

Canada when engaging on policy and programming issues. In cooperation with their local counterparts, these partners help drive change and results on the ground through the innovative approaches they bring to international assistance.

In September 2017, Global Affairs Canada published Canada's Policy for Civil Society Partnerships for International Assistance Policy – A Feminist Approach (Civil Society Organizations [CSO] Policy). It reaffirms Canada's commitment to working collaboratively with the civil society sector. The CSO Policy ensures that Global Affairs Canada's approach to partnerships with civil society aligns with Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, under the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The CSO Policy supports the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality. Its other objectives include fostering innovation among CSO leadership to maximize the impact of Canada's international assistance.

Representatives from Global Affairs Canada and Canadian partner organizations are working together in an advisory group to support the effective implementation of the CSO Policy. Global Affairs Canada will also engage with the civil society sector annually to:

- review mutual implementation of the CSO Policy and compare against its objectives and action areas;
- discuss evolving global and domestic CSO challenges and opportunities; and
- exchange knowledge and good practices.

The novel approach to a CSO Policy Advisory Group has met with positive feedback. Members welcome the opportunity to discuss CSO Policy implementation in an open and collaborative environment. This further demonstrates the department's commitment to fostering meaningful and effective partnerships with the civil society sector.

International Development Week is an annual public engagement platform for Global Affairs Canada, the provincial and regional councils for international cooperation, and other partners. The week allows them to celebrate Canadian contributions to and involvement in poverty reduction.

Partners for a Better World was the week's theme in February 2018. In 2018, the councils reached more than 4.3 million Canadians, including many youth, through nation-wide activities.

Canadian youth both attended and co-moderated an innovative International Development Week signature event discussion. They joined leaders from CSOs and the Parliamentary Secretary for International Development, engaging in meaningful dialogue on gender equality and



ACTION TO PROMOTE LOCAL INITIATIVES

"Thanks to Action pour la promotion des initiatives locales [action to promote local initiatives, or APIL] and its partner, the Léger Foundation, I have at my disposal a hectare of land plus five sheep. In 2015, before the implementation of the Food Security Innovation and Mobilization project, I didn't even have a single chicken of my own or the tiniest plot of land, because when we were repatriated from Côte d'Ivoire, my husband, my children and I had difficulty integrating socially and economically into our own village. Thanks to APIL and the Léger Foundation, the best part of the impacts is yet to come."

— Ouédraogo Halima, age 34, in Burkina Faso

the importance of empowering women and girls in the context of the #MeToo movement.

During International Development Week, the Minister of International Development announced the organizations that will implement the International Youth Internship Program (2018-2021) and the International Aboriginal Youth Internships initiative (2018-2022). These programs offer Canadian youth opportunities to gain valuable international development experience and promote Canada's international development efforts upon their return to Canada.

In 2017-2018, through the Volunteer Cooperation Program, 15 Canadian organizations sent 1,707 Canadian volunteers in professional fields to work with local partners in 41 developing countries. (Volunteers consisted of 1,040 women and 667 men.) Four partners—Oxfam-Québec, Canada World Youth, Youth Challenge International and Cuso International—have included "innovation funds" in their projects. These funds allow local partners to develop and implement new business and development models for local communities, particularly for the benefit of women and youth.