House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** Action Canada for Population and Development (ACPD)

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Foreign aid and foreign policy

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Increase the current committed spending for family planning (from the $1.1 billion in new funding under the Muskoka initiative) from 9% or $84 million to 12% or $132 million, in keeping with a 2012 report by the UN Population Fund which calls on donors to provide $4.1 billion in new funding to provide universal access to family-planning services – a figure that would more than double current global spending levels.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

≤$499,999

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Government figures from September 2012 show that out of the $1.1 billion in new funding under the Muskoka initiative, approximately $84 million of programming had been committed for family planning purposes. Of this, $935 million was operational at the time meaning that $165 million still had to be allocated to various projects by 2015. Increasing the amount of funding for family planning to the recommended $132 million, will mean allocating only $48 million of the $165 remaining funds leaving close to $117 million for other Maternal, Newborn and Child Health initiatives.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Over 200 million women and girls in developing countries, many in Canada's 10 focus countries of the Muskoka Initiative, who wish to avoid pregnancy do not have access to modern and effective methods of contraception. This results in over 75 million unintended pregnancies every year which puts them at risk of death or disability during pregnancy and childbirth, including from unsafe abortion, particularly where quality of care is inadequate. Ensuring women have access to family planning allows them to choose if and when they want to have children and obtain higher levels of education.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

By meaningfully engaging civil society organizations, especially women, youth and human rights-focused organizations, among other relevant stakeholders in the planning, implementation and evaluation of Canada's development policy framework and delivery of ODA, the Canadian government can not only benefit from their expertise and partnerships, but also build the capacities of such stakeholders. This involves creating participatory mechanisms for diverse constituencies to apply for DFATD funding, knowledge sharing spaces and capacity building opportunities.

Topic: Foreign aid and foreign policy

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Meet the commitment of providing 0.7% of GNI for Canada’s ODA ensuring that it includes 10% of ODA directed towards sexual and reproductive health initiatives. This can be done through the establishment of a clear development policy framework, in consultation with diverse stakeholders, including civil society, based on the ODA Accountability Act and internationally accepted human rights principles that promotes a strong vision of Canada’s contribution to addressing global poverty.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$5 million -$9.9 million

5 or more years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

DFATD underspent $419 million from its 2012-2013 budget (amounting to over 13% of the amount authorized for spending on grants and contributions). During the past and current fiscal years, there have been fewer projects initiated by diverse stakeholders, including women and human rights-focused organizations. As a first step, reallocate the $419million underspent to the 2014-2015 ODA budget, to maintain current ODA of 0.32% GNI, and to adopt a plan to meet its 0.7% ODA target.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Canadian ODA contributes to saving lives, increasing educational attainment and creating employment opportunities, thereby strengthening economies and alleviating poverty. In keeping with Canada`s commitment (made at the International Parliamentarians Conference on the Implementation of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development) to allocate 10% of ODA to population assistance, Canada can play a leadership role in empowering young women and girls with their human rights, preventing maternal mortality and morbidity and securing healthy populations.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

By meaningfully engaging civil society organizations, especially women, youth and human rights-focused organizations, among other relevant stakeholders in the planning, implementation and evaluation of Canada's development policy framework and delivery of ODA, the Canadian government can not only benefit from their expertise and partnerships, but also build the capacities of such stakeholders. This involves creating participatory mechanisms for diverse constituencies to apply for DFATD funding, knowledge sharing spaces and capacity building opportunities.

Topic: Foreign aid and foreign policy

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Increase financial support for multilateral initiatives and the realization of international commitments to achieve gender equality and, specifically, those aimed at meeting the sexual and reproductive health needs of young women and girls though strengthened support for initiatives aimed at eliminating all forms of stigma, discrimination and violence against women, including harmful traditional and cultural practices; recognizing that donors have a role to play in promoting equality and tackling structural inequalities that violate women and girls' human rights.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$5 million -$9.9 million

3 years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

In April 2013, Canadian government took a leadership step in creating advances to protect women from violence by pledging $5million in support of G8 efforts targeting sexual violence in conflict zones. ACPD calls on the Government to, as a first step, use these funds to supports its commitment to international agreements including the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Violence Against Women (CEDAW), agreed conclusions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the 2013 UN Human Rights Council Resolution on sexual violence against women (which Canada chaired).

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Achieving gender equality by guaranteeing young women and girls' right to live free from all forms of stigma, discrimination and violence, requires the elimination of early and forced marriage. In 2012, Canada committed to working with multilateral institutions, including the United Nations, to address this issue. Sustaining and increasing financial support for UNFPA and its multilateral allies in reviewing and reforming laws and policies that uphold harmful cultural and traditional practices, such as early and forced marriage, empowers young women and girls to claim their human rights.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

By leveraging the expertise of Canadian individuals, civil society organizations, academia, among other constituencies, the Canadian government can strengthen collaboration and the provision of technical assistance with multilateral institutions, including UNFPA, in order to contribute to changing laws and policies with a view to achieve gender equality; as they relate to eliminating harmful cultural and traditional practices and all forms of stigma, discrimination and violence.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

Recommendation 1:

In times of financial austerity, governments must invest development funding carefully, ensuring that the impact each dollar achieves must be as great as possible based on the principle of good governance. Guttmacher Institute estimations show that for each dollar spent to move from the current levels of modern method use to the full-needs-met scenario would save 1.40$ or 40% in the costs of maternal and newborn healthcare

A July 2013 report from the Guttmacher institute shows how by helping women avoid unintended pregnancies, public funding for contraceptive services in 2010 in the US, resulted in net public savings of $10.5 billion or $5.68 for every dollar spent providing contraceptive care

Providing basic maternal and newborn health services in developing countries costs an average of US$3 per capita per year. The total cost of saving a mother or infants life when complications arise is about US$230

Sexual and reproductive illnesses and deaths affect women and men in their most productive years, undermining the economic future of nations and their families

Recommendation 2:

Canadian ODA (frozen at 0.32% of GNI) ranks 14th among OECD countries, below France, the UK and the Netherlands. In 2011, Canadian ODA decreased by 5.3%

The OECD Development Assistance Committee 2012 Peer Review of Canada states that,
"Canada lacks a clear, top-level statement that sets out its vision for development co-operation. The new approach to Canadian aid is not yet supported by sufficient or transparent decision-making criteria, complicating its processes and public accountability and constraining discussions with key stakeholders, including parliament"

Conclusions from the 2013 Commission on the Status of Women commits the Government to increasing investment in gender equality and the empowerment of women and strengthening international cooperation, through the fulfilment of international ODA commitments, that supports multisectoral strategies, particularly towards ending violence against women and girls and promoting gender equality

Recommendation 3:

Early and forced marriage constitutes a violation of young women and girls'human rights, and remains a significant issue in many of DFATD priority countries, where 30% or more of women between the ages of 20-24 are married before the age of 18

Ending early and forced marriage is closely related to UN Secretary-General's Every Woman Every Child initiative, the MDGs and the ICPD

Reviewing and reforming laws and policies that hinder the realization of women, girls and adolescents' sexual and reproductive rights, including laws, policies and practices that uphold harmful cultural and traditional practices, decreases their vulnerability to maternal mortality, puts them at lower risk for experiencing violence, stigma and discrimination, increases their ability to prevent unwanted pregnancies and STIs (including HIV) and allow them to obtain the highest levels of education

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided