



**OXFAM**

Canada

**CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW**

July 2016



**THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CANADA TO SCALE UP ITS GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY**







Decades of experience with development partners around the world have taught Oxfam Canada that ending global poverty begins with women's rights.

Led by a feminist Prime Minister, and with a new commitment to bringing a feminist lens to all international assistance, Canada has an opportunity to become a global leader by pioneering an approach that truly tackles the root causes of poverty and inequality.

A feminist approach has the power to transform societies. Such an approach must build women's agency and challenge systemic inequality, unjust power systems, and discriminatory norms, laws, policies, and institutions at all levels. It must also emphasize learning, collaboration, participation, inclusivity, and responsiveness in its processes and partnerships.

As co-chair of the Women's Rights Policy Group, and as an organization with longstanding experience with feminist policy and programming, Oxfam Canada makes the following recommendations to Canada's International Assistance Review. They focus first and foremost on how to strengthen Canada's leadership on women's rights and gender equality, and how to effectively mainstream a feminist approach throughout the thematic policy priorities outlined in the Minister's discussion paper.

To seize this game-changing moment, Global Affairs should begin by making women's rights and gender equality a thematic priority in its own right. It should then earmark \$100 million annually to support women's organizations and feminist movements, and set out a timetable to ensure that 20% of ODA is dedicated to addressing the structural determinants of inequality and gender-based discrimination.

If implemented, these recommendations will help Canada truly walk the talk on women's rights and gender equality, and provide invaluable support for a much-needed global movement for change.



Julie Delahanty

Executive Director, Oxfam Canada



# OVERVIEW OF OXFAM CANADA'S RECOMMENDATIONS



## STRENGTHEN FOCUS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

- Make women's rights and gender equality a standalone thematic pillar to address the structural determinants of inequality and discrimination.
- Allocate 20% of ODA to advancing women's rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment.
- Establish a \$100 million annual funding envelope to support women's rights organizations, feminist **networks**, and women's movements.
- Adopt a policy to guide how Global Affairs will apply a feminist lens, and commit to adopting feminist **Monitoring & Evaluation** methodologies.
- Mandate that all development and humanitarian projects have at least one well-resourced intermediate level outcome that addresses gender inequality.
- Instate more open-scope calls for proposals and create long-term, predictable funding mechanisms.

## DELIVERING RESULTS

- Reverse cuts to ODA and announce a plan to achieve the UN 0.7% target.
- Fund initiatives that use digital technology to promote accountability and shift social norms.
- Increase investments in sex-disaggregated data collection systems.
- Support civil society and fund policy & advocacy initiatives.
- Foster intersectional collaboration by creating more flexible funding streams.
- Further engage Canadians in the 2030 Agenda by allocating funds for public engagement, supporting coalition initiatives, and exploring innovative ways to catalyze Canadian philanthropy.
- Invest in and facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration.



# RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN 5 PROPOSED THEMATIC PILLARS



## HEALTH AND RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

- Close the gaps in the Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Initiative by scaling up funding for comprehensive SRHR services, investing in advocacy, focusing on adolescents and young people, and addressing the root causes of poor maternal health outcomes.



## CLEAN ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Ensure climate financing is new and additional to ODA, earmark at least 50% for adaptation, and prioritize work with women and vulnerable populations.
- Commit resources to resilience building and disaster risk reduction.
- Increase spending on sustainable agriculture, with a focus on rural women.



## GOVERNANCE, PLURALISM, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- Support gender-responsive budgeting and national women's rights capacity.
- Champion tax justice as part of Canada's approach to development.



## PEACE AND SECURITY

- Increase aid for gender equality in the peace and security sector and in post-conflict settings, and support women's organizations in fragile contexts.
- Ensure the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security is well designed and implemented.
- Link climate change to the peace and security agenda.



## RESPONDING TO HUMANITARIAN CRISES

- Formalize the use of gender markers across humanitarian interventions, and address women and girls' sexual and reproductive health needs in all humanitarian responses.
- Require sex-disaggregated data in all emergency response initiatives, strengthen capacity of partner governments on Gender in Emergencies, and provide training on Gender Based Violence Guidelines.
- Ensure funding mechanisms can respond to slow-onset and displacement-related crises.
- Recognize local civil society and women's organizations as valuable humanitarian partners, and pilot a Call for Proposals on Feminist Humanitarian Response.



## INTRODUCTION

Oxfam understands that to find lasting solutions to poverty, we must tackle what drives it: exclusion and inequality. Systematic discrimination against women and girls, in particular, is both a cause and a result of the inequality that drives poverty. Gender justice is therefore crucial to ending poverty and inequality.

Led by a feminist Prime Minister, and with a new commitment to a feminist approach to international assistance, Canada has an opportunity to become a global leader on women's rights and gender equality.

**GLOBAL AFFAIRS SHOULD SEIZE THIS GAME-CHANGING MOMENT TO SCALE UP ITS COMMITMENT TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY. IT CAN DO SO BY MAKING WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY A THEMATIC PRIORITY IN ITS OWN RIGHT, ENSURING THAT 20% OF ODA IS DEDICATED TO ADDRESSING THE STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS OF INEQUALITY AND GENDER-BASED**

**DISCRIMINATION, AND EARMARKING \$100 MILLION ANNUALLY TO SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND FEMINIST MOVEMENTS.**

A feminist approach is fundamentally new; it is not simply about improving upon what has been done. It's about being bold in our ambition to move the needle forward. It's about rethinking how we work and who we work with. It's about walking the talk and ensuring that our financial commitments match our level of ambition.

This will not be easy. Inequality is entrenched in all societies, and patriarchal systems and attitudes are the norm. A cultural shift towards equality requires significant resources and time. The approach will have its critics, but a feminist approach has the power to truly transform societies.

Oxfam knows that people's lives are improved when they are empowered to demand their basic rights, turn the trend of inequality, and create their own solutions together. To achieve this, we must support people, organizations, and alliances to work together



to drive change and hold duty-bearers to account. Since women often face the greatest barriers to setting their own agendas, Oxfam recommends a rights-based, transformative approach to strengthen women and girls' capacity to mobilize their own power and that of others.

The timing could not be better. Women's rights work is sorely underfunded, with Canada itself a below-average donor in recent years. Political backlash continues to prevent the advancement of women's rights, from the municipal level to global policy-making. And yet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development hinges on women's empowerment as a pre-condition for ending poverty and inequality, as exemplified by a standalone goal on gender equality (goal 5) and gender equality mainstreamed across all other goals.

By embracing a feminist approach, Canada can take this one step further – tackling unequal gendered power relations as a core strategy to bring about transformational change. With decisive action and investment, Canada can become a frontrunner in pioneering a feminist approach to development, joining only a small handful of other countries who have pledged to take this on.

Integrity and coherence are fundamental to feminist work. It is therefore difficult to look at a feminist approach to international assistance in isolation from a whole-of-government approach. Canada should ultimately adopt a feminist foreign policy that underpins its efforts and activities in international assistance, foreign relations, development and trade.

For the purposes of this review process, our submission focuses upon international assistance, and is based upon our conviction that Canada's development endeavours must be reinforced, not undermined, by our diplomatic and trade efforts. The universality of the 2030 Agenda also urges us to reflect on the domestic implementation of the SDGs, and the learnings we can draw from Canada's development experience and feminist programming, connecting local and global movements for change.

Oxfam Canada's submission focuses upon the need for Canada to scale up its commitment and fill the funding gap for women's rights and gender equality. We also provide a number of targeted recommendations in relation to the five thematic policy priorities outlined in the Minister's discussion paper, as well as additional recommendations for how Canada can best deliver on results.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN FOCUS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY**

Oxfam Canada is co-chair of the Women's Rights Policy Group, a civil society coalition that organized a full-day event on *A Feminist Approach to Canada's International Assistance* on July 5th, 2016 in Ottawa as part of the informal IAR consultations. Many of the following recommendations emerged from that dialogue, as well as from Oxfam's longstanding experience with feminist policy analysis, programming, and monitoring & evaluation.

### **RECOMMENDATION: ADOPT A POLICY TO GUIDE HOW GLOBAL AFFAIRS WILL APPLY A FEMINIST LENS TO ITS INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE, AND COMMIT TO ADOPTING FEMINIST MONITORING AND EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES ACROSS THE DEPARTMENT.**

Canada's feminist approach must seek to address the root causes of structural and systemic inequalities and transform systems of power, many of which are grounded in social constructions of gender and patriarchal attempts to control women's bodies and choices. Central to the implementation of a feminist approach are intersectionality and agency.

Intersectionality is a framework that recognizes the multiple aspects of identity that play out in our lives and experiences, such as class or race, and that compound and exacerbate oppression and marginalization. It also challenges us to expand our understanding of gender beyond binaries and stereotypes. Adopting an intersectional approach allows us to identify and address complex contexts, and formulate strategies to best meet the needs of those who are intended to benefit from initiatives.

Agency is an individual or group's ability to make choices, and to transform those choices into desired outcomes. Feminist agency includes principles of autonomy, choice, empowerment, and meaningful engagement. Agency allows us to recognize that individuals are experts and knowledge holders in their own right.

A feminist lens is not just about results, but process. Fundamental to feminist process are integrity, contextualization, learning, collaboration, participation, inclusivity and responsiveness. In practice, a feminist lens must go hand in hand with a human rights-based approach to international assistance, as both frameworks position rights-holders (and their needs) at the center. This also means shifting from a 'supply' driven approach which prioritizes service delivery, to a 'demand' driven approach that positions individuals' needs and realities at the center of all initiatives. Ultimately, a feminist approach must challenge systemic inequality, unjust power systems, discriminatory laws, policies and programs – at local, national, regional and global levels.

### **RECOMMENDATION: MAKE WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY A STANDALONE THEMATIC PILLAR TO ADDRESS THE STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS OF INEQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION.**

A focus on the "health and rights of women and children", as currently articulated in the International Assistance Review discussion paper, is too broad to allow either "rights" or "health" the prominence they deserve. Conflating these two themes also preserves an outmoded social welfare approach to women's rights that is counter to a feminist approach.

When gender mainstreaming is the sole institutional mechanism to advance equality, only some dimensions of the discrimination that women experience are addressed – for example as mothers, as entrepreneurs, or as farmers. In line with the SGGs, a standalone pillar creates the space for programming that addresses women's rights holistically. It supports women to define their own agendas, increase their capacity to work on issues that they themselves have prioritized, strengthen their organizations, and build movements for social change. Without resourcing for this agenda-setting work, key structural issues affecting women in poverty will go unaddressed.

Experts worldwide agree that the most effective way to achieve gender equality is through a twin-track approach, combining dedicated resources for women's rights with a robust system for mainstreaming gender across all sectors. Oxfam's confederation-wide Strategic Plan, [The Power of People against Poverty](#), takes this approach because of the recognition that a standalone focus on women's rights and gender equality is most likely to

foster the political commitment, necessary internal buy-in, accountability, and resources to create sustainable and effective action. Mainstreaming efforts are also far more likely to succeed if complemented by the leadership, visibility, and expertise that a standalone focus brings.

Throughout the negotiation of the post-2015 agenda, UN Women and women's rights organizations from around the globe clearly articulated that a standalone pillar should focus on the structural determinants of gender-based inequality that impede women's empowerment, agency, and the full realization of their rights. Canada can demonstrate leadership by addressing global funding gaps for women's rights and gender equality, and ensuring that this pillar focuses on the structural drivers of inequality. Areas of focus of this pillar should include:

- Creating the systems and an enabling environment which promote women's agency, voice, and decision-making power in public and private spheres.
- Addressing the pandemic of violence against women by looking holistically at gender discrimination in all its forms (including social norms, laws, policies and institutions) and providing services to survivors.
- Supporting women's transformative leadership, advocacy work, and movement building.
- Investing in expanding women and girls' capabilities, resources, opportunities, and collective organizing.
- Building national capacities to advance women's rights through gender-responsive public services and gender-budgeting, support to local women's movements and organizations, and increased capacity for strong monitoring and sex-disaggregated data collection.
- Investing in advancing women's civil and political rights by supporting programs on women's political participation, involvement in decision making, freedom of expression and assembly, decent work, collective bargaining and access to justice.



**RECOMMENDATION: CLOSE THE FUNDING GAP FOR WOMEN’S RIGHTS BY ENSURING THAT 20 PERCENT OF ALL AID INVESTMENTS HAVE AS THEIR PRINCIPAL FOCUS ADVANCING WOMEN’S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY, AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT.**

Canada was historically a leader in the field of gender equality, establishing an international reputation through its advocacy on women’s rights, its support to women’s organizations, and its pioneering work in organizational gender policy. In recent years however, Canada has cut its overall aid budget and has devoted ever less ODA to promoting women’s rights. Only 1-2 % of Canada’s aid budget has been allocated to programs that are specifically designed to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment over the past five years.<sup>1</sup>

Global Affairs should set out a clear timetable to achieve a 20% of ODA spending target within the next 5 years.

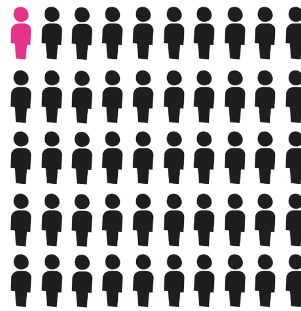
**RECOMMENDATION: MANDATE THAT ALL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROJECTS HAVE AT LEAST ONE WELL-RESOURCED INTERMEDIATE LEVEL OUTCOME THAT ADDRESSES STRUCTURAL GENDER INEQUALITIES, AND PUT IN PLACE ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS TO ENSURE THAT THIS STANDARD IS MET ACROSS THE DEPARTMENT.**

Global Affairs’ Gender Equality Action Plan Reports for 2010-2014 stressed the need for both targeted interventions (standalone pillar) as well as mainstreaming. However, the department’s approach to gender equality integration has had mediocre results at best.

Gender equality mainstreaming is an important strategy to address inequality, increase targeted programming for transformative change, and address root causes of gender inequality through an intersectional power analysis. Measures to ensure the success of mainstreaming throughout Global Affairs include:

