



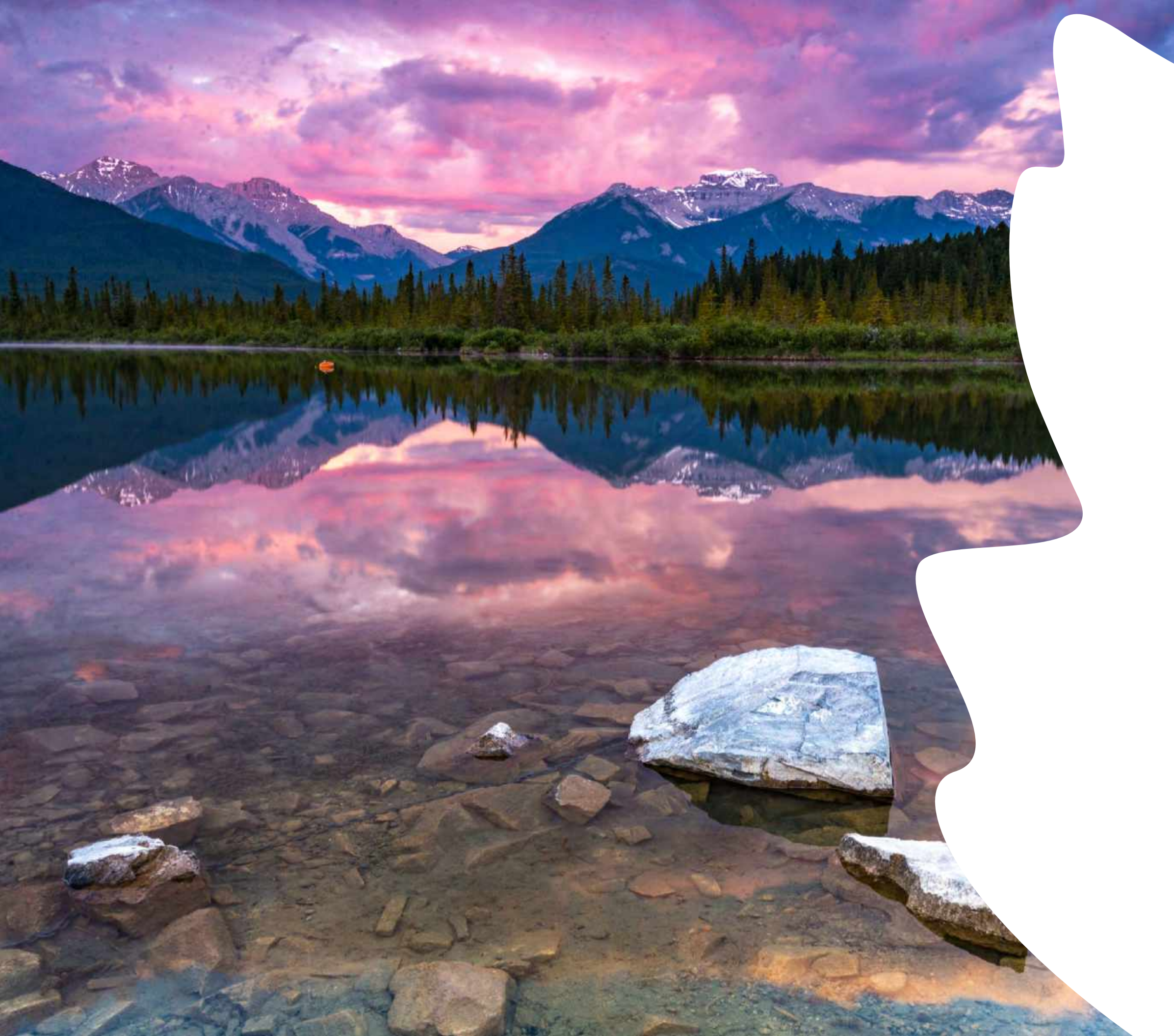
CHARTING THE COURSE

2019 – 2020 Annual Report



CanWaCH

Canadian Partnership for
Women and Children's Health



The CanWaCH team lives, works and plays across Turtle Island. Spanning from Lekwungen territory in the West to Algonquin territory in the East, we pay respect to the traditional guardians of the land upon which we live and work. We acknowledge the long standing and continuing relationships to the land and pay respect to all Indigenous peoples from all nations across Turtle Island.



Letter from the Board Chair

Dear friends and colleagues,

On December 31, 2019, as we rang in the start of a new decade, very few of us would have guessed where we would find ourselves a few months later. The year 2020 has tested our resolve. It has changed the world as we knew it. The global pandemic of COVID-19 has laid bare the cracks in our collective foundation; forcing us, including our families, to adapt to pressing health challenges, exacerbated by social, economic and demographic inequities. I have been struck by the sheer magnitude of the crisis, in which more than one million people have died, and in which whole countries and communities have had to shut down in order to attempt to stop the spread of the virus. As stated by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres at the UN General Assembly in September, “COVID-19 is not only a wake-up call, it is a dress rehearsal for the world of challenges to come.”

The vision statement of CanWaCH is “a world where women, children and adolescents, in all their diversity, realize their right to thrive in full health.” And as you know, we try to achieve this mission through uniting our expertise – by working better, together. The pandemic has not diminished the importance of this vision but has certainly called into question our collective ability to achieve it. In our own communities across Canada, it has been apparent that although we are all equally susceptible to COVID-19, we are not equally able to avoid it. In many of the countries where we work, the pandemic has hugely affected the health and economy of populations, but again, not equally. And finally, our inability to be in the field, to work with our local partners has forced us to think and work more creatively. Yet even our creativity has not sufficiently allowed us to meet our individual and collective health and development goals.



Our lives will continue to be affected by the pandemic for the next few years. Work as we know it will not be possible. Until a vaccine is available, we will remain dependent on virtual rather than real travel. We are being forced into thinking about a new paradigm for how we develop partnerships, how we transfer knowledge, how we maintain our accountability and, importantly, how we continue to recognize and combat the underlying inequalities and power dynamics that hinder access to health-care and progress on good health overall. Despite these huge challenges, I am inspired by the strength and value that coming together - virtually, and at a safe distance - provides. As the chair of the CanWaCH Board of Directors, I see my colleagues and CanWaCH members contributing to dialogue, connecting with each other and participating in sharing knowledge and information. We must continue to do so. We must be resilient.

There is power in working collectively and in building a collective voice. There is purpose in building our knowledge base and in participating in platforms that can help us address the common challenges that we face in our new reality. As we move forward, our new reality will force us to challenge ‘old’ ideas and assumptions, and through Canadian values and ingenuity, including kindness and collaboration, enable us to begin to achieve the CanWaCH vision.

I wish you good health and good spirits through the winter months ahead.

Dr. Stanley Zlotkin
Board Chair

Letter from the CEO

The past year has been marked by a reckoning with our collective vulnerability and the fragility of progress towards a more equal world. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our norms and uncovered the depth and breadth of health inequality pervasive across all countries. From PPE to handwashing facilities, COVID-19 has demonstrated that one’s access to safety and protection is dictated by gender, race, wealth, ability and geography.

As citizens, families, organizations and countries turn inward to their own immediate pandemic responses, the ability to act as a global community has been deeply challenged, and toxic narratives of ‘us and them’ have spread as quickly as the virus itself. Despite the weight of this pushback, our community has stepped up to defend health rights as the imperative in this moment. Safeguarding progress to date, innovating, adapting and pivoting has saved countless lives and inspired hope that there is a pathway forward.

“SAFEGUARDING PROGRESS TO DATE, INNOVATING, ADAPTING AND PIVOTING HAS SAVED COUNTLESS LIVES AND INSPIRED HOPE THAT THERE IS A PATHWAY FORWARD.”

As I reflect on CanWaCH’s new strategic plan, which envisions a world where women, children, and adolescents, in all their diversity, realize their right to thrive in full health, I know that we have our work cut out for us. Old challenges with new COVID-19 twists will mean that we must ensure our partnerships, thought leadership, and knowledge mobilization are more effective than ever. We will



need to be stridently committed to creating space for diverse voices and to addressing systemic racism, colonialism and inequality within our own organizations, our sector and beyond.

I am grateful for the courage, resistance and resilience that I have witnessed over the past year. Around the world and here at home, we are called by movements articulating the needs and demands voiced by courageous individuals such as #BlackLivesMatter and #MMIW, who are claiming their rights and demanding justice. In moving forward, and in imagining a new type of world, we will continue to walk alongside these movements and champion their calls to action with every step.

As I embark on my first year as CEO, I invite each of you to reach out to me and my CanWaCH colleagues with your ideas, your dreams and your big vision for the world we want to create together.

In solidarity,
Julia Anderson
CEO





CANWACH MEMBERSHIP

Project Explorer Data: Between 2010-2020, Canadians were directly involved in at least 125 unique development and humanitarian projects in Haiti.

COVID-19 has increased risks of malnutrition and food insecurity, with impacts particularly felt by women and girls. Nutrition, food security, and gender equality is even more critical than before.

CANWACH IS A ROBUST COALITION COMPRISED OF MORE THAN 100 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL ASSOCIATES.

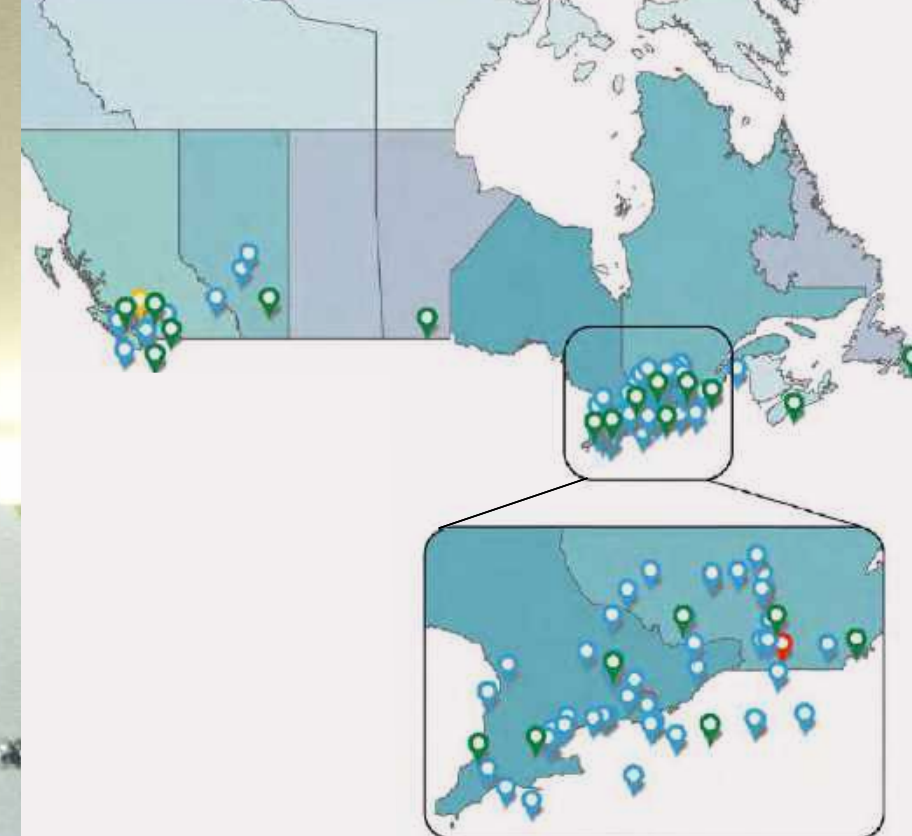
The strength of the CanWaCH membership rests on its diversity, with members joining from civil society, academia, and health professional associations. CanWaCH members contribute to CanWaCH's collective work through participating in working groups, consultations, and committees. Together, we form a strong Canadian-wide network. Through an interdisciplinary base of individuals and organizations committed to global health and gender equality, CanWaCH members have helped shape the current direction of the sector, so every woman, child, adolescent, and gender diverse person has the right to survive and thrive.

Over the past year, CanWaCH's membership and the global health sector as a whole has demonstrated its resiliency in the face of unprecedented change and uncertainty around the globe. We have witnessed the biggest common global health challenge of our era — COVID-19 — wreak havoc around the world. In response, the CanWaCH membership has battened down the hatches to navigate through the ever-changing storm. As we all work together, we will continue to push forward priorities that centers the health and rights of women and children at the heart of what we do.

CANWACH CURRENTS

In working with CanWaCH members, we have found that one of the best ways to engage Canadians is by **sharing stories, bringing global health and gender equality programming to life**. In November 2019, CanWaCH organized two site visits with Canadian-based organizations, Femme International and Amref Health Africa in Canada, recording videos and taking photos to showcase their work. These have been utilized when engaging with Canadians and key stakeholders.

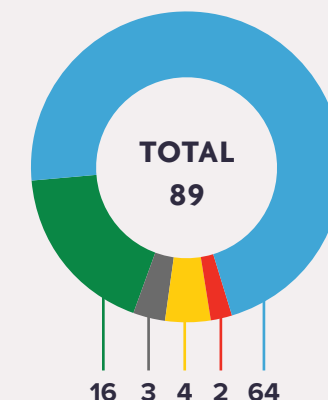
PPE and proper sanitation have become even more critically important during COVID-19. Around the world, 70% of frontline health care workers are women.



Members Across Canada

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

- Civil Society / NGO
- Academic / Research
- Private Sector
- Professional Association
- Other



“THANK YOU TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM FOR ALL THAT YOU DO AND ALL THAT YOU CONTINUE TO DO AMIDST THE PANDEMIC. IT IS VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.”

CANWACH MEMBER





ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

Project Explorer Data: Between 2010-2020, Canadians were directly involved in at least 92 unique development and humanitarian projects in Ethiopia.

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women and girls, including increased responsibilities for water collection in constrained and dangerous circumstances, to meet heightened demands for water for handwashing to prevent the spread of the virus.



CANWACH CURRENTS

In November 2019, CanWaCH attended the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25, a conference which acted as a springboard to re-energize the global community and breathe new life into the ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development) agenda. While in Nairobi, CanWaCH partnered with the High Commission to Kenya in Nairobi, along with co-hosts Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights and the International Development Research Centre, to host an event highlighting Canada's commitment to women's health and rights.

OVER THE PAST YEAR, CANWACH HAS SOUGHT TO DEEPEN TRUE, AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH MEMBERS, OTHER COALITIONS, GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS, AND DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS WHO ARE INVESTED IN GLOBAL HEALTH AND GENDER EQUALITY.

Though having to ride the COVID-19 wave has caused us to alter course in search of clear surf, working together in partnership has allowed CanWaCH and its members to generate, coordinate and facilitate uptake of evidence-based decisions and policies. CanWaCH has drawn on the domestic and international expertise of members and partners, providing a platform to exchange knowledge, share resources, and hold space for conversations to showcase the amazing work that Canadians are doing around the world.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY: MOBILIZING FOR GLOBAL ACTION

In August, CanWaCH also celebrated International Youth Day, when we were joined by young leaders across Canada who are leading the way in tackling some of the most complex issues we face, including climate change and racial equity. Over the day, Canadians had the opportunity to hear from young leaders across Canada, garner insight on career opportunities and reflect on the work required now and in the future.



The momentum from Nairobi continued into International Development Week, where CanWaCH partnered with the Cooperation Canada (formerly the Canadian Council for International Cooperation [CCIC]) to host a 'Go For the Goals' reception that welcomed the Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of International Development. Minister Gould's remarks inspired hope and encouraged the sector to work together to create a stronger future where no one is left behind.

