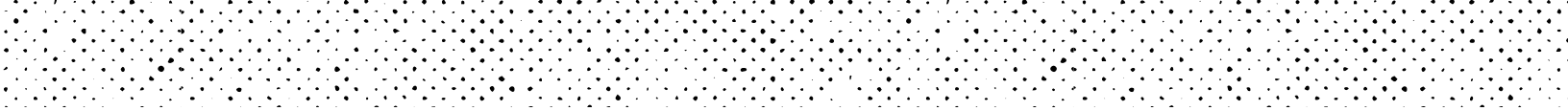
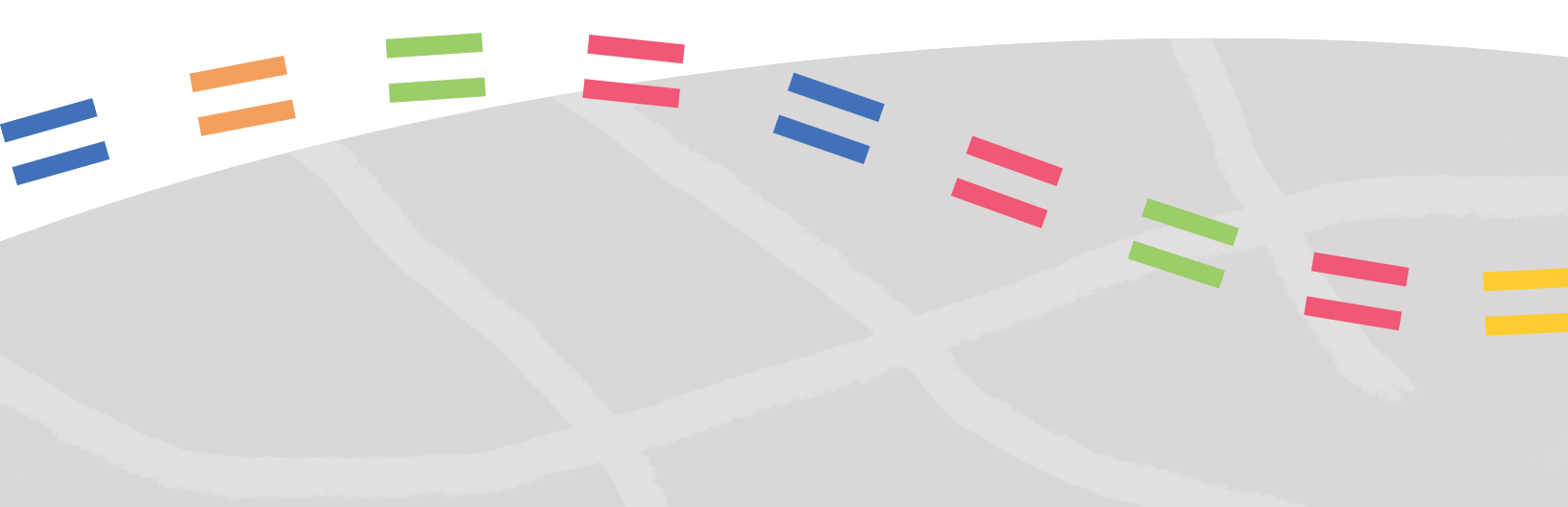
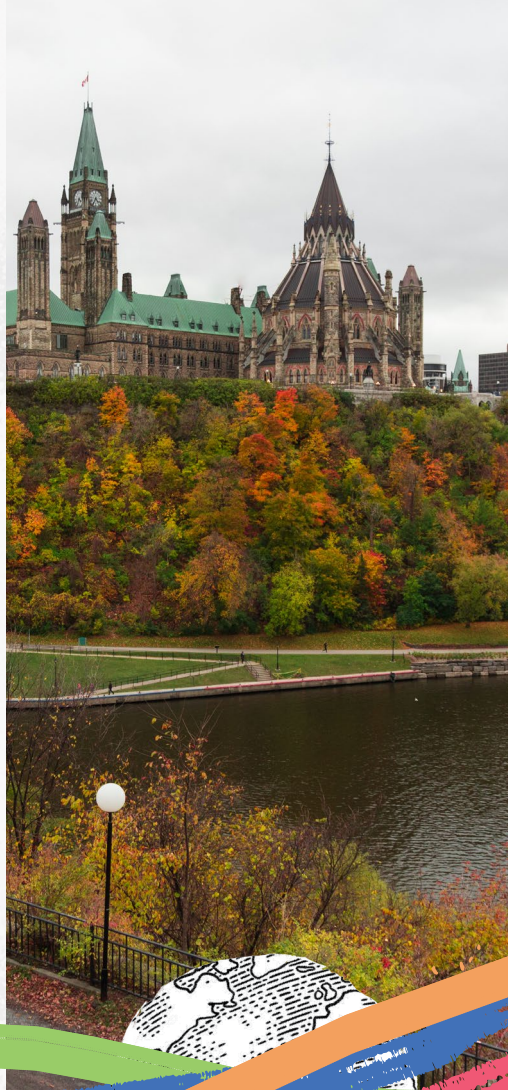




PATHWAYS TO GENDER equality

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- 5. ABOUT THE CONFERENCE**
 - 6. CODE OF CONDUCT**
 - 7. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**
 - 10. CONTACT INFORMATION**
 - 11. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**
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- 
- A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page shows a grey road with white lines curving into the distance. Along the left side of the road, there are several flags on poles, each with two horizontal stripes. The flags are blue, orange, green, pink, blue, pink, green, pink, and yellow.



Welcome to *Pathways to Gender Equality!* This conference package has been made to provide you with all you need to know while attending this year's Spur Change conference. Inside, you'll learn more on what to expect as a participant, venue information, program schedule and much more. On behalf of the Inter-Council Network and the Spur Change team, welcome once again and we hope you enjoy these few days of learning and knowledge sharing amongst the SMO community.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND

As participants from coast to coast to coast make their way to Ottawa, we would like to pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this unceded land on which we gather. We acknowledge the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this land we live on for centuries and continue to do so through their histories, languages, ceremonies, and cultures. We remind ourselves that we all have roles to play in righting the historical wrongs that have taken place and are ongoing. Indigenous people's connection to the land teaches us about our inherent responsibility to protect and respect the Earth and to recognize that we are all connected to each other.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

In order to create a learning and networking opportunity for Canadian Small and Medium Organizations (SMOs) Spur Change, on behalf of the Inter-Council Network (ICN) of provincial and regional councils for international cooperation, seeks to annually convene representatives from coast-to-coast-to-coast to learn from peer-to-peer experiences, approaches and best practices.

The *Pathways to Gender Equality* conference aims to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by showcasing the impactful work of SMOs in international cooperation. The conference will also gather insights from these organizations on the support needed for future capacity-building programs. This initiative aligns with the core Action area of Global Affairs Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), [Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls](#), and the United Nations' [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) as a cross-cutting theme.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 Showcase impact:** Provide opportunity for SMOs to share their achievements, innovative approaches and good practices in contribution to gender equality and empowerment in the spirit of knowledge sharing amongst peers.
- 2 Engage with international leaders:** Promote global voices through international speakers, partnered and working with Canadian SMOs, to open discussion and share their knowledge across the sector.
- 3 Cultivate collaboration and community:** Foster connections and strengthen the SMO community through informal gatherings, encouraging collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the development of supportive networks among participants.
- 4 Consult on capacity building:** Gather insights from SMOs on the support and resources they need to enhance their impact, informing the development of potential future capacity-building programs.



CODE OF CONDUCT

Spur Change is a program of the Inter-Council Network and hosted by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation. It is our mission to ensure the conference is conducted in the spirit of ACGC's core values: Respect, Inclusiveness, Equality, Empowerment, Human Rights, Collaboration, Accountability, Transparency, Sustainability, Mutual Learning. At ACGC, we have a zero tolerance for hate speech and harassment and wish for the conference to remain a safe space. Please remember to remain respectful in your comments and questions. This Code of Conduct applies to the session organizers, speakers, and participants within and outside the sessions on any used conference-related platforms. This also includes all communications pertaining to the conference (e.g. on social media).

ALL PARTICIPANTS COMMIT TO:

» **Respect:** I commit to being respectful, candid, transparent, and fair to all participants regardless of language, race, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, ability, etc. throughout the conference.

» **Inclusion:** I commit to creating space for all in attendance to contribute and participate, to give prominence to the voices and stories of those who might otherwise be excluded, and to seek out the wisdom and reflection of those who may feel silenced.

» **Equity:** I commit to encouraging a forum in which the varied experiences of participants are given equal weight.

» **Humility:** I commit to participating in the forum with a spirit of openness to learning, and a recognition that the broad diversity of participants includes experience and knowledge that is beyond my own, and through which I can grow.

» **Solidarity:** I commit to the broad goals of strengthening Canada's global leadership and recognize that all participants share those goals. In all conversations and forums, I will remember that we are on the same side and will seek to find common ground and inspiration.

» **Safety:** I commit to ensuring the physical, emotional, sexual, and spiritual safety of all participants in the conference, including by calling out harassment when it is witnessed and reporting incidents to conference organizers or other authorities as appropriate.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

TRAVEL TO THE HOTEL

For travel subsidized participants, we invite you to take a taxi to the Best Western Plus Gatineau-Ottawa Downtown (131 Rue Laurier, Gatineau, Quebec J8X 3W3) from the airport or train station upon your arrival. Please procure a receipt (ideally with start and end locations) to provide for reimbursement after the conference.

ACCESSING THE VENUE

The conference will take place at the Aga Khan Foundation (The Delegation of the Ismaili Imamat, 199 Sussex Dr, Ottawa, ON K1N 1K6). The main entrance is located at 199 Sussex Drive. There is an additional entrance accessible via Boteler St, you must call security at 343-630-3282 to open the gate.

PARKING

Please note that parking is not provided on-site, however, street parking is available in the neighbourhood along Boteler, Dalhousie, Parent, and Bolton streets. When parking, please take care to respect any posted regulations. Parking tickets/fines will not be covered by Spur Change. For access to a bike rack, please plan to arrive via the entrance on Boteler Street and contact security at 343-630-3282 to direct you accordingly.

SHUTTLE SERVICE

If you are staying at the Best Western Plus Gatineau-Ottawa Downtown, a shuttle has been arranged for the following dates and times:

DAY 1 WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

- Hotel to Aga Khan
 - » 11:15
 - » 11:45
- Aga Khan to Hotel
 - » 19:00
 - » 19:30

DAY 2 THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

- Hotel to Aga Khan
 - » 8:00
 - » 8:30
- Aga Khan to Hotel
 - » 20:00
 - » 20:30

DAY 3 FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8

- Hotel to Aga Khan
 - » 8:00
 - » 8:30
- Aga Khan to Hotel
 - » 13:00
 - » 13:30

Note: On Friday, November 8, we recommend checking out of the hotel in the morning unless you are staying an additional night. The coat check is secure for holding luggage while you participate in the last day of the conference.

COAT CHECK

A coat check will be available at Aga Khan for bulky items and winter coats which you would like to store, including luggage on the last day of the conference. We ask that you do not leave any items at the coat check overnight between the days of the conference.

REGISTRATION

The registration table will be clearly marked when you enter the venue. On the first day of the conference, we ask that everyone check-in at the registration desk to receive your name tag, fill out a media consent form, and check out a headset for simultaneous interpretation if needed.

SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

For sessions in plenary, simultaneous interpretation between English and French is available. For those who wish to, you may sign out a headset at the registration desk. To ensure that the headsets remain charged for all three days, we ask that you return the headset at the end of each day.

NAME TAGS

Name tags will have your name, pronouns (if provided) as well as stickers indicating whether you speak English (yellow sticker) and/or French (blue sticker).

If you opt out of providing media consent, we will also add a red sticker to your name tag to flag for the media team to avoid capturing your image.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

For most of the conference, there will be professional photographers on site capturing the event. The photos they capture will be shared with all participants the following. We encourage you to take your own photos of the panels and with one another! Please tag Spur Change ([LinkedIn](#), [@Spur_Activer](#)) and **use the hashtag:**

#PathwaysToGE

On November 7, you can also expect to be pulled aside as there will be a videographer team conducting short interviews on the importance of supporting SMOs and gender equality. Videos will be published after the conference and unedited interview footage will also be made available for you and your organization's use.

Be sure to practice your elevator pitch!

As mentioned in earlier sections, upon registering on the first day, we ask that you sign a media release form. If you elect to opt out, we will be sure to notify the media team. Make sure you get a red sticker on your name tag as that will be a main indicator for the media team.

DINING

For those staying at the hotel, breakfast is served starting at 7:00 each morning just off the main lobby.

A lunch buffet will be served on each conference day in the library. Coffee, tea, and water will be available throughout the day with snack breaks. These breaks are outlined in the program later in this package.

For the evening networking event on November 6, light refreshments and appetizers will be served. For the public event on November 7, a standing dinner will be served.

Your allergies have been provided to the caterers and ingredient lists will be provided for each food item presented. If you have any concerns, please reach out to a Spur Change staff member.

WIFI

Wifi will be available on site. Please connect to the network **DII-Guest** using the password: **he!!Oakfc**

PAMPHLET AND INFO TABLE

We will have a few tables set up on which you can place some pamphlets or materials about your organization and impact for other attendees to explore at their leisure. **We encourage you to bring a promotional pamphlet/sheet!** *Space will be limited so we encourage one type of pamphlet/material per organization.*

LOST AND FOUND

If you come across a lost item, please bring it to the registration desk where a team member will be able to hold it and coordinate an announcement. Any unclaimed items will be given to Aga Khan security following their lost and found policies.

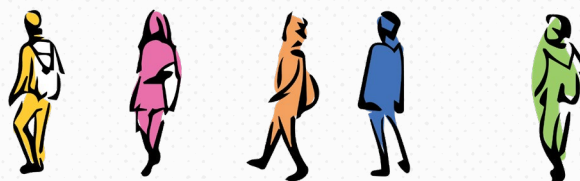
SCENT POLICY

In consideration of your peers, we ask that everyone refrains from using strong perfume or cologne throughout the conference. Thanks in advance for your cooperation and understanding.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Masks will be made available for those who wish to use one. If you feel more comfortable social distancing, we invite you to find a seat on the periphery of the main room—there is ample space on the sides to space out. If, during the conference, you are finding social distancing to be difficult, please find a Spur Change team member who can help find a solution.

If you're feeling sick or unwell during the day, please return to the hotel or your home. If you require a taxi back to the hotel due to illness, please find a member of the Spur Change team who will take note for later reimbursement or email André (andre.melrose@acgc.ca) when you are feeling better.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Members of the Spur Change team will be around the conference, ready to assist with anything you need. You can identify them as the individuals holding clipboards. If you need to get in contact with a specific team member, please view the information below to get in contact with the correct person.

TRAVEL AND ACCESSING THE VENUE

Taylor Hamilton | spurconference@acgc.ca | 705-347-1999

FINANCE AND TRAVEL SUBSIDIZATION

André Melrose | andre.melrose@acgc.ca

REGARDING THE ATMOSPHERE OR CODE OF CONDUCT

Marie-Catherine Thouin | mariecatherine.thouin@acgc.ca | 819-588-6370

CONFERENCE EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Marie-Catherine Thouin | 819-588-6370

Sandra Muchekeza | 780-885-4692

For anonymous general feedback during the conference, please fill out the form at the link below. Otherwise, feel free to contact a team member listed above or contact the team at spurchase@icn-rcc.ca.

[Feedback Form](#)

Please note that a survey will also be sent out after the conference to gather more detailed feedback on the overall conference.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency, call 911 immediately. Please contact an Emergency Contact when able. In the event of a non-emergency incident (eg. non-life-threatening illness preventing conference participation) contact the Emergency Contact, then refer to other relevant phone numbers below. In the event of an emergency evacuation at Aga Khan, follow the direction of Aga Khan staff members.

FOR ALL EMERGENCIES: 911

CONFERENCE EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Marie-Catherine Thouin | 819-588-6370

Sandra Muchekeza (anglais) | 780-885-4692

Health Link: 811

Get health advice from a registered nurse.

The Support Network: 211

Single access point to health, human services, community resources and government assistance

Canadian Mental Health Association Distress Line: 780-482-4357

Provides confidential, non-judgmental and short-term crisis intervention, emotional support and resources to people in crisis or distress.

Mental Health Support Line: 1-877-303-2642

Get confidential information and referrals.

The closest hospital emergency room to the venue and hotel is Hull Hospital (116 Bd Lionel-Émond, Gatineau | 819-966-6200) and the Hôpital Montfort (713 Montréal Rd, Ottawa | 613-746-4621).

The closest clinics to the venue and hotel are Appletree Medical Centre (613-482-0118 - various locations), Médecin de famille (873-800-0016), and UnionMD, Clinique médicale privée à Gatineau (819-484-1281). We strongly recommend calling before going to any medical facility, as all listed above can help with minor emergencies, but

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

DAY 1

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

10:00 - 11:00 Guided Bus Tour of Ottawa (Optional)

12:00 - 13:00 Registration and Lunch

13:00 - 13:30 Land Acknowledgement and Welcome

13:30 - 14:15 Interview with Senator Paulette Senior

14:15 - 15:30 The Conscious Equality Framework:
Accelerating Gender Inclusion

15:30 - 16:00 Snack Break

16:00 - 17:15 Breaking Barriers & Inviting Inclusivity

17:15 - 17:30 Presentation: Global Affairs Canada's Grants
and Contributions Transformation Initiative

17:30 - 19:00 Networking Event



DAY 2

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

9:00 - 10:30 Global Approaches to Gender Equality

10:30 - 11:00 Snack Break

11:00 - 12:30 Beyond the Conventional: Building Inclusive Pathways to Gender Equality in Global Health & Well-being

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch

13:30 - 15:00 Bridging the Gap: Advancing Gender Equity through Online Education in Afghanistan

15:00 - 15:30 Snack Break

15:30 - 17:30 How to Use Advocacy as a Tool to Unlock Gender Equality

17:30 - 18:00 Wellness Break

18:00 - 20:00 Small Steps, Big Results



DAY 3

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8

9:00 - 11:00	SMO Impact Horizon: Learning for Change Inquiry
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11:00 - 11:30	Snack Break
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11:30 - 12:30	Future Directions of Gender Equality: Navigating Government Transition
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12:30 - 13:30	Lunch & Farewells
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DETAILED PROGRAM

DAY 1

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

We do not have any organized activities in the morning. For those of you arriving the night before, we invite you to make the most of a morning in Ottawa! For those of you with GAC-funded projects, we recommend you reach out to your Project Team Leads to meet in-person. If not, it's also a good moment to see if your member of parliament is available for a meeting to learn more about your impact and organization.

10:00 - 11:00 | Guided Bus Tour of Ottawa (Optional)

Before the conference gets underway, meet us at the Best Western hotel lobby for a bus tour of Ottawa! Departing at 10 am (arrive in the lobby around 9:45/9:50), see Parliament Hill, major landmarks, and more from a double decker bus with a panoramic viewing window. The bus will return to the hotel before heading to the conference venue. [View the bus tour itinerary here](#). Please note that this will be a condensed tour so not every sight will be visited.

12:00 - 13:00 | Registration & Lunch

Make your way to the Aga Khan Foundation for registration and for lunch.

13:00 - 13:30 | Land Acknowledgement & Welcome

Welcome! Join us as James Parsons, Khalil Shariff, and Sandra Muchekeza share opening remarks to launch the *Pathways to Gender Equality* conference.



James Parsons

Global Affairs Canada



Khalil Shariff

Aga Khan Foundation
Canada



Sandra Muchekeza

Alberta Council for
Global Cooperation

13:30 - 14:15 | Interview with Senator Paulette Senior

To set the stage for our exploration of the global progress on gender equality, we are pleased to welcome the Honourable Senator Paulette Senior, who has devoted her life to breaking down systemic barriers and building up women and girls of diverse backgrounds.



Senator Paulette Senior

Senate of Canada

14:15 - 15:30 | The Conscious Equality Framework: Accelerating Gender Inclusion

In this engaging session, Karen will share her insights on how we can accelerate progress in gender equality and inclusion, building on the significant investments made over the years. She will introduce her signature Conscious Equality Framework, a holistic approach that draws from her extensive global experience across regions and sectors. This framework highlights key insights and best practices, offering a powerful tool to enhance our ongoing efforts toward achieving gender equality, women's empowerment, and inclusion for all.



Karen Craggs Milne

15:30 - 16:00 | Snack Break

16:00 - 17:15 | Breaking Barriers & Inviting Inclusivity

This workshop will explore the challenges women encounter in international cooperation and underscore the critical need for inclusive environments. Through engaging, interactive activities, participants will have the opportunity to actively discuss and identify solutions to these barriers, fostering meaningful dialogue and collaboration in plenary sessions.



Lois Arokoyo

United Nations
Association of Canada,
Regina Branch

17:15 - 17:30 | Presentation: Global Affairs Canada's Grants and Contributions Transformation Initiative

Global Affairs Canada (GAC)'s Grants and Contributions Transformation Initiative (GCTI) is helping Canadian international assistance to reach more people faster – enhancing the impact of Canada's global policy objectives. Come hear about how the Initiative is overhauling outdated and inefficient systems that are currently used to deliver grants and contributions (G&Cs). It is bringing all teams and processes together under a single system so that staff and partners can seamlessly collaborate. From assessments to financial management, all data and communication will be connected – unlocking massive potential to automate work and respond in real-time to global development needs. Current partners, as well as a wider range of organizations will be able to access funding easily. Both staff and funding recipients will be able to work more efficiently and effectively on the life cycle of each project with increased transparency and trust.



Brandon Lee

Global Affairs Canada



Monique Bergeron

Global Affairs Canada

17:30 - 19:00 | Networking Event

After a day of engaging discussions, come mingle with your peers at this special networking event. This is your opportunity to follow up with SMOs you connected with earlier in the day who are championing gender equality, all while enjoying the music of Darcy Ataman from Make Music Matter. Let's keep the conversation going in a lively, social setting!



Darcy Ataman

Make Music Matter

DAY 2

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

9:00 - 10:30 | Global Approaches to Gender Equality

Join Iris Canham (Roll a Hippo Foundation) from South Africa, Roheena Ali Shah (My Oral Village) from Pakistan, and Sada Segeja and Zulpher Bashir Mbwana (Community Forests International) from Tanzania as they share insights from their work in gender equality across sectors and regions. This discussion will delve into the strategies they use to address barriers in fields like child development and protection, economic empowerment, climate adaptation, and policy advocacy, highlighting approaches that empower communities and promote lasting change.



Iris Canham

Roll A Hippo
Foundation



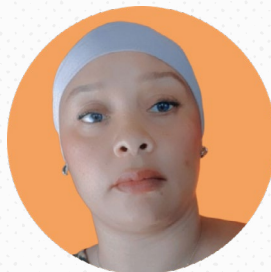
Roheena Ali Shah

My Oral Village



Sada Segeja

Community Forests
International



Zulpher Bashir

Community Forests
International



Christina MacIsaac

The Fund for Innovation
and Transformation
(Chair)

10:30 - 11:00 | Snack Break

11:00 - 12:30 | Beyond the Conventional: Building Inclusive Pathways to Gender Equality in Global Health & Well-being

This interactive and practical workshop will explore the intersection of gender, race, sexuality, age, and ability in global health and well-being, pushing beyond traditional frameworks to support the creation of truly inclusive spaces. Participants will engage in facilitated discussions on structural inequities in Global health systems, integrating intersectional approaches, and amplifying voices often unheard. Through collaborative exercises, we will explore how to move from informational awareness to transformational action, especially in contexts where safe spaces for dialogue are limited or absent. Participants can expect to leave with new perspectives, actionable strategies, and a shared vision for how to embed greater equitable health outcomes in our collective programming.



Anne Pringle

Lucky Iron Life



Keely Rogers

Canadian Physicians
for Aid and Relief

12:30 - 13:30 | Lunch

13:30 - 15:00 | Bridging the Gap: Advancing Gender Equity through Online Education in Afghanistan

Right to Learn Afghanistan, in partnership with Global Affairs Canada, launched the Support for Afghan Girls' Secondary Education (SAGE) project in the spring of 2024. The SAGE project focuses on strengthening and advancing the Darakht-e Danesh Classroom (DDC) online program and is designed to empower Afghan women and girls to pursue post-secondary education, enter the workforce and become leaders in their communities. **(Description continues on next page.)**



Stephanie Calver

Right to Learn
Afghanistan

(Continued from previous page.)

This interactive workshop will help to contextualize the situation in Afghanistan related to gender equity in education, share a background on SAGE project goals, partners and progress, and then transition to a world café to engage participants in the scaling plan. The facilitated world café will offer an opportunity to reflect on systemic inequalities, support knowledge exchange, and harvest collective wisdom related to online educational pathways for women and girls in Afghanistan and the region.

15:00 - 15:30 | Snack Break

15:30 - 17:30 | How to Use Advocacy as a Tool to Unlock Gender Equality

Advocacy is an essential tool in advancing gender equality and amplifying the voices of those advocating for fairer, more inclusive policies. In this interactive workshop, facilitated by Results Canada participants will learn how to develop an effective advocacy strategy, how to engage parliamentarians, and how to communicate compellingly to drive impact, through a gendered lens. By understanding the tools and tactics that work, participants will be equipped to champion gender equality in their organization, with their supporters, and through communities to ensure a better, more equal, future for all.



Dominique Denoncourt

Results Canada



Lindsay Sheridan

Results Canada

17:30 - 18:00 | Wellness Break

18:00 - 20:00 | Small Steps, Big Results: SMOs Advancing Gender Equality

Join us for an engaging evening of knowledge sharing and networking at the “Small Steps, Big Results” public event. At this event, we are opening the invitation to the public and those interested in learning more about the role of SMOs and their partners in advancing gender equality worldwide. Starting off with a few presentations followed by a mixer with refreshments, the event aims to connect you with professionals across sectors, deepen discussions on gender equality, and explore opportunities for collaboration. Have colleagues or know someone based in Ottawa interested in attending? Invite them to register by November 1 to join us in-person or by November 7 to join us online at the following link: <https://bit.ly/4e7qsRz>.



Anita Vandenberg

Member of Parliament,
Ottawa West—
Nepean



Jennifer Elms

Aga Khan Foundation
Canada (Chair)



Hyang Cho

Good Neighbours
Canada



Dianne Loring

Medical Mercy Canada



Karine Casault

Mer et Monde



Roheena Ali Shah

Aga Khan Foundation



Geetanjali Gill

University of the
Fraser Valley



Dennis Stuebing

Wisdom2Action

DAY 3

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8

9:00 - 11:00 | SMO Impact Horizon: Learning for Change Inquiry

Canadian SMOs have meaningfully contributed to Canada's international development efforts towards gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, poverty reduction and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The SMO Impact Horizon: Learning for Change Inquiry invites us to build on both rich insights shared and upon our own unique SMO experience, to influence the vision, and nudge the future, of the Canadian SMO impact horizon. This participatory two-hour session will invite the magic of appreciative storytelling to share and celebrate our stories of beneficial impact; discern powerful enablers and troublesome potholes; and, recommend guiding principles or promising practices to influence Canadian SMO and Inter-Council Network (ICN) initiatives emerging on our shared horizon.



Darren C. Brown

People Development

11:00 - 11:30 | Snack Break

11:30 - 12:30 | Future Directions of Gender Equality: Navigating Government Transition

With a potential federal election on the horizon, the future of Global Affairs Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) may be uncertain. This workshop will equip organizations with strategies to advocate for gender equality through political transitions. Participants will learn how to prepare for various scenarios, build relationships across the political spectrum, and navigate the opportunities and risks of an election period.

Led by Jesse Clarke, a gender equality expert with over 20 years of experience in Canada's international development sector, this interactive session provides practical tools to help organizations stay resilient and adaptable in times of change.



Jesse Clarke

JN Clarke Consulting

12:30 - 13:30 | Lunch & Farewells

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES (A-Z)

Anita Vandenbeld

Anita Vandenbeld is a Canadian Member of Parliament, where she has represented Ottawa West-Nepean since 2015. Vandenbeld chairs the House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights, and sits on the Foreign Affairs and International Development Committee and the Committee on Access to Information, Privacy, and Ethics. From 2015 to September 2018 Vandenbeld chaired the Parliamentary Women's Caucus. She is also the founding chair of the all-party Democracy caucus. Vandenbeld has also served on the Committee on the Status of Women and the Procedure and House Affairs committee.

Prior to her election to the Canadian House of Commons, Vandenbeld worked for over a decade in international democratic development and women's political participation, having worked in over 20 countries on inclusive governance and women's leadership. She managed a global, multi-partner online network to promote women's political rights and participation, called iKNOWpolitics.org. Vandenbeld was a parliamentary advisor with the United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh; Senior Advisor and Deputy Chief of the Central Assembly and Political Parties Section of the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission in Kosovo; She coordinated an anti-corruption campaign with the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina; and as the resident director of the National Democratic Institute's office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Vandenbeld established a political party program during the 2011 elections.

Vandenbeld has a Masters Degree in Constitutional and Political History from York University. Shortly after leaving graduate school she spent 6 years as a staff member in the Canadian Parliament, including as Director of Parliamentary Affairs in the office of the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister Responsible for Democratic Reform.

Vandenbeld is a recipient of the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal for her work in Kosovo. She has also served as a board member to the Parliamentary Centre, a Canadian non-profit dedicated to strengthening parliaments around the world, and as a founding board member of the Centre for Democratic and Participatory Governance in Brussels.

Anne Pringle

Anne Pringle is the Director of Programs & Impact at [Lucky Iron Life](#), leading the company's global initiatives to combat iron deficiency. She has developed partnerships with NGOs across Tanzania, Benin, Peru, Guatemala, Senegal, Uganda, and India, co-creating nutrition programming that has led to the distribution of 85,000 Lucky Iron Fish/Life units. Anne also manages Lucky Iron Life's BCorp certification process, ensuring social and environmental accountability across the company's operations. Prior to this, she co-founded Local Buttons, an ethical fashion line working with artisans in Haiti, and managed Toronto Metropolitan University's SocialVentures Zone,

where she built out a robust structured program with curriculum, a mentoring network and funding support, supporting emerging social entrepreneurs. She holds a BA in International Development, an MSc in Environmental Applied Science, and a Diploma in Modern Dance, reflecting her diverse skills and commitment to social impact.

Brandon Lee

Brandon Lee is the Director General of the [Grants and Contributions Transformation Initiative](#) at Global Affairs Canada, where he leads a department-wide initiative to modernize the management of over \$6 billion in global grants and contributions. Previously, he served as Consul General of Canada in San Francisco, Seattle, and as Canada's Ambassador to Silicon Valley. Brandon has also held senior roles at the World Trade Organization and the International Committee of the Red Cross, spearheading key international reforms. He has a diverse background in both government and private sectors, including innovation and change management.

