



**Submission to the Government of Canada's
International Assistance Review**

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Foreword

The Government of Canada's International Assistance Review is taking place at a time of tremendous change, marked by significant shifts in the causes of poverty, inequality and instability around the world.

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), the [Paris Climate Change Agreement](#) and the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) together provide new impetus to develop more effective and durable approaches towards poverty eradication, and for fostering more prosperous and resilient communities.

Central to these new global agendas is an understanding that poverty and instability are caused by unequal power relations. Inequality exists both between and within countries. With 73 percent of the world's poor people living in middle-income countries,¹ for example, donors' traditional focus on low-income countries may not accurately reflect parallel shifts in challenges related to community health, economic inclusion, resilience, food and nutrition security. Meanwhile, in all countries, women continue to represent a vast population whose contributions to development, peace and good governance is well documented, but whose agency continues to be denied.

A new approach for reaching the world's poorest and most vulnerable, centred on efforts to address and reverse power imbalances, is needed. By refocussing its efforts on fostering a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities – between women and men, between power-holders and marginalised communities, and between countries – Canada can today lead new efforts to promote more inclusive social structures and institutions, more durable development outcomes, and a more stable and prosperous world.

The policy briefs that follow reflect the knowledge and expertise of professionals from across CARE International. These include leaders in the fields of gender equality and women's rights, global health and nutrition, food security and climate change, financial inclusion, and humanitarian assistance. Each brief presents key issues, analysis and recommendations aimed at informing coherent, evidence-based and results-driven international assistance policies. Properly implemented, the recommendations contained herein can help the Government of Canada become a global leader in advancing post-2015 international assistance objectives.

Diverse in their thematic orientation, however, the briefs that follow are united by a common, overarching message:

Reaching the world's poorest and most vulnerable in a world shaped by persistent inequalities, climate change, protracted crises, and a new universalist vision of global development, requires new approaches to international assistance aimed at transforming the social structures that perpetuate inequalities, investing in community resilience, and empowering the most marginalized people to be agents of change.

¹ World Bank. MIC Overview. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mic/overview>

Summary of Recommendations

Gender equality: Cornerstone of effective development 4

- 1. Establish gender equality as a standalone pillar, as well as a cross-cutting theme, of Canada’s international assistance policies 4
- 2. Strengthen internal capacity to support a feminist foreign policy, and to measure its results..... 5
- 3. Focus on long-term social, political and economic transformation 4
- 4. Adequately fund gender equality work, and women’s rights organizations 6

Health and rights of women and children..... 7

- 1. Involve women and youth in the design and delivery of all health-related services at local, national and global levels 7
- 2. Adopt evidence- and needs-based sexual and reproductive health and rights policies and programs, and champion sexual and reproductive rights worldwide 8
- 3. Ensure that a health equity perspective guides policy and programming decisions 8
- 4. Coordinate investments and policies within and between departments 8
- 5. Strengthen and improve the quality and resilience of national health systems 9

Women’s economic empowerment 10

- 1. Ensure financial inclusion for the most excluded women and girls.....10
- 2. Support women’s entrepreneurship11
- 3. Support integrated approaches to dignified work for women.....12

Inclusive agricultural growth, food security and resilience to climate change..... 13

- 1. Strengthen resilience among smallholder farmers through climate-smart and gender-responsive agriculture13
- 2. Promote innovation through farmer-centred, inclusive and participatory agricultural research and extension programs.....14
- 3. Promote efficient food systems that reduce post-harvest losses.....14
- 4. Promote alternative energy options for rural and urban women15

Governance, pluralism, diversity, and human rights 17

- 1. Promote collective action among poor and marginalized people, especially women and girls17

- 2. Work with power holders at all levels in the design and implementation of participatory local development plans that reflect demands put forward by poor and excluded social groups.....18

Responding to humanitarian crises 19

- 1. Protect civilians and humanitarian space, and uphold humanitarian principles19
- 2. Make predictable and timely financing the norm in all humanitarian contexts20
- 3. Scale-up successful models for investing in innovative partnerships20
- 4. Maintain and strengthen accountability to beneficiaries.....21
- 5. Integrate disaster risk reduction and resilience into humanitarian assistance21
- 6. Insist on the integration of gender equality in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all humanitarian responses.....22
- 7. Support INGOs to work in partnership and build capacity of national actors23

Delivering results: Improving effectiveness and transparency, innovation, and partnerships 25

- 1. Ensure coherence between foreign affairs, international trade, international development, humanitarian assistance, environment and climate change, and health25
- 2. Target social, political and economic transformation, while allowing long-term programs to adapt to changing circumstances26
- 3. Promote innovative global partnerships.....26
- 4. Ensure predictability, and encourage new ideas.....27
- 5. Foster accountability for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals27
- 6. Reinstate allowable annual allocations for public engagement27

Conclusion 29

Gender equality: Cornerstone of effective development

A feminist foreign policy means fostering long-term change in social norms and attitudes

The more people of all genders enjoy equal rights, the more a country is likely to be peaceful, resilient and prosperous.

Canada has a tradition of championing gender equality, both in its own policies and in its international diplomacy. Yet we have not always kept pace with the global gender equality conversation. Today, in the context of the [2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), Canada can reclaim a position of leadership in the promotion of gender equality worldwide.

The following recommendations are aimed at strengthening the structures, capacities, policies and financing that will allow the Government of Canada to establish a truly transformative, feminist foreign policy.

Establish gender equality as a standalone pillar, as well as a cross-cutting theme, of Canada's international assistance policies

The Government of Canada should establish gender equality as a development goal in and of itself, while ensuring gender equality is reflected in all its international assistance policies and programs.

When gender equality is addressed exclusively in combination with other issues – such as sexual and reproductive health and rights, or the rights of children and youth – it dilutes the focus given to each thematic priority while evoking a limited social welfare approach, rather than a feminist perspective. Contrariwise, research shows that when people of all genders are able to exercise their rights, interventions in other development areas also tend to be more effective and sustained. This wisdom, while not new, is increasingly reflected in global policy agendas. In 1979, for example, the [Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#) established women's rights as a development goal in and of itself. The [Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness](#) and the [2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) position gender equality as a standalone issue with specific targets and indicators, while also integrating gender equality into other areas of concern.

Focus on long-term social, political and economic transformation

The Government of Canada should invest in long-term, iterative, participatory and holistic programs aimed at changing social norms, attitudes and behaviours.

Gender and power relations are delicately entwined with our identities as individuals and as societies. Achieving true equality for all genders therefore requires changing social norms.² This

² Bryan, Elizabeth (Ed.) pp. 14. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/GenderEquity.pdf> (accessed on 25 July 2016).

involves shifting attitudes and behaviours, one individual at a time.³ Accordingly, programming must be iterative, participatory and holistic. Such approaches foster national governments' support for, and involvement in, gender equality activities and results, while ensuring that the private sector and other enablers understand their role in supporting gender equality, and that people of all genders have the time to discover what it means to be part of a gender equal society.⁴ Longer-term programming also permits development partners to achieve more definitive demonstrations of change, thereby enabling reporting against the targets set out in the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

Strengthen internal capacity to support a feminist foreign policy, and to measure its results

The Government of Canada should strengthen its capacity for, and accountability to, gender transformation by:

- a. Using the objectives set out in the 1999 Gender Equality Policy Statement as the basis of a framework for structuring funding and measuring results across Global Affairs Canada; and,***
- b. Integrating gender-specific and gender equality impact goals at the highest levels of Global Affairs Canada's monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) systems, and clearly linking results to OECD DAC codes.***

In 1999, the Canadian International Development Agency adopted a Gender Equality Policy Statement containing three objectives that are highly compatible with a feminist foreign policy:

1. To advance women's equal participation with men as decision makers in shaping the sustainable development of their societies;
2. To support women and girls in the realization of their full human rights; and
3. To reduce gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development.⁵

New measures are needed that strengthen the Government's institutional capacity to deliver against these objectives.⁶ The establishment of a gender equality hub within Global

³ See: CARE International. "Woman Power in Sri Lanka" News, April 21, 2016, <http://www.care-international.org/news/stories-blogs/women-power-in-sri-lanka> (accessed July 15, 2016); Munyamaliza, Edouard. "Engaging men and boys in Rwanda." <http://insights.careinternational.org.uk/development-blog/conflict/engaging-men-and-boys-in-rwanda-as-partners-in-ending-sexual-violence?highlight=YToyOntpOjA7czo2OiJyd2FuZGEiO2k6MTtzOjY6ImdlbmRlcil7fQ> (accessed July 15, 2016); and CARE International in Egypt. "Women's Rights Program Overview." http://www.care.org.eg/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=55&Itemid=95&lang=en (accessed July 15, 2016).

⁴ Independent evaluations of CARE's flagship work on gender-based violence in Sri Lanka and gender in peacebuilding in the Balkans, for example, show clear transformations in men's and policy makers' attitudes – but only after ten years of work. See, e.g.: CARE International. "Broadening gender: Why masculinities matter." http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/Broadening-Gender_Why-Masculinities-Matter.pdf (accessed July 15, 2016); and, SARERWORLD. "Impact evaluations of an integrated programme: Young Men Initiative in the Western Balkans" Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/masculinities-conflict-and-peacebuilding.pdf> (accessed July 15, 2016).

⁵ See: The McLeod Group. "Gender Equality." <http://www.mcleodgroup.ca/topics-3/a-place-for-women-gender-equality-and-canadian-development-policy/> (accessed on 25 July 2016).

Affairs Canada could simultaneously foster cutting-edge, gender-specific programming, while supporting and coordinating gender mainstreaming in other technical areas. Further measures are needed to ensure accountability for gender equality impacts within the context of the [Official Development Assistance Accountability Act](#).⁷

Adequately fund gender equality work, and women's rights organizations

The Government of Canada should meet or exceed international targets for funding programs where gender equality is the principal objective, including by earmarking a proportion of its funding for women's rights and LGBTQ rights organizations and requiring INGOs to direct resources to such organizations.

Women's rights and LGBTQ rights organizations are the most effective at identifying and meeting the needs of their constituents, and the most effective political advocates for transformational change.⁸ Moreover, they are often the first to arrive on the scene of an emergency or to respond with appropriate farming solutions in times of drought.⁹ Internationally, it is well established that more investment in gender-specific programming is needed to sustain gender equality results.¹⁰ Yet the organizations doing this work remain chronically under-funded.¹¹ Over the past five years, Canadian funding for programs where gender equality is the principal objective has amounted to only one or two percent of total program funding.

Conclusion

In recent years, Canada's international assistance has often treated women as victims, as mothers or potential mothers, or as passive recipients of assistance. The adoption of a feminist foreign policy requires that international assistance policies and funding mechanisms treat women not as beneficiaries, but as agents of change. This involves enacting a rights-based approach that seeks to address the root causes of problems, and to transform unequal structures and systems. New measures must go beyond service delivery, and be aimed at strengthening women's autonomy and empowerment. This must include support for women's rights organizations' ability to influence policy reform and implementation, to transform gender norms and stereotypes, and to foster changes in attitudes and behaviours. A successful Canadian feminist foreign policy relies not only on well-designed directives and good intentions, but also on the government's internal capacity to coordinate and account for gender equality results.

⁶ Bryan, Elizabeth (Ed.). "Strategies for Promoting Gender Equity in Developing Countries: Lessons, Challenges and Opportunities." Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars. pp. 10.

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/GenderEquity.pdf> (accessed on 25 July 2016).

⁷ [Official Development Assistance Accountability Act \(S.C. 2008, c. 17\)](#)

⁸ Association for Women's Rights in Development. "Changing Their World: Concepts and Practices of Women's Movements." 2012. http://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/changing_their_world_2ed_full_eng.pdf (accessed July 15, 2016).

⁹ See: CARE International. "Women, Work and War: Syrian women and the struggle to survive five years of conflict." 2016. http://www.care-international.org/files/files/CARE_Women_Work_War_report.pdf accessed July 15, 2016).

¹⁰ The World Bank. "World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development."

<https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2012/Resources/7778105-1299699968583/7786210-1315936222006/Complete-Report.pdf> (accessed July 15, 2016).

¹¹OECD. "From ambition to results: Delivering on gender equality in donor institutions." DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET). 2014. https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/From_ambition_to_results.pdf accessed July 15, 2016).

Health and rights of women and children

Addressing the socio-economic determinants of health

Significant progress has been made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals over the past 15 years. That progress has, however, been uneven, and MDGs three and four, aimed at reducing maternal and child mortality, remain furthest off target.

Maternal and child mortality is mostly preventable, and concentrated in socio-economically disadvantaged populations. Unsafe sex for women, for example, depends not only access to and availability of contraceptives, but also on women's ability to negotiate safe sex. Similarly, access to optimal nutrition often hinges on a redistribution of resources within the household and women's power to make spending decisions. Stigma and discrimination of marginalized populations, likewise, drive the vulnerabilities that can cause diseases such as HIV, TB and malaria.

Evidence-based interventions can prevent maternal and child deaths and improve the health and well-being of women and children. Successfully addressing the socio-economic determinants of these challenges requires focusing on the rights of women, men, boys and girls. Only a rights-based approach to health and gender will allow us to reach our objectives.¹²

Involve women and youth in the design and delivery of all health-related services at local, national and global levels

The Government of Canada should support participatory health policy design and delivery by expanding financial and technical support for women- and youth-led groups at local and national level.

Research shows that women will not access services that do not meet their needs.¹³ Meaningful space is needed within the global health architecture for all people – including women, youth, disenfranchised and poor people, and sexual minority advocates – to exercise their right to self-determination and to engage with and lead in the planning and delivery of health-related services at the community level.¹⁴

Maternal mortality still stands at 210 deaths per 100 thousand live births.

Under-five mortality continues to occur at a rate of 43 deaths per one thousand live births.

Twelve percent of married women around the world have an unmet need for contraceptives;

This number doubles, reaching 24 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Unsafe sex is the main avenue for the transmission of HIV;

HIV remains the number one killer of women worldwide.

¹² The BMJ. "Towards a new Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health." The BMJ. 2015; 351(Suppl1)

¹³ Mannava et al. "Attitudes and behaviours of maternal health care providers in interactions with clients: a systematic review." Global Health. 2015; 11: 36.

¹⁴ Models such as CARE's Community Scorecard process provide a platform for such engagement to take place, by ensuring accountability of decision-makers and service delivery to the needs and interests of beneficiaries. See: CARE International (2013). "The Community Score Card (CSC): A generic guide for implementing CARE's CSC process to improve quality of

Adopt evidence- and needs-based sexual and reproductive health and rights policies and programs, and champion sexual and reproductive rights worldwide

The Government of Canada should support reproductive health services that are commensurate with impact groups' needs, and based on evidence about what makes health policies and programs accessible, effective and durable.

The Government of Canada should leverage its diplomatic resources to champion sexual and reproductive rights worldwide.

The achievement of positive health outcomes for women and children relies on their safe, affordable and confidential access to the full range of reproductive health services, including safe abortion and post-abortion care.¹⁵ In order to effectively safeguard young girls, laws restricting child and early forced marriage must be enforced through community-based interventions and protection services, which are critical for ensuring laws and policies lead to changes in social norms and more durable health outcomes. Sexual rights and justice must be part of the international development agenda, allowing for the full expression of sexual and gender identities as a basic human right.

Ensure that a health equity perspective guides policy and programming decisions

The Government of Canada should adopt global health policies and programs that treat the health needs of all people equitably, using a rights-based approach.

Health services must be provided to those most in need, and on the basis of their human rights. As the geography of poverty continues to shift, however, with over 70 percent of extremely poor people now living in Middle Income Countries, global disease distribution is also changing. Poverty, for example, is a key determinant of preventable maternal and child mortality. Refugees and people living in fragile states, by contrast, have a right to basic health services, but often cannot count on publicly provided services. Donors need new approaches to ensure they are equipped to respond to health needs where they exist, equitably and in a manner that upholds individuals' human rights.

Coordinate investments and policies within and between departments

The Government of Canada should adopt a whole-of-government strategy for ensuring policy coherence and the coordination of investments in the promotion of women and children's rights and health, both in Canada and internationally.

Health and rights are the responsibilities of governments. In an era of globalization, however, health challenges are also increasingly transnational. This applies equally to disease outbreaks, such as Ebola, as well as to diseases rooted in individuals' socio-economic status. Within this context, it is essential that investments be coordinated across different funding mechanisms and departments – such as the Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada and Status of Women Canada – whose expertise could help enhance Canada's added value.

services." http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/FP-2013-CARE_CommunityScoreCardToolkit.pdf (accessed 21 July, 2016).

¹⁵ Haddad, Lisa. "Maternal deaths averted by contraceptive use: an analysis of 172 countries." *Lancet* [Volume 380, No. 9837](#), p111–125, 14 July 2012.

Strengthen and improve the quality and resilience of national health systems

The Government of Canada should work with development actors and donors to help improve the quality of primary healthcare systems according to the World Health Organization's six health system building blocks.

Equipped with knowledge and evidence about what constitutes quality and resilient national health systems, governments in low and middle income countries have an opportunity and an obligation to provide essential, population-based health services. These must be rooted in strong, particularly primary, health care systems (policies should resist disproportionate resources going to specialized curative care). Commitments such as the [Abuja Declaration](#) provide strong levers to encourage and advocate for national governments to invest adequately in order to reach all citizens. The World Health Organization's Health System's Framework establishes six building blocks to guide investments in quality health systems: leadership and governance, services, human resources, information systems, financing, and essential medicines and commodities.¹⁶

Conclusion

Thirty years ago, Canada led the adoption of the [Ottawa Charter \(1986\)](#), entrenching the values of equity and social justice in international approaches to health. The MDGs have shown that, while much can be achieved through technological and indicator-driven interventions, such approaches also have limitations. Canada has an opportunity to demonstrate global health leadership by broadening its focus to consider not only results and accountability, but also an emphasis on rights and equity. This requires focusing on the socio-economic determinants of health, adopting well-coordinated, evidence- and needs-based policies, empowering people to engage with and lead in the planning and delivery of health-related services, and supporting the strength, quality and resilience of national health systems. By adopting global health and rights policies that meet these imperatives, Canada can help transform the lives of women, children and men, end preventable maternal and child deaths, and improve the health and well-being of all people.

¹⁶ WHO. "The WHO Health Systems Framework." Health services development. http://www.wpro.who.int/health_services/health_systems_framework/en/ (accessed on July 15 2016).

Women's economic empowerment

Supporting women's entry into the formal economy

Women around the world participate in labour markets on an unequal basis with men, and often have to rely on men for access to basic financial services. Around two billion people don't use formal financial services, and more than 50 percent of adults in the poorest households do not have bank accounts. The majority of the world's unbanked people are women.

Financial inclusion is a key enabler for reducing poverty and boosting prosperity. World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Yong Kim has called for Universal Financial Access (UFA) by 2020.¹⁷ The [Sustainable Development Goals](#),¹⁸ similarly, highlight the importance of women's equal access to and control over economic resources to their empowerment and broader development outcomes.

Investments in women's economic empowerment can help deliver deep and lasting change for women and their communities.

Ensure financial inclusion for the most excluded women and girls

The Government of Canada should adopt a holistic strategy to strengthen women's agency and financial decision-making in the home and wider community, including by working with banks, national governments and financial regulators to address policy and regulatory barriers preventing women's access to financial products, services, and education.

Universal access to and use of responsible, affordable, quality financial products and services is one of the most important means by which women can achieve greater control of their lives and increase their own – and their family's – opportunities, income and wellbeing. Women's access to savings, in particular has been shown to be one of only three interventions proven to accelerate the economic empowerment of women, regardless of their context.¹⁹ Yet regulatory and policy barriers in many parts of the world continue to hinder women's entry into the formal economy. These include policies that prevent financial service

Women earn on average 35 to 40 percent less than men, enjoy less mobility into the formal sector, and tend to work in unorganized and non-unionized sectors.

Meanwhile, women devote one to three hours more a day to housework, two to 10 times more time caring for children, the elderly and the sick, and one to four hours less a day to market activities than their male counterparts.

This leaves women with less time for education, leisure, political participation and self-care.

Sources : World Bank. "Gender Equality Data & Statistics"; World Bank. "2012 World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development"; ILO. "Global Employment Trends 2014"; Eurostat 2014.

¹⁷ World Bank. "Financial Inclusion." <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/financialinclusion> (accessed on July 15 2016).

¹⁸ SDG 5a.: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>).

¹⁹ Buvinić, Mayra, Rebecca Furst-Nichols and Emily Courey Pryor. "A Roadmap for promoting Women's Economic Empowerment." United Nations Foundation. <http://www.womeneconroadmap.org/> (accessed on July 15 2016).

providers from giving legal recognition of community-based and informal savings groups,²⁰ and Know Your Customer requirements.²¹ Other barriers preventing poor women from accessing formal financial services manifest themselves in the form of distance and time. These barriers can be addressed through measures that encourage mobile networks and mobile money providers to increase the availability of responsible digital financial services for women and girls. Finally, national financial inclusion strategies should be embedded with financial inclusion approaches, including funding informal group savings models and financial education initiatives. This builds on findings that women's participation in gender transformative informal savings and loans groups can support the growth of women's businesses, guard against economic shocks, develop financial literacy and generate social outcomes, including women's increased control over financial resources.²²

Support women's entrepreneurship

The Government of Canada should work with development partners to reduce gender-specific barriers to women's entrepreneurship and workforce participation, and to support women-led enterprises.

Women's entrepreneurship and economic participation can be hindered by a range of barriers rooted in gender inequalities. These include laws, such as those allowing husbands to prevent their wives from working, and gender-based job restrictions.²³ Skills development, enterprise training, gender-sensitive labour policies and awareness-raising at household and community levels are effective means to overcome these barriers. Private sector partners can play a positive role by adopting gender-sensitive policies and practices in support of female workers, including the provision of safe, protective and culturally-appropriate work environments. Governments and multinational businesses, similarly, can increase women's economic opportunities by fostering access to finance, enacting reforms enabling women-led businesses, and sourcing from women-led enterprises.

²⁰ Savings groups (or village savings and loans associations – VSLAs) are self-managed groups that do not receive any external capital and provide people with a safe place to save their money, access small loans, and obtain emergency insurance. Savings groups have also been shown to be effective in helping the unbanked learn to engage with formal financial service providers.

²¹ Know your customer (KYC) is the process of a business verifying the identity of its clients. Although it provides help banks manage risk, it can limit access for people who don't have paper identity and may be disproportionate for the risks associated with smaller borrowers. See: Centre for Global Development. *Balancing Financial Integrity with Financial Inclusion: The Risk-Based Approach to "Know Your Customer."* Policy Paper 074, February 2016. <http://www.cgdev.org/publication/balancing-financial-integrity-financial-inclusion-risk-based-approach> (accessed on July 15 2016).

²² Allan, Alice, Brendan Ahern and Matt Wilson. "The State Of Linkage Report: The first global mapping of savings group linkage " CARE, Plan, Barclays. http://www.seepnetwork.org/filebin/savings_led_working_group/The-State-of-Linkage-Report-2016.pdf (accessed on July 21, 2016)

²³ World Bank. "Women, Business and the Law 2016." <http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2016/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2016.pdf> (accessed on July 21, 2016).

Support integrated approaches to dignified work for women

The Government of Canada should support organized labour, encourage factory owners and business leaders to improve standards, and challenge gendered social and cultural norms about work.

The Government of Canada should work with the International Labour Organization and G7 countries to strengthen job creation, skills development and the establishment of social protection and safety nets around the world.

Employed women are less likely than their male counterparts to enjoy the protections guaranteed to them by international and national labour rights instruments, or to have their interests represented by labour organizations. Women also face greater barriers in accessing social security, including health care and income security. As a result, women are more likely to be subjected to unhealthy, dangerous and exploitative relationships with their employers. Governments, multinational companies and donors have a responsibility to uphold workers' rights, including by demanding that their suppliers and distributors uphold standards for dignified work and labour organization access.²⁴

Conclusion

Strengthening women's economic integration, education and self-reliance contributes to economic growth and women's human rights, while also reducing vulnerabilities to environmental and economic shocks, malnourishment, early forced marriage, domestic violence, and harmful cultural practices. Indeed, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), in particular SDG 8, clearly articulate the importance of women's economic empowerment and decent work to the achievement of more equal and prosperous societies, and to the realization of a range of development outcomes. The Government of Canada can contribute to these objectives by adopting policies and funding mechanisms aimed at ensuring the most marginalized women and girls have access to savings and financial instruments, while fostering their ability to open and operate businesses, promoting their ability to enjoy their labour rights, and favouring dignified work for women throughout value chains. All such measures must be firmly rooted in a feminist foreign policy that is committed to ensuring women's economic participation is supported by social and cultural norms.

²⁴ ILO. "Rules of the Game: A Brief Introduction to International Labour Standards." http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_318141.pdf (accessed on July 21, 2016).

Inclusive agricultural growth, food security and resilience to climate change

Ending hunger and malnutrition amid a changing climate hinges on our ability to address inequalities in food systems

Hunger and poverty are not accidents—they are the result of social and economic injustice and inequality at all levels.

The reality of inequality is no truer than for women. Representing half the world's population, women control far less than their fair share of the world's resources. Inequality shapes who has access to food and the resources to grow it and buy it. It governs who eats first and who eats worst. Inequality determines who can adapt to a changing climate.

Smallholder farmers, especially women, must be at the centre of our efforts to ensure the availability of quality food and livelihood opportunities for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. Appropriate policies and funding mechanisms can help these farmers contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, while building more resilient communities around the world.

Strengthen resilience among smallholder farmers through climate-smart and gender-responsive agriculture²⁵

The Government of Canada should adopt a food systems policy centered on the potential of women smallholder farmers to stimulate economic growth, strengthen community resilience, and promote climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Smallholder farmers make up 85 percent of the world's farms, employ some two-thirds of people in low- and middle-income countries, and provide almost 80 percent of the world's food.²⁶ Similarly, more than 90 percent of people engaged in the fish sector work (including fish farming) in small-scale fisheries and two-thirds of poor livestock keepers are women.²⁷ Small-scale food producers often struggle to grow, catch or buy enough nutritious food because of poor quality soil, small plots of

Worldwide, 795 million people are chronically hungry, and 161 million children under five are stunted.

Every year we use 1.5 times the planet's resources, exhausting resources faster than the planet can naturally regenerate them.

Climate change has reduced global agricultural production one to five percent per decade over the last 30 years, and could reduce it by two percent per decade for the rest of the century.

Up to 600 million more people could be at risk of hunger by 2080.

Source : FAO, "How to Feed the World in 2050." <http://www.fao.org/>

²⁵ CARE's definition of *agriculture* includes all productive activities, including agriculture, animal husbandry, and fishery and fish farming. By *Climate Smart Agriculture*, CARE understands a smallholder women-sensitive low-input, locally oriented (local and national food systems) and environmentally friendly productive system that promote social and gender equality.

²⁶ FAO, "The State of Food and Agriculture 2014 » <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4040e.pdf> (accessed on 15 July 2016). And FAO, "Putting family farmers first to eradicate hunger." <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/260535/icode/> (accessed 15 July 2016).

²⁷ FAO. "The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Women in Agriculture." <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e00.htm> (accessed on July 21, 2016).

land, depleted fish stocks, water scarcity, unavailability of diverse foods, or low incomes. Meanwhile, in 2015 agriculture contributed to 39.3 percent of total global emissions.²⁸ Further evidence suggests that two-thirds of the world's greenhouse gas emission reduction potential through 2030 is located in developing countries.²⁹ Smallholder farmers – especially women – are critical for stimulating economic growth in the poorest and most vulnerable regions of the world, and as allies in our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable and nutrition-sensitive agricultural systems offer means to simultaneously increase yields, build economic, social and environmental resilience in the face of shocks induced by climate change, conflict and natural disasters, preserve and enhance ecosystems, and address gender inequalities in food systems. As underscored in the [Food Security Policy Group's "Agenda for Food Security and Resilience,"](#)³⁰ agriculture is a key driver of economic growth, especially when focused on women small-scale farmers.

Promote innovation through farmer-centred, inclusive and participatory agricultural research and extension programs

The Government of Canada should promote more sustainable, productive, profitable, equitable and resilient food systems by putting end-users at the centre of agricultural innovation creation processes, and by working with farmers' organizations as mechanisms for promoting local governance systems' responsiveness to farmers' interests and needs.

Farmer-led agricultural production and innovation promotes best practices that unite indigenous approaches with modern methods. In order to ensure the accessibility of publicly-provided extension services, as well as their use by smallholders, women must be involved in the co-creation of knowledge and technologies that respond to their specific needs as farmers. Moreover, measures to strengthen the technical and organizational capacity of women's and men's farmer groups can enable them to meaningfully influence policy and scale up innovations.

Promote efficient food systems that reduce post-harvest losses

The Government of Canada should support time-saving and value-adding post-harvest systems and technologies for women farmers.

Approximately one third of all food produced globally – including plant, animal and fishery products – is lost during production, post-harvest processing and distribution, or wasted at the consumer level. These losses amount to \$1 trillion annually.³¹ In low-income countries, food loss results from wide-ranging managerial and technical limitations in harvesting techniques, storage, transportation, processing, cooling facilities, infrastructure, packaging and marketing systems.³² Recognizing that women are mainly responsible for food processing and preparation in low-income countries,

²⁸ FAO. "FAO Stat." <http://faostat3.fao.org/faostat-gateway/go/to/home/> (accessed on July 21, 2016).

²⁹ Ackerman, Frank. "Financing the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Measures in Developing Countries." *G-24 Discussion Paper Series*, No. 57 (2009) http://unctad.org/en/Docs/gdsmndpg2420094_en.pdf (accessed on 15 July 2016).

³⁰ Food Security Policy Group. "Agenda for Food Security and Resilience." http://www.ccic.ca/files/en/working_groups/food_security_and_resilience_07.pdf (accessed on 15 July 2016).

³¹ FAO. "Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste Reduction." <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4068e.pdf> (accessed on 21 July 2016).

³² *Ibid.*

appropriate systems and technologies are critical for reducing postharvest losses, decreasing women's burden and enabling profitable food systems.

Promote alternative energy options for rural and urban women

The Government of Canada should support initiatives that promote women-led social enterprises involved in the production and sale of safe, sustainable and affordable fuel energy units.

Women in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are responsible for almost 90 percent of food preparation in the household.³³ For many, this includes significant time collecting and burning inefficient fuels. Ensuring women's improved access to fuel-efficient stoves, including improved firewood and charcoal stoves, solar stoves, and bio-gas stoves, can help women spend more time on productive activities, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Conclusion

Within the interrelated challenges of hunger, climate change, and poverty resides an opportunity for international assistance interventions to yield multiple development outcomes, while fostering innovation, equity and better governance within rural communities. By supporting more sustainable, productive, profitable, equitable and resilient food systems, the Government of Canada can help communities build resilience and adapt to climate change, while simultaneously mitigating their greenhouse gas emissions. These benefits can be extended by working with farmer-led organizations and value chains, to ensure more inclusive innovation and application of agricultural best practices. A gender-responsive approach is needed in order to help position women as equal players in agricultural development and climate change initiatives, and powerful contributors to the wellbeing of their farms, families and communities. Towards this end, women must have access to the information and resources that will enable them to make choices and engage in markets on equal footing, as well as access to post-harvest systems and technologies that enable them to make more efficient use of their plant, animal and fish products, and of their time. Further, women's access to and income generation through more fuel

CARE's "SuPER" approach encourages investments in agriculture that promote:

Sustainable agricultural systems grounded in healthy ecosystems, stable, accountable and enduring institutions and sustainable financing;

Productive, (including profitable, and nutrition-sensitive) intensification interventions that are 'climate smart' and increase returns on investment for farmers;

Equitable outcomes in smallholder agriculture by enabling access to equal rights, opportunities, resources and rewards, taking into account the needs and constraints of women farmers, and supporting access to affordable nutritious food for all;

and that help individuals, families, communities and systems become

Resilient i.e. able to withstand and bounce back from environmental and economic shocks and stresses, including those exacerbated by climate change.

Source : CARE International. FAO, "The SuPER approach to smallholder agriculture." <http://careclimatechange.org/our-work/super/>

³³ WHO. "Progress on Sanitation and Drinking-Water." http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241563956_eng_full_text.pdf?ua=1#sthash.t7Pu2hji.dpuf (accessed on 15 July 2016).

efficient stoves can contribute towards climate change mitigation targets, while fostering women's economic empowerment.

Governance, pluralism, diversity, and human rights

Addressing the underlying causes of poverty and social injustice, promoting more durable outcomes

Poverty is created and sustained through unequal power relations – it is determined by how, and by whom, public decisions are reached, as well as the ways in which resources are collected, made accessible and allocated.

Underlying this inequitable distribution of power, resources and opportunities – between women and men, between power-holders and marginalized communities, and within and between countries – is poor governance. The injustice of inequality hits the poorest and most vulnerable, especially women and girls, hardest. It is also a source of social instability, and erodes development gains.

The achievement of sustainable and equitable development requires that donors and development partners find new ways to empower the disempowered, to foster the capacity of local organizations to hold power-holders to account, and to promote effective and inclusive spaces for the public to influence policy decisions that affect their interests.

Promote collective action among poor and marginalized people, especially women and girls

The Government of Canada should promote individuals' ability to act collectively, assert their rights and push for change, by incorporating the use of social accountability mechanisms in the projects and programs it supports.

Social accountability can be defined as an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability.³⁴ Social accountability mechanisms – including Community Scorecards,³⁵ social audits,³⁶ citizens' charters and report cards,³⁷ and participatory budget monitoring processes – are a proven means to create space to bring service providers, public authorities and community members together in ways that allow citizens, particularly women, to influence the way public funds are allocated and spent, and how services are designed and delivered.³⁸

³⁴ World Bank. "Social Accountability: An Introduction to the Concept and Emerging Practice."

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPCENG/214578-1116499844371/20524122/310420PAPEROSo1ityOSDP0CivicOno1076.pdf> (accessed on 21 July 2016).

³⁵ CARE International. "The Community Score Card (CSC): A generic guide for implementing CARE's CSC process to improve quality of services." http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/FP-2013-CARE_CommunityScoreCardToolkit.pdf (accessed on 21 July 2016).

³⁶ CIET International. "Social Audits: Fostering Accountability to Local Constituencies." "Public Expenditure Review: Citizens' Report Cards in India." Capacity for 'Voice' Issue 15, October. <http://www.pria-academy.org/pdf/Ciet-Social%20Audit%20Pages.pdf> (accessed on 21 July 2016).

³⁷ World Bank (2004). "Citizen Report Card Surveys – a note on the concept and methodology." Social Development Notes No.91 / February. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPCENG/1143380-1116506267488/20511066/reportcardnote.pdf> (accessed on 21 July 2016).

³⁸ For more resources on the social accountability visit: <http://governance.care2share.wikispaces.net/Social+Accountability>

Work with power holders at all levels in the design and implementation of participatory local development plans that reflect demands put forward by poor and excluded social groups

The Government of Canada should continue to support citizen engagement and dialogue processes, and seek to expand and replicate successful models in other sectors and regions.

Local governments, traditional leaders, the private sector, civil society and informal institutions are critical for ensuring inclusive, effective and sustainable development. The ways in which these stakeholders interact influences the distribution of power, resources and opportunities in a community. Yet, around the world, existing systems and structures continue to restrict options for citizens to engage and negotiate with power-holders. Community-Driven Development (CDD), Community-Driven Reconstruction (CDR) and Community Action Plan (CAP) programs can support the establishment of platforms for marginalized citizens to prioritize their collective needs, plan and implement these priorities, and devise action plans aimed at influencing local development planning with funding from the central government and/or external donors.³⁹

Conclusion

Governance, pluralism, diversity and human rights play critical and complementary roles in determining how power is distributed in a society. Similarly, governments, the private sector, civil society and other development actors make up an institutional landscape on which prosperity and stability depend. With its own history in the promotion of good governance, pluralism, diversity and human rights, Canada is uniquely placed to play a critical role in supporting healthier institutional landscapes around the world. This should include measures aimed at upholding transparency and responsiveness among all powerholders, and fostering space and capacity for marginalized people and communities to voice their interests. This entails a shift from a logic model/project approach, which emphasizes linear outcomes, towards an approach founded in programmatic theories of change that promote the development of participatory institutions upon which more prosperous and inclusive societies can be built.

³⁹ The Latin American Dialogue Forums, for example, demonstrated how civil society, government and the private sector can be brought together to develop shared solutions to common problems. See: The Latin American Dialogue, "Transparency and dialogue in extractives industries in Latin America" December 2015, <http://www.dialogolatinoamericano.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/invitation-english.pdf> (accessed on 15 July 2016), and Franks, Daniel, and Diana Arbeláez-Ruiz. "Getting to the Table." *American Quarterly*, 2014. <http://search.proquest.com/openview/a23b55fbbcdadd88bc1f92bb25b53aa/1?pq-origsite=gscholar> (accessed on 21 July 2016).

Responding to humanitarian crises

Supporting women's agency in emergencies

Global humanitarian need is on the rise.

While women, girls, men, and boys all suffer in a crisis, structural gender inequalities mean women and girls face greater obstacles in reaching their potential and leading safe, healthy, and dignified lives. Disasters kill more women than men, and hit women's livelihoods hardest.

Yet women also play critical roles in emergency situations – supporting relief and recovery efforts, and taking on increasing responsibilities inside and outside of the house.⁴⁰

As gender dynamics shift during crises, Canada and other donors face critical opportunities to support women's valuable contributions, while building more equitable and self-reliant communities.

Protect civilians and humanitarian space, and uphold humanitarian principles

The Government of Canada should promote respect for the humanitarian principles, preserve the civilian nature of humanitarian response and provide the political support and leadership to negotiate improved humanitarian access.

Humanitarian assistance is increasingly being delivered in conflict-affected areas. This has been met with increases in violent attacks on humanitarian workers and civilian infrastructure. According to the internationally-accepted humanitarian principles – humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence⁴¹ – humanitarian assistance must be delivered impartially to those in need, irrespective of who they are. This is particularly important when military assets are deployed as part of a humanitarian response, which can undermine the perception of independence and safety of humanitarian workers. Humanitarian assistance must remain independent of military goals in order to ensure that local authorities continue to grant humanitarian actors access to those in need, and allow individuals to receive aid safely.

Humanitarian crises and needs are increasingly protracted.

Worldwide, 125 million people need humanitarian relief.

More than 65 million people are displaced from their homes.

Armed conflicts and climate change result in 80 percent of humanitarian need globally, and are the biggest causes of forced displacement.

Sixty percent of all maternal deaths take place in humanitarian settings.

All forms of gender based violence against women and girls spike during disasters and conflict.

Sources: UNHCR. "Global Trends 2015: Figures at a glance." <http://www.unhcr.org/>; UN. "Deputy Secretary-General's Remarks at High Level Plenary Meeting on 'In a World of Risks: Today's Threats to International Peace and Security'." <http://www.un.org/>; ECOSOC. "Gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters." Report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women. 58th Session. <http://www.un.org>

⁴⁰ CARE International. "Women, Work and War: Syrian women and the struggle to survive five years of conflict." http://www.care-international.org/files/files/CARE_Women_Work_War_report.pdf (accessed on 15 July 2016),

⁴¹ UNOCHA. "What are Humanitarian Principles?" https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf (accessed on 21 July 2016).

Make predictable and timely financing the norm in all humanitarian contexts

The Government of Canada should allocate multi-year humanitarian funding, including through predictable budget allocations to Global Affairs Canada’s International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) Directorate

The Government of Canada’s new international assistance policy should include clear guidelines around the timeliness of humanitarian funding.

The main drivers of humanitarian need – conflict and climate change – are inherently protracted in nature, and the numbers of people affected by conflict and protracted emergencies are rising. At the same time the number of people affected by natural disasters globally keep rising. Within this context, predictable, multi-year humanitarian financing will enable more effective humanitarian planning and responses. Effective humanitarian assistance in these contexts requires a comfort with a certain amount of risk to enable innovation. Multi-year humanitarian financing should be the normal funding mechanism for these types of crisis.⁴²

Timeliness of funding is also critical to ensure the effectiveness of life-saving humanitarian aid. While decisions can be made quickly for rapid onset humanitarian crisis, it can take up to five months for Global Affairs Canada to make decisions under the Annual Response to Complex Emergencies process. This process should be accelerated, and further aligned with the UN Humanitarian Response planning process and timelines.

Scale-up successful models for investing in innovative partnerships

The Government of Canada should promote innovative humanitarian approaches by increasing its un-earmarked investments in NGO partners, and scaling up the successful Canadian Humanitarian Assistance Fund (CHAF) model.

The Canadian Humanitarian Assistance Fund (CHAF) is an example of how partnerships can be funded, and rapid decisions enabled, in response to emergencies. Its effectiveness has been proven, including in Canada’s responses to the recent earthquakes in Ecuador and Pakistan. This model should be further developed, with a view towards increasing its scale, scope and funding levels, and ensuring it is available to a greater number of NGO humanitarian partners in Canada. Longer-term, flexible strategic humanitarian grants to trusted partners framed around specific, jointly held thematic goals, such as “gender in emergencies”, provide an effective way to invest in innovation in areas such as capacity enhancement, organizational development, learning, and flexibly to respond rapidly to emerging crisis, according to a set of criteria.⁴³

⁴² For an in-depth analysis of the value and effectiveness of multi-year humanitarian financing, see: CARE Canada et al. “Multi-Year Humanitarian Funding in Protracted Crises: The Case for Donor Support.”

<http://care.ca/sites/default/files/files/publications/Multi-Year%20Humanitarian%20Funding%20in%20Protracted%20Crises%20-%20Collaborative%20Pap....pdf>

⁴³ One example of such an approach is DFAT Australia’s Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA). See:

<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/review-of-the-humanitarian-partnership-agreement-hpa.aspx>.

Maintain and strengthen accountability to beneficiaries

The Government of Canada should ensure that its humanitarian assistance is delivered in a manner that is transparent and accountable to beneficiaries, without imposing additional transaction costs.

All donors must strike a balance between ensuring accountability to taxpayers and beneficiaries, while working in trusted partnership with humanitarian agencies. Beneficiary accountability should be at the core of all of the Government of Canada's international assistance policies. Accountability is not about reports, but a shift in how humanitarian agencies and donors consult affected populations, plan, and deliver humanitarian aid. Measures to strengthen partners' monitoring, evaluation, and accountability systems should be undertaken in a manner that avoids imposing additional bureaucracy and reports. Practically, this means that all Government of Canada-funded humanitarian programming should be aligned with the [Core Humanitarian Standard](#).⁴⁴

Integrate disaster risk reduction and resilience into humanitarian assistance

The Government of Canada should adopt humanitarian assistance mechanisms capable of supporting both immediate responses in emergencies, as well as longer-term resilience programming, while ensuring organizations are able to pivot between activities as the operating context evolves.

The Government of Canada should invest in disaster risk reduction and resilience-building programs in line with commitments made under the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

The impacts of conflict, climate and natural disaster can rarely be prevented. But more can be done to help people withstand and recover from such shocks. Resilience against recurrent and protracted crisis can be defined as the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth. Yet funding for resilience programming remains under-resourced, often occupying a space between different coordination mechanisms and funding sources. Recent programming in crises like Syria has proven that livelihoods and resilience programming is possible, and crucial, even in the midst of a complex emergencies.⁴⁵ Resilience programming should emphasize approaches that empower women and more effectively reduce inequality between men and women, and between displaced people and host communities. Investments in system strengthening efforts, particularly those that support local capacity, can help ensure long-term positive impact of life-saving interventions. Achieving the aim of "no one left behind" in the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) requires an approach that establishes resilience to recurrent crises as a common objective across increasingly layered, integrated and overlapped sequencing of development and humanitarian programs.

⁴⁴ CHS Alliance. "Core Humanitarian Standard." <http://www.chsalliance.org/> (accessed on 21 July 2016).

⁴⁵ CARE et al. "Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment: Southern Syria." <http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/food-security-and-livelihoods-assessment-southern-syria> (accessed on 21 July 2016).

It is not enough to respond only after a disaster has struck. By investing in measures to reduce the risk and impact of disasters before they occur, lives will be saved, and post-crisis responses can be made less costly, allowing more resources to be directed towards crisis and conflicts whose impacts are less easily mitigated. Increasingly, evidence proves that early action to help people before the effects of drought are fully felt can help avert famine. Investment in disaster risk reduction can mitigate the effects and damages caused by earthquakes and cyclones. Every \$1 invested in disaster risk reduction saves at least \$7 in relief at a later stage. For vulnerable populations, this means reduced loss of life and suffering, increased security, and greater ability to hold on to their assets.⁴⁶

Insist on the integration of gender equality in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all humanitarian responses

The Government of Canada should only fund proposals that are at minimum marked 'Gender Sensitive' on the IASC tool.

The Government of Canada should open a call for "feminist response" proposals focused on stand-alone gender-in-emergencies programming.

Canada is internationally renowned as an advocate for women and girls in emergencies, and for its support of feminist gender-sensitive policies and programs that ensure the protection of women and children. Global Affairs Canada could go a step further by ensuring all humanitarian proposals are underpinned by strong gender analysis, and are assessed against the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\)](#) Gender Marker tool. Further, Global Affairs Canada should ensure the systematic gathering of sex and age- disaggregated data from programs, and that all Canadian-funded humanitarian programming is gender sensitive.

A “feminist approach” and support for gender equity provides a clear global leadership opportunity for the Government of Canada to invest in technical gender capacity and expertise within Global Affairs Canada’s International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) Directorate, and in Canadian civil society organizations, to ensure our programming is transforming gender dynamics and effectively support and protect women and girls. In addition, in our experience, too often gender analysis and responding to gender-related needs are often regarded as an ‘add-on’ rather than a priority. By making gender central to response planning and implementation from the outset of a crisis, opportunities can be seized to ensure that women, men, boys and girls receive appropriate and equal access to services that respond to their specific needs. Not only is accountability for gender in the international humanitarian system missing, we also see a lack of investment in empowering women and girls in crisis-affected communities to have a voice in decision-making on humanitarian policies and programs, which is key for real accountability to the populations we seek to assist.

⁴⁶ UNDP. “#ActNow – Save Later.” http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/get_involved/ActNow.html (accessed on 21 July 2016).

Support INGOs to work in partnership and build capacity of national actors

The Government of Canada should promote capacity building for civil society and partnerships as a separate, critical component of humanitarian programs and outputs

Done right, humanitarian assistance can reinforce national systems and civil society, and change power dynamics. Where appropriate and feasible, and in keeping with the existing humanitarian principles of partnership, trusted INGOs must be encouraged to move beyond direct implementation and work in partnership with local civil society in the affected countries and communities. Working with local, women-led civil society groups – which are both closer to, and more trusted by, communities – is an effective way to help these groups play a greater decision-making role in humanitarian, conflict and peace-related policies and programs. INGOs have a clear role in building strategic partnerships and humanitarian capacity and accountability of local civil society organizations. Towards this end, funding should be provided to trusted INGO partners based on the basis of their capacity, experience and ability to deliver.

Conclusion

The World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 was one of many recent efforts to address an urgent need for new ways of working to respond more effectively to crises that are stretching the international humanitarian system beyond capacity. The Government of Canada's 2016 International Assistance Review presents an opportunity to foster real change in the way humanitarian assistance is delivered, and to recommit to the humanitarian principles, international human rights and other frameworks for protecting the most vulnerable in conflict. With its commitment to enacting a feminist foreign policy and supporting basic human rights, the Government of Canada is well-positioned to play a unique leadership role in its humanitarian policy and programming. The recommendations above challenge current norms and offer practical guidance to inform a shift in modalities that will help the Government realize its ambitions for humanitarian leadership, effectiveness and innovation, without adding additional costs and resources. In this manner, Canadian civil society and the Government of Canada can fulfill their shared responsibility toward vulnerable communities around the world, as well as to Canadian taxpayers.

Rationales for strategic flexible funding

Development outcomes

- Delivers innovative solutions to development problems through testing new and different approaches and scaling up what works.
- Enables strong and collaborative partnership with development actors in communities where we work, so that results are sustainable and scalable.
- Ensures that programmes target the most vulnerable people and they can be reached quickly and effectively, even in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.
- Encourages adaption of programming based on operational and technical learning and in response to changing contexts so that results are most effective.
- Enables longer-term programming, independent of funding cycles.
- Supports effective monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanisms so that the results of programmes are understood and acted upon and quality programming is reinforced.
- Enables increased funds to be leveraged for humanitarian and development programmes.
- Sets up tools, methods and approaches to ensure agencies are delivering in the most cost-effective way, delivering value for money for poor people.

CSOs

- Enables civil society organisations to effectively deliver against their development and humanitarian objectives, working in partnership with others, reaching the most vulnerable, responding to emergencies, and adapting strategy based on learning and changing contexts.
- Enables partner CSOs to use funds flexibly to support areas such as learning, evaluation, strategic organisational development and effectiveness, and innovative or risky work leading to better quality results which can be taken to scale.
- Supports difficult-to-fund, complex programming and institutional effectiveness measures and leverage further funding.
- Minimises transaction costs for both donor and CSOs, compared with regular accountable grants.

Delivering results: Improving effectiveness and transparency, innovation, and partnerships

Global challenges require coordinated solutions that apply the right mechanisms, in the right context

Today's development challenges are increasingly trans-boundary in nature. They are connected to issues of global public goods – such as climate change, tax and financial flows. At a time in which coordinated action among countries and development actors is becoming increasingly critical for confronting such challenges, there is growing concern that global governance systems are weakening.

Amid these changes, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), the [Paris Climate Change Agreement](#) and the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) provide a new framework for reversing the inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities. In fragile states, low-income countries and middle-income countries, where inequality remains high and the large majority of the poor reside, donors and other development actors are learning to work with new partners in local civil society and other sectors to promote more efficient international assistance interventions, more inclusive social structures and institutions, and more durable development outcomes.

Through its international assistance policies and funding, Canada can support more effective and innovative partnerships, while ensuring the transparent use of taxpayers' dollars in the pursuit of a more stable, prosperous, and sustainable world.

Ensure coherence between foreign affairs, international trade, international development, humanitarian assistance, defence, environment and climate change, and health

The Government of Canada should adopt new mechanisms and approaches for ensuring coherent policy and funding between foreign affairs, international trade, international development, humanitarian assistance, defence, environment and climate change, and health machineries in order to more effectively address interconnected global challenges.

The principle of universality enshrined in the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) implies a shared responsibility for global public goods and development imperatives between developed and developing countries. The Government of Canada has indicated that it recognizes the need to adopt more integrated ways of working between departments to address such global challenges. New policy frameworks being developed under the authority of several Cabinet Ministers must be launched with consideration to how they interact with one another to reinforce interdependent Canadian policy objectives. The nexus between domestic and international climate change and sustainable development issues, stability and security, clean and inclusive growth, resilience, nutrition and health, and agriculture and food security underscores the fact that international public policy increasingly requires expertise, technologies and approaches to be shared and coordinated between departments and their respective stakeholder groups. The Government's desire to do more to tackle these challenges amid prevailing budgetary constraints only reinforces this need. By ensuring that

its policies and programs are cohesive and mutually reinforcing, the Government of Canada can deliver long-lasting impact across a range of global public goods.

Target social, political and economic transformation, while allowing long-term programs to adapt to changing circumstances

The Government of Canada should favour 10+ year programs, ensuring that financing and reporting mechanisms are flexible enough to adapt planned activities to changing circumstances, while ensuring accountability for outcomes.

The achievement of effective and long-lasting international assistance outcomes requires interventions that shift attitudes and behaviours, one individual at a time. Canada can increase its impact by investing in programming that is iterative, participatory and holistic. These approaches ensure that national governments buy into activities and results, that the private sector and other enablers understand their role in supporting objectives, and that people of all genders have the time to discover for themselves what it means to live in a more equal society. Such approaches take time, but yield results. Longer-term programming allows development partners to achieve more definitive demonstrations of real change, thereby facilitating reporting against the targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Reporting systems should be adapted to allow for reflection on progress and commensurate adaptation of activities during the program cycle.

Promote innovative global partnerships

The Government of Canada should support cross-country/governmental, multi-stakeholder strategies on global public goods that recognize and provide opportunities for meaningful input from participants at all levels.

International assistance is generally delivered through a mix of financial mechanisms for working with civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations, multilateral organizations and directly with recipient country governments. The right mix of these mechanisms is highly context-dependent. In fragile states with weak infrastructure and government capacity, for example, INGOs play a critical role in delivering basic services, often in partnership with local civil society organizations. In middle-income countries, by contrast, local CSOs are often capable of operating very effectively. High-performing multilateral funds, meanwhile, are able to address global challenges at scale, but can be opaque about the manner in which funds are used.⁴⁷ Finally, budget support allows assistance-receiving countries to invest in their own development priorities, but can be politically motivated or distort domestic governance processes. In all contexts, international assistance actors must operate in ways that are transparent, complimentary, and adapted to their environments. New approaches, such as returnable capital and structured funds within a Canadian Development Finance Institution, for example, could help mobilize private capital flows to emerging and frontier markets, while shifting the risk-return profile, promoting local knowledge sharing,

⁴⁷ One example of a high-performing multi-donor fund supported by Canada is the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), managed by the World Bank. This fund has been highly transparent, supports a suite of high-performing programs, and is primarily responsible for the major gains in education and health that have been achieved in the country. See: <http://www.artf.af/>

building local capacity and shaping policy and regulatory reform.⁴⁸ Global Affairs Canada could also support the establishment of platforms for governments, multilaterals, private sector, academia and civil society to share learning and experience as well as influence development policy and decision-making.

Ensure predictability, and encourage new ideas

The Government of Canada should foster innovation by establishing risk-tolerant funding mechanisms dedicated to piloting new technologies, approaches, partnerships and monitoring and evaluation systems.

Predictability allows partners to plan ahead. A calendar for calls for proposals, shared with enough lead-time, and characterized by more freedom to propose innovative solutions, would encourage better planning and new ideas. Innovation hubs – in which INGOs, companies and others are given small grants over several phases to test new ideas, with potential scale-up funding for promising models – have been used in other countries with good results. Whenever possible, funding decisions should be decentralized in regional or national offices. Consider that local CSOs may not always have the capacity to raise a required match for a project, even though they may be best placed to ensure the achievement of agreed outcomes.

Foster accountability for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

The Government of Canada should adopt mechanisms for holding all development partners to account for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, while leveraging its impact in priority areas by engaging in multilateral 'blocks' with like-minded donors whenever possible and appropriate.

Building on the important, though uneven, progress made under the [Millennium Development Goals](#), the new [Sustainable Development Goals](#) provide the framework and impetus to end inequality and reach the poorest and most vulnerable people. It is critical that all governments ensure adherence to the SDGs. Moreover, in line with the principles of aid effectiveness, coordination with other donors should be promoted, and co-funding encouraged whenever possible.

Reinstate allowable annual allocations for public engagement

The Government of Canada should reinstate allowable annual allocations for public engagement by Canadian NGOs in Canada, and support advocacy as an output of international assistance programming, particularly in its work with local, women-led CSOs and efforts aimed at changing social norms and attitudes.

Civil society engagement and advocacy plays a critical role in raising public awareness and commitment to international assistance imperatives, while ensuring that public policies properly reflect the needs of the poorest and most marginalized communities. Contrary to their counterparts in other countries, however, Canadian INGOs largely have to finance public engagement activities

⁴⁸ An eventual DFI should be financed not by Official Development Assistance but rather through development finance and philanthropic funds, and underpinned by robust impact assessments.

through limited unrestricted funds. Despite these challenges, Canadian civil society partners have shown no shortage of willingness and ability to engage in activities aimed at fostering understanding and awareness of international assistance issues among the Canadian public, while working with government officials to impart their expertise and inform policy processes. Awareness-raising and public engagement should also be fostered in countries receiving Canadian assistance. This is particularly urgent on contexts where space for CSO engagement is being constrained, leading to an erosion of civil rights and government accountability. Support to local women-led civil society organizations should seek to empower and raise the ability of such organizations' to influence and shape development planning, public perception and public expenditure over the long-term

Conclusion

Global challenges require coordinated solutions that apply the right mechanisms, in the right context. The interconnected challenges of climate change and sustainable development, stability and security, clean and inclusive growth, resilience, nutrition and health, and agriculture and food security, call for a greater integration and coherence of policy and funding mechanisms, as well as expertise, technologies, and stakeholder groups, between branches of government dealing with foreign affairs, international development, security and stability, environment and climate change, and humanitarian assistance. Canada's convening power and financial resources should be applied in ways that encourage knowledge-sharing, partnerships, and innovation between local CSOs, NGOs, multilateral organizations, the private sector and others. This requires predictability and freedom for partners to propose and innovate new approaches, as well as models for outcome accountability that allow for progress to be evaluated and interventions to be reoriented as needed during program cycles. New mechanisms should ensure all actors, including fellow donors, are fully aligned and accountable towards the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). Public engagement and advocacy, both in Canada and in international assistance-receiving countries, plays a critical role in promoting accountability for outcomes within a climate of public awareness and commitment to the imperatives of international assistance.

