
SUPPORTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

Women's rights organizations are at the forefront of advocating for the rights of women and girls. They play a critical role in raising social concerns about gender inequalities. Canada supports the efforts of women's rights organizations. It seeks to strengthen their capacity to foster changes in policies, legislation and services, and to challenge harmful and discriminatory social beliefs and practices.

In Afghanistan, the Women's Enterprise, Advocacy and Training Program is partnering with Relief International. Together, they protect women and girls from gender-based violence by strengthening Afghan civil society organizations. These organizations, in turn, coordinate, advocate, protect and promote the rights and empowerment of women and girls.

In the African Great Lakes region, Global Affairs Canada supported a partnership that combats violence against girls and young women. The Centre for International Studies and Cooperation has partnered with the Coalition of Collectives of Associations Working for the Advancement of Women in the Great Lakes Region. These groups are working with local women's rights organizations in three countries in the Great Lakes region: Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The goal is to increase the protection of girls and young women in this region where gender-based violence is widespread.

In Bolivia, Canada and the Netherlands contributed to efforts to reduce gender-based violence and support the sexual and reproductive rights of women and girls. They also supported women's and girls' rights to economic and political participation. Canadian support assisted with the adoption of two laws as well. Law 348 aims to eliminate violence against women and a gender identity law lets transgender people change their government identity documents. Since the project began in 2010, 12,878 women have accessed sexual and reproductive health counselling services. As well, 719 women have assumed political leadership positions and 3,291 women have increased their incomes.

In India, the Mahila Samakhya Programme is a national program for women's empowerment whose strategy enables women to explore the power of the collective. Between 2014 and 2017, the IDRC has supported a project that evaluates this program's impact. The evaluation sheds light on the role of women's action groups in catalyzing social and economic change. A goal is to provide empirical evidence that can inform practitioners and policy-makers. The evaluation also aims to further understand how collective action programs can be modified to maximize the benefits to women.

ENABLING PUBLIC SECTOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Canada supports the capacity and accountability of government institutions and legislatures at all levels to eliminate all discrimination against women and girls. In practical terms, that means Canada supports government institutions and legislatures as they design, budget, implement and measure the policies, laws and programs needed to achieve these goals. Canada also backs efforts to enable women's and girls' full participation in society and access to services. This helps reduce poverty and inequality.

One example is Canada's support for the Together for Girls Partnership in Tanzania. In December 2016, the Government of Tanzania launched the landmark National Plan of Action to End Violence against Women and Children in Tanzania, for 2017 to 2022. In addition, Canada's support to the Together for Girls Partnership in Tanzania has facilitated the reporting of 52 cases of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Canada's support for numerous African governments helped them implement policies that enable gender equality in sectors such as democratic participation. These governments include Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Ghana, Senegal, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Mozambique and Tanzania. Through Global Affairs Canada's Pan-African Programme, the governments of Liberia, the Central African Republic and Guinea were also included. In Ethiopia, Canada worked to empower women in their economic activities. Canada helped women access business training and loans that allowed thousands to grow their businesses. This increased employment by 68% and profits by 78%.

In Mongolia, in 2016-2017, Global Affairs Canada's support helped many women take part in elections training workshops. More than 2,000 mostly female potential candidates and campaign managers from nine political parties took part in 46 workshops. These were run by the International Republican Institute's Campaign Academy for Successful Elections. In the 2016 elections, 13 women were elected to the State Great Hural (parliament), putting female representation at a record high of 17.1%.