrument of "colonial transfer of a multitude of Western epistemological preconceptions" (Aguinaga et al., 2013, p. 45).

This paper identifies five core elements of feminist approaches to international development keeping in mind Brisolara's key guiding concepts, the feminist development literature, and practical applications.

Table 1: Core Elements of Feminist Approaches to International Development.

<p>Core Element (i)</p>	<p><i>Structural entrenchment and systemic nature of gender inequality - gender inequality spans multiple sectors (ie. economy, politics, culture and society) and is effectively embedded within and perpetuated by their respective institutions and/or structures.</i></p> <p>The feminist approaches to international development is grounded in recognizing and deconstructing structures and normative knowledge that support forms of oppression and dominance [Boserup (2007), Drolet (2010), Everett & Charlton (2014), Pearson & Jackson (1998), Kabeer (2015), Marchand & Parpart (2003), Momsen (2004) and Murdock (2003)]. Gender inequality is intersectional (complex) [Biewener & Bacqué (2015), Drolet (2010), Pearson & Jackson (1998) and United Nations (n.d.b)]. Not properly addressing the structural/institutional entrenchment of gender inequality, oppression, dominance, across sectors, will negate the sustainability of any program results. This element is also reflected in Brisolara's (2014) sixth and seventh guiding principles.</p>
<p>Core Element (ii)</p>	<p><i>Facilitating, fostering and upholding inclusivity - recognition and inclusion of marginalized perspectives (especially those of women), refraining from the privileging of knowledge, and the inclusion of men into feminist development efforts.</i></p> <p>The literature suggests that it is imperative to recognize women as indispensable actors in rendering development interventions effective and sustainable (Harcourt, 1994). It is critical to avoid the use of normative language in a feminist international development approach as it may bolster social and gender divides, negative stereotypes, forms of oppression/male dominance, and negate the inclusion of female voices and/or perspectives (Brisolara, 2014; Biewener & Bacqué, 2015; Drolet, 2010). It is clear that this concern underlies Brisolara's (2014) fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth guiding principles. Furthermore, a feminist international development approach must include men and boys to address the societal and institutional entrenchment of gender inequality in element (i) and reach successful and sustainable results.</p>

<p>Core Element (iii)</p>	<p><i>Acknowledge the dynamism inherent in discrimination (and thus, inequality and oppression) - understand that discrimination, oppression and gender inequality as products of diverse and intersecting circumstances, identities, and contexts.</i></p> <p>By highlighting ‘intersectionality’ as critical to a feminist approach to international development, Biewener & Bacqué (2015), Drolet (2010), Pearson & Jackson (1998), United Nations (n.d.b), Everett & Charlton (2014), and Momsen (2004) bring attention to the importance of recognizing the structures and sources of oppression, privilege, domination and inequality as highly complex. Thus, if the complex roots of gender inequality are not acknowledged or addressed, intervention outcomes will not be comprehensive, effective, or sustainable. This key element is also recognized throughout Brisolara’s (2014) sixth, seventh and eighth guiding principles, as she defines discrimination as inherently intersectional (cutting across race, class and culture), further urging close attention be paid to these synergetic linkages.</p>
<p>Core Element (iv)</p>	<p><i>Underscore the importance of empowering women, girls and marginalized people - facilitate and bolster female (and marginalized groups’) empowerment, in a way that is aware of and respects context specificity and encourages ownership.</i></p> <p>The literature presents ‘empowerment’ as a key concept and ‘buzzword’. Biewener & Bacqué (2015), Pearson & Jackson (1998), Drolet (2010) and United Nations (n.d.b) recognize its critical role in inclusive vocabulary (use of language), the GAD understanding of sustainable development (ie. women’s agency and economic empowerment reducing poverty) and fostering comprehensively secure societies. Empowerment is also discussed by Drolet (2010) and United Nations (n.d.b) as a tool for transforming the entrenched power relations within society, as well as a fundamental human right. Furthermore, the concept is highlighted as prerequisite to solving large-scale, complex development issues and producing sustainable results, especially when centred on achieving gender equality [Drolet (2010), Everett & Charlton (2014), Jerneck (2018), Kabeer (2015), Momsen (2004), and Osamor (2018)]. Brisolara’s (2014) guiding principles note the importance of empowerment specifically in reference to an evaluators’ moral and ethical responsibility to empower through engaged activism and advocacy.</p>

<p>Core Element (v)</p>	<p><i>Acknowledge the importance of language - avoid making generalizations and assumptions and pay attention to language and communication so that they do not further entrench structures of gender inequality.</i></p> <p>Both the literature review and Brisolará (2014) recognizes this is as critical. Language becomes an important concern for feminist approaches to international development when considering its ability to either perpetuate systems of gender inequality, oppression and domination or foster female empowerment and inclusivity, as well as its power in framing issues, influencing opinions (and the creation/reinforcing knowledge) and acting as a tool for asserting dominant (traditionally androcentric and discriminatory) narratives [Brisolará (2014), Drolet (2010), Biewner & Bacqué (2015), Murdock (2003), Marchand & Parpart (2003)]. Therefore, it is critical that feminist approaches to international development employ inclusive, non-discriminatory language. This concern is reflected in Brisolará's (2014) second, third, fourth and fifth guiding principles in reference to its relationship with the creation and assertion of knowledge.</p>
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Chapter Three: FIAP and the Core Elements

The five core elements selected in Chapter Two are important tools for identifying and interpreting the relationship between feminism and international assistance and are fundamental to ascertaining whether FIAP is consistent with feminist approaches to international development. Section 3.1 will discuss the treatment of gender in past Canadian aid policies; section 3.2 will provide a substantive presentation of FIAP; section 3.3 will briefly introduce the methodology of juxtaposing FIAP with the core elements; and finally, section 3.4 will present and discuss the findings of this juxtaposition.

Section 3.1: The Treatment of Gender in Past Canadian Aid Policies

Morrison (1998), Swiss (2012) and Tiessen (2014) highlight Canada's early commitment to recognizing gender equality as a cross-cutting theme and a critical element in providing effective aid. Canada's commitment to WID advocated women's integration "as equal partners of men in the development process" (Angeles, 2003, p. 287), and CIDA's "policy guidelines to integrate gender concerns into all its programs and activities" (p. 284) garnered attention from the international donor community.

During the 1980s and 1990s, CIDA focus shifted from WID to GAD as evident in the heightened focus on “gender equity and gender equality policies” (Angeles, 2003, p. 287) in the agency’s renewed gender strategy. This shift coincided with a rise in donor concerns for development sustainability, ownership, and accountability, as well as ‘gender mainstreaming’ [ie. “ensuring that gender perspectives and the goal of gender equality are central to all government and NGO activities” (Angeles, 2003, p. 284)] (Angeles, 2003).

Other GAD-related milestones for Canadian official development assistance (ODA) include: the establishment of a gender equality division in 1994; the identification of women’s human rights as central to CIDA policy in 1995; explicit recognition of a link between gender equality and poverty reduction in 1995; and the introduction of the term ‘empowerment’ in 1996 (CIDA, 1999). *Canada in the World*, the 1995 policy document, specifies the “full participation of women as equal partners in the sustainable development of their societies” (Government of Canada, 1995, p. 42) as important to Canadian ODA. Gender equality was identified by CIDA as an integral part of sustainable development, and subsequently approached as a cross-cutting programming issue (CIDA, 2010).

Canada’s prioritization of feminist and gender concerns within its ODA fluctuated with domestic political and attitudinal shifts regarding international assistance. Swiss (2012), Tiessen (2014), and Tiessen and Carrier (2015) highlight a diminution of gender equality as a concern in Canadian aid between 2006 and 2015. In fact, the term ‘gender equality’ was omitted from Canadian foreign policy in 2007 and replaced with ‘equality between women and men’, negating the feminist value of recognizing gender as non-binary. Reduced support and spending negatively affected the culture surrounding ‘gender equality’ within CIDA (Swiss, 2012; Tiessen & Carrier, 2015).