**GLOBAL AFFAIRS SPEND ON GENDER EQUALITY**

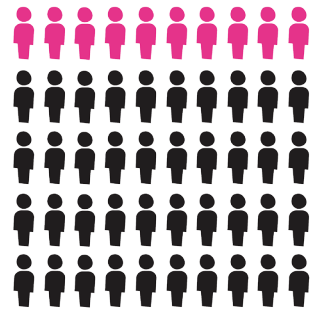
2013-2014



**1.98%**

**WHAT WE ARE ASKING FOR**

BY 2021



**20%**

- Investing in increased Gender Equality/ Women’s Rights capacity, ensuring staff are trained and that gender equality is incorporated into performance management systems, and nurturing high level leadership.
- Ensuring that gender experts are key members of program design teams (in the case of Calls for Proposals and RFPS) and proposal review teams (in the case of unsolicited proposals).
- Empowering staff at Global Affairs to turn down project proposals that do not meet minimum standards in terms of advancing gender equality.
- Focusing on the transformational aspect of mainstreaming rather than simply the integration of basic gender equality indicators. Programs must address power imbalances and move beyond percentages of female participants alone.
- Developing and empowering complex gender equality expertise in all thematic areas at Global Affairs and creating space for dialogue and learning with civil society and partners.
- Learning from past experiences through research, programming, and knowledge management. One mechanism to achieve this is through unsolicited proposals, which enable partners and beneficiaries to build programs based on experience.
- Including activities and funds to conduct gender capacity assessments and gender strengthening of program partners. See [The Power of Gender-Just Organizations: A Toolkit for Transformative Capacity Building](#).

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Statistical Reports on International Assistance, as compiled by CCIC

**RECOMMENDATION: ESTABLISH A \$100 MILLION ANNUAL FUNDING ENVELOPE DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS, FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS, AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS.**

Despite their tireless work to challenge discriminatory social norms, raise consciousness, and build collective strategies for change, women's rights organizations receive very little support from governments and donors. It is estimated that autonomous women's organizations and institutions that work to advance gender equality (even including UN Women) receive less than 0.4% of all official development assistance.<sup>1</sup> While donors have recognized the importance of "investing in women and girls", this trend has unfortunately not translated into meaningful and sustainable new funding for women's rights organizations themselves. Canada itself only dedicated \$3 million to women's rights organizations in 2013-14, whereas Norway, with a similar aid budget, dedicated \$93 million.<sup>2</sup>

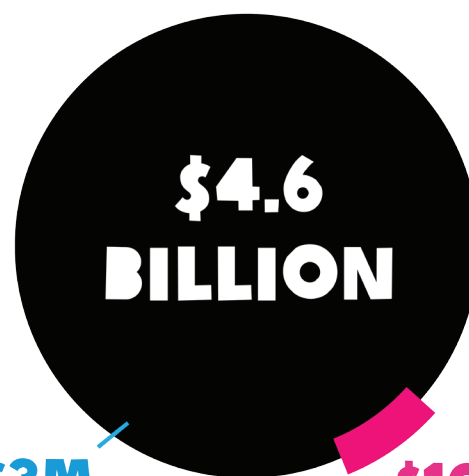
And yet, evidence confirms that these organizations and movements are fundamental in catalyzing change towards gender equality. For example, a global study conducted over four decades across 70 countries revealed that the mobilization of feminist movements is the most important factor in making progress towards ending violence against women at the national level – more important than GDP, progressive politics, or even the number of women politicians.<sup>3</sup>

Canada can play a unique role in providing significant funding to support women's rights organizations that are best placed to help women strategize and mobilize to advance their rights. Women and girls contribution to emergency response and peace building are undervalued and under-resourced, warranting a specific emphasis on funding women's rights organizations in fragile states, in conflict and humanitarian settings, and in non-traditional sectors. This should include grassroots women's organizations and movements that represent women from marginalized groups (young women, LGBTI,

<sup>1</sup> OECD. "Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Statistics based on DAC Members' reporting on the Gender Equality Policy Marker, 2013-2014". March 2016

<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> OECD. "Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Statistics based on DAC Members' reporting on the Gender Equality Policy Marker, 2013-2014". March 2016

<sup>3</sup> Mala Htun and S. Laurel Weldon, (2012) "The civic origins of progressive policy change: combatting violence against women in a global perspective, 1975-2005", American Political Science Review, 106 (3): pp. 548-569.



**\$3M**  
**GAC FUNDING TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS**

**\$100M**  
**WHAT WE ARE ASKING FOR**

women with disabilities and with HIV/AIDS, etc.)

Funding for women's rights organizations and movements should not be thematically anchored. It should instead support an integrated approach by funding feminist and women's rights organizations working on a variety of structural issues – including the crucial work of changing norms, attitudes, and behaviors. Funding should be made available for the full range of work these organizations do – service provision, awareness raising and advocacy, research and policy influencing, and networking and mobilizing – in addition to organizational capacity building to increase sustainability and impact. Core, flexible, and multi-year funding should be a priority, to enable women to define their own agendas, increase their capacity to work on issues that they themselves have prioritized, strengthen their organizations, and build movements for social change.

