

The focus of overseas aid needs a radical reform to address the denial of womans rights and gender inequality globally.

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I am extraordinary. Women are extraordinary, yet in the cry out for help they are overlooked. We are overlooked. I set a goal to inform and be informed, and what I have unravelled is shameful.

We may already be too late for the women who have passed after been subjugated to violence and the hate crimes against them ,the violence and the scale that is pasted on their bodies which states their worth as if they were mere objects, and the NGO's who made it their life's work to protect have failed them.

Women around the world in need of aid are being affected by the compromised access to clean water and shelter. The violence, the conflict and the dangers that surround them for being a woman forces many of which who find themselves having to resort to desperate needs such as marriage, whether they are selling their child off for the "better" or giving up freedom by marrying men thrice their age ,all of it is simply for survival, even if it costs them their freedom.

We see all this evidence in countries such as Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Uganda where GBV increases during displacement, or in areas drowning in conflict. An aid dependant country such as Malawi scores poorly on the gender equality in global indices. Despite foreign aid, such enraging statistics exist. Why is that the case? Why is it that overseas aid overlooks the wellbeing of women? Where does the money go? What is the point of aid? When many still find themselves slaved to the system. Do not get me wrong though, my intentions are not to point fingers, but rather to address the rights of women around the world and the inequality that exists right now today, around the world.

According to the Thomson Reuters Foundation only about 0.1% of humanitarian aid goes to addressing violence against women and girls worldwide. This is why change must occur, why addressing the rights of all women globally is important.

The purpose of aid is to aid in the growth of others which in turn brings about growth to all, yet less than \$2 was allocated to each woman or girl at risk of rape or abuse in conflict zones out of the \$14.5B in humanitarian aid according to IRC and women's rights group between 2016 and 2018.

The Taliban that came in August of 2021 is still present 4 years later. Slowly however deafening, Afghan women have been banned from all forms of employment. Silenced. Isolated. Forced to stop their education and forced to be covered from head to toe in the name of modesty and purity. They are now forbidden from contact with other women to prevent

unity amongst themselves against the oppression. They are restricted in their movements and appearances outside. This is the reality of many, yet nothing has been done. Treated less than human beings, subjugated to violence every day, isolated from the world they once knew and for some it is all they know. As Merl Streep said, “A squirrel has more rights than a girl in Afghanistan today” and “A bird may sing in Kabul, but a girl may not”

Can you imagine a world where you have no freedom, where you are silenced and hidden from everyone? A life that is not your own but your father, your brother, or your husband not of your choice. Despite all the organization's out there that speak of promoting and bringing about gender equality where all women can have the freedom to live a life of their own, 4 years have passed since this Taliban took place and little to no actions have taken place. How many organizations have taken the initiative to spread awareness or help the women of Afghanistan? I am thankful to the organizations and individuals who take their time to spread awareness however it cannot stop there. We must act! Now is the time, never tomorrow!

In central Africa where rape has been widely documented as a weapon of war, no funding towards preventing these war crimes was recorded at all. how long will you make the women and girls wait for what you have promised? How long will the Men who engage in these crimes profit off the women's pain? How long will you allow them to prosper within the system of patriarchy? When will it end? when will you end it?

In 2015 all the countries in the world committed the sustainable development goals by 2030, however achieving gender equality requires sufficient investment. According to Focus 2030 no country has reached the international target of directing at least 85% of its ODA to gender equality. However, between 2021 and 2022 ODA with gender equality rose by 19%. In August 2021 France enacted a new law to frame its development aid policy. This means that 75% financed by French ODA should have gender equality by 2025 resulting in four times the amount from 2021.

Change is happening for the better, only because action is taking place, that is why advocating for the rights of women and girls around the world will not stop. It will not stop until gender equality is achieved, until women will never be denied of their rights, stripped of their freedom, and be undermined despite their brilliance. It all starts somewhere, and it is high time for all of us, together to reach out our hands to all the women around the world and pull them out of the oppression and dangers that surround them and completely overrule the patriarchy and inequality that exists.

It may seem as though it is too late for change and to reform this system that many have come to accept however I believe in growth. I believe in the future where women around the world will be free. A world where a man and a woman can stand side by side as equals free from judgement. To all those whose hearts and minds I have reached you may not remember my face, but you will remember this speech and you will never forget these words by John Maxwell “Change is inevitable, but Growth is optional.”

Thank you.