

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

**By
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(NAWL/ANFD)¹**

¹ A list of organizational endorsements is available upon request.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: That the government increase funding for childcare by \$2 billion in 2020-2021 and by additional \$2 billion increments in successive years (\$4 billion in 2021-2022, \$6 billion in 2022-2023).

Recommendation 2: That the government introduce legislation that establishes national standards for comprehensive, non-profit, publicly-managed long-term care and related home care services for all in need and that establishes principles, conditions, and accountability mechanisms for federal transfer payments to the provinces/territories.

Recommendation 3: That the government convert the \$200 million in project-based Capacity Building Funds to women's organizations to core funding and commit to long-term core funding for women's organizations going forward. Additional new core funding should be granted to women's groups addressing intersecting discrimination that affects marginalized communities and to support COVID19-related intersectional collaborations and innovations.

Recommendation 4: That the government meet the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Call for Justice to develop and implement a National Action Plan that addresses violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. That the government also develop a National Action Plan on VAW/GBV in Canada.

Recommendation 5: That, learning from the experience of CERB, the government develop a robust system of income support that is not anchored in an ableist framework, that recognizes every woman's inherent humanity and value beyond their "productivity" in the labour market, and that ensures economic security and a dignified life for all.

PRINCIPLES TO INFORM BUDGET ANALYSIS

STARTING POINT: Women, in all their diversity, experienced social and economic marginalization before the COVID-19 pandemic because intersecting practices of systemic discrimination are institutionalized in Canada's social, economic and political reality.

- * Institutionalized gender roles mean women do a disproportionate share of unpaid care work suppressing their access to paid work.
- * Women – particularly Indigenous, Black and racialized women and women with disabilities – make up 70% of precariously employed workers (part-time, short-term, minimum wage, temporary agency).
- * Women in every sector of the economy, at every income level, in every region in Canada experience deep discriminatory gender pay gaps throughout their lives (women with disabilities: 56% gender pay gap; immigrant women: 55%; Indigenous women: 45%; racialized women: 40%; women on average: 32%).²
- * 36% of First Nations women living off reserve, 28% of racialized women, 23% of Inuit and Métis women, 21% of single mothers, and 20% of immigrant women live in poverty. 73% of seniors living in poverty are women.³
- * The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls detailed the distinct gendered oppression and ongoing colonial genocide that drive social and economic marginalization and heightened violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This includes: disproportionately high rates of disability, heightened unemployment, underemployment, barriers to education and training, overcrowded and inadequate housing, disproportionately highly gendered violence, and lack of access to clean water, food, medical services and supplies.
- * Colonialism and anti-Black racism result in the over-policing, disproportionate incarceration and state violence against Indigenous and Black women and the state disproportionately removes Indigenous and Black children from their families.

² Census, 2016.

³ Canada Without Poverty, *Poverty is Sexist*. Available online: <https://cwp-csp.ca/poverty/just-the-facts/>

- * 24% of women have disabilities. Only 61.3% of women with disabilities have paid employment. One third live below the poverty line and 40% experience violence in their lifetimes.⁴
- * 1 in 3 women in Canada experience intimate partner violence and other forms of gender-based violence. Risks are heightened for women with disabilities; Indigenous, Black and racialized women; trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming women; migrant women; women targeted by Islamophobia and sex workers.

CURRENT REALITY: The pandemic-related recession exacerbated that systemic discrimination.

