



**Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the
Upcoming Federal Budget**

By: Canadian Women's Foundation

The Canadian Women's Foundation is a national leader in the movement for gender equality in Canada. Launched in 1991 and now one of the largest women's foundations in the world, the Foundation has raised more than \$130M and funded over 2,500 programs across the country. The Foundation has been a successful partner of the federal government during the COVID pandemic, efficiently disbursing over \$30M to women's organizations across the country.

Recommendations:

Make Women a Priority:

Recommendation 1: That the government provide funding in the amount of \$50M to the Canadian Women's Foundation to apply an intersectional GBA+ lens to fund, build capacity, convene and support policy and advocacy work prioritizing marginalized women, girls and gender diverse people facing systemic discrimination as well as Black, Indigenous and racialized-led women's organizations and initiatives addressing anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, anti-Muslim and anti-Asian racism with a gender justice lens, across our focus areas.

Gender-based Violence:

Recommendation 2: That the government fund implementation of the recommendations of the Native Women's Association of Canada, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and Women of the Métis Nation in response to the Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the needs of women in communities documented by provincial Indigenous women's associations and prioritize their recommendations going forward.

Recommendation 3: That the government initiate sustained and escalating investment for a National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Girls/Gender-Based Violence building through successive federal budgets into billions of dollars, particularly for Black and racialized women who have been underserved.

Truth and Reconciliation:

Recommendation 4: That the federal government immediately complies with the ruling of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ordering an end to discrimination against First Nations children in the delivery of child welfare services on reserves.

Recommendation 5: That the government fully implement Bill S-3 to achieve the restoration of Indigenous women's inherent rights through expediting registration of women and their children, addressing the residual discrimination in communities, and meaningful engagement with Indigenous women and their organizations in the development of any federal policy and funding formulas.

Equality and Gender Justice

Recommendation 6: That the government continue the transformative long-term investments in early learning and child care announced in Federal Budget 2021 and adopt a similar leadership role across the care sector, stimulating social infrastructure with investment tied to non-profit care and to standards for decent work and care, for all residents of Canada.

Intersectional Feminist Recovery and Transformation:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen increased needs among populations that are vulnerable due to barriers caused by sexism, systemic racism, and ableism as well as the ongoing effects of colonization. The pandemic crisis highlighted the fragility of response systems and the urgent need for structural rethinking and systemic change.

Moving to the next stage of gradual recovery provides a unique opportunity to address these persistent gaps exacerbated by the pandemic. Timing this budget to support what amounts to significant transformation is critical. Many people in Canada, the organizations that work with them, the sectors they are part of, and the governments that represent them are all saying: “We will not return to business as usual.”

The pandemic disproportionately impacted women to an extent that threatens previous equality gains. Economic losses fell heavily on women living on low incomes who experience intersecting inequalities based on race, class, disability, migration and immigration status and are often concentrated in low paying precarious care jobs with a high risk of exposure to infection and a lack of paid sick leave or health benefits. Many of the women working in these sectors are Black, racialized, immigrant, migrant, and/or undocumented. Caught between precarious employment and unpredictable access to child care and schools, many mothers - especially those with children under 6 - simply exited the labour force, risking their financial security to increase their care role.¹

Transforming Canada means changing systems. The actions and investments outlined below offer significant direction on how this transformation can be made concrete through ongoing budget commitments.

Make Women a Priority:

Invest in Gender Equity through the Canadian Women’s Foundation

The breadth and depth of gendered pandemic impacts² have increased urgency to strengthen the women’s sector, prevent rollbacks and continue equality gains. Recovery calls for a strengthened women’s sector and a focus on support for Black and racialized-led women’s organizations and initiatives. The Canadian Women’s Foundation is uniquely positioned to effectively and efficiently support the women’s sector and ensure inclusion. Throughout the pandemic, the Foundation has directed funds to organizations serving the most marginalized women and girls regionally and nationally with laser-focused precision and speed. With this investment, we can continue deploying our expertise as a funder, capacity builder, collaborator, convener and knowledge mobilizer in support of inclusive gender equality.

- Invest \$50M in the Canadian Women’s Foundation to apply an intersectional GBA+ lens to fund, build capacity, convene and support policy and advocacy work prioritizing marginalized women, girls, and gender diverse people facing systemic discrimination, as well as Black, Indigenous and racialized-led women’s organizations and initiatives addressing anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, anti-Muslim and anti-Asian racism with a gender justice lens across our focus areas:
 - Gender-Based Violence
 - Economic development
 - Inclusive leadership
 - Youth empowerment

Gender-Based Violence:

National Action Plan to Address Violence against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people

National groups - the Native Women's Association of Canada, Pauktuutit and Women of the Metis Nation - have all put forward recommendations related to the call for National Action Plan in the Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. In addition, many other associations, such as the Ontario Native Women's Association, Quebec Native Women and Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, have presented the specific needs of women in their communities. We recommend that they receive funding to address the needs documented and that their recommendations are prioritized going forward.

In particular, the government must prioritize funding models that are equitable, provide funding that supports the mission of each organization, and finance supports and services that are specialized and reflect different needs.

National Action Plan (NAP) on Violence Against Women and Girls/Gender-Based Violence

A collaborative group of experts from the sector delivered a bold, ambitious, intersectional plan to Women and Gender Equality in April 2021. This important road map will require clear and strong structures established at the outset to drive the process forward. To be successful, Canada's NAP requires sustained and escalating investment through successive federal budgets, particularly for Black and racialized women who have been underserved.

The upcoming federal budget must put in place means to harmonize this National Action Plan with the separate, ongoing efforts to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQIA+ people from the outset. An Independent Oversight Body of Experts must be established as early as possible to provide the NAP with significant accountability and governance structure. It must be guided by expertise from a stable, resourced violence against women/gender-based violence sector from the start. Since the plan outlined includes a ten-year framework, achieving the outcomes promised in this comprehensive plan will take investments in the billions of dollars over time.

Truth and Reconciliation:

Address Ongoing Legacies of Residential Schools

With discoveries of children's remains being found close to former residential schools throughout Canada, the federal government must take immediate and concrete action, beginning with the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) calls to action 71 through 76 on the Missing Children and Burial Information.³ This process must be led by the First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities affected. The government should address the process of uncovering and investigating the sites of burials with appropriate care and spiritual attention towards families and communities. The government should fund this process and consider that in their entirety, all remains are evidence of trauma and genocide that will be addressed legally.

In 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) found that inequities in Canada's child welfare services created incentives to remove First Nations children from their homes, families and communities. Dr Marie Wilson, a witness before the CHRT and a former

Commissioner of the TRC, described the harms experienced by First Nations children because of Canada's underfunding of child welfare services as comparable to those experienced by survivors of Residential Schools. Canada must immediately comply with the ruling¹ of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ordering an end to discrimination against First Nations children in the delivery of child welfare services on reserves.

Fully Implement Bill S-3

Removing sex discrimination in the *Indian Act* can only be accomplished with a clear mandate and requisite levels of funding, and the government must equip itself with the necessary funding and structures to ensure that every eligible registration is received and processed in a timely manner. Only then can the process start to undo generations of discrimination. We encourage the government to make investments and establish processes outlined by the Ontario Native Women's Association:

- Sufficient investments to implement timely registration of women and their children under *Bill S-3*.
- Immediate investments in addressing the residual discrimination in communities that continue to function within a legacy of colonization and embedded patriarchal values, including the limitations that are part of the governance structure imbedded in the *Indian Act*.
- Meaningful engagement with Indigenous women and investment in Indigenous women's organizations in the development of any federal policy and funding formulas.⁴

Equality and Gender Justice:

Transform Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC)

The substantial commitments to early learning and child care in Budget 2021 were welcome and a recognition that this is crucial to a gender-equitable Canada which recognizes women's unpaid work in this area. In order to fulfill the promise of that budget, we advocate for using this significant investment "to drive transformational change in ELCC with regard to public responsibility for funding, management and delivery." Development and investments must continue until the current market model is replaced "with a universal public system that will make high quality, affordable, inclusive, flexible, culturally safe, regulated early learning and child care accessible to all who want it, and that properly compensates those who work in the sector."⁵

Foster a Healthy Care Economy

The pandemic spawned national recognition that care work is essential and confirmed the low social value attached to care and women's work. Much of our care economy relies on a largely underpaid labour force of women who are disproportionately recent immigrants, migrant workers, Black and racialized women.⁶ Recovery is an opportunity to leverage this national recognition into decent work for care workers and high-quality care for communities, reducing social and economic barriers and advancing inclusion and gender justice. Federal Budget 2021 announced significant long term funding commitments for early learning and

child care. In Budget 2022, the federal government should adopt a similar leadership role across the care sector and stimulate critical social infrastructure with investment tied to non-profit care and to meeting standards for decent work and for care, for all residents of Canada.

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¹ Dawn Desjardins and Carrie Freestone (2020), [Canadian women continue to exit the labour force](#), RBC Economics.

² Canadian Women's Foundation, Resetting Normal: <https://canadianwomen.org/resetting-normal/>

³ First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada (for the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada), 2016 CHRT 2 <https://www.chrt-tcdp.gc.ca/transparency/AnnualReports/2016-ar/2016-ar-en.html>

⁴ Ontario Native Women's Association, letter to The United Nations Human Rights Committee, May 28, 2021, <https://www.faq-gnw.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/McIvorPetitionersSubmissionCombinedFilesJune152021-1-1.pdf>

⁵ Child Care Now, Canada's Roadmap to Affordable Child Care for ALL, <https://timeforchildcare.ca/2021/07/06/canadas-roadmap-to-affordable-child-care-for-all/>

⁶ CCPA, Canadian Women's Foundation, Ontario Non-Profit Network and Fay Faraday, Resetting Normal: Women, Decent Work and Canada's Fractured Care Economy <https://fw3s926r0g42i6kes3bxg4i1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ResettingNormal-Women-Decent-Work-and-Care-EN.pdf>