

FOR DISCUSSION – May 16, 2018

Estimating Donor Investment in Women’s Economic Empowerment

Quantitative Analysis of ODA in Support of WEE

Executive Summary

This analysis is the product of a collaboration between Oxfam Canada and the Canadian International Development Platform. The main objective of the analysis is to **estimate the level of donor investment in Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE)**. The analysis focuses first and foremost on Canada’s investment in WEE.

The lack of a clear and consistent definition of WEE that can be applied to official development assistance (ODA) data is a serious limitation which this study attempts to address. To this end, our analysis begins with the development of a methodological framework, grounded in the policy literature on WEE, which breaks down WEE into four components – 1. *economic opportunities, access and inclusion*, 2. *economic autonomy decision making and leadership*, 3. *economic rights, labour rights and institutions*, and 4. *the care economy*. Methodologically, we apply a combination of a gender marker and keyword-based approach to subset, analyze, re-code, and visualize WEE investments by donors, starting with and primarily focusing on Canada. We also update and compare our approach with other publicly available quantitative estimations of WEE (conducted by the OECD-DAC).



ESTIMATING DONOR INVESTMENT IN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

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The OECD-DAC describes donor support for WEE as a “drop in the ocean”. The DAC estimates total donor investment in WEE at approximately \$8.8 billion in 2013-14. However, only \$861 million of this investment targets WEE as the *principal objective*. ODA to WEE makes up a mere 2% of DAC ODA in the economic and productive sectors. We update the DAC’s analysis and peg the total size of the WEE landscape using the DAC’s method in 2015 at approximately \$7.2 billion, of which only \$461 million targeted WEE as the *principal objective*. In contrast to the DAC, our method applies a much more stringent criteria for inclusion as WEE. For a project to be considered WEE, it must have gender equality as a *principal objective* and contain a WEE-relevant project description. Further, while the DAC focuses only on economic and productive sector groups, our approach is applied across all DAC purpose codes. Our estimate of the total DAC investment in WEE for 2015 is \$148.3 million. In other words, in our view, donor investment in WEE is an even smaller drop in the ocean than the DAC suggests.

We find that investment in WEE is less than 0.5% of Canadian CRS-reported ODA. For 2011 to 2015, we estimate Canada’s total investment in WEE was \$85 million. Canada outperforms its DAC peers in terms of investing in WEE –outperformance that is significant using our approach (which is skewed in favor of Canada since Canadian projects were the starting point) and smaller using the DAC approach.

Of the four components of WEE, projects targeting the care economy receive by far the lowest level of attention. Projects focusing on *economic opportunities, access and inclusion* receive approximately 3.6x more attention from donors as compared projects focusing on *economic rights, labour rights and institutions*, and projects focusing on *economic autonomy decision making and leadership*. The care economy receives about half that of economic rights and institutions, and economic autonomy. This pattern holds the same for Canada as for the DAC in general.



Introduction

In June 2017, the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Marie-Claude Bibeau, unveiled Canada's new Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP). While gender equality is the main focus of the policy, women's economic empowerment (WEE) is only mentioned twice in the FIAP. In general, the FIAP offers little specific insight into how Canada may operationalize support for WEE. Further, the lack of a standard, widely-accepted definition of WEE complicates quantitative analysis of donor support to WEE.

The purpose of this report is to address shortcomings in understanding how WEE is defined, operationalized, and assessed. The objectives of this analysis are to:

1. Estimate Canada's financial disbursements to WEE (2011-2015).
2. Disaggregate WEE spending into key components of WEE investments.
3. Compare Canada's disbursements to WEE with that of other donors.
4. Describe the overall landscape of WEE.
5. Identify major gaps in WEE investments and research.

Literature Review and Methodology

Definitions and Frameworks of Women's Economic Empowerment

Multiple definitions of WEE exist with varying degrees of specificity. Multiple institutions have frameworks that guide the implementation and measurement of WEE. The literature review compared definitions and frameworks of WEE from Oxfam, the GrOW program of the International Development Research Centre, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the OECD DAC Gender Network, Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), the current Growth that Works for Everyone Policy Action Area Policy, GAC Women's Economic Empowerment Guidance Note, the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel (HLP) on Women's Economic Empowerment, and the links between the SDG targets and WEE as expressed by the OECD.

In many definitions, including these, the concept of unpaid care work is necessarily tied to WEE. Gender inequality in unpaid care work is described by the OECD as the missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour force participation, wages, and job quality. Women continue to make up the largest share of unpaid family workers leaving women disproportionately vulnerable to poverty and rendering their economic contributions invisible.¹

OECD-DAC Analysis of Women's Economic Empowerment

The OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) and the DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics (WP-STAT) conducted a quantitative analysis of ODA in support of WEE.² Their main finding was that donor support for WEE was "a drop in the ocean". We update this analysis with more recent data and provide a comparison.

The study pegged ODA commitments to WEE at USD 8.8 billion in 2013-14, up from USD 5.2 billion in 2007-08. Of aid to economic and productive sectors, 24% targeted gender equality as either a primary



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or secondary objective in 2013-14. However, only 2% was committed to projects that targeted WEE as the *principal objective*. This level, according to the study, falls far short of required WEE investments implied by the SDGs and other international commitments such as the "25 by 25" initiative adopted by the G20 in 2014 - a commitment to reduce the gender gap in labour force participation in G20 countries by 25% by 2025.³

Methodology⁴

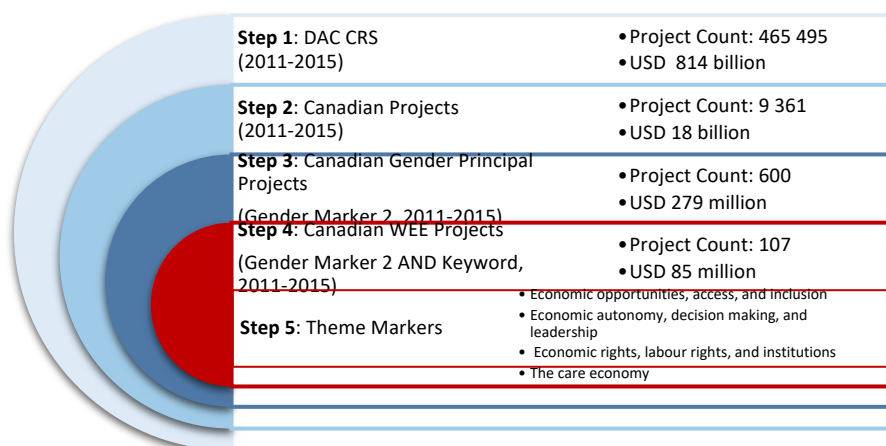
For the purposes of this analysis we define women's economic empowerment as comprising four themes:

1. **Economic opportunities, access and inclusion,**
2. **Economic autonomy, decision making and leadership**
3. **Economic rights, labour rights, and institutions,** and
4. **The care economy.**

These themes encompass the definitions and frameworks outlined in the materials described in the literature review. Each theme consists of a grouping of WEE keywords. A description of the themes and keywords is available in Annex 1. While it is recognized that a number of factors, such as: education, reproductive health and rights, and the elimination of gender-based violence all contribute to WEE, stand-alone projects in these areas were excluded, unless explicitly framed as economic or productive initiatives.

The main data source used in this analysis is the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS). The data covers the period from 2011 to 2015. Only projects that target gender equality as a policy objective and screened by donors as "2" (gender principal) using the OECD DAC gender marker have been included.

Starting from a database of all DAC projects from 2011 to 2015, the methodology narrowed the data to only Canadian projects. It then captured projects where gender equality was the *principal objective* of the project (marked "2") and applied WEE keywords to this subset. Finally, subsets of WEE projects based on the four WEE themes were created.⁵

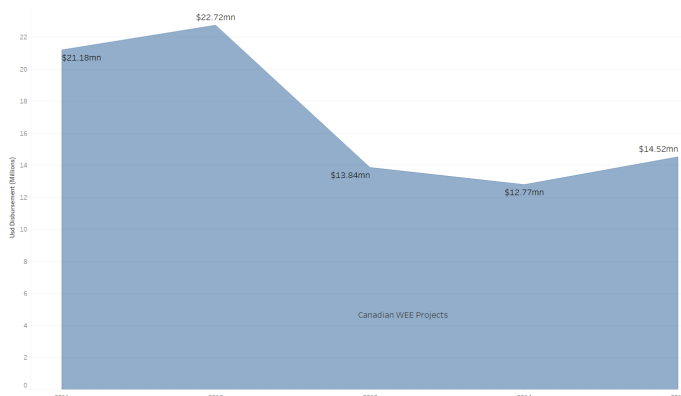




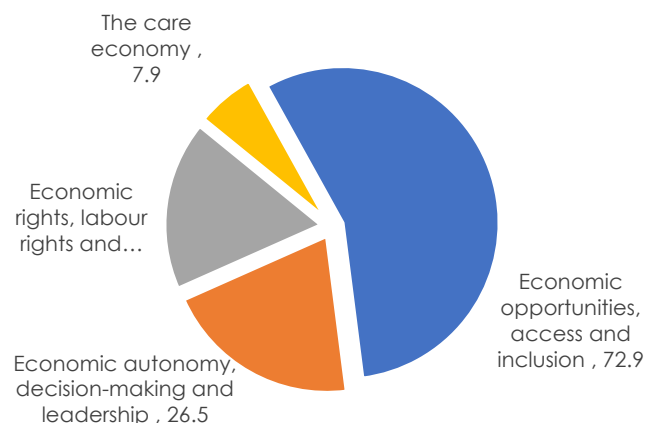
Summary of key findings from the quantitative analysis