Christina MacIsaac

Christina MacIsaac is the Director of Innovation for the [Fund for Innovation and Transformation \(FIT\)](#), a national initiative of the ICN that launched in 2019. Christina brings a wealth of experience to her role. Prior to FIT, she worked in strategic community investment with a global financial services company, and engaged extensively with the charitable sector across Canada on issues ranging from educational innovations to address system gaps, psychological health and well-being, to social responsibility and sustainability. A past participant of Canada World Youth, Christina is thrilled to engage with the international development sector during this conference.

Darcy Ataman

As an artist and founder and CEO of [Make Music Matter](#), Darcy Ataman has dedicated his work to bringing an alternate form of music therapy to survivors of conflict and trauma. He developed the innovative Healing in Harmony music therapy program in partnership with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege and continues to scale the innovation that has served over 15,000 individuals in 9 countries around the world including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, Guinea, South Africa, Turkey/Syria and Peru. Most recently, Ataman has worked closely with Indigenous leaders in Canada to further develop the unique model of therapy and help address generational trauma.

He has worked internationally as a music producer, collaborating with countless artists such as Levon Helm and DJ Jazzy Jeff's production company, resulting in several Juno nominations. In 2019, Ataman co-founded A4A Records and Publishing with legendary producer David Bottrill, creating a groundbreaking publishing model for artists living in extreme poverty and conflict zones. A contributor to the Huffington Post and other publications, Ataman also has been a guest lecturer at Oxford, the University of Winnipeg, and a range of international events, speaking to the long-lasting impact of music and its ability to re-stitch the soul. Learn more about Darcy by checking out the [Make Music Matter team page](#).

Darren C. Brown

Darren C. Brown has over 20 years of experience co-creating and facilitating just, holistic learning in diverse communities and organizations. His work integrates participatory research, creative resources, and inclusive approaches to experiential learning, often aligning with Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. A trained graphic facilitator, Darren specializes in intercultural effectiveness, leadership transformation, and policy dialogue, applying gender-based analysis and promoting equity in diverse learning environments. He has worked nationally, internationally, and interculturally for over 30 years, with all required United Nations certifications up to date. [Click for more information about Darren.](#)

Dennis Stuebing

Dr. Dennis Stuebing is the Executive Director and Co-Owner of [Wisdom2Action](#), a consulting firm dedicated to social change, specializing in gender justice, 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion, children's rights, and mental health. With a Doctorate in Global Studies and a background in project management and policy analysis, Dennis has extensive experience supporting non-profits, governments, and communities. He is also Vice President of the Society of Queer Momentum and a board member of the National Alliance for Children and Youth.

He lives with his partner Ian, and dog Angus, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq, in Pinoek (Mi'kma'ki), also known as Kentville, Nova Scotia.

Dianne Losing

Dianne Losing is a knowledge management professional with a Master's in Interdisciplinary Studies, specializing in sustainable knowledge-sharing strategies. She has extensive experience with corporate and nonprofit sectors, focusing on knowledge mobilization and stakeholder engagement to drive impactful change. Recently, she worked with [Medical Mercy Canada](#) in Ukraine, assessing initiatives and supporting affected communities. Her work emphasizes collaborative learning, gender equality, and empowering underserved populations through sustainable, knowledge-based solutions.

Dominique Denoncourt

Dominique Denoncourt is a global health advocate, specializing in nutrition, immunization, and sexual and reproductive health.

Dominique holds a BA in International Studies and an M.Sc. in Humanitarian Action and International Development Management from Université Laval. Her research focused on armed conflicts and the ethics of aid, through a feminist and decolonial approach. Currently, she serves as the Policy & Advocacy Officer at [Results Canada](#), leading campaigns on global child and maternal health. Her experience includes roles with Doctors Without Borders, the Center for Research-Action on Race Relations, and Crossroads International.

Geetanjali Gill

Dr. Geetanjali Gill is an Associate Professor and Program Chair of [Global Development Studies at the University of the Fraser Valley \(UFV\)](#) in British Columbia. She holds a PhD in Development Studies from the University of Sussex and conducts research on gender norms and transformative change in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. With over 16 years of experience as a gender and development consultant, she has co-led projects in Sierra Leone, empowering persons with albinism and promoting inclusive education through collaborations with grassroots organizations.

Hyang Cho

Hyang Cho is the Executive Director of [Good Neighbours Canada](#), leading strategic initiatives for sustainable development and community empowerment. With over 15 years of experience in the humanitarian sector, she has managed international projects, including in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. In 2017, she founded Good Neighbours Canada, focused on driving community-led change. Hyang holds a master's degree in Global Political Economy and is a published author of *Beyond the UN: Other Ways to Make a Difference*. Outside of work, she enjoys camping with her family.

Iris Canham

Iris is a dedicated community development specialist, author and social justice activist with a strong focus on women and children's issues, particularly in the realm of gender equity. With extensive experience in identifying social challenges and mobilizing stakeholders, Iris designs and implements impactful projects that foster sustainable change in communities. As an advocate for social justice, she passionately works to empower vulnerable people through initiatives that improve access to essential resources, such as water, education, and nutrition.

Currently, she collaborates with the [Roll a Hippo Foundation](#) to enhance water accessibility for women to improve livelihood and economic participation. In addition, this partnership includes working with early childhood development centers to improve water, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition, identifying poor accessibility to these as barriers to a thriving, healthy child. Iris believes that inequality, and most significantly gender inequality, is the root cause of poverty in many communities. She believes that empowering women is key to building stronger, healthier communities.

James Parsons

- Executive Director, Canadian Partnership Division at Global Affairs Canada
- Joined CIDA in 2000
- He has spent his career in international assistance, on bilateral programs in Africa and Asia as well as the Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs)
- Previously served as Head of Cooperation at the Office of the High Commission of Canada in Kigali, Rwanda.
- Holds a Masters Degree in Environmental Studies from York University in Toronto and a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Resource Studies with a Minor in Native Studies from Trent University
- He has lived and studied in Thailand and Indonesia focusing on indigenous peoples' issues.

Jennifer Elms

Jennifer Elms (she/her/elle) is a global gender specialist with 15 years of experience across East Africa, Southeast Asia, Australasia, and North America. Currently the Regional Gender Equality Advisor (North America) at [Aga Khan Foundation Canada and USA](#), she focuses on women's economic empowerment, gender-responsive education, and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. Jennifer holds a Master of Human Rights and Democratization from the University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Arts from Memorial University of Newfoundland. Outside of work, she enjoys basketball, writing, and family adventures with her partner, Hassan, and their two children.

Jesse Clarke

Jesse Clarke is a government funding expert on a mission to transform Canadian charities' and nonprofits' relationship with government. Jesse brings over 20 years of experience in government and nonprofit leadership, including senior roles leading government relations and government funding strategies for several Canadian organizations. She spent the first 10 years of her career as a federal civil servant before joining the non-profit sector in 2010. Jesse has raised more than \$100 million in government grants during her career, working for organizations including Right To Play, Pathways to Education and Save the Children.

She founded [JN Clarke Consulting](#) in February 2021. Since founding the firm, JN Clarke Consulting has grown to a team of 4+ associates, and has provided transformative government relations services to more than 40 different organizations across Canada's charity and non-profit sectors. JN Clarke Consulting offers strategy and retainer support in government relations to non-profits across Canada, as well as grant writing to selective clients. JN Clarke Consulting is a proudly feminist and LGBTQ+ owned firm, with a strong commitment to anti-racism, decolonization and progressive values.

Karen Craggs Milne

[Karen](#) is a distinguished authority and go-to expert for organizations who are serious about getting social justice work right. She brings over 25 years of global experience working, addressing social justice issues both as a seasoned Executive and a trusted Industry Expert, supporting programming, service delivery, organizational change and national policy work.

To date, Karen has advised 150+ corporations, governments, NGOS and post secondary institutions on how to bring Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI), Decolonization, Indigenization and Reconciliation (DIR), Environment, Social and Governance (ESG), Social Impact and Social Purpose to life - all with thoughtful intentionality and meaningful impact.

Karen's pioneering work has had a profound global impact earning her numerous accolades including Top 25 Canadian HR Innovator (2022), Top 100 Canadian professional (2020) and Obama White House Recognized Gender Equality Changemaker (2016).

Karine Casault

With an MBA and expertise in strategic communications and sustainable development, Karine Casault stands out for her integrative approach to social and environmental responsibility. Her vision is based on co-construction and multi-stakeholder dialogue to generate lasting positive impact. She has made significant contributions to the international cooperation sector, notably by leading a community of practice on gender equality project in Senegal for [Mer et Monde](#), a solar energy project, and a project on social responsibility in the Senegalese mining sector for Comité 21 Québec, mandated by Global Affairs Canada. Today, as a consultant to the Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI) and its members, she supports agents of social and environmental change in their transformational initiatives. Her expertise also extends to the academic world, where she teaches sustainable development in the context of the International Cooperation and Solidarity Certificate at the Université de Montréal.

Keely Rogers

Keely Rogers has spent the past 15 years devoted to making a difference in the lives of her local community and through international outreach, holding professional roles in multiple international development organizations. From working alongside partners in Africa and Central America, to championing for the unhoused in Ottawa, Keely is passionate about advocating for the under-served, and bridging the gap between developed and developing nations.

Keely Rogers was born and raised in the west end of Ottawa. She achieved an undergraduate degree in Political Science and French from Memorial University of Newfoundland in 2018, and was certified as an Associate in Project Management from the Project Management Institute in 2021. Keely's career has largely been dedicated to managing fundraising initiatives, grant writing and reporting, and overseeing locally

led development projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Her expertise lies in international WASH development programs and water resource management.

Keely joined [Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief \(CPAR\)](#) in 2023. As the Director of International Development, Keely leads CPAR in achieving the Global Goals for Sustainable Development through programming that addresses the social and environmental determinants of health - so that families have enough nutritious food to eat or access to clean water - which impacts the well-being of these populations, but improving weak health systems is also instrumental to improved health. CPAR's programs are designed to support the knowledge, training and inputs that a community most needs, and strives to build capacity and ensure that the program benefits continue long after the project is completed.

Khalil Shariff

Khalil joined [Aga Khan Foundation Canada](#) as Chief Executive Officer in August 2005. He was previously with the Toronto office of McKinsey & Company, an international management consultancy, where he advised governments, financial institutions, and health care providers on strategy, organization, and operational improvement.

Khalil served on AKFC's National Committee for five years, and has cultivated his interest in international development and conflict resolution issues through a variety of activities including: Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Harvard Negotiation Law Review; Policy Co-ordinator and Research Associate, Harvard Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research; Legal Intern, Chambers of the Vice-President, International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania; Intern, Office of Under-Secretary-General, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. He was the youngest member ever elected as a School Trustee in 1993 for the Board of School Trustees in Richmond, B.C.

Khalil holds a B.A. in International Relations and Economics from the University of British Columbia and a J.D. magna cum laude from Harvard Law School.

Lindsay Sheridan

Lindsay Sheridan is a parliamentary expert and campaign specialist who has over 8 years experience advocating for sustainable change, at [Results Canada](#) she has worked driving impact towards global health equity, access to quality education, and economic inclusion.

Lindsay holds a Master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Waterloo, where she completed research on female peacebuilding through storytelling in sub-Saharan Africa and explored peacebuilding practices to support settler and indigenous relationship-building domestically. After graduation, she worked on Parliament Hill as a legislative assistant supporting a Member of Parliament in her role as critic for international human rights and as Vice-Chair on the Subcommittee for International Human Rights Committee. Lindsay also supported youth engagement and stakeholder management at the Bruyere Research Institute in Ottawa before joining Results, where she now is the Manager of Advocacy; in this capacity, she also serves as the co-chair for the Canadian International Education Policy Working Group (CIEPWG).

Lois Arokoyo

Lois recently earned her Bachelor's degree in Environmental Systems Engineering from the University of Regina, where she was recognized with multiple scholarships for her academic excellence. Her work is driven by a strong commitment to sustainability and creating a safer future for upcoming generations. With substantial experience in fundraising and stakeholder engagement, Lois has led various projects, including securing clean water for children in Nigeria. Additionally, she has coordinated initiatives to fight hunger among the homeless, collaborating with the Salvation Army and local NGOs, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lois is a Design Project Manager with the Government of Saskatchewan, specializing in highway design and transportation engineering. She also serves as Vice President of the [United Nations Association of Canada, Regina Branch](#), where she leads various community engagement initiatives. A strong advocate for women in STEM, Lois is passionate about mentoring young women pursuing STEM degrees at the university level.

Monique Bergeron

Monique Bergeron is Deputy Director, within the Business Process Transformation Division of the Grants and Contributions Transformation Initiative at Global Affairs Canada where she leads the testing of transformative business processes and tools to inform the future way of doing business with GAC.

Previously she worked closely with governmental and civil society organizations on strategic and operational issues for the people of Afghanistan, the Caribbean, and Tanzania.

She has a diverse background in development and fragile and conflict-affected states programming, at GAC, as well as with international institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Senator Paulette Senior

Paulette Senior has devoted her life to breaking down systemic barriers and building up women and girls of diverse backgrounds. She is currently the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Women's Foundation and was previously the Chief Executive Officer of YWCA Canada.

Senator Senior is a thought-leader on various women's issues, including promoting gender equity, addressing gender-based violence, reducing women's poverty, shrinking the wage gap, and promoting the empowerment of women, girls and gender-diverse people across Canada. She has led, managed and operated Toronto-based shelters, employment programs and housing programs, and she has sat on the Board of Directors of several equity-focused organizations, including the Women's College Hospital and the G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council. She currently sits on the Board of Directors of Oxfam Canada, the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation and the Women's Funding Network. In 2022, she was appointed to serve as a member of the Independent Advisory Board for Supreme Court of Canada Judicial Appointments.

In recognition of her community service, Senator Senior has received several awards, including the African Canadian Achievement Award, the AfroGlobal Leadership Award, the Black Business and Professional Association's Harry Jerome Trailblazer Award, the Top 25 Women of Influence Award and, most recently, the Skills for Change Impact Changemaker Award.

Senator Senior holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Urban Studies from York University, an honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Lethbridge and qualified for the Institute of Corporate Directors' ICD.D designation.

Roheena Ali Shah

Roheena is a dedicated gender specialist with a strong commitment to promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and community development. Her research interests lie at the intersection of gender and disability, where she advocates for inclusive policies and practices that address the unique challenges faced by women with disabilities.

With extensive experience working on projects funded by UNFPA, Global Affairs Canada, and WaterAid, Roheena has been instrumental in integrating gender-responsive approaches into development and humanitarian initiatives. She acted as Gender Advisor for the [Cash and Calendars Project](#) led by [My Oral Village](#) and the University of Alberta. This innovative project, at the intersection of gender and literacy, empowered women who could not read or write to maintain their own savings group and maternal health records, thus promoting financial literacy and gender mainstreaming. Currently, Roheena holds the position of Gender and Poverty Manager at Planning and Development Department ETI Gilgit-Baltistan, where she is actively engaged in policy formulation and strategy development to ensure marginalized groups, particularly women, have access to equal opportunities.

Sada Segeja

Sada is a passionate change agent dedicated to supporting smallholder farmers on Pemba Island, Zanzibar, Tanzania. As an Agroforestry and Gender Equity Officer at [Community Forests Pemba](#), she draws on her deep understanding of local challenges to promote equitable access to land, training, and markets, strengthening women farmers' economic and food security. Her commitment to gender equity lies in improving women's livelihoods, particularly in conservative communities where women face significant social restrictions, climate vulnerability, gender-based violence, and limited access to education. Sada's leadership in nature-based climate adaptation and women's advocacy amplifies their voices, promotes recognition of women's rights, and fosters men's awareness of their vital role in standing with their sisters, daughters, mothers, and wives. She believes empowering women to sustainably manage and benefit from their environment is essential for achieving gender justice and societal progress.

Sandra Muchekeza

Sandra Muchekeza is a dedicated and passionate leader committed to serving marginalized communities in Edmonton. Originally from Kenya, she pursued her Bachelors studies in Psychology in Australia before relocating to Toronto, Canada, where she began her career in International Development, first as an intern in Tanzania and holding various positions in organizations working to address global issues. Over the years, Sandra's professional journey has evolved, focusing on managing programs, projects, and enhancing systems and processes within the social profit sector.

Before joining the [Alberta Council for Global Cooperation](#) as Executive Director, as Director of Program Development and Accountability at Africa Centre, the largest Black-serving organization in Western Canada, Sandra spearheaded various programs and initiatives aligning with the organization's strategic objectives. Notably, she led the implementation of the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI) program, funded by the Government of Canada, aimed at empowering grassroots not-for-profit organizations serving Black communities across Canada.

Before her tenure at Africa Centre, Sandra served as the Executive Director of the Council of Canadians of African and Caribbean Heritage (CCACH). Here, she worked tirelessly to expand the organization's programs, bolster its fundraising efforts, and establish a strong community presence within Edmonton. Additionally, Sandra contributed her expertise to the Canada Black Justice Strategy as a Steering Group member. This Government of Canada initiative tasked her with providing recommendations and developing a framework for consultations with Black communities across Canada, crucial for shaping the strategy and addressing their experiences with the criminal justice system.

Stephanie Calver

Stephanie Calver (she/her) is Project Manager of the Support for Afghan Girls' Secondary Education Project (SAGE) with [Right to Learn](#). Prior to this, she worked in the fields of sustainability, education, and sport management at the University of Calgary (Office of Sustainability), University of Alberta (Executive Education), Canadian Sport Institute (Pacific), and as an Equine Canada Certified Coach.

Stephanie completed a Master of Arts in Global Leadership from Royal Roads University and Bachelor of Arts in Recreation & Health Education from the University of Victoria. She is a trained professional coach through the Co-Active Training Institute (CTI) as well as the Playing Big Facilitators Training program with Tara Mohr to offer unique practices and tools for women to speak up, create, and lead. Certified in the EQ-i 2.0 and EQ 360 tools through Multi-Health Systems, she enjoys sharing insights on the many ways wellbeing and emotional intelligence are deeply interconnected, essential skills for leaders of the future.

Zulpher Bashir

Zulpher is a driving force behind social and economic empowerment for smallholder farmers on Unguja Island, Zanzibar, Tanzania, blending enterprise development with gender equality advocacy. In her role as a Social Enterprise and Gender Equality Officer at [Community Forests Pemba](#), Zulpher leverages a decade of experience to create business opportunities that empower women farmers while championing sustainable horticulture to enhance livelihoods, community well-being, and climate resilience. Her work in gender equality goes beyond policy reform, focusing on dismantling deep-rooted social norms and structural barriers that perpetuate gender inequality. Zulpher envisions a future where women and men share equal access to resources and economic opportunities, driving inclusive progress for all in Zanzibar.



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