

We've won! We've lost!

by Juliet Hunt

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Photo Credit: *Violaine Martin/UN Geneva/Flickr*

We fought long and hard to have our voices heard

Through the years, we struggled and learned

We made alliances with those in power

We found the feminists in government camps,

And some of us worked hard from within

We searched our souls and our lives

To make sure we walked the talk

Human rights, a family and a world without violence

We marched side by side and spoke our truth

We believed the rhetoric of partnership

We danced the logframe tango, we did the M&E

And we remember those feminists, women and men

Who created a space for us

We took that space, we defined it, we were credible

We believed in ourselves, we believed in them!

We changed the space, we changed our world,

We won!

Resources for gender equality!

Money to address men's violence against women

Policies, money, theories of change, money, research, money

Value for money, outcomes – demonstrate or die.

But you need them all, and in proper order, with diagrams!

Short-term, medium-term, long-term, what-next-term?

Spoon-feed them – social change is NOT linear!

Change is MESSY – that is the point of the theory of change.

What you count now, may not really count.

Are the feminists within crowded out by gender experts?

Experts, more experts – but whose knowledge counts?

We fought against controlling behaviour by men,

To be controlled? Never believe anyone who calls themselves an expert.

There is a new game to learn, new boxes to tick,

The goal posts move – and they move with each new guru

If it looks like colonialism, smells like it, tastes like it, FEELS like it

It IS colonialism!

Yes, it dresses as gender expertise,

It masquerades as neutral, technical and professional

It has years of experience in many countries, here and there

“We are doing this to make you stronger”

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Smash the pretence – it is patronising, it is colonialism!

Do this, it makes no sense – or you don't get the money.

Thank me, ask me for advice, keep quiet – or you don't get the money.

Change your analysis, anything can be “best practice” – just don't criticise them!

Whose experience counts? Whose knowledge counts?

We've lost!

This poem was prompted by Gordon Peake's [post](#) 'Aid's implementariat: national and invisible'.

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Link: <https://devpolicy.org/weve-won-weve-lost-20201216/>