

Feminist Development Aid: Purple washing and Legal Indifference

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Abstract

Foreign policies championing feminist approaches to development cooperation have proliferated in recent years. The rise in avowedly feminist aid has occurred despite a lack of consensus around what constitutes feminist development aid, and whether such an approach is meaningful in the first place. Indeed, debates about the (im)possibility of feminist development aid – and what its priorities should be – arise frequently in the fields of feminist foreign policy and gender studies. Though such questions are widely discussed in social sciences, there exists little legal analysis of feminist development aid and of development aid in general. The legal implications of feminist development aid, and the impact of the law on its implementation, thus remain largely ignored. This gap in the literature is especially regrettable given that the rapidity with which feminist development aid has been touted and publicized has far outstripped the law's interpretation and implementation of it. This article argues that this gap in the research is clearly political and denotes a form of disdain from the Global North towards Global South populations receiving aid. In order to change this paradigm, the current dominant notion of the rule of law must be expanded on an international scale.

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