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BC Council for  
International Cooperation

# A British Columbia Review of Canada's International Assistance Policy

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# British Columbia Council for International Cooperation

## WHO WE ARE

The British Columbia Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC) is a coalition of international development and civil society organizations that has engaged in sustainable development and social justice issues for over a quarter century. BCCIC supports its more than 100 members in becoming more effective agents of change in their global cooperation efforts by disseminating knowledge gained through collaborative projects, building relationships across different sectors and networks, and developing the capacity of international development practitioners. BCCIC represents members' interests and advances policy recommendations on provincial, national and international issues and the enabling role of civil society in these areas. BCCIC's vision is to engage British Columbians in global cooperation for a just, equitable, and sustainable world; its mission is to provide members and others in BC with networking, information sharing, and learning opportunities that facilitate cooperation to achieve global development goals and increase public awareness of, and support for, global development. BCCIC is registered as a charitable organization in Canada and receives core operating support from the Government of Canada, provided through Global Affairs Canada, and from membership dues. The Council receives project funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Kenoli Foundation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BCCIC would like to thank all of the individuals and organizations in British Columbia who participated in interviews, roundtables, and other consultations during this process. We would also like to express our gratitude to the 29 communities across the region for hosting the series of roundtables that enabled BCCIC to meet community members in-person and listen to input from over 400 participants. Finally, we were honoured that Lilian Chatterjee, Director General for Global Affairs Canada, participated in our consultation at the Dutch Urban Design Centre in Vancouver, BC on June 15, 2016.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A new comprehensive Canadian international assistance framework that connects expertise across sectors and aligns itself with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is both necessary and possible. Indeed, as this report suggests, if Canada is to tackle key global issues such as gender inequality, climate change, security, humanitarian assistance, and development financing, the government must build stronger partnerships across its internal departments and the three levels of government, as well as with northern and southern civil society partners. Furthermore, it must incorporate the *17 Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), outlined in *Agenda 2030*, as a harmonizing global framework in order to provide a truly universal and interconnected roadmap for achieving transformative change for a healthy planet and viable future.

To prevail in such an effort, Canada will need not only bold leadership and a strategic policy, but also a path-breaking cooperative agenda based in a transformational theory of change. The advent of a new liberal government with strong leadership in its Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers, coupled with an aspirational global framework around sustainable international cooperation, presents an unparalleled opportunity for this new visionary approach.

This report - which was produced by the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC) in consultation with over 400 members of civil society - presents both a vision and concrete set of policy recommendations for such an agenda. With input from experts and other stakeholders from the worlds of policy, business, indigenous communities, and civil society, the report explores the Canadian context of these global challenges and frameworks and recommends concrete mechanisms for sustained, multi-level engagement and on-the-ground action.

The report and its recommendations are based on the following understandings:

- That because *Agenda 2030* provides an accepted time-bound global framework for action on the world's most pressing threats, Canada needs to act immediately to develop solutions through its engagement strategies.
- That because Canada is a signatory to *Agenda 2030*, it should align its domestic and international efforts with the global standard.
- That because Canada has committed to a 'feminist lens' in its international engagement approach, and because there is overwhelming consensus that human-induced climate change is well underway and presents a risk to all development gains, both themes should be cross-cutting across all policy interventions.
- That a meaningful international assistance policy addresses different cultural, religious and political value systems in a way that accounts for respective stages of development.
- That a meaningful approach to international engagement is one that is rooted in equitable North-South partnerships.

**The report recommends that**, as a first step in forging this new cooperative agenda, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) should consult across government with multiple departments, namely the Department of National Defence, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the Department of Justice, to encourage a **whole-of-government approach** to policy development. Concurrently, GAC should meet with members of civil society, First Nations, diaspora cultural communities, and Canadian youth in its efforts to adopt an **integrated approach**.

**The report recommends that** this partnership should be formalized and directed by an *Interministerial Sustainable Development Advisory Council* and include members from each of the identified government departments and community sectors. The Advisory Council would meet regularly to provide specific recommendations on areas needing improved policy coherence and would oversee the development of a **suite of indicators** to legitimately and transparently track progress toward achieving its goals.

In addition, each of the highlighted thematic areas proposed by Global Affairs will require an integrated and universal approach to developing international assistance mechanisms. As a whole, they should be used as a lens for viewing and achieving the SDGs.

## Priority Policy Recommendations are:

### Health and Rights of Women and Children

- Adopt a *gender transformative* approach that supports an increase in women's entrepreneurship and participation in peacebuilding and post-conflict governance, with support for nontraditional actors in progressive partnerships and approaches that improve gender standards and practices.
- Reorient funding for MNCH initiatives toward programming, including early education programming, that focuses on sexual and reproductive health as well as sexual identity and gender equality/equity issues in the context of a rights-based approach to sustainable development.

### Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change

- Develop a seventh theme around Environment, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health that is separate from Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change.
- Differentiate countries of climate vulnerability from countries of focus and provide additional, non-ODA financing to support climate adaptation and mitigation projects in those countries that link to humanitarian assistance efforts.
- Leverage Canada's success with collaborative planning and environmental management governance models when developing policy around natural resources internationally.

### Governance, Pluralism, Diversity and Human Rights

- Establish a *Good Governance, Security, and Development Task Force* to cooperatively define and identify best practices in systemic change for good governance and rule of law.
- Invest in institutional development and quality higher education and increase support for groups working with both state and non-state actors to solve emerging complex problems in non-traditional sectors.

## Peace and Security

- Take a lead role in global negotiations around peacebuilding, UN peacekeeping and peace support operations.
- Establish interdisciplinary and intergenerational programs that teach young people peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and conflict resolutions skills with a view to building an interdepartmentally-based and government-funded 'Maple Berets' program.
- Increase funding for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) as a tool for social change and conflict prevention.

## Responding to Humanitarian Crises and the Needs of Displaced Populations

- Engage with Canada's diaspora cultural communities to build relationships with and improve the capacity of southern communities to prevent and respond to humanitarian crises.
- Review Canada's immigration and refugee policy to account for political, social and environmental refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in a timely manner.

## Delivering Results

### *Improving Effectiveness and Transparency*

- Make the grant proposal and management process more accessible to small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) by simplifying and standardizing requirements and procedures and by encouraging more responsive and adaptive opportunities for funding.
- Support funding mechanisms that target SMOs organizations and encourage consortium-building.

### *Innovation*

- Develop a detailed database of GAC-funded overseas programming and a complementary, collaborative technology platform for civil society organizations to engage with.
- Fund 'Innovation Hubs' or similar spaces, in partnership with civil society and the private sector, where organizations can take risks with new pilot project innovations before scaling up.

### *Partnerships*

- Include indigenous, youth, and diaspora community representatives as delegates to advisory councils and support such efforts with an expansion of global citizenship programs and the International Youth Internship Program (IYIP).
- Bring young innovators and champions in science, technology, arts and culture from southern countries to Canada in order to broaden their vision on Canadian achievement across multiple sectors.

Canada is poised to take a leadership role in international assistance policy alongside a comprehensive, universal and aspirational global framework for real change. Ultimately, the country's success will hinge on crafting an approach that takes into account the perspectives and expertise of many in a world of ever-growing complexity.

It is the firm conviction of BCCIC and its members that Canada will benefit from the kind of collaboration and recommendations outlined herein. Moreover, not only would such an approach go a long way in confronting the developmental threats facing the world, but Canada would position itself at the forefront of a stronger, cleaner, more equitable world, better able to help lead the world to meet other 21st century challenges.

# THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Perhaps nothing describes our global context and where Canadians find themselves in history better than *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (Agenda 2030). Agenda 2030 is a global effort to achieve a stable, inclusive, healthy and thriving world. Agenda 2030 delivered the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) – a suite of 17 integrated goals and 169 targets that aims to tackle the root causes of environmental, social and economic inequality in order to achieve a more peaceful and sustainable world. Three principles distinguish Agenda 2030 from previous agreements. It is aspirational, integrated and universal. It is the first multilateral agreement of its kind to call for a country to achieve a set of sustainable development goals within its own borders as well as through its engagement with partner countries, in effect linking domestic and international policy through a cross-sectoral approach. It applies to poverty in Canada, climate change globally, and peace and security in Canada's overseas development initiatives. It is a call for all governments, including Canada's, to align and harmonize national policy with a time-bound global agenda.

Following the adoption of the SDGs, the world met to tackle climate change in Paris in December 2015 at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the

Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In a sobering about-face on the issue of climate policy, the Canadian government committed to a 1.5 degree Celsius target threshold instead of 2 degrees – a threshold that will require us to take dramatic steps under an intensely short timeframe. This sense of urgency clearly points to the time-bound nature of any steps that the global community needs to take toward tackling these issues - an urgency that should be echoed in Canada's approach to achieving the SDGs through its international development policy.

The fifteen-year period we are entering has also been marked by an intense increase in migration and violent conflict. There are significant challenges to established ideas about development and its relationship with conflict – the return of geopolitics, struggling democratic movements, the growth of terrorism – which Global Affairs Canada (GAC) must take into account when developing its integrated approach to international assistance and in any examination of how Canadians engage in the world.

# THE CANADIAN CONTEXT

Upon election, Prime Minister Trudeau published his mandate letter for the Ministry of International Development and La Francophonie wherein Minister Bibeau was instructed to support “the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* [and make] Canada a leader in development innovation and effectiveness.” She is also expected, “in collaboration with the

Minister of Environment and Climate Change and the Minister of Finance, [to provide] assistance to countries that are vulnerable to the destabilizing effects of climate change, including through climate finance.” The letters further contain references to consulting with Canadians and being accountable to the prescribed mandates. In the case of GAC, the emphasis on consultation is further underscored by

the [International Development and Humanitarian Assistance Civil Society Partnership Policy](#), which focuses on “enhancing effective development and humanitarian cooperation with international, Canadian, and developing country CSOs.”

The draft *International Assistance Review (IAR)* provides civil society with an opportunity to directly influence Canada’s international agenda on a new policy and funding framework to guide Canada’s aid decisions. Simultaneously, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is engaged in an analysis of Canada’s role regarding sustainability

while the Department of National Defence (DND) is reviewing its defence policy that addresses, in part, humanitarian assistance, security and peace operations. The processes to date have been carried out in an open and transparent way. On behalf of its civil society network, the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC) has leveraged the global SDG framework as a lens through which to analyze the *IAR* in the context of a more integrated and sustainable world.

## THE BRITISH COLUMBIAN CONTEXT

BCCIC is a coalition of international development and civil society organizations that has engaged in sustainable development and social justice issues for over a quarter century. Since 1989 our members have worked both within Canada and internationally to tackle challenges such as poverty and sustainable development. The Council aims to help its members become more effective agents of change in their global cooperation efforts.

Under our new [Strategic Plan](#), BCCIC has engaged in a process of inquiry across the province to determine the state of our world in 2016 and how we as individuals and organizations have evolved as agents of change in our identities and our work. BCCIC conducted an extensive series of 29 roundtable consultations across 5 regions in BC, meeting with over 400 individuals over nine months to explore the role of the SDGs in bringing about local and international change. Participants included civil society organizations (CSOs), mayors and municipal leaders, First Nations, private sector representatives, inter-faith groups, academia, youth, and other stakeholders. In line with the universal focus of the goals, the consultations brought together CSOs working on the SDGs both locally

and internationally.

Each consultation posed the following discussion points:

1. What are the Sustainable Development Goals and why do they matter?
2. How do the Sustainable Development Goals relate to your work?
3. How can the SDGs be an opportunity for greater impact and collaboration?

Following these roundtables, BCCIC held an in-person consultation in Vancouver in June 2016 that was attended by Director General for GAC, Lilian Chatterjee, as well as a final online consultation in mid-July. These consultations were focused specifically on GAC’s *IAR* and examined its relationship to the SDGs and on drawing important connections to the simultaneous reviews undertaken by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Department of Defence.

## ASSUMPTIONS

In a consultation process, what is asked and how it is asked goes a long way in determining answers. If we ask the wrong questions, too many questions, or questions that do not dig deep enough, we may miss innovations or emergent ideas. Behind each question lies an assumption – a set of premises that are either presumed or implied. If we ask what to do about the world’s poorest populations and most fragile states, what is the assumption? *Why* we focus on the world’s poorest and most vulnerable will tell us a lot about our theory of change and identity structure, as well as the assumptions behind our understandings of “us and them”. The *problem* is a matter of opinion - opinion that depends on our underlying assumptions, our theories of change, and how we view the world. Indeed, when we look at an impoverished or vulnerable person, are we seeing the root problem or simply the effect of a root problem? Our view depends on who we are and how we view challenges. Under Trudeau’s guidance, Canada is realigning its view of global cooperation

through a feminist lens. A feminist lens presumably means one that addresses the fundamental inequality between women and men in all aspects of global cooperation policy. It is a postmodern approach that insists that *who* we are and *how* we look at the world determines the nature of the issues we confront.

During our consultation process, ninety percent of participants surveyed said that we should be exploring the assumptions behind the themes and questions in GAC’s *IAR*. BCCIC therefore asked participants to spend time uncovering the assumptions inherent in each of the policy themes and questions. We address these assumptions in each section in the hopes that doing so will allow us to make better decisions around Canada’s international engagement strategies.

## INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE BASED ON A LIBERAL THEORY OF CHANGE

The importance of understanding the assumptions that underlie Canada’s approach to international assistance points to the need for a clear theory of change to guide GAC’s policy and practice. A theory of change describes the philosophy of *why* and *how* change needs to happen - it is an actor’s definition of ‘the good’ being pursued and the kind of change needed to bring it about. The current *IAR* Discussion Paper provides clarity around the *how* and *what* of GAC’s international assistance focus, but lacks a clear and coherent explanation of *why* GAC has chosen its six themes and *what* it ultimately aims to achieve through them. BCCIC’s consultation addressed this gap by first answering the technical

*what* and methodological *how* questions contained in the *IAR* Discussion Paper before diving deeper to examine the question of *why* we do the work we do. This approach allowed participants to move beyond the universe of technical solutions and processes that are typically prioritized in consultations and to explore the *why* behind Canadian international assistance work. When asked *why* they or their organizations take a particular approach, participants’ theories of change fell into four broad but inter-related categories. These four broad approaches can inform Canada’s Liberal approach to international assistance.



## 1. Individual Values

Many participants pointed toward individual values and beliefs as drivers for their involvement in global cooperation as a means to change the world. Most pointed out a feeling of solidarity with the world's poorest and most vulnerable, or the need for individuals to see themselves as global citizens, and therefore believe our national policies should include mechanisms to promote these values. Individual empowerment, access to basic human rights, working with leaders and key decision makers, addressing challenges like corruption at the individual scale, encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset and not being shy to include "love", "greed", "compassion" or a "spiritual orientation" in development work are all examples of how these individual interior theories of change manifest.

## 2. Individual Behaviours

Many participants pointed to evidence-based changes in individual behaviour as being critical to making the world a better place. Rooted in action, many of the proponents of behavioural change assert that changing individual values is not as critical as adopting very specific methodologies such as mosquito net use to avoid malaria, vaccinations to protect women and children from tuberculosis, or zinc supplementation for Maternal Newborn and Child Health (MNCH). Proponents of these theories are prone to saying "be the change you want to be in the world" as both a motivation for a being an agent of change and as a methodology for actually changing the world.

## 3. Exterior Collective Systemic Change

Proponents of this view are prone to broad statements about the need for systemic change and addressing the root causes of a collective

problem. Advocates for collective systemic change tend to promote political solutions. They see larger collective patterns and their underlying structures as the point of intervention to facilitate change. Developing good governance, changing policy, building effective justice systems, tackling trade agreements, and collectively implementing global agendas are key to changing the world. Rather than installing solar panels they will work to eliminate unfair taxation or trade tariffs on renewable energy.

## 4. Interior Collective Cultural Change

Proponents of this view recognize that many collective practices and beliefs are cultural in nature. Advocates for collective cultural change are keen to educate and empower at the collective scale toward a change in overall attitudes. Common strategies to change cultural mores include working through media, advertising, awareness campaigns or educational programs. Empowering women and girls while also changing the individual attitudes of men and boys is more important than developing new laws or policies that risk having little impact in practice. Often keenly aware of the potential for different worldviews, these proponents can be instrumental in pointing out how Western development policies and practices can run contrary to local or indigenous priorities. They believe that education, awareness raising and changing collective mindsets are the keys to a better world.

As a network, BCCIC embraces and honours all four of these interdependent change orientations toward making the world a better place. We believe each orientation holds a partial and complementary truth. Further to this, we reject the illusion that any particular view or theory is right or wrong as a standalone theory. Indeed, an integrated Liberal government theory of change that promotes Canadian leadership in global cooperation should

embrace all four of these strategic orientations at *the same time* and recognize that organizations evolve as they align their approaches with global best practices such as the [Istanbul Principles](#) or goals such as the SDGs. A feminist lens or a rights-based approach, for example, can be seen as positive steps along the path to global citizenship rather than prerequisites for participation in solving the world's problems. Ultimately, as we grow out of the 'us and them' divide that has dominated international development thinking for sixty years, we will tolerate, embrace and encourage each other in our theories of change and work toward

integrating our views, not isolating them. BCCIC encourages GAC to give equal attention to the four interdependent change orientations identified by BCCIC and outline an integrated theory of change that encourages different approaches to change, as recommended on [page 11](#). After all, only with a clear *why* can we have a dynamic *what* and an effective *how*.

## OVERARCHING COMMENTS

# NEED FOR GREATER INTEGRATION BETWEEN SDGS AND THE IAR POLICY THEMES



Agenda 2030 is grounded in the principle of universality, meaning it applies to all people everywhere. While the *IAR* rightly focuses on how Canada can best leverage its efforts in relation to specific SDGs (health, climate change, economic growth, and peace, justice and strong institutions) it is also important to consider the added value of leveraging the SDG framework as a *whole*. BCCIC encourages the Government of Canada to fully adopt the integrated, indivisible and universal language of the SDGs and build internal capacity for understanding and working with them.



BCCIC has conducted an initial analysis of GAC's six policy themes in an effort to map the overlaps between the goals outlined in the *IAR* and the SDGs. Connections were made by reviewing Canada's current and proposed measurable actions around a given theme and reviewing how they link to specific indicators and their sub-targets as described in *Agenda 2030*. Our findings, represented in the infographics on the following pages, show that the GAC themes support the achievement of 12 out of the 17 SDGs, but that actualizing these connections will require recognizing and incorporating these interlinkages into specific programming and funding around the themes.



BCCIC supports GAC's shift to view its international assistance policy through a feminist lens and therefore believes that gender equality as reflected in SDG 5 should be a cross-cutting theme. Moreover, because of the transboundary nature of climate change and its potential to undercut all progress made in international development, BCCIC posits that climate change should also be a cross-cutting theme. Our findings, however, show that neither gender nor climate change are adequately integrated through GAC's other policy themes. Our analysis also showed that GAC's themes fail to address five of the SDGs - Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), Innovation, Industry and Infrastructure (SDG 9), Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), Life Below Water (SDG 14) and Life on Land (SDG 15). Because these SDGs are environmental in nature, we urge GAC to add a seventh theme around Environment, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health as outlined on pages 17 and 20.

**We recommend that** GAC fully leverage the SDG framework by using the six policy themes as a vehicle to address **each and all** of the global goals, making explicit connections between each theme and the associated SDGs, and funding projects and programs that reflect these inter-linkages by 2018.

**Further, we recommend that**, in order to support the implementation of a holistic policy approach, GAC develop a coherent and explicit theory of change that integrates the assumptions present in each of the six policy areas, envisions these policy areas as a vehicle for achieving the SDGs as an integrated framework, and gives equal attention to the four interdependent change orientations identified by BCCIC on page 9 - individual values, individual behaviours, collective systemic change and collective cultural change.

**Further, we recommend that** the Government of Canada develop a *Canadian Charter of Sustainable Development* by 2018 to be used in open dialogues and trainings between government and civil society to achieve the SDGs by 2030. These dialogues should include discussion of indicator frameworks, monitoring, reporting and the evaluation of country progress both domestically and internationally. We highly recommend providing explicit space for CSO shadow reporting and the formal inclusion of youth in this dialogue.

## NEED TO TAKE A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

# 2

We cannot discuss climate change without discussing emerging human health epidemics. We cannot discuss human health issues without considering the root causes of poverty. We cannot talk about poverty without talking about the link to peace and justice. But these connections are not made between the goals as outlined in the *IAR*. The goals and their related targets continue to exist in silos, separated from one another and from other policy initiatives such as DND's *Defence Policy Review Public Consultation Paper*, where peace and security are linked to good governance, and Environment and Climate Change Canada's *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy*, where climate change is linked to humanitarian assistance.

Linking the goals means identifying and implementing cooperative and collaborative opportunities across disciplines, sectors and departments. It means bridging the disconnect between international trade deals and development assistance as well as the promotion of extractives and fossil fuels with Canada's commitment to progressive climate change policy. With the *IAR*, this means an integration of approach and policy with Environment and Climate Change Canada (Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change), Status of Women Canada (Women and Children; Peace and Security), the Department of National Defence (Peace and Security), the Ministries of Finance and the Treasury Board (Funding), and the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development (Delivering Results). It also means integrating civil society as a source of expertise toward achieving the SDGs. Furthermore, because so many of the goals directly relate to provincial jurisdiction (terrestrial forest management) or even municipal participation

(education curriculum), there is a need for policy coherence across the three levels of government and First Nations governance systems.

**We recommend that** an *Interministerial Sustainable Development Advisory Council* be established to overview and ensure collaborative management and monitoring of the SDG goals among DND, Global Affairs Canada, and Environment and Climate Change. The *Advisory Council* should fund and maintain at least 12 standing seats, including 6 inter-ministerial seats and 2 seats for CSOs, with at least one seat representing the Executive Director of one of the Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation. Another 2 seats could be designated for youth and/or indigenous delegates, with an additional seat held by a representative of one of the Inter-Cultural Associations to represent diaspora communities. All the seats, including the CSO, youth delegate/indigenous, and intercultural seats should be self-selected from among their respective sectors, with the departmental representatives selected from their respective policy communities and constituencies. A primary mandate of this Council would be to provide specific recommendations on areas needing improved policy coherence and national harmonization toward international standards and agreements.

## 3

TAP INTO THE *INVISIBLE MOSAIC*

Canada is home to an *invisible mosaic* of local civil society groups working toward, and in many cases already achieving, success around the SDGs. In British Columbia alone, BCCIC has identified and [digitally mapped](#) over 1400 small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs)<sup>1</sup> and projects directly working on the SDGs. While we suspect that there are similar *invisible mosaics* throughout Canada, their efforts remain largely invisible to the government, the public and even many of the organizations themselves. By making visible this *invisible mosaic*, the government's policy development and implementation processes can benefit from tapping into their expertise so that such a partnership would support the establishment of a vibrant community of policy and research networks, and promote regular dialogue on crucial public policy issues.

**We recommend that** the Canadian government support the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation (ICN), in particular its *Canada 2030 Fund*, which promises to enhance the participation of small and medium-sized CSOs in order to achieve stronger development results. The ICN represents over 400 civil society organizations from across Canada that are engaged in overseas development work that lends itself to improved human rights governance, climate change adaptation, and the enhancement of peace and security. We believe the long term absorptive capacity for a permanent fund should be \$25 million/year toward working with this mosaic.

**Further, we recommend that** 2 seats on the aforementioned *Interministerial Sustainable Development Advisory Council* be held by CSO representatives. The seats are rotating, but at least one should always be held by either a small or medium-sized organization or by the Executive Director of one of the provincial and regional Councils for International Cooperation in order to ensure more collaborative approaches among provinces and regions in Canada concerning sustainable development and social justice.

<sup>1</sup> "Small" refers to Canadian civil society organizations (CSOs) with annual operating budgets of under \$500,000, and "medium" refers to CSOs with annual operating budgets of between \$500,001 and \$2 million.

# THEMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## HEALTH AND RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The basic assumption embedded within GAC's IAR is that Canada should be focusing on the most vulnerable women and girls as the fulcrum of political change toward improved livelihoods. Several studies<sup>1</sup> show that including women in development decisions does in fact link to better decision-making on issues as diverse as finances, water management and health care. Women are economic agents of change within their homes and communities and often oversee the health and well-being of their families. Both the United Nations and World Bank recognize these values and have advanced landmark agreements such as the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) and the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#).

GAC's Health and Rights of Women and Children theme clearly links to SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Good Jobs and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 16 (Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). As a cross-cutting theme, however, we urge Canada to make explicit connections in its approach

to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Renewable Energy), 9 (Innovation and Infrastructure), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption), 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life Below Water), and 15 (Life on Land).

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**Q:** *Building on our commitment to a feminist approach and support for the gender equality goal of the 2030 Agenda, where should Canada focus its international assistance efforts in this area? Can Canada take advantage of specific opportunities to demonstrate new or continued leadership on women's empowerment and gender equality?*

BCCIC commends GAC for viewing its international development engagement through a progressive, developmental, and feminist lens, including a shift in its programming and implementation to support reproductive rights, and recognizes Canada's [Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security](#) as a positive step in the right direction. However, in order to truly improve the position of women in the world, BCCIC encourages GAC to look beyond programming and policies that focus

<sup>1</sup> See: Batliwala, Srilatha. "The meaning of women's empowerment: new concepts from action." (1994): 127-38.; Duflo, Esther. "Women empowerment and economic development." *Journal of Economic Literature* 50.4 (2012): 1051-1079.; Nussbaum, Martha C. *Women and human development: The capabilities approach*. Vol. 3. Cambridge University Press, 2001.

on improving the existing conditions of women toward changing the very social fabric and political structures that have created these conditions in the first place. If we mean to promote a feminist lens in our global cooperation policies, Canada must reassess its foreign policy and trade agreements that often support some of the world's least feminist environments, as in the case of arms exports to countries such as Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, many older women are the primary caregivers for their families, but are often absent from policy initiatives and including them would represent a more holistic approach to age and gender inclusion. Gender equality also depends on the understanding and support of men and boys, who must be included in a rights-based approach to the health and empowerment of women and girls.

**We recommend that** Canada move beyond gender sensitive policy development and toward *gender transformative*<sup>2</sup> policy and engagement to do a better job of addressing the root causes of gender inequality. This will include continuing to increase women's entrepreneurship and participation in the international private sector. It will also include working with DND to promote women in peacebuilding and post-conflict governance and institutional development.

**Further, we recommend that** nontraditional actors be given explicit opportunities in calls for funding, including men and boys, as well as groups that do not identify as feminist, to evolve their practices toward achieving international standards such as the Istanbul Principles. Encouraging progressive partnerships, consortium approaches, and peer learning or public engagement components that improve gender practices for proponents are recommended.

<sup>2</sup> Gender transformative approaches are programs and interventions that create opportunities for individuals to actively challenge gender norms, promote positions of social and political influence for women in communities, and address power inequities between persons of different genders.

**Q:** *How can Canada's efforts to support well-being and empowerment better benefit children and youth, including in the education sector?*

Research shows that policies targeting upward mobility through early childhood interventions including education are the most effective solutions to address inequality and poverty globally.<sup>3</sup> Because we know that educated women invest more in their families and communities than in themselves, it follows that we should be focusing on women and girls and their education. Canada also has the opportunity to spearhead a shift to gender transformative policy by supporting primary and secondary education initiatives that promote sexual and reproductive health and skills development. Following on its admirable history of supporting MNCH initiatives, Canada should recognize sexual and gender health and identity as well as reproductive rights education as integral to a rights-based approach.

**We recommend that** GAC reorient funding for MNCH initiatives toward programming that has or includes a specific focus on providing for sexual and reproductive health programs and projects. A portion of this funding should support well-funded and well-resourced public schools and hospitals that focus on early education intervention as a driver for upward economic ability and provide marketable skills-based and vocational training, including in technology, for girls at the primary and secondary education level.

**Further, we recommend that** specific funding support programs that address sexual

<sup>3</sup> Chetty, Hendren, Kline, Saez: Quarterly Journal of Economics 129(4): 1553-1623, 2014. [www.equality-of-opportunity.org](http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org)

identity and gender equality/equity in the context of a rights-based approach to sustainable development and that such issues be encouraged as components of project proposals, calls for proposals, responsive funding and public engagement proposals.

**Q:** *What strategic role can Canada play in advancing health-related SDGs to improve the health of women and girls, including adolescents, in particular their sexual and reproductive health and rights?*

Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) is closely tied to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 8 (Good Jobs and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 13 (Climate Action), and 16 (Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions). With the understanding of the universality among the GAC policy themes and the SDGs, GAC - in conjunction with DND

and ECCC - can strategically advance the health of women and girls by targeting multiple initiatives that include sustainable and climate smart agriculture for improved livelihoods and food security, access to clean water and reliable sanitation, early intervention education for upward mobility, child protection especially in fragile states, and peace diplomacy to ensure democratic governance.

**We recommend that** GAC - in the spirit of universality and a cross-cutting feminist lens and in conjunction with other governmental departments, particularly DND and ECCC - address the issue of women’s and girls’ health through a rights-based approach that supports funding of multiple causal streams, including agriculture, water and sanitation, and public and private sector decision making. This funding should be a responsive funding mechanism that encourages non traditional actors well versed in sexual and reproductive rights to work in partnership or consortia with traditional CSO development actors.





## CLEAN ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The assumption embedded in GAC's questions around this issue implies that a niche approach is the correct approach when considering engagement and that Canada has sufficient expertise in those sectors to engage as experts. Climate change is a significant long-term risk that will cause rising global temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and more extreme weather events that will intensify the challenges of global instability, poverty, hunger, and conflict. As a risk multiplier, it will trigger conflict over food and water shortages, refugee migration, and dwindling natural resources. The approach to tackling the causes and impacts of climate change must therefore emulate the nature of interconnected environmental issues and adopt a more holistic and ecosystem-based approach.

GAC's Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change theme clearly links to SDGs 1 (Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 13 (Climate Action), 16 (Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Climate change also connects to SDGs 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land), but the strategies outlined in the *IAR* fail to touch upon any marine, aquatic or terrestrial ecosystem or biodiversity topics. Furthermore, because climate change is a cross-cutting theme due to its risk multiplying nature, we urge GAC to make more explicit links in its delivery mechanisms to SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 9 (Innovation and Infrastructure), and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

There is mention in the *IAR* that water is a "key element in environmental sustainability and

climate change" but it is of particular concern that clean water and sanitation is not addressed within GAC's themes considering that water quality and access play a large role in the areas of health, gender, clean economic growth, peace and security, and response to humanitarian crises. It is tempting to collapse environmental issues and climate change issues into a single pillar, but it must be noted the environmental issues such as water quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem health exist independent of their relationship to climate change. A seventh pillar that focuses on Environment, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health would provide a vehicle for appropriately addressing the impacts of climate change, the sustainable use and conservation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, the development of sustainable cities, and the promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns in relation to international assistance.

**We recommend that** GAC develop a seventh theme around Environment, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health. This new policy area would address the lack of an environmental focus in GAC's current policy areas, distinguish climate change from other priority environmental issues, and provide a means to coordinate with the ECCC and SDG environmental objectives. GAC should support programming around this theme, including water programming, with flexible funding criteria. To support this theme, GAC should update its environmental public policy and action plan from 1996 independent of a purely climate change perspective.

**Further, we recommend that** Canada move beyond signatory status to ratify the Paris Agreement.

## Q: *Where has Canada added value in promoting clean sustainable economic growth?*

Smallholder farmers, fishers and pastoralists play a key role in job creation and the reduction of extreme poverty. They also have the knowledge, but perhaps not the resources, to build climate resilience methods such as agroforestry and agroecology, aquaculture, and livestock investment diversification into their resource management practices. In these cases, Canada's CSOs and their long history of North-South civil society partnerships outside of government-to-government partnerships represent a value-added for the development process. These North-South CSO partnerships are also crucial in promoting clean energy uptake and have provided a space for Canadians to provide capacity-building 'green skills,' particularly in technical and vocational education and training.

**We recommend that** Canada promote an enabling environment for innovation around small-scale and decentralized clean energy projects among CSOs through the development of knowledge sharing platforms and funding opportunities for international engagement, similar to the former Environment and Sustainable Development Program, with a dedicated amount provided for SMOs and Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGO). The program would target climate change and clean energy projects while supporting CSO recommendations for pro-poor, gender sensitive small scale project funding around non-carbon based solutions. The program would also complement the [Green Climate Fund's](#) call for investments in renewables in Africa that promote North-South CSO and private sector partnerships toward the uptake of clean energy, and would move Canada toward achieving SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

## Q: *How can Canada support developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change?*

BCCIC commends Canada for signing the Paris Declaration and for reinstating funding around climate change initiatives overseas - \$2.65 billion over the next five years is an historic contribution to help developing countries tackle climate change and should be lauded as appropriately ambitious. Based on precedents, however, Canada's contribution could grow to \$4 billion a year by 2020 to represent a 3% to 4% contribution of the US\$100 billion promised in the Paris Declaration. GAC should foster collaboration with local communities to mitigate climate change impact in developing countries and some funding should focus on small-scale decentralized energy solutions that reach the most marginalized and lean toward locally available, appropriate technologies best promoted through simple, small scale interventions. These efforts should be funded in addition to Canadian Official Development Assistance (ODA). Such financing, if directed in part through multiple programming streams that address climate change, would reflect the universal and interconnected nature of the SDGs.

**We recommend that** GAC work with DND to address and differentiate countries of vulnerability that will be more or less affected by climate change and ensure that the \$2.65 billion pledged is additional financing, separate from ODA, and that funding be increased to \$4 billion by 2020. The funding should be made available to north-south partnerships that include both civil society and public-private partnerships. Climate vulnerable countries may be different from countries of focus in terms of development assistance. The Philippines, for example, faces great threats from climate change, while Afghanistan remains one of Canada's

largest recipients of ODA, so a more nuanced and differentiated approach to assessing vulnerabilities needs to be highlighted with a view to developing more collaborative interdepartmental approaches.

**Further, we recommend that** the at-risk financing should be linked to humanitarian assistance, with a special focus on mobilizing women to identify solutions. To do this, GAC must coordinate with DND and its humanitarian assistance efforts and consider reviewing its refugee policy to embrace refugees fleeing climate-induced disasters.

nature of climate change, clean growth, and environment. Canada should instead focus on its expertise in the niche area of collaborative planning governance for environmental management, especially in rural communities. From the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and integrated watershed management to multi-use forest management and transboundary resource management<sup>1</sup>, the country has a long history of bringing together actors with different views of resource development into comprehensive and successful management planning that could be applied overseas.

**Q:** *Are there niche areas within climate and environment (e.g. water, biodiversity, land use, agriculture, energy) where Canada could further focus its international assistance?*

BCCIC discourages GAC from taking a niche approach when addressing the interconnected

**We recommend that** GAC leverage Canada's success with collaborative planning and environmental management governance models when developing policy around natural resources internationally.

<sup>1</sup> See the Great Bear Rainforest Act, the Mackenzie River Basin Transboundary Waters Master Agreement, the Great Lakes Commission, and the Canada-US Boundary Waters Treaty.





## GOVERNANCE, PLURALISM, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

There are two basic assumptions embedded in GAC's IAR around Governance, Pluralism, Diversity and Human Rights - that Canada is a just and peaceful society, and that governance structures around the world are based on similar value systems. In reality, we must consider Canada's treatment of its Indigenous Peoples historically and in the present before we determine whether Canada is sufficiently just. We must also acknowledge that states around the world are in different stages of development and that everything from culture to religion can influence value systems. Still, Canada is a pluralist society with a diverse and embedded civil society that partners

regularly with government. This civil society network offers a form of governance that further supports a rich history of multi-stakeholder engagement that is exemplary and transferable. By the United Nations definition of good governance, wherein a country's institutions and processes are transparent, Canada maintains a comparative advantage in promoting good governance in developing countries and in supporting SDG 16 (Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions). Moreover, the merger of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD) provides

an opportunity to integrate good governance and security into international development so that a foundational basis of strong rule of law and stable political and legal systems are in place to support sustainable development efforts.

Canada's CSO network plays a critical role in reducing fragility and providing resiliency in times of natural or manmade crisis and have a proven record of strengthening institutions across multiple sectors internationally. By enabling multiple institutions to act in times of need, and by reducing overall institutional vulnerability, Canada's CSO network directly supports progress toward Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. Along with SDG 16, the Governance, Pluralism, Diversity and Human Rights theme makes connections to SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). GAC should also consider making explicit links from the theme to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 5 (Gender Equality), and 13 (Climate Action).

**Q:** *How can Canada best help implement Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda - to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels?*

By embedding BCCIC's proposed seven policy themes within the overarching framework of the SDGs, Canada will be grounding its approach to building peaceful and just societies within a human-rights based framework while aligning with international conventions that enforce human security and democracy. By working with its diaspora communities and Indigenous Peoples to improve their livelihoods, Canada would be harmonizing its stance for a just society domestically with its position internationally. By leveraging its public legal education sector, GAC - in conjunction with the Department of Justice - can provide a model of

citizen access to justice, particularly for women and children.

**We recommend that** Canada develop a global citizenship program that promotes cross-cultural education and dialogue with Canada's Indigenous Peoples, diaspora communities, and youth. In support, GAC should double its current commitment of \$2 million for aboriginal internship programs to \$4 million and encourage consortium approaches to encourage absorptive capacity for a fund of this size. We recommend a youth internship stream of a similar nature be opened up to diaspora communities or CSOs that target diaspora youth. Furthermore, GAC should work through diaspora societies in BC to promote Canadian values on tolerance and understanding in the countries of origin of these immigrants through cultural exchanges involving youth and university students around community projects.

**Further, we recommend that** GAC collaborate with DND and the Department of Justice (DOJ) to establish and fund a *Good Governance, Security, and Development Task Force* to identify best practices in human rights, public legal education, and justice system capacity building programs in order to create access to justice education programs in affected countries.

**Q:** *How can Canada best advance peaceful pluralism and respect diversity and human rights?*

Canada must reassess universality in the context of human rights, as the term was created in a western context, but is meant to be cross cultural. Some of the underlying assumptions should be challenged and respect paid to religious, cultural and social norms while still upholding the universal standard inherent to all human beings. Canada must also recognize that governments alone do not make

governments work and that long-term and sustained investments in civil society, particularly in fragile contexts, provide much of the scaffolding to build government infrastructure and capacity.

**We recommend that** Canada increase support for groups working with both state and non-state actors to solve emerging complex problems in non-traditional sectors, particularly when it comes to security and conflict prevention.

definition of good governance and underwrite long-term institutional development that supports good governance and rule of law.

**We recommend that** Canada provide large-scale, long-term investment in institutional development and quality higher education that focuses on or leads to the achievement of the sustainable development goals, including specific support for academic institutions that highlight programs or schools of this nature.

**Q:** *In what areas of governance can Canada's international assistance have the most impact?*

Canada can have the most impact by moving from supporting short-term, standalone projects to long-term, predictable investments in building permanent institutions and competencies. In particular, in the context of institutional fragility, Canada - working across several departments, including DND, GAC, and Justice - needs to integrate security into its

**Further, we recommend that** the aforementioned *Good Governance, Security, and Development Task Force* develop a single, holistic definition and set of parameters for engagement around good governance and functional rule of law programming to apply across funding departments such as the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, the Partnership Fund, the Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START), bilateral efforts, the Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program (ACCBP) and others.



## PEACE AND SECURITY

The basic assumption embedded in this theme is that Canadian values, lifestyles and traditions are the right ones. The policy also assumes that the definitions of peace and the value systems to support it are the same across the world. If we agree that peace is the absence of violent conflict, not all conflict, then Canada can leverage its strength as a pluralistic society with a history of peaceful conflict resolution to engage in peacebuilding and peacekeeping action that enables secure societies and avoids relapse into conflict.

GAC's Peace and Security theme is linked to SDGs 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 16 (Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). BCCIC urges GAC to recognize and incorporate the connections to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 5 (Gender Equality), and 13 (Climate Action).

**Q:** *What specific strengths should Canada build upon to respond to peace and security challenges?*

As one of the most respected countries in the world given its history of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, Canada should take more ownership of its leadership role in UN peacekeeping. As a successful negotiator on the world stage, Canada could lead more bilateral and multilateral mediation efforts to tackle issues of peace, security and humanitarian assistance. But from a preventative and advocacy perspective, there is an opportunity for GAC - in conjunction with DND - to establish a program for youth to learn to be mediators of peace and peacekeeping in non-violent environments. Perhaps dubbed the "Maple Berets," youth could be more highly trained in crisis and conflict resolution with a view to eventually working alongside their civilian counterparts.

Collaborating within DND's structure and training could help Canada's youth learn to work more effectively in different global hotspots. Intense training programs could take place on Canadian soil, to take advantage of DND's infrastructure in Canada's regional and northern constituencies. Whether learning to assist in social media campaigns that endeavour to fight terror using non-violent means, or assisting civilian efforts to promote peaceful resolution to otherwise intractable problems, the newly-formed Maple Berets could train young Canadians to make the world a better place by learning from Canada's peacebuilding reputation, and relying on made-in-Canada toolkits outfitted with modern-day peacekeeping and conflict resolution skills. A program like this would complement the current IYIP program of longer term development internships.

**We recommend that** Canada re-establish its commitment to UN peacekeeping and peace support operations, that it take a lead role in global negotiations around peacebuilding, and that GAC, working with DND, help establish interdisciplinary and intergenerational programs that teach young people peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and conflict resolutions skills with a view to building an interdepartmentally-based and government-funded 'Maple Berets.'

**Further, we recommend that** Canada support the current Canadian proposal to sponsor and support a [United Nations Emergency Peace Service](#) (UNEPS).

**Q:** *How can Canada align its international assistance efforts in peace and security with international approaches, including the 2030*

### agenda?

The success of Agenda 2030 depends on secure states with a solid foundational justice system and can only be achieved through all levels of governance, from civil society and community programming to municipal engagement in multilateral forums. Such efforts must also be aligned within the context of climate change as a significant long-term risk and risk multiplier so that GAC can develop appropriate mechanisms to address and mitigate the causes and effects of climate change through a better balance of climate financing and an examination of the countries most vulnerable to climate change (see recommendation on [page 18](#)). GAC must also maintain focus through its feminist lens by supporting [Security Council resolution 1325](#) and its protection of, and opportunities for, women, peace and security. Finally, GAC must consider the impact of terrorism on all efforts to achieve the SDGs as terrorist groups such as al-Qaida, ISIL/ISIS and the Taliban are increasingly sophisticated in their approaches and could undermine all efforts at peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Coordinated responses between GAC and DND must be multi-pronged and locally-relevant. Youth in terrorism-prone regions are adept at social media and technology development and should be supported as a pro-democratic, anti-terror voice on the ground. Previous opportunities to support such strategies, such as Global Affairs Canada's grant in aid of [Technological Platforms to Strengthen Public Sector Accountability and Citizen Engagement](#) and [elrha's Humanitarian Innovation Fund](#) support innovative solutions to the challenges facing effective development assistance and could also benefit by taking a whole-of-government approach.

**We recommend that** GAC work with DND to increase funding for the existing *Technological Platforms* fund by \$10 million to support, for example, digital security among international development practitioners and partners, as well

as fund more youth social media and application development as a tool for social change and conflict prevention. Such funding should cover both development and maintenance of all technology platforms. A supporting public engagement program should be developed for awareness building and capacity and skills development around digital security and identity protection for all Canadian international development practitioners and their in-country partners.

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**Q:** *What kind of international assistance partnerships should Canada pursue to achieve its peace and security goals?*

A whole-of-government approach requires coordination with Canadian institutions and various on-the-ground actors. GAC, in conjunction with CSOs, has the opportunity to coordinate its efforts with other departments, such as DND and ECCC, to leverage more holistic responses to environmental, humanitarian, and security threats. GAC also has the opportunity to coordinate with DND and DOJ to support more integrated good governance and security efforts in order to guide a more strategic approach to building a strong foundation of rule of law within regions open to development work. These efforts should focus on both working within governance and legal institutions to build human capacity as well as with security forces to support anti-crime and corruption efforts. Canada's robust and embedded civil society network is an international assistance partner and can play a pivotal role in building the infrastructure and capacity for long-term peace through its relationships with southern civil society partners and should therefore be included in decision making processes as outlined in the *Interministerial Sustainable Development Advisory Council* recommendation (see [page 12](#)). Canada also has the opportunity to partner with the numerous diaspora



groups around Canada that have very close and economically significant relationships with their homelands, as exemplified through the practice of remittances. BCCIC is therefore working closely with diaspora representatives from areas such as sub-Saharan Africa, which is prone to climate threats, and Ukraine, which is experiencing security challenges.

**We recommend that** GAC increase support for the Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program (ACCBP) from \$15 million to \$50 million to enhance the capacity of government agencies, international organizations and non-governmental entities to prevent and respond to threats posed by transnational criminal activity.



## RESPONDING TO HUMANITARIAN CRISES AND THE NEEDS OF DISPLACED POPULATIONS

The assumption embedded in this GAC theme is that Canada should be responding after a crisis and not intervening prior to a crisis. In reality, humanitarian crises that are natural disasters are often linked to the impacts of climate change and can often be managed with stronger preventative measures around climate action. Similarly, humanitarian crises due to ethnic, religious, or political conflicts can often be prevented with a foundation of good governance and democratic infrastructure. No matter the cause of such crises, the resulting impact of a growing number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) is one that provides opportunity for coordination among several government departments, namely DND, ECCC, and GAC.

Responding to Humanitarian Crises is connected to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 13 (Climate Action), 16 (Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). BCCIC sees connections to SDGs 5 (Gender Equality), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and urges GAC to incorporate them into policy.

**Q:** *How can Canada support needs-driven, effective and timely responses to humanitarian crises with predictable yet flexible support?*

More timely responses to humanitarian crises will require further coordination with Canadian institutions and various on-the-ground actors. GAC, in conjunction with CSOs, has the opportunity to coordinate its efforts with other departments, such as DND and ECCC, in order to leverage

opportunities to take a more boots-on-the-ground response, resulting in quicker turnaround times.

**We recommend that** GAC increase investment in local capacity building through innovative partnerships with civil society and diaspora communities that could also build necessary local infrastructures and increase knowledge in order to be able to respond to crises more immediately.

**Further, we recommend that** Canada review its immigration and refugee policy to account for political, social and environmental refugees and IDPs in a timely manner.

**Q:** *How can Canada better support the protection of vulnerable populations in crises and strengthen respect for humanitarian principles?*

Alongside funding more traditional crisis response efforts, Canada should also focus on investing in foundational measures that would both lessen the probability of ethno-religious political crises and ensure functioning services in the time of a natural disaster-related crisis. As a key example of the interconnectedness among SDGs, preventative measures for reducing the risk of humanitarian crises would include ensuring peaceful and just societies (SDG 16) that engage women as equals in the governance decision making process (SDG 5) and that take early climate action measures (SDG 13) around resource availability (SDG 6, 14 and 15).

**We recommend that** Canada support the funding of long-term preventative policies that focus

on multiple causal streams of humanitarian crises, including democratic peacebuilding and climate smart natural resource management.

**Q:** *How can we facilitate more comprehensive and coordinated responses to better meet the needs of populations affected by crises and optimize the impact of humanitarian, development and peace and security initiatives?*

Canada must reconsider its policy implementation and funding models around disaster response, humanitarian assistance and long-term development. Because of the close relationship between development activities in-country and the ability to respond to humanitarian crises or disasters, there must be a spectrum of initiatives that address both prevention and response. If communities are better developed and prepared, they will be more resilient. Moreover, Canada’s rich tapestry of diaspora groups provide close connections to

homelands - as demonstrated by the practice and economic significance of remittances - and have a history of direct and fast engagement in post-humanitarian crisis situations. By tapping into CSO partnerships and varying diaspora expertise, GAC can exert a more direct and responsive engagement with communities, both preventatively and in the instance of humanitarian or disaster response.

**We recommend that** Canada incorporate long-term development planning into its humanitarian response efforts in order to build resiliency among the most vulnerable communities.

**Further, we recommend that** Canada tap into the Canadian diaspora community to engage in southern communities - particularly those in countries identified as vulnerable - including undertaking studies to better understand the value and role of remittances between diaspora communities and their home countries. GAC should also initiate cultural communities or diaspora targeted youth internships alongside the current International Youth Internship Program (IYIP).



## DELIVERING RESULTS

There are several assumptions embedded in this policy theme. That innovation, in the sense of ‘new is best’ is necessary, or that we’re not innovative already; that risk taking and failure is bad; and that innovation is only happening in Canada or the north and must be transferred to the south. But from whose perspective is something innovative? There are several development ‘innovations’ that continue to work well and that should not be thrown out simply because there is a call for something new. There is also an opportunity when speaking of innovation to create a space where development actors can try and fail before finding something that works to scale up. Innovation, after all, happens at the edges with limited resources and we should be open to risk as we push the envelope for success.

It is worth noting that GAC’s definition of innovation differs from the *Agenda 2030* definition embedded in Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure. The SDG definition of innovation covers investments in infrastructure, sustainable industry development and access to financial services and markets, technology development support and innovation for industrial diversification and commodities, and increased access to information and communications technology (ICT) such as the internet. While GAC, like *Agenda 2030*, does support innovation through technological breakthroughs and connectivity, it goes a step further and also promotes innovation through new business models, partnerships, programming and policy practices, and even behavioural insights. BCCIC believes this expanded view of innovation better lends itself to a more integrated development approach and commends GAC on its visionary approach.

Delivering Results supports the implementation of the GAC themes around all the SDGs, with a particular resonance around SDG 16 (Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for

the Goals).

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**Q:** *What concrete steps could Canada take to make its international assistance delivery approaches and mechanisms more efficient, effective and innovative? How can we promote greater coherence between our development, trade and diplomacy efforts?*

To make the international assistance delivery mechanisms more efficient, the process must not be a barrier to SMOs. Onerous proposal and reporting processes decrease the value-added of CSOs and SMOs, who are inherently flexible, adaptable, and innovative. In fact, SMOs account for approximately 25 per cent of total revenue in Canada’s development cooperation sector studied in [Small & Medium Sized Organizations: Their Operations, Funding, and Impact](#), if revenue from the four largest CSOs among the 807 charities studied is excluded. To be more effective, there must be a mechanism through which CSOs and SMOs can share their experiences and evaluate the process, not just the outcomes and outputs. To be innovative, the funding mechanisms to support development initiatives must be innovative as well – looking beyond the ‘usual suspects’ and toward new partnerships such as consortia. In this regard, the Treasury Board was identified by our consultation participants as a key player in pursuing new and improved partnership and funding mechanisms.

International trade agreements go beyond mere trade relations and have repercussions in ‘non-trade’ areas, including human rights, health, and the environment. Canada’s current involvement in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), for example, risks undermining the availability of generic drugs and

fair access to essential medicines among the world's poorest. Trade agreements must therefore provide for adequate flexibilities to not jeopardize the development prospects of our southern partners.

**We recommend that** GAC make the grant proposal and management process more accessible to SMOs by introducing a two-stage proposal approach with a preliminary Letter of Intent; allowing consortia applications; providing core funding; streamlining match and procurement rules; standardizing administrative and reporting procedures; readjusting Results-Based Management (RBM) models to incorporate immediate, intermediate and long-range goals to better gauge progress toward lasting change; and instituting a system of calls for proposals that are more responsive and adaptive to existing expertise and capacity. Opportunities should also shift toward long-term funding as short-term funding does not support real, long-term change.

**Further, we recommend that** GAC support funding for SMOs through mechanisms such as the *Canada 2030 Fund*, which promises to enhance the participation of small and medium-sized CSOs in order to achieve stronger development results (see page 13).

## **Q:** *How can Canada foster development innovation?*

Canada must consider that, along with new innovations that push the risk envelope, there is also value in aiming for 'continuous improvement' with existing tools that are working well. Innovations can also come in how CSOs organize to innovate - fostering a collaborative environment for innovation could amplify efforts and result in bigger innovation dividends. By including the private sector, for example, innovations would gain scalability

that might not be possible within traditional government backed funding mechanisms. Finally, by linking domestic and international innovation, Canada would be normalizing risk associated with innovation across a broader scale. Organizations such as Engineers Without Borders publish regular [Failure Reports](#) in an effort to encourage creativity and calculated risk taking in the pursuit of better development practices.

**We recommend that** Canada fund a platform for CSO networks working on the SDGs to collaborate for peer learning and innovation exchange. The platform would be a method for CSOs to share their work with each other, rather than just with their donor community.

**Further, we recommend that** Canada set up and provide seed funding for Innovation Hubs, risk taking spaces where pilot projects can be tested at the small scale before scaling up. Under the ICN's *Canada 2030 Fund*, SMOs would be well-placed to co-manage pilot projects in these spaces. The private sector must also be involved in this initiative as scalability can only happen with funding beyond ODA.

## **Q:** *Which organizations, communities, coalitions or partnerships should Canada work with? How best can we work with them to deliver our international assistance objectives?*

There are a number of SMOs working across British Columbia and Canada with the expertise to contribute to a collaborative, cross-sectoral approach that brings together the public, private, and civil society sectors. These SMOs are often the first line of communication on the ground in the most vulnerable regions and already achieving the SDGs and GAC's specific international assistance objectives – building relationships, empowering

people, and working with them to adapt development programs to meet their unique needs. To strengthen this coalition, Indigenous Peoples, diaspora communities, and the youth sector must be included in policy development throughout all stages of the process. Indigenous Peoples have a unique perspective on the global themes and by being more inclusive of their concerns, Canada would be harmonizing its stance for a just society domestically with its position internationally. Diaspora communities provide close connections to homelands and offer a point of collaboration for humanitarian assistance and disaster preparedness and response. The youth community is very active around several of the issues outlined in the *IAR* - from climate action groups to water rights initiatives - and the UN's [World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement](#) and [State of the World's Volunteerism Report](#) both show that their engagement is most meaningful if it is inclusive and clearly defined through both a local and global lens.

Canada should also focus on reaching international youth in fragile states as a tool for social change against the threat of terrorism. Like youth throughout the world, youth in terrorism-prone regions are adept at social media and technology development. Their skills could be a deterrent to the spread of the ideology of terrorism and youth-supported ICT should therefore be supported through technological partnership funding (see recommendation on page 24)

**We recommend that** 2 youth/indigenous representatives act as delegates to the aforementioned *Interministerial Sustainable Development Advisory Council* and that these representatives be recipients of ongoing intergenerational mentorship aimed at fostering and growing strong bonds between the generations tasked with accomplishing *Agenda 2030*. The *Council's* youth/indigenous representative seats will operate on a rotating basis with overlapping terms in order to ensure the transfer of institutional

knowledge. An additional seat should be held by a representative of one of the Inter-Cultural Associations to represent diaspora communities.

