

# FEMINIST FOREIGN AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

## Opportunities and Challenges from a Global South Perspective



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November 2025

Suggested citation: Eknor Ackzell, A. 2025. *Feminist Foreign and Development Policies: Opportunities and Challenges from a Global South Perspective*. Geneva: UNRISD.

## **Abstract**

This paper examines how Feminist Foreign and Development Policies (FFDPs) have emerged as both a site of transformation and contention within global governance. It traces the articulation of feminist principles that emphasize equality, inclusion and the redistribution of power within foreign policy and development cooperation, and analyses how these approaches are adapted, contested and advanced across the global South. While FFDPs were initially adopted in the global North as efforts to embed gender justice within diplomacy and aid, their diffusion has intersected with diverse political, cultural and economic realities that have shaped their uptake and meaning. The paper explores how FFDPs influence debates on peace, security, trade and financing for development, while highlighting tensions related to policy coherence, donor and recipient hierarchies, and limited funding for grassroots and women's movements. Situated within a global context of democratic backsliding and escalating anti-gender mobilization, the analysis underscores both the transformative potential and the structural constraints of FFDPs. It concludes that realizing the feminist promise of these policies requires meaningful collaboration with feminist actors and women's movements in the global South, equitable and sustained resourcing, and a commitment to decolonizing global policy processes.

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## Acronyms

AWID	Association of Women's Rights in Development
AfIP	African Feminist Collective on Feminist Foreign Policy
APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FEMNET	African Women's Development and Communications Network
FFDP	Feminist Foreign and Development Policy
FFP	Feminist Foreign Policy
FIAP	Feminist International Assistance Policy
GBV	Gender Based Violence
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PEFAL	Política Exterior Feminista en América Latina (FFP in Latin America)
PoC	Province of China
PRIF	Peace Research Institute Frankfurt
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
SRE	Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (Secretariat of Foreign Relations)
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## 1 Introduction

Thirty years after the landmark Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995, gender equality remains a central yet contested goal in global policy. There have been undeniable advances—from the proliferation of national gender strategies to adoption of progressive laws and regulation—yet progress is uneven and fragile. In recent years, a new approach has emerged in some countries' external relations: Feminist Foreign and Development Policies (FFDPs). This approach explicitly prioritizes gender equality and the rights of women and marginalized groups in foreign policy and development agendas. Early adopters of FFDPs sought to transform foreign policy by applying an intersectional gender lens to issues of peace, security, aid, trade, and human rights. However, the rise of FFDPs has coincided with a growing backlash against gender equality in many parts of the world, as anti-feminist and ultra-conservative forces push back on hard-won feminist and democratic gains (McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023; UNRISD and UN Women 2025). This report provides a comprehensive overview of the origins and objectives of FFDP, examines its impact across different regions, and assesses how feminist movements in the global South perceive and are affected by these policies. In doing so, it highlights both the opportunities created by FFDPs and the significant challenges that must be navigated to realize its transformative vision.

While feminist foreign policy (FFP) is the more widely used term, it typically refers primarily to the external dimensions of diplomacy, security and international relations. By contrast, feminist foreign and development policy (FFDP) explicitly integrates both foreign policy and development cooperation, recognizing that aid, trade, and development financing are equally critical arenas where gender justice must be advanced. The inclusion of development is especially important from a global South perspective, as development cooperation through funding and support has the potential to shape everyday realities for women and feminist movements. Without linking feminist commitments to financing, and funding local feminist and women's movements in the global South, policies risk becoming symbolic and without transformative potential (Michalko 2023). The choice to use the term FFDP over FFP, when suitable, in this paper thus reflects a commitment to a more holistic, comprehensive framework that links external relations with structural issues such as financing for women's movements. It also resonates with UNRISD's mandate to bridge research and policy across social development, ensuring that feminist principles are embedded not only in diplomatic strategies but also in the design and delivery of development cooperation.

In this paper, *feminist commitments* refer to policy approaches that go beyond promoting gender equality or women's empowerment in a narrow sense. While gender equality commitments often aim to improve women's participation or access within existing systems, feminist commitments are explicitly transformative: they seek to challenge and change the underlying power relations, norms, and structures (patriarchal, colonial, racial, and economic) that produce inequality in the first place. In other words, feminist commitments address not only outcomes for women but also the systems of power that shape those outcomes. It is furthermore important to acknowledge that the pursuit of feminist objectives in foreign and development policies does not depend on the formal adoption of a "feminist" label. Many governments advance gender-

responsive and equity-oriented approaches that align with the principles of FFDP without explicitly naming them as such. What matters in the end is not the terminology but the substance, as policies that redistribute power and resources, promote inclusion, and address structural inequalities can advance feminist goals even in the absence of the FFDP designation. This appears to be especially relevant in great parts of the Asian and African regions, and to a lesser degree in Latin America and the Caribbean, where the feminist label is often considered too controversial or Western. While keeping its focus on FFDPs, this report will therefore also include some discussions on foreign and development policies that align with FFDPs in their commitment to promoting gender equality and women's rights, but without the label.

The pace and pattern of interest for, adoption of and indeed abandonment of FFDPs have varied significantly across regions and political contexts. Evidence suggests that adoption has often been driven by progressive governmental leadership and active feminist movements, whereas abandonment tends to coincide with political turnover and changes in government, nationalist retrenchment, or contestation over the meaning and scope of feminist policy (further discussed in sections 4 and 5).

Picking up after this the first introductory section, this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides a global overview of the origins, objectives and spread of FFDPs. Section 3 situates FFDPs in a global context marked by backlash against gender justice and democracy, positioning FFDPs as potential countermeasures to regressive pushback. Section 4 offers a regional overview of FFDP-related developments and perspectives from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Section 5 draws out cross-regional insights, identifying key challenges, opportunities, and tensions across contexts. Section 6 provides recommendations and reflections on lessons learned, exploring potential pathways forward for harnessing the transformative potential of FFDPs. The paper concludes with a discussion on areas for further research in section 7.

## **2 Feminist Foreign and Development Policies**

### **2.1 Origins and objectives**

FFDPs can be understood as “the policy of a state that defines its interactions with other states, as well as movements and other non-state actors, in a manner that prioritizes peace, gender equality and environmental integrity; enshrines, promotes, and protects the human rights of all; seeks to disrupt colonial, racist, patriarchal and male-dominated power structures; and allocates significant resources, including research, to achieve that vision. Feminist foreign policy is coherent in its approach across all of its levers of influence, anchored by the exercise of those values at home and co-created with feminist activists, groups and movements, at home and abroad” (Thompson et al. 2020). In this way, the aim of FFDPs is to rethink power dynamics in diplomacy and aid: shift away from militarized security toward human security, promote inclusive development, and amplify the voices of those historically marginalized in international policy making (women, LGBTQIA+ communities, racial and ethnic minorities, persons with

disabilities, migrants, etc.). It also means ensuring policy and normative coherence—for example, not championing women’s rights abroad while undermining them at home—and being accountable to the constituencies these policies claim to help. Importantly, FFDPs goes beyond earlier gender initiatives like the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda (Papworth 2024). Whereas WPS focuses mainly on women’s roles in conflict and peace processes, FFDP takes a broader grip: it endeavours to apply a gender lens to *all* aspects of foreign policy (trade, aid, climate, migration, peace and security, global health, etc.) and explicitly calls for transforming the structures of inequality rather than only increasing women’s participation in existing frameworks.

The concept of a feminist foreign policy was first introduced by Sweden in 2014, marking a bold departure from traditional diplomacy (Michalko 2023). Sweden’s then-Foreign Minister Margot Wallström argued that sustainable peace and development could not be achieved if half the world’s population—women and girls—were excluded from decision making and their rights ignored (WIIS 2021). Sweden’s Feminist Foreign Policy was underpinned by the “3 Rs”: promoting women’s *Rights*, increasing women’s *Representation* in all areas of foreign policy, and allocating *Resources* to advance gender equality (Government of Sweden 2018). This framework treated gender equality not as a secondary concern but as “an agenda for change” to disrupt the systemic discrimination that women and girls face worldwide (Government of Sweden 2018). In practice, this meant Sweden’s diplomatic efforts, development cooperation, and even security policy were aimed to be reoriented to support women’s rights and participation (Aggestam and Bergman Rosamond 2016). For example, Swedish aid funding was redirected toward gender equality initiatives, and Swedish diplomats advocated globally for sexual and reproductive health and rights (a closer look at the Swedish example and its inconsistencies will be provided in section 5). The Swedish experiment provided a proof of concept that encouraged others to follow suit.

## 2.2 FFDP uptake, interest and reversals

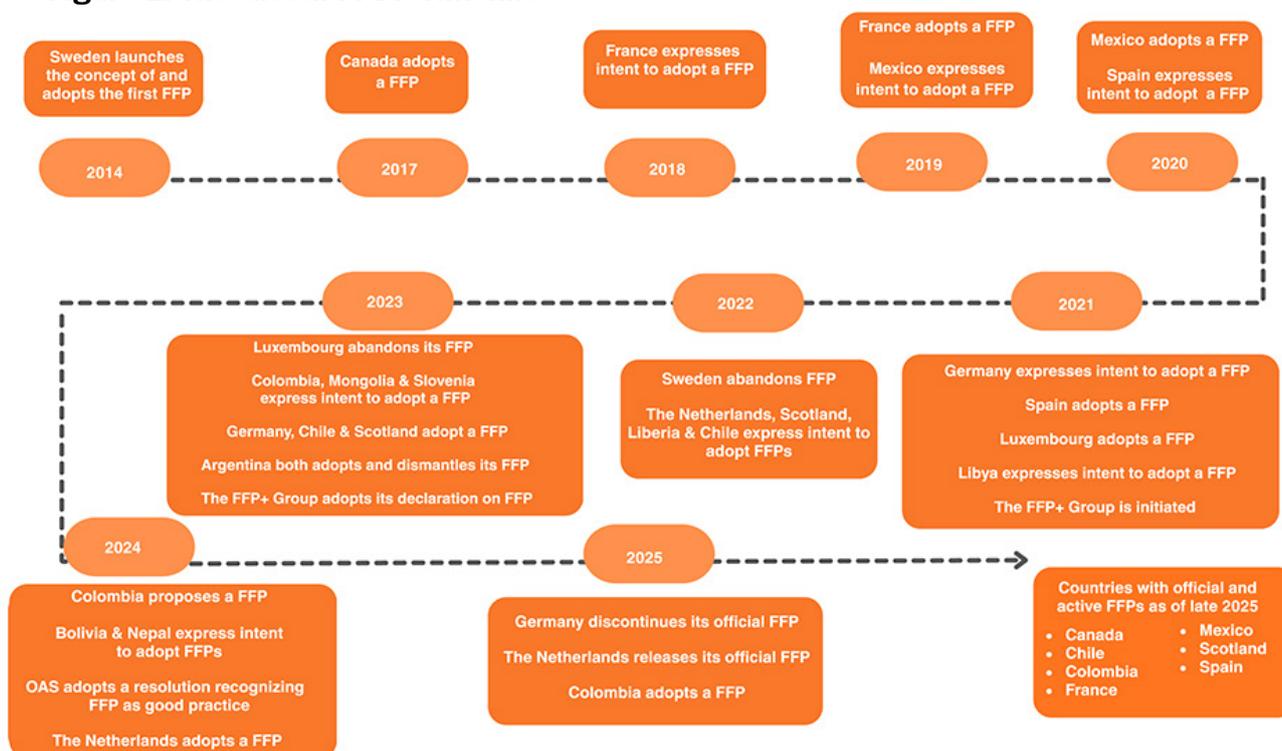
Between 2014 and 2025, many countries have adopted, declared their intention to adopt, and indeed abandoned their FFDP, as highlighted in Figure 1 (Gender Security Project n.d.a).

Adoption primarily spread in the global North (with early adopters being Canada, France and Spain), with Mexico standing out as the first Latin American and global South nation to declare a Feminist Foreign Policy, demonstrating that this was not solely a Western or European concept (FFP Collaborative 2023). Between the years of 2021 and 2025, many countries in the global South declared their intention to adopt and/or adopted a FFDP, including Argentina, Colombia, Mongolia, Libya, Liberia, Chile, Bolivia and Nepal, spanning the regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In addition, many global North countries did the same, including Germany, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Scotland and Slovenia. Notably, as of late 2025, Sweden, The Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg and Argentina have abandoned their FFDP (Gender Security Project n.d.a).

Each country’s FFDP varies in aim and content, being tailored to national contexts, but also typically share common objectives: to centre foreign and aid decisions on the interests of women and marginalized groups, to champion human rights and gender justice internationally, and to model gender equality within diplomatic institutions themselves.

A growing number of other governments have expressed interest or taken steps to integrate a feminist approach without explicitly using the label. For instance, Norway has long had an action plan on women’s rights and gender equality in development cooperation and remains a top donor for gender programming, even though it has not labelled its foreign policy “feminist” (UN Women 2022a). Similarly, Australia, while not formally declaring FFDPs, has emphasized its gender strategy for their peace and security and foreign policy. These examples underscore that many countries support the aims of FFDP, such as women’s empowerment and conflict prevention through inclusion, even if political or cultural factors deter them from adopting the “feminist” label. In some cases, governments opt for terms like “gender equality in foreign policy” to avoid domestic backlash against the word “feminist,” reflecting cultural sensitivities. This is also connected to, but not limited to, the fact that in some places there remains a perception that the promotion of gender equality and feminist goals is about exporting Western agendas to the global majority world in a neocolonial fashion (Achilleos-Sarll 2018). Nonetheless, the influence of the FFDP framework is visible in a widening range of states and international forums, such as the Organization of American States (OAS).

**Figure 1. The Global FFDP Timeline**



Source: Gender Security Project n.d.a

By late 2025, 14 countries have adopted or expressed their intention to adopt FFDPs, spanning Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa and Asia. This rapid spread demonstrates the growing resonance of feminist approaches in global politics. On the other hand, the abandonment of FFDPs by Sweden, the Netherlands, Argentina, Luxembourg and Germany highlight that FFDPs are vulnerable to the fluctuations of national politics and changes in governments, as well as being susceptible to the challenging global context, where gender justice policy is increasingly being subject to attempts of erosion (UNRISD and UN Women 2025).

Early evidence suggests that FFDPs can lead to tangible changes: increased funding for girls' education and sexual health, more women mediators in peace talks, greater support for women's rights organizations, and foreign ministries that better reflect gender parity. However, implementation across countries has been uneven, and measuring impact remains a challenge. The next sections explore how these ideas have been embraced and contested, and how global trends are influencing the trajectory of FFDPs.

### **3 The Global Context: Momentum amid Backlash and Contestation**

The rise of FFDPs has unfolded in a period of both accelerating progress and intensifying backlash for gender justice and democracy worldwide. On one hand, the momentum behind FFDP reflects broader gains for women's rights: many countries are adopting laws against gender-based violence, feminist movements are increasingly visible and interconnected, and international institutions like the UN are urging gender-responsive approaches to conflict, development, and climate action (UN Women 2023). Moreover, new alliances such as the FFP+ Group (initiated in 2021) with countries from both the global North and the global South, as outlined further in Box 1, are bringing together states supportive of feminist approaches in international arenas, to promote feminist principles in multilateral fora such as the United Nations and beyond (Papworth 2024). This demonstrates an increasing geographic diversity in the feminist policy cohort, with global South voices starting to take a more prominent role. Many of these states are sharing experiences and best practices, for example through forums that link European and Latin American policy makers and through platforms like *Política Exterior Feminista en América Latina (PEFAL)*, which encourages knowledge exchange in Spanish on feminist foreign policy models (Papworth 2024). Such developments indicate that the concept of FFDP is evolving through a more inclusive global dialogue than in its initial Eurocentric incarnation.

On the other hand, the expansion of feminist policies has been met by a powerful backlash from anti-feminist and anti-democratic forces that has grown in parallel around the world (Khan et al. 2023). We are witnessing a growing opposition to gender justice and democratic values worldwide. Central in this context are the transnational anti-gender movements, that make up a coordinated and systemic movement that is not confined to any single region or policy area. The backlash against gender justice is not only against women's and LGBTQIA+ rights, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), but also against broader agendas of social justice, climate action and human rights (UNRISD and UN Women 2023, McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023).

Anti-gender movements are fuelled by transnational funding networks, with funds that far exceed the financing of progressive movements. A comprehensive funding overview is not publicly available at this time and the upcoming data examined in this paragraph are drawn from different studies with varying scopes and timeframes. Nevertheless, they collectively illustrate a concerning trend: the well-resourced growth of anti-gender movements. Between 2013 and 2017, global funding for anti-gender movements was estimated to reach USD 3.7 billion, which is

more than triple the estimated USD 1.2 billion directed towards LGBTQI+ movements over the same period (GPP 2020). The funding is mainly sourced from conservative religious institutions, far-right political actors and parties, philanthropic foundations, CSO's, and high-net-worth individuals (Datta 2021, Khan et al. 2023). The bulk of these funds origin from Russia, Europe and the US. One study by the European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights published in 2021 shows that between 2009 and 2018, a group of 54 organizations based mainly in Russia, Europe and the US funded anti-gender movements with more than USD 700 million (Datta 2021). This study was followed up in 2025 and found that the anti-gender funding in Europe more than doubled (per year) from 2018 to 2022, reaching USD 1.18 billion in this five-year period (Datta 2025). It is important to note that these funds are only the funds that have been identified so far.

This backlash is not only a cultural contestation but is also politically motivated and supported as it goes hand in hand with broader authoritarian and populist agendas. Patriarchal gender norms are being weaponized to fuel anti-democratic movements, with attacks on women's rights often serving as a gateway to roll back state influence and undermine minority rights, civil liberties, and pluralism more generally (Datta 2021, Khan et al. 2023). For countries championing FFDP, this global context poses a serious challenge of needing to contend with active resistance from powerful anti-rights lobbies domestically and in international fora, including the UN.

Backlash is also visible in multilateral institutions and conflict settings where feminist peace and security efforts face resistance. At the UN, some states have blocked or watered down language on gender equality in resolutions, undermining the WPS agenda. In peace processes, women's participation is often resisted—whether through outright exclusion or tokenistic inclusion that maintains patriarchal power. A report by the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) shows that such backlash arises within policy making spaces themselves, as actors inside governments and international organizations quietly resist or undermine commitments. This highlights that adopting feminist policies on paper is only a first step to realizing them; entrenched attitudes continue to obstruct implementation unless directly addressed (PRIF 2023).

Feminist policy advocates warn against yielding to anti-gender forces, urging progressive donors and philanthropies to scale up support for women's rights groups on the frontlines. The Global Philanthropy Project (2020) called this a “meet the moment” response, noting that conservative actors vastly outspend feminist initiatives. This resource imbalance threatens both sustainability and activist safety. Countries with FFDPs, by their commitments, are expected to show solidarity by providing flexible funding, a safe haven for threatened activists, and diplomatic pressure against crackdowns. Consistency in these actions is a key test of FFDP authenticity, rigor and potential to make real change.

