



# Canadian Jesuits International

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July 28, 2016

Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to submit our responses to the questions put forward in Global Affairs Canada's International Assistance Review (IAR). This submission is a collaborative effort by our staff and Board at Canadian Jesuits International (CJI).

The work of CJI is aligned with GAC's focus on working with the poorest and most vulnerable people. Our submission reflects the belief that international programs must work with the local culture, in order to ensure that changes we promote take root. This approach also recognizes the autonomy and agency of women and girls, who are in many places looking to transform their cultures from within.

Our responses also place particular emphasis on education, both overseas and in Canada, as a key element in achieving the long-term transformation needed for a more peaceful, equitable and just world. We hope that GAC will continue to identify youth as a key beneficiary population.

We also hope that the Canadian government will increase funding for efforts to build solidarity between and among communities and institutions in Canada and in the Global South, with the participation of people from diverse cultures and religions.

We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to a renewed and refocused approach by GAC that reflects Canadian values, and recognizes the values of people in the regions of the world where we seek to engage in international cooperation and humanitarian response.

We commend you for initiating an open and inclusive discussion. At CJI we look forward to hearing about the results of the IAR and the new policies and initiatives that GAC will launch in support of the SDGs.

Sincerely,

Madeline Lunney  
Director

### Overview Questions

What are Canada's strengths in providing international assistance through our development, humanitarian, and security and stabilization efforts?

Canadians' strengths of diversity, tolerance, peace-building, ecological awareness, respect for human rights and empowerment of individuals should be put to use in providing international assistance. Strengths also include a historic focus on gender equality and project experience on empowering women, as well as a historic focus on partnerships with Canadian civil society organizations. These strengths and our particular worldview should inform and determine programming aligned with the SDGs.

Which priorities should guide Canada's development assistance policies? And which international assistance activities should Canada scale back or phase out?

Canada should focus on where we have the most to offer in development assistance. Prioritize funding for humanitarian intervention over military action. Recognize that emergency humanitarian assistance demands a longer term commitment for full recovery. Review the idea of *eliminating* some countries from receiving development assistance. If an organization/partner can make a case that funding is needed, it should be directed there. Further, commit to a 15-year timeline for some larger projects that aim to be innovative or transformative.

Support research initiatives that provide data that will reinforce the pertinence of the intervention, through case studies and socio-economic indicators. Focus on need for the professional international development sector. Continue to promote the International Youth Internship Program and exchanges for a minimum of six months if not one year and discourage short-term (one week to one month) volunteer trips. Focus on offering services based on need and phase out sponsoring programs and discourage fundraising 'marketing' that perpetuate the stigma of the Global South as passive recipients of charity. Promote the procurement of food and NFIs locally, and study the feasibility of cash-assistance programs and avoid any dumping as food aid when not life-saving.

If Canada wants to contract out professional services (e.g., training for police), this should be managed as a separate program and not resourced from funds for international development. Bring an end to public funding for the private, for-profit sector to do development work.

Give Canadians an opportunity to voice their opinions at regular intervals. Increase communication around projects so that people understand the importance of accountability for results, but with a greater sense of the challenges facing NGOs. Facilitate more South-South exchange for pilot projects or regional networks to undertake or document work that can then be replicated.

How can Canada best refocus its international assistance on helping the poorest and most vulnerable, and supporting fragile states? What can we learn from the experience of others in this regard?

Canada can best refocus its international assistance on helping the poorest and most vulnerable through education and empowerment. Listening to affected people as well as training and educating people locally should be built into every project so that we enable and empower those who are poorest and most vulnerable. Priorities should be guided by international research on how to best effect change with the participation of the beneficiaries in program design and implementation. At a minimum, feedback mechanisms (using local language and local means of communication) must be in place from the beginning of a response.

