

WHERE CANADA STANDS

A Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report

In *Where Canada Stands*, BCCIC evaluates Canada's progress on the seven UN Sustainable Development Goals under review at the 2017 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). Although Canada is not submitting a Voluntary National Review (VNR) this year, the report provides a civil society perspective on how Canada is doing, how we can improve, and where we need to adjust indicators to a Canadian context to facilitate future VNRs. *Where Canada Stands* compiles factsheets, expert interviews, and case studies.

Key Challenges

Relative to the global context, Canada does well the SDGs, ranking 13th out of 149 countries in the 2016 SDG Index. However, indicators better able to capture the diversity of experiences within the Canadian context show that Canada has a long way to go before it can claim that "no one is left behind."

There are 4.9 million people in Canada living in poverty. As of 2012, more than 4 million people lived in households that experience food insecurity, which led to higher rates of chronic disease. In recent years, outcomes related to violence against women and women's economic participation have not improved substantially. Canadian infrastructure is also aging and needs to be replaced with sustainable infrastructure, while Canada has achieved only 1% of

the 10% target of conserving coastal and marine areas. Further, Canada has been criticized for human rights violations toward 1.4 million Indigenous People. The average Indigenous person lags behind the average non-Indigenous Canadian on almost every SDG outcome, a product of colonialism. The Canadian government should expediently implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the UN Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Moving Forward: Policy and Indicators

Many of the experts we interviewed expressed a feeling of cautious optimism to achieving the goals. They recognize the progressive commitments of the Trudeau government to develop new national policies directly addressing poverty, food systems, housing, infrastructure, gender-based violence, and sustainable development.

In order to continue moving forward, we urge the federal government to create a comprehensive strategy to measure Canada's progress on the SDGs that includes a sound monitoring and evaluation framework and incorporates qualitative and quantitative indicators. We cannot allow our relative success on globally-scaled measures drive us to complacency on the very real social, economic, and environmental challenges facing millions of Canadians.



Cross-cutting Themes



Indigenous Communities

Canada must build true nation-to-nation relationships between the Federal government and First Nations, affirming self-governance structures for community-led change.



Youth

Youth must be recognized as a vulnerable population and their voices universally included in decision-making.



Environment

All levels of government must consider the climate impacts of each policy to ensure long-term resiliency and sustainability.

Goal 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere

- Frame poverty and homelessness as human rights issues, including in the upcoming national Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- Introduce an integrated, multi-departmental approach that addresses the multiple causes of homelessness
- Work together to ensure the self-determination of First Nations by recognizing their unique histories and implementing full legal rights based on localized systems.

Goal 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

- Integrate food insecurity reduction targets into all new social policies, including the upcoming Poverty Reduction Strategy and National Food Policy.
- Prioritize funding for equitable social assistance over funding expansions to food banks.
- Use sustainable agriculture to mitigate climate change by reducing emissions, sequestering carbon, managing carbon pricing, and ensuring continued access to global markets.

Goal 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- Monitor healthcare improvement by measuring the social determinants of health, such as poverty rates, the GINI coefficient, housing inadequacy, security and environmental data.
- Incorporate coverage for dental care, vision services and prescription drugs into the medicare system.
- Provide equitable investment in public and primary health care for First Nations people on-reserve to meet provincial standards.

Goal 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- Implement a national childcare policy to provide affordable and adequate childcare to families.
- Increase funding to Status of Women Canada to 1% of total federal program spending.
- Improve data collection of self-reported violence against women at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels.

Goal 9 - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

- Continue to make long-term funding resources available to municipalities for comprehensive planning.
- Upgrade standards for infrastructure, while maintaining flexibility such that Canadian cities can control decision-making, and disseminate information about these standards.
- Follow through on commitments to improve infrastructure on First Nations reserves, including ending the more than 130 boil-water advisories currently in place.

Goal 14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

- Develop and enforce stronger regulatory frameworks to ensure that deep sea resource exploration and extraction occurs in an environmentally responsible way.
- Increase investment in data collection to allow the federal government to establish habitat-appropriate indicators for monitoring ocean health.
- Ensure access to marine resources for indigenous communities that does not conflict with indigenous value systems and management practices

Goal 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

- Implement a ten year timetable to expand Overseas Development Assistance to 0.7% of GNI.
- develop a robust set of Canada-specific SDG indicators that will disaggregate regional and demographic results to fully understand who is being left behind on the SDGs.
- Create cross-sectoral and -departmental partnerships to build policy surrounding the SDGs