

Canada 2030: ICN National Submission on Global Affairs Canada's International Assistance Review

Introduction

On May 18, 2016, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, launched a public review and consultation of Canada's international assistance policy and funding framework. The International Assistance Review (IAR) will inform how Canada can best refocus its international assistance on the poorest and most vulnerable people and support fragile states. It will also shape Canada's approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As part of the IAR, the Minister is placing a special emphasis on the rights of women and girls, and plans to apply a feminist approach to Canada's international assistance activities going forward. The IAR is based on six thematic pillars:

- Health and rights of women and children;
- Clean economic growth and climate change;
- Governance, pluralism, diversity and human rights;
- Peace and security;
- Responding to humanitarian crises and the needs of displaced populations; and
- Delivering results, with a focus on improving effectiveness and transparency, innovation and partnerships.¹

The Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation (ICN) welcomes the IAR. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Paris Agreement on climate change point to the need for urgent action by Canada and others to address global sustainable development challenges. The IAR presents a timely opportunity for Canada to re-examine its role in the world and how it can best contribute to sustainable development at home and abroad. Importantly, given the time bound nature of the SDGs and the critical need to address climate change, the IAR also offers Canada an opportunity to set out a clear action plan that outlines immediate steps and longer term priorities.

The ICN appreciates efforts by Global Affairs Canada to engage with communities across Canada through its support to official and unofficial consultations. The ICN looks forward to continued engagement with Global Affairs Canada through the partnership approach that has characterized the IAR consultations.

This report presents the ICN's national submission to the IAR. The ICN is a coalition of the eight Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation. These member-based Councils are committed to global social justice and social change, and represent over 350 diverse civil society organizations (CSOs) from across Canada.

The ICN provides a national forum in which the Councils collaborate for improved effectiveness and identify common priorities for collective action. Rooted in communities across Canada, the Councils

¹ See <http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/development-developpement/iar-consultations-eai/document.aspx?lang=eng>



are leaders in public engagement at a local and regional level and are recognized for bringing regional knowledge and priorities to the national level.

The report provides an overview of the key messages arising from ICN member consultations. It consolidates common messages and recommendations from across Councils, reflecting areas of consensus. Though regional nuances exist, ICN member consultations revealed a significant degree of overlap in terms of priorities for the IAR. Following an overview of ICN member consultation processes, the report sets out ten overarching recommendations for Canada's approach to international cooperation and international assistance. The remainder of the report is structured around the six pillars in the IAR, and includes a series of specific recommendations that respond to the questions outlined by the IAR discussion paper

ICN Consultation Process

Annex 1 provides an overview of the consultation processes undertaken by ICN member Councils. Over 859 individuals were consulted across Canada through inclusive processes that made use of official consultations in partnership with Global Affairs Canada, unofficial consultations, surveys and webinars. ICN member Councils engaged a diverse range of individuals and groups including CSOs, youth, secondary and post-secondary institutions, diaspora communities, research institutions, churches and faith-based organizations, private sector representatives, nationals from the Global South, and interested individuals. In addition to provincial and territorial consultations, members of the Provincial and Regional Councils had opportunity to review and provide comments on the ICN submission through a survey carried out July 13-20, 2016. The ICN received 66 responses from Council members across Canada that indicated broad agreement with the contents of the report.

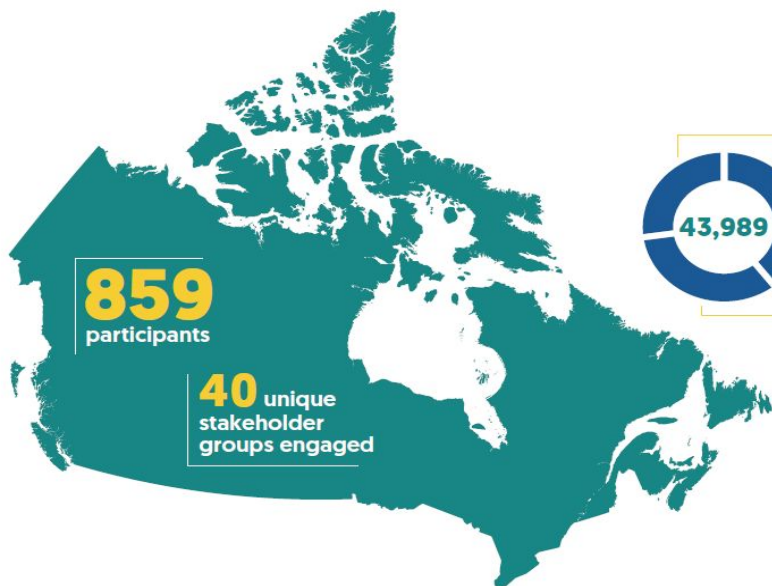


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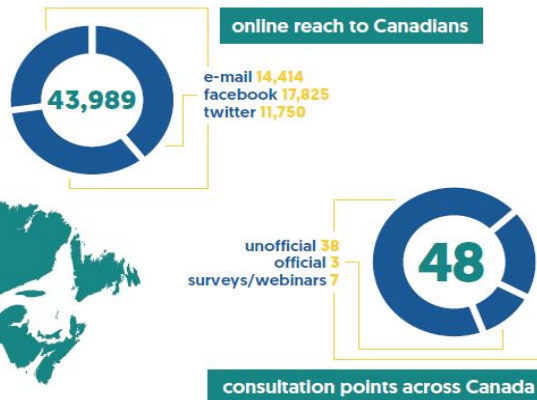


ICN National Submission on Global Affairs
Canada's International Assistance Review

inter-council
network Provincial & Regional Councils
for International Cooperation



nearly
400 organizations
represented by
the ICN



Overarching Recommendations

1. Canada's international assistance should be underpinned by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework and draw on lessons from Canadian and international experiences. Canada should lead on realizing the SDGs both at home and abroad.

Canada can lead on the realization of the SDGs in at least three key ways. First, the SDG framework should underpin the key pillars of Canada's approach to international assistance. This means embedding the SDGs into the pillars of Canada's international assistance framework and directly linking policy priorities to the SDGs. The interconnected and integrated nature of the SDGs also means that Canada's approach should contribute to realizing all 17 of the SDGs through its priorities. To ensure that no one is left behind Canada should also ensure that its international assistance targets the most marginalized groups, including people with disabilities, Indigenous communities, LGBTQ communities and others.

Second, Canada should draw on its strengths and experiences to underpin the realization of the SDGs in its international cooperation efforts. Canada's history of providing humanitarian aid and peacekeepers, embracing multiculturalism and diversity, efforts at reconciliation, problem solving and planning in collaboration with Indigenous peoples, expertise in agriculture, and long experience engaging the Canadian public, inter alia, should inform Canada's international assistance efforts.

Finally, the universal nature of the SDGs means that they apply equally to Canada's domestic policies. Canada can be a leader by example and should take a serious approach to the adoption of Agenda



2030 at home. Canada should examine its own progress in the areas of gender equality, poverty and inequality, Indigenous rights, climate change and environmental sustainability to ensure that Canada has the credibility to lead on these issues globally and that no one is left behind in Canada. The time bound nature of the SDGs and the urgency of climate change necessitates that Canada bring forward actions on Agenda 2030 as quickly as possible.

2. Canada's approach to international cooperation must include and go beyond the aid portfolio.

Canada should take a whole-of-government approach to international cooperation. The IAR is occurring alongside Canada's Federal Sustainable Development Strategy review and the Defence Policy Review. There are obvious linkages between these consultation processes and the outcomes of each should facilitate greater policy coherence for sustainable development across government departments.

The merger of trade, foreign policy and development portfolios in Global Affairs Canada offers an opportunity for Canada to situate international assistance within the broader context of Canada's international cooperation. It no longer makes sense to refer to international development policies; rather, Canada's focus should be on international cooperation. There is a need for Global Affairs Canada to articulate a coherent international cooperation policy that includes development, trade and diplomacy, and links to other policy areas that impact international cooperation, as appropriate (such as efforts on climate change by Environment and Climate Change Canada). Across the IAR pillars, consultations highlighted instances where inconsistencies between development and other policies, notably defence, trade and commercial interests, hinder Canada's development work. Canada's international cooperation policy should articulate how Canada is contributing to effective development through international assistance and efforts in other policy domains, and how Canada's international cooperation aligns with principles for effective development cooperation in practice.

3. Canada should clearly articulate an integrated approach to international cooperation that recognizes linkages across the key domains in which Canada aims to contribute.

The themes in the IAR are interconnected. Progress on social, economic and environmental outcomes is interdependent as outlined in the SDGs. Women's rights relate to all thematic areas of work, as well as in the design, delivery and implementation of programs. Climate change, economic growth and governance are linked to conflict, peace and security and humanitarian crises. Humanitarian response needs to be linked to long-term development planning and efforts to build resilience. Public engagement and education underpins support for international cooperation broadly. The outcome of the IAR should include a set of policies for Canada's international cooperation priorities with links between policies and the SDGs set out, including in terms of implications for programming.

4. Canada's international assistance should be grounded in a human rights-based approach that integrates all economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development through standalone priorities and as cross-cutting themes.

Canada should take a human rights-based approach to international assistance that supports the SDGs by focusing on poverty reduction and reducing inequalities, in particular for the poorest and most marginalized. Gender equality, environmental sustainability and climate change are important priorities individually but are also integral to the realization of results in all areas of programming. The



human rights-based approach also means addressing intersecting forms of discrimination and grounding policies and approaches to the international human rights framework, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Canada's international assistance should take a human rights-based approach.

5. Canada should focus on supporting the poorest and most marginalized communities.

Canada has set the ambition of focusing its international assistance on the poorest and the most marginalized. This ambition aligns with the global focus on eradicating extreme poverty and ensuring that no one is left behind in the SDGs. Canada's ambition means supporting the poorest and most marginalized in the communities in which they live, regardless of whether they live in low or middle-income countries. Moreover, Canada should clearly articulate the groups it aims to support in humanitarian, peace and security and development programming, and make clear who is meant by the poorest and most marginalized. These include, for example, women and girls, people with disabilities, Indigenous communities, LGBTQ communities, religious minorities and others. In this context, Canada's approach should be participatory with efforts guided by the needs identified by people and organizations in partner countries, and local partners and communities supported as change agents for realizing solutions.

6. Canada should support local ownership and ensure policies and programs are informed by local perspectives.

There is a need for greater local ownership over priorities and projects in Canada's international assistance. The Official Development Assistance Accountability Act (ODAAA) includes provisions to ensure that Canada's aid is informed by the perspectives of the poor. The IAR offers an opportunity to further translate the ODAAA into policies and programming by supporting communities to define their own challenges and solutions. In practical terms, this means partnering more with local CSOs in partner countries and other stakeholders as key partners and change agents in development. Canadian small and medium-sized CSOs will be critical contributors to achieving this objective given their partner-led, multi-faceted relationships with counterparts in developing countries.

7. Canada should immediately invest in public engagement and education on international cooperation.

There is a need for greater and immediate commitment to support transformational public engagement and education on international cooperation, including through volunteerism, if the Canadian government aims to engage more Canadians in international cooperation. Canada should establish a formalized High Level Working Group on public engagement and mechanisms to support public engagement consultations with inputs from all regions of Canada. By 2017, Canada should prepare a comprehensive public engagement policy and strategy as an integral component of Canada's international cooperation program. The strategy should elaborate a theory of change and be supported by common metrics to help increase collective understanding of Global Affairs Canada priorities and impact. It should also include a range of partners - small, medium and large CSOs,



education institutions and others - to reach all Canadians. Dedicated funding should be available for standalone public engagement programs as well as for the inclusion of public engagement components in all development projects and programs. There should also be opportunities for national public education programs on topics that are broader than any one organization's mandate, such as the SDGs. Underpinning the public engagement strategy should be an emphasis on supporting cultural and knowledge exchanges between Canadians and individuals in other countries, in particular youth, Indigenous, LGBTQ, and diaspora communities as well as people with disabilities to underline the concept of universality behind the SDGs and Canada's new approach to international cooperation.

8. Canada should increase official development assistance to match Canada's ambitions to support global sustainable development.

Canada has not seen substantial growth in its international assistance since official development assistance (ODA) was doubled in 2010-11. Though growth occurred in 2015 over 2014, this was largely due to exceptional payments – a loan to Ukraine and a double payment to the World Bank. Removing these exceptions, ODA remained flat over 2014 to 2015.² Canada has also never met the international target of reaching 0.7% of GNI in ODA. There is a need for Canada to commit to increase its levels of ODA and establish a realistic timetable to reach the 0.7% target.

9. Canada should take a long-term, predictable, and flexible approach to financing international assistance efforts.

Across IAR pillars, consultations pointed to the need for long-term, predictable and flexible funding. This means establishing longer term partnerships and financing time horizons, including with countries of focus. Moreover, the prioritization of local community needs and perspectives necessitates an approach to funding that is reliable for communities over the longer term (as development results take time) but also allows for flexibility in funding diverse development actors, and flexibility when circumstances change in country. In this context, there is a special need to ensure flexible funding is made available to small and medium-sized CSOs that face significant barriers to accessing funding from Global Affairs Canada given the current approach that tends to favour larger organizations.

10. Canada should work with a diverse range of partners, including small and medium-sized CSOs, youth, women's rights groups, diaspora communities, educational institutions, community associations, the private sector, and others across Canada.

The ambition to engage more with Canadians on international cooperation needs to be backed by financial and non-financial mechanisms to facilitate engagement. This means the development of new tools and approaches that target key stakeholders in international cooperation as knowledge partners, experts, and programming partners. This includes actively supporting small, medium and large CSOs, youth, women's rights groups, diaspora communities, education institutions, community associations, local governments, private sector firms and organizations and other partners, both in Canada and abroad. To this effect, there are a number of steps Global Affairs Canada can take.

² See <http://cidpnsci.ca/canadas-foreign-aid-2012-2/>



First, Global Affairs Canada should prepare a plan to effectively implement its Civil Society Partnership Policy. This plan should include an articulation of how the Ministry will strengthen support for CSOs across Canada and abroad through financial and non-financial support, and target engagement with key stakeholder groups named in the policy. Second, there is a need to develop a clear policy to appropriately engage private industry in international cooperation and promote cross-sector collaboration. This policy should outline criteria for partnership with the private sector, including with reference to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other relevant legal and voluntary agreements. Finally, ambitions to engage youth in international cooperation will need to be matched by an effective strategy and funding. Global Affairs Canada should consider ways to reach youth by working in partnership with education institutions, the Provincial and Regional Councils, and other CSOs, and by providing enhanced support for youth internships, and supporting a range of public engagement programmes and initiatives.

1. Health and rights of women and children

Canada should consult with stakeholders on the adoption of a feminist approach to international assistance and clearly articulate what the approach means in practice moving forward.

Those consulted noted the government's proposal to adopt a feminist approach to international assistance and look forward to further consultation. There is a need for Canada to clearly articulate what a feminist approach would mean in practice, and how it will recognize multiple sexual identities and address patriarchy, power structures and intersecting forms of discrimination, including but not limited to gender, race, ability, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic status. The adoption of a feminist approach should promote critical reflection by Global Affairs Canada and its partners on how international cooperation will occur differently in the future and how it will address the underlying and root causes of discrimination and inequality.

Canada should centralize gender equality across all areas of work.

Gender equality should continue to be a cross-cutting priority for Global Affairs Canada development programming as well as targeted through specific programs. In other words, it should be a standalone priority and a cross-cutting theme. Global Affairs Canada should focus on gender equality and gender equity in its approach. All projects and programs should be subject to gender-based analysis. This means substantively examining and addressing gendered dimensions of international cooperation initiatives, and critically analyzing intersectionality and existing institutions and structures in terms of their effectiveness in reducing inequalities and leaving no one behind.

Canada should take a holistic approach to the health and rights of women and children.

Canada should invest in the issues that impact women's ability to meaningfully participate in society by addressing root causes of gender inequality. This means supporting women and girl's empowerment broadly, and addressing critical issues including the full range of reproductive and sexual health services and reproductive rights, health systems, violence against women and girls, sex trafficking, nutrition, education, entrepreneurship, control over economic resources, including land, political participation and social and cultural practices that are harmful to women and girls such as female genital mutilation and early and forced childhood marriage. Working with local people and



resources is important in this regard to ensure that efforts are grounded in the local social, economic, cultural and environmental factors that impact gender equality.

In conjunction with the areas noted above, Canada should also take a holistic approach to wellbeing that accounts for determinants of health and ensures that all people benefit from improved health systems. This means taking a multi-disciplinary approach to health that examines social, economic and environmental factors, and focuses on all forms of wellbeing including physical and mental health. Canada's continued approach to maternal, newborn and child health should be appropriately situated within this broader approach.

Canada should invest in women and women's rights groups directly.

Canada should support women as change agents in their own right. Canada has a history of investing in efforts to realize women's rights and gender equality, including through support for women's rights groups in local communities. There is a need for Canada to reinvest in women's rights groups that have the capacity to spearhead gender equality efforts in the countries in which Canada works. This means ensuring that women are leading in the planning and implementation of Canada's efforts to support gender equality. Canada should focus on building relationships with Canadian organizations and organizations in partner countries that are working on gender equality and women's empowerment, including grassroots organizations and women's movements, and supporting them to demand human rights and accountability from their own governments. In order to support legal and political reforms that empower women and girls, Global Affairs Canada must work with the Canada Revenue Agency to address policy inconsistencies which currently keep Canadian charities from supporting such work on the ground. Canada also has a role to play in supporting ministries and departments focused on women in partner countries.

Canada should include men and boys as part of the solution to realizing gender equality.

Men and boys play a critical role in realizing gender equality outcomes. A holistic approach is needed that includes women, men, girls and boys as stakeholders in realizing gender equality.

Canada should support youth, including by investing in education.

Canada should prioritize youth engagement in the countries in which it works, encouraging youth to be part of program implementation and to be engaged as active citizens in their own communities' development; youth participation should be central to Canada's strategies to ensure real change for future generations. There is also a need for Canada to make investments in child protection systems, and education that see children, especially girls, through from primary education to secondary and post-secondary education. These efforts should be guided by local, cultural and linguistic considerations in education.

2. Clean economic growth and climate change

Canada should make environmental sustainability and climate change a key focus of international cooperation efforts.



Climate change is arguably the biggest problem being faced globally. Canada has responded by committing to ambitious climate change targets and taking steps that could help restore Canada's reputation for environmental stewardship. Building on these efforts, environmental sustainability and climate change should be an integral part of the lens through which Canada approaches international cooperation as a standalone priority and a cross-cutting theme.

Canada should contribute to clean economic growth and climate change by focusing on renewable energy and sustainable agriculture, supporting technology transfer and research, and investing in a balanced approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

There are a number of key areas Canada can support to realize clean economic growth and address climate change. These include investing in renewable energy, drawing on Canadian expertise, and supporting smallholder, sustainable agriculture, including agroecology and agro-forestry with attention to local contexts and the multiple roles of women and youth in particular. Canada also has a role to play in supporting appropriate technology and research. Opportunities exist for Canada to continue contributing to evidence-based approaches by supporting organizations such as the International Development Research Centre and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, as well as to learn from the research being carried out in partner countries. Finally, Canada should increase its investments in climate adaptation and mitigation to target at-risk and climate vulnerable populations, and ensure proper prioritization of adaptation activities vis-à-vis mitigation.

Canada should focus on local solutions.

Community adaptation to climate change should be a priority going forward. There is a need to ensure dedicated financing to support local communities to identify sustainable development challenges, develop innovations and carry out economic activities that are locally suitable and environmentally sensitive. Communities and societies have different traditions and cultural practices that should inform Canada's efforts. Notably, Indigenous peoples and smallholder farmers should be supported to identify and implement solutions given their close ties to the land that leave them particularly exposed to the impacts of climate change.

Canada should match private sector partnerships with support for appropriate legal and policy frameworks.

Partnerships with the private sector have potential to improve economic and environmental outcomes. However, these efforts should be matched by a focus on appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks in Canada, abroad and at the global level to address climate change and support economic growth. There is a need for Canada to reflect critically on the impact of international trade and international trade agreements on sustainable agriculture and local access to resources, as well as how it will contribute to the fight against tax evasion, which undermines domestic resource mobilization and growth possibilities in partner countries.

Canada should spell out its efforts to promote clean economic growth and address climate change will intersect with issues related to food security, water and environmental sustainability outside the area of climate change.



Though the IAR refers to agriculture as part of Canada's approach to supporting clean economic growth and addressing climate change, there is very little clarity on how Canada will continue to support food security in this pillar. Moreover, a number of consultations noted the importance of ensuring accessibility to water in light of climate change impacts not only as a human right but also as a critical input in terms of agricultural production. Finally, it is unclear how dimensions of environmental sustainability beyond climate change, such as SDG goals related to life on land and under the water, fit within this pillar or Canada's overall approach to international cooperation.

3. Governance, pluralism, diversity and human rights

Canada should practice what it promotes. Progress in Canada impacts Canadian leadership abroad.

Canada can play a prominent role in supporting the realization of better governance, respect for pluralism and diversity and the promotion of human rights abroad. However, Canada needs to make progress in these areas domestically to have the credibility to lead on these issues globally. Canada is currently undergoing a reconciliation process with Indigenous peoples. Though not perfect, this process is working towards improving relationships between the Canadian government, Canadians and Indigenous peoples, and provides important lessons that Canada can bring to international cooperation.

Canada should invest in CSOs in partner countries to support transparency, accountability and the realization of human rights.

Canada has a role to play in supporting an enabling environment for civil society in partner countries. CSOs play a critical role in promoting transparency and accountability from government, and demanding human rights. Capacity development is needed to support CSOs in partner countries to establish inclusive, democratic structures and systems, empower women and youth, and call for an end to human rights violations.

Canada should ensure Canadian mining companies operating abroad are accountable for their impacts.

There is a need to hold Canadian businesses to the same standards used in Canada with respect to human rights, employee safety and benefits, and environment and social impacts for operations overseas. Access to justice for communities impacted by Canadian mining companies, in particular, is a major issue. Current measures, including the Office of the Extractive Sector Corporate Social Responsibility Counsellor, are insufficient. Communities around the world should have access to the Canadian judicial system to hold Canadian companies to account for environmental and human rights violations. An independent ombudsman should also be established.

4. Peace and security

Canada should clearly establish links and improve coordination between efforts to promote peace and security and other pillars of the international assistance review.



Canada needs to consider how it will engage in fragile and conflict-affected states over the long-term moving from addressing humanitarian needs in times of conflict to peacebuilding and restoration, and the promotion of governance, pluralism, diversity and human rights. Moreover, women should have a seat at the table in peace processes; Canada's support for women's rights features into peace and security programming. The policies that emerge as a result of the IAR should effectively link peace and security efforts with other relevant pillars of the IAR. There is also a need to facilitate coordination between like-minded countries and partners, CSOs, the private sector and others to ensure that activities reinforce and do not duplicate efforts in country.

Canada should localize peace and security efforts through meaningful partnerships with local communities.

Local communities should be empowered to provide direction on their needs, stimulating peace through development with relationships and partnerships based on transparency, responsiveness, and equity. Canada should enter into partnerships with smaller organizations that work directly with community members and local government organizations. Small and medium-sized CSOs from Canada and internationally are supporting progress on peace and security. However, the current funding model in Canada primarily tends to benefit large CSOs rather than smaller organizations that are often more integrated at the local level.

Canada should make child and youth protection a priority.

Conflict has a significant effect on the future of children and youth. Canada should build on its history supporting child rights by making child and youth protection a priority in conflict situations.

Canada should ensure secure and stable funding for efforts related to peace and security.

Local efforts and partnerships should be sufficiently backed by long-term and flexible funding to realize progress on priorities identified by communities.

Canada should ratify the Arms Trade Treaty and halt armament sales to states with records of human rights violations.

Canada's credibility on peacekeeping and security is undermined by a poor track record on the arms trade.

Canada should re-engage in international peacekeeping efforts.

Canada's historic role in international peacekeeping efforts has diminished. There is a need for Canada to re-engage in a number of ways. First, Canada should play a leading role in global negotiations around peacebuilding and institutional development, and work together with other countries to champion peace and social justice talks. Second, Canada should increase its peacekeeping forces and re-engage with the African Union. Third, Canada can play a role in the provision of capacity development to UN missions that are comprised of troops from developing countries.



5. Responding to humanitarian crises and the needs of displaced populations

Canada requires a transparent, integrated humanitarian response policy framework matched with long-term, predictable and flexible financing.

Historically, there has been a lack of clarity and transparency in terms of Canada's approach to humanitarian crises in terms of policies and programming. There is a need for greater transparency around match funding and how Canada will address the needs of the most vulnerable in humanitarian crises. Moreover, Canada should work to improve the integration between humanitarian, development and public engagement programming, engage a wide range of partners in humanitarian assistance, including small and medium-sized CSOs, and provide long-term funding to enable partners to address complex multi-year crises. The IAR offers an opportunity to establish a clear and transparent humanitarian response policy framework that articulates: 1) when Canada will contribute to addressing humanitarian crises; 2) how Canada will provide support in terms of funding arrangements, in relation to development programming and according to humanitarian principles; and 3) Canada's approach to targeting vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Canada should localize humanitarian efforts through meaningful partnerships with local communities.

Canada's humanitarian efforts should be informed by the views of people directly affected by humanitarian crises. Impacted people and communities should be involved in the planning and development of short and long-term responses so that their needs are met quickly and effectively. This approach could be facilitated through engagement with community leaders, local community based organisations and other local actors.

There are a number of other potential steps Canada could take to support local communities. Successful examples exist of direct cash disbursements in the immediate period following displacement or crises to address immediate needs quickly. Purchasing goods and services locally as much as possible is also an important way to build long-term relationships with communities and facilitate reconstruction, linking humanitarian and development imperatives. Finally, Canada should prioritize local responses to humanitarian crises. Communities respond to humanitarian crises in diverse ways, drawing on local knowledge, leadership and through the use of existing support systems. Local CSOs and other actors are key players, many of which partner with Canadian CSOs. Assistance should be delivered by organizations that are best placed to meet community needs and have legitimacy to operate on the ground. Canada can play an important role in the provision of logistical and financial support.

6. Delivering results

Canada's international assistance should be grounded in aid and development effectiveness principles.



Canada has signed onto successive agreements at the international level related to aid effectiveness and effective development cooperation.³ Canada's international assistance should align to the following principles: democratic ownership of priorities by partner countries, alignment with country systems, harmonization and coordination with other donors, inclusivity in development partnerships, transparency and accountability, and a results focus.

Canada should be a leader in holding up the principles of good development practice. This means supporting the strategies and priorities identified by partner countries and local communities, including in terms of defining intended results, coordinating with other donor governments to reduce duplication of efforts, providing predictable, flexible funding, facilitating inclusive partnerships, including by recognizing that the ways of working and the contributions of different stakeholders vary, managing efforts to focus on results, and improving transparency and accountability. In terms of the results focus, Canada can take a number of steps to improve existing monitoring and reporting systems. The current system is cumbersome and serves as a bureaucratic exercise of accounting for every dollar spent, rather than focusing on results. There is a need to simplify reporting processes, including through the use of priority indicators.

In addition to upholding the principles outlined above, Canada should support the effectiveness of its partners. In particular, CSOs in Canada and around the world have committed to the Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles, which set out principles for how CSOs can best support development outcomes.⁴ Canada can work with CSOs that have signed onto the Istanbul principles and are working towards transformative change according to international best practice.

Canada should improve the accessibility, flexibility and predictability of international assistance.

In keeping with the International Development and Humanitarian Assistance Civil Society Partnership Policy and Canada's international commitments to effective development cooperation, Global Affairs Canada should establish predictable, equitable, flexible, and transparent funding mechanisms. Predictable funding facilitates capacity development, strategic engagement and planning, and ensures that Canadian partners in developing countries have reliable support. Long-term funding (e.g. a minimum of five years) also needs to be made less restrictive and more flexible, enabling organizations to adapt their approaches when changes in country context or opportunities for innovation arise.

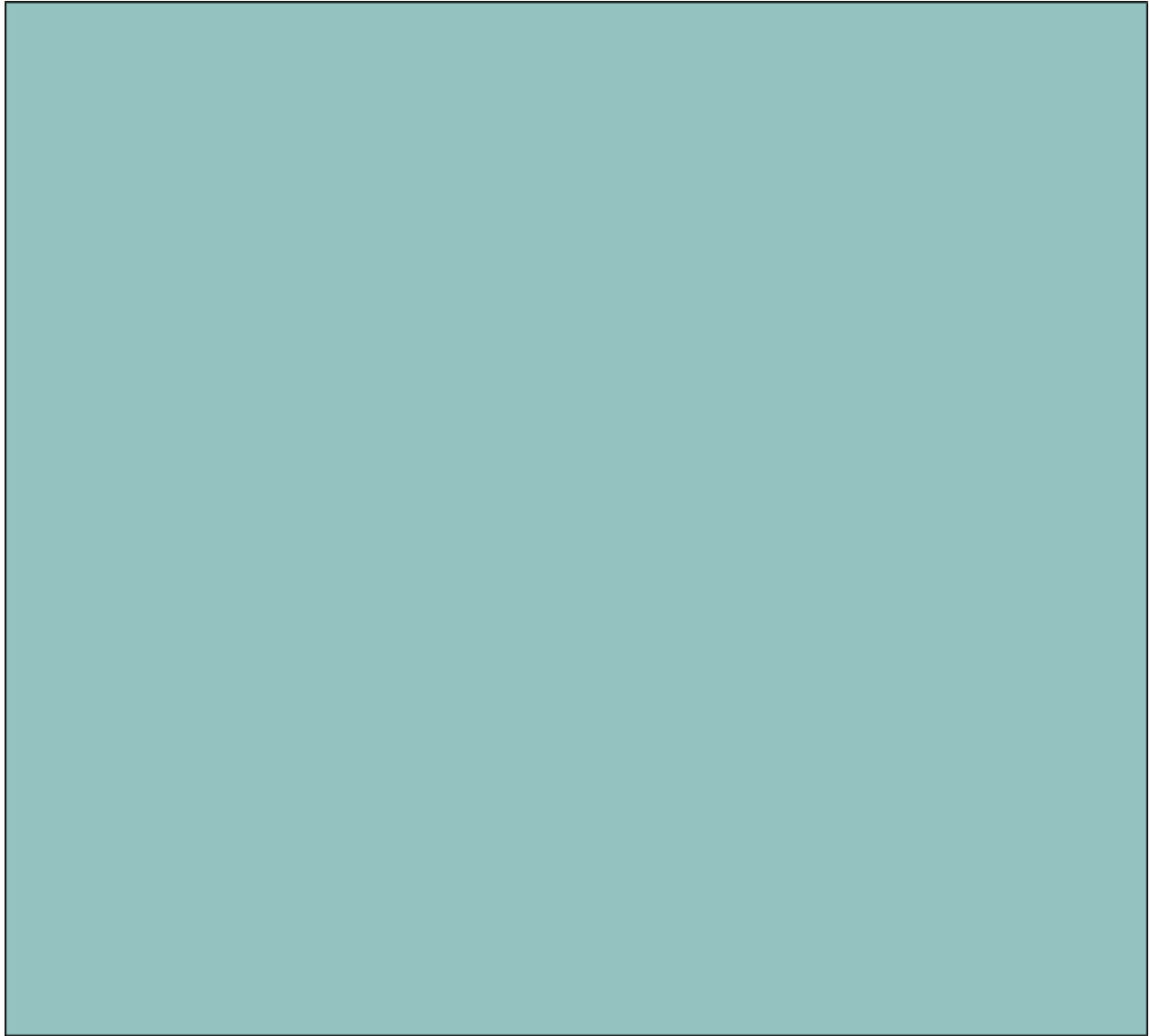
Funding should also be accessible. This means simplifying funding procedures and reporting structures. Existing processes should be streamlined, including through the re-introduction of concept note proposals and provisions for engagement by Global Affairs Canada with organizations submitting proposals for funding. Moreover, the IAR has noted the importance of engaging with more Canadians in international cooperation, including working with a diverse range of stakeholders. However, the current funding structures tend to limit possibilities for small and medium-sized CSOs to effectively contribute to international cooperation (Box 1). More opportunities should be made available to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders can effectively engage in international cooperation. In particular, Canada can take efforts to better engage diaspora communities, education institutions and Indigenous communities.