Whether progress now outweighs regression on a global level is unclear: aggregate gains persist, yet sharp, localized setbacks and the rising costs of defending them blur the overall balance. After Beijing 1995, a norm cascade accelerated change: CEDAW uptake deepened, the WPS agenda created entry points, the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) consolidated commitments, donors and philanthropies expanded gender programming, women's representation grew, and transnational networks professionalized

advocacy and data while digital mobilizations (such as Gender Based Violence (GBV)/SRHR campaigns) lowered coordination costs and raised salience. Since roughly 2015, however, reinforcing shocks such as authoritarian/populist politics using “gender ideology” as a wedge, crisis stacking (austerity, pandemic, wars, climate shocks) that causes states to re-prioritize “hard security,” algorithmic amplification of outrage, and shrinking civic space, have made backlash appear ascendant. Whether regression outpaces progress is context-specific: key advancements such as progressive legal reforms, girls’ education, women’s political presence, and gender-responsive budgeting continue. At the same time, sustaining recent gains in gender equality is more expensive than it was a decade ago. This is due to well-funded counter-mobilization, polarized politics, tighter regulations on civic space, and escalating demands for donor compliance and evidence. These factors force social movements and institutions to divert scarce resources into security, legal defence, administration and rapid communications just to maintain the status quo. In addition, SRHR faces broader contestation globally, and policy coherence gaps (discussed further in section 5.4) blunt advances. In sum, it appears that progress persists but is more uneven and costly to sustain.

### **Box 1. The Feminist Foreign Policy Plus (FFP+) Group**

The FFP+ Group was co-initiated by Spain and Sweden in 2021 to promote feminist approaches within the multilateral system and foreign policy. The group later formalized its shared commitments by adopting a Political Declaration on Feminist Approaches to Foreign Policy at the 78th UN General Assembly (UNGA) on 20 September 2023. The group is an informal, cross-regional grouping of UN Member States, but not a formal UN body.

The group coordinates joint advocacy, aligned positions, and knowledge-sharing in multilateral fora (for example UNGA, CSW) to advance gender equality, human rights, intersectionality, and inclusive multilateralism across diplomacy, development, peace and security, and climate action, as set out in the 2023 declaration.

Because of fluctuations in its membership, which reflects changes in governments and politics globally in reference to FFDPs, we refer to the signatories of the joint political declaration of the 4th Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policies, 22-23 October 2025, to examine which countries are active in the FFP+ group as of October 2025. It should be noted that it is reported that Nepal and Morocco participated and were welcomed as new members during the meeting and are therefore included in the list below, even though they are not listed as signatories.

#### **Members**

Armenia	Australia	Belgium	Canada
Chile	Colombia	Cyprus	Dominican Republic
Estonia	France	Germany	Iceland
Ireland	Kosovo	Latvia	Liberia
Lithuania	Luxembourg	Mexico	Moldova
Morocco	The Netherlands	North Macedonia	Nepal
Norway	Portugal	Rwanda	Slovenia
Spain	Thailand	Ukraine	The United Kingdom
Uruguay			

FFP+ Group membership does not require a formal domestic FFP. It is noted that Sweden, one of the initiators of FFP+, withdrew from the group in connection with abandoning its own domestic FFP in 2022.

Source: Government of the Netherlands 2023, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (France) 2025

In this climate, FFDPs are emerging as critical countermeasures, both for defending existing commitments and for reframing gender equality as a matter of effective governance, rather than “just” ideology. It is important to note that—especially in polarized contexts—evidence-based narratives that emphasize the benefits of gender equality for peace, economic stability and social cohesion can help build coalitions across political divides. While these movements are global, their impact is disproportionately felt in the global South, where conservative actors often leverage developmental language to justify restrictive policies.

The next section delves into how different regions are navigating these dynamics, illustrating the diverse ways in which FFDP ideals are being interpreted, implemented, and contested around the world.

## **4 A Regional Overview of FFDPs in the Global South**

This section will focus on providing an overview of the reception of FFDP and related feminist policy by countries in the global South. To this end, it considers the regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, primarily between the years of 2014 and 2025.

### **4.1 FFDPs in Africa**

Africa is a continent of vast diversity, which extends to the realm of gender equality and foreign policy. African nations have collectively recognized the importance of gender issues—the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and instruments like the Maputo Protocol on women’s rights demonstrate an official commitment to advancing gender equality across the continent. In practice, progress has been uneven between sub-regions and countries. Conflict and instability in parts of Africa have posed major setbacks for women’s rights (for example, the resurgence of militant extremism in the Sahel often comes with strict repression of women’s rights and autonomy), while in other parts, robust women’s movements have driven significant change (such as campaigns against child marriage in Zambia and Ethiopia or for women’s land rights in Cameroon, Togo and many more) (Stand for Her Land n.d., UNICEF 2018). Themes resonant with FFDP—women’s empowerment, inclusion in peace processes, and gender-sensitive development—have been increasingly present in African diplomacy, often encouraged by international partnerships and civil society advocacy.

To date, few sub-Saharan African governments have formally adopted a FFDP, but there are notable moves toward diplomacy with a focus on gender equality and women’s rights. One pioneering example is Liberia, which under Africa’s first female president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2006–2018), made women’s leadership in peacebuilding a cornerstone of its post-conflict reconstruction. While Liberia did not label this a FFDP, its recent engagement with the FFP+ Group signals continued commitment to feminist principles in international forums. Similarly, Rwanda—renowned for its high proportion of women in parliament—has shown interest in integrating gender equality into its foreign engagement, joining discussions on feminist

approaches at the UN (Papworth 2024). Rwanda's policies arguably stem at least in part from a post-genocide understanding that inclusion is vital for stability, and Liberia's from the pivotal role women played in ending its civil war. Across the region, South Africa stands out for championing women's rights and racial equality in its diplomacy (reflecting ideals from its post-apartheid constitution), although it too stops short of using the term "feminist." South Africa's foreign ministry has promoted women's participation in peacekeeping and supported resolutions on women, peace and security, aligning with FFDP objectives albeit framed as part of its broader human rights agenda. In West Africa, countries like Ghana and Nigeria have developed National Action Plans for Women, Peace and Security, indicating an awareness that foreign and security policy must be gender-responsive, especially in peacekeeping contributions and regional mediation roles. Still, domestic politics do not automatically translate to how these themes are pursued abroad. Many African leaders are cautious not to be seen as imposing "Western feminism," mindful of both internal religious/political sentiments and critique of neo-colonialism (Achilleos-Sarll 2018). As a result, even reform-minded governments might emphasize "women's empowerment" without adopting the full language of feminist foreign policy. This might also be connected to other critique of FFDPs, which will be further discussed in section 5.

In North Africa, the context is shaped by recent and ongoing conflict as well as enduring social conservatism. Since the Arab Spring uprisings more than a decade ago, countries like Tunisia, Morocco, and Egypt have seen both advances (for example: Tunisia's progressive gender parity laws in politics (Youssef 2023) and setbacks for example rollback of women's rights in Egypt (Amnesty International 2012)) in women's rights. Foreign policy in this region has traditionally been state-centred and security-dominated, and none of the North African states have an official FFDP. However, there are signs of change driven by both domestic activism and international influence. Libya indicated their intent to adopt a FFDP in 2021, spearheaded by their first woman Foreign Minister, Najla El Mangoush. They expressed commitment to women's inclusion in peace efforts and gender-aware diplomacy, but no further steps have been officially taken to pursue adopting a FFDP. Tunisia has a vibrant feminist movement that, during the height of its democratic transition, pushed the government to champion women's rights regionally. Morocco has touted its reforms on women's rights (like revisions to family law (The fund for global human rights 2024)) as part of its soft power when engaging with African and Middle Eastern neighbours, even if it has not branded this as part of an FFDP. Overall, North African governments tend to frame gender issues in foreign relations carefully, often highlighting women's roles in countering extremism or as part of development goals, but conservative social norms and political uncertainties make an overt feminist approach politically controversial. Furthermore, the influence of Gulf states and other regional powers that espouse traditional gender norms can pressure North African states to downplay feminist initiatives.

Across Africa, the reception and implementation of FFDP principles are mixed, reflecting each country's unique socio-political landscape. In sub-Saharan Africa, a few front-runners like Rwanda and Liberia signal growing openness to explicitly feminist approaches, influenced by homegrown experiences of women's leadership in peace and governance. Elsewhere, elements of FFDP appear in practice but without the label—many African states have embraced aspects such as women's economic empowerment, or gender-balanced peacekeeping, often with support from

international partners. Yet, challenges remain: domestic inequality and patriarchal resistance can blunt the external projection of feminist values, and leaders may avoid the term “feminist” to prevent backlash or accusations of cultural inauthenticity (Achilleos-Sarll 2018, McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023). North African countries illustrate this tension, where progress on women’s rights is often couched in nationalist or religiously acceptable narratives rather than global feminist discourse. Nonetheless, African feminist activists and civil society are key drivers pushing their governments toward more transformative stances. They argue that issues like conflict resolution, climate change, and economic justice in Africa *demand* a feminist lens—because women disproportionately bear the brunt of these problems and must be part of the solutions (FEMNET 2022). Their continued advocacy, alongside international feminist solidarity and support from donor countries with FFDPs, can provide critical resources and visibility to these movements. Over time, this combined advocacy and partnership may encourage more African policy makers to explicitly integrate feminist principles into foreign and development policy.

