



Fund for Innovation  
and Transformation

Fonds pour l'innovation  
et la transformation

## **8 organizations from across Canada selected for prestigious national innovation fund!**

**Winnipeg, MB** – Eight organizations from across Canada have been selected to test innovative solutions that will improve the lives of women and girls in developing countries.

The successful organizations will be awarded between \$150,000 - \$250,000 to test their ideas in eight different countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The selected innovations address challenges related to health, education, safety and technology, with a focus on empowering women and girls. Examples include a digital database to improve safety for women journalists in Sudan, tailored e-learning programs for students in Latin America and Uganda, and a distribution model for solar agricultural technologies in Tanzania, among others. Each idea will be tested over 6-15 months, giving organizations an opportunity to gather evidence, adapt and improve.

The funding is part of a unique new national initiative, the Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT), that supports ideas at the testing phase. Launched in May 2019, FIT funds Canadian small and medium-sized organizations from different sectors to test new or improved practices, policies and approaches with local partners around the world. The 5-year, \$16.5 M program is an initiative of the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils, funded by Global Affairs Canada and managed by the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation.

For Christina Maclsaac, Director of Innovation for FIT, the first year of the program has reaffirmed the potential of Canadian organizations to drive inclusive innovation on the international stage. “Innovation can’t happen in a silo. We know that when women, girls and vulnerable people are involved in identifying challenges and finding solutions, the results have more lasting impact. It’s great to see this collaborative approach reflected in the projects moving forward.”

Janice Hamilton, Executive Director of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, notes that “another key focus of FIT is sharing lessons learned from the testing results of the innovation solutions and sharing them with the wider international development community. This could provide a tremendous opportunity to improve development practice.”

FIT is currently in its second round of funding and will be announcing the next set of successful organizations in the spring.

For more information about the first round of funding recipients, please refer to attachment and <https://fit-fit.ca/fit-funding-decisions/>.

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**About the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC):** MCIC is a coalition of Manitoba-based organizations involved in international development. Its mission is to support, connect and amplify the work of its members and partners, while directly engaging and collaborating with Manitobans for global sustainability. MCIC encourages dialogue on global issues and helps empower Manitobans to become active global citizens — individuals who understand that their actions here make a difference around the world. MCIC is also responsible for distributing Government of Manitoba and Government of Canada funds designated for international development and humanitarian projects.



**About the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation:** The Inter-Council Network is a coalition of the eight Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation. The independent Councils are committed to global sustainable development, social justice and social change. They are rooted in communities across Canada and represent nearly 350 diverse civil society organizations from across Canada. Council membership varies from locally based cultural community civil society organizations to highly recognizable international organizations.



**About Global Affairs Canada:** Global Affairs Canada manages Canada's diplomatic relations, provides consular services to Canadians, promotes the country's international trade, and leads Canada's international development and humanitarian assistance.



## **FIT Funding Announcement Intake 1: Attachment to February 25<sup>th</sup> 2020 Media Release**

FIT has selected eight (8) Canadian small and medium-sized organizations to receive funding in the program's first intake. Each SMO will receive up to \$250 000 to test their innovative solutions in partnership with local organizations over a 6-15 month period.

Details about the funded projects are provided below.

### **1. Canadian Organization: Alternatives (Quebec)**

**Project Title:** Une plateforme contre la violence à l'égard des femmes journalistes au Soudan  
(A platform against violence on women journalists in Sudan)

**Testing Country:** Sudan

**Testing period:** 12 months

**Amount:** \$246,710

Alternatives will develop and test a new digital database, Harassmap, as a way to improve the safety of women journalists and protect women's rights in Sudan. By collecting secure data on violence and harassment experienced by women journalists, the online tool will help organizations and the international community better understand gender-based violence in the region and improve prevention and response methods.

### **2. Canadian Organization: Canada SOS: Students Offering Support (Ontario)**

**Project Title:** Girls Groundswell

**Testing Country:** Guatemala

**Testing period:** 15 months

**Amount:** \$198,574

Canada SOS will test an innovative approach to improving educational performance and retention among rural Mayan youth, especially girls, in Guatemala, using student-driven "learning circles" supported by e-learning technologies. "Learning circles" will be led by trained Indigenous youth (aged 13-21) who will mentor students in grades 4-6 to encourage academic reinforcement and improved educational outcomes.

**3. Canadian Organization:** Canadian Network for International Surgery (CNIS) (British Columbia)

**Project Title:** Midwifery Active Digitization Empowerment Initiative for Tanzania

**Testing Country:** Tanzania

**Testing period:** 15 months

**Amount:** \$250,000

CNIS will test the use of digital augmentation to improve and expand the delivery of midwifery curriculum at Tanzania's Nursing Training Colleges. The project will evaluate the effectiveness of digital learning as a cost-effective alternative to standard classroom training, with the goal of increasing availability of quality care for women at risk of maternal and neonatal mortality in low- and middle-income countries.

**4. Canadian Organization:** Change for Children Association (Alberta)

**Project Title:** Technology & Training for Quality and Equality

**Testing Country:** Nicaragua

**Testing period:** 14 months

**Amount:** \$250,000

Change for Children will test a new training program and digital resource database for teachers in remote indigenous communities of Nicaragua. The offline, technology-enabled, linguistically and culturally-appropriate MOOC (massive open online course) will be tested to determine its impact on teacher capacity, classroom resources, quality of instruction and gender equality.

**5. Canadian Organization:** Embrace International Foundation (Alberta)

**Project Title:** Inclusive E-Learning for Ugandan Youth

**Testing Country:** Uganda

**Testing period:** 12 months

**Amount:** \$213,814

Embrace International Foundation will test a new approach to self-directed e-learning through the use of Mobile Learning Labs, which consist of a portable plug-and-play server RACHEL (Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning) and tablets. The project aims to empower and improve the lives of students in rural Uganda, especially girls and those living with disabilities, by promoting skills development and improving enrolment rates.

**6. Canadian Organization:** KIDS Initiative (Manitoba)

**Project Title:** Kieni Fighters Resource Centre for Women and Girls

**Country:** Kenya

**Testing period:** 15 months

**Amount:** \$214,945

KIDS Initiative will test a new holistic prevention program, the Kieni Fighter Resource Centre for Women and Girls, that addresses behavioural, biomedical, and structural risks of HIV/AIDS infection for women and girls in Kenya. The project, which includes training to promote alternative livelihood opportunities and incentives to increase educational completion rates, is designed to reduce exposure to the root causes of the feminization of HIV/AIDS.

**7. Canadian Organization:** OVO Solar Technologies Inc. (Ontario)

**Project Title:** Increasing poultry production in Zambia

**Testing Country:** Zambia

**Testing period:** 12 months

**Amount:** \$249,030

OVO will test the distribution of solar chicken egg incubators with related training as a means to help farmers in Zambia raise more chickens, diversify their incomes and improve their overall livelihoods.

**8. Canadian Organization:** Ryerson University (Ontario)

**Project Title:** Preventing Cervical Cancer in India through Self-sampling (PCCIS)

**Testing Country:** India

**Testing period:** 15 months

**Amount:** \$250,000

Ryerson will test the introduction of a self-sampling method, supported by a sexual health literacy intervention, to increase screening for Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and cervical cancer among rural women in India. The project aims to facilitate timely screening for HPV and help to decrease cervical cancer mortality rates in areas where the Papanicolaou (Pap) test is not easily accessible to women.