



# SPUR CHANGE IMPACT REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SEVEN  
YEARS OF PROGRAMMING



# ABOUT SPUR CHANGE

The Spur Change program was a 7-year capacity-building and knowledge-sharing initiative, providing support for Canadian SMOs in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development projects. The program was implemented by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation in collaboration with the other provincial and regional councils of the Inter-Council Network (ICN). The project’s activities aimed to:

- increase effectiveness of Canadian small and medium organizations(SMOs) to deliver sustainable development results in support of Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) and the sustainable development goals (SDGs);
- increase collaboration of Canadian SMOs in international development; and
- increase engagement of Canadians, particularly youth, as global citizens in support of FIAP and the SDGs.

The program was funded by Global Affairs Canada as part of the small and medium organizations for impact and innovation initiative alongside the Development Impact Window and the Fund for Innovation and Transformation. While originally planned as a 5 year pilot, the program received two no-cost extensions and shifted the focus of the last two years to primarily supporting SMOs.



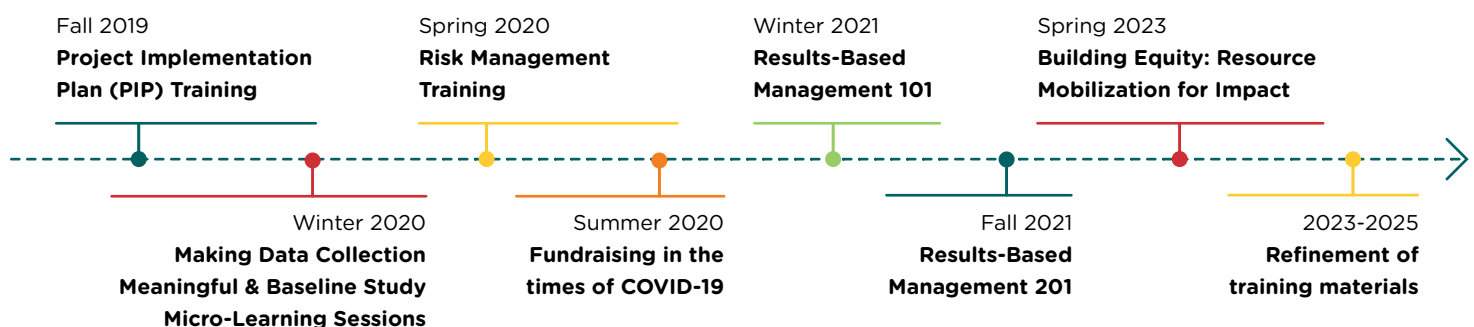
# SUPPORTING SMALL AND MEDIUM ORGANIZATIONS

## BUILDING CAPACITY

Spur Change strengthened the technical and adaptive capacity of SMOs to design, manage, and report on complex international cooperation projects. Through practical training, tailored resources, and other activities, organizations moved from uncertainty to confidence by learning to embed Results-Based Management, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, risk management, and gender-responsive approaches into their systems and practices. This capacity-building translated directly into stronger proposals, improved implementation, organizational change, and ultimately, more sustainable results.

- Year over year, 76% of SMO survey respondents report that they and their partners have made measurable impacts towards gender equality, the empowerment of women & girls, poverty reduction and/or the achievement of the SDGs.
- Across annual surveys, 78% of SMO respondents report using the knowledge, skills, and tools gained through Spur Change activities.
- Through post-activity surveys, 81% of SMO respondents report increased capacity to implement inclusive, gender-responsive, sustainable, innovative, programming. Learning methods employed through capacity-building activities were consistently rated as effective (91% on average); material and tools provided were also consistently rated as highly relevant to participant needs (92% on average).

**“I have [more] confidence now in implementing [projects]. The increased knowledge I have gotten with Spur Change has put me in a better position to help contribute to my organization and to the people we are serving.” – SMO Participant**

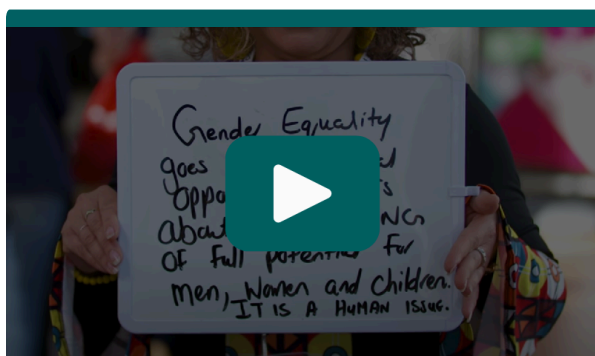


Timeline of Spur Change training development.

## SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Spur Change created accessible, practical spaces for peer learning and knowledge exchange that enabled SMOs to learn not only from experts, but from each other and from their local partners. These exchanges helped organizations contextualize technical requirements, integrate feminist and intersectional approaches, and apply learning directly to real-world challenges—strengthening both individual practice and collective expertise.

- Across capacity-building opportunities, 78% of SMO participants surveyed report increased understanding of good practices promoting gender equality and the SDGs. While some workshops were focused more on technical skills than on others, Spur Change took a holistic approach, aiming to embed good practices across our entire roster of learning opportunities.
- At conferences, 80% of SMO participants surveyed report leaving with increased access to knowledge on gender equality and the SDGs—be it through new resources or new connections.



“Through knowledge sharing in Community of Learning meetings, guidance from trainers, and exposure to best practices, we have gained immense insights and opportunities.”  
— SMO Participant

### [Watch: Sharing Perspectives: Gender Equality in International Cooperation](#)

At the Spur Change conference in November 2024, we asked four international practitioners on gender equality to share their experiences and speak to the importance of promoting gender equality worldwide. Listen to the video to hear what they had to say!

“I really enjoyed working with the other participants [at the training] and I found the activities that encouraged us to pool our knowledge really useful and relevant.” — SMO Participant



## HIGHLIGHTING SMOS

Spur Change championed the importance of SMOs to the international cooperation community here in Canada and around the world. Through highlighting organizations in webinars and funding development leaders from SMOs from the global South to come to Canada and speak to the value and importance of the work being done in their communities, the program helped share the large impact smaller organizations can have. The program also put the spotlight on SMOs across a series of reports, funding research into specifically how best to support them and how this may differ from larger organizations.

- Over 30 SMOs were highlighted through Spur Change webinars and other opportunities.
- 1,800+ people across Canada were engaged by Southern development leader tours conducted with Canadian SMOs and supported by Spur Change.
- 5 SMO Reports were published and shared widely across the international cooperation sector.



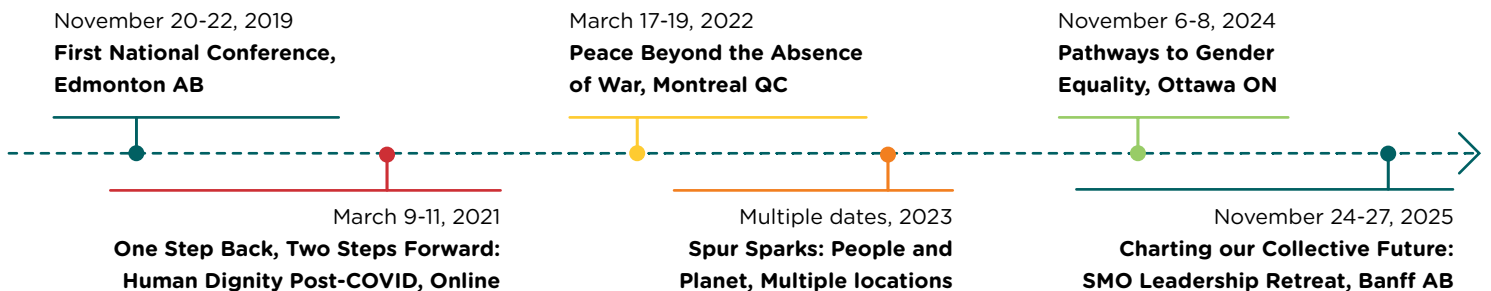
### [Watch: Sharing Perspectives: Importance of Supporting SMOs](#)

At the Spur Change conference in November 2024, we asked representatives from SMOs to introduce their mission and explain why their work is important to support. Thank you again to all the organizations who took part in the video.

## CONNECTING THE SMO COMMUNITY

Spur Change connected SMOs by intentionally bringing together organizations across regions, mandates, and experience levels. Through a Community of Learning, conferences, and workshops, participants built trusted relationships that enabled collaboration, joint problem-solving, mentoring, and collective advocacy. Altogether, the program helped strengthen the international cooperation sector, particularly among SMOs.

“This network has truly empowered us and connected us with organizations we may not have otherwise encountered in our usual circles.” – SMO Participant



Timeline of Spur Change conferences.



# SUPPORTING EDUCATORS

## PROMOTING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Spur Change encouraged global citizenship education in the classroom through sharing turn-key lesson plans and tools for educators. Partnering with diverse educational groups and SMOs across Canada, Spur Change’s Share & Learn series promoted new and fun ways to engage young people and schools in their global community—ways to help us all feel closer together on a global scale and for a better tomorrow.

- 334 educators took part in the Share & Learn series and other educator-focused events.
- 50+ resources were shared with educators on promoting GCE in the classroom.
- In post-activity surveys, 89% of educator survey respondents report they are confident they can deliver GCE lessons in the classroom and 91% report the tools and resources as relevant to their needs.

## CREATING CONNECTIONS

Spur Change aimed to connect educators with SMOs through holding joint conferences and other events. Realizing the potential for collaboration between educators here in Canada and SMOs, many who are engaged in education around the world, these events captured the overlapping passion of teaching towards a more empathic and sustainable future.

**“[Spur Change] brought together teachers and these small and medium organizations... that has been, from a personal level, very prosperous.” — Educator participant**



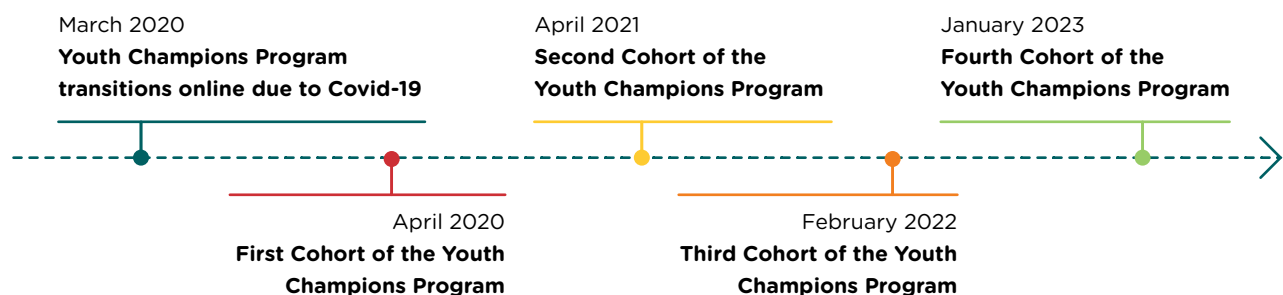
# SUPPORTING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

## FOSTERING GROWTH

Spur Change’s Youth Champions Program fostered personal and professional growth by equipping youth with concrete skills, confidence, and mentorship to move from interest to leadership. Participants gained practical competencies in project design, public engagement, and SDG literacy while developing the self-assurance to lead initiatives, pursue careers in sustainability and development, and continue their engagement beyond the program. For many, the program represented a first opportunity to see themselves as capable change agents.

- 64 Youth Champions were recruited across four cohorts of the program.
- For 95% of participants, the Youth Champions Program was their first time participating in an international program of this type.
- Conceived as a week-long in-person training program, the YCP transitioned online during Covid-19 and delivered training sessions to each cohort on a variety of topics needed to implement a public engagement activity.

“As a youth who had never taken any actions or been involved in activism, the Youth Champions Program prepared me to take a first step... my awareness was turned into knowledge, then into empowerment.” – Youth Champion



Timeline of Youth Champion Program cohorts.

## ENCOURAGING NEW PERSPECTIVES

The Youth Champions Program encouraged young people to critically engage with global issues through intersectional, cross-cultural, and lived-experience-based perspectives. By connecting youth across countries, identities, and social contexts, the program deepened understanding of the SDGs, gender equality, climate justice, and inclusion—challenging dominant narratives and amplifying voices often excluded from global policy and sustainability conversations. Through pairing youth with SMO mentors, mentors could share their expertise from the international cooperation sector, youth could share their own perspectives, and together, they could reshape what public engagement looks like.

- Youth Champions from 18 countries took part in the program including: Canada, Bénin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Haiti, Kenya, Nepal, Nicaragua, and more.
- 35 SMO mentors took part in the program, with many recurring year over year.

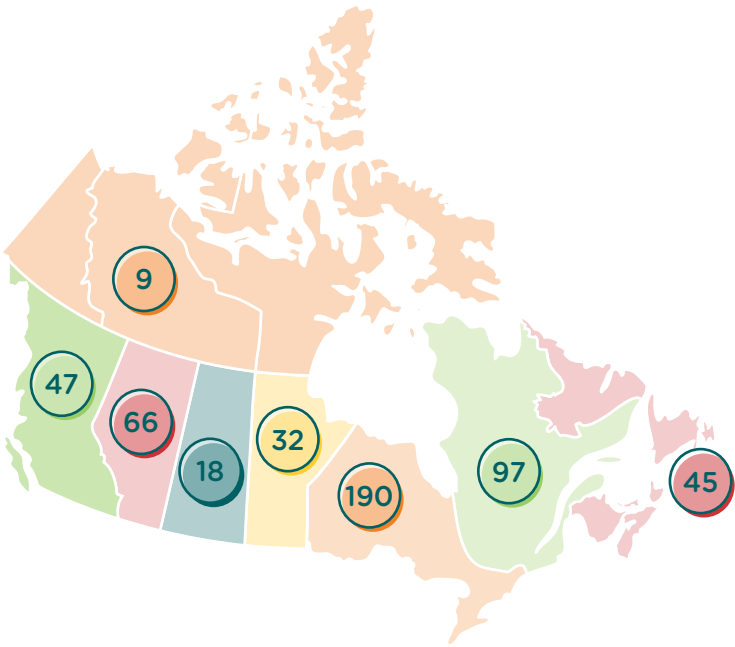
“I could explore topics like climate justice and the SDGs from a different perspective.”  
— Youth Champion

“Throughout the program I was able to connect with peers from across the globe and work with individuals in different countries.”— Youth Champion



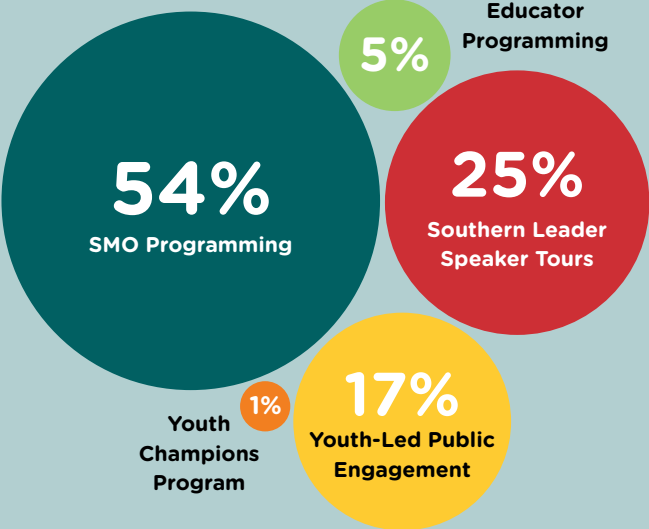


# BY THE NUMBERS



Canadian SMOs supported by region.

## 7,387 Direct Participants



Participants by program stream.

## + 264,207 Online Reach

Includes engagement promoting youth programming on social media and website. Also includes engagement on the Spur Change Resource Library.



- 👤 = 50 Participants
- 👩 = 4,007 Women & girls
- 👨 = 1,777 Men & boys
- 👤 = 31 Other gender identity
- 👤 = 1,572 Prefer not to answer or disaggregation unavailable



Participants by gender.



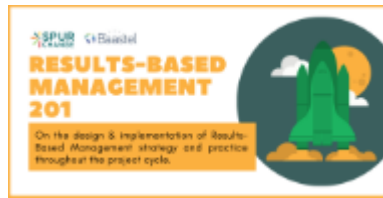
# SMO RESOURCES

## TRAINING

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[Results-Based Management 101](#)



[Results-Based Management 201](#)



[Building Equity: Resource Mobilization for Impact](#)



[Making Data Collection Meaningful](#)



[Baseline Data Collection Training](#)



[Project Implementation Plan Training](#)



[Risk Management Training](#)



[Fundraising in the Times of COVID-19](#)



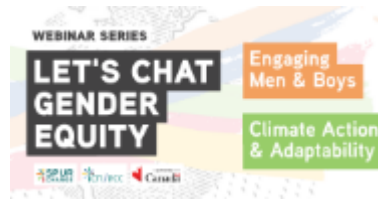
[Code of Conduct to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Violence](#)

## WEBINARS

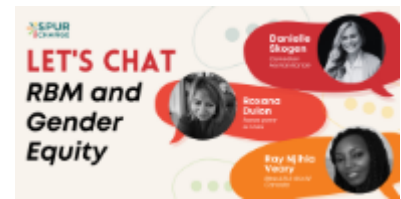
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[SMO Impact Journey](#)



[Let's Chat: Gender Equity](#)



[Let's Chat: RBM and Gender Equity](#)



[Putting Feminist MEAL into Practice](#)



[Testing Innovative Solutions with a Gender Lens](#)



[What is a Financial Statement?](#)

## REPORTS

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[2020: Needs Assessment Report](#)



[2021: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on SMO Adaptation and Resilience](#)



[2022: What have SMOs learned from COVID?](#)



[2023: What Constitutes an "Enabling Environment" for Canadian SMOs?](#)



[2024: Amplifying SMO Impact on International Cooperation](#)

# EDUCATOR RESOURCES

## SHARE & LEARN SERIES

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[I'm a Global Citizen](#)



[On Advocacy by Teachers](#)



[When Awareness Rhymes with Playfulness](#)



[Fostering Empathy and Design Thinking with the SDGs](#)



[Harnessing Literature's Potential](#)



[Gender Equity in the Classroom](#)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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[The TUSEME Approach: Promoting youth leadership through arts](#)



[Learn & Teach: Climate Change](#)



[Global Citizenship Education in Online and Hybrid Classroom](#)