One pathway for advancing FFDP in many of the African countries might be to embed feminist aims in nationally resonant frames (for example Agenda 2063, Maputo Protocol commitments, care-economy and climate-resilience agendas) rather than the “feminist” label itself; align external support with priorities set by African ministries and movements; and shift donor practice from prescriptive toolkits to flexible, trust-based funding for grassroots actors. Given fiscal strain from debt, pandemic aftershocks, inflation, and climate crises, governments often pivot to short-term stabilization. A feminist approach can keep women’s economic security, SRHR, and GBV prevention on the recovery agenda by tying them to macroeconomic and climate-finance decisions. In this model, international partners can play a supportive, but not patronizing, role in co-designing with local coalitions and use existing African policy frameworks as entry points.

In sum, Africa’s journey with FFDP is in its early stages: the seeds have been planted in various forms, but substantial growth will require navigating cultural sensitivities, ensuring policies truly match local women’s needs as promoted by local women’s and feminist movements, and resisting the regional manifestations of the global and well-funded anti-gender backlash.

## 4.2 FFDPs in Asia and the Pacific

Asia—spanning the Middle East, South Asia, East and Southeast Asia, as well as the Pacific—presents a vast tapestry of political systems, cultures and states of gender equality. This region contains both some of the world’s most populous countries and smaller nations, each with distinct foreign policy priorities. Generally, explicit FFDPs are rare in Asia, especially compared to Europe or Latin America and the Caribbean. Many Asian governments prioritize economic growth, sovereignty, and traditional security concerns in foreign policy (as do most of the world’s governments), and may view gender issues as a domestic matter or a low priority internationally. Additionally, in parts of Asia, the term “feminist” can be politically controversial or associated with Western paradigms, leading governments to pursue similar objectives under different banners (such as “women’s empowerment” or “gender-responsive development”). Nevertheless, the underlying principles of FFDP, such as promoting peace, human security and rights, and inclusive development, have relevance across Asia’s diverse contexts. Women’s movements in

the region—from grassroots organizations like the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) to informal transnational networks—have long engaged in cross-border advocacy (for example, on migrant workers' rights or climate justice), effectively practicing feminist foreign policy from the ground up, even without formal state endorsement (APWLD 2022). Furthermore, several Asia-Pacific countries have made international commitments on women, peace, and security, and some have foreign aid programmes strongly focused on gender equality. One of the main challenges and opportunities of adopting FFDPs in Asia lie in bridging local and national gender equity priorities with the global FFDP discourse in a way that accounts for cultural differences and avoids external imposition.

As of late 2025, only a few of Asian states have publicly aligned themselves with the feminist foreign policy agenda. Nepal broke new ground as the first Asian country to declare their intent to adopt an FFDP in 2024. Building on its strong commitments to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and gender-responsive development planning, Nepal has expressed interest in exploring feminist approaches within its foreign policy discourse, particularly in relation to peacebuilding, migration, and climate justice. Feminist networks in the country have largely welcomed these discussions but stress that without clear institutional frameworks and resources, such commitments risk remaining aspirational and limited to being of symbolic value (CESIF Nepal 2024). Another notable example is Mongolia, which has signalled interest in FFDP (Papworth 2024). Mongolia hosted Asia's first "Female Foreign Ministers' Meeting" in Ulaanbaatar in 2023 and produced the *Ulaanbaatar Declaration*. The declaration reaffirmed the participating states' commitment to advancing gender equality, women's leadership in diplomacy, and inclusive multilateralism. It emphasized integrating a feminist perspective into peace, security, and development agendas, and called for stronger cooperation among countries to counter gender-based discrimination and ensure women's meaningful participation in global decision making. Mongolia also organized several high-level meetings in 2024 aimed at strengthening women's leadership, which brought together female political leaders and the private sector from various countries and regions (UNRISD 2025). In addition, Mongolia has also joined the Feminist Foreign Policy Plus Group (FFP+) at the United Nations, committing to gender-transformative approaches in its multilateral engagement (Gender Security Project n.d.b).

In South Asia, no country has declared an FFDP, but there have been influential leaders (for example in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) who have leveraged their positions to advance women's issues regionally. For instance, Bangladesh, under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has championed women's economic empowerment and played a prominent role in UN peacekeeping with a stated aim of increasing female peacekeepers (Center for Policy Dialogue 2023). While not labelled feminist, these actions integrate gender considerations into international engagement. India, a major Asian power, has demonstrated ambivalence: it often supports gender equality language in multilateral fora, has acknowledge a need for a gender-balanced foreign policy, and has development partnerships in Africa and South Asia focusing on women (such as training programmes for women), yet its foreign policy is driven more by *realpolitik* than a feminist vision (Khullar 2024). Moreover, India's current ruling discourse is culturally conservative, which limits an overt feminist framing.

In Southeast Asia, countries like Indonesia and the Philippines have shown leadership on women's rights in certain aspects. Indonesia, with a woman as former Foreign Minister (Retno Marsudi) and a history of promoting the role of women in Islam and peace mediation, has elements of a feminist approach in its diplomacy, for example by convening an ASEAN women peace mediators' forum. This high-level dialogue hosted by Indonesia concluded with ASEAN member states and partners reaffirming their commitment to implement the Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security, emphasizing women's leadership in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and regional security cooperation (UN Women Asia Pacific 2023). The Philippines, with its strong civil society engagement, was among the early adopters of a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, first launched in 2009 and later updated for 2017–2022. According to its national review submitted to UN Women, the country has advanced measures to protect women migrant workers and strengthen anti-trafficking frameworks, reflecting a human-rights-based orientation in its international commitments, even as domestic political dynamics have sometimes constrained consistent advocacy (UN Women 2019).

The Middle East remains the world's region that is the least aligned with feminist principles in their foreign and development policy. No Middle Eastern state has adopted FFDP, and in several Middle Eastern states (for example the Gulf states) foreign policy is tightly linked to conservative gender ideals and regime security, leaving little room for a feminist agenda. That said, some incremental shifts exist. For example, the United Arab Emirates emphasizes its support for girls' education and women's entrepreneurship internationally. This is framed within its soft power and development aid strategy, albeit overshadowed by its less progressive domestic laws related to gender (AGDAA and Gulf Women and Law Committee 2023). Additionally, protracted conflicts in the Middle East, such as those in Syria and Yemen, have spurred local women's organizations and networks to demand greater inclusion in peace negotiations and reconstruction planning. Women's movements in these contexts have taken on significant mediation roles at the community level, addressing issues from prisoner exchanges to humanitarian access, yet they remain marginalized in formal peace talks. Countries with FFDPs have at times sought to amplify these calls for inclusion, but entrenched violence, fragmented political landscapes, and the dominance of armed actors have limited the transformative potential of such efforts (UN Women 2022b).

Cultural sensitivities and reluctance to the term "feminist" play a crucial role in Asia's movement toward incorporating feminist principles into their foreign and development policies. A recurring theme is that several Asian countries incorporate gender equality aims in practice but avoid the "feminist" label due to domestic cultural or political sensitivities. This can be linked to the fact that in societies where feminism is portrayed by opponents as a Western or destabilizing import, governments choose a cautious approach. For example, Malaysia has in recent years engaged in discussions about incorporating feminist principles into their foreign and development policy. Representatives from both the government and civil society have discussed the adoption of a feminist approach to foreign policy, but this has not yet been officially implemented (IDFR and The Asia Foundation 2022). China, a global economic and cultural heavyweight, espouses a rhetoric of gender equality with statements like "women hold up half the sky". Chinese delegations often back general women's rights language in UN agreements in fora such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). However, China's authoritarian governance and

strategic priorities mean its foreign and development policy is far from feminist. For instance, its extensive development projects under the *Belt and Road Initiative* pay limited attention to gender impacts and women's empowerment (Cai and Yu 2022). In addition, the economic shocks faced by many Asian countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as those related to climate crises and conflict, can divert attention to urgent domestic needs. However, one could argue that a feminist approach would prioritize crisis recovery that emphasizes support for women.

In summary, Asia's engagement with FFDP is nascent and varies widely across the region. A few bright spots show that the conversation has begun, and feminist ideas are permeating slowly into policy debates. It is important to note that Asia's feminist and women's movements are active transnationally, even if their governments are not leading on FFDP. Networks of activists, scholars, and CSOs across Asia and the Pacific are engaging with the concept of FFDP and are trying to influence their countries' stances. The Asia-Pacific region as a whole has yet to embrace FFDP in a formal way, but many of its countries practice components of it under different guises. The reasons for reluctance range from cultural and religious norms, to fears of appearing aligned with a Western agenda, to authoritarian politics that are inherently anti-feminist, to disillusionment regarding that FFDP can make real impact when set against other economic and political interests. The military coup in Burma (Myanmar) in 2021, the Taliban's return in Afghanistan in 2021, and the crackdown on dissent in places like Hong Kong PoC in 2024 have been devastating for women's rights and illustrate how quickly gains can reverse. Countries with FFDPs have condemned many of these regressions, but the geopolitical leverage to change those situations is limited. Events such as these have contributed to tempering the perceived effectiveness of FFDP in the eyes of Asian observers, as feminist principles may inform diplomatic positions, but power and economic interests often prevail in determining outcomes.

Going forward, any expansion of FFDP in Asia will likely require reframing the concept in locally resonant terms that can dovetail with feminist aims without using the label. In the meantime, the role of external partners is delicate: Western nations promoting feminist policies must avoid a patronizing stance and instead support Asian civil society and reformers in culturally aware ways (Michalko 2023). If Asian feminist movements continue to push from below, and if global pressure for gender justice remains in the face of backlash, we may see more Asian governments integrating feminist principles into their foreign policy.

