

**CanWaCH**

Canadian Partnership for  
Women and Children's Health



**CanSFE**

Partenariat canadien pour  
la santé des femmes et des enfants

# Partnerships for Impact



**STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 – 2025**

# Strategic Framework Overview

## VISION

A world where women, children and adolescents, in all their diversity, realize their right to thrive in full health.

## MISSION

CanWaCH unites the expertise and commitment of Canadian organizations and individuals to advance the health and rights of women, children and adolescents globally.

## VALUES

- Human Rights
- Partnership
- Accountability
- Gender Equality

## Strategic Framework & Objectives

### ADVANCING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

**We believe** that by gathering, exchanging, and championing leading expertise and emerging trends, we will activate the knowledge necessary to turn ideas into impact.



### MOBILIZING EVIDENCE

**We believe** that by analyzing, integrating, and sharing data, we will advance the solutions to complex challenges and reinforce best practices.

### DEEPENING PARTNERSHIPS

**We believe** that by convening partnerships for impact, we will achieve greater effectiveness through collaborative learning and action.

### MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM

**We believe** that by standing on the strength of a diverse, multisectoral, and interdisciplinary base of individuals and organizations, we will harness the collective capability required to uphold the right of every woman, child and adolescent to survive and thrive.

# Introduction

## Global Context

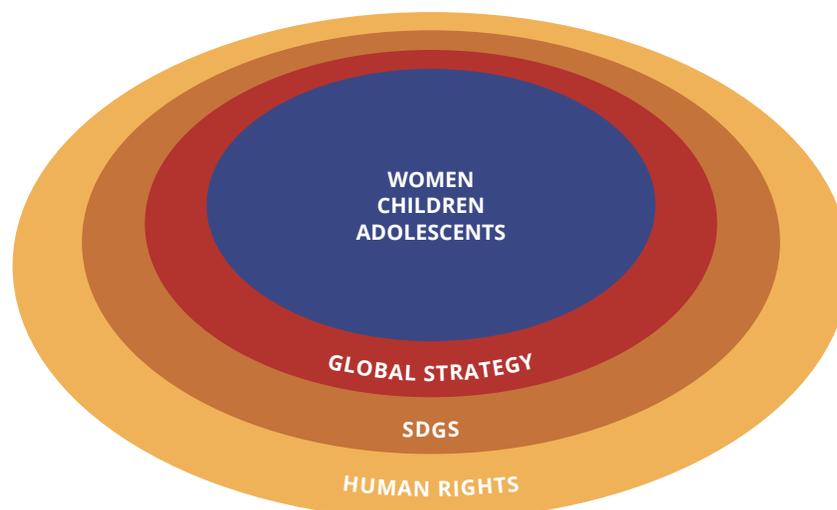
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) puts forth a universal and integrated ambition for global progress, at the heart of which lies the principle of “no one left behind.” Situated within a human rights framework, the 17 SDGs are accompanied by specific targets to be met by 2030 – ranging from a commitment to ending extreme poverty, to providing education for all, to achieving gender equality.

With 10 years remaining, addressing the urgency of achieving the SDGs demands new and unusual partnerships focused on advancing the rights and needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized. This will necessitate purposeful political leadership coupled with action and collaboration from civil society, the private sector, technical experts, and academia. It will also require a deliberate focus on measuring progress and tracking results.

The health and rights of women, children, and adolescents – in all their diversity<sup>1</sup> – are at the very heart of sustainable development. When their health and rights are upheld, women, children, and adolescents are better able to access all their human rights; this has great transformative potential, both for individuals and for entire societies.

The Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents Health provides guidance to accelerate momentum to eliminate disparities that women, children, and adolescents continue to face. It sets a pathway for global partners to create enabling environments that transform societies so that women, children, and adolescents everywhere can realize their rights to the highest attainable standards of health and well-being. Strong partnerships must be the drivers in a global effort to uphold the rights to health and through health for everyone, everywhere.<sup>2</sup>

*Figure 1. Global strategies within a human rights framework*



1 Further reference to women, children, and adolescents in this strategy includes gender diverse peoples

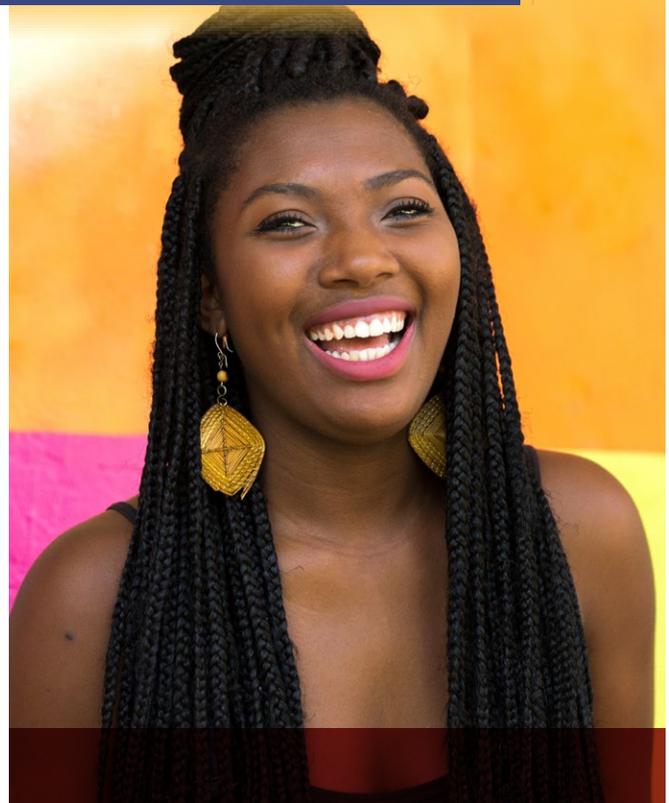
2 World Health Organization. 2017. Leading the realization of human rights to health and through health: report of the High-Level Working Group on the Health and Human Rights of Women, Children and Adolescents. Geneva.

## Canadian Leadership

Canadians have a major role to play in achieving the SDGs. The Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health (CanWaCH) is implementing an ambitious five-year strategic plan to set a course for ensuring that excellence and collaboration guide Canada's efforts in the global movement to advance the health and rights of every woman, child, and adolescent. Through the lessons learned in executing our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan (Appendix A) and the strategic planning process (Appendix B), we are inspired to expand on our core focus of measuring results, exchanging knowledge, and engaging stakeholders in order to drive the next stage of Canadian leadership. Compared to its predecessor, our new strategy emphasizes:

- *Leveraging Canada's unique voice and global reputation to drive improved health outcomes where we can make a strategic contribution,*
- *Embracing the complex, intricate nature of coalition building,*
- *Integrating a comprehensive life-course approach to health, underpinned by the social determinants of health, and*
- *Adopting a focus on equity, through a feminist, intersectional, and gender transformative lens that addresses the underlying inequalities and power dynamics that hinder progress.*

The next five years will demand that we be bold in our vision and that we harness the transformative potential of coalition-building to bring this vision to life. Our role is to leverage the strength of an inclusive, multi-stakeholder platform to advance the thought leadership, mobilize the evidence, and deepen the partnerships necessary to advance the health and rights of women, children, and adolescents globally.



## Who are We?

CanWaCH is a unique organization built on a multi-stakeholder platform that brings together a diverse group of partners, including non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, healthcare and professional associations, and private entities, to advance a collaborative approach to improving outcomes in the health and rights of women, children, and adolescents. Our Members are the experts; CanWaCH plays an important role in aligning and amplifying their work in order to achieve greater impact. As a participant in the dynamic ecosystem of global health, human rights, and gender equality movements around the world, CanWaCH is built on the conviction that we can achieve more together than alone.

While CanWaCH's primary stakeholders are our Members and international and domestic partners, we see women, children, and adolescents as key agents of change supported through the solidarity and commitment of our partnership.

# Strategic Framework



## VISION

A world where women, children and adolescents, in all their diversity, realize their right to thrive in full health.

## MISSION

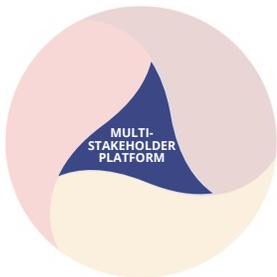
CanWaCH unites the expertise and commitment of Canadian organizations and individuals to advance the health and rights of women, children and adolescents globally.

## VALUES

- **Human Rights:** We are committed to a human rights-based approach that upholds the inherent right to the highest attainable standard of health through participatory, inclusive, transparent, and responsive processes. We are dedicated to understanding the ways in which overlapping root causes of inequality, discrimination, and marginalization continue to threaten the health and rights of women, children and adolescents.
- **Partnership:** We are committed to placing inclusive partnerships at the heart of all that we do and to harnessing our collective ability to achieve stronger results together than any individual or organization can achieve alone. We are dedicated to pursuing best practices in forming partnerships and demonstrating these practices in our day to day.
- **Accountability:** We are committed to openness and transparency and to linking resources to results, outcomes, and impacts. We are dedicated to standing behind the experience and leadership of partners from the Global South in the development of transformative approaches to health.
- **Gender Equality:** We are committed to respecting and prioritizing the agency, voices, and individuality of people of all genders, particularly those facing discrimination because of their gender. We are dedicated to gender-transformative and responsive approaches to health by recognizing the underlying inequalities and power dynamics that hinder access to healthcare and progress on good health overall.

# Strategic Framework Breakdown

This Strategic Framework visually depicts the interconnected nature of our strategic objectives, with our multi-stakeholder platform and collaborative spirit at the heart of our efforts.



## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM

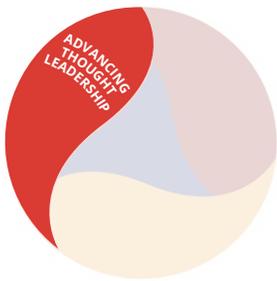
**Definition:** We believe that by standing on the strength of a diverse, multisectoral, and interdisciplinary base of individuals and organizations, we will harness the collective capability required to uphold the right of every woman, child and adolescent to survive and thrive.

**Why it Matters:** The Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health calls for the creation of an enabling environment for health and well-being through multi-sector collaboration. Collective action from the global health sector and others, such as agriculture, education, and poverty reduction, "contributes significantly to health outcomes while contributing co-benefits across sectors."<sup>3</sup>

Since CanWaCH's inception, we have maintained our commitment to providing a platform for non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, healthcare and professional associations, private entities, and government partners to rally around a shared goal of improving health outcomes for women, children and adolescents worldwide.

As a platform, we are more than the sum of our parts. Our Members and stakeholders have wide ranging and deep expertise. Our role is to support them by amplifying their leading thinking and ideas, leveraging the data and evidence necessary to improve outcomes, tell compelling stories, and cultivate trusting and collaborative relationships.

<sup>3</sup> Every Woman Every Child. The global strategy for women's, children's and adolescents' health. (2016-2030). <https://www.globalstrategy.everywomaneverychild.org>



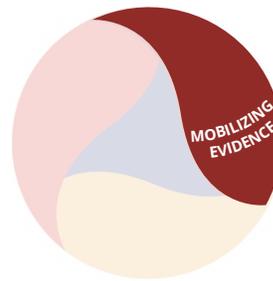
## ADVANCING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

**Definition:** We believe that by gathering, exchanging, and championing leading expertise and emerging trends, we will activate the knowledge necessary to turn ideas into impact. Specifically, this means:

- Generating proactive and responsive analyses and forecasts to inform policy, programming, and public engagement efforts; and
- Acting as a national and global interlocutor to strengthen connections among CanWaCH Members, stakeholders, and global partners.

**Why it Matters:** Sound knowledge - both technical and experiential - is at the heart of progress, but it is only useful if shared and put to work. In order to overcome pressing and complex barriers to the health and rights of women, children, and adolescents, we must be purposeful in seeking out critical analyses and novel insights from our Members, stakeholders, and global partners. CanWaCH has a role in formulating the collective intelligence of our Members and stakeholders and bringing it to national and global conversations.

Knowledge mobilization is the process through which we can move from evidence to impact. We draw on the “health in all policies” approach held by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, which seeks to integrate the fundamental links between health and non-health sectors, the importance of adopting a comprehensive, life course approach to health, and the value of multi-sectoral engagement.<sup>4</sup> In this vein, promoting thought leadership in a unified, compelling voice will strengthen our Members’ and partners’ impact and effectiveness.



## MOBILIZING EVIDENCE

**Definition:** We believe that by analyzing, integrating, and sharing data, we will advance the solutions to complex challenges and reinforce best practices. Specifically, this means:

- Responding to data gaps and facilitating the utilization and communication of data to generate stronger monitoring, evaluation and learning processes, policies, programming, and public engagement; and
- Engaging proactively with emerging technology and innovations in data, in order to strengthen collective efforts to address current and emerging issues.

**Why it Matters:** When it comes to advancing the SDGs, “data are the lifeblood of decision-making and the raw material for accountability.”<sup>5</sup> To ensure that no one is left behind, data must be well-documented, integrated and used in a timely manner to inform decision-making. Filling data gaps and increasing the availability of data disaggregated by gender, age, race, ethnicity and income, will provide a much clearer picture of circumstances where women, children, and adolescents are denied their right to survive and thrive.<sup>6</sup>

The development context in many countries is changing, especially in the face of issues like climate change and political conflict. While strengthening the capacity to utilize traditional data sources is essential, innovating to uncover new approaches required to address emerging issues is equally vital. Integrating traditional data sources with technological advances and novel data sources, while offering opportunities for Members and partners to innovate and test new approaches, is a key step on the pathway to improved service quality and stronger, more inclusive systems.

Evidence is not just the foundation of enhancing service delivery, programming and policy; it helps us tell compelling stories to build awareness among the general public and to increase their engagement on issues of health inequality faced by women, children, and adolescents globally.

<sup>4</sup> The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health. 2016. Strategic Plan 2016-2020. Geneva, Switzerland: PMNCH. Retrieved from: [https://www.who.int/pmnch/knowledge/publications/pmnch\\_strategic\\_plan\\_2016\\_2020.pdf](https://www.who.int/pmnch/knowledge/publications/pmnch_strategic_plan_2016_2020.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> UN Data Revolution Group. 2014. A World that Counts. Retrieved from <https://www.undatarevolution.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Open Data Watch. 2018. The Data Value Chain: Moving from Production to Impact. Retrieved from: <https://opendatawatch.com/publications/the-data-value-chain-moving-from-production-to-impact/>





## DEEPENING PARTNERSHIPS

**Definition:** We believe that by convening partnerships for impact, we will achieve greater effectiveness through collaborative learning and action. Specifically, this means:

- Offering purposeful opportunities for connection, networking, and peer mentorship among Members and partners; and
- Identifying and responding to gaps in knowledge and capacity through Member-informed learning and training opportunities.

**Why it Matters:** Cultivating partnerships committed to working together to achieve shared goals is a fundamental principle of development effectiveness. The meaningful engagement of diverse partners from health sectors and health-enabling sectors (for example, education, environment, infrastructure) will ensure an integrated approach to upholding rights to health and through health.

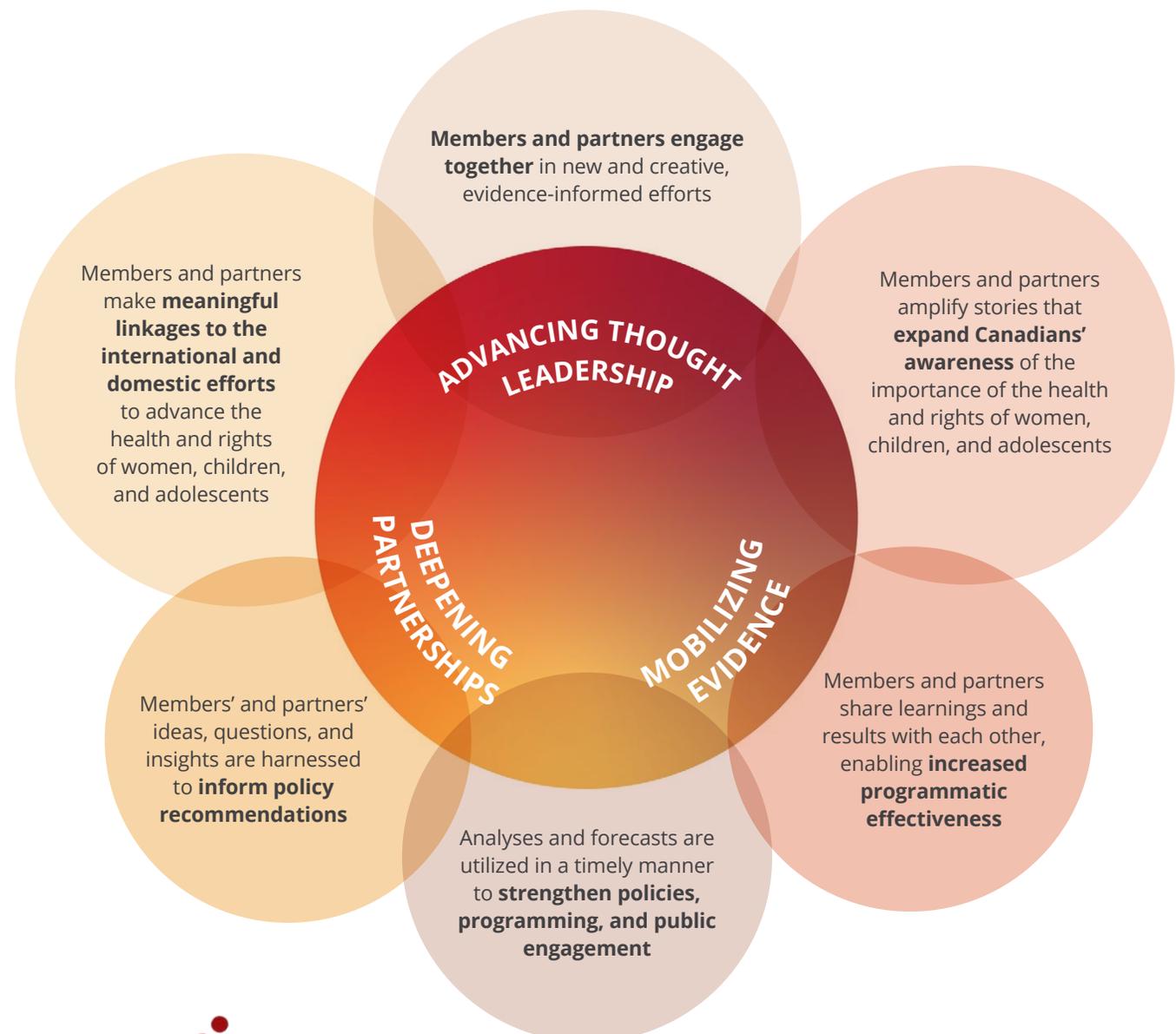
At CanWaCH, we celebrate the diversity of views, backgrounds, and experiences of our partners and in turn, build our partners' capacity and willingness to engage in new partnerships. Our multi-stakeholder platform facilitates mutual understanding amongst partners and builds the trust necessary to expand the range of approaches to build momentum and achieve results. Through our commitment to inclusivity, we will continue to embrace and amplify each partner's distinct contribution. CanWaCH will bring together and elevate our partners' efforts in a purposeful way, recognizing that sharing knowledge and resources will result in more effective policies, programs, and public engagement.



# How Will We Get There?

Our strategic objectives represent the multifaceted and iterative nature of the work that lies ahead. Just as no one individual can tackle the most pressing issues in advancing the health and rights of women, children and adolescents, our strategic objectives cannot be approached in isolation. They are necessarily interlinked and require a synchronized approach. The visual below depicts the results we anticipate at the intersection of our strategic objectives.

## Framework for Action



# How Will We Work?

## How will we monitor our success?

The Secretariat will be responsible for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, under the direction of the Board of Directors. An Implementation Plan and Results Framework will outline the activities and performance monitoring processes. The selection, prioritization and resourcing of activities will be conducted through an Annual Work Plan. In order to ensure that this strategic plan remains aligned with global architecture and emerging priorities, the Secretariat will undertake an annual review in order to make any necessary adjustments.



## Organizational Excellence

The fulfillment of our strategic objectives relies on the organizational excellence that encircles all our operations. Integral to our organizational excellence is an approach that is both informed by, and in support of, our Membership. Three key structures guide CanWaCH's work:

1. **Board of Directors:** The governing body of CanWaCH is drawn from among sector leaders and experts and provides strategy, direction and oversight for the organization. The Board is led by the Board Chair and works through the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Governance and Human Resources Committee to oversee CanWaCH activities.
2. **Secretariat:** Providing the technical and administrative functions of CanWaCH, the Secretariat is comprised of a team of personnel responsible for delivering on the CanWaCH's strategic objectives and tasked with supporting CanWaCH partners in the delivery of their activities. The Secretariat serves CanWaCH at large and is overseen by the Board and its Committees.
3. **Membership:** The CanWaCH Membership is comprised of organizations and individuals working toward advancing the health and rights of women, adolescents, and children. Members inform, legitimize, and support the delivery of our collective objectives through their programs and projects. They are both drivers and recipients of the value of CanWaCH. Members actively participate in CanWaCH's working groups, bringing together experts in specific thematic areas to support building the sectors capacity and to take CanWaCH strategic objectives from theory to action.

# Annex A: Lessons Learned and Evaluation Findings

Since its inception, CanWaCH has gained vital experience and insight into its potential as a membership-based organization building partnerships for impact. The vision and mission of our new strategy are expanded to include adolescents and to better describe CanWaCH's purpose.

Existing (2016 to 2020 Strategic Plan)	New (2020 to 2025 Strategic Plan)
<b>Vision</b>	
We envision a world where every woman and child survives and thrives	A world where women, children and adolescents, in all their diversity, realize their right to thrive in full health.
<b>Mission</b>	
We catalyze Canadian collaboration to improve women's and children's health worldwide.	CanWaCH unites the expertise and commitment of Canadian individuals and organizations to advance the health and rights of women, children and adolescents globally.

In the 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan, three strategic pillars were the foundation of our work: Measuring Results, Knowledge Exchange and Stakeholder Engagement. In delivering on our first strategic plan, we built up a vibrant multi-stakeholder platform and established CanWaCH as a go-to broker for information, relationships and inspiring stories. Highlights of our work include creating a dynamic Project Explorer that collects and aggregates the results of Canadian partners, formalizing a diverse base of committed Members across Canada, offering countless opportunities for learning and capacity-building, facilitating the development of the Thrive Agenda policy platform, and delivery of the Lead On Canada public engagement campaign. In the new strategy, we are inspired to build on these original strategic objectives and assets in order to drive the next stage of Canadian leadership.

Existing (2016 to 2020 Strategic Plan)	New (2020 to 2025 Strategic Plan)
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Measuring Results:</b> Improved use of data to inform performance and decision making</li> <li>• <b>Knowledge Exchange:</b> Strengthening engagement of CAN-MNCH with its partners for improved results and engaged publics</li> <li>• <b>Stakeholder Engagement:</b> Continued stakeholder investment and leadership in RMNCAH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Advancing Thought Leadership</b> by gathering, exchanging, and championing leading expertise and emerging trends, we will activate the knowledge necessary to turn ideas into impact.</li> <li>• <b>Mobilizing Evidence</b> by analyzing, integrating, and sharing data, we will advance the solutions to complex challenges and reinforce best practices.</li> <li>• <b>Deepening Partnerships</b> by convening partnerships for impact, will achieve greater effectiveness through collaborative learning and action.</li> </ul>