**Further, we recommend that** funding for interns under the International Youth Internship Program (IYIP) be increased from \$15,000 to \$25,000 per intern as a reflection of the value of the Canada's dollar and rising global costs and that the program allocation for aboriginal internships be doubled from \$2 million to \$4 million, with a new window opened for diaspora youth.

 **How can we engage a wider range of partners to leverage the resources and expertise necessary to achieve the sustainable development goals?**

BCCIC's [map](#) of the *invisible mosaic* of CSOs engaging in SDG work around BC provides organizations an affordable mechanism to share best practices so that they might collaborate and leverage their expertise in a way that will allow them to amplify their impact. GAC should work with other governmental departments to provide similar provincial and federal knowledge sharing platforms and should further connect Canada's CSOs to overseas representatives and in-country offices as a means for peer learning around cultural knowledge and capacity building needs. GAC should also look to engage counterparts from partner countries as there is an opportunity for knowledge exchange and technology transfer to better serve the achievement of the SDGs.

**We recommend that** the government develop a CSO database of organizations, projects, and lessons learned for all GAC-funded overseas programming. This should be coupled with a technology platform or portal for CSOs to connect both with each other and with overseas representatives and in-country offices such as

embassies, consulates, and diplomatic staff to share best practices around sustainable development initiatives.

**Further, we recommend that** GAC allocate funds for scholarship and awards to bring young innovators and champions in science, technology, arts and culture from southern countries to Canada in order to broaden their vision on Canadian achievement across multiple sectors.

**Q:** *How can we enhance broader engagement of Canadians in our international assistance efforts?*

Canada has a long and exemplary history of engaging Canadians in intercultural skills and knowledge learning exchanges. *Katimavik* encourages community engagement through volunteer service while *Explore* promotes language and cultural development through multi-week immersion programs. There is an opportunity now for the development of similar types of programs in the international sustainable development realm to engage not just youth, but Canadians as a whole.

**We recommend that** Canada explore an international youth corps concept as an early intervention tactic, similar to the US Peace Corps, that would build culturally respectful relationships and lay the groundwork for emerging partnerships.

**Further, we recommend that** Global Affairs work with the provincial ministries of education to build SDG modules into academic curricula. Several SMOs have already created curriculum to engage schools - particularly elementary schools - and coordinating activities through provincial ministries of education could expand these efforts.

**Q:** *Are there additional tools or mechanisms that Canada should add to enable it to deliver international assistance more innovatively? How can current approaches and mechanisms be strengthened?*

While the discussion paper outlines several strategies for achieving its policy goals, and while Minister Bibeau's mandate letter calls for a new policy and funding framework, the *IAR* has very little on innovative financing options and rejects outright a meaningful increase of ODA to 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI). Furthermore, the *IAR* continues to promote international engagement strategies that are short-term, falling within a 5-year action plan. To truly achieve long-term institutional change that will support the goals set forth in the *IAR*, a more long-term approach must be developed and supported financially by Global Affairs Canada. BCCIC supports and upholds the 0.7% GNI international indicator recommended for development assistance countries, originally proposed by our own Pearson government and since achieved or exceeded by countries such as the United Kingdom, Norway and Sweden.

**We recommend that** Canada move from supporting short-term projects to making long-term investments in civil society and quality higher education, and in building permanent institutions and competencies that will underwrite, sustain, and catalyze long-term sustainable development.

**Further, we recommend that** Canada commit to growing its international assistance envelope to reach the longstanding internationally agreed target of 0.7% GNI within a seven-year timetable as reinforced in *Agenda 2030*.

In order to transparently track progress toward achieving its policy priorities, GAC needs to develop

technically sound, evidence-based indicators to effectively measure contributions toward success. Furthermore, it needs to harmonize its own set of indicators with those developed by ECCC in its *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy* and with the indicators developed within the global SDG framework. BCCIC shares this commitment to evidence-based tracking and provides clear recommendations around an integrated and holistic set of SDG-related targets and indicators in its report, [Keeping Track](#).

Canada currently tracks its contribution to global sustainable development through ODA expenditures and developing the recommended indicators will require leveraging disaggregated GAC data on actual assistance delivered to developing countries rather than relying on inflated measures like total ODA. We commend Global Affairs Canada on its efforts in gathering and publishing disaggregated data on ODA spending while encouraging GAC to strengthen this work by reporting in a manner consistent with the Country Programmable Aid (CPA) data published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). Furthermore, data should be collected and presented in a manner consistent with GAC themes and their integration with the SDGs and their sub-targets, with clear data coding for transparency. In particular there is need to develop more detailed coding for funds allocated to climate change (SDG 13), urban sustainable development (SDG 11), and sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12) - all of which are key indicators for progress on GAC's current policy priorities. Finally, this data should be made regularly available to Canadians through GAC's current *Statistical Report on International Assistance* as well as through an online database.

Along with established input indicators such as disaggregated ODA, GAC should consider additional **input** indicators to measure Canada's

leadership role in achieving the SDGs. Such indicators could measure participation in multilateral institutions working on specific SDGs and include funding contributions and meetings or summits hosted. Indicators should also focus on Canada's commitment to enabling the international policies needed to implement GAC policy and the SDGs, including ratification of key multilateral agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol and the establishment of enabling bilateral agreements that support scientific and technological innovation in partner countries.

There is an additional need for strong **output** indicators to demonstrate that Canada is achieving its policy goals. Significant investment is needed in developing monitoring and evaluation capacity for GAC-funded projects and programmes, including substantial funding for CSO and partner country data collection and data analysis. Furthermore, the impact of Canadian-funded programmes and projects should be measured vis-a-vis the locally and nationally defined SDG indicators of partner countries. Data on output indicators should be thoroughly disaggregated by gender, age, and geographical region to ensure that Canada's international development assistance is reaching the world's most marginalized people.

**We recommend that** Canada consult BCCIC's [Keeping Track](#) report to develop a suite of indicators that harmonize both with ECCC's indicators and the global SDG indicators in order to legitimately and transparently track progress toward achieving its goals. **Input indicators** should track disaggregated ODA expenditure data by both GAC theme and the SDGs as well as Canada's commitment to relevant multilateral institutions that enable global sustainable development policy. **Output indicators** should use disaggregated data to measure progress toward GAC's policy priorities and should respect nationally-defined SDG indicators of partner countries.





# CONCLUSION

The adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was an historic global commitment to addressing the urgency of the inter-linked social, economic and environmental issues of the 21st century. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals presented a measurable set goals and targets to tackle these threats through a holistic and integrated framework. And while it is true that the challenges implicit in such global problems can be unsettling, it is also true that such moments can also be galvanizing for new leadership. This new reality begs a new set of global responses and presents a new opportunity for Canadian international assistance to address the complexity and integration of the interrelated goals and targets.

BCCIC believes that Canada's swift and decisive action will provide leadership in the domestic and international implementation of *Agenda 2030* and the SDGs. We believe that, with a coherent and explicit theory of change to guide its international assistance policy, Canada can develop a visionary strategy to address the global goals both at home and abroad.

This report provides an ambitious set of recommendations for GAC to consider as it moves toward a universal and integrated approach to international assistance. It urges Global Affairs Canada to envision its six themes as a vehicle for achieving the SDGs as an integrated framework while giving equal attention to the four interdependent change orientations identified by BCCIC - individual values, individual behaviours, collective systemic change and collective cultural change. It also recognizes the linkages across pillars within the *IAR* and to other policy domains and recommends a whole-of-government approach to engage around the goals. The recommendations consistently highlight the need to enable civil society participation, support a diverse range of Canadian and international partners, and provide long-term, predictable, and flexible funding.

BCCIC is confident that the analyses and recommendations presented in this report will provide a substantive roadmap for implementing this transformative agenda. We are honoured to have participated in the consultation process and look forward to seeing the results reflected in the 2017 budget, matched by a rollout of policies, frameworks and appropriate funding mechanisms over 2017 and 2018.



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