



Canadian  
Teachers'  
Federation

Fédération canadienne  
des enseignantes et  
des enseignants



# YOUTH-LED ROADMAP FOR GENDER EQUALITY:

A PLAN TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5 IN CANADA

# THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR COMMITTED PARTNERS

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Youth for Gender Equality Writers' Conference  
March 2019, Ottawa, Ontario

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# WELCOME MESSAGE

**At this moment, there are about 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 on earth. This is the largest global population of youth in history, a group that is set to grow over the next several decades.**

We have witnessed the power of these youth. We have watched them mobilize for issues they believe in and advocate for causes they are passionate about. Yet in a world with the largest youth population to date, we have also seen them missing from conversations where their voices should be amplified. With Youth for Gender Equality, together, we are redefining that narrative.

On behalf of Plan International Canada and the Canadian Teachers' Federation, we are thrilled to present you with the first-ever *Youth-Led Roadmap for Gender Equality in Canada*. Three years in the making, this document reflects the voices of more than 300 diverse youth from coast-to-coast-to-coast who are passionate about gender equality and the goal of a better tomorrow. The recommendations contained in the *Roadmap* directly reflect what these young people identified as the most important and pressing issues within the fight for gender equality. It is their voices that address these issues and lay the framework for change. It is also their voices you will continue to hear in years to come – raising issues that have gone ignored, disrupting the status quo, sharing opinions and developing solutions for a more just and equitable society. We encourage you to listen...and, ultimately, to take action.



***Youth for Gender Equality is a process<sup>1</sup> as much as an outcome. It is the process of youth leading us to challenge and change social and cultural norms that are reinforcing discrimination and violence in all its forms. Youth are the leaders of today – guiding us as we confront, accept and take action to reconcile the vision of Canada we have for tomorrow with the dark vestiges of violence and discrimination that haunt our past and persist to this day, particularly in regard to Indigenous women and girls.***

We are at a watershed moment to turn the page on gender discrimination in Canada. There is no country in the world that has achieved gender equality. With youth leading the way, we must seize the moment and turn to action to see Canada become the first country in the world to realize the ambition of the UN Sustainable Development Goal on Gender Equality within our borders. Our hope is that other countries will follow as well.

As youth unpack the root causes of discrimination and articulate what we can and must do in our own individual and professional lives, now is the time to join the movement for gender equality and to end discrimination for all.

To this end, we would like to extend appreciation to the network of more than 20 organizations that make up our Steering Committee, partner organizations and our technical advisors. Working together, our goal is to support the most excluded and marginalized youth communities in Canada to bring their insights and recommendations to the centre of this effort.

Although Canada may be viewed by many around the world as a global leader when it comes to gender equality, the reality is far different. For scores of people around the country, equality remains out of reach and discrimination is far too prevalent. That is why the *Roadmap* is significant. Our youth have courageously raised their voices by taking the lead to bring about real change that is desperately needed. By sharing their experiences, youth are helping to pave the way toward a more equal present and future.

If you had any doubts before, the recommendations in this document and the thoughtfulness built into its scope will affirm that the young people of today truly hold within them the power to change the world.



Caroline Riseboro, CEO & President of Plan International Canada

H. Mark Ramsankar, Canadian Teachers' Federation President

Cassandra Hallett, Canadian Teachers' Federation Secretary General

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to Annex 1 to learn more about the methodology behind the process.

# FOREWORD

Despite common perceptions to the contrary, gender inequality continues to be a significant issue in Canada, shaping our everyday lives, and even impacting the safety of many women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

Through Youth for Gender Equality, diverse youth from around Canada came together to generate recommendations intended to break down the barriers to gender equality in Canada. Developing these recommendations from youth perspectives and lived experience is a critical aspect of this initiative, as youth are the voice of the future and the product of a new tomorrow searching for a better way for the generations to come.

It is said that youth hold the innocence of yesterday, the reality of today and the hope for tomorrow. However, the ways that youth experience and understand the very real issues of today's society, including gender equality, are too often overlooked, despite the fact that youth must bear the brunt of these issues. Youth have to face gender biases and prejudices head-on, through school systems, social norms and other activities that follow binary structures.

Sadly, issues of gender inequality do not stop at a certain age. As an Indigenous woman, I have witnessed this my whole life. I carry the teachings of seven generations, and know that it will take seven generations for the intergenerational trauma to begin to heal from issues like gender inequality. Gender equality was a way of life for Indigenous people, because binary gender identity was not a structure in place within most communities: it was bounded within our traditional teachings and the way we carried ourselves. Forced assimilation and colonial acts introduced gender inequality: a force that, to this day, renders Indigenous women as less than, dehumanizing our very beings. I was motivated to be a part of Youth for Gender Equality because I have witnessed the way gender inequality has impacted my people, community and families. I have witnessed the way gender inequality has put my loved ones and myself in harm's way with very little support because of our intersectional identity of being Indigenous and female and Two-Spirited. This is something I carry with me every day and something I centre in my life through my prayers for the protection of my loved ones, my community and myself.

I hope this work invokes a conversation, a shift in ideologies and an intentional re-evaluation of the ways in which we work, live and socialize on a daily basis, and a better understanding of who is being impacted by our words and actions. We must make room for a better tomorrow where we value the lands we occupy, where workplaces have the integrity to evaluate employees based solely on work ethic and where social spaces are accessible and comfortable for all folks who share these lands within Turtle Island.

**Maddi, 24, Piikani Nation, Blackfoot Confederacy, Alberta**



# WHO WE ARE<sup>2</sup>

We are youth from throughout Canada committed to a future with gender equality.

We each come from diverse backgrounds and share in our identities. We are Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, economically marginalized, new Canadians, Francophone, gender diverse and racialized youth. We are youth who come from urban, rural and remote communities. We are from 10 provinces and one territory.

We have lived these experiences and have seen the impact of gender inequality and intersectional discrimination based on age, gender identity, race, economic class, disability, language and religion. We know the stakes are high. And we want to raise awareness on urgent gender-inequality issues: Discrimination based on gender identity and expression, harmful norms and stereotypes, gender-based violence, lack of resources, education related to reproductive health, and intersecting issues facing Indigenous women and girls, members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and other marginalized communities.

*We started a conversation about gender equality with more than 300 youth in Canada about the pathways we can take to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5, focused on gender equality in Canada by 2030. This conversation matters for the peace and well-being of our generation and generations to come.*

We participated in in-depth Dialogues, sharing our personal lived experiences of gender inequality, analyzing the root causes of these experiences and coming up with recommendations on how to overcome these barriers to achieve gender equality. These Dialogues were foundational to this *Roadmap* and have directly shaped the recommendations presented within it. We have tried to uphold our diversity at every turn, so that this *Roadmap* is a true reflection of youth in Canada. We recognize that although we represent a large variety of identities, many voices are still missing from this conversation.

We would like to acknowledge that the work we are enacting is being done so on the shared, unceded treaty and territorial lands of the Indigenous peoples within Turtle Island. We wish for all Canadians to acknowledge at all times the unceded territory of Indigenous peoples on which they live, work and learn and to give gratitude to the people(s) of these lands that allow us to conduct this work and continue to strive for respecting the land and the people within it. Note that throughout this report, Indigenous peoples of Canada refers to First Nations, the Métis Nation and Inuit. Each consists of distinct, rights-bearing communities with their own histories. We are committed to acknowledging and working alongside Indigenous communities and values brought forward within this document.

**Everyone has a role to play. Together, we can drive and deliver change. We all must abandon practices that are discriminatory, oppressive, exclusive and negatively target marginalized communities, in the favour of equality, inclusion, empowerment, love and solidarity.**



*“Just wait and see what we can do. Power comes in unity and resilience, and these are both traits that youth possess.”*

**– Adriana, 21, Alberta**

<sup>2</sup> 'We' throughout this document refers to youth that participated in the Youth for Gender Equality project, as defined in this section. YGE participants include economically marginalized/homeless youth, Indigenous youth, refugees, newcomers, people of colour, youth with physical disabilities, members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, not-employed youth, youth with justice-system involvement, and youth with child welfare-system involvement, as well as youth who do not identify with any of these shared identities.

# INTRODUCTION

We imagine a world where the voice of every individual is heard amid the noise of growing inequality. This image has been under scrupulous review via a three-year initiative led by us, a passionate group of youth from throughout Canada.

In 2015, Canada committed to achieving a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030, alongside 192 other United Nations Member States via the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are 17 goals created by the United Nations (UN) to challenge countries to create fundamental changes to societies to make the world more equitable, prosperous and peaceful. These global goals focus on eradicating all forms of poverty and inequality, accelerating structural transformations and building resilience. By implementing these goals into our societies and world, there is a social and economic benefit for current and future generations. These goals offer a blueprint for peace and prosperity while creating an immediate call to action.

As a response, Plan International Canada partnered with the Canadian Teachers' Federation on Youth for Gender Equality (YGE). YGE is a groundbreaking initiative that engaged more than 300 youth in Canada to discuss and support the development and implementation of a *Youth-led Roadmap for Gender Equality*. YGE is unique in its 'for youth by youth' approach. Youth are directly affected and involved in the dynamics of these policy discussions. Who better to orient and frame them?

Since 2016, we, YGE youth throughout Canada, have committed to work on SDG 5, which focuses on achieving gender equality. We are devoted to challenging gender norms and gender inequality in our lives and communities. Upon the completion of 41 Dialogues, where we gathered to discuss our lived experiences with gender inequality, 27 youth representatives from our group of more than 300 gathered at a four-day youth-led Writers' Conference in March 2019. At the conference, with policy, gender and advocacy support and expertise from partner organizations, we focused on transforming narratives, dismantling heteronormative expectations, writing in non-binary language, and being inclusive of all identities. The result was more than 60 actions and recommendations we can take at all levels illustrating the pathways to achieve SDG 5 in Canada.<sup>3</sup> Each recommendation written was through an intersectional and gender-transformative lens while using a rights-based approach.

***Our Youth-led Roadmap for Gender Equality aims to engage people in Canada and around the world in the conversation about gender equality, the creation of inclusive and discrimination-free environments and to make safe spaces for all genders and identities.***

Studies show that half of all women in Canada have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence by the age of 16, and as of 2015, only seven of Canada's 10 provinces have elected at least one 2SLGBTQIA+ elected representative.<sup>4</sup> Statements similar to the latter are echoed throughout the data collected from the Dialogues and thus contribute to the urgency of the implementation of the *Roadmap* and creation of policies to create a more positive space for all.

Recognizing that within the SDGs, gender equality is both a standalone goal, and a cross-cutting target throughout all other goals, we looked at the gender equality issues most powerful in our lives in Canada. Here at home the targets across SDG 5 are relevant and important, as well as the target within SDG 4, the Education Goal, that looks at gender equality in education as a priority to create exponential change in Canada.

The purpose of this *Roadmap* is to raise awareness and take concrete action on gender-inequality issues, which include discrimination based on gender identity and expression, harmful norms and stereotypes, lack of resources and education related to reproductive health, and, importantly, issues facing Indigenous women and girls, 2SLGBTQIA+ and other marginalized communities. The following actions and recommendations incorporate the perspectives and experiences collected from the Dialogues and are based on the lived experiences of youth, ages 14 to 24, throughout Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Please refer to Annex 1 to learn more about the methodology.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Canadian Women's Foundation



“Youth-led organizations need to be encouraged and empowered to participate in translating the 2030 Agenda into local, national and regional policy. They play a significant role in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Agenda, as well as in holding governments accountable. With political commitment and adequate resources, young people have the potential to make the most effective transformation of the world into a better place for all.”

– Youth and the SDGs, United Nations

<b>TARGET 4.5</b>  ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS TO ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION FOR THE VULNERABLE	<b>TARGET 5.1</b>  END DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS	<b>TARGET 5.2</b>  END ALL VIOLENCE AGAINST AND EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS	<b>TARGET 5.3</b>  ELIMINATE FORCED MARRIAGES AND GENITAL MUTILATION	<b>TARGET 5.4</b>  VALUE UNPAID CARE AND PROMOTE SHARED DOMESTIC RESPONSIBILITIES
<b>TARGET 5.5</b>  ENSURE FULL PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING	<b>TARGET 5.6</b>  UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS	<b>TARGET 5.A</b>  EQUAL RIGHTS TO ECONOMIC RESOURCES, PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND FINANCIAL SERVICES	<b>TARGET 5.B</b>  PROMOTE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH TECHNOLOGY	<b>TARGET 5.C</b>  ADOPT AND STRENGTHEN POLICIES AND ENFORCEABLE LEGISLATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Credit: Above illustration inspired by graphics on [opendevelopmentmekong.com](http://opendevelopmentmekong.com)



## ROADMAP TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN CANADA

Youth for Gender Equality looked at what we can do right now as individuals in our own lives, within our families, own communities and our workplaces to challenge and change the harmful gender norms perpetuating inequality and violence in all its forms.

We have the power to achieve SDG 5 in Canada, but it requires everyone to examine our own assumptions and behaviours and make a clear commitment to fostering a culture of equality for all.

What follows are concrete actions we can take now, and are already taking, to set Canada down the path to success.

**We are calling on all people throughout Canada to join us in these commitments to see Canada become the first country in the world to realize the ambition of SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**

# OUR COMMITMENTS

As the youth architects of this *Roadmap*, we will commit to taking action and call on all individuals from coast-to-coast-to-coast to join us to:

1

Ensure that there's diverse representation, especially those from excluded identities, at all of our community events.

2

Educate ourselves and make an effort to educate others on matters regarding 2SLGBTQIA+ communities; obtain the knowledge and open-mindedness to be accepting.

11

Support friends and family discovering their gender identity.

12

Make an effort to make more friends that are part of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

13

Contribute to and support the implementation of gender-responsive and discrimination-free public policies.

3

Recognize and celebrate the diversity of all individuals, regardless of gender identity by creating an environment that is discrimination free for all persons.



4

Create opportunities for and empower all genders (binary and gender diverse) to pursue positions of power, authority, and leadership.

5

Act as allies, raise awareness for gender equality and fight gender inequality and gender-based violence.

14

Celebrate and take quantifiable, tangible action on International Women's Day (March 8th every year).



15

Promote Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs for women and girls.



7

Critically self-examine and evaluate our own personal assumptions and biases on a daily basis in order to recognize and challenge harmful social norms ingrained in our thinking and behaviour.



17

Always acknowledge the shared and unceded territory of Indigenous peoples on which they live, work and learn and to give gratitude to the people(s) of these lands that allow us to conduct this work and continue to strive for respecting the land and the people within it.

18

View it as our duty to create a classroom, school, and curriculum that ensures informative sexual education and celebrates gender equality.



6

Recognize and address the bias against teen mothers and fathers and work to see that they are not excluded.

16

Step up in our own homes and communities to share the burden of domestic work equally for all genders.

8

Change the way we talk/react to situations involving sexual assault.

9

Pay attention and positively respond to #metoo and #believeher.

10

Recognize the intersectionality of a person's identity and that of others.

19

Support non-profit organizations that deliver programming that addresses gender-based violence.



20

Just say "no" by calling out and reporting all forms of discrimination.

# OUR CALL TO ACTION

Moving forward from the commitments we can make right now, we are calling on decision-makers at all levels of government and across sectors to take concerted action to achieve the targets and indicators related to SDG 5 in Canada by 2030. The recommendations below will help to achieve the intersecting targets on gender equality throughout the Sustainable Development Goals.

Many of the targets in themselves include binary language, which we, Youth for Gender Equality participants, reject. Instead, our recommendations encourage the use of language and actions that are inclusive of all gender identities to ensure that, as we work to end discrimination in Canada, we leave no one behind. We also recognize, however, that issues of discrimination specific to those who identify as women and girls remain urgent. Our goal is to highlight and address these issues while also recognizing inequalities that impact people who are marginalized based on their gender.

We also know that the targets of the SDGs are interdependent and mutually reinforcing – many of our recommendations will help achieve more than one target at once. Within our Dialogues, a number of key issues emerged as priorities to end all forms of gender discrimination in Canada.



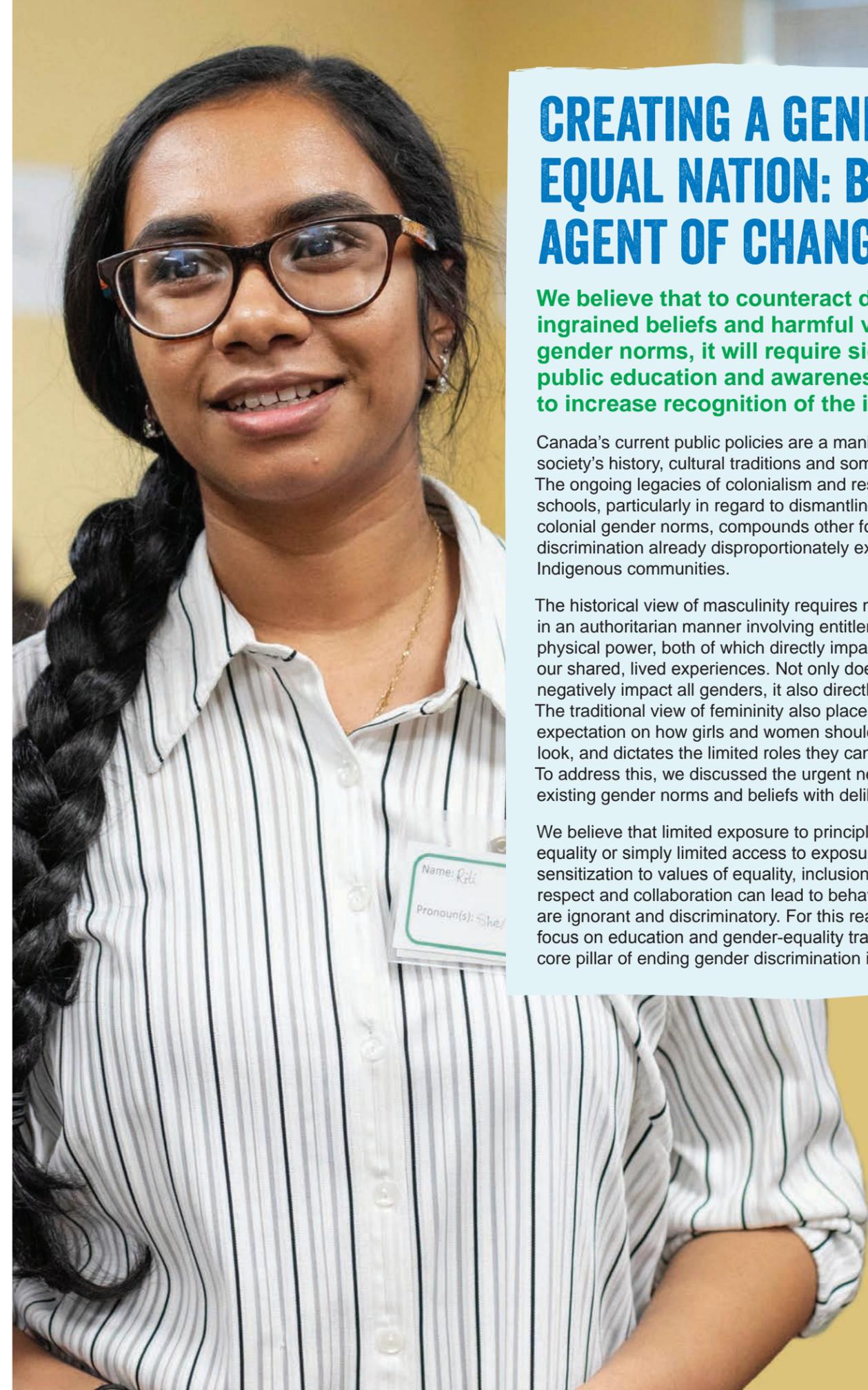
## CREATING A GENDER-EQUAL NATION: BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE

**We believe that to counteract deeply ingrained beliefs and harmful views of gender norms, it will require significant public education and awareness building to increase recognition of the issue.**

Canada's current public policies are a manifestation of our society's history, cultural traditions and sometimes religion. The ongoing legacies of colonialism and residential schools, particularly in regard to dismantling and imposing colonial gender norms, compounds other forms of discrimination already disproportionately experienced by Indigenous communities.

The historical view of masculinity requires men to behave in an authoritarian manner involving entitlement and physical power, both of which directly impact many of our shared, lived experiences. Not only does this view negatively impact all genders, it also directly impacts men. The traditional view of femininity also places a narrow expectation on how girls and women should behave and look, and dictates the limited roles they can play in society. To address this, we discussed the urgent need to confront existing gender norms and beliefs with deliberate intention.

We believe that limited exposure to principles of gender equality or simply limited access to exposure and sensitization to values of equality, inclusion, mutual respect and collaboration can lead to behaviours that are ignorant and discriminatory. For this reason, we focus on education and gender-equality training as a core pillar of ending gender discrimination in Canada.



Riti, 17,  
Saskatchewan

## Educate and train those in power

### We call on:

21. The Federal Department of Women and Gender-Equality to fund and promote gender equality training for community leaders in all provinces and territories.
22. All levels of government, school boards, and community organizations to audit and amend any public facing forms to be gender inclusive.
23. All levels of government to ensure that public spaces install gender-inclusive washrooms.
24. The federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to implement gender-equality training for all levels of law enforcement, with a special focus on experiences of Indigenous peoples, sexual assault survivors, people of colour, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and to ensure that law-enforcement personnel are held accountable for discriminatory attitudes and actions.
25. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to mandate an annual renewal of gender-equality training for all media personnel.
26. Community leaders (including religious leaders, Indigenous leaders, teachers, parents/caregivers, and youth) to be supported to initiate open conversations about gender equality (via dialogues and information packages) within their communities.
27. Provincial and territorial human rights commissions to be appropriately funded to raise awareness on the harm of discriminatory hiring practices and be supported with full capacity to address cases.
28. Provincial and territorial labour ministries to end the practice of unpaid internships, which discriminate against the financially insecure, in particular, women, girls and non-binary genders.
29. All employers to implement gender-equality and intersectionality training for executives, human resource employees and hiring managers.



“If we don’t have stakeholders, like politicians, fighting for this issue, then we’re not having this conversation in the most effective way. We need political leaders to step up and represent their countries or their jurisdictions and really fight for what the people want.”

– *Elyssa, 16, Ontario*

# 71¢



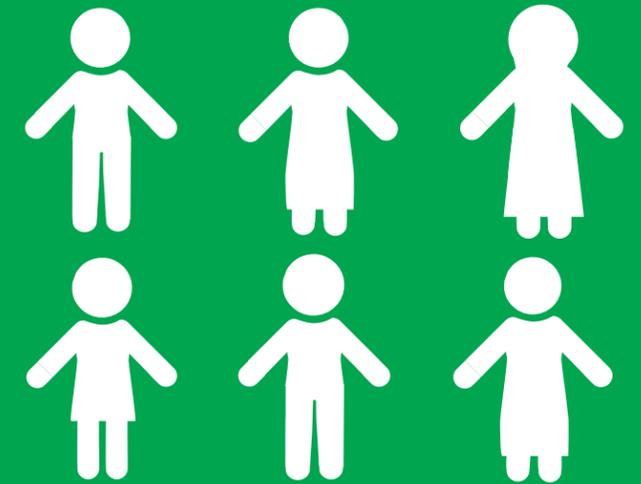
THE AVERAGE AMOUNT EARNED  
by FULL-TIME WORKING WOMEN  
IN CANADA for every  
DOLLAR EARNED BY A MAN

Source: statcan.ca

## CANADIAN WOMEN ARE

# 6X MORE LIKELY

to say they feel  
**LESS THAN EQUAL** to their  
**MALE COUNTERPARTS**



Source: Girls to Womanhood – A Look at Gender Equality in Canada; Plan International Canada

## End gender discrimination in sport

### We call on:

30. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to increase the coverage and promotion of women’s sports to a more equitable level.
31. Provincial sports associations to end discriminatory policies on sports uniforms and equipment.
32. Municipalities, Tribal Chiefs and Councils, Band Councils, as well as Elected and Hereditary Chiefs throughout Canada to fund and promote sports and fitness programs led by people who identify as women, non-binary or Two Spirited, to encourage more participation by marginalized groups.



Youth for Gender Equality Writers' Conference  
March 2019, Ottawa, Ontario

# STEPPING UP FOR SURVIVORS: PUTTING AN END TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Ending gender-based violence needs to be a top priority for everyone.

We believe that gender-based violence stems from the traditional and harmful view of masculinity that conditions men to behave in an authoritarian manner, with entitlement and physical power. The traditional view of femininity also imposes barriers against women to speak out or act against gender violence in their own lives.

We acknowledge the Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirited people who have lost their lives, as well as the families, friends and communities who are impacted by this epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The issue of violence for Indigenous communities is constructed from the ongoing legacies of colonialism and residential schools, and we strive to bring awareness and continue to fight against these acts with action today.

While many efforts are already underway to address gender-based violence in Canada, we see a need for more support and resources to assist survivors of all gender identities and an urgent need to prioritize the health of Indigenous communities in particular. We also see a need to ensure that support for young people is consistent from prevention to survivorship through to reintegration into society and building healthy relationships.

Andrew, 21, Alberta



“We can’t have gender equality without having respect to the land. As Indigenous people, that’s our mother, that’s our creator, that’s where we come from – and you can’t have one without the other.”

– Maddi, 24, Alberta

## Prioritize Indigenous health and step up support for survivors

We call on:

33. All levels of government to implement adequate culturally appropriate health facilities and services within existing healthcare systems, to prevent unethical reproductive care and provide adequate options for both traditional Indigenous and western medicine.
34. All levels of government to implement Indigenous-led, culturally competent help centres for survivors of violence to rehabilitate back into society and provide care for youth survivors.
35. Municipalities, Tribal Chiefs and Councils, Band Councils, as well as Elected and Hereditary Chiefs throughout Canada to develop 2SLGBTQIA+ oriented support groups and resources for survivors of gender-based violence and intimate-partner violence.

## Ensure no survivor is turned away

We call on:

36. All levels of government to implement transitional housing specifically for 18 and 19-year-old youth who are aging out of the foster-care and judicial systems.
37. Ministries of community and social services to allocate funding to increase the number of shelters and housing-support programs for victims fleeing domestic violence, so that no victim gets turned away from accessing safety, and so that they have access to proper housing after leaving shelter services. This recommendation is in light of the fact that half of the women in Canada have experienced at least one incident of physical and sexual violence by the age of 16.
38. The Ministry of Community and Social Services, Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services and the Manitoba Ministry of Family to introduce and implement support programs for victims who leave shelters, so that survivors have proper housing after leaving these services. This recommendation is in light of the fact that Saskatchewan and Manitoba have consistently recorded the highest provincial rates of police-reported violent crime.



# EDUCATE TO EMPOWER: SETTING A NEW STANDARD FOR INCLUSIVITY IN EDUCATION

Gender inequality is rooted in our society's culture, traditions and norms. To tackle these deeply ingrained practices and perceptions, we ourselves are the next generation of change agents that need to be equipped to rise to the task.

To this end, we see reform of the education system as a key priority to systematically build gender-equality awareness and tools for empowerment.

Yet the responsibility does not end there.

We also recognize the need for self-accountability – to “be the change we want to see” – by not letting traditional societal perceptions/beliefs define oneself and being more receptive to alternative, challenging points of view.



Rohan, 20, Ontario

## Revise curriculums to be gender equal

### We call on:

39. The Government of Canada to provide accessible resources for people in Canada to learn about gender equality and how to dismantle harmful gender norms, stereotypes and practices in their lives.
40. Ministries of education to ensure schools integrate a gender-equality lens to all curriculums and courses including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), English, social studies and history.
41. The Council of Ministers of Education to gather data on gender inequality in schools and ensure gender analysis of all curricula.
42. Ministries of education to revise reading lists and literature in courses to be written by diverse authors and include all narratives, especially female, Indigenous and non-binary narratives.

## Include diverse voices and narratives

### We call on:

43. Provincial and territorial governments to ensure that school boards include youth representation and are tasked with promoting gender equality in schools. Youth voices must be included in decision-making and boards should ensure that all schools are positive spaces for all genders.
44. Canadian post-secondary institutions to integrate mandatory gender-equality training module/session into journalism programs.

ALMOST  
**64%** OF 2SLGBTQIA+ STUDENTS  
& **61%** OF STUDENTS WITH 2SLGBTQIA+ PARENTS  
REPORTED THAT  
THEY FEEL  
UNSAFE AT  
SCHOOL



Source: Every Class in Every School

CHILDREN DEVELOP  
A SENSE OF  
GENDER  
IDENTITY  
BY THE AGE OF  
**2 OR 3**

Source: Diane Ehrensaft, author of "Gender Born, Gender Made." (tolerance.org)

## Teach comprehensive sex-ed and support sexual and reproductive rights

### We call on:

45. The Council of Ministers of Education to initiate the creation of a nationwide, sexual-health curriculum that explicitly includes consent, acknowledgement of different forms of gender-based violence and harassment, dismantling heterosexist norms, content on the topic of sexual and reproductive health for members of minority groups, such as those that identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, Indigenous, disabled, newcomers and those who are vulnerable to STIs, including HIV/AIDS. This curriculum is to be taught from primary ages.
46. Provincial ministries and departments responsible for K–12 education and Post-Secondary Education Training (PSET) to ensure schools have an educator specialized in sexual education.
47. Provincial ministries and departments responsible for K–12 education and PSET to ensure that all educators are informed about sexual and reproductive health rights, gender-based violence, and discrimination pertaining specifically to people of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and sexual-assault survivors. Gender-equality training should be implemented through Professional Development days (PD days) and teacher-education courses.
48. Health ministries to ensure that adolescent-friendly health services are provided across provinces and territories and that services are accessible, non-judgmental and supportive of adolescent parents.



Vaidehee, Jo & Jenn,  
Youth for Gender Equality Writers' Conference,  
March 2019, Ottawa, Ontario



“I’m a scientist. I’m also a female, a person of colour and an immigrant. All of those parts of my identity affect the opportunities and access that I, and so many other people, have to STEM and those fields”

– Vaidehee, 18, Saskatchewan

## Ensure schools have the resources to address gender-based violence

### We call on:

49. Provincial and territorial governments and school systems in Canada to create protocols in educational institutions, on gender-based violence and harassment in schools. The goal is to make schools a safe space for all genders and ensure there is support for survivors and consequences for the perpetrators.
50. Ministries of education to ensure schools provide accessible resources, such as peer-to-peer groups where students can be trained on gender equality, sexual health, healthy relationships, and gender violence, to educate their peers and create a support network of gender-equality-educated students.

## NEW VOICES AT THE FOREFRONT: EQUITABLE SPACES FOR ALL

In our discussions of our lived experiences, we noted that women and people with gender diverse identities have historically been excluded from leadership opportunities in Canada due to a fixed and harmful view of gender norms.

This means limited role models for young people, particularly leaders that have and are confronting existing norms and practices.

We see a need to create more safe spaces for youth leadership, inclusive of all gender identities, as well as recognize that young people need greater support to break traditional molds and play more than one role at once.

## Create safe spaces for youth leadership, especially for Indigenous youth

### We call on:

- 51. All levels of government to include meaningful opportunities for youth to be consulted and actively participate in policy decision-making processes.
- 52. Provincial and territorial Ministries of Indigenous Affairs, Tribal Chiefs and Councils, Band Councils, as well as Elected and Hereditary Chiefs to fund youth leadership conferences in Indigenous communities.
- 53. Provincial and territorial Ministries of Indigenous Affairs, Tribal Chiefs and Councils, Band Councils, as well as Elected and Hereditary Chiefs to support the creation of youth councils who meaningfully input and participate in decision making.
- 54. Provincial ministries of education to support and fund educational visits and exchanges between youth on reserves and non-Indigenous youth.

## Equality and support for young parents

### We call on:

- 55. The Government of Canada to implement a national strategy for affordable, accessible and quality childcare.
- 56. Provincial and territorial governments to fund community-based programs for new parents to encourage equitable parental involvement in childcare.
- 57. Municipalities, Tribal Chiefs and Councils, Band Councils, as well as Elected and Hereditary Chiefs throughout Canada to fund, support and promote father-to-father groups for new and expectant fathers to become empowered in their role as equally valued parents.



“Gender inequality was something I witnessed... somebody was reduced to tears because the teacher encouraged her to not go into a particular field of study when she shared her career interests. It struck home because my parents always told me that I could be whatever I want to be, and I didn’t understand why it didn’t apply to her.”

– Pablo, 19, Ontario

As of 2015, only 7 OF CANADA’S 10 PROVINCES had elected at least ONE 2SLGBTQIA+ MP TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS or had an LGBT SENATOR APPOINTED FROM THEIR PROVINCE

Source: Canadian Women’s Foundation



# SAFE TO THRIVE: EQUALITY ON THE JOB

**Our society's beliefs and practices influence where and how we work. This influence spans hiring practices and dress codes to compensation and opportunities for advancement.**

For young people in particular, unpaid internships are of serious concern and have important gender implications. Un(der)paid internships are inherently exclusionary and exploitative. They are not only upholding a system of inequality; they are further entrenching it.

Young people are working evenings and weekends, lack formal access to sexual-harassment investigation procedures and conflict-resolution mechanisms and are often explicitly excluded from policies that protect the rights of employees and their interests.

Mesgna, 17, Manitoba



“Gender inequality for me exists at all levels. At the social level, whether in everyday life, in the workplace or even at school. It’s programmed in people’s minds even unconsciously. For me, it is something to change, so that everyone feels that they have a place in society”.

– Romaisaa, 16, Québec

JUST  
**8.5%**  
of the highest-paid  
positions in  
**CANADA'S TOP 100**  
LISTED COMPANIES ARE  
**HELD BY WOMEN**

Source: statcan.ca

## Ensure our workplaces are free from discrimination and harassment

### We call on:

58. Federal, provincial and territorial governments to ensure that existing anti-harassment policies are implemented, properly funded and include effective monitoring and evaluation.
  - b. The federal government in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, should launch a Canada-wide, public-awareness campaign about anti-harassment policy, legislation and complaints processes.
59. Federal, provincial and territorial labour ministries to scale up innovative pilot programmes to address discriminatory hiring practices.
60. All provincial and territorial governments to maintain and appropriately resource offices of the Child and Youth Advocates to support the rights of vulnerable youth, call out discriminatory policies and ensure implementation of services relevant to workplaces and other contexts.

## Close the wage gap and grant equal pay for equal work

### We call on:

61. Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador and British Columbia provincial governments to implement pay-equity legislation. These provincial jurisdictions currently do not have pay-equity legislation.
62. All ministries of labour to ensure pay equity for all people (i.e., not limited to a binary-gender view), noting that special attention must be paid to the intersectional experience of women, Indigenous, people of colour, ability and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

## No work for no pay

### We call on:

63. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), the Ministry of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour and equivalent provincial bodies to eliminate unpaid internships, and monitor and ensure fair pay for work within all sectors, particularly due to internships' disproportionate impact on girls and women.
64. All municipal governments to support community-based organizations to implement a community program, “Know Your Worth,” that educates youth on how to negotiate pay in the workplace and employment rights and resources and how to navigate harassment, bullying and violence in the workplace.



Youth for Gender Equality Writers' Conference  
March 2019, Ottawa, Ontario

## CONCLUSION

**The overall purpose of this Roadmap is to engage youth, all levels of government, stakeholders and all people throughout Canada to join the conversation on gender equality.**

Our goal is to mobilize individuals throughout Canada to create change within their own communities for the betterment of our country and world. This *Roadmap* strives to ensure all commitments and recommendations reflect the lived experience of various identities in Canada. The aim is to leave no one behind on our journey to equality, prosperity and peace on a national and global scale. Through our power as young people, pathways for change have been identified and outlined for future generations to continue fighting for more equitable spaces for people of all identities.

***This project calls on everyone to implement these recommendations into their lives and to be accountable for their actions. By calling on individuals, communities, government officials and institutions, these recommendations will act as a Roadmap to reach the SDG 5 goal of gender equality by 2030.***

It is the duty of all people to incorporate gender-inclusive practices into various aspects of their lives and apply an intersectional lens to their actions and conversations. It is crucial that each person takes responsibility for their role in achieving gender equality and more equitable spaces across all walks of life.

It is the responsibility of government officials and stakeholders to co-create lasting policy that reflects and includes the wide variety of identities that make up Canada. It is only by including all those who face oppression and discrimination in the process of decision-making that we will achieve deeper solutions to these complex issues that address root causes.

This *Roadmap* recognizes the intersectionality of the SDGs and how gender equality is crucial to achieving the other 16 goals. It also proposes transformative change that will need to be implemented in the years leading up to the 2030 Agenda as a way for Canada to not just achieve gender equality to also achieve each and every Sustainable Development Goal.

By doing so, all sectors, public and private, in Canada will improve through the realization of rights among marginalized communities and the understanding of the power of unity among all people.

Together, we each must abandon practices that are discriminatory, oppressive, exclusive and that target marginalized communities in the favour of equality, inclusion, empowerment, love and solidarity. This report is a testament to the power of human connection and one's capacity for change. We call on all levels of government, stakeholders, the private sector, communities, institutions and individuals to stand in solidarity with each other in reaching SDG 5 and creating a better and more inclusive world.



“We’re here, we’re educated, we’re powerful, we’re informed, and we want to make a change. We’re directly involved with these policies.”

– Katherine, 17,  
Newfoundland  
and Labrador

# ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY

## ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY

### BACKGROUND

Youth for Gender Equality (YGE) is a three-year initiative co-led by Plan International Canada and the Canadian Teachers' Federation that engages youth throughout Canada to convene and discuss how to spearhead progress towards SDG 5, gender equality.