For the first time more women than men lost work during a recession, prompting economist Armine Yalnizyan to label this a “she-recession”. Women – particularly Black, Indigenous and racialized women in low-paying work – experienced disproportionate job losses. They also experienced disproportionate COVID-19 infections and deaths because they do high-risk work where they cannot physically distance at twice the rate of men.⁵

- * **Women accounted for 63% of job losses** in the first two months of the pandemic and **70% of job losses among workers aged 25-54**.⁶
- * Throughout the pandemic **women accounted for 56% of job losses**. Overall, **32% of women** lost all or at least 50% of their employment hours compared to **29% of men**.⁷
- * Despite greater job losses, women have accounted for only **29% of job recovery**.⁸

⁴ Amanda Burlock, *Women with Disabilities. Women in Canada: A Gender Based Statistical Report* (Statistics Canada, 2017),

⁵ Canadian Women’s Foundation et al, *Resetting Normal: Women, Decent Work and Canada’s Fractured Care Economy* (July 2020) at pp. 4-6

⁶ Katherine Scott, *Behind the Numbers: Women bearing the brunt of economic losses* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2020)

⁷ Scott, *Behind the Numbers*

⁸ Statistics Canada, *May Jobs Report* (2020)

- * Among the 900,000 parents who lost work since February, **56.7% are mothers** but they have garnered only **40.7% of job recovery by parents** since May.⁹
- * Among workers aged 25-54, **424,500 women have left the labour force** entirely, driving women's employment to its lowest level since the mid-1980s. RBC highlights that this decline women's employment puts women "at higher risk of long-term job-separation and future wage penalties."¹⁰
- * Systemic ableism throughout this pandemic evidenced a deprioritizing of care and triaging specific to people with disabilities, putting their lives/right to life at risk. Analysis of financial resources and supports in the Federal Government's pandemic response, including CERB, reveal how systemic ableism continues to leave people with disabilities' income supports (pre- and post-pandemic) well below CERB levels and far below the poverty line.

Women in their diversity will not experience economic recovery unless this budget deliberately focuses on the gendered impacts of the recession. Funding and policy in this budget must establish and support systemic measures that deliver economic security for all women and full, safe returns to jobs that deliver decent work and decent pay.

REQUIRED ACTION: COVID-19 created a "she-cession"; the government must deliver a "she-covey".

These principles must inform the government's budget:

1. **Intersectional gender-based analysis (GBA+) and gender-based budgeting** which accounts for and deliberately counteracts the above dynamics of institutionalized and intersectional discrimination must inform all policy, legislative and budget decisions.
2. The budget must be **gender-responsive**. Because the pandemic harmed women disproportionately, the budget must prioritize spending and policy-development that **prioritizes all women's economic recovery**.

⁹ Statistics Canada, *May Jobs Report*

¹⁰ RBC Economics, *Pandemic threatens decades of women's labour force gains* (16 July 2020)

3. The budget must **commit to continued public spending** to support post-pandemic rebuilding that eliminates systemic discrimination and establishes social and economic security for the most marginalized. The budget must reject the politics of austerity.
4. The budget must **prioritize spending on social infrastructure** such as childcare, long-term care, health, clean water, affordable housing and addressing VAW/GBV.
5. Building a gender-responsive budget should **involve women's organizations in decision-making**. Those who will be directly affected by policies and programs should participate in decision-making.

ANALYSIS

I. The budget must support publicly-funded, accessible, flexible childcare as a top priority. Without it, women cannot return to work.

Women disproportionately shouldered the additional unpaid care, cleaning and homeschooling work during the pandemic. This is unsustainable.

Meanwhile, 99% of early childhood educators are women¹¹ and they suffered significant job losses. 72% of Canadian childcare centres closed during the pandemic and 71% laid off staff.¹²

The pandemic exacerbated Canada's childcare shortage crisis. 36% of childcare centres and 38% of family child care home providers that closed during the pandemic may not reopen.¹³ Centres that open can serve fewer children due to physical distancing and have higher operating costs with enhanced health and safety protocols.

Only \$625 million of the \$19 billion federal reopening funds are earmarked for childcare. This is shockingly inadequate.

¹¹ Melissa Moyser, *Women and Paid Work*, Statistics Canada (2017)

¹² Martha Friendly, Barry Forer and Rachel Vickerson, *The pandemic experience has created an uncertain future for Canadian child care services: Highlights of a national survey* (4 June 2020)

¹³ Friendly, Forer and Vickerson, *Highlights of a national survey*

Unless childcare centres reopen and expand, women caring for children cannot return to work. This will set back women's economic security generations and undermine the whole economy.

Government must increase funding for childcare by \$2 billion in 2020-2021 and by annually increasing \$2 billion increments in subsequent years. These funds must: expand available care spaces; raise childcare workers' wages commensurate to their essential professional work; and enable centres to implement measures that keep workers and children safe. As was done for essential workers' children, care must be available with flexible hours that are accessible to women who don't work 9 to 5.

II. The budget must commit to introduce legislation to establish national standards for high quality, publicly-managed long-term care and related home care services and a legislative framework for transfer payments to support this comprehensive public system.

Long-term care is a women's issue. Two thirds of long-term care residents are women. Long-term care staff are overwhelmingly women. 90% of personal support workers who provide 90% of hands-on care to long-term care residents are women and disproportionately racialized, immigrant and/or migrant women. Their work is precarious, low-paid and overwhelmingly part-time so these women routinely work multiple part-time jobs at different facilities. These precarious conditions of work parallel inadequate and precarious conditions of care for long-term care residents.

The pandemic exposed why this crisis must be addressed. 81% of Canada's COVID-19 deaths occurred in long-term care facilities – the highest percentage globally. Residents in for-profit homes were 60% more likely to contract COVID-19 and 45% more likely to die from it.¹⁴

New legislation must establish national standards for care and staffing mix, and tie transfer payments to national standards. New funding must support full-time employment with decent pay, working conditions and benefits, including paid sick days.

¹⁴ M.C. Oved et al, "For-profit nursing homes have four times as many COVID-19 deaths as city-run homes, Star analysis finds", *Toronto Star* (8 May 2020); Canadian Women's Foundation et al, *Resetting Normal: Women, Decent Work and Canada's Fractured Care Economy* (July 2020) at p. 23

III. The budget must deliver core funding for women's organizations.

The government must meet its commitment to intersectional GBA+ in all policy-making and legislation. The pandemic's gendered impact makes a robust intersectional feminist analysis more essential than ever.

Equality seeking women's groups across Canada must participate in this GBA+ because they have the necessary intersectional feminist analysis, policy expertise, front line experience working with and for women and collaborative networks to help build a gender-responsive budget.

This recession threatens many women's organizations' existence. Converting the \$200 million in existing project-based Capacity Building Funds to core funding will enable 270 organizations operating at national, provincial/territorial and local levels flexibility to meet urgent needs created by the pandemic.¹⁵

IV. The budget must provide for a National Action Plan on VAW/GBV

Gender-based violence in Canada was a crisis before COVID-19: one-third of women and gender diverse people experience gender-based violence during their lives. Intersecting discrimination fuels increased violence amongst Indigenous, Black, racialized and marginalized women and gender diverse people, including two-spirit people and women who are disabled, poor, religious minorities and im/migrants. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls demanded a National Action Plan on VAW/GBV. This Call for Justice remains unmet.

During the pandemic, gender-based violence skyrocketed globally. Across Canada, domestic violence rates increased 20%-30%.¹⁶ One in five Indigenous women experienced physical or psychological violence during the pandemic.¹⁷

The government must urgently develop and implement National Action Plans on VAW/GBA, including financial transfers to ensure women can access services and protections wherever they live in Canada.

¹⁵ NAWL/CRIAW, *Proposal for Support to Equality-Seeking Women's Groups* (April 2020): <https://nawl.ca/nawl-and-criaw-proposal-for-support-to-equality-seeking-womens-groups-in-canada-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

¹⁶ YWCA Canada and Institute for Gender and the Economy, *A Feminist Economic Recovery Plan for Canada* (July 2020) at p. 11

¹⁷ YWCA and GATE, *Feminist Economic Recovery Plan* at p. 11