### **4.3 FFDPs in Latin America and the Caribbean**

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have emerged as a significant arena for FFDP, fuelled by vibrant feminist movements and a wave of progressive governments in the 2010s and early 2020s. This region has a rich history of women's mobilization and leadership, from the pioneering feminists of the early 20th century who fought for suffrage and rights, to contemporary movements like "Ni Una Menos" (not one less) against gender-based violence and the "Green Wave" for reproductive rights. These domestic movements have not only transformed national agendas but have also influenced regional positions in international fora. By the late 2010s, LAC feminist activism converged with political opportunity: several countries elected governments with explicit commitments to gender equality and social justice. This created fertile ground for the adoption of feminist approaches to foreign policy, with LAC

becoming the second epicentre of the formal FFP movement after Europe. In some respects, LAC countries have developed broader and deeper interpretations of feminist foreign policy than their earlier European counterparts (Burni and Espinoza 2024).

The first country in the Americas, and indeed the first outside Europe, to launch a feminist foreign policy was Mexico in January 2020. Mexico's Feminist Foreign Policy was grounded in five pillars (Philipson García et al. 2023):

1. A gender mainstreaming approach to Mexico's foreign policy and a feminist plus foreign agenda
2. Gender parity within the Secretariat of External Relations (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores SRE)
3. A SRE free of violence
4. Equality is visible
5. Foreign policy is feminist and intersectional

This comprehensive approach was notable given Mexico's context as an upper-middle-income country with stark gender inequalities (for example, high femicide rates (Papworth 2024)), a fact that Mexican officials acknowledged as they pursued external advocacy in tandem with domestic efforts. Mexico used its FFP to champion initiatives like the Generation Equality Forum (which it co-hosted with France in 2021) and to mainstream gender in the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) declarations. It also made symbolic strides, such as achieving gender parity in ambassadorial appointments and gender parity across all levels of government (Philipson García 2023). Mexico's leadership paved the way for its neighbours. In 2023, Chile adopted a feminist foreign policy, making it the first in South America. Chile's approach, as articulated by its female foreign and defence ministers, emphasizes intersectionality, environmental justice, and human rights for all genders, effectively linking feminist policy with the country's broader agenda of social and environmental transformation after years of neoliberal governance (UN Women Latin America and the Caribbean 2024).

Around the same time, Colombia's new government under President Gustavo Petro and Vice-President Francia Márquez (the latter a renowned Afro-Colombian feminist activist) signalled that Colombia would pursue a feminist foreign policy. Indeed, Colombia's foreign ministry in 2023 outlined plans for an FFP focused on peace, combating climate change with women's leadership, and South-South cooperation on gender equality. The country officially adopted an FFDP in 2025. Additionally, Argentina had taken steps toward a feminist foreign policy during the administration of President Alberto Fernández (2019–2023), who called himself Argentina's first feminist president. The Argentinian foreign ministry collaborated with UN Women to integrate gender into its diplomatic training. However, Argentina stopped short of a formal FFP before a change of government in late 2023 put those plans on hold, illustrating how political turnover can affect continuity (Burni and Espinoza 2024). Costa Rica, known for its human rights stance in their foreign policy, also expressed interest by joining the FFP+ Group, though it has not published a dedicated FFP strategy or formally declared their intent to adopt an FFDP. In addition, Bolivia announced in 2024 that it is working toward the adoption of a FFDP, signalling its commitment to integrating gender equality and Indigenous women's leadership into its international engagement. This intent reflects Bolivia's broader emphasis on plurinationalism

and social justice, positioning feminist principles within its diplomatic and development priorities (Gender Security Project n.d.a). It is yet unclear what effect the newly elected (as of October 2025) center-right president Rodrigo Paz Pereira will have on Bolivia's political priorities.

Similarly, in the Caribbean, where small island states have constrained diplomatic capacity, there have been moves to adopt gender-focused foreign aid policies. For instance, Barbados, while not having formally declared a FFDP, has under Prime Minister Mia Mottley developed their international engagements to reflect feminist principles by foregrounding women's leadership in climate diplomacy and spearheading the *Bridgetown Initiative* to reform global financial governance in ways that prioritize equity, justice, and the needs of vulnerable communities (UNEP 2021).

LAC feminist foreign policies often distinguish themselves by their holistic and intersectional approach. Whereas some European FFDPs initially centred mainly on women's representation and rights, LAC versions tend to explicitly address underlying structural inequalities and link domestic and foreign policy. For example, Mexico, Chile and Colombia frame gender equality as both an end in itself and a means to achieve broader goals like sustainable development, violence reduction, transforming power structures, and inclusive governance (Burni and Espinoza 2024). These policies often incorporate issues of economic justice, Indigenous and Afro-descendant rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, and environmental protection, recognizing that feminism in Latin America has long been connected with social movements for democracy. There is also a notable emphasis on policy coherence: Chile's feminist foreign policy debate, for instance, raised the imperative of aligning external positions (for example supporting women's rights abroad) with internal actions such as advancing women's equality at home and ensuring women participate in foreign policy decision making (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile n.d.).

Another innovative aspect of LAC feminist approaches in foreign and development policy is the close collaboration with civil society. Latin American governments have engaged local feminist organizations in crafting their foreign policy priorities, reflecting the region's strong tradition of participatory policy making on social issues (EULAC Foundation 2025). This stands in contrast to some global North FFDPs that were more government-driven; in Latin America, one sees a more bottom-up influence, where activists and scholars form part of the conversation on what a feminist foreign policy should entail. For example, feminist groups in Mexico actively monitor the implementation of the FFP and critique inconsistencies in areas such as arms sales and asylum policy (Aguilar 2023). However, it should be noted that local feminist movements have criticized Mexico for engaging more with international women's movements than local ones (Philipson Garcá, 2023). Similarly, in Colombia, consultations with Afro-descendant, Indigenous, and women peacebuilders ensure that foreign policy reflects a diverse feminist perspective (EULAC Foundation 2025, UN Women LAC 2024). This collaborative model can be seen as a best practice emerging from the global South, opening up the concept of FFDP from a donor-centric view and grounds it in local realities and social movements' demands.

The influence of LAC's FFDPs is beginning to be felt regionally and internationally. These countries have formed a sort of "LAC feminist bloc" in multilateral settings. For instance, they have jointly pushed for stronger gender equality language in OAS and UN resolutions and coordinated positions at forums like the UN Commission on the Status of Women. There is an

element of South-South leadership: LAC FFDP adopters often share experiences with African and Asian countries curious about the approach, thus shifting the dynamic from FFDPs being a global North export to it being a norm that global South countries actively shape. Domestically, the adoption of FFDP has provided added leverage for feminist advocates to hold governments accountable. In Mexico, activists have pointed out the dissonance between the government’s feminist rhetoric abroad and ongoing high levels of gender violence and impunity at home, pressuring authorities to do more (Papworth 2024). This illustrates a broader challenge: ensuring that feminist foreign policy is not used to gloss over domestic shortcomings. There is also the risk of policy reversals. Latin America’s political pendulum can swing: the recent election of a far-right president in Argentina (who campaigned against “gender ideology”) is a case in point. While Argentina had only partially embraced FFDP, a more extreme shift could occur elsewhere—future governments in Chile, Colombia or Mexico might not maintain their predecessors’ feminist stance if political winds change, as observed in several European countries that had championed the approach. Additionally, resource constraints and crises can limit implementation. Economic difficulties, like those many LAC countries faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, can divert attention to urgent domestic needs. However, as previously noted, a feminist approach would place women-centered pandemic recovery at the heart of those priorities.

In connection to the issue of crisis, the region also faces its own forms of backlash against women’s rights and overall democratic backlash. Highly patriarchal and conservative factions in LAC are pushing against feminist advancements, evident in battles over abortion laws and gender education (UNRISD and UN Women 2025). These groups sometimes criticize feminist foreign policy as an elitist, western agenda or as contrary to “family values.” The impact of regressive backlash on FFDP in LAC has been mixed. For example, Mexico’s FFDP has survived changes in appointments for their Foreign Minister. In contrast, Argentina has abolished their Special Representative for Feminist Foreign Policy and dismantled the office following the recent change in government.

In summary, the LAC region has injected new energy and perspectives into the global feminist foreign policy movement. The region demonstrates that global South countries can be norm innovators. By rooting their FFDPs in domestic feminist struggles and linking them to issues of race, class, and colonial legacies, Latin American policy makers are arguably expanding the scope of what FFDP means. Their experiences show the value of adapting the concept to local contexts: a feminist foreign policy in Colombia may prioritize peace accords, while a Caribbean island like Barbados might focus on climate resilience for women farmers, and both fit under the broad umbrella of FFDP. The perspectives of feminist movements in the global South, addressed further in the next section, additionally illuminate how these policies are perceived by those they aim to empower. In Latin America, those movements largely view FFDP as a welcome shift that could amplify their causes, provided that governments remain accountable and that the policies do not lose their transformative edge when confronted with *realpolitik* or backlash.

## 5 Cross-Regional Insights: Challenges and Opportunities of FFDP

As discussed in previous sections, FFDPs have gained prominence over the past decade, promising to centre gender equality and social justice in international affairs and development cooperation. Proponents argue that FFDPs can transform traditional power dynamics and uplift marginalized voices globally, with particular reference to women and girls. However, scholars, activists, and civil society leaders have raised critical questions about how transformative these policies are in practice. Many critiques focus on whether FFDPs inadvertently reproduce old hierarchies or fall short of their radical promise when confronted with *realpolitik*. This section examines the main challenges and opportunities of FFDPs, taking into account the impact of implementation of FFDP by donor and partner countries to countries in the global South. It is organized around five interrelated themes: (1) hierarchies and donor–recipient power dynamics; (2) western paradigms and global South marginalization; (3) symbolic commitments and funding justice; (4) policy coherence and credibility; (5) grassroots and women’s movements as policy drivers. These themes are illustrated with examples from around the world, highlighting concerns that FFDPs must address to fulfil their progressive aspirations.

### 5.1 Hierarchies and donor–recipient power dynamics

A recurring criticism of FFDPs is that they risk perpetuating the very global hierarchies they seek to challenge. Many feminist policies have originated in wealthy donor states of the global North, which can reinforce paternalistic, postcolonial relationships with global South countries. African feminist analyses argue that dominant FFDP discourse often positions the global South as the “subject of implementation,” rather than an equal partner shaping the agenda (Haastrup 2025). In other words, policies are frequently *done to* the global South rather than co-created, echoing colonial patterns in which powerful states set the terms and expect others to follow (Bouka 2021, Tamale 2020). This helps explain scepticism across African and other Southern contexts toward FFDPs framed from the North. As Nimco Ali and Aya Chebbi (2023) cautions, without disrupting unequal power relations, a feminist foreign policy can amount to “coloniality in new clothes,” maintaining dominance beneath a feminist veneer. Some research supports that Southern NGOs’ experiences of donor conditionalities and framing confirm these asymmetries in FFDP practice (Haastrup 2025, Rao and Tiessen 2020).

From a multilateral standpoint, FFDPs and UN gender-equality discourse substantially overlap (for example in relation to CEDAW and the SDGs), which helps with legitimacy, shared metrics, and access to multilateral venues. Yet the UN is not monolithic. While some UN entities such as UN Women and regional commissions often advance intersectional and feminist framings, other parts of the system, including intergovernmental negotiations, tend toward minimal consensus under state pressure. This tension matters across the globe as alignment with UN norms can open doors to opportunities and resources, but it may also dilute redistributive and decolonial ambitions. This dynamic is relevant from a global power perspective. There is also regressive pushback within the UN, where blocs of states routinely contest or water down feminist language, with particular reference to SRHR and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI), which results in lowest-common-denominator values being reflected in texts or

bracketed compromises in negotiated outcomes (PRIF 2023; McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023). To ensure the transformative potential of FFDPs, alignment without dilution is called for. This approach could leverage UN standards and monitoring while also co-creating priorities with local feminist and women’s movements and anchoring policies in nationally resonant frameworks.

The donor–recipient imbalance is also starkly visible in funding practices under FFDPs. Global South women’s organizations and movements frequently find themselves constrained by Northern donors’ priorities and procedures, which often assume that grassroots feminist groups lack the capacity to manage significant grants (Rao and Tiessen 2020). Consequently, funds intended for gender equality are routinely channelled through large international NGOs or consultancy firms based in the global North, which act as intermediaries and retain control over resources. This practice sidelines the very actors doing the on-the-ground feminist work and reproduces colonial hierarchies of knowledge and power in development cooperation (Haastrup 2025, Rivera Chávez 2022). Analysts argue that such funding models sustain a “donor-knows-best” paradigm, keeping decision-making power firmly in Northern hands (Achilleos-Sarll 2018). Françoise Moudouthe, CEO of the African Women’s Development Fund, captured this frustration during the *Shaping Feminist Foreign Policy Conference 2023*: “We need more money, but we get crumbs. Forget the myths we can’t absorb it—we can” (Michalko and Tant 2024, page 7). Her call highlights the reality that feminist foreign aid will not disrupt entrenched hierarchies unless global South actors are trusted and empowered to lead. Without deliberate shifts of power—through trust-based funding, direct allocation to grassroots groups, and mutual accountability—FFDPs risk replicating the old donor–recipient hierarchies.

## 5.2 Western paradigms and global South marginalization

A recurring critique is that FFDPs are often framed in Eurocentric terms, risking the marginalization of global South feminist priorities. Much of the discourse has emerged from Northern capitals, where feminist foreign policy is conceived as an exportable model, sometimes perceived as culturally alien or externally imposed (Achilleos Sarll 2018, Michalko 2023). African and Latin American feminists argue that this framing reproduces postcolonial hierarchies by positioning the global South primarily as the recipient of feminist norms rather than as a co-creator of them (Ali and Chebbi 2023). The result is that rich histories of local feminist traditions—whether grounded in Pan-African solidarity, Indigenous epistemologies, or Latin American concepts like *Abya Yala*<sup>1</sup>—risk being overshadowed by Western liberal frameworks (Feminist Foreign Policy Collaborative 2023, Rivera Chávez 2022).

Closely linked to the problem of Eurocentrism is the exclusion of grassroots feminist voices from shaping and monitoring FFDPs. Despite being the very movements that inspired FFDPs, women’s organizations across the global South report that they are not consulted enough in its design or implementation (Tant et al. 2022). FFDPs are generally crafted by diplomats and policy makers, sometimes with input from large international NGOs, but they typically bypass local grassroots groups. This exclusion undermines the feminist ethic of inclusion and empowerment.

<sup>1</sup> *Abya Yala* is a term used by some Indigenous peoples to reclaim and assert their cultural identity, sovereignty, and connection to the American continent beyond colonial naming systems (del Valle Escalante 2014).

Mexico's case illustrates this gap: while the country has been lauded for adopting the first FFDP in the global South, its foreign ministry engaged more with international CSOs than with domestic women's movements. Many Mexican feminists were unaware of the policy, or dismissed it as disconnected from local struggles, especially given the government's antagonistic stance toward feminist protesters (Philipson García 2023). As a result, the credibility of the policy at home has suffered. Similar tensions have emerged elsewhere, where external framings of "feminism" have provoked backlash from conservative actors who portray FFDPs as Western intrusions. For instance, Ghana's homophobic Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill mobilized in part by framing LGBTQIA+ rights as Western, linked to global anti-gender movements agendas (Coleman et al. 2021). These cases underscore that FFDPs must be rooted in local feminist knowledge and co-created with grassroots actors to avoid reinforcing colonial hierarchies and to ensure legitimacy in practice (Bouka 2021, Tamale 2020).

Moreover, the exclusion of African knowledges reflects broader "knowledge hierarchies," where global South feminist analysis is often dismissed until validated by Northern institutions. Scholars like Toni Haastrup argue that the exclusion of African knowledges is "especially jarring" in mainstream FFDP discourse (Haastrup 2025). In response, formations like the African Feminist Collective on Feminist Foreign Policy (AfIP Collective), launched in 2022, are intentionally asserting African feminist perspectives in the FFDP space, working to ensure foreign and development policies align with grassroots priorities rather than replicate donor-driven, largely global North agendas. Researchers Without Borders and FEMNET also note that knowledge production on FFDP is often dominated by the global North, with civil society in Africa pushing back for visibility, agency, and co-creation in policy design (Researchers Without Borders et al. 2024).

Including grassroots voices is not only ethically necessary but practically effective. Local feminist groups are often best positioned to understand community dynamics, serve as early warning systems against backlash, and implement context-sensitive solutions in peacebuilding, humanitarian aid, and climate resilience. As ODI has argued, for FFDPs to be transformative it is essential to shift power from donors to those doing the work of gender equality in the global South, including feminist movements (Michalko and Tant 2024). Practical steps include establishing permanent consultation mechanisms with feminist organizations, dedicating flexible, long-term funding to grassroots groups, and ensuring participatory accountability frameworks. Without such measures, FFDPs risks remaining top-down and performative.

Ultimately, the exclusion of grassroots voices and social movements undermines the transformative potential of feminist foreign and development policies. A feminist policy cannot succeed if it does not practice the inclusion and power-sharing it preaches. Therefore, integrating the knowledge, leadership, and aspirations of global South feminist movements is both an ethical imperative and a precondition for FFDPs to achieve lasting change on the ground.

### **5.3 Symbolic commitments and funding justice**

Critics contend that many FFDPs make bold symbolic pledges to gender equality but stop short of pursuing deeper structural change in global systems. The rhetoric of feminist foreign policy—

emphasizing women’s rights, peace, and inclusion—is often not matched by willingness to tackle entrenched threats to gender justice, like militarism. African feminists warn of “NGO-ization”: the professionalization and depoliticization of feminist agendas once they are adopted by state institutions. As feminist ideas are absorbed into official policy, they can be stripped of radical content and used as technocratic “gender mainstreaming” tools that avoid confronting systemic power structures such as militarized security or exploitative trade regimes (Aggestam and Bergman Rosamond 2016, Michalko 2023). In such cases, the feminist label risks becoming superficial, confined to a feel-good brand without transformative potential.

This gap between words and actions can be illustrated by the clash between militarism and feminism. Many states with FFDPs continue to have high military expenditures. Of the top fifteen military spenders in 2022, three of them (France, Canada, and Germany) had formal FFDPs at the time (Papworth 2024). Germany’s 2023 feminist foreign and development policy guidelines pledged to integrate feminist principles across aid and diplomacy, yet Germany continues to prioritize traditional geopolitical alliances and economic interests, creating tensions between rhetoric and practice (SWP Berlin 2023). Moreover, German funding modalities still prioritize large implementing organizations over grassroots feminist movements, reinforcing top-down donor practices (BMZ 2023, Papworth 2024). Such contradictions highlight the danger of feminism in name only: without addressing structural drivers, FFDPs risk reinforcing the very hierarchies they seek to dismantle.

