



## Canadians Are Back(ed)!

### Government Announces Renewed Partnership with Canadians on Global Cooperation

May 10, 2017

**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

Minister of International Cooperation and La Francophonie Marie Claude Bibeau announced a new \$100 million fund for small and medium-sized organizations at the Canadian Council for International Cooperation's Global Impact Soirée on 9 May 2017. This comes after almost three years of discussions with the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation (ICN), and CCIC. The Councils, who represent close to 400 civil society organizations from coast to coast to coast, wholeheartedly welcome the announcement, which expresses and bolsters support for Canadians working on issues of poverty, sustainability, and human rights in a global context.

"Canada made a strong statement about our role in the world today," remarked Michèle Asselin, Executive Director of l'Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale. "From a feminist perspective we have a lot to offer internationally, to help transform the lives of women and girls."

"This funding will empower Canadians from all regions of our country to deepen partnerships and scale up innovative efforts to help women and girls realize their rights, and to help communities address the most significant issues of our generation, like climate change," concurs Kimberly Gibbons, Executive Director of the Ontario Council for International Cooperation.

The five-year, \$100 million fund will be made available to small and medium-sized organizations using a two-pillared approach, one for responsive programming, and one for innovation to test ideas that resolve specific development challenges, particularly for initiatives that would support women and girls. It will use the existing expertise of Canadian NGOs that will be encouraged to share their best practices and work together.

Dr. Zephania Matanga, Executive Director of the Canadian Multicultural Disability Center, a small-sized organization, and member of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC), offers his congratulations to Minister Bibeau on providing a wonderful opportunity for small organizations to access resources to participate in the development of marginalized communities. "In Zimbabwe we could provide additional resources for education and healthcare for people with disabilities in rural areas," states Dr. Matanga. "This will also enable the diaspora to participate in international cooperation." According to the MCIC's Executive Director, Janice Hamilton, "We know from research and experience that Canadians, through small and medium-sized organizations, have strong ties to their local partners overseas, as well as their own communities in Canada. They not only support the local communities to have access to water and sanitation in Cambodia, to improve maternal health in Afghanistan, and to assist farmers in Peru adapt to climate change, among others, but also share these stories and successes with their fellow Canadians."

**The Inter-Council Network (ICN) is a dynamic coalition of the eight provincial and regional member-based Councils for International Cooperation across Canada committed to social justice and social change.**

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“It is a proud moment,” affirmed Janice, “and proof that government is taking a thoughtful, proactive yet timely approach to change. It is concrete proof behind the claim that *Canada is back*,” she concluded.

For more information on this initiative and the work of the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils (ICN) please contact:

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