Section 3.2: FIAP

The current Liberal government has attempted to repair Canada’s international standing as a leader on gender equality and furtherance of women’s rights. Efforts include: Canada’s first gender-balanced federal cabinet; a feminist international assistance policy (FIAP); full integration of gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) into government departments; and using Canada’s G7 presidency to focus toward women and gender-equality.

FIAP embodies the synergistic relationship between feminist and gender-related concerns and international assistance by applying a lens of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls to all Canadian ODA. The Policy can also be considered a

return to the GAD principles as it focuses on “issues of structural inequalit[y] and [gender-]unequal power relations” (Brown & Swiss, 2017, p. 118), and progressive in its spotlight on “inclusivity, power, and even intersectional discrimination” (p. 118). FIAP can also be interpreted as a human-rights based approach, representing “a prerequisite for peace and prosperity” (Guay, 2017, para. 1).

FIAP focuses on six interconnected action areas, all aligned with the belief of women’s empowerment and gender equality as critical for sustainability and effectiveness. These action areas are: (1) gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; (2) human dignity; (3) growth that works for everyone; (4) environment and climate action; (5) inclusive governance; and (6) peace and security (Global Affairs Canada, 2017a). The first action area (considered the core) is consistent with Goal 5 of the SDGs (achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls) (Global Affairs Canada, 2017a; United Nations, 2015). Within this core action area, ‘empowerment’ spans “the economic, political and social” (CanWaCH, 2017, p. 1) sectors, and gender inequality is recognized as intersectional, a “targeted pillar [and] a cross-cutting theme” (p. 1). These concerns mirror broader concerns within the international donor community. For example, a 2001 United Nations report highlights the effects of “gender differences and inequalities [on] the impact of development strategies” (p. 1), which are most apparent within education, health, agriculture, water supply, poverty reduction, labour markets and structural adjustment responsiveness. UN Women (2018) also points to growing recognition of women’s economic empowerment as critical to achieving the SDGs (specifically 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 and 10).

Through FIAP, Canada aims to have its international assistance be: “1. [h]uman rights-based and inclusive[;] 2. [s]trategic and focused[;] 3. [t]ransformative and activist[;] 4. [e]vidence-based and accountable” (CanWaCH, 2017, p. 1). Emphasis is placed on “investments, partnerships and advocacy efforts” (CanWaCH, 2017, p.1), reflecting the government’s belief that they provide the “greatest potential to close gender gaps [and] eliminate barriers to gender equality” (p.1). Zuercher (2018) notes the government’s intent to direct 95% (at minimum) of bilateral “international assistance spending ... [toward] equality and empowerment[,] with another \$150 million going directly to women’s organizations” (para. 1). Additionally, FIAP aims to refocus Canadian ODA towards fragile and conflict-affected regions, for example, “Sub-Saharan Africa [will] receiv[e] at least 50% of funding” (Zuercher, 2018, para. 1).

FIAP, however, has its critiques. Given its recent release, most commentary are found in media and non-academic sources. Brown and Swiss (2017) convey a widely held concern: is FIAP all talk and no walk? Some pressing challenges are presented as: its focus on the private sector (especially regarding its role in gender equality promotion); a “lack of policy coherence for development” (Brown & Swiss, 2017, p. 117); and the lack of budgetary increase and clear scope (Brown & Swiss, 2017; Thompson & Asquith, 2018; Sinclair, 2017). Similarly, a widely shared concern for mainstreaming gender and feminist thought into contemporary development practice is the lack of adequate political will (Osamor, 2018), and negative connotations attached to ‘feminism’ (Thompson & Asquith, 2018; Sinclair, 2017). This can affect development cooperation (ie. projects with ‘feminism’ in their title could be rejected, or ignored, by investors and partners) (Thompson & Asquith, 2018; Sinclair, 2017). Such inadequacies are highlighted by Alexopolous (2017) as critical to distinguish between wordplay (which she argues FIAP represents) and intent to act.

Nacyte (2018) critiques FIAP’s lack of a definition for ‘gender’, projecting a binary (exclusionary) categorization of the sexes. One could also infer a conflict with the feminist belief that gender is socially constructed (Nacyte, 2018). Ambiguous definitions also affect the composition of intended target audience and distorts the way in which readers perceive the Policy’s scope, purpose and foundation.

Similarly, Zuercher (2018) critiques FIAP’s lack of a definition for ‘empowerment’ and its portrayal of gender equality as a means to an end. He argues FIAP, and its portrayal of women and girls’ empowerment as a shortcut to development results, to ignore the fact that “effective international development depends on thoughtful, pragmatic, content-appropriate approaches” (para. 3).

Alexopoulos (2017) infers FIAP’s lack of a clear definition for ‘feminism’ as an imposition of Western/Canadian feminist ideology and values, ignoring the lived experiences of women. She argues FIAP as pursuant to the “Liberal feminist aim of legal gender equality and normative empowerment, [focused on] gender parity in salary, political representation, and leadership roles” (Alexopolous, 2017, para. 3). The Policy, thus, “rel[ies] on [gender] essentialist constructions of men and women” (para. 9), generalizing (homogenizing) based on the ‘inherent’ biological nature of the two sexes (Oxford Reference, n.d.). Tiessen (2015) also highlights the ‘gender essentialism’ [ie. treating women “as victims of violence rather

than active agents of peace and development” (para. 1)], projected throughout Canada’s development programs in fragile and conflict-affected states.

Finally, Alexopolous (2017) critiques FIAP’s inconsistent exportation of “feminism [as] gender inequality remains the status quo within its own borders” (para. 4) and attempted “eras[ure of] Canada’s anti-feminist history and contemporary perpetuation of racism, sexism and economic exploitation” (para. 9).

Section 3.3: Consistency Between FIAP and the Core Elements: Methodology

The methodology adopted to juxtapose FIAP with these core elements was based on content analysis and consisted of the following steps:

1. The feminist language in FIAP was identified, organized, deconstructed into keywords, and interpreted.
2. This language ‘table’ was used to locate consistencies between FIAP and the five core elements. In many cases, FIAP did not explicitly define key feminist concepts, and sometimes, the lack of standardized interpretations posed difficulties for identifying direct linkages. In these cases, interpretations (of the concepts) from Chapter Two and Table 1 were applied as baseline-understandings.
3. The consequent ‘consistency’ findings were reviewed for relevance under each core element.
4. A scale was developed for ranking FIAP in terms of its consistency with each core element as either *not consistent*, *slightly consistent*, or *mostly consistent*.

Section 3.4: Consistency Between FIAP and the Core Elements

Table 2 provides a visual representation of the findings from the analysis of the consistency between FIAP and the five core elements. A detailed discussion of these findings and their significance, organized by the respective core elements, follows.

Table 2: Consistency between FIAP and the Core Elements.

Core Element	Consistency	Gaps
(i)	Mostly Consistent	No major gaps.
(ii)	Mostly Consistent	Limited direct links to the importance of including marginalized (women’s) perspectives into the development process.
(iii)	Mostly Consistent	Lack of direct linkages of consistency to action area 2 and 4.

(iv)	Mostly Consistent	No major gaps.
(v)	Slightly Consistent	References of ambiguities/generalizations; women and girls presented as 'tools' or untapped potential; lack of reference to the importance of language; and lack of clear definitions/explanations for certain feminist terms.

Core Element (i).

The first core element highlights the importance of recognizing gender inequality as structurally and systematically entrenched. This includes acknowledging the intersectional nature of gender inequality (ie. spanning economic, political, cultural, social spheres), as well as its embeddedness/perpetuation by institutions and systems of normative knowledge. In addition, Core Element (i) asserts a need for challenging (deconstructing) these existing structures/systems, especially if development programming is to produce sustainable results.

The FIAP provides ample linkages to the central focus of this core element. For example: “[w]omen and girls - whose voices and interests are too often ignored - are particularly at risk” (of violent conflict and the effects of climate change) (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p. 1); (FIAP) “recognizes that promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls require the transformation of social norms and power relations” (p. 9); and “[i]ssues surrounding governance can be complex and are deeply rooted in the society in which citizens live” (p. 49). Furthermore, the Policy’s understanding of gender inequality as structurally embedded and systemic is evident in its attention to heightened sexual violence during violent conflict (pp. 32-33); “limited access to financial services” (p. 36); and persisting issues such as “unpaid work and care” (p. 36).

FIAP recognizes the importance of challenging normative knowledge and the institutional structure that bolster systems of (gender) inequality, oppression and domination. This is evident in references in FIAP like: “[m]en and boys must also challenge the traditions and customs that support and maintain gender inequalities” (p. 10); “[u]nequal power relations and systemic discrimination, as well as harmful norms and practices, will be challenged” (p. 11); “policies, laws, procedures, norms, beliefs, practices and attitudes that support gender inequality can be difficult to challenge and change” (p. 49); “[m]any countries

fail to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based crimes effectively” (p. 50); and “[d]iscrimination against women and girls often extends beyond societal norms and practices and is enshrined in policies and laws” (p. 50). Specific references to the importance of challenging (deconstructing) institutionally and structurally entrenched gender inequality, dominance and oppression can be found in the ‘Canada will’ statements (especially in pages 52 and 59). FIAP can also be said to be in agreement with the assertion of deconstruction as being critical to the success and sustainability of development programming - “we firmly believe that women and girls have the ability to achieve real change in terms of sustainable development and peace” (p. ii); and “empowered girls and women are key to making greater gains in sustainable development” (p. 26).

Finally, FIAP is found to be consistent in recognizing gender inequality as intersectional. For example, discrimination and inequality are highlighted in the introductory message of Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau and in the section on ‘Canada’s Feminist Vision’ (pp. ii, 8), as being complex and multifaceted. Page seventeen of the Policy states that intersectional issues necessitate multifaceted solutions/approaches.

Core Element (ii).

Core Element (ii) emphasizes acknowledgement and inclusion of marginalized perspectives (especially those of women) into the development process (ie. avoid privileging knowledge) and involving men and boys in eliminating gender inequality. In FIAP, being ‘inclusive’ is broadly portrayed as part of the ultimate goal of “eradicating poverty and build(ing) a more peaceful, more inclusive and more prosperous world” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p. ii) and not as a tool for achieving it. However, while the Policy outlines ‘inclusive’ or ‘inclusion’ as meaning “all people” (p. 11), “for everyone” (p. 35), “all citizens” (p. 49), and “leaving no one behind” (p. 75), a clear gender specific definition is absent. Additionally, references like “inclusive growth” (pp. 35, 49, 67, 75) and “financial inclusion” (pp. 36, 38) represent instances where ‘inclusive’ and/or ‘inclusion’ are attached as qualifiers.

There are substantial links between FIAP’s feminist language and the other important areas of Core Element (ii) like full/meaningful/active participation, leadership, equal decision making, and women and girls as central to “sustainable development and peace” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p. ii)]. These concepts are considered critical to FIAP’s central message - increasing gender equality and empowering women and girls in recipient nations

by eliminating the barriers restricting their contribution to economic growth, promoting good governance, sustainable peacebuilding, and realizing their potential to be powerful agents of change - and its six action areas, and are consistently reiterated throughout the policy document. Supporting references for 'full/meaningful/active participation' include: "encouraging greater political participation by women and girls" (p. vii); "support[ing] greater participation of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction efforts" (p. vii); and "the full and equal participation of women as economic actors" (p. 35). Supporting references for 'leadership' include: "[women being] uniquely positioned to take on leadership roles" (p. 29); "support[ing] women's leadership and decision making in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts" (p. 45); and "help[ing to] advance women's leadership and decision making in governance" (52). Finally, supporting references for 'equal decision making' include: "increas[ing the participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups] in equal decision making" (p. vi); and "increas[ing] the participation of women and girls in equal decision making, particularly when it comes to sustainable development and peace" (p. 13).

FIAP is also consistent with Core Element (ii)'s concern for including men and boys in combating the societal and/or institutional entrenchment of gender inequality. This is highlighted throughout the section "Engaging men and boys" (p. 10), as well as on pages vi, 11, and 17. This concern is portrayed as especially important to the core action area in that the engagement of men and boys is presented as critical to eliminating deeply entrenched normative forms of gender inequality within society.

However, there is a lack of direct reference in FIAP to Core Element (ii)'s focus on 'recognizing and including marginalized (ie. women's) perspectives into the development process'. Thus, the Policy could be interpreted as mostly privileging Western and/or male-dominated knowledge. Women and girls are consistently presented as potential powerful agents of change (pp. vi, 1, 2, 29, 55, 75) and/or as the means by which sustainable and positive progress can be achieved. Nevertheless, these assertions do not explicitly suggest consulting the vulnerable and marginalized people (especially women and girls) as critical. More indirect supporting references include: governments' inclusion of gender analysis into the development process (p. 6); governance decision-making including the interests of marginalized groups (p. 52); disaggregated data as a critical tool for a feminist approach to international assistance (p. 53); and incorporating gender perspectives into development

efforts (specifically involving the Canadian Armed Forces) as beneficial (p. 60). These are considered 'indirect' due to the lack of explicit mention of consulting the perspectives of marginalized groups (ie. women and girls). However, it can be inferred as a progressive step.

Core Element (iii).

The Core Element (iii) highlights discrimination (inequality and oppression) as a dynamic phenomenon, influenced by various intersecting variables (ie. race, class, culture) and facilitated/bolstered by highly complex sources/structures.

The most direct link is evident within FIAP's depiction as "an approach based on human rights, [which] takes into account all forms of discrimination" (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p. ii). This statement is echoed in FIAP's assertions of women as especially burdened by intersectional discrimination (p. 49), that "inequalities exist along intersectional lines" (p. 8), and that it is critical to empower those who face multiple forms of discrimination (p. 2).

FIAP provides diverse examples of dynamic (intersectional) discrimination faced by women and girls. The Executive Summary includes a description of the challenges and/or barriers faced by women and girls, depicting the complexity and rootedness of (systems of) discrimination (pp. 3-6). This is further illustrated throughout action area 5, as common forms of discrimination are discussed as pervasive (and interconnected) across sectors (specifically human rights, rule of law, and political participation) (pp. 49-51). Further supporting references include: "[g]ender-based discrimination in some societies means that women and girls eat last and eat least" (p. 24); the "various forms of financial discrimination limit[ing women's] ability to take advantage of market opportunities" (p. 38); the 'side-lining' of women "in peacebuilding processes" (p. 58) alongside "weak and fragmented ... gender equality efforts in response to conflict" (p. 58); and the persistent unequal benefits of / discrimination within trade agreements (p. 69).

Further consistency is also identifiable in the Policy's acknowledgement that the complex roots of discrimination (inequality and oppression) are entrenched and institutionally embedded. In the Executive Summary, FIAP commits to providing international assistance that challenges "unequal power relations and systemic discrimination as well as harmful norms and practices" (p. 11). Such a direct link is also implicit in the Policy's objectives of "help[ing to] advance women's leadership and decision making in governance and public sector" (52); "help[ing to] strengthen legal systems and promote reforms that eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls" (p. 52); "improv[ing] access to justice for

women and girls” (p. 52); “support[ing] the protection of women’s human rights defenders” (p. 52); and “support[ing] the efforts and capacity of governments at all levels to ensure public services respond better to the needs and potential of women and girls” (p. 53). In addition, FIAP highlights “[c]onstitutional reform and post-conflict state-building [as] offer[ing] important opportunities to advance a women’s rights agenda and address historical discrimination” (p. 59).

The major gaps of consistency between FIAP and Core Element (iii) pertains to the lack of concrete linkages in action areas 2 and 4. Action area 2 (Human Dignity) depicts examples of discrimination and barriers/challenges facing women and girls in relation to health, nutrition and education without identifying specific corrective actions. Similarly, action area 4 (Environment and Climate Action) does not explicitly discuss (dynamic) discrimination. However, it does note the unique burdens and effects of climate change on women, and the need for non-discriminatory policies (pp. 43-47).

Core Element (iv).

Core Element (iv) highlights the importance of empowering women, girls and marginalized people in a way that encourages ownership and is attentive to context-specificity. Here, empowerment is understood as critical for sustainable development and inclusive discourse, as well as addressing oppressive/unequal power relations.

The most direct indication of consistency is evident within FIAP’s core action area, as it is understood to be the most effective way to achieve the Policy’s ultimate goal of a “more peaceful, more inclusive and prosperous world” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p, ii). Supporting references include: “empowering women, overseas and here at home, makes families and countries more prosperous” (p. i); “[empowering women and girls] is a powerful way to reduce poverty for everyone” (p. vi); and “we believe that empowering women and girls is the best way to achieve positive economic and social outcomes” (p.8). FIAP’s core action area also portrays women and girls’ empowerment as beneficial for everyone, further underscoring its importance. Supporting references include: combating violence against women and increasing awareness of their rights (pp. 20-21, 25); increasing the economic potential [and, thus, “broader economic growth and lasting change” (p. 35)] through schooling and access to financial resources (pp. 26-27; 35-38); and increasing climate resiliency and improving resource management (pp. 46-47). Indirect supporting references include: increasing marginalized and female representation in leadership positions regarding

climate change, peace, governance, humanitarian efforts; marginalized and female representation, perspectives, and needs in decision making and high-level forums; and bolstering women's organizations and advocacy groups. Here, empowerment is presented as either activity-prerequisites or outcomes. In addition to focusing on the importance of empowering women and girls, FIAP includes broader focus on marginalized people: "Canada's feminist international assistance will help protect and promote the human rights of all vulnerable and marginalized groups" (p. vi); "[w]omen and girls are not the only groups that face discrimination and inequality" (p. 2); and "Canada will support programs and partners that provide life skills, and ...education and training, with an emphasis on assisting women and marginalized youth find work" (p. 27).

FIAP comprehensively addresses Core Element (iv)'s concerns of context-specificity and ownership. First, commitments to deliver on the core action area (and, thus, the Policy's ultimate goal) indirectly addresses context-specificity. Supporting references include: "[w]e will make sound decisions based on evidence and closely track our progress, but in a manner adapted to the needs of different stakeholders in different contexts" (p. iii); "Canada will also develop and facilitate training and pre-deployment courses on gender equality and context-specific gender norms" (p. 59); and "...to better respond to specific country and partner contexts" (p. 70). In addition, FIAP acknowledges the need for flexible and sensitive programming in fragile and conflict-affected situations, targeting women's inclusion and empowerment, and improving gender equality (pp. vii, 3, 57, 58, 61, 67). Encouraging ownership is consistently (but indirectly) mentioned in association with sustainability, capacity building and resilience. Supporting references include: "for our actions to be sustainable, we must ensure that they contribute to building local capacity" (p. ii); "help strengthen the capacity of local and national women's groups" (p. 31); "help improve economic opportunities and the resilience of rural women" (p. 38); and Canadian support to improving the adaptability and resilience of women in the Senegalese agricultural workforce (p. 40-41).

The empowerment of women and girls (and gender equality) as prerequisite to sustainable development is evident throughout FIAP's 'Introductory Message', 'Executive Summary' and the 'International Assistance: Improving our Effectiveness' sections. Other supporting references include: "we believe that women and girls have the ability to achieve real change in terms of sustainable development and peace" (p. ii); "empowered girls and

women are key to making greater gains in sustainable development” (p. 26); “[including women in] the planning and implementation of humanitarian responses... prepare women to lead post-crisis recovery and reconstruction” (p. 29); “local women’s cooperatives and associations ... are best placed to support food security and economic sustainability at the local level” (p. 38); and “[w]omen’s participation in the peacebuilding process increases by 35% the probability that a peace agreement will last for at least 15 years” (p. 61).

Regarding Core Element (iv)’s concern of transforming entrenched power relations, FIAP explicitly acknowledges that its framework “requir[es] the transformation of social norms and power relations” (p. 9).

Core Element (v).

Core Element (v) highlights the importance of language, and the use of inclusive and non-discriminatory communication (ie. avoiding generalizations and assumptions). Importance is also placed on the power of language and (the communication of) knowledge, as it can foster empowerment and inclusivity, frame issues and influence opinions.

The reasoning behind FIAP’s *slightly consistent* grading in terms of this element refers to the fact that each identifiable consistency in the Policy is accompanied by an oppositional reference, resembling an amalgamation of “yes, but” observations. Despite this conclusion, the FIAP does employ inclusive, empowering and non-discriminatory language.

FIAP’s continuous efforts to address issues of inequality, inclusivity and discrimination are evident in its framing and discussing the provision of development assistance and action areas (ie. empowering women and girls and considering the needs and perspectives of marginalized and vulnerable groups as critical) (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. ii-11). Supporting language includes: support; participation; equal decision-making; inclusive. FIAP is also portrayed as an “approach based on human rights, one that takes into account all forms of discrimination” (p. ii), highlighting the necessity of “defend[ing] the rights of women and girls so they can participate fully in society” (p. ii). Furthermore, it recognizes inclusive transformation as attainable only when everyone is involved in activities targeting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, especially men and boys (p. 10). However, this consistency is accompanied by a significant number of ambiguous references and generalizations like “[t]his will help women and girls achieve more equitable access to and control over the resources they need to secure ongoing economic and social equality” (p. vi); “women tend to spend more of their incomes in ways

that directly benefit their children” (p. 2); and “in many developing countries” (p. 45). Successful poverty alleviation is depicted as requiring gender equality and (economically) empowered women and girls, “which will benefit families as well as the economic growth of their communities and countries” (p. ii). This framing is often accompanied by reference to women and girls as ‘tools’ and/or untapped potential (pp. 2, 29, 35, 36, 58) and painting gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment as a means to an end.

FIAP is consistent, however, in acknowledging the necessity of consulting additional sources of knowledge and expertise. This is evident in the phrases ‘support’ and ‘ensuring equal participation in decision making’. Supporting references include: “[FIAP] also means that all our implementing partners must consult with women and involve them in needs assessments, decision making and planning of initiatives” (p. ii); “[w]e will make sound decisions based on evidence and closely track our progress, but in a manner adapted to the needs of different stakeholders in different contexts” (p. iii); “provide better support for local women’s organizations and movements that [lead the way in regards to] advanc[ing] women’s rights” (p. 19); and “Canada will listen to their [(women and girls)] concerns and advocate for their safety” (p. 52).

However, FIAP lacks mention of ‘narrative’, or explicitly acknowledge the diversity of opinions regarding feminist concepts/approaches to international development. Nor does it recognize ‘feminism’ as capable of sparking contention with some of Canada’s bilateral-recipient nations. Additionally, FIAP does not explicitly recognize the importance of language or caution (in avoiding narratives capable of entrenching inequality, oppression and/or domination). Finally, FIAP does not define key feminist terms (ie. gender equality, empowerment, feminism, inclusive), which would be key for its successful implementation.

Overall, our findings are that FIAP is *mostly consistent* with four out of five of the core elements. In particular, all important areas in both Core Elements (i) and (iv) could be linked to substantial references within FIAP (thus, *mostly consistent*). The most critical concerns of Core Elements (ii) and (iii) could be linked to references within FIAP, although there are gaps (thus, *mostly consistent*). Finally, FIAP is considered *slightly consistent* with Core Element (v) as there were substantial gaps. Our conclusion is that FIAP can be considered representative of feminist approaches to international development.

Chapter Four: FIAP and the SDGs

Introduced in 2015, Agenda 2030 introduced 17 SDGs (and their 169 targets and 232 indicators), to be achieved by 2030, as a global 'plan' for a "better and more sustainable future" (United Nations, n.d.a, para. 1). This chapter addresses the second research question of this MRP: *Does or can the implementation of FIAP enhance Canada's contribution to meeting the SDGs?* Sections 5.1 and 5.2 will analyse the gender content in the SDGs within the context of the five core elements. Section 5.3 will compare these consistencies to those of Chapter Three's findings relating to FIAP. Section 5.4 will use Section 5.3's conclusions to consider FIAP's potential contribution towards achieving the SDGs.

Section 4.1: The Gender Content of the SDGs

The introduction to Agenda 2030 acknowledges the "human rights of all and [the] achieve[ment of] gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls" (United Nations, 2015, p. 1). Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are considered "integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental" (p. 1).

The most explicit source of gender content is Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls (United Nations, 2015). It is classified as "a fundamental human right [and] necessary foundation for a peaceful and prosperous and sustainable world" (United Nations, n.d.b, para. 2). In support of this is the belief that equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes, will fuel sustainable economies and benefit everyone (United Nations, n.d.b).

Rosche (2016) reiterates this emphasizing the importance of "justice and inclusion, economies that work for all, and sustaining our shared environment now and for future generations" (para. 4). Furthermore, the SDGs acknowledge "gender inequality as cause and outcome of poverty and marginalization" (Rosche, 2016, p. 113), as well as an interlinked, intersectional and cross-cutting issue, alongside women's rights (Betteridge, 2015; Abelenda, 2015). Additionally, the consultation process behind SDG 5 and other gender targets are presented as inclusive and participatory, involving women's rights and gender equality advocates/activists (Rosche, 2016; Dhar, 2018; Sen, 2019). Along with the Goal 5, this is widely considered a 'feminist' win, and an opportunity for real transformation (Abelenda, 2015; Betteridge, 2015; Dhar, 2018; Esquivel, 2016; Rosche, 2016; Sen, 2019). It is a

fundamental break from the one-size-fits all approach to gender inequality and women's rights "recogni[zing]... national context and circumstances [as] need[ing] to be understood in order to measure progress effectively" (Abelenda, 2015).

However, the SDG's treatment of feminist concerns and gender issues has its share of critiques. Kim (2017) argues Agenda 2030 to have inadequately addressed the root causes of gender inequality, and to be lacking the "culturally nuanced and contextualized approaches" (p. 239) required to do so. O'Manique and Fourie (2016) argue the SDGs to "perpetuate rather than challenge the systemic drivers of gender injustice, [and] silenc[e the] feminist critiques demand[ing] systemic transformation" (p. 121). Here, Agenda 2030 is highlighted as embodying liberal feminism principles, "offer[ing]... technocratic and cultural solutions to the crisis of social reproduction" (p. 125). In addition, Agenda 2030's "vision [is] not always met with strong enough language, clear policies or funding provisions" (Esquivel, 2016, p. 9), and that transformative action requires increased consideration for "how structural power relations are challenged or reinforced in the Agenda" (p. 9) (O'Manique & Fourie, 2016). Significant future risks for the SDGs include: "lack of concrete funding commitments" (Abelenda, 2015, para. 9); growing attention towards "the corporatization of the development agenda" (para. 11); and a lack of "measurable or time-bound" (Betteridge, 2015, para. 10) gender targets.

To analyse the feminist/gender content within the SDGs, we distinguish between the SDGs directly targeting and integrating women and girls (see Appendix B for the full lists of goals). This illustrates where feminist issues and/or gender concerns are framed as separate challenges, and where they are integrated as vital for SDG-advancement. In doing so, we analysed both Agenda 2030 (United Nations, 2015), where the targets are listed, and the Global Indicator Framework (United Nations, 2018), presenting the indicators for these targets.

As stated earlier, Goal 5 is the most explicit (and only) goal 'targeting' women and girls. For example, its targets aim to eradicate all manifestations of discrimination, violence, and harmful practices against women and girls (targets 5.1 - 5.3), and ameliorate their economic participation, leadership-representation, and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (5.4 - 5.6). Specific objectives for targets 5.a - 5.c include: protecting the economic rights of women; promoting their empowerment through enabling technology; and codifying the importance of gender equality and women and girls' empowerment. The

indicators focus on improved legal frameworks and tracking systems to ensure/support non-discrimination, gender equality, women and girls' empowerment, their rights to own and control land, and access sexual and reproductive health services/information/education (5.1.1, 5.6.2, 5.a.2, and 5.c.1). There is also a focus on identifying the proportion of women (and girls) who have: experienced sexual violence, young marriages, genital mutilation, unpaid work; (sexual/sexual health) decision making capability; rights to own/have land and technology; and/or are in (local and/or national) government roles, leadership positions and management roles (United Nations, 2018).

There is consistent recognition for feminist concerns and gender issues throughout the other SDGs suggesting a high level of 'integration'. For example, the targets for Goals 4, 9, 10, 11 and 16 highlight the importance of inclusivity in: education (4.1 - 4.3, 4.5 - 4.7); industrialization (9.2); social, political and economic lives (10.2, 10.3); transportation, urbanization and public spaces (11.2, 11.3, 11.7); and representation and decision-making (16.7). Supporting indicators highlight the importance of collecting sex-disaggregated data on levels of proficiencies, development, participation and equality in: education (4.1.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.5.1, 4.6.1, 4.7.1); poverty and discrimination levels (10.2.1, 10.3.1); access to public transportation and open space, and physical/sexual harassment levels (11.2.1, 11.7.1, 11.7.2); victims of homicide, conflict-related deaths, human trafficking, and/or sexual violence (16.1.1, 16.1.2, 16.2.2, 16.2.3); institutional positions and faith in decision making (16.7.1, 16.7.2). Goals 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 17 also portray gender equality as critical for the lives and well-being of all, with targets focusing on: poverty alleviation and access/rights to economic resources, services and property ownership/control (1.2, 1.4); agricultural productivity (2.3); maternal mortality and reproductive health (3.1, 3.7); sanitation and hygiene services (6.2); work and labour rights (8.5, 8.8); and trading systems (17.10). Supporting indicators highlight the importance of collecting disaggregated data on: poverty levels and land rights (1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.4.2); small-scale food producer-incomes (2.3.2); maternal mortality, adolescent birth rates and modern family planning (3.1.1, 3.7.1, 3.7.2); and hourly earnings, unemployment rates, occupational injuries, and labour rights (8.5.1, 8.5.2, 8.8.1, 8.8.2). In addition, targets 6.2 and 13.b highlight the obligation to recognize the needs and unique capacities of women (and girls).

Section 4.2: Juxtaposing the SDGs with the Core Elements

This section considers the consistency between the SDGs (United Nations, 2015; United Nations, 2018) and the core feminist elements outlined in Chapter 2.

The links to Core Element (i) are most recognizable in targets acknowledging the (structural/institutional) embedded and systemic nature of gender inequality within education (4.5 and 4.7), health (5.6), and economy [ie. land ownership and/or control (5.a); labour rights (8.8, 10.3)]. Inequality is also recognized as reinforced through legal systems (10.3, 16.b), policies (10.4, 16.b) and trade (17.10). The solutions are affirmed through the SDGs' mitigating actions, including: social, economic and political inclusivity (target 10.2); and non-discriminatory action, legislation, (sustainable development) policies, and trading systems, that bolster equality (10.3, 10.4, 16.b and 17.10). There are also significant links between some of the supporting indicators and Core Element (i) [ie. education parity (4.5.1), independent (sexual and reproductive health) decision making ability (5.6.1), land ownership/control rights (5.a.1 and 5.a.2), labour rights (8.8.2), discrimination (10.3.1)], as well as mitigation efforts [ie. gender equality education mainstreaming (4.7.1)].