**RECOMMENDATION: IMPROVE EXISTING FUNDING SYSTEMS TO FOSTER STRONG FEMINIST PARTNERS IN CANADA BY INSTATING MORE OPEN-SCOPE CALLS FOR PROPOSALS AND CREATING LONG-TERM PREDICTABLE FUNDING MECHANISMS.**

Funding for feminist programming from GAC used to be more readily available, predictable, and flexible. This is no longer the case, and this backsliding must be reversed. There are a number of key simple changes which can be made to remove barriers for partners with the capacity to conduct feminist initiatives. Many of these are related to the new



'Authorized Programming Process' and the Calls for Proposals approach. These prioritize programming designed by Global Affairs over programming designed and led by local communities, which respond to local contexts at the appropriate moments. By closing down all communication prior to project approval, this process also eliminates any opportunity for collaboration or mutual learning. The combination of limited-scope calls for proposals, the high cost-share requirements for Partnership for Development Innovation programming, and long delays in project review and approvals lead to a difficult dynamic for feminist programming and prudent financial management.

Creating long-term, predictable, and responsive funding mechanisms would ultimately facilitate the

fostering of strong feminist partners for Global Affairs to work with. This could be done by:

- reviewing funding modalities so as to reduce the use of Requests for Proposals;
- standardizing certain information requirements for applications, particularly around budgets;
- ensuring more timely decision making and signing of contracts;
- instating an ICR policy of at least 12% so that NGOs can adequately manage and absorb risk; and,
- creating a better balance between Canadian and multilateral aid recipients.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN 5 PROPOSED THEMATIC PILLARS



### HEALTH AND RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

#### RECOMMENDATION: CLOSE THE GAPS IN THE MATERNAL, NEWBORN AND CHILD HEALTH INITIATIVE.

Oxfam Canada is among the civil society organizations that sponsored the convening of the *Global challenges and opportunities for Canadian leadership on SRHR: A multi-stakeholder conversation* that was held in Ottawa on June 6 -7, 2016. We fully endorse the recommendations that emerged from that process, and would emphasize that Canada should follow through on its commitment to closing the gaps in its Maternal, Newborn and Child Health initiative by:

- Scaling up funding for comprehensive SRHR services, including safe abortion, post-abortion care and family planning / contraception, including in conflict and post-conflict settings.
- Investing in local, national, regional, and global civil advocacy by civil society groups and women's rights/ feminist organizations.

- Focusing on adolescents and young people by supporting comprehensive sexuality education, services tailored to adolescents' needs, and research on the barriers to adolescents' access to comprehensive SRHR health and services.
- Adopting a policy or strategy to guide the governments' efforts related to the advancement of SRHR.
- Addressing the root causes of poor maternal health outcomes such as gender inequality, social norms, violence against women, etc.





## CLEAN ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE



### RECOMMENDATION: ENSURE CLIMATE FINANCING IS NEW AND ADDITIONAL TO

### BUDGETED ODA, EARMARK AT LEAST 50% FOR ADAPTATION, AND PRIORITIZE WORK WITH WOMEN AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.

The implementation of the SDGs and the implementation of the Paris Agreement are linked. For both agendas to be met, climate adaptation efforts focused on the poorest and most vulnerable, particularly women, must take center stage. This is key to fulfilling the SDG ambition of leaving no one behind.

A portion of Canada's climate financing should be allocated to women-specific targeted interventions. This would be best achieved by directing more funding to civil society and women's rights organizations working on community-based adaptation, rather channeling it through multilaterals. Adaptation funding must also be made available in the form of grants, not loans; and funding channeled through multilateral agency must be more stringently monitored and results reported, especially in light of Canada's commitment to feminist programming.

Canada should recognize, value, and invest in women's capacity for climate change adaptation and risk mitigation. This means supporting initiatives to increase the active participation of women in decision-making processes around climate change – from the local to the international level. Canada should insist that at least one third of the boards of all key multilateral climate change be filled by women, and that rural women are able to access funds for climate change adaptation.

See report: [Governing Climate Funds: What Will Work for Women?](#)

### RECOMMENDATION: COMMIT RESOURCES TO RESILIENCE BUILDING AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION.

There are links between climate change and humanitarian crises such as natural disasters and conflicts. It is important to address the underlying

risk factors that lead to disasters and conflicts and the factors that decrease communities' ability to withstand them. Canada should commit resources to resilience building and disaster risk reduction, find a clear home for this work within Global Affairs, and put in place agile funding mechanisms to support disaster recovery work that integrates DRR and resilience perspectives.

Technical disaster risk reduction and resilience projects should go hand-in-hand with efforts to shift attitudes and beliefs about gender, and challenge cultural stereotypes that reinforce women's inferior social status and exacerbate their vulnerability to shocks and stresses. These should include projects to build women's leadership and self-confidence, raise awareness about women's rights, and promote women's economic empowerment.

See for example, [Gender, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Climate Change Adaptation: A Learning Companion](#) and [Resilience in Times of Food Insecurity: Reflecting on the Experience of Women's Organizations](#).

### RECOMMENDATION: INCREASE SPENDING ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, WITH A FOCUS ON RURAL WOMEN.

Women are disproportionately vulnerable to climate change but they can also play a key role in implementing solutions. Women produce much of the food that feeds people in developing countries. If they were given equal access to land, resources and opportunities, their production could soar. As smallholder farmers, they are also often at the forefront of maintaining the world's biodiversity, including agricultural biodiversity, which are for climate resilience.

