



CanWaCH

Canadian Partnership for
Women and Children's Health

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITIES:

WORKING TOGETHER IN HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE WAYS


LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The CanWaCH team lives, works and plays across Turtle Island. With staff spanning from Lekwungen territory in the West to Huron-Wendat territory in the East, we pay respect to the traditional guardians of the land upon which we live and work.

We acknowledge that Indigenous peoples are the traditional guardians of Turtle Island, on the land also known as Canada. We recognize their long standing and ongoing relationship with this territory, which includes unceded and traditional land.

As settlers on this land, we have a responsibility to continue developing meaningful partnership with Indigenous peoples, to reassess and reconsider our positionality in the spaces we occupy, and to use our power to speak out against the historic and ongoing systemic injustices experienced by Indigenous peoples.

We offer this land acknowledgement knowing that it is just the beginning of our commitment to Indigenous solidarity. As an organization we strive to act alongside Indigenous communities by committing to working in partnership, supporting and amplifying their voices and learning from them in all areas of our work. Reconciliation is an ongoing process and it is our duty as individuals and as an organization to continue to unlearn colonial practices and history while relearning our collective past, present and future. We are committed to pursuing a more inclusive, collaborative and respectful future that is grounded in the **94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada** and the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**.



Reconciliation is an ongoing process and it is our duty as individuals and as an organization to continue to unlearn colonial practices and history while relearning our collective past, present and future.

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

“Diversity, equity and inclusion is not a sprint, it is a forever marathon that is about the journey and what we learn along the way.”

Dear friends and colleagues,

If the last year has shown us anything, it is the resilience of the CanWaCH membership. We have continued to push for progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in the face of multiple crises – the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, and war and conflict. These crises have challenged us to continue to find innovative global health solutions that uplift women and girls in communities around the world, while continuing to advocate for the proper resources to implement existing solutions that ease the burden on healthcare systems. I am proud to be a part of a membership that addresses these challenges head on while always questioning the status quo - not only in the work that we do in partnership with communities, but in how our organizations are structured and operate.

In 2020, COVID-19 challenged us to re-invent the way that we work with offices around the world shifting to working from home and virtual meetings and events. Our ability to successfully navigate that challenge inspired us to contemplate deeper, substantive changes in the way we work through 2021-2022, with a push from the global health workforce to decolonize our approaches, bring new voices and perspectives to decision-making spaces and create inclusive environments that enable more equitable global partnerships.

I recognize that addressing these challenges must start at the board level and I am pleased to share that over the last year CanWaCH's Board of Directors has begun our own diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)

journey. We have worked with Canadian DEI experts to create more equitable and inclusive practices for board recruitment and retention. Alongside 70 organizations, CanWaCH has signed on to the Anti-Racism Framework for Canada's International Cooperation Sector. We are dedicated to improving DEI practices within the sector by providing our monitoring and evaluation expertise to support the data collection and sharing methods used to inform the Anti-Racist Cooperation (ARC) Hub's annual survey and report.

As Board Chair, I am committed to working with the rest of the board, Julia and the team to implement these DEI practices and continue to re-evaluate them on a regular basis. Diversity, equity and inclusion is not a sprint, it is a forever marathon that is about the journey and what we learn along the way. This reflective work will lay the foundation for CanWaCH's mission, creating open and inclusive spaces as we continue to strive for equal futures for everyone, everywhere.

I wish you health and happiness into the winter months and the new year ahead.



Onome Ako

Chair, Board of Directors



LETTER FROM THE CEO

“I am encouraged by the energy and engagement that happens when we are able to come together in collaborative spaces. These moments have renewed and strengthened connections within the CanWaCH community.”

What a year! Just as we started to move out of the pandemic-induced 'groundhog day fog' that has followed us since 2020, we find new challenges at our doorstep - war and conflicts, restrictive laws and policies aimed at women's health rights and the climate crisis. These challenges existed prior to COVID-19, but this year they emerged with a new level of complexity in a world deeply scarred by the impacts of a global health crisis.

At CanWaCH, we 'feel' the news, reading between the lines the deep injustice of inequality driving our daily news feeds. Sadly, there is no one magic solution that will suddenly reverse the moment we are in but we do know there are contributions to be made from across the academic, civil society, government and private sectors. We know that working together is the only pathway to the world we want to see.

Over the past year, we have come together in both new and old ways. We have learned that even relatively new ways of connecting require a fresh approach - we have all experienced some level of "Zoom fatigue". With this in mind, our team has made a conscious effort to offer online events and tools that offer concrete, tangible skills and practical guidance to our members while simultaneously shifting conversations and discussion to in-person moments as public health guidelines permitted.

Like other industries, the international cooperation sector has experienced tremendous turnover in personnel. We, quite literally, have all had to get to know

one another again. The return to in-person gatherings brought anticipation and excitement. While it has taken some time to become comfortable again with travel logistics, how to talk to strangers and even how to put an outfit together, these in-person moments have been a personal highlight of the year. I am encouraged by the energy and engagement that happens when we are able to come together in these collaborative spaces. These moments have renewed and strengthened connections within the CanWaCH community.

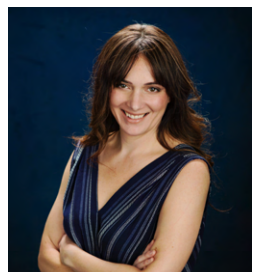
Throughout the year, I have also been inspired by our members' steadfast commitment to addressing ongoing inequities in communities across the country and around the world. Reconciliation is an ongoing journey as is becoming an anti-racist organization and community. CanWaCH strives to act in solidarity with Indigenous communities to support the creation of equitable partnerships and to offer space that amplifies the voices of leaders in this work. We are dedicated to providing access to experts, guidance and tools that help strengthen our members' work as we continue on our collective journey toward a world where women, children and adolescents, in all their diversity, realize their right to thrive in full health.

In solidarity,

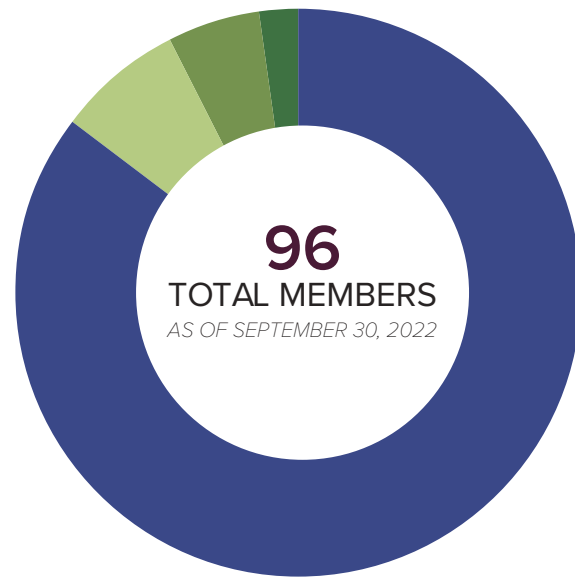


Julia Anderson

Chief Executive Officer



MEMBERSHIP



86%

CIVIL SOCIETY / NGO

7%

ACADEMIC / RESEARCH

5%

PRIVATE SECTOR

2%

PROFESSIONAL
ASSOCIATIONA BREAKDOWN OF THE
CANWACH MEMBERSHIP

Once again, the CanWaCH **membership** has shown its resiliency in the face of constantly evolving global challenges. Canada's international cooperation sector did not escape the impacts of workforce turnover felt in economies around the world. More organizations than not underwent significant shifts in personnel and operations throughout the year. The foundation of CanWaCH's work has always been to support and uplift the work of our members and, amid these changes, that fortification became more important than ever.

Throughout the year, CanWaCH has undertaken significant internal improvements to our systems and processes to better enable us to support our members. In addition to the implementation of a new member relations management platform, the team has revamped our member application and onboarding process while doubling down on our efforts to 'check-in' with members about their needs on a more personal, candid level. This behind the scenes work has allowed us to expand the depth and breadth of our relationships with members.

RE-CONNECTING
WITH OUR MEMBERS IN PERSON

Two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, CanWaCH members told us in-person opportunities were needed to reconnect and explore new approaches that ensure healthy workplaces while collectively reimagining our work towards a more equitable global recovery.

To meet this need by our members, CanWaCH reimagined the approach to our annual flagship event and introduced "**Cross Country CanWaCH Connect**" events in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver in early May 2022. These engaging in-person evening gatherings included networking

and inspiring keynote speakers focused on leadership, resilience and healthy workplaces. Across the three cities, 103 members including 14 emerging youth leaders and participants from 59 small-to-medium sized organizations attended these events.

Following these events, members reiterated to us the value of such in-person opportunities in generating excitement around the diversity of the CanWaCH membership and in driving momentum towards new partnerships and further collaboration.

MEMBERSHIP

*Youth play an important role in the ongoing success of the Equal Futures Network with **over 60 youth-led organizations** in the membership.*

RENEWED COMMITMENT TO YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

A renewed area of focus for CanWaCH is youth engagement. CanWaCH started the year as a proud partner of the eighth annual Global Health Students and Young Professionals Summit (GHSYPS) held online from November 26-27, 2021. Inspired by this partnership, CanWaCH worked with the International Youth Alliance for Family Planning (IYAFP) Canada, a youth-led CanWaCH member, to develop a youth engagement strategy and conduct an environmental scan of youth activities within the membership and beyond. Following this, CanWaCH established a new **Youth Working Group** in the summer of 2022. The 17 members of the working group have a strong mandate to provide input, expertise and advice towards CanWaCH's youth engagement efforts and to build community among professionals working with youth within the international cooperation sector.

Domestically, CanWaCH continued to foster relationships with young leaders who are passionate about advancing gender equality in their community. As a part of **Equal Futures 2022: A Gender Equality Summit**, a diverse group of 25 youth bursary recipients from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island received financial support to attend and actively participate in the summit. Throughout the summit's programming, the voices of youth experts were front and centre on topics including advancing gender equality in Canadian politics, building social movements for systems change in the digital age and intersectional perspectives on the gender equality movement. Youth play an important role in the ongoing success of the **Equal Futures Network** with over 60 youth-led organizations in the membership.



ADVANCING HEALTH EXPERTISE THROUGH THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Prior to the pandemic, the global healthcare system was already in serious peril and existing challenges have been exacerbated by COVID-19. The last year further exposed global health inequities - from access to COVID-19 vaccines to hunger crises to the rollback of sexual and reproductive health rights. To stop the setbacks caused by COVID-19 and to advocate for the strengthening of global health systems that meet the needs of women and children, CanWaCH focused on putting the voices of health experts delivering unique and effective content in front of the right audiences at the right time. This work is made possible with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and has demonstrated unequivocally, the power of partnership. Through nine high-level roundtables and 27 engagements with key decision-makers, including three sitting Ministers, the Deputy Minister for International Development and Members of Parliament from across the political spectrum, CanWaCH worked continuously to ensure women and children's health and rights were centred in discussions of the COVID-19 response and recovery.

**9 HIGH-LEVEL
ROUNDTABLES**

**27 ENGAGEMENTS WITH
KEY DECISION-MAKERS**

CanWaCH also continues to be an active contributing member to the **Future Planning Initiative** as well as other campaigns like **Aid for Afghanistan** and the seventh **replenishment** of the **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**. For example, CanWaCH co-hosted an event with the Future Planning Initiative partners to mark Canada's commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights and to showcase the release of Guttmacher Institute's report, *The Impact of Canadian International Assistance for Family Planning, 2020–2021*.

In 2022, CanWaCH became the new home of ThriveHire - an online platform for the global health community. Now housed on the CanWaCH website, the **ThriveHire Files** is your go-to destination for commentary on hot topics in global health, career and job search advice, best practices and lessons learned from practitioners, and more. CanWaCH has published thoughtful pieces on global health issues including on the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and reflections from the 77th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The ThriveHire Files is also a space to examine local-to-global issues in gender equality such as economic justice and pay inequities. Through this space, we strive to uplift and amplify new voices within the international cooperation sector especially those of emerging young leaders. Guest contributors are always welcome!