Conclusion – Towards a new Canadian international assistance policy and funding framework

The year 2015 marked a turning point in international cooperation for protecting and expanding global public goods in the areas of international assistance, climate change adaptation and mitigation, community resilience and disaster risk management.

Three key international agreements define this new landscape: The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the 17 associated [Sustainable Development Goals](#) provide a call to action for countries and multilateral organizations, civil society and the private sector, to find new ways of working together to ensure ‘no one is left behind’. They also establish a comprehensive set of actions for attaining this objective. The [Paris Climate Change Agreement](#) underscores climate change as a critical global challenge, in which developed countries carry an obligation to support sustainable development and adaptation among the world’s poorest and most marginalized communities. The [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) articulates a set of targets, actions and principles to guide international efforts to better manage disaster risk and build communities that are better prepared to withstand recover more quickly from the impacts natural and human-made disasters.

Not only do the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework mark the beginning of a new era of concerted international cooperation for addressing humanity’s greatest challenges, they share a strong emphasis on gender equality’s central role in fostering more prosperous, healthy, stable, inclusive, compassionate, and resilient communities around the world.

CARE shares this perspective.

In the seven policy briefs and 31 recommendations that make up this submission, we have suggested a series of practical actions that Canada can take to leverage its unique added value in the international community, fine-tune its rights-based international assistance approaches, and lead a new push in the fight against inequality, poverty and vulnerability. Each brief provides evidence and rationale to inform the development of a new Canadian international assistance policy and funding framework centred on the means by which Canada can support more sustainable solutions. In all cases, this involves measures for addressing unequal power relations – in particular those deriving from gender inequality – as injustices and underlying causes of poverty and instability.

Brief #1 posits **Gender equality: Cornerstone of effective development**. It demonstrates that the adoption of a feminist foreign policy requires that gender equality be established as a standalone policy pillar, as well as a cross-cutting theme in the Government of Canada’s new international assistance frameworks. Programs must be driven by long-term theories of change, focussed on efforts to reorient social attitudes, norms and behaviours. This entails measures to ensure that the most marginalized members of the communities receiving Canadian assistance are involved in processes affecting their opportunities, livelihoods and wellbeing. The brief further underscores the importance of dedicated resources and capacities within responsible federal government departments, as well as among women’s rights organizations around the world.

Brief #2 focusses on the **Health and rights of women and children**. It identifies the need to involve women and youth in the design and delivery of health-related services. It underscores why health policies and programs, including those that provide reproductive health services, must be informed by evidence about what makes them accessible, effective and durable for impact groups. Further, sexual health and rights, including the full expression of sexual and gender identities, must be defended internationally as basic human rights. From this, it follows that health services must be provided to those most in need, and on the basis of their human rights. Recognizing the increasingly transnational nature of global health challenges, Brief #2 urges the adoption of a coherent, whole-of-government strategy for promoting women and children's rights in Canada and around the world. Finally, it identifies national primary healthcare systems as the essential institutional mechanisms through which donors can support the delivery of quality, essential, population-based health services in line with international guidelines.

Brief #3 centers on the role of **Women's economic empowerment** – both in maximizing a population's productive capacity, and in fostering deep and lasting change. It demonstrates that promoting women's agency and financial decision-making depends on overcoming regulatory and policy barriers which continue to impede women's access to financial products, services and education. This can be assisted through the formation of community-based and informal savings groups, and the recognition of these organizations by financial institutions. Further policies are needed to ensure women are not prevented, whether by law or cultural norms, from participating in the workforce or opening businesses. Labour organizations, international labour standards and social safety nets provide additional tools to ensure that employed women are afforded the dignity and security that is their right.

Brief #4 details how **Inclusive agricultural growth, food security and resilience to climate change** – centred on the untapped potential of women smallholder farmers – can ensure the availability of quality food and livelihood opportunities for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people, while contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation, fostering gender equality, and building more resilient communities around the world. Towards this end, it emphasizes the need to promote the role of smallholders themselves as the drivers and end-users of agricultural innovation processes. Moreover, it shows that farmers' organizations can play critical roles as partners in the promotion of more responsive local governance. Women smallholder farmers can be assisted to participate in such efforts through programs that support the adoption of post-harvest systems and technologies that reduce loss along agricultural production chains, increase profitability, and leave women with more time to invest in productive activities. Finally, women-led social enterprises involved in the production and sale of efficient fuel energy units can provide alternate sources of income, while mitigating the use of inefficient and dirty fuels.

Brief #5 posits **Governance, pluralism, diversity, and human rights** as critical mechanisms for recalibrating power imbalances, and thus for building the foundations for durable international assistance outcomes. Policies aimed at fostering improvements in this area must be focused on facilitating civic engagement of communities impacted by decision-making and public expenditures. Towards this end, social accountability mechanisms offer proven means to create space in which service providers, public authorities and community members can be brought together in ways that

allow citizens, particularly women, to influence the way public funds are allocated and spent, and how services are designed and delivered. Central governments and external donors can assist these efforts by promoting the creation of spaces in which citizens are able to prioritize their collective needs, plan and implement priorities, and devise strategies aimed at influencing local development.

Brief #6 builds on CARE's longstanding experience in **Responding to humanitarian crises**. Emergency situations, by their very nature, require assistance to be delivered in a timely manner. As such, the predictability of funding sources is instrumental, and can make the difference between life or death for hundreds or even thousands of people. Amid a growing number of increasingly protracted crises driven by climate change and conflict, however, it is also critical that longer-term funding mechanisms be available, and that they include sufficient predictability to allow implementing partners to adjust their activities to respond to shifting circumstances. Such mechanisms should be capable of supporting resilience and disaster risk reduction programming. Evidence shows that humanitarian situations are opportune contexts for supporting changing gender dynamics. As such, humanitarian programming should emphasize women's empowerment and seek to reduce inequalities between men and women, and between displaced people and host communities. Towards this end, all humanitarian responses should be shaped by a feminist lens, or at minimum be marked 'gender sensitive' on the IASC tool. Further, innovation in humanitarian contexts requires a certain risk tolerance, and unorthodox partnerships and approaches can yield surprising results. Accountability to beneficiaries themselves should underpin and guide all humanitarian assistance policy and programming. Accountability for results should be adopted in such a way as to avoid unrealistic or onerous procedural hurdles. Finally, all humanitarian assistance must uphold the humanitarian principles – ensuring a clear separation between assistance and political or military objectives is key for the protection and safety of civilians and humanitarian workers alike.

Brief #7, under the heading **Delivering results: Improving effectiveness and transparency, innovation, and partnerships**, addresses the 'how' of effective international assistance delivery. Situating the Government of Canada's International Assistance Review at the beginning of a new era of international coordination for addressing transnational challenges, it calls for policy coherence, and the sharing of expertise and mechanisms, between Canada's foreign affairs, international trade, international development, defence, environment and climate change, humanitarian assistance and health machineries. It underscores research proving the manifold efficiencies that can be attained through longer-term – 10-plus year – international assistance programs. It calls for international assistance to be delivered through a mix of financial mechanisms for working with civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations, multilateral organizations and directly with recipient country governments. It also details why some mechanisms may be more appropriate in certain contexts than others, and encourages the Government of Canada to pilot new partnerships and innovation mechanisms. Innovation hubs, such as have been pioneered by other donors, and decentralized funding decisions, while entailing a measure of risk, can be more efficient and deliver unexpected, positive results. In all its international assistance policy, Canada should ensure it is holding itself and partners accountable to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. Finally, public engagement is critical for raising awareness, commitment and democratic accountability towards public policies properly reflect the needs of the poorest and most

marginalized communities. Civil society can play an instrumental role in this regard, and should be seen as a partner in fostering public awareness and accountability, as well as a source of expertise and insight in domestic and international policy processes.

Amid new global challenges, increasingly protracted crises, and a shifting geography of poverty, Canada today faces an opportunity to adopt a comprehensive policy and funding framework for reaching the world's poorest and most vulnerable people, while building more prosperous, peaceful and resilient communities. Informed by latest evidence and the ingenuity of stakeholders in civil society, the private sector and academia, the Government of Canada's 2016 International Assistance Review provides a new foundation upon which to launch international assistance policies that are informed by evidence and best-practice, precedent-setting in their implementation of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), the [Paris Climate Change Agreement](#) and the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#), that deliver real and long-lasting change for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people, and that reflect Canadians' longstanding commitment to human rights and desire to play a pro-active and positive role in the world.