Core Element (ii) can only be loosely linked to the SDGs. Inclusivity (acknowledging and including the perspectives of women and marginalized peoples, avoiding the privileging of knowledge) can be implied as prerequisite for SDG targets 1.b, 2.2, 4.a, 6.2, 11.2, 17.18, but is not explicitly acknowledged. Supporting references include: pro-poor, gender-/child-/persons with disabilities-sensitive strategies and facilities (1.b and 4.a), addressing the needs of women, girls, vulnerable persons, children, elderly, and persons with disabilities (2.2, 6.2 and 11.2), and collecting disaggregated data (17.18). Only indicator 11.2.1 could be directly linked to Core Element (ii) [its focus on the accessibility of transport systems for the aforementioned groups of people implies the inclusivity of perspectives (United Nations, 2015)]. Consistencies can also be identified throughout Agenda 2030's 'Preamble', 'Declaration' and 'Follow-Up and Review'. This includes a call for addressing the "needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people" (United Nations, 2015, p. 2), implying inclusive consultation. Similarly, the follow-up and review process itself, is presented as "open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people and will support reporting by all relevant stakeholders" (p. 32). Only once, on page six (United Nations, 2015) is the involvement of men and boys regarded as critical to the achievement of gender equality and the

empowerment of women and girls. Other major gaps of consistency include: lack of explicit understanding of inclusivity as the recognition/consultation of marginalized (female) perspectives; lack of links to Goal 5; and lack of substantial links to indicators.

SDG links to Core Element (iii) are generally implicit as well. An understanding of discrimination, inequality and oppression as inherently dynamic (intersectional) is implied with acknowledgements of the identities, circumstances and contexts at play for some groups experiencing inequality and discrimination (targets 1.4, 2.3, 8.8, 10.2, 11.2, and 11.7). A more direct link is identified in target 5.1's reference to "all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere" (United Nations, 2015, p. 18). Supporting indicators highlight the importance of collecting disaggregated data (2.3.2, 10.2.1, 11.2.1, and 11.7.1); and understanding (intersectional) discrimination in relation to occupational injuries (8.8.1), labour rights (8.8.2), and harassment (11.7.2). Other consistencies can be identified throughout Agenda 2030's 'Preamble', 'Declaration' and 'Follow-up and Review'. Here, SDG-acknowledgement of poverty and inequality as multidimensional, is presented as part of Agenda 2030's ultimate objective (United Nations, 2015, p. 2). The responsibility to eradicate (intersectional/dynamic) discrimination is evident throughout the 'Declaration' (United Nations, 2015). The use and collection of disaggregated data, highlighted as critical in the 'Follow-up and Review', implicitly acknowledges said dynamism (United Nations, 2015). Major gaps pertain to the fact that 'intersectional' is not included within either Agenda 2030 or the Global Indicator Framework, and a lack of supporting indicators for targets 1.4 and 5.1.

Links to Core Element (iv) mostly involve implicit examples depicting why the empowerment of women and girls is critical to sustainable development. Supporting references include: increasing (small-scale) agricultural production/incomes (target 2.3); integrating aspects of sustainable development into education (ie. gender equality) (4.7); ensuring women's rights/access/ownership of economic tools (5.a); using technology for empowerment (5.b); and improving the women's climate-resiliency (13.b). Implicit is an underlying conceptualization of empowerment (of women and girls) as necessary for sustainable development and requiring the promotion of ownership. In addition, indicator 13.b.1 focuses on how the support received by "least developed and small island developing States... for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management" (United Nations, 2018, p. 14) may target women. Another consistency points

to the importance of ensuring policy and legislation supports the empowerment of women, girls, and marginalized people (target 5.c) and “the social, economic and political inclusion of all” (United Nations, 2015, p. 21) (target 10.2). Supporting indicator 5.c.1 highlights the need for State systems “to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment” (United Nations, 2018, p.7). Empowering women and girls is consistently portrayed in Agenda 2030’s ‘Preamble’ and ‘Declaration’ (specifically on pages 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 12) as a fundamental and cross-cutting issue to the SDG framework (United Nations, 2015). This is evident in considerations of gender equality and empowerment (of women and girls) as “integrated[,] indivisible and balanc[ing] the three dimensions of sustainable development” (United Nations, 2015, p. 1). For example, empowerment is acknowledged as a human right, necessitating institutional change, and sport is portrayed as a empowerment-tool (United Nations, 2015). Major gaps pertain to the lack of acknowledgement for the need of context-specificity, and references of encouraging ownership.

SDG-consistency with Core Element (v) was more difficult to identify. While the aim of employing non-discriminatory and inclusive language is clear throughout the Agenda 2030 and the Global Indicator Framework, no representative targets or indicators stood out. Examples of consistently employed language includes: gender-sensitive (United Nations, 2015, pp. 15 and 32); inclusive (pp. 2, 3, 8, 13, 20, 29); equal/universal access (pp. 4, 6, 8, 9, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22 and 25); non-discrimination/non-discriminatory (pp. 4, 26, 27, and 29); empowerment (pp. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 18); and equitable (pp. 3, 7, 16, 17, 20, and 29). A major gap points to the lack of SDG-recognition for non-binary gender identities, disallowing space for those identified as LGBTTQQAAP (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, ally, pansexual) to be included/empowered. It also affects the ability for broader feminist concerns and gender issues to be considered.

Section 4.3: Juxtaposing FIAP with the SDGs

This MRP has so far analysed the treatment of feminist issues and gender concerns within both Canada’s FIAP and the SDGs using the lens of core elements of feminist approaches to international development. This allows for a subsequent cross-sectional examination of both sets of findings using the core elements as organizing variables. The methodology is as follows.

1. The findings from Chapter 3 and Section 4.2 were correlated to identify the consistency between FIAP and the SDGs. These allowed us to determine the potential contribution of FIAP to Agenda 2030 implementation.
2. SDGs (3, 7, 9, 12, 14, and 15) lacking links to the five core elements were omitted from this analysis. This left SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13 and 17 as areas of possible FIAP contribution.
3. A scale consisting of three ranks - *very good*, *good* and *weak* - was developed and used to measure the consistency between the SDG-targets and FIAP. *Very good* links represented explicit references in FIAP for close to all of the components in the SDG targets and possibilities for the strongest contribution; *good* links presented explicit references for half of the components; and *weak* links presented only implicit references.

Table 3 depicts the strongest and weakest areas for possible FIAP contribution towards achieving the SDGs.

Table 3: Consistency between FIAP and the SDGs.

Core Element	Consistent SDG targets and indicators	FIAP consistency
(i)	Target 4.5 (Indicator 4.5.1) Target 4.7 (Indicator 4.7.1) Target 5.6 (Indicator 5.6.1) Target 5.a (Indicators 5.a.1, 5.a.2) Target 8.8 (Indicator 8.8.2) Target 10.2 Target 10.3 (Indicator 10.3.1) Target 10.4 Target 16.b Target 17.10	Good Weak Good Good Good Good Very Good Very Good No matching areas found. Good
(ii)	Target 1.b Target 2.2 Target 4.a Target 6.2 Target 11.2 (Indicator 11.2.1) Target 17.18	Good Weak Good Weak No matching areas found. Weak
(iii)	Target 1.4 Target 2.3 (Indicator 2.3.2) Target 5.1 (Indicator 5.1.1)	Good Good Very Good

	Target 8.8 (Indicator 8.8.1) Target 10.2 (Indicator 10.2.1) Target 11.2 (Indicator 11.2.1) Target 11.7 (Indicators 11.7.1, 11.7.2)	Good Good No matching areas found. No matching areas found.
(iv)	Target 2.3 Target 4.7 Target 5.a Target 5.b Target 5.c (Indicator 5.c.1) Target 10.2 Target 13.b (Indicator 13.b.1) Target 17.18	Good Weak Good No matching areas found. Good Good Very Good Weak
(v)	Consistently employed inclusive and non-discriminatory language including gender-sensitive, inclusive, equal/universal access, non-discrimination/non-discriminatory, empowerment, and equitable.	Consistent use of similar inclusive and empowering language including support, participation, equal decision-making, and inclusive.

Very good linkages.