Focus on education, health care and nutrition, social inclusion, shelter and sanitation. Approaches in these areas should be conceived as holistic interventions rather than the delivery of isolated services. Holistic interventions mean multidimensional programming. For example, an early childhood education project should involve child protection, inclusion of children with disabilities and education for parents; might have a child nutrition component; and, might also involve several NGOs working together.

A key contribution that the International Development sector can bring to the goal of quality education for all is to establish collaboration spaces with international education boards. Innovation and alternative education is happening in many of the countries where the needs of locals and their reality is embedded in the curriculum and educational outcomes. Quality education goes beyond the use of a standardized test. It should include supporting local governments and international educational bodies to achieve greater educational success measured from alternative local perspectives.

Which organizations, institutions, and partners should Canada work with, and what is the most effective way to do so?

We should work with Canadian NGOs with a proven track record and their overseas partners. Canadians have a lot to contribute and the overseas partners provide the on-the-ground context and the ability to continue the work. Canada should work with NGOs that are able to demonstrate expertise in reaching identified beneficiary populations. This is key to quality results.

Time and financial resources should be allocated for consultations and research, which can be designed to bring benefits in terms of local capacity building, even if the project doesn't go ahead. Provide GAC with the resources to give real feedback on proposal calls and on proposals themselves.

How can Canada deliver its international assistance most efficiently and effectively, and better measure results?

For Canada to offer international assistance in the most effective way, it must be bounded by humanitarian principles and guided by international standards. The Sphere Standards were developed responding to specific contexts (mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa). When applicable, this or some other international quality standards should be met. Even in new and demanding contexts (e.g. urban centres), there must be a commitment for technical quality standards. We must continue to monitor and evaluate our work, asking hard questions. We can work efficiently and effectively by leveraging the generosity of our donors, volunteers and trade partners.

Baseline data is paramount. Often the main challenge is to get clear indicators, and funding should reflect that. Coordination with other agencies and local authorities also mandatory.

Roundtables of people involved in trade, diplomacy and international development in specific areas in the world could result in greater cooperation, support and effectiveness in meeting the SDGs.

Organizations should be required to report the depth and breadth of their results, but over longer periods of time, depending on the project. Excessive reporting requirements overburden smaller organizations and their partners, and are not a proven way of achieving quality programming.

## **Health and Rights of Women and Children**

- Building on our commitment to a feminist approach and support for the gender equality goal of the 2030 Agenda, where should Canada focus its international assistance efforts in this area?

Canada aims to be not only gender-sensitive but gender-transformative. No project should be imposed; and, within a project, each component needs to be carefully constructed (in long-frame terms, the outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs needed to achieve our goal must be a shared goal with the local community and beneficiaries). When engaged in working overseas, we need to articulate very precisely what factors in ongoing practices hinder gender equality. We need to be precise on what - i.e., which specific practice - is repressive or violent. Then we can consider these in programming or offer recommendations that seek to change what is harmful. We should focus on transforming only what is harmful to women or society as a whole, or challenging practices that go against the integrity and respect that every person, man, women, boys and girls requires.

In order to promote this focused or targeted change, it is also important to respect local ways of communicating, including protocols and nuances of the local language. This is the only way to achieve long-lasting change and sustainable development. Our programs must work with and not against the local culture. Without these considerations, the changes we promote will be dissolved or reversed soon after a project ends. In contexts where there is limited access to vulnerable communities, if Canada is perceived to have an agenda to impose its values, access to beneficiaries will be further restricted and the safety of the implementing teams or implementing partners might also be compromised. This approach also recognizes the autonomy and agency of women and girls, who are in many places looking to transform their cultures from within.

We must continue to work to address the root causes of inequality, and understand that real change will take time and substantial commitment on the part of donors and those working for change, often under very difficult conditions. Canada could take bolder steps in providing longer-term and multi-country funds for women's empowerment. Priority should be given to credible NGOs with long-term presence.

Canada can also demonstrate continued leadership by introducing programs in partner countries to develop a new generation of women leaders of diverse backgrounds and to ensure that at all levels of government and governance there are concerted efforts to build leadership that will promote a feminist worldview. While Canada is a pioneer in gender inclusivity (e.g., 50% of our current cabinet is comprised of women), what concrete steps are being taken to develop a generation of women leaders in development, as well as utilizing the rich diaspora that Canada possesses?

Further, we should reinstate support for more South-South exchanges and networks so that policy makers and NGOs can hear from the women who have often been left out of the conversation on development priorities.

Canada needs to make a significant investment in education and programming that will ensure that everyone in a given country can sit at the table: truly inclusive decision-making incorporating voices from different cultural and ethnic groups, disability groups, the LGBT community, for example, will ensure that the Canadian viewpoint and assistance framework is not only inclusive but intersectional.

- How can Canada's efforts to support well-being and empowerment better benefit children and youth, including in the education sector?

Although, globally, the number of boys and girls in school is greater than ever before, countries with protracted conflicts are at risk of losing a full generation of pupils. Syrian children, who were born at the outset of the war, or those born in communities affected by the Boko Haram insurgency, often, do not have schools they can go to. Those who started school but have lost more than four year of schooling will not be able to reintegrate in a regular school. Accelerated learning programs are needed for refugees to catch up and be accepted in the school system of the country of their (temporary) residency.

The fact that “250 million children are unable to read, write or count even after four years of schooling” must be a top priority to redress. It is worrisome that students are automatically advanced to the next year without learning the basics of their existing grade level. Any education project that is supported by Canadian funds should follow up on the *quality* of the education given.

It is not enough to build a classroom. In too many countries, classes are only held for a couple of hours a day. Teachers are unmotivated, underpaid or overwhelmed and too many schools have extremely weak attendance (by both students and teachers). Budgets also need to cover essentials that support the improvement of the education system at the school district or national level (beyond focusing on student sponsorship or scholarship schemes). Remedial summer schools are often welcomed in many places. We can *suggest* this to our partners overseas: to determine if there is an opportunity to have classes for those who need it the most, for instance through the summer (or equivalent school year breaks).

Canada is a global leader in the telecommunications sector and this leadership can be leveraged in educational programming and the provision of telecommunications tools to further the education of children and youth overseas. Provision of incentives for private sector companies to invest in technology in hard to reach areas can greatly benefit countries and ensure competitiveness in the global market. Greater non-monetary incentives for private sector companies to invest in technology in hard-to-reach areas would greatly benefit some countries and enhance their competitiveness in the global market; however, such incentives should NOT promote tied aid.

Quality employment strategies that begin with education for livelihoods and finish with job creation incentives for employers are key in ensuring that the world’s youth are provided with the tools for success. These programs can and should be incorporated into peacebuilding strategies in post-conflict and fragile state environments, as well as in programming for both urban and rural environments.

According to UNESCO (*Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all*, 2014), the world faces a shortfall of 3.3 million primary school teachers and 5.1 million lower secondary school teachers. International cooperation efforts could focus on teacher training, particularly access to curriculum resources, information on childhood development and support for evaluation of education programs that is centred in local realities.

To improve the quality of learning, teachers need a strong curriculum. The curriculum needs to reflect the context in which they are operating in order to be effective. Agencies should have as a common practice sharing their expertise and the materials available. Teachers or facilitators developing their own materials have ownership of it, but it is surprising how often teachers start preparing materials from scratch, over and over.

It is important to recognize the diversity across the globe and within a country (including the rural/urban divide). English as a second language might be of use for Somali refugees in Nairobi, but not equally so for indigenous groups in their own community.

Promoting quality is NOT meant to be advocating homogeneous curricula or didactic techniques. What is important is that formal and informal schooling covers all basics in terms of literacy and numeracy, and also allows learning about history and civics; about art, the environment, solidarity and human rights. Each country should be sovereign in directing the school system and study content that it feels best serves the nation. Yet, Canada can be engaged in research in education and other social sciences to see if there are significant gaps in what is being taught. Should the absence of addressing social or gender equality issues be intentional (e.g., to educate some to become submissive subjects in the society – either in the workforce or in the family), then these particular gaps may be addressed. The first step is to be aware of what type of formation is Canada supporting.