MINISTER GOULD'S REMARKS INSPIRED HOPE AND ENCOURAGED THE SECTOR TO WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A STRONGER FUTURE WHERE NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND.

These aspirations are the foundation for the members of the Public Engagement Working Group (PEWG) who continue to address challenges and key messages to best engage Canadians in global health and amplify the work of our members. In May, the **#LeadOnCanada** public engagement campaign celebrated its second anniversary. The campaign highlights the great work that Canadians are doing around the world, builds Canadians' knowledge by debunking myths and celebrates the heroes behind the scenes. **#LeadOnCanada** continues to work with members and the PEWG to bring together a community of champions dedicated to advancing the health, rights and wellbeing of people around the world.



38

WEBINARS

5,745

TOTAL ATTENDEES

39

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY



AT CANWACH WE KNOW THAT OUR MEMBERS AND THEIR PARTNERS HOLD GREAT KNOWLEDGE IN HOW TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND REALIZE A WORLD WHERE WOMEN AND CHILDREN CAN SURVIVE AND THRIVE.

CanWaCH continues to work with members at events, webinars, workshops and working groups to gather, exchange and champion leading expertise to turn ideas into impact.

In November 2019, CanWaCH hosted the 2019 Annual General Meeting and partnered with Coopération Canada to host the ‘Summit on Canada’s Global Leadership.’ During the Summit and following the AGM, CanWaCH led two breakout sessions that gave space for in-depth conversations on metrics and gender equality. These engaging discussions brought together diverse voices to discuss and analyze gaps, successes and opportunities to formulate a collective intelligence of our members and partners.

As 2020 evolved, we saw a significant shift in how the sector convened. With COVID-19, in-person opportunities to exchange knowledge were no longer possible, however this fact did not stop us from gathering and connecting. With the world battering down the hatches, CanWaCH convened members, stakeholders and partners online to discuss immediate and pressing issues. This collaboration created opportunities to gather champions and leading experts to discuss emerging trends and activate the knowledge necessary to turn ideas into impact.

Project Explorer Data:
Between 2010-2020,
Canadians were directly
involved in at least 80 unique
development and humanitarian
projects in Bangladesh.

Inset: According to the UN, “women commonly face higher risks and greater burdens from the impacts of climate change in situations of poverty, and the majority of the world’s poor are women.”

Below: Women make up a disproportionate percentage of non-traditional jobs, which can force them to work for lower wages and in unsafe conditions, leaving many without social and health benefits, and the protection of labour laws.



Starting in March, CanWaCH ramped up its efforts, hosting weekly webinars. Sessions took deep dives into a variety of topics designed to foster knowledge exchange, mobilize evidence, and offer practical capacity-building experiences to proactively respond to the new and collective challenges we were facing. Sessions ranged from mental health to adolescent SRHR, from the role of WASH in responding to COVID-19 to training on RADAR coverage survey tools.

To wrap up the year, CanWaCH celebrated Gender Equality Week at the end of September by hosting a series of online convening moments over three days. The events featured a range of topics, including a dialogue on pressing gender justice issues in Canada with President Lorraine Whitman from the Native Women’s Association of Canada, a panel on Canada’s role on the world stage, plus workshops on topics such as monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and organizational policy. In all, the events drew connections between local and global realities and reflected the membership’s commitment to knowledge, growth, and justice.

“CANWACH HAS CREATED SPACE FOR VALUABLE FEEDBACK THAT WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR CENTRE’S FIRST GENDER EQUALITY FRAMEWORK.”

CANWACH MEMBER 

CANWACH CURRENTS

During Gender Equality Week, CanWaCH held an information session about its upcoming Gender Equality Training Modules. Informed by consultations with gender equality experts, the multi-day training modules use a participatory and iterative process, beginning by developing a baseline of understanding that flows into in-depth technical knowledge and concepts. By looking at different analyses and case studies, the training teaches participants about logic models, gender transformative outcomes, MEAL (monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning) and gender equality coding frameworks. Throughout, the training modules offer **interactive opportunities for participants to learn, share and explore**, with the goal of strengthening capacity to understand and utilize gender transformative approaches to global health programming.





MOBILIZING EVIDENCE

Project Explorer Data: Between 2010-2020, Canadians were directly involved in at least 32 unique development and humanitarian projects in India.

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.




BY COLLECTING, COLLATING, AND SHARING DATA AND EVIDENCE ABOUT CANADA'S INVESTMENT IN GLOBAL HEALTH AND GENDER EQUALITY, CANWACH'S OBJECTIVE IS TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT MEMBERS AND THE SECTOR AS A WHOLE TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION.

With over 1,100 projects currently in the Project Explorer, 2019/2020 has marked a period of significant progress for member data input into the database and has supported members' programming by making data available that is 'fit-for-use' for the needs of various stakeholders.

This year also saw the advancement of the Canadian Collaborative for Global Health, which consists of six Labs and 37 individual organizations, all working within an innovative, feminist-informed 'hub and spoke' model of partnership. With the Lab activities now wrapping, we continue to work closely within the Collaborative model to ensure that the solutions and outputs that have been incubated are shared broadly with key stakeholders. The Canadian Collaborative for Global Health is a truly unique platform for civil society organizations, academics and their global partners to work together. The findings of the Labs will be all the more important as we work together to not lose gains made in women and children's health and to respond to the global pandemic.

Moving forward, bold, evidence-based, innovative approaches will be needed by CanWaCH and its members. COVID-19 has amplified a number of issues faced by the sector, particularly as it relates to data collection and measuring results. In June, CanWaCH released the *100 Days of a Pandemic: Canada's Evidence-Driven Global Response* report, which synthesized information from more than 100 organizations on the immediate impacts that COVID-19 has had on their work and operations. By highlighting how the pandemic has been exacerbated by already fragile health systems, incomplete data, and untrustworthy information, and how the pandemic threatens to reverse critical gains made in global health and rights, the report flags some of the largest challenges the sector is facing. A review of data strategies are provided to offer direction to organizations who are still working on collecting evaluation data and how this will impact their work. The report also looks to the future to discuss data priorities, data strategies, obstacles and challenges that lay ahead, and recommendations on what is needed moving forward. CanWaCH continues to build on this report through the projects collected in the Project Explorer, with maps and analyses available to support members as they respond to the crisis.

"WE REALLY APPRECIATE THE WORKING GROUPS AND THE CHANCE TO SHARE WHAT WE ARE DOING. AFTER THE LAST HAITI WORKING GROUP MEETING, TWO ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED ME ABOUT HAVING US DO WASH TRAINING WITH THEM. THAT KIND OF NEW COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP IS EXCITING FOR US."

CANWACH MEMBER 

Organizations are reporting that long-standing challenges have been exacerbated by the virus, such as rising poverty, food insecurity and increased violence against women and girls. In the face of ongoing challenges, we continue to see resiliency in the face of the pandemic.

CANWACH CURRENTS

CanWaCH shines a spotlight on the inspiring and critically important work that members, associates and Canadian global health actors, leaders and CSO's are undertaking around the world. Through the Project Explorer, detailed information on over 1,100 projects is available, and this number is growing daily. These projects highlight the unique programming and innovative partnerships that our members and sector colleagues are undertaking worldwide. This data is also available through 92 interactive visual dashboards, which tell the story of Canadian leadership. By collecting and visualizing project data, we can work more effectively, transparently, and collaboratively, and ensure that we are investing in the health and rights of all women, children, and youth.



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*Project Explorer
Data: Between
2010-2020,
Canadians were
directly involved in
at least 67 unique
development and
humanitarian
projects in Kenya*

Canada



CanWaCH

Canadian Partnership for
Women and Children's Health