

for Canada to work with others to strengthen international awareness and action on the WPS agenda.

Civil society groups at the local and international levels are essential partners in Canada's Action Plan. Through the Women's Voice and Leadership initiative, Canada is supporting local grassroots women's rights organizations. In May 2018, the government issued a call to action to civil society, philanthropists and the private sector to collaborate in setting up a new partnership for gender equality. This new funding initiative, to which Canada has committed up to \$300 million, aims to mobilize unprecedented levels of resources to help close the funding gap faced by women's rights organizations.

Domestically, the government has formalized its partnership with civil society through the Action Plan Advisory Group to draw on the expertise of its frontline colleagues. The Advisory Group is a critical forum for all federal partners to discuss challenges and opportunities with civil society and Indigenous organizations. In addition to sharing their experienced views, Canada counts on civil society to hold the government to account, whether the government is meeting its objectives or falling short of them. The government is deeply grateful for the guidance provided by its many civil society partners, in particular the Women, Peace and Security Network - Canada. There is still much to learn and improve, and it is thanks to this collaboration that Canada will continue to improve its performance in the future.

Canada's efforts to advance the WPS agenda over the reporting period have not been without their challenges. Commitments have been made, funding has been released, and new programs are under way. However, achieving enduring results that meet government ambitions will require frequent and honest reflection on the areas where it needs to improve. Administrative hurdles, measurement and attribution challenges, as well as ongoing difficulties in operating in conflict contexts, oblige the government to adapt its tools. Despite the obstacles confronting the

Action Plan, the Government of Canada remains wholly committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure that progress toward our shared WPS objectives continues steadily, thoughtfully and relentlessly; women, girls and all of those afflicted by an absence of peace and security deserve nothing less.

#### WHO IS ELSIE?

The Elsie Initiative is named after Canadian women's rights pioneer Elsie MacGill (1905-1980). Born in Vancouver, Ms. MacGill graduated from the University of Toronto in 1927 and became the first Canadian woman to receive a degree in electrical engineering.



Elsie MacGill was also the first woman to design aircraft and was in charge of the production of the Hawker Hurricane fighter at Canadian Car and Foundry, which employed 200 women during the Second World War.

Ms. MacGill overcame numerous challenges to achieve a lifetime of accomplishments. At 24 years old, she contracted a severe form of polio. Turning her experience as a patient into a call for action, she became a champion for women's rights and the rights of people with disabilities. Elsie MacGill fought for the advancement and interests of women and people with disabilities through her tireless volunteer contributions on numerous national committees. She served as a commissioner of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, and further served as Canada's representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization.