House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** MATCH International and Oxfam Canada

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Foreign aid and foreign policy

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Reinstate local gender funds within DFATD countries of priority in order to channel resources directly to women's rights organizations working to strengthen civil society and improve human rights.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

2 years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Within the Official Development Assistance envelope, the GofC could establish an annual funding allocation administered locally in a number of DFATD focus countries. The funds would specifically target support to women's rights organizations- those which are women-led, community driven and working to improve women's rights and conditions. Recent evidence indicates that while there are more resources for women and girls within ODA envelopes,only one tenth of women's rights organizations are receiving funding from bilateral, national governments and International Non-governmental Organizations.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

The direct beneficiaries of this funding allocation would be the women's rights organizations working in countries of priority as defined by DFATD. However, there is significant impact and benefit to indirect beneficiaries who are served by these organizations. It is a commonly held development theory that 'supporting women's rights organizations to make change and build strong and inclusive social movements is the most effective mechanism for ensuring sustainable change in the lives of women and girls'. (UK DFID Theory for Change, 2012).

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

The DAC Network of Gender Equality recommends support to women's rights organizations across development policy, programming and funding channels. Canadian alignment to these recommendations positions Canada as a champion and leader of human rights and equality between men and women.

Topic: Foreign aid and foreign policy

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Create a specific allocation within Canada's Official Development Assistance annual envelope to support efforts by governments and civil society, particularly women's organizations, in low- and middle-income countries to prevent and otherwise address Violence Against Women (VAW) and Gender-based Violence (GBV).

Such a fund would help concentrate Canada's international efforts on VAW/GBV, bringing greater visibility, cost efficiencies, and synergies and effectiveness, particularly through greater opportunities to generate and exchange evidence on what works in prevention and response.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

2 years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Creating a special international development assistance fund on VAW/GBV could be achieved through the re-allocation of existing ODA. The fund could be structured to award grants or contributions on a competitive basis to innovative and effective approaches to preventing and responding to VAW/GBV.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Poor women in countries receiving Canadian ODA would be the primary beneficiaries – both victims of violence as well as women of all ages threatened by VAW/GBV whether in public or private spheres. The most effective women's organizations working on VAW/GBV in their communities would be supported through this fund in their important work – both through receipt of program funding, and through the opportunity to be connected with Government of Canada international development gender specialists and counterpart organizations around the world.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Studies have shown that women's organizations are the most effective at both responding to the effects of VAW/GBV – on women, their families, and communities – and acting to reduce the incidence. This includes prevention programs focused on men, or research and advocacy aimed at strengthening legislation. Women's organizations are underfunded relative to other types of civil society organizations, thus there is huge potential to see major gains from such a fund. Ultimately, more women will have rights and societies will benefit from their participation in community, civic and political life.

Topic: Federal budgets and the public service

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

Please select from the drop down menu

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Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

Women’s rights organizations are the most effective in creating change for women, yet these organizations continue to be critically underfunded. In 2011, only 10% of women’s rights organizations received funding from bilateral agencies,national governments and international organizations. In fact, the majority of women’s rights organizations have never received core funding to cover operational expenses. A recent 2011 study drew light on the fact that one-fifth of all women’srights organizations were faced with the serious threat of closure.

If we are to see a serious shift in improving conditions for women, there will need to be investment in the very part of civil society that will lead the effort. The Government of Canada has the opportunity to be part of this vital effort, and by channeling ODA resources through women's organizations, will become one of a small group of leaders who are ensuring their investments are catalytic.

Transforming the social norms that condone and, in some places, even encourage behaviour that discriminates against women, and those social norms that have a demonstrable link to Violence Against Women, is the challenge of our time. And while engaging with men and boys is a critical component of ending VAW. the countless women's organizations that are on the front lines need significant, multi-year support, particularly in places where rates of VAW are on the rise or stubbornly refuse to fall.

As importantly, these women's organizations, of which organizations that have been or are today partners of the Government of Canada, would benefit enormously from the added profile from the announcement of a new fund on VAW by a major donor like Canada . All organizations working on VAW would rightly feel encouraged in their efforts, and the fund would no doubt catalyze increased investment, whether by the donor community, the private sector, or the public at large.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided