

Action Coalition 1: Gender-Based Violence

The key priorities and actions outlined in this document are based on extensive discussions within the Action Coalition 1: Gender-Based Violence Working Group of the B+25 Network. For the Beijing +25 review, there are six Action Coalitions centring on critical areas for women's rights and gender equality: Gender-Based Violence, Economic Justice and Rights, Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Feminist Action for Climate Justice, Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality, and Feminist Movements and Leadership, plus the GEF Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Actions.

Overview of the Issue in Canada

- Women with disabilities who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual experience 2.3 times higher rates of violence compared to heterosexual women with disabilities.¹
- In 2017, almost 96,000 people in Canada were victims of intimate partner violence, representing 30% of all police-reported violent crime. 75,000 (four out of 5, 79%) of these victims were women.²
- In Canada, Indigenous women and girls are 16 times more likely than Caucasian women, and 12 times more likely than all other women to go missing or be murdered.³

Canada must address all forms of gender-based violence – physical, emotional, cyber, and other – against all women and girls. All levels of governments, public and private sector institutions, must commit to implementing, strengthening, and funding evidence-driven action plans. It's time to move past promises and act. Meaningful participation of women's rights organizations serving intersectional and diverse groups of women and girls is essential to ensuring access to justice services and support that are both trauma-informed and culturally appropriate.

¹ Cotter, Adam (2018), as cited in: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. (2019). *Unfinished Business: A Parallel Report on Canada's Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. <https://www.criaw-icref.ca/updates/unfinished-business/>

² Burczycka, Marta (2018), as cited in Unfinished Business (2019).

³ National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019), as cited in Unfinished Business (2019).

Most critically, to end gender-based violence in Canada within 10 years, the federal government must immediately implement the [National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence](#) (NAP). This report lays out 100 recommendations for policy action across four pillars: enabling environment and social infrastructure; adequately funding and developing community-specific prevention work; promoting responsive legal and justice systems; and providing support for survivors and their families. These recommendations require an intersectional and human rights-based approach and collaboration of all levels of government.

All forms of systemic gendered and racialized violence against Black women, Indigenous women, and racialized women, must be addressed. Indigenous women and girls on reserve and in urban areas experience disproportionate levels of violence. The frequency of racist and misogynist hate crimes against Muslim and Asian women has increased. All women and girls—including low-income women, women with disabilities, Indigenous women, racialized women, and 2SLGBTQIA+ folks—require access to high-quality, inclusive, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, support services adapted to their linguistic and distinct needs, legal services, education, and healthcare. The Canadian government needs to ensure these services are universally accessible and adequately funded.

Government action must address economic inequality, unsafe housing conditions, and pervasive, deep-seated poverty, as they are all interconnected with rates of gender-based violence. Governments must also address their role in perpetuating institutional violence in policing, the coerced sterilization of women with disabilities and Indigenous women, as well as the flagging and removal of children of Indigenous women and women with disabilities.

Key Commitments per Action Coalition Blueprint

As part of the 25-year review process of the Beijing Platform for Action, UN Action Coalition leaders have defined the following concrete set of key actions to be realized by 2026:

Action 1: More states and regional actors, ratify international and regional conventions, and public and private sector institutions strengthen, implement and finance evidence-driven **laws, policies and action plans** to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. In so doing, 550 million more women and girls will live in countries with laws and policies prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls by 2026.

Action 2: Scale up implementation and financing of evidence-driven **prevention strategies** by public and private sector institutions and women’s rights organizations to drive down prevalence of gender-based violence against women, adolescent girls and young women in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. In so doing, increase by 50% the number of countries that include one or more evidence-driven prevention strategies on gender-based violence against women and girls in national policies by 2026.

Action 3: Scale up implementation and financing of coordinated survivor-centered, comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable **services for survivors** of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. In so doing, more women and girls will live in countries with multi-sectoral action plans on GBV which include provision of police, justice, health, and social sector services by 2026.

Action 4: Enhance support and increase accountability and quality, flexible funding from states, private sector, foundations, and other donors to autonomous **girl-led & women’s rights organizations** working to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. In so doing, progressively improve and increase international funding by 50% to women’s rights organizations, activists and movements including those working to address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity by 2026.

Realizing the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence

Key Priorities

Recommendations for Implementation:

- Implement the 100 recommendations outlined in the [National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence](#)
- Implement actions from the [2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#), the [Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls’ Calls for Justice](#); the Métis Perspectives’ 62 Calls for Miskotaha, and other relevant reports

Funding:

- Ensure core funding, increase overall funding, and livable wages for staff and workers in women’s rights organizations that provide services, education, advocacy, and research for ending gender-based violence

- Finance accessible infrastructure and technology, especially in rural, remote, and Northern communities
- Support the creation of research and disaggregated data, advocacy, and services addressing gender-based violence
- Increase funding for legal aid to cover family law, property division and protection order expenses for survivors of gender-based violence and survivors of intimate partner violence counter charged with a criminal offence
- Fund culturally appropriate, community-based healing programs and resources for Indigenous women and girls, particularly survivors of the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop
- Increase funding for programs supporting children who witness and/or experience gender-based violence and/or sexual violence
- Provide infrastructure in Indigenous communities (such as transportation, safe drinking water, childcare, affordable housing, health services, etc.) as outlined in the [2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan](#)
- Allocate funding to community-based restorative and transformative justice programs centered on the distinct needs of survivors of gender-based violence
- Allocate funds to adequately address sexual violence and harassment in post-secondary institutions and campuses to increase consent and bystander intervention training

Economic Equality:

- Implement actions outlined in the Action Coalition on Women's Economic Justice and Rights
- Raise disability benefit rates and address inequalities in distribution of disability benefits
- Raise social assistance rates to provide an adequate standard of living well above the poverty line (adjusted for fluctuations in inflation and cost of living)
- Reform policies perpetuating women's financial dependence on their spouses
- Address coercive control exerted over women, particularly immigrant women, whose status is tied to their personal or professional relationships (with spouse, employer, etc.)
- Promote better recognition of foreign credentials to increase employment options for immigrant women

Education:

- Support educational campaigns on gender-based and sexual violence, consent, and cyberviolence, including preventative education, for men and boys, and training for service providers

- Offer inclusive, intersectional sex education in public schools that promotes sexual health and well-being
- Implement trauma-informed, anti-racism and anti-ableism training for service providers, educators, workers in the legal profession, and other institutions
- Provide education around anti-racism and anti-hate beginning with elementary school to combat violence against visibly Muslims and women and girls of other faiths

Services:

- Ensure women and girls in all their diversity have access to safe accessible long-term housing (prioritize universal design in new housing) and emergency shelters that provide culturally responsive and language specific services
- Increase the number of culturally safe and distinction-based (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) shelters, second stage and transitional housing for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women and gender diverse folks, on reserve and in urban areas
- Increase access to services and supports for Indigenous women, girls, and families fleeing violence, especially in rural and remote areas
- Ensure access to services for survivors of sexual violence, no matter where they live (including in rural, remote and Northern areas where there is a dearth of services)
- Ensure survivors have access to free, specialized mental health services, including for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Increase language and ethno-specific legal and mental health services for newcomer and/or racialized women and girls
- Increase support services for survivors with disabilities, including Deaf women
- Increase access to reproductive health services, including abortion and low-cost contraception, appreciating diverse experiences (women with disabilities, Black, Indigenous, and racialized women and girls, 2SLGBTQ+ folks, sex workers, etc.)
- Collaborate with Indigenous communities and Indigenous women's groups to reform child welfare policies, with emphasis on land-based healing, connection with Elders, etc., to eliminate harm to Indigenous mothers and reduce overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the system
- Redesign the child welfare system to prevent the overrepresentation of racialized children and children with disabilities
- Address police/RCMP violence and sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces

Take Action

<p style="text-align: center;">Government Actions <i>Holding the government to account</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grassroots Actions <i>Feminist Work</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the 100 recommendations outlined in the roadmap for the National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence • Implement actions from the 2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQA+ People National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQA+ People, the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice; the Métis Perspectives' 62 Calls for Miskotaha, and other relevant reports • Implement the six recommendations from the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights • Fund and implement the Victim Advocate Case Review model across Canada • Implement federal commitments following national dialogues on Addressing anti-Indigenous racism in health systems • Ratify the ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment and tripartite discussion about C190 implementation • Collect disaggregated distinctions-based data related to Indigenous children in care • Implement recommendations from the Report of the Third Independent Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for meaningful participation and remuneration of civil society organizations in the development of gender-responsive macro-economic plans, budget reforms and stimulus packages • Advocate for long-term funding that extends beyond the fiscal calendar for organizations combatting gender-based violence and providing support and resources to survivors • Advocate for key policy development and other initiatives that recognize the vast expertise of community-based organizations addressing gender-based violence • Advocate for well-funded and accessible compensation funds for victims of violence, including historical impacts • Support transformative and restorative justice options for prevention of violence, such as healing circles that centre the needs of survivors of sexual violence to participate • Support increased and universal access to reproductive health including abortion and low-cost contraception • Advocate for increased funding for kinship and community-based healing programs, including financial resources for intersectional and culturally informed training, that is

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trauma-informed for workers providing service to survivors

- Advocate for trauma-informed reporting and confidentiality protocols on post-secondary campuses
- Advocate for trauma-informed, anti-sexist, anti-racism and anti-ableism training for service providers, educators, workers in the legal profession, and other relevant institutions

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The key priorities and actions outlined in this document are based on extensive discussions within the Action Coalition 1: Gender-Based Violence Working Group of the B+25 Network. These discussions were held between March and October 2021 with the following feminist and women's organizations: Canadian Federation of University Women (Charlotte Akin), Canadian Labour Congress (Sarah Hedges-Chou), Council of Canadians with Disabilities (Jewelless Smith), Canadian Women's Foundation (Karen Campbell), Ending Violence Association of Canada (Valérie Auger-Voyer), Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak / Women of the Métis Nation (Tamsin Fitzgerald), National Association of Friendship Centres (Gaelle Mushyirahamwe), National Association of Women and the Law (Tiffany Butler), and South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (Silmy Abdullah).

The findings were compiled and presented by Elizabeth Nguyen and Kenya Thompson.

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