The linkages between FIAP and SDG targets 5.1, 10.3, 10.4 and 13.b are interpreted as *very good*.

Core Element (i).

Targets 10.3 and 10.4 [“ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and action in this regard” (United Nations, 2015, p. 21); and, “adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social production policies, and progressively achieve greater equality” (p. 21)] were explicitly represented in FIAP. Although the Policy almost exclusively focuses on women and girls in their commitment to improving equal opportunity and outcome, it also recognizes the consequential benefits for all (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. ii, vi, 8, 11, 49-50). In addition, the Policy explicitly commits to transforming policies, legal systems, institutions and structures that perpetuate (gender) inequality and discrimination (pp. vii, 49, 50, 52).

Core Element (iii).

Target 5.1 [“end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere” (United Nations, 2015, p. 18)], was also explicitly represented in FIAP. This is evident in FIAP’s core objective (gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls), consistently reiterated by the Policy and its commitments (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 8, 38, 50, 50-51, 52, 59, 67). Also, consistent, is the portrayal of discrimination (faced by all women and girls) as diverse and intersectional (pp. ii, 4-6, 24, 49-50, 50, 50-51, 59).

Core Element (iv).

Target 13.b [“promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States” (United Nations, 2015, p. 23)], presented explicit links to FIAP as well. The Policy acknowledges the unique effect of climate change on women, and their significant potential in designing and implementing efforts of climate-mitigation, resiliency, adaptation and management (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. vi, vii, 8, 36, 44, 45). Furthermore, FIAP highlights climate-smart agriculture, clean energy and equal climate financing, while presenting successful program results (pp. vii, 36, 45, 46-47).

Good linkages.

The linkages between FIAP and SDG targets 1.4, 1.b, 2.3, 4.5, 4.a, 5.6, 5.a, 5.c, 8.8, 10.2, and 17.10 are interpreted as *good*.

Core Element (i).

SDG targets with *good* linkages are: 4.5, 5.6, 5.a, 8.8, 10.2, and 17.10.

1. Representation of target 4.5 [“by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for vulnerable ... peoples” (United Nations, 2015, p. 17)] is evident in FIAP’s understanding of the persisting gender disparities in education, consequent challenges for women and girls’, and commitments to gender-responsive curricula (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 4-6, 17).
2. Representation of target 5.6 [“ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights...” (United Nations, 2015, p. 18)] is evident in FIAP’s understanding of limitations to women and girls’ (control of) sexual and reproductive health and rights (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 4-6, 32-33). FIAP commits to promoting equal human rights/access, and recognizes the wide benefits of deconstructing systemic discrimination, harmful norms and practices (pp. 4-6, 11, 32-33). However, it lacks explicit mention of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform, and ‘universal access’.

3. Representation of target 5.a [“undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property [and] financial services...” (United Nations, 2015, p. 18)] is evident in FIAP’s understanding of (and commitment to urgently address) the negative consequences of economic barriers and/or discrimination facing women and girls as hindering inclusive economies and growth (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 4-6, 11, 36, 38, 49-50).
4. Representation of target 8.8 [“protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment” (United Nations, 2015, p. 20)] is evident in FIAP’s recognition of persisting labour (gender) inequalities and discrimination, and commitment to supporting women’s improved labour rights and working conditions (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 4-6, 36, 50-51, 52). However, it lacks reference to migrant (women) workers.
5. Representation of target 10.2 [“By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status” (United Nations, 2015, p. 21)] is evident in FIAP’s objective to address the (complex) root causes of poverty and inequality (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. ii, vi, 8, 11). The Policy highlights exclusion and (dynamic) discrimination as intersectional, and acknowledges political, social and economic inclusion as important (pp. ii, vii, 11, 49, 50, 50, 52). However, women and girls’ inclusion and equal opportunity is almost exclusively focussed on.
6. Lastly, representation of target 17.10 [“promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization...” (United Nations, 2015, p. 27)] is evident in FIAP’s commitment to a gender-equal and non-discriminatory international trade agenda. However, it lacks references to it as universal, rules-based, multilateral, or under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Doha Development Agenda.

Core Element (ii).

Targets with *good* linkages are: 1.b and 4.a. Representation of target 1.b [“create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies...” (United Nations, 2015, p. 15)], in FIAP, is somewhat explicit [ie. “helping to break the cycle of poverty” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p. 75); “leav[ing] no one behind” (p. 7)]. FIAP’s core objective (poverty eradication and inclusive growth/prosperity) includes concern for the most marginalized and vulnerable (pp. ii, iii, vi, 4-6, 13, 50-51). The Policy also understands the full economic inclusion of women as requiring empowerment, capacity-building and gender equality (pp. ii, vi, 13, 35, 50-51, 67), and their political inclusion as prerequisite to equitable and non-discriminatory

policies/structures (pp. 50-51). However, it lacks explicit reference to policy frameworks at all levels. Secondly, representation of target 4.a [“Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all” (United Nations, 2015, p. 17)] is somewhat explicit throughout FIAP’s commitment to welcoming, gender-sensitive and non-violent educational facilities and programs (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p. 27). However, it does not explicitly reference child- and disability-sensitive, non-violent, safe and inclusive facilities.

Core Element (iii).

SDG Targets with *good* linkages are: 1.4, 2.3, 8.8 and 10.2.

1. Representation of target 1.4 [“ensure all..., in particular the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources,... access to basic services, [and] ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new tech and financial services, including microfinance” (United Nations, 2015, p. 15)], is evident in FIAP’s concern for the detrimental consequences of economic barriers facing women and girls, and commitment to addressing them (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 4-6, 38). FIAP also references: financial inclusion, equal access to capital markets, financial tools, business development services, technology, land, and lending to women entrepreneurs (pp. 4-6, 38). However, it lacks mention of microfinance, and focus beyond women and girls.
2. Representation of target 2.3 [“By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers...” (United Nations, 2015, p. 15)] is evident in FIAP’s understanding of detrimental barriers to agricultural productivity (and primary incomes) for women in least developed states, and example of mitigative programming (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 4-6, 40-41). However, it lacks broader recognition of small-scale food producers (including: indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers) and mitigative programming specific to them.
3. Representation for target 8.8 is evident in FIAP’s recognition of detrimental barriers to women’s economic activity (pp. 4-6), and commitment to (empowering women to take advantage of) equally accessible and inclusive economic opportunities, services, and rights (pp. 38, 50-51, 52). However, it lacks mention of migrant (women) workers and precarious employment.
4. Representation of target 10.2 is evident in FIAP’s ultimate objective (combating the complex roots poverty and inequality) (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. ii, 8), understanding of exclusion and discrimination as intersectional, and portrayal of political, social and economic inclusion as critical (pp. ii, 8, 52). However, it lacks a broader focus beyond women and girls.

Core Element (iv).

SDG targets with *good* linkages are: 2.3, 5.a, 5.c, and 10.2.

1. Target 2.3 in FIAP is manifested in an acknowledgement of the persistent barriers facing women's agricultural productivity; recognition of this as the primary source of income in least developed nations; and example of mitigative programming (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 4-6, 40-41). Also similar is the lack of broader recognition of small-scale food producers (including: indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers) and any mitigative programming specific to them.
2. Representation of target 5.a is evident in FIAP's understanding of the discrimination and/or economic barriers facing women and girls (pp. 4-6). However, FIAP lacks specific references to reforms and national laws.
3. Target 5.c ["adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels" (United Nations, 2015, p. 18)] is evident in FIAP's acknowledgement of gender inequality and discrimination as legislatively embedded and supported (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. 20-21, 50). The Policy also highlights the consequential negative effects, while committing to challenge them (as it benefits all) (pp. vii, 20-21, 50, 52). However, explicit references to 'sound policies', 'enforceable legislation', 'all levels' is lacking.
4. Finally, representation of target 10.2 mirrors that within Core Element (i) and (iii). FIAP recognizes the (complex) roots of poverty and inequality; understanding of exclusion and discrimination as intersectional and diverse; implicit portrayal of political, social and economic inclusion as critical (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, pp. ii, vi, vii, 1, 8). However, the Policy lacks a broader focus, beyond women and girls.

Overall, one can recognize the highest concentration of *good* and *very good* linkages within Core Element (i) (two *very good* and six *good*). This highlights a shared understanding of gender inequality as structurally (institutionally) entrenched, systemic, and trans-sectoral as strong. The next highest concentrations can be recognized within Core Elements (iii) and (iv) (each with one *very good* and four *good*).

Section 4.4: FIAP's Potential Contribution to Achieving the SDGs

Section 4.3 suggests that FIAP's strongest contribution can be to SDG Goal 5 ["achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" (United Nations, 2015, p. 18)], specifically targets 5.1, 5.6, 5.a and 5.c. The second strongest links pertain to Goals 4 ["ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (p. 17)] and 10 ["reduce inequality within and among countries" (p. 21)], specifically targets 4.5, 4.a, 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4. The less strong links relate to Goals 8 ["promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive

employment and decent work for all” (pp. 19-20)], 13 [“take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” (p. 23)] and 17 [“strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development” (pp. 26-27)].

FIAP accentuates SDG 5 [and its ability to “drive progress towards achieving the other [17 SDGs]” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017b, p. 7)] as the focal point for Canada’s contribution to Agenda 2030. Additionally, the central SDG-tenets (ie. poverty eradication and leaving no one behind) are portrayed as most effectively achieved through a feminist approach (p. 7).

Our preceding analysis suggests that while FIAP contribution is very strong in achieving SDG goal 5 and possibly goals 4 and 10, it is not uniform across all goals. A 2018 Voluntary National Review of Canada’s Agenda 2030 implementation provides insight into how Canada plans to advance the SDGs at home and abroad. This is framed as people-centred (to ensure policies and programming are sensitive and responsive to the intersectional and diverse realities of individuals), and well-coordinated [to “advance all three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental” (Global Affairs Canada, 2018a, p. 6)]. Furthermore, ‘leaving no one behind’ is of great importance to Canada’s domestic efforts to close the gender wage gap, and domestic and international efforts to “promot[e] human rights related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression” (p. 5).

The 2018 Review also includes a deconstruction of progress achieved, objectives and next steps for (domestic and international) Canadian efforts in regard to each SDG. Regarding the areas of potential FIAP-contribution identified in section 5.3, there is substantial discussion on targets 5.1, 5.6, 5.a, 5.c, 4.5, 4.a, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 8.8, and 13.b, while target 17.10 and indicators 5.a.1, 5.c.1, and 13.b.1 do not receive adequate attention. Associated examples of accomplishments and/or progress made include: Girl Guides of Canada empowering women and girls, and combating all forms of discrimination and violence (in support of target 5.1) (Global Affairs Canada, 2018a, p. 47); implementation of Learn Canada 2020 (in support of target 4.5) (p. 39); formation of Statistics Canada’s Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics as part of Statistics (in support of target 10.3) (p. 79); and Canadian funding to the World Bank Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) (in support of target 8.8) (p. 68).

The establishment of an SDG Unit was included in the 2018 Canadian federal budget (Budget 2018) “to ensure effective 2030 Agenda coordination across federal departments and agencies and with Canadian stakeholders, and to track Canada’s progress on the SDGs” (Global Affairs Canada, 2018a, p. 3). In addition, was the call for “the development of a national SDG strategy and indicator framework to support national SDG implementation” (Alliance 2030, 2019, para. 2). Budget 2018 bolstered “support for data strengthening, monitoring and reporting and greater coordination to ensure continued progress” (p. 7) towards SDG-advancement and directed funds specifically to Agenda 2030-implementation programs (Global Affairs Canada, 2018b).

Canadian institutions, which have launched and/or oversee specific tools for SDG-advancement include: Status of Women Canada (now the Department for Women and Gender Equality); the Department of Finance; and Global Affairs Canada. For example, the Gender Results Framework (provided through the Department for Women and Gender Equality) “represents the Government of Canada’s vision for gender equality, highlighting the key issues that matters most” (Status of Women Canada, 2019, para. 2). These issues fall within: education and skills development; economic participation and prosperity; leadership and democratic participation; gender-based violence and access to justice; poverty reduction, health and well-being; and gender equality around the world (Status of Women Canada, 2019).

Chapter Five: Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to both understand the feminist nature of FIAP and its potential ability to contribute to the advancement of the SDGs. Two research questions were analysed: *is the FIAP consistent with the core elements of a feminist approach to development?*; and *does or can the implementation of FIAP enhance Canada’s contribution to meeting the SDGs?* These questions were approached through the identification of five core elements of a feminist approach to international development, and their application to both FIAP and Agenda 2030. Sequencing the research questions in this fashion allowed for the findings produced from the first, to be applied in answering the second.

We hypothesized that (a) by comparing the policy (FIAP) to accepted understandings of feminist development, one can more adequately examine its (FIAP’s) stature as a ‘feminist

international assistance policy'; and (b) as virtually all of the SDGs are linked with the gender context, the aim of meeting these commitments are inherently linked to FIAP. We argued that (a) by juxtaposing FIAP with a list of five core elements of feminist approaches to international development, one can examine the consistency of the former as with the later; and (b) that a juxtaposition of the gender content of the FIAP and the SDGs, consistent with the core elements, will help us highlight FIAP's potential contribution to the achievement of the SDGs.

From the literature review in Chapter Two, we identified five core elements of a feminist international development policy - (i) acknowledgement of the structural entrenchment and systemic nature of gender inequality; (ii) facilitation, fostering and upholding of inclusivity; (iii) importance of recognizing discrimination (and inequality and oppression) as inherently dynamic; (iv) importance of empowering women, girls and marginalized people; and (v) the importance of language.

Our findings showed that the FIAP was *mostly consistent* with four out of the five elements. All aspects of Core Elements (i) and (iv) were present in FIAP; Elements (ii) and (iii) were substantially linked to FIAP; and element (v) had few areas as linked to FIAP. Overall, we found FIAP to be adequately representative of the evolution of feminist literature on international development.

We then examined the SDGs through the same lens of the five core elements. The findings from this analysis were then juxtaposed with the 'consistency' findings regarding FIAP to deduce how the implementation of FIAP may enhance Canada's contribution towards achieving the SDGs. We concluded the strongest areas for potential FIAP contribution pertained to (in order of most to least robust) SDGs 5, 4, 10, 8, 13 and 17 respectively. This conclusion was substantiated by the enabling environment facilitated by Government of Canada commitments, priorities and programs (both domestic and international), for Agenda 2030 implementation.

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Appendix A

Brisolara's (2014) Eight Guiding Evaluation Principles

1. Knowledge is culturally, socially and temporally contingent (ie. diverse situations, perspectives, relationships and identities) - one must avoid generalizations;
2. Knowledge is a powerful resource that serves an explicit or implicit purpose (ie. forming, sharing, accrediting and using knowledge places one in a position of power);
3. Evaluation is a political activity (ie. evaluators' personal experiences, perspectives, and characteristics come from and lead to a particular political stance);
4. Research methods, institutions and practices are social constructs (ie. products of dominant ideologies and their respective environments);
5. There are multiple ways of knowing (ie. intuition, emotions and love) and it is often privileged from those in positions of power;
6. Gender inequities are one manifestation of social injustice (ie. discrimination cuts across race, class and culture and is inextricably linked to all three);
7. Discrimination based on gender is systemic and structural (ie. fortified through social norms, which need to be disrupted to understand the relationship between power and oppression in specific contexts);
8. Action and advocacy are considered to be morally and ethically appropriate responses of an engaged feminist evaluator (pp. 23-31).

Appendix B

Distinction Between SDGs Targeting and Integrating Women and Girls

SDGs Directly Targeting Women and Girls

- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

SDGs Integrating Women and Girls

- Goal 1: End poverty in all forms everywhere.
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.