³ See <http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/>

⁴ See <http://cso-effectiveness.org/-istanbul-principles,067-.html>



Canada should engage diaspora communities more effectively in international cooperation. Diaspora communities have a role to play in supporting Canada's broad development efforts, and specifically in the promotion of governance, inclusivity, pluralism and human rights, peace and security, and humanitarian crises. Global Affairs Canada should take steps to solicit the views of diaspora communities systematically in its programming, recognizing that diaspora communities are not homogenous, and engage community groups in the identification and implementation of solutions. Mechanisms should also be in place to facilitate access funding to support the efforts of diaspora groups in international cooperation. Many organizations are small and require small amounts of funding to harness contributions from the private sector, including members of diaspora communities.



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⁵ See <http://ocic.on.ca/content/study-smos-their-operations-funding-and-impact#overlay-context=>



Canada should also support research and strategically include universities and colleges in international cooperation programming. Universities and colleges are well placed to partner with Global Affairs Canada in a number of areas. Support for research conducted by universities and colleges in Canada and partner countries should continue. In addition, universities and colleges are natural allies to promote global citizenship education, which is increasingly a part of their curricula.⁶ Finally, students participate in international cooperation through campus groups, study abroad programs, internships and applied research projects, which could be better supported by Global Affairs Canada.

Canada should draw on Indigenous perspectives and lessons in its approach to international cooperation. Canada has much experience in the way of working with Indigenous communities to problem solve sustainable development challenges and implement solutions. Canada can work with Indigenous peoples to promote pluralism, cooperation and inclusion, respect for diversity and human rights. An innovative approach to Canada's international assistance would be connecting Canada's Indigenous peoples with Indigenous peoples and cultures elsewhere on the globe that face similar issues and challenges in their struggle for survival and social justice. This approach would support the sharing of best practice and work towards ensuring that no one is left behind in the realization of the SDGs.

Canada should support improved communication, collaboration and learning among Global Affairs Canada and development partners.

International cooperation efforts can be characterized by missed opportunities for synergies and collaboration, and duplication of efforts. Consultations from across Councils highlighted the need for better communication by Global Affairs Canada and development partners on the activities that they undertake. This is a critical first step to improve collaboration between organizations, draw out best practices and facilitate shared learning. Given the significant focus on partnership in the IAR, Canada needs to invest in bringing people together to facilitate collaboration.

⁶ Global Affairs Canada could also explore opportunities to work with provincial ministries of education to support global citizenship education at elementary and secondary levels.



Global Affairs Canada should play a greater role in terms of supporting communication and knowledge sharing, facilitating partnership and collaboration, and drawing out best practices from within Canada and from partner countries. A number of concrete steps could be taken in this regard, such as:

- Create a simple registry of all activities carried out by development partners (including those that are not funded by Global Affairs Canada), searchable by country and region, and programming area (human rights, water, education, health, etc.). In particular, there is a need for better data coordination across small and medium-sized CSOs.
- Support the establishment of a common, accessible platform for CSOs, the private sector, education institutions and interested Canadians to network, share research, information, impact stories and best practice, find government information, and engage with Global Affairs Canada. The platform should also have a physical presence, affording opportunities for exchange of expertise and best practices through workshops, conferences and seminars, including with organizations from other developed countries and from partner countries. Importantly, the platform could serve as a means for regular, institutionalized, multi-stakeholder dialogue to generate more effective development cooperation and promote collaboration among diverse development partners.
- Facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships by encouraging joint proposals, funding and implementation of projects from CSOs, the private sector and other stakeholders. Government can play an important role in grounding multi-stakeholder partnerships, and providing space for potential partners to explore opportunities as it takes time for organizations to develop relationships and build trust.
- Treat partnerships as a relationship, not a contract. Currently, organizations engage in contractual relationships in which they are largely accountable to Global Affairs Canada. Though organizations should continue to be accountable for taxpayers' dollars, there is a need to expand partnerships to relationships based on mutual learning, respect and shared responsibility for results. Global Affairs Canada can build on its positive approach to partnership in the IAR consultations going forward.

Canada should promote mutual accountability and transparency.

There is a need for organizations to be accountable to both donors and the communities in which organizations work. Global Affairs Canada can promote mutual accountability by ensuring greater transparency in its operations as well as those of the organizations its supports. In terms of Global Affairs Canada's operations, there is a need for greater transparency in terms of who gets funded, why and for what. Global Affairs Canada is also in a position to promote good development practice, including the Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles, by selecting partners that have adopted principles to ensure transparency and accountability in their operations.

Canada should balance supporting innovation and more 'traditional' approaches to international cooperation.

Canada should support development efforts that have a history of success alongside new innovations. In this context, a portfolio that includes funding for innovative approaches to international cooperation and a focus on what has worked in the past and is continuing to work is critical; not every project needs to be truly innovative. This balanced approach, which Global Affairs Canada is taking in



the context of maternal, newborn and child health, should inform efforts in all areas that Canada seeks to realize sustainable development results.

Canada should support diverse innovations through a measured approach that allows for risk taking, flexibility and scaling success.

Support for innovation should include and move beyond technology, to ensure that innovative approaches to delivering sustainable development are also supported. Canada should adopt a strategic, phased approach to promoting innovation across its activities. Under this approach, Global Affairs Canada could provide initial funding to different types of partners, including small, medium and large CSOs to test innovations and support innovation hubs, with provisions to support larger scale implementation for successful approaches. There is a need to allow room for “failure”, recognizing that organizations face incredible pressure to consistently demonstrate success to funders. Openness to “failure” allows organizations to try new things and identify lessons and best practice to ensure success in the long-run. In this context, innovation funding mechanisms should be predictable, accessible, flexible and responsive to changes on the ground. They should also be open to qualitative evidence, including respecting local and Indigenous traditions of oral storytelling as a meaningful component of measuring the effectiveness of projects.

Conclusions

The ICN submission sets out an ambitious set of recommendations for the IAR. The ICN notes the Minister’s plan to adopt a feminist approach to international assistance and calls for further consultation on what the approach means in practice. Fundamentally, Canada should take a human rights-based approach to international cooperation that targets the poorest and the most marginalized and is complemented by a focus on environmental sustainability and addressing climate change in all of the activities supported by Global Affairs Canada. In this regard, the SDGs provide a key framework against which to align Canada’s international assistance efforts and due attention is needed to realizing all SDGs, respecting their integrated nature. The recommendations consistently highlight the need to focus on local ownership and empowerment, and support a diverse range of partners through long-term, predictable, and flexible funding. Finally, this submission points to the linkages across pillars within the IAR and to other policy domains, noting the need for Canada to develop a coherent approach to international cooperation and a whole-of-government approach to how it engages in the world.

The ICN thanks the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie and Global Affairs Canada for this opportunity to engage on the future of Canada’s international cooperation efforts. It expects to see the results of the consultation reflected in the 2017 budget, matched by a rollout of policies, frameworks and appropriate funding mechanisms over the 2017 and 2018. Canada must take immediate steps to reform its international assistance and overall approach to international cooperation. The time bound nature of the SDGs and urgent need to address climate change requires no less.



Annex 1

Consultations by Inter-Council Network Members on the International Assistance Review			
Council	Participant s	Stakeholders Engaged	Consultation Mechanisms
ICN	66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ICN Council members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Member survey, July 13-20, 2016, to provide feedback on a first draft of the report
Alberta Council for Global Cooperation	53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Boards of education and post-secondary institutions ● Council members representing CSOs ● Diaspora community members ● Funding and development organizations ● Indigenous youth ● Individuals from the Global South ● Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Member survey ● Unofficial roundtable, June 16, 2016, Edmonton ● Official consultations, June 25 and June 28, Calgary and Ottawa
Association Québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale	89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unofficial roundtable, June 13, 2016, Montreal ● Consultation with members by email on AQOCI's written submission, July 4-8, 2016
Atlantic Council for International Cooperation	85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSOs ● Churches ● Nationals from the Global South ● Secondary and post-secondary institutions ● Youth interns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Official consultation, June 11, 2016, Halifax ● Webinar, June 22, 2016



British Columbia Council for International Cooperation	<p>400+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Domestic and internationally focused CSOS ● Education and research institutions ● Faith-based organizations ● First Nations leaders ● Interested individuals ● Mayors and councillors ● Private sector representatives ● Southern partners ● Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unofficial roundtable consultations on the SDGs and their implications for organisations going forward, September 30, 2015 – June 10, 2016, 28 communities across 5 regions in British Columbia ● Unofficial roundtable on the IAR, Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and the Defence Review, June 15, 2016, Vancouver ● Webinar, July 14, 2016
Manitoba Council for International Cooperation	<p>40</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council members, staff, associates and friends representing CSOs, academia, research institutes, students, diaspora communities and youth ● Interested individuals ● Non-member CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Member survey, June 8-17, 2016 ● Unofficial thematic roundtables, June 8, 2016, Winnipeg
Northern Council for Global Cooperation	<p>5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council board members of the Yukon Development Education Centre ● Yukon CSO based in Haiti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unofficial roundtable, June 21, 2016, Whitehorse ● Written submission via email
Ontario Council for International Cooperation	<p>112</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council members and others representing CSOs, diaspora communities, faith based organizations, colleges and universities, research institutions, consulting firms, youth interns and students ● Interested individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unofficial thematic roundtables, June 16, 2016, Toronto
Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation	<p>9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council members representing CSOs ● Interested individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unofficial roundtable, July 5, 2016, Saskatoon



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