YGE works with partners and Members of Parliament from coast-to-coast-to-coast to unite young people, of all gender identities between the ages of 14 and 24, in conversations on how to create an equitable society for people of all genders, abilities and races, reflecting the values of reconciliation.

In recognition of the critical role that all gender identities play in achieving gender equality, YGE seeks active engagement and participation of youth of all genders as agents of change themselves.



# ROADMAP CREATION PROCESS

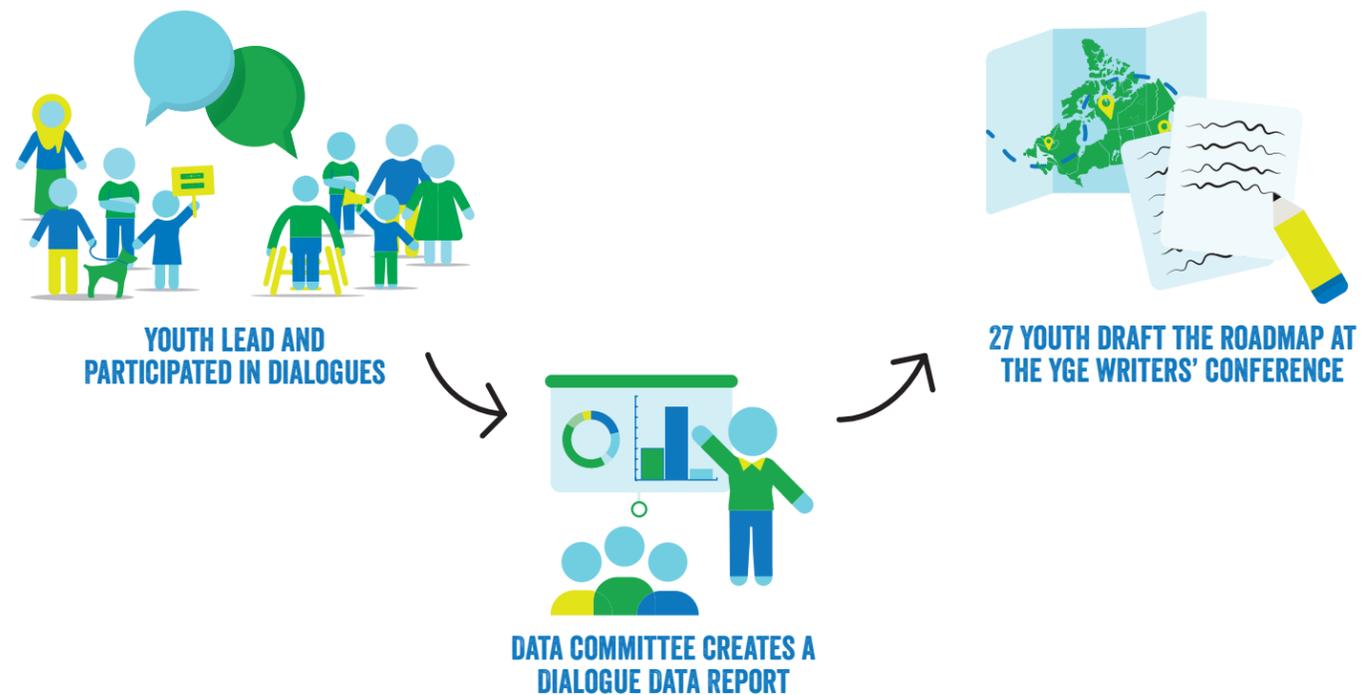
The overarching goal of YGE is to support the development and implementation of a *Youth-led Roadmap for Gender Equality*, including recommendations at the global, national and local levels. In achieving this goal, YGE facilitated national, youth-led Dialogues that engaged more than 300 youth of all gender identities in conversations on how to achieve the UN SDG 5 and targets, both in Canada and abroad.

Each Dialogue was facilitated by a young person and consisted of structured activities that allowed participants to critically examine how gender has impacted their own lives. These young people were provided with a support staff, training guide and two online training sessions that were co-developed by Plan International Canada's Youth Advisory Council. The first training outlined how to facilitate a Dialogue and capture notes from discussions and the second on gender equality.

Within each two-hour Dialogue, youth participants shared their personal lived experiences of gender inequality, analyzed the root causes of these experiences and were challenged to come up with recommendations on how to overcome these barriers in order to achieve gender equality. Participants were then tasked to prioritize their recommendations to those they felt were most pressing and needed to be implemented now, and those they felt were most impactful on achieving gender equality.

**Data from these Dialogues was compiled and validated by a youth data committee, and in turn used to inform the development of the Roadmap. The data committee, including both data experts and YGE youth participants, created a Dialogue Data Report, which acted as the foundation to drafting recommendations for the Roadmap.**

The *Roadmap* itself was drafted by a group of 27 youth Dialogue facilitators during the YGE Writers' Conference, a four-day conference, where participants were involved in trainings that enabled them to apply an intersectional, anti-colonial, gender-transformative lens when drafting recommendations found in this *Roadmap*. Writers' Conference participants continued to write, refine, consult and review this *Roadmap* until it was complete.



# YOUTH REPRESENTATION

To ensure that the recommendations formed were reflective of the experiences of youth in Canada, YGE took a purposive sampling approach<sup>5</sup> that involved creating ten overarching strata, as well as other types of groupings that considered provinces/territories, community sizes, age groups, language and gender identities.

**These various categories then informed the engagement strategy for YGE to ensure young people throughout Canada who were most significantly affected by gender- inequality issues were in the forefront of creating this Roadmap.**

The shared identities of youth participants included the groups listed below, as these young people were most adversely affected by gender inequality, based on census data and other research publications.

Youth engaged in YGE include economically marginalized/homeless youth, Indigenous youth, refugees, newcomers, young people of colour, youth with physical disabilities, members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, not-employed youth, youth with justice-system involvement and youth with child-welfare-system involvement. There were also Dialogues including youth with no common identity, who do not necessarily fall into one of these shared identities. With the support of our network of partners throughout Canada, YGE made an effort to engage young people in Dialogues, ensuring voices of youth from shared identities and all gender identities, community types (remote, rural and urban): ages (14–24 years old), languages (francophone and anglophone) from all provinces and territories actively participated in the YGE Dialogues. Through this intentionality, YGE was able to hear the voices and stories of young people who are more adversely impacted by gender inequality and to amplify their voices in this *Roadmap*.



<sup>5</sup> Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling approach used in qualitative research. It was chosen in order to provide information-rich cases for in-depth study, recruiting participants with the required knowledge or lived experience to respond to the Youth for Gender Equality Dialogue questions.

# ANNEX 2: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## ANNEX 2: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### 2SLGBTQIA+

This includes those who identify as Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual. This term can be used by a community to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to sex, gender or attraction (as with the term Queer).

### Anti-colonial

Opposed to colonial rule of one country or territory by another; opposing or resisting colonialism.

### Bias

The action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing personal opinions, values and attitudes to influence judgment.

### Bisexual

A person who experiences attraction to both men and women. Some bisexual people use this term to express attraction to both their own sex and/or gender, as well as to people of a different sex and/or gender.

### Dialogue

A structured, two-hour, youth-facilitated conversation among peers during which participants engage in a number of activities that explore gender equality. Within each Dialogue, youth share their personal lived experiences of issues relating to gender inequality, analyze the root causes of those experiences and create multi-faceted solutions on how to overcome barriers to achieving gender equality.

### Discrimination

The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex or other characteristics.

### Empowerment

Empowerment is about agency – the ability to make choices and act on those choices. Empowerment of all people is essential to achieving gender equality. Empowerment is both a process and an outcome. Only people can empower themselves. But institutions can support empowering processes both at the individual and collective levels.

### Equitable

Being equitable is the deliberate process of being fair in order to produce equal and measurable outcomes.

### Gay

A person who experiences attraction to people of the same sex and/or gender – gay may include both male-identified individuals and female-identified individuals, or refer to male-identified individuals only.

### Gender

For the purpose of this report, gender is defined as: the socially constructed characteristics often based on assigned sex of persons – including the norms, roles, behaviours, activities, attributes and relationships that exist between them. In many contexts, this takes the form of a binary classification of either 'man' or 'woman'. Inherent in the examination of gender is the need to recognize power differentials.

## Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence can be defined as a structural problem that is deeply embedded in unequal power relationships between genders and disproportionately affects women and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Different forms of gender-based violence, including physical violence, sexual violence, psychological or emotional violence, and economic violence, affect individuals throughout their life.

## Gender binary

The socially ascribed notion that there are only two genders, male and female, and that masculinity is reserved for men and femininity is reserved for women.

## Gender diverse

An umbrella term for gender identities and/or gender expressions that differ from cultural or societal expectations based on assigned sex.

## Gender equality

Gender equality is a rights-based approach. It means that, regardless of gender, across the life-course and in all their diversity, individuals have equal opportunities and outcomes in realizing their full rights and potential. Achieving gender equality requires specific measures designed to eliminate gender inequalities and biases.

## Gender identity

A person's internal and individual experience of gender. This could include an internal sense of being a man, woman, both, neither, or another gender entirely. A person's gender may or may not correspond with social expectations associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Since gender identity is internal, it is not necessarily visible to others.

## Gender norms

Gender norms are ideas about how one should be and act based on their assigned sex.

## Gender-transformative approach

Programs and interventions that create opportunities for individuals to actively engage in systemic change, including changing gender norms and stereotypes. Gender-transformative approaches tackle the root causes of inequality that block individuals from realizing their rights and achieving their full potential.

## Gender wage gap

The gender wage gap is the difference in earnings between women and men in the workplace. It is a widely recognized indicator of women's economic equality.

## Heteronormative

Of, relating to, or based on the attitude that heterosexuality is the only normal and natural expression of sexuality.

## Heterosexuality

The quality or characteristic of being sexually attracted solely to people of the opposite sex.

## Human Rights-Based Approach

A human rights-based approach acknowledges international human-rights standards and promotes and protects human rights. For young people, a rights-based approach would mean youth agency is strengthened in decision-making processes to reduce unequal power dynamics by enabling their voices to be heard, encouraging participation and by creating systems that are respectful and responsive to their needs.

## Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of gender, race, ethnicity, class, income, education, occupation, disability, caste and other status which create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and inequality that give rise to exclusion and subordination.

## Intersex

Refers to variations in chromosomal, hormonal or anatomical sex characteristics that are outside of medically or socially constructed classifications of male or female.

## Marginalized

Someone or something that is treated as if they are not important.

## Non-binary

Relating to or being a person who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that is neither entirely male nor entirely female.

## Poverty

The lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods and to address hunger, malnutrition and ill health; the limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and cultural life. Poverty occurs in all countries.

## Root cause

The fundamental reason for the occurrence of a problem.

## Sex/Assigned Sex

The classification of a person as male, female or intersex based on biological characteristics, including chromosomes, hormones, external genitalia and reproductive organs. Most often, sex is assigned by a medical professional at birth and is based on a visual assessment of external genitalia.

## Stakeholder

A stakeholder is anybody who can affect or is affected by an organization, strategy or project. They can be internal or external, and they can be at senior or junior levels.

## Survivor

Often used to refer to someone who is healing and beginning to cope with the trauma they have experienced.

## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A set of 17 global goals that cover a broad range of social issues, such as poverty, hunger, health, education, climate change, gender equality and social justice. The SDGs are officially known as "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." They are a commitment made through the United Nations from global leaders to address inequalities that exist in the world.

## Transgender

A person who does not identify either fully or in part with the gender associated with the sex assigned to them at birth – often used as an umbrella term to represent a wide range of gender identities and expressions.

## Transitional Housing

Transitional housing can be broadly defined as the provision of affordable, temporary housing paired with a mix of appropriate supportive services. The goal of these services is to facilitate an individual's movement to permanent, stable housing and independent living.

## Turtle Island

For some Indigenous peoples, Turtle Island refers to the continent of North America. The name comes from various Indigenous oral histories that tell stories of a turtle that holds the world on its back.

## Two-Spirit (or 2-Spirit)

An English umbrella term that reflects the many words used in different Indigenous languages to affirm the interrelatedness of multiple aspects of identity – including gender, sexuality, community, culture and spirituality. Many Indigenous cultures recognize Two-Spirit people as respected members of their communities. Two-Spirit people are often accorded special status based upon their unique abilities to understand and move between masculine and feminine perspectives, acting as visionaries, healers, and medicine people. Some Indigenous peoples identify as Two-Spirit rather than, or in addition to, identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer.

## United Nations

An international organization founded in 1945 that can take action on issues confronting humanity in the 21st century, such as peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, human rights, disarmament, terrorism, humanitarian and health emergencies, gender equality, governance, food production and more.

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