CANWACH IS THE NEW HOME OF THRIVEHIRE

Since 2017, CanWaCH has been compiling data and depicting it in a straightforward way that is open and accessible to everyone through the **Project Explorer**. We believe that research and data should not be limited to academic studies and spaces. Throughout

the year, we have reimagined how we define evidence, how we generate it, and how we use it. Accountability tracking for commitments to women and children's health like the **Thrive Agenda** is a key area where we are generating evidence. Behind the scenes, we have been bolstering our research capacity and setting the stage for a robust research agenda that supports the work of our members in improving health outcomes for women, adolescents and children around the world.



Another way we have reimagined our approach to generating evidence and how we use it is through our public opinion research. Building off of the success of our working groups, we launched the Public Opinion Research Working Group to foster coordination and collaboration within the international cooperation sector to provide timely snapshots into the Canadian public's opinions on issues in global health. The working group advances public opinion polling by Canada's international cooperation sector that is strategically timed, aligned in language, common objectives and best practices and that provides insights to inform the communications and public engagement efforts of CanWaCH members and partners.

Support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation helped to demonstrate unequivocally, the power of partnership.

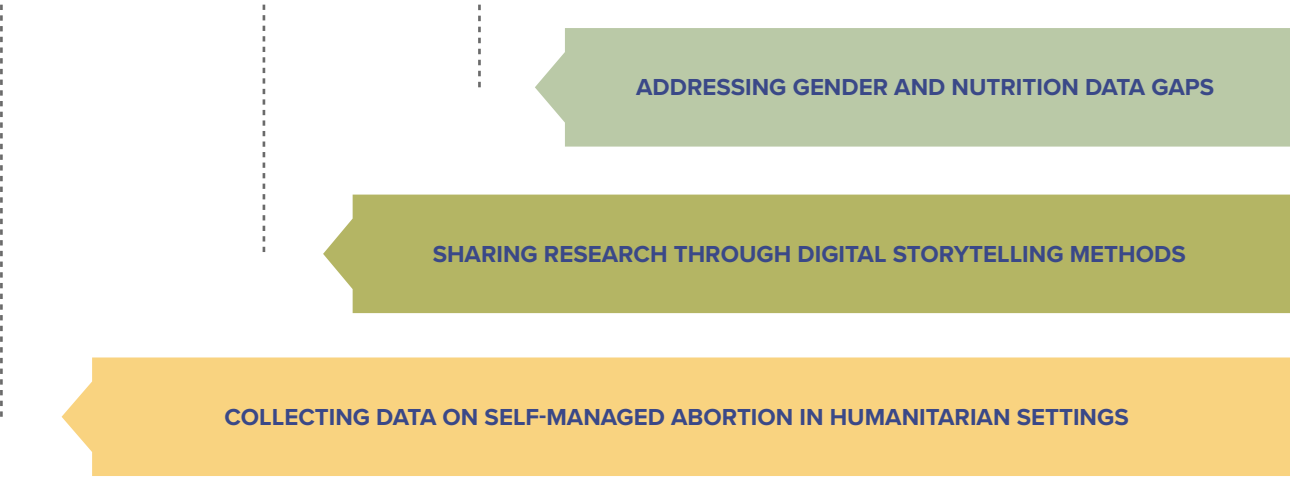
EXPANDING AND STRENGTHENING CAPACITY

The COVID-19 pandemic not only continued to impact the nature of our work but our work environment itself. The international cooperation sector was not immune to the staffing shortages and high turnover rates being experienced across the global labour force, with many people deciding to leave the sector or change career paths. To help address these operational challenges, while still being mindful of Zoom fatigue, CanWaCH focused on providing events, tools and resources that will help strengthen and expand our members’ capacity.

CANADIAN COLLABORATIVE
FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

During the closing session of CanWaCH Academy, we were proud to introduce the second iteration of the **Canadian Collaborative for Global Health**. The Collaborative brings together seven Canadian and nine global partners to generate solutions to urgent data challenges, rooted in a feminist approach, to contribute meaningful progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in 11 countries. The three labs focus on collecting data on self-managed abortion in humanitarian settings, addressing gender and nutrition data gaps, and sharing research through digital storytelling methods. They will produce findings and tools to help refine and expand monitoring and evaluation best practices used in global health projects.

