

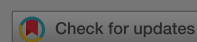
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Rationalizing 'gender-wash': empowerment, efficiency and knowledge construction

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Abstract

As support for the agenda of women's empowerment has grown, its remit has narrowed. From transforming structural inequalities, donors have increasingly focused on women's economic empowerment, and within this sphere, specific thematic areas dominate aid programming: access to finance, markets, skills training, business development services and social protection. This trajectory indicates the persistence of

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project’s methodology as objective and value-free; and apparent critical reflection on its design. It explains the persistence of the ‘efficiency approach’ to gender programming as reflecting the Bank’s conceptualization of development as a purely technocratic endeavor, and highlights how feminist advocates can advance alternatives.

Keywords: Empowerment gender policy feminist political economy World Bank efficiency competition economic development

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Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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Notes

1 Recent research highlights the significance of relational dynamics in the process of policy transfer (Bazbauers 2017), extending earlier work emphasizing the Bank’s coercive capacities (George and Sabelli 1994; Peet, Born, and Fehrer 2003).

Additional information

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