Canada should increase spending on sustainable agriculture and support programs that specifically aim to ensure that women food producers have equal access to land, resources, and opportunities. This should include programs that support women's cooperatives and rural women's associations who are uniquely placed to reach out and provide support to women farmers, so that they may increase yields, food security and income from agriculture.





SORAW





## GOVERNANCE, PLURALISM, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

### RECOMMENDATION: CHAMPION TAX JUSTICE AS PART OF CANADA'S APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT.

Canada can tackle growing inequality by working on fiscal governance and taxation issues. One of the driving forces behind growing inequality is the political influence of economic elites. As a result, many governments do a poor job of collecting taxes owed by rich individuals and companies. Developing country governments are losing billions of dollars that should be spent on social services to reduce poverty and inequality. Furthermore, when governments cannot raise enough revenue from wealthy individuals and corporations, they hike other taxes, such as consumer taxes. These taxes are considered regressive because they apply to everyone equally regardless of their income, and therefore have a disproportionate impact on the poor and on women. See for example, [Women and the 1%: How Extreme Inequality and Gender Inequality Must Be Tackled together](#).

This issue is at the nexus of development and finance and will need to be tackled by both departments working together. Concrete roles for Canada's development ministry include championing the inclusion of developing countries in global tax reform and governance processes, and supporting tax policy reforms in developing countries

that shift the tax burden from labor and consumption to capital and wealth. [It's Time to End Extreme Inequality](#).

### RECOMMENDATION: SUPPORT GENDER- RESPONSIVE BUDGETING AND NATIONAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS CAPACITY.

A country's budget can be a lever for social transformation. Gender-responsive budgeting is a powerful tool to address inequality. It ensures that gender equality and women's rights priorities are reflected in policy discussions, backed by resources, and result in robust programs that address women's needs.

Canada should support developing country governments to undertake gender-responsive budgeting to ensure that gender inequality is addressed in all stages of the budget cycle, and to identify policies and budget allocations that could address these inequalities. See [Making Women Count: the Unequal Economics of Women's Work](#) for additional recommendations.

As part of its new feminist approach to international assistance, Global Affairs should consult with local women's rights organizations to determine when and whether it is strategic to support national women's machineries with technical capacity and resources. This was a much-lauded and effective component of Canada's approach to gender and development in past decades, and should be re-adopted.





## PEACE AND SECURITY

### RECOMMENDATION: INCREASE AID FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN THE PEACE AND

### SECURITY SECTOR AND IN POST-CONFLICT SETTINGS, AND SUPPORT LOCAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS.

There is strong evidence that including women in decision-making and supporting gender-equitable societies lead to greater peace. Canada's emphasis on women's rights, re-engagement with the multilateral system, peacekeeping, and peace building offers multiple entry points to be a leader on the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Canada should actively support the full participation of women in conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peace building, and recovery, and support initiatives to address conflict-related sexual violence.

Canada should show leadership among donors by ensuring that its contribution to the peace and security sector puts women's rights at the center. Canada should ensure that at least 15% of all projects it funds in post-conflict settings specifically address women's needs, advance gender equality, and empower women. Canada should also strengthen and support local women's organizations working in fragile contexts. These organizations require core funding that is flexible, predictable (multi-year) and significant.

### RECOMMENDATION: ENSURE THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY IS WELL DESIGNED AND IMPLEMENTED.

The new National Action Plan on WPS should include a strong policy mandate with clear crosswalks to all of Canada's actions and policies in conflict-affected and fragile states (including conflict prevention, extractives, climate change, preventing violent extremism, peacekeeping, etc.), clear outputs and indicators, strong public accountability, and a dedicated budget that is supported by a constructive relationship with civil society.

### RECOMMENDATION: LINK CLIMATE CHANGE TO PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA.

Resource scarcity caused by climate change can increase competition and tension over land and lead to violent conflict. Root causes of peace and security issues, such as inequality and climate change, must therefore be considered in this pillar.







## HUMANITARIAN AID

### **RECOMMENDATION: FORMALIZE THE USE OF GENDER MARKERS ACROSS ALL PHASES**

### **OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS, AND ADDRESS WOMEN AND GIRLS' SEXUAL HEALTH AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH NEEDS IN ALL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES.**

Canada has been commended for its work to incorporate gender equality in its humanitarian assistance, playing a leadership role in the field of Gender in Emergencies. Global Affairs Canada can consolidate this leadership by requiring that gender markers be integrated across all phases of the humanitarian programs it funds (context analysis, needs assessments, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation). The use of gender markers should focus on quality rather than a tick-the-box approach.

Gender-based violence should be integrated into the gender markers for all projects, and the full range of women and girls' SRHR needs should be assessed and addressed in all humanitarian responses, from the very start.

### **RECOMMENDATION: PLAY A GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ROLE IN PROMOTING A GENDER IN EMERGENCIES APPROACH BY REQUIRING SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA IN ALL EMERGENCY RESPONSE INITIATIVES THAT CANADA FUNDS, STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF PARTNER GOVERNMENTS, AND PROVIDING TRAINING ON GBV GUIDELINES.**

Lack of attention to the gendered impacts of crises, including sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, is still a weakness in the humanitarian system despite a myriad of guidelines, toolkits and resolutions. Canada can play an important role in ensuring that a Gender in Emergencies approach is well implemented in the field through project monitoring and other accountability mechanisms. Canada should require sex disaggregated data in all emergency response initiatives it funds.





Global Affairs should work to strengthen the capacity of partner governments to address gender equality and gender-based violence in national disaster risk reduction, resilience, preparedness, and response strategies and programs. Global Affairs should provide funding for training on the Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action.

### **RECOMMENDATION: ENSURE FUNDING MECHANISMS CAN RESPOND TO SLOW-ONSET AND DISPLACEMENT-RELATED CRISES.**

The funds that Canada annually makes available to respond to chronic crises, as well as the Canadian Humanitarian Assistance Fund (CHAF), are disbursed via two well-designed funding mechanisms which enable organizations to respond to chronic or small rapid onset crises that would otherwise be difficult to raise funds for. Few other global donors offer these types of much-needed funding mechanisms, and Oxfam commends Global Affairs for this approach.

However, Global Affairs remains slow to fund slow-onset crises (such as the El Niño drought for example) or new displacement crises (such as the Burundian displacement crisis in Tanzania, Rwanda and the DRC) that affect hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people. Global Affairs Canada should expand the CHAF or create new flexible and responsive funding mechanisms to intervene in slow-onset and displacement-related humanitarian crises for which stable multi-year funding is required. Global Affairs should also create funding mechanisms for disaster risk reduction and resilience. Proposal review processes and decisions for slow-onset crises and DRR initiatives should be swift and timely, just as they would be for humanitarian responses.

Given the rising scale of humanitarian disasters and the changing nature of needs, Canada should also invest in Global Affairs' capacity to engage in global humanitarian reform discussions.

### **RECOMMENDATION: RECOGNIZE, SUPPORT, AND EMPOWER LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AS HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS, AND PILOT A CALL FOR PROPOSALS ON FEMINIST HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE.**

The global humanitarian system is overstretched, investing inadequately in risk reduction and prevention, and providing assistance that is often insufficient, inappropriate, and late. Humanitarian action led by governments in crisis affected countries, assisted and held accountable by civil society, is usually faster and more appropriate, saving more lives and alleviating the suffering of many more men, women, and children. Yet only a small fraction of humanitarian assistance goes directly to local actors.

Canada can help [Turn the Humanitarian System on Its Head](#) by supporting locally led humanitarian action whenever possible; providing adequate funding to state and civil society actors in affected countries; and fostering stronger partnerships between international and local actors. It can also fund multi-year programs to build the capacity of local organizations so they can then engage most effectively in disaster risk reduction, resilience building, and emergency response.

As part of an effort to increase space for civil society in emergency contexts, Canada should promote the voice and agency of women in humanitarian delivery and response, and recognize women's organizations as valuable humanitarian partners. It can do so by providing funding to work with local women's groups who can lead and/or support humanitarian assistance and protection, in a way that is flexible, predictable and multi-year. See for example, [A Critical Analysis of the Humanitarian Response Approach of Central American Women's Rights Organizations](#).

Canada has the opportunity to become a knowledge leader in humanitarian and recovery interventions with a strong focus on women. GAC should provide funding for innovation and broader evaluation agendas as an element of humanitarian response. Launching a Feminist Response Fund would be a clear signal of GAC's intention to explore new ways of addressing humanitarian crises. In partnership with Canadian organizations, GAC should develop a common research and learning agenda to foster innovation. Areas of learning could include protection in crises, women and humanitarian action and innovative responses and practices. As a first step, Global Affairs should pilot a Call for Proposals on Feminist Humanitarian Response.



# RECOMMENDATIONS ON DELIVERING RESULTS

## RECOMMENDATION: REVERSE CUTS TO ODA AND ANNOUNCE A PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE UN 0.7% TARGET.

Greater impact requires greater investment. Canada should increase ODA and announce a long-term plan for achieving the UN aid target of 0.7 % of Gross National Income, a goal endorsed in June 2005 by all parties in the Canadian Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

## RECOMMENDATION: FUND INITIATIVES THAT USE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY AND SHIFT SOCIAL NORMS.

Global Affairs should support initiatives that use innovative digital technologies to strengthen the ability of social movements and civil society to hold government accountable as a means of promoting on transparency and effectiveness. This could entail investing in innovative approaches for publishing and disseminating crucial public information at the country level – both by governments and civil society.

There is an important cultural role for communications technologies to play in shifting norms and behaviors. For example, Oxfam feminist partners in Latin America have used telenovelas to shift attitudes towards gender based violence, and Oxfam has used reality-TV shows in Eastern Africa to help raise visibility and counter stereotypes about women farmers.

## RECOMMENDATION: INCREASE INVESTMENTS IN SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION SYSTEMS.

There is a severe shortage of sex-disaggregated data. In many areas, data simply doesn't exist. And where it does, it often misses women and girls entirely or undercounts and undervalues their economic and social contributions to their families, communities, and countries. As part of its commitment to develop high-quality and open national statistics, Canada should invest in building capacity in sex-disaggregated data collection and

analysis.

Global Affairs Canada should also commit to improving its own data collection. As a first step, Global Affairs Canada should perform a department-wide performance assessment of its Policy on Gender Equality, which has not been carried out comprehensively since 2006. This would be a means to both renew Global Affairs Canada's commitment to the policy by demonstrating accountability, and would provide valuable data on the department's track record in collecting sex-disaggregated data, in light of improving on it.

Oxfam Canada encourages GAC to explore the integration of Feminist MEL concepts and approaches to ensure program approaches align with the new, transformational objectives of a feminist approach.

## RECOMMENDATION: SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY AND FUND POLICY & ADVOCACY INITIATIVES.

The SDGs require political fixes, not only technical ones. Canada will therefore be more effective if it supports citizens to do policy and advocacy work and to claim their rights, than if it focusses on service delivery work alone.

In every country context, civil society space is a critical enabler in the fight against poverty and the pursuit of social justice. Yet in recent years there has been an alarming trend with many governments imposing laws and restrictions that limit the space for civil society to operate. Capacity building for civil society is essential for the success and sustainability of development interventions. Canada's aid investments should seek to empower citizens in all countries to organize, speak out against injustice, and claim their rights.

Global Affairs can do this by deliberately making funding available for projects that focus on supporting policy and advocacy work, civic participation, encouraging constructive dialogue between citizens and state authorities, and investing in building the core capacities of civil society organizations (specifically women's rights organizations) in countries receiving development assistance from Canada.

Canada also has the opportunity to show leadership with other progressive nations by committing to making the protection of human rights defenders a foreign policy priority.

<sup>1</sup> Library of Parliament. "[In Brief: Official Development Assistance Spending](#)". Revised in May 2009.

Global Affairs Canada should release an action plan for how it will implement the Civil Society Partnership Policy, including a list of benchmarks, goals and targets, developed in consultation with civil society. The 2030 Agenda emphasizes that all development actors have a role to play. There should be better balance in Canadian ODA recipients between multilateral, bilateral, and civil society recipients.

### **RECOMMENDATION: FOSTER INTERSECTIONAL COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS BY CREATING MORE FLEXIBLE FUNDING STREAMS.**

The SDGs push us to look at intersectionality, and push us to break down thematic focuses and the long-term development/humanitarian divide. This will require new ways of working and new collaborations – a whole of government, whole of Canada strategy, working across different departments, with new stakeholders and in new partnerships. Global Affairs should build more flexibility into funding streams to encourage responsive and innovative programming and partnerships to test new ideas.

Global Affairs should ensure partners have greater access to Global Affairs' country strategies and policies, and these should be better informed by partners' lessons learned and experience in-country.

### **RECOMMENDATION: FURTHER ENGAGE CANADIANS IN THE 2030 AGENDA BY ALLOCATING FUNDS FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, SUPPORTING COALITION INITIATIVES TO REACH OUT TO CANADIANS, AND EXPLORING INNOVATIVE WAYS TO CATALYZE CANADIAN PHILANTHROPY.**

Increased investment in public engagement in Canada will help connect Agenda 2030 with Canadian realities, and help to increase Canadians' understanding of, and support for, international development efforts. Public engagement also plays a key role in creating global citizens and helping to forge more just, tolerant and peaceful societies.

Global Affairs should consult with development organizations (many of which have longstanding experience in public engagement and education) to clarify objectives and confirm a coherent approach for how our sector can best engage Canadians. This could result in a policy on public engagement, which is currently lacking. Calls for proposals should include funding allocations to incentivize organizations to

integrate public engagement and education into their program design.

Global Affairs should also explore how matching funds can help catalyze Canadian philanthropy to support specific underfunded yet crucial development priorities (such as violence against women, for example). It could also explore partnerships with other Canadian government ministries and agencies, both federal and provincial, to this effect.

Global Affairs Canada should build on the experience and continue to support coalition initiatives (such as the Humanitarian Coalition and the CAN-MNCH Network) which build coherence and increase the reach and impact of our sector's efforts to communicate with and engage Canadians.

### **INVEST IN AND FACILITATE KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COLLABORATION.**

To become a leader in feminist foreign policy and development, Canada needs to invest in knowledge sharing and collaboration. There is tremendous untapped knowledge throughout the sector. GAC should develop a knowledge sharing strategy for feminist development whose structural elements would include, among others: establishment and administration of a digital platform to promote connections between actors, and the free flow of ideas and knowledge; cross-organizational working groups to tackle big issues together; and an Annual Roundtable on Feminist Development.






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