- We estimate **Canada's total investment in WEE (2011-2015), employing our gender marker and keyword approach, to be approximately \$85 million.**
- WEE investment by Canada is approximately 30% of Canada's disbursements to projects having gender equality as the *principal objective*.
- However, **investment in WEE is less than 0.5% of Canadian CRS-reported ODA.**
- On an annual basis, Canada's WEE investments only range between \$12 million and \$22 million.
- Of the 4 WEE themes, the ***economic opportunities, access and inclusion* theme receives by far the greatest attention** as a component of WEE, followed by *economic rights, labour rights, and institutions; economic autonomy, decision-making and leadership*; and lastly the *care economy*. This pattern is the same for Canada as across DAC reporters.
- **The care economy receives very little investment from all donors and only around \$8 million over 5 years** in the case of Canada.
- Using the **OECD-DAC's approach**, we estimate the **total size of the WEE landscape at approximately \$461 million** for 2015. Conversely, using our **keyword approach**, we estimate the **total size of the WEE landscape to be approximately \$148 million** for 2015.⁶
- Canada makes up between 9.7% and 13% of the WEE landscape using our keyword approach, and about 2.4% to 5% of the WEE landscape using the DAC's method. Using either method, **Canada seems to outperform when it comes to WEE relative to its share of overall ODA and gender-specific ODA.**
- **Using the DAC approach, Canada ranks 11th among DAC WEE donors.**⁷ The largest WEE donors are: the US, UK, EU, Australia, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

Canadian annual WEE project disbursements, 2011-2015⁸



Thematic distribution of WEE investments among DAC donors (USD Millions), 2011-2015⁹





Annex 1: WEE themes, descriptions and corresponding keywords

<p>Economic opportunities, access, and inclusion</p>	<p>Women have the capital, assets, and skills needed to participate in the economy through employment, market access and business (enterprise) development opportunities. For example, women workers and entrepreneurs receive technical and vocational training and have access to digital resources, capital, and credit.</p>	<p>Economic opportun (ity) (ities) Capital Asset Employ Market access Business development Enterprise Worker Entrepreneur Technical training Vocational training Digital Credit</p>
<p>Economic autonomy, decision-making and leadership</p>	<p>Women have the autonomy to overcome cultural norms in order to take on leadership roles, make decisions, control their economic and capital assets, negotiate for fair returns, and make changes to their own economic wellbeing.</p>	<p>Autonomy Norm Leadership role Decision mak (er) (ing) Control Negotiate Fair return</p>
<p>Economic rights, labour rights, and institutions</p>	<p>Institutions promote women's rights to own or inherit land and property. Also, institutions provide decent and secure working conditions for women. Women benefit from the rights and the institutional support to participate in economic activities without being subject to discrimination or job insecurity arising from precarious work, often in the informal economy.</p>	<p>Inherit Property right Land right Secure Working condition Economic right Labour right Discrimination Wage Secure Precarious Formal</p>
<p>The care economy</p>	<p>Women's unpaid domestic care and work is recognized and valued. This requires that household responsibilities, such as childcare and general caregiving are redistributed among women and men, governments, the private sector, communities, and households. Improvements in gender-responsive infrastructure (roads, sanitation, water, and electricity) reduces the time needed to complete household tasks. As a result, women in the care economy are less vulnerable to poverty.</p>	<p>Domestic care Domestic work Unpaid Household respons (ability) (abilities) Childcare Caregiv (er) (ing) Redistribut (e) (ing) (ed) Vulnerable</p>

ENDNOTES

¹ See: International Labour Organization, 2016. Women at Work: Trends 2016

http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS_457317/lang--en/index.htm.

² For an overview see: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/tracking-money-for-womens-economic-empowerment.htm>

³ See: OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, 2016. Tracking the money for women's economic empowerment: still a drop in the ocean. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Tracking-the-money-for-womens-economic-empowerment.pdf> and OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, 2011. Aid in Support of Women's Economic Empowerment. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/46877843.pdf>.

⁴ There are limitations to the methodology. Those limitations include: 1. The reporting language of the Long Descriptions in DAC CRS projects is not standardized, 2. There is inconsistency in the length and specificity of long descriptions, 3. Donors apply gender markers differently within the DAC data. This includes inconsistency among countries on the extent to which they decide to screen projects and potential lack of consistency among donors on how they decide to apply the gender equality policy marker.

⁵ One project can belong to more than one WEE theme. This non-exclusivity is defensible as large projects (such as Canada's efforts in Pakistan) cover a range of WEE themes.

⁶ These are totals derived from projects for which gender equality was the *principal objective*.

⁷ Using our keyword method Canada ranks 3rd, however our method has limitations when it comes to comparisons across the DAC and the DAC's approach likely provides a fairer relative reference.

⁸ Examples of projects include:

- Stimulating Sustainable Economic Growth Through Women's Participation in the Economy, Bolivia, \$8.3 Million USD over 2011-2015. Donors: Canada and Netherlands.
- Assisting UN Women Economic Rights programmes in Palestine. \$626,000 over 5 years. Implementing Agency: UN Women. Donor: Canada.
- Afghan Women's Community Support, \$2.6 Million over 2011-2012. Implementing agency: War Child Canada. Donor: Canada.

⁹ The geographic distribution of Canadian WEE investments of the top 5 recipients for 2011-2015 are: Pakistan 26.80M, Bolivia 8.42M, Middle East regional 5.68M, Afghanistan 5.5M and Philippines 3.96M.