Key learnings were generated from the 2019 Global Affairs Canada Mid-Term Evaluation, the strategic planning process, and annual membership surveys. This Strategic Plan has been shaped by these lessons learned, including:

### **PARTNERSHIPS ARE A TWO-WAY RELATIONSHIP**

CanWaCH's role and value as a convener, facilitator of information sharing, and relationship builder is an important part of the global movement for sustainable development. The new strategic plan reflects the pivotal role of the multi-stakeholder platform in supporting a responsive, collaborative and inclusive approach to advancing the health and rights of women, adolescents, and children. It also recognizes the distinct space occupied by CanWaCH as a project accountable both to funders and to Members, Associates, and other stakeholders.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND ANALYSIS**

Rigorous, high-quality analysis underpins all that CanWaCH does and is highly valued by the Membership. In order to leverage the knowledge and insights generated by Members and partners, CanWaCH must take a leadership role in curating and amplifying these learnings in compelling and intelligible formats for a variety of audiences to ensure that knowledge becomes action.

### **MEANINGFUL CROSS-CANADA ENGAGEMENT**

The power of any partnership is strengthened by its diversity and the inclusion of all voices. Now that CanWaCH has a formal and increasingly stable membership, additional efforts are needed to ensure that small and medium-sized organizations, francophone, and geographically diverse organizations are included in programming.

### **PRIORITIZATION AND PURPOSE**

CanWaCH's core areas of work from its 2016-2020 Strategic Plan - Measuring Results, Exchanging Knowledge, and Engaging Stakeholders - should remain central in all that we do. Building on the gains to date by focusing on "trademark" CanWaCH outputs and providing clarity on the value and interlinkages of these activities will strengthen CanWaCH's effectiveness.

### **PRINCIPLE-BASED**

The 2020-2025 Strategic Plan's vision, mission and values sharpen CanWaCH's focus on rights-based and inclusive approaches to achieving the SDGs; defines CanWaCH as a multi-stakeholder platform that places its Members at its core; and provides a defined set of values to guide decision-making.

### **PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT**

Definition of future success requires clear metrics, outcomes and results which allow CanWaCH to monitor and be held accountable for these results.

# Annex B: How We Established Our Strategic Objectives

CanWaCH undertook a consultative process to develop this Strategic Plan, in order to ensure the meaningful incorporation of Members' and key stakeholders' views, including the CanWaCH Board of Directors, Working Groups, Global Affairs Canada, and the Secretariat. A Committee of the Board of Directors, along with the CEO, led the process. Figures B.1 and B.2 provide an overview.

*Figure B.1 Overview of strategic plan development approach and timeline*



*Figure B.2 Overview of Strategic Planning Key Activities (September 2019 – March 2020)*

Method	Description
<b>Key Informant Interviews</b>	11 Board Members 7 Global Affairs Canada Officials 1 Staff Member
<b>Focus Groups</b>	4 Staff Focus Groups (22 staff) 4 CanWaCH Working Group Focus Groups (12 Members)
<b>Document Review</b>	Global Affairs Mid-Term Evaluation (informed by approximately 50 evaluation participants) Grant Agreements Annual Reports Annual Member Surveys
<b>SWOT Analysis &amp; Development of Strategic Options</b>	Based on the outcomes of the interviews and document reviews, a SWOT analysis was completed to identify what CanWaCH was doing right and what needed to change. From this analysis, 10 Strategic Options were presented to the Board of Directors for consideration, refinement and bundling to form the basis of the current plan's strategic objectives.
<b>Facilitated Board Retreat</b>	CanWaCH Board Members reviewed and refined the strategic bundles to develop the foundation of the strategy
<b>CanWaCH Staff Retreat</b>	22 Staff Members reviewed and validated the initial draft strategic plan
<b>Board Review and Approval</b>	Iterative process of reviewing the strategic plan