

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

**By:
Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale
(AQOCI)**

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List of AQOCI Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the government double the current amount of official development assistance (ODA) from \$6.4 billion to \$12.8 billion over a period of five years in order to meet Canada's international commitments.

Recommendation 2: That the government commit to improving funding to small and medium organizations in the international cooperation sector.

Recommendation 3: That the government commit to allocating \$6.76 billion in principal-purpose climate finance as its fair share in the five-year period between 2021–2022 and 2025–2026.

Recommendation 4: That the government invest the necessary resources to implement all aspects of its feminist foreign policy.

A Call for a Budget That Supports a Just Recovery and Greater Solidarity Across Communities and Borders

As we confront the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare to restart the economy, in June, more than 500 organizations from across Canada endorsed a series of [six principles for a just recovery](#), intended to guide the federal government in developing measures for its 2021 budget:

1. Put people's health and well-being first, no exceptions
2. Strengthen the social safety net and provide relief directly to people
3. Prioritize the needs of workers and communities
4. Build resilience to prevent future crises
5. Build solidarity and equity across communities, generations and borders
6. Uphold indigenous rights and work in partnership with indigenous peoples

The [Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale \(AQOCI\)](#) and the other endorsers of the principles for a just recovery believe that the status quo is not an option, and they refuse to go back to the pre-pandemic economic model, which was already fuelling an ecological, climate and social crisis whose impacts could be even greater and more irreversible than those we are currently experiencing.

Canadians have tremendous needs right now, and it is clear that the government needs to focus on strengthening the social safety net and providing relief directly to the people. However, the current public health and climate crises know no borders and can only be resolved with greater international cooperation and solidarity. Canada has a moral responsibility and the financial capability, at both the national and international levels, to allow individuals and communities to live with dignity.

AQOCI, an association representing 60 Quebec-based international cooperation and solidarity organizations, would like the 2021 federal budget to demonstrate a clear commitment from Canada to investing in a just recovery and doing its fair share in terms of international cooperation and solidarity.

Recommendation 1

That the government double the current amount of official development assistance (ODA) from \$6.4 billion to \$12.8 billion over a period of five years in order to meet Canada's international commitments.

The purpose of official development assistance (ODA) is to improve living conditions in countries of the global South. For many of these countries, ODA is a major source of funding that helps them meet their residents' basic needs, including health and education needs. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vital that we honour our commitments in this area.

Sadly, Canada's ODA in 2019 was still below the average of OECD donor countries and even reached its lowest point in 50 years, 0.27% of its gross national income (GNI). This was also nowhere near the international target of 0.7%, which Canada has never really come close to reaching.

To meet its international commitments and support the most vulnerable people on the planet, who are now also dealing with the consequences of COVID-19, we recommend that Canada double its current amount of ODA within five years from \$6.4 billion to \$12.8 billion per year.

Recommendation 2

That the government commit to improving funding to small and medium organizations in the international cooperation sector.

Small and medium organizations (SMOs) in Canada's civil society sector play an important part in international cooperation. They are involved in diverse, innovative development programs and help promote global citizenship to Canadians from coast to coast to coast. SMOs are known for their public engagement efforts in Canada, their long-term partnerships with local stakeholders in the South, their specialization and their ability to quickly adapt to communities' changing needs on the ground.

Since SMOs were significantly affected by CIDA's shift to an exclusive call-for-proposal funding mechanism in 2010, they were pleased with the 2017 announcement of a [five-year pilot initiative](#) (valued at \$100 million) seeking to engage these organizations in international assistance efforts in areas consistent with Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy. However, the first calls for proposals showed that the funding available would only cover a very small number of projects.

In line with our first recommendation, assuming that the total ODA budget is substantially increased, we recommend that the government also commit to improving funding to SMOs in the international cooperation sector.

Recommendation 3

That the government commit to allocating \$6.76 billion in principal-purpose climate finance as its fair share in the five-year period between 2021–2022 and 2025–2026.

The fight against poverty is inextricably linked to the fight to protect the environment, and improving living conditions for humans, especially women, is largely dependent on having a healthy, resilient environment. Since we are facing not only a public health crisis, but an unprecedented ecological crisis as well, it is vital that Northern countries do their fair share to fund the global fight against climate change.

Canada is one of the 10 countries that have contributed most to climate change over the past 100 years. Considering its historical liability, doing its fair share will require not only taking the necessary steps to reduce its own domestic greenhouse gas emissions, but also financing climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in Southern countries. According to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), based on Canada's GNI as compared to those of other donor countries, Canada's fair share is approximately \$4 billion annually, including \$1.8 billion in bilateral climate finance. Yet Canada's commitment for 2020–2021 is about \$800 million, well short of its fair share.

Since Canada is currently holding consultations to inform its international climate finance approach post 2020–2021, we recommend that the government allocate \$6.76 billion in principal-purpose climate finance as its fair share in the five-year period between 2021–2022 and 2025–2026.

That equates to annual increases of 18%, as shown in the table below.

Annual Bilateral Climate Finance in Millions of Dollars

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
800	945	1,115	1,315	1,550	1,830	6,755

The analysis leading to this recommendation was carried out by the [Canadian Coalition on Climate Change and Development \(C4D\)](#).

Recommendation 4

That the government invest the necessary resources to implement all aspects of its feminist foreign policy.

In February 2020, Minister Champagne announced that the government would be holding consultations to develop a white paper on Canada's feminist foreign policy. We are pleased that the government is taking this progressive direction, and we encourage it to continue on this path. However, it is not enough to adopting feminist rhetoric. It needs to be backed up by concrete action and the necessary resources.

In addition to substantially increasing the ODA budget to implement Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy, here are three measures that could support the implementation of a feminist foreign policy:

- Support leadership more effectively among women, especially indigenous women, in the area of climate change adaptation and mitigation by taking a feminist approach in financing plans. In particular, encourage the development of projects specifically related to gender and climate in the countries facing the greatest climate change impact;

- Redefine the concept of security by moving away from the traditional military-centred perspective and proposing a vision that seriously considers the non-military aspects of security, such as food security, environmental security and health security;
- Ensure the independence of the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE) and empower her to investigate human rights violations associated with Canadian companies operating abroad, as urged by the [Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability \(CNCA\)](#).