In a similar vein, Sweden’s pioneering feminist foreign policy was praised for its strong language on women’s rights. Yet, Sweden continued exporting arms to authoritarian regimes such as Saudi Arabia (involved in the Yemen war), directly contradicting feminist goals of peace and security (CFFP 2019). There was pushback against the arms trade, and shortly after declaring their FFDP, Sweden announced that it would not renew arms deals with Saudi Arabia. However, Sweden’s lucrative arms trade continued with little regard for feminist principles, despite the foreign ministry’s advocacy of women’s rights abroad. Sweden also enacted restrictive asylum laws after adopting its FFDP, effectively blocking family reunification and leaving women and girls in precarious conditions (Aggestam and Bergman Rosamond 2016).

Global South commentators argue that truly feminist policy requires tackling root causes—such as restructuring debt systems and confronting militarism—rather than layering gender rhetoric onto existing policies. These cases suggest that for FFDPs to live up to their transformative promise, they must move beyond symbolic declarations and actively challenge entrenched militarism, global economic hierarchies, and domestic inconsistencies.

Moreover, critiques from the global South frequently highlight a chasm between FFDPs’ ambitions and the reality of resources and implementation on the ground. Many feminist foreign aid pledges are not backed by substantial new funding or are undermined by bureaucratic inconsistency. For instance, several donor governments, such as Germany and Canada, have announced increases in aid for gender equality. Yet overall funding to grassroots women’s organizations remains abysmally low. By most estimates, less than 1 percent of global official development assistance (ODA) and philanthropic funding goes directly to feminist and women-led organizations (AWID 2019). This statistic has been widely cited as evidence that despite

high-level commitments, feminist movements and women’s rights organization currently receive crumbs of the financing pie (AWID 2021). The vast majority of gender-focused aid still flows to large intermediaries or short-term projects, not to sustained movement-building or grassroots empowerment (Tant et al. 2022). This resource gap severely constrains the transformative impact FFDPs can have. Not funding those who are actually advancing women’s rights is itself risky as it leaves the field open for anti-feminist forces to gain ground (Nolan et al. 2025). Yet governments have been slow to change their funding modalities to meet feminist movements’ needs.

### **Box 2. Examples of feminist funding approaches**

Examples of feminist funding approaches, as called for by women’s movements and researchers, are the *Equality Fund* and the *Leading from the South initiative*. These funds take on the administrative and reporting burdens from grassroots feminist organizations and movements, directly disbursing funds and giving them access to resources that would otherwise be out of reach, while at the same time relieving them of administrative tasks that divert their attention and labour away from activities on the ground.

Source: Michalko and Tant 2024

This is despite research showing that funding feminist movements is among the most impactful ways to advance gender equality (Htun and Weldon 2012), and advocates urging that FFDPs prioritize directing aid to grassroots women’s organizations rather than large intermediaries (Arutyunova and Clark 2013). The ODI (Michalko and Tant 2024) further highlights that a coalition of FFDP-aligned governments could, by pooling funds and applying feminist funding, dramatically strengthen feminist grassroots and women’s movements and thereby support democracy and prosperity from the ground up. Feminist funding approaches such as these empower grassroots and women’s movements to become policy drivers (see Box 2).

## **5.4 Policy coherence and credibility**

One of the harshest critiques of FFDPs is that some states adopting feminist policies exhibit glaring contradictions between their feminist rhetoric and their broader foreign policy behaviour, especially regarding militarism, economic exploitation, and human rights. These contradictions can undercut the moral authority and effectiveness of FFDPs. A lack of policy coherence and inconsistent implementation across government departments dilutes FFDPs. A FFDP is meant to be “cross-cutting,” but in practice, some parts of government may ignore or resist it. A frequently cited example is the tension between promoting women’s rights and profiting from the arms trade, as previously discussed in section 5.3 where the cases of Sweden and Germany were highlighted. Also discussed in section 5.3 was Sweden’s though asylum restrictions that ran counter to the FFDPs stated aims. Together these inconsistencies present serious obstacles to the credibility of Sweden’s FFDP and illustrate how national interest as well as populist pressures often override feminist principles when inconvenient. The Swedish case is emblematic: unless a state is willing to reconsider arms sales, military alliances, and profit-driven foreign engagements, its feminist policy will appear selective and instrumental.

In 2023, Germany formally adopted both a feminist foreign policy and a feminist development policy, with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) pledging to significantly increase funding for gender equality measures by 2025 (BMZ 2023). While this commitment was welcomed as a strong signal, feminist organizations have criticized the lack of clarity on implementation mechanisms and accountability. Reports note that much of Germany's development cooperation still follows traditional aid modalities, with funding flowing through large international organizations rather than directly to grassroots feminist groups in the global South (Tant, Jiménez Thomas, and Rodríguez 2022). Moreover, critics argue that Germany's foreign policy continues to prioritize strategic and economic interests, including arms exports and restrictive migration policies, that contradict feminist commitments. These tensions illustrate the broader challenge of ensuring that FFDPs extend beyond rhetorical pledges to systemic change in donor practices.

There are indications that some global North donor countries are open to exploring concerns of policy coherence and credibility as part of their FFDPs. Germany, for example, has formally acknowledged concerns over colonial legacies in its 2023 guidelines for feminist foreign and development policy, yet critics argue its long-standing foreign policy interests remain largely unchanged, with geopolitical and economic considerations continuing to influence policy more than reformist feminist principles (CFFP 2023). Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy likewise has strong rhetoric around gender equality, but civil society and analysts point out tensions in implementation, especially in sectors like mining and extractive industries, where local communities (often women and Indigenous groups) are not always adequately protected (Oxfam Canada 2018). Feminist critiques suggest that without tackling structural issues such as debt, climate finance, and trade inequalities, FFDPs risk being performative: without changes to global financial architecture and donor state practice, rhetoric alone does little to resolve underlying gender injustice (Women7 2025).

Looking at the impact on global South countries that have adopted FFDP, early indications suggest these policies can reinforce domestic progress but that they are no panacea. In Chile, the adoption of a feminist foreign policy has been accompanied by an increase in women's representation in diplomatic leadership: about 30 percent of Chile's ambassadors are women, up from about 12 percent four years before the policy shift (Winter 2023). However, Mexico's FFDP has largely been an external-facing posture, while domestically the government's budget priorities (for example sharply increasing military spending under President Andrés Manuel López Obrador) and weak action on gender violence indicate a lack of whole-of-government alignment (Philipson García 2023). Mexico has laudable gender equality laws on paper and even gender parity in politics, yet the persistence of pervasive GBV and extremely high femicide rates as well as the former president's hostility toward feminist advocates highlight gaps between policy and reality. To address these inconsistencies, feminists call for robust accountability and monitoring frameworks. For example, Mexican civil society voices have explicitly recommended that SRE (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores) produce a public FFDP policy roadmap with specific actions, indicators, outcomes, and intended impact, along with transparent reporting that allows academics and civil society to monitor and evaluate progress (Philipson García et al. 2023).

The above cases reveal how, without concrete mechanisms in place, a feminist policy can remain an isolated promise by the foreign ministry while trade, defence or immigration ministries continue with business-as-usual. Moving from lofty declarations to tangible change requires both adequate resourcing and rigorous implementation across all facets of foreign and development policy. Without these, FFDPs risk being partial and easily undermined by competing interests as well as by regressive actors. Bridging this gap requires difficult introspection and changes in state behaviour, such as by aligning defence, trade, and immigration policies with feminist principles of peace, equity, and care. Some recommendations include instituting arms export controls with a gender lens (for example prohibiting arms transfers likely to facilitate gender-based violence), prioritizing conflict prevention over military solutions, supporting fair trade and climate action, and rejecting double standards in human rights. Only through such shifts can FFDPs avoid charges of hypocrisy and earn trust among global South communities and civil society actors.

## 5.5 Grassroots and women's movements as policy drivers

The advent of FFDPs has been met with a mix of optimism, cautious approval, and critical scrutiny from feminist movements across the global South. These are the representatives of the very groups whose rights and experiences are often intended to be elevated by FFDP, making their perspectives crucial in evaluating authenticity and effectiveness. Broadly, many feminist activists and civil society leaders in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean welcome the feminist intentions of FFDPs as a much-needed realignment of international priorities. They see in it an opportunity for states to seriously address global injustices—such as conflict and climate change—through a lens that recognizes and empowers women and marginalized communities (FEMNET 2022).

For instance, some women's organizations in conflict-affected contexts have long organized to make peace processes more inclusive, and they routinely use donor/state commitments under FFDPs as well as donor/state commitments reflecting the principles of FFDPs (and the closely related WPS agenda) to press for entry points—such as support for women mediators, survivor-centred provisions, gender commissions, and advisory boards—thereby increasing their chances to gain access to negotiation spaces and recovery resources (OECD 2020, UN Women 2021 and 2022b). Evidence from Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Libya shows that women's networks leveraged international commitments to establish and sustain mechanisms like the Syrian Women's Advisory Board and local mediation platforms, which have enabled women to advise mediators, broker local ceasefires, and elevate protection and recovery needs (UN Women 2022b, OSE-Syria n.d.). Evaluations of donor practice (for example Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) and gender-equality programming in the Middle East and Maghreb) similarly document funding and diplomatic support aimed at women's participation in stabilization, humanitarian, and peace initiatives (Global Affairs Canada 2020 and 2023).

Another area of impact is in norm-setting: some feminist movements feel emboldened that the discourse at high levels has shifted to include discussions on feminist approaches and priorities. It is now more common in international settings to hear talk of patriarchy, intersectionality, and care economies, terms that were long pushed by feminists and are now entering the mainstream diplomatic vocabulary, which FFDPs has contributed to. There is hope that this discursive

change will eventually translate into concrete policy change (for example more countries adopting parental leave policies or considering the gendered impacts of sanctions and trade deals). The presence of a growing reference list of feminist foreign policy frameworks and indices (like the ICRW’s Feminist Foreign Policy Index, see box 3) that ranks countries on gender-relevant metrics is itself a sign that civil society can benchmark and hold governments to account internationally.

### Box 3. ICRW’s Feminist Foreign Policy Index

Developed by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), the Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) Index benchmarks 48 countries, including those without a formal FFP. The evaluation is based on 27 indicators grouped into seven priority areas:

- peace and militarization
- official development assistance
- migration for employment
- labour protections
- economic justice
- institutional commitments to gender equality
- climate

The latest full publication (ICRW, 2023) shows that countries scoring lowest comprise the United States: 0.12; India: 0.24; and China: 0.28, and those scoring highest comprise Sweden: 0.80; Norway: 0.73; Mexico: 0.67; and Finland: 0.67. Other strong showings come from Latin America, including Costa Rica: 0.65; Peru: 0.65; Argentina: 0.62; and Chile: 0.62, as well as from Europe, including Germany: 0.63; Luxembourg: 0.61; and Belgium: 0.59.

**The Index’s aim is comparative, evidence-based accountability:** it assesses how countries’ external policies align with feminist principles across aid, security, economic and climate action, highlighting not just formal “FFP” labels but the substance of policy practice.

Source: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) n.d.

Global South feminists often invoke the slogan “Nothing about us, without us,” insisting they be co-creators and not merely beneficiaries of FFDPs. This entails consultation in policy design, partnership in implementation, and shared leadership in global forums. Latin America offers notable examples of participatory approaches: Colombia has involved civil society organizations in shaping FFDP agendas, contrasting with more top-down approaches seen in some European cases (EULAC Foundation 2025). In Africa, regional women’s networks (such as FEMNET) have engaged with feminist foreign policy champions to push for more African Union engagement on women’s rights and to resist regressive policies. Rachel Kagoiya, then Head of Communications at FEMNET and currently CEO of GROOTS Kenya, remarked at the FFP+ ministerial meeting, UNGA 2023 (Michalko 2023, page 11):

*“We must start from a place of humility, vulnerability. From acknowledgement and self-awareness. Then collectively and boldly we can advance feminist principles and values, like inclusivity, sharing power, collaboration, and active listening”.*

Feminist movements expect governments with FFDPs to embody those principles, to share power by elevating voices from the global South in international decision making, to collaborate by building equal partnerships rather than donor-recipient relationships, and to listen actively to the needs and analyses coming from women on the ground.

## **6 Recommendations: Promoting the Transformative Promise of FFDP**

FFDPs represent one of the most significant shifts in international relations thinking in recent decades, a shift from seeing gender equality as a niche concern to treating it as integral to global peace, security, and development. This paper has shown how FFDP originated as a pioneering idea in a few countries and has since spread and adapted across different regions, while also facing contestation. By tracing its journey and evolution through Europe, North America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, it has been noted that while context matters greatly, certain common threads exist: the pursuit of women's rights and representation, the commitment to peace and human security, the challenge of confronting deep-seated patriarchal and power structures, and the challenge of grounding FFDP in local contexts. However, the concurrent rise of anti-feminist backlash threatens to undercut progress and has indeed already reversed some feminist gains in different parts of the world (UNRISD and UN Women 2025). If the gains of Beijing are to be defended—and if gender equality is to remain a cornerstone of global governance—FFDPs must evolve from political statements into locally grounded, well resourced, and transformative strategies. Only then can they serve as a true shield against the backlash against women's and LGBTQIA+ rights within the context of democratic backsliding, and as a driver for a more just and sustainable future.

The critiques and regional manifestations of FFDPs that have been explored in this paper underscore that FFDPs must evolve significantly to address global South concerns. Hierarchical power relations, superficial commitments, cultural misalignment, resource shortfalls, contradictory behaviours, and sidelining of grassroots actors all threaten to hollow out the transformative promise of FFDPs. Yet these critiques are accompanied by constructive proposals: decolonize the policy making process, invest in structural change (from debt justice to disarmament), ensure coherence across government, and create genuine partnerships with local feminist movements. Global South scholars and activists are not rejecting the idea of FFDPs outright, rather they are insisting that it live up to its name by challenging global inequities and uplifting those historically left at the periphery of international policy making. As African feminists argue, a truly liberatory feminist policy would engage local feminist movements and seek to dismantle the colonial, racist, and patriarchal underpinnings of the world order, not merely reform them at the margins (Haastруп 2023, Berry et al. 2022). Achieving this will require humility and substantial changes on the part of donor countries. It will mean embracing diverse feminist visions from the global South that may redefine priorities. The reward, if these challenges are met, is the possibility of a FFDP paradigm that is more equitable, credible, and

effective in advancing gender justice globally—a paradigm informed by those for whom these issues are most urgent and real.

To support ongoing efforts, this paper offers eight key recommendations, as provided in the list below. Diverse stakeholders should collaborate strategically to implement them.

1. **Strengthen grassroots participation:** Ensure that FFDPs are co-created with global South feminist and women’s movements, including Black, Indigenous, and LGBTQIA+ organizations, through rigorous consultation mechanisms. Systematically incorporate women movements participation in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and recovery processes.
2. **Shift funding modalities:** Move beyond short-term project support by committing long-term, flexible, and direct funding to grassroots feminist and women-led organizations, avoiding reliance on Northern intermediaries. To this end: allocate core, flexible funding to feminist movements, with a focus on global South initiatives; integrate gender markers and accountability mechanisms into official development assistance (ODA) and the aid architecture; align financing with intersectional feminist priorities to support sustainable action: and reform macroeconomic policy, such as debt relief and progressive tax justice, to alleviate the fiscal constraints that often limit public and donor investment in gender equality. By easing these systemic funding pressures, feminist movements and organizations can access more sustainable resources to carry out their work.
3. **Address structural contradictions:** Align feminist rhetoric with practice by integrating feminist principles across arms exports, military interventions, trade, debt, climate policy, and migration, to avoid undermining FFDP commitments. Integrate care policies, unpaid work recognition, and redistribution into foreign and development strategies.
4. **Institutionalize feminist approaches:** Embed FFDP principles in law and policy frameworks across government departments to ensure continuity beyond individual political leaders and guarantee coherence in implementation. Mandate gender and diversity training, feminist focal points, and leadership commitments in foreign and development ministries. Reform internal organizational culture, staffing, and decision-making processes to reflect feminist values and ensure that FFDPs are backed by measurable, budgeted action plans.
5. **Center global South feminist knowledge:** Elevate and integrate indigenous feminist traditions, African, Asian, and Latin American feminist frameworks and perspectives into global FFDP debates, to counter Eurocentric bias.
6. **Ensure accountability:** Establish transparent monitoring and evaluation frameworks for FFDPs that include participation from civil society in the global South as well as the global North, with clear benchmarks, reporting mechanisms, and independent assessments. Also build intersectional data and evidence systems by establishing gender-disaggregated and intersectional data repositories co-governed with feminist networks and monitor progress on intersectional inequalities related to race, class, disability, geography, and care work.
7. **Promote South–South collaboration:** Support regional platforms and networks that facilitate exchange and solidarity among global South feminist actors, strengthening local

ownership and reducing dependency on Northern-driven frameworks. Further amplify global South feminist agendas by elevating experiences and innovations from the global South as normative models.

8. **Strategically counter backlash against gender equality:** Systematically monitor anti-gender movements and democratic backsliding and align feminist and progressive coalitions to respond proactively to regressions. Use evidence-based, intersectional, and culturally sensitive approaches to maintain momentum for gender justice.

## 7 Further research

Further research should address five key research gaps.

First, there is a need for country-level analyses of FFDP impacts in the global South, particularly in early adopters like Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, to assess how these policies translate into domestic progress on gender equality.

Second, research should explore how donor-country FFDPs shape or have shaped outcomes in recipient countries on a more detailed case-specific level, including tensions between feminist commitments and contradictory practices, including but not limited to trade, military engagements, extractive industries, aid and development cooperation, and migration.

Third, greater attention must be paid to grassroots perspectives, examining how women's movements, especially Black, Indigenous, and LGBTQIA+ activists, engage with or are excluded from FFDP implementation.

Fourth, comparative regional research is needed to explore various entry points. These include peace and security, particularly in Africa where much local feminist mobilization has focused on women's peace and security (WPS); governance and the informal economy, particularly in Asia where local feminist concerns often centre on governance reform and labour rights; and sexual and reproductive health and rights alongside environmental justice, particularly in Latin America where strong feminist movements have prioritized sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and environmental justice.

Fifth and finally, research on feminist financing is needed, including potential pathways on how to overcome the persistent underfunding of women's rights organizations (less than 1 percent of ODA (AWID 2019)), and to evaluate the potential of South–South cooperation in shaping feminist foreign and development agendas. In addition, there is a need to fund research to fill the data gap in regard to our current knowledge on how much of global ODA and philanthropic funding directly go to feminist and women-led organizations.

Given UNRISD's extensive experience of cross-regional, interdisciplinary, and feminist research, in addition to its global network and position within the multilateral system, the institute is particularly well-placed to lead and/or coordinate on these research activities.

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## **Acknowledgements**

I express my great appreciation and thanks to my colleague Katja Hujo, who has provided substantial support and insights throughout this project. I would also like to extend my warm thanks to my colleagues Francisco Cos-Montiel, Paramita Dutta, Sergio Sandoval and Madeline J. Colley, for their support of this paper. Their review greatly strengthened the analysis and presentation of the paper. Thank you to my husband Erik for your unwavering encouragement. I also extend sincere thanks to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for their generous support that made this work possible.