THE THREE LABS FOCUS ON:



A BREAKDOWN OF
CANWACH EVENTS

42
EVENTS & WEBINARS

3141
TOTAL REGISTRANTS

CANWACH
ACADEMY

Over the course of four days in May 2022, CanWaCH held a wide range of online practical workshops and training sessions, known as **CanWaCH Academy**, under the theme of “Recovery, Renewal and Resilience” for those working in finance and operations, communications and public engagement, gender equality and programming, monitoring and evaluation, and policy and advocacy.

1010
Total registrants (including 200 who self-identified as youth)

24
Speakers/instructors

16
Hours of learning

EQUAL FUTURES 2022:
A GENDER EQUALITY SUMMIT

Over the last couple of years, there has been a concerted effort within the international cooperation sector to create local-to-global connections within our work. Grounded in the need to decolonize global health work, there is a push to create stronger bonds and mutual understanding between the Canadian public - especially youth - and the communities where our members work around the world.

To strengthen connections in pursuit of **Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality**, we have worked throughout the year to foster connections between the **Equal Futures Network**, a CanWaCH initiative which brings together over 500 organizations, agencies, nonprofits and grassroots groups committed to advancing gender equality in Canada, and CanWaCH members working to advance gender equality in communities around the world.

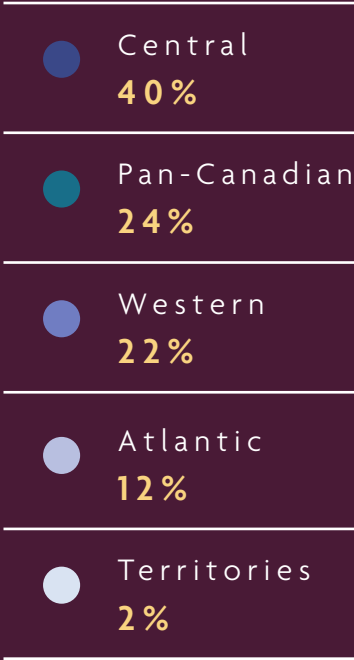
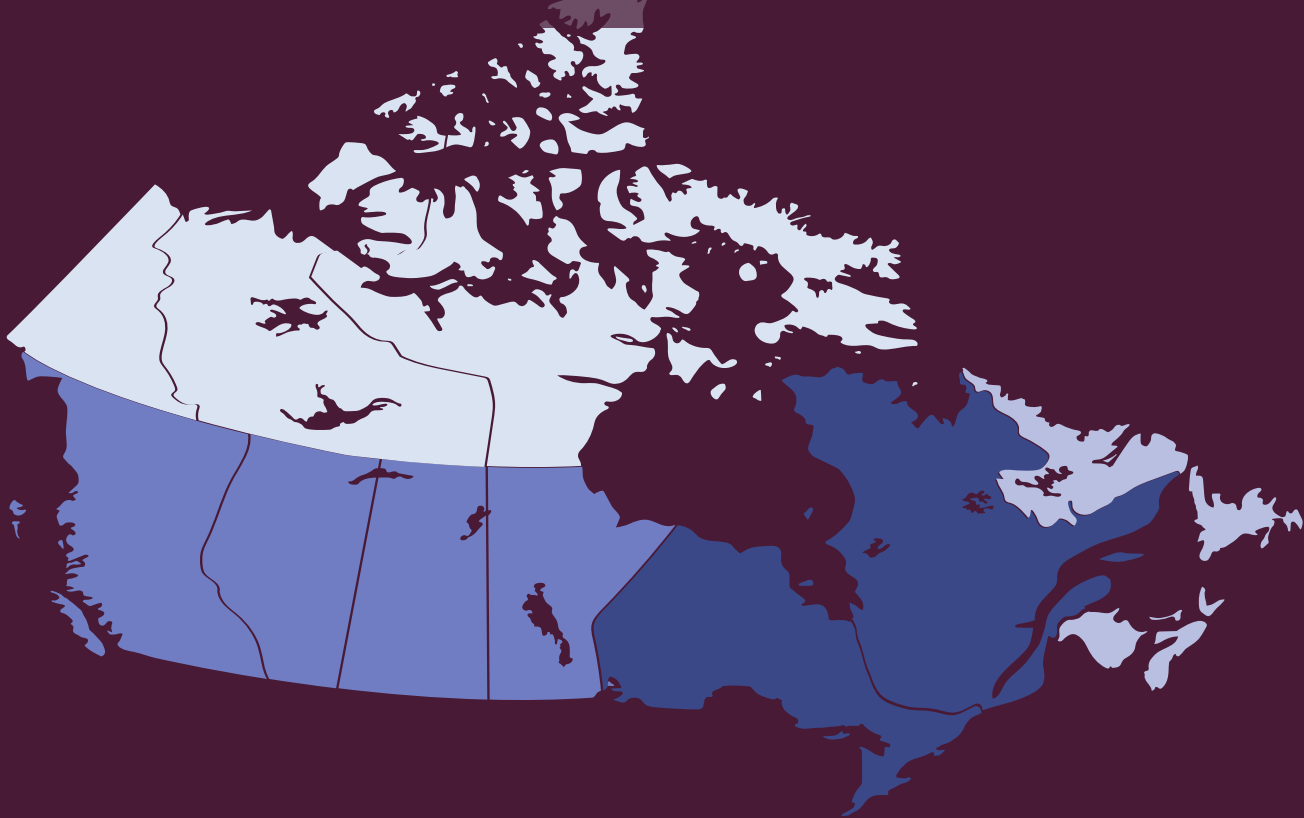


From June 7-8, 2022, over 200 gender equality champions, leaders and key stakeholders from across the country gathered in-person for the inaugural **Equal Futures 2022: A Gender Equality Summit** held on unceded Algonquin Anishinaabe territory, on settler maps known as Ottawa. Participants were also able to take part by joining the livestream and/or **rewatch sessions on CPAC** throughout the summer.

Through the theme “Collaboration, Collective Action and Community”, the summit **featured** a variety of programming, including practical workshops, high-level panels and discussions and networking opportunities to build connections, strengthen capacity, share expertise, and establish collective actions for advancing gender equality across the country and around the world.

CanWaCH was pleased to welcome the **Honourable Marci Ien**, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, and the **Honourable Harjit Sajjan**, Minister of International Development, as we strive to continue connecting the gender equality movement in Canada to global movements and initiatives. These connections spotlighted the universality of the Sustainable Development Goals while confirming the local-to-global threads already woven into our work. Overwhelming feedback was that sessions led by Indigenous leaders and the theme of Indigenous solidarity were highlights for participants as well as a top learning from their experience. The need to ground our local work to advance gender equality in solidarity and partnership with Indigenous communities is a lesson that we will carry forward into 2022-2023.

A BREAKDOWN OF THE EQUAL FUTURES NETWORK MEMBERSHIP



506 MEMBERS

CANWACH PROJECT EXPLORER

Canadian actors and their partners have a huge impact worldwide when it comes to development, humanitarian response, human rights and gender equality. The **Project Explorer** is an interactive map illustrating a robust database of over 1500 projects from Canada's commitments to advancing the health and wellbeing of women, children and adolescents from 2010 to present. These projects were led by 410 organizations with the support of over 800 global partners in 128 countries around the world. 643 projects focused on advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights in 100 countries.



Canadian actors and their partners have a huge impact worldwide when it comes to development, humanitarian response, human rights and gender equality.

The **2021 Global Health Impact Report** was released in February 2022 and reflected that much of this year was spent re-evaluating and reorganizing our approaches amid a changing world. Through this data collection and analysis, CanWaCH identified two areas for further research and development of best practices: 1) the need for better understanding and integration of decolonization and local leadership; and, 2) the need to support technical capacity.

These findings informed our focus on expanding the depth of technical expertise and knowledge within the membership through the production of training materials and tools across disciplines including gender equality, monitoring and evaluation and public engagement. In April 2022, CanWaCH introduced our **Technical Guidance Note on Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Plans for Global Health & Rights Programs**. This technical note provides clear, succinct guidance on creating monitoring and evaluation plans for global health programs.

CanWaCH implemented a 'train the trainer' approach to our traditional **gender equality training program**. Throughout the year, 38 organizations sent team members to be trained as facilitators who can now provide this training to colleagues and partners. Building off of this work, the **Gender Equality Working Group** developed a **French Terminology Guide on the Use of Technical Terms in Gender Equality** to make it easier for our members to incorporate gender inclusive language in their global health programming and communications.

The ever-evolving digital landscape also presents challenges that require reimagining our approaches to communications and public engagement. CanWaCH revamped our public engagement strategy to return to basics with a focus on generating awareness and public education. To foster the ongoing sharing of best practices, ready-to-share communications materials, and professional development opportunities, CanWaCH worked with the **Public Engagement Working Group** to develop an ad hoc **Public Engagement Bulletin** and member-wide open meetings on a quarterly basis.

We also worked with members to develop a series of short educational videos on key issues in global health - vaccine equity, sexual and reproductive health and rights, water, sanitation and hygiene, and nutrition and food security.

Through the Equal Futures Network, we worked with the team and community at the **On Canada Project** to build **Designing Digital Dialogue: Communications for Systems Change**, a resource that helps leaders, communications practitioners, and social media managers level-up their digital communications and public engagement strategies. Integrating local-to-global reflection exercises and providing tools to help increase capacity for public engagement activities, the toolkit helps members effectively communicate global work to Canadian audiences.

We also heard from small-to-medium sized organizations about limited capacity to stay up to date and engage with the latest government investments and policy decisions. To make this easier for members, we created a **curated list** of the latest announcements relevant to global health policy and investment by Canada on our website alongside deeper dives into 'need to know' details around major moments like the federal budget.

CHECK OUT THESE HANDY TOOLS AVAILABLE ON THE CANWACH WEBSITE TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR WORK!

- ▶ **ANTI-RACISM COOPERATION HUB**
- ▶ **BUILDING CAPACITY AND CONFIDENCE IN GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING: A VIRTUAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE**
- ▶ **FRENCH TERMINOLOGY GUIDE ON THE USE OF TECHNICAL TERMS IN GENDER EQUALITY**
- ▶ **LATEST GOVERNMENT OF CANADA ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- ▶ **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT BULLETIN**
- ▶ **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT VIDEOS**
- ▶ **TECHNICAL GUIDANCE NOTE ON DEVELOPING MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLANS FOR GLOBAL HEALTH & RIGHTS PROGRAMS**
- ▶ **THRIVEHIRE FILES**

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Barbara Grantham, CARE Canada
Jocelyn Mackie, Grand Challenges Canada
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We are grateful to these former team members who contributed to our work over the past year:

Jen Boyce, Senior Advisor, Government Relations & Policy
Erin Gilchrist, Senior Policy Advisor
Julie Vautour, Equal Futures Network Officer

CANWACH WORKING GROUPS

GENDER EQUALITY WORKING GROUP

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Kelly Bowden, Oxfam Canada
Rudy Broers/Anjum Sultana, Plan International Canada
Martin Fischer, World Vision Canada
Gabriel Karaskz-Perriau, Cooperation Canada
Sarah Magee/Louis Belanger, Bigger than Our Borders
Eileen Melnick-McCarthy, Cuso International
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Taryn Russell, Save the Children Canada
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Leah Peer
Andrea Rodriguez Ayala
Maryann Rogers
Sanam Sekandary
Simron Sidhu

Lauren Wiebe
Lauren Murray, CanWaCH (Secretariat)

EQUAL FUTURES NETWORK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Helen Kennedy, Egale Canada
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Marie-Noelle Lanthier, Leadership féminin Prescott-Russell
Jenny Nam, BC Women's Health Foundation
Aimee Nygaard, BC Women's Health Foundation (Mentee)
Eugenia Ochoa, Elevate (Mentee)
Sydney Piggott, Elevate
Brintha Sivajohan, BIPOC Women's Health Network
Erin Jex, CanWaCH (Secretariat)





CanWaCH
Canadian Partnership for
Women and Children's Health



In partnership with
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