Canada should provide more funding for Early Childhood Education programming and recognize parents as children's first teachers. Child-centred learning promotes cognitive and social development, laying the foundations for later learning and mastery of life skills.

Prioritize education in emergencies (including in refugee camps) as a means of helping internally displaced persons and refugees rebuild their lives. Children who are not in school are at greater risk of violence, abuse, including early marriage and recruitment into conflict. For children and youth that are otherwise house-bound, school offers a relatively safe space. Education can provide children with life-saving information and sustain progress and investment made by the community and by the children themselves in education.

- Do you have any other comments concerning "Health and Rights of Women and Children"?

In emergency, recovery and development programs, primary health care is usually covered, but rarely are programs undertaken for those with special health needs and chronic diseases. There are often gaps in secondary and tertiary health care. Also, special attention and funding should be allocated to towards psychosocial support.

There is a significant amount of experience around Gender and Development, but not as much around Gender in Humanitarian Assistance. Canada can contribute to the discussions, research, programming and sharing of experiences to improve work in this area, and should continue its support for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA.

## **Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change**

- Are there niche areas within climate and environment (e.g. water, biodiversity, land use, agriculture, energy) where Canada could further focus its international assistance?

Canada has supported and can continue to support the training of small-scale farmers in environmentally sound and sustainable methods. Small-scale and organic farming has proved to be more sustainable and to provide greater food security to poor farmers in depressed areas than large-scale farming with non-organic inputs. The conditions that allow GMOs in Canada may not be present in another country. It is crucial that local conditions are prioritized over the interest of multinational corporations. Canadian international assistance must empower people to grow their own food – including the protection of seeds.

For small farmers to be resilient against climate change, sovereignty is paramount. Across the globe, smaller NGOs work with small farmers quite successfully. Farmers need to be in control of their own production system. GMOs and chemical fertilizers, on the other hand, make farmers dependent on government subsidies, bank loans and corporations. Even where subsidies are available, these inputs often do not reach the farms in time. Farmers cannot follow nature and rain cycles, and crop yields and food security are compromised.

Livestock contributes a lot to CO2 emissions. Sustainable organic agriculture can reduce this impact by putting the carbon [manure] into the soil as fertilizer instead of into the air. If Canada promotes organic agriculture, we will also be fighting climate change on this front.

- Do you have any other comments concerning "Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change"?

Production systems set for fair trade are likely viable but not yet aligned with clean economic growth principles (green energy and production practices). Canada must recognize which partners are ready and will benefit more from access to markets and fair trade.

Any position that Canada takes internationally should be backed up by our own environmental policies and practices.

We support the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability *Open for Justice* campaign, which calls on the Canadian government to “ensure that people harmed by the overseas operations of Canadian mining, oil and gas companies are able to access justice in Canada”.

## **Governance, Pluralism, Diversity and Human Rights**

- How can Canada best help implement Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda-to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels?

Canada can provide support for organizations that are supporting and/or accompanying human rights defenders while at the same time working diplomatically to encourage societies to protect their own citizens who work for human rights. Arguably, Canada can distinguish its international cooperation agenda by focusing some significant funding on long-term capacity building and accompaniment for organizations engaged in social justice work.

- How can Canada promote inclusion, advance respect for diversity, and uphold human rights?

Canada has modified the list of priority countries following different criteria (*based on their real needs, their capacity to benefit from development assistance, and their alignment with Canadian foreign policy priorities*). Over the last decade, there was an impression that funding was allocated following trade interests. Middle-income countries are not on the priority list (as they, represented by economic performance indicators for the country as a whole might not fit the criteria described above), and yet they are where the majority of people living in extreme poverty are found. If not through direct assistance, then when negotiating trade and other global affairs (from education exchanges to promoting tourism), Canada has the opportunity and moral responsibility to consider the human rights record of partner countries.

Canada should lead by example. In Canada, we are concerned about where our food comes from or how our goods are made. The information available from different countries should be shared and used in negotiations. Often development agencies and the Canadian private sector are working at cross-purposes, so that Canadian development efforts go toward mitigating the deleterious effects of Canadian mining and extractive companies in marginalized communities around the world. There should be a strong, unified stance of no tolerance for Canadian companies committing human rights abuses or environmental devastation – especially of indigenous territories, same here in our country or abroad.

Increasingly it seems that vulnerable groups are not only the most impacted by armed conflict: they are the targets. As human beings we are outraged, but governments can be slow to convert that natural outrage into focused action. Canada should be more vocal in defense of human rights and speak out about those who are targeting the weakest and the helpless, for whatever religious or political reasons.

- Do you have any other comments concerning "Governance, Pluralism, Diversity and Human Rights"?

It is important to monitor the activity of private Canadian investors in fragile states, looking into the economic, environmental and social effects of such investment interventions. Our work when engaging to promote a healthy social fabric should not be naïve. It is of no benefit to channel all efforts to defeat a corrupt leader – only to later witness that this leader's place is taken by another who in turn becomes just as corrupt. We should support initiatives that link the private sector with the International Development sector so that efforts to combat corruption and increase transparency and business accountability are maximized.

## **Peace and Security**

- How can Canada align its international assistance efforts in peace and security with international approaches, including the 2030 Agenda?

In many vulnerable communities where we work, lack of security is an evident problem. Peace-building programs should have a livelihood component. In addition, there should be a budget allocating resources for youth to have access to education and jobs. Especially in the context of protracted crises (whether these are social-economic crises or armed conflicts), youth feel abandoned, and without hope, violence is likely to spread. We see this over and over across the globe. If you do not take care of the poor, someone else will (regrettably, this someone else may be a radical group looking for young soldiers or a drug cartel).

Too often we have forgotten to attend to young people. It is broadly accepted that vaccinations for infants are paramount, but sports, cultural activities and life skill development for youth are just as essential. Much is demanded of youth, yet often the youth demographic is neglected or fails to meet beneficiary vulnerability criteria to access services. Project design should promote, and what is even harder, maintain safe environments for sport, cultural and recreational activities that are accessible to youth. In the countries and communities where thousands of youth are unemployed and out of school, society is in debt with them. Offering safe spaces and recreational activities is, of course, not enough. It is relatively expensive, but it continues to be one of the most efficient (including cost-efficient) approaches to combat crime and other social problems such as early marriage and enrollment in gangs or other armed groups.

Beyond investing in youth, facilitating a healthy social fabric is the best investment that a society seeking peace can make. Canada should not consider it a luxury, but rather a strategy, to support projects that promote community living (the cohesion of urban neighbourhoods, supporting host communities with high levels of refugees or migrant workers, and so on). Canada can share expertise from urban and rural planning to sharing governance tools that promote collaborative decision-making and consultations.

Canada should be wary of the enterprises that kill small-business and traditional workshops. When a corporation takes over, offering goods and services that were previously provided locally, large number of people become unemployed. The benefits or ‘savings’ that multi-national corporations bring with them most often only benefit a few and unemployment is often the first ripping of the social fabric. Canada contributes to peace and security when keeping this in mind.

It is important to support local advocates that defend indigenous people’s rights and the environment. Canada can be a witness and a promoter of human rights. Protect those who are under death threats for fighting for social and environmental justice or journalists who are documenting corruption by local authorities or international corporations depleting local resources or exploiting local populations. Members and partners of these corporations must be aware of the practices in their international network and must be held accountable for their actions.

### **Responding to Humanitarian Crises and the Needs of Displaced Populations**

- How can Canada support needs-driven, effective and timely responses to humanitarian crises with predictable yet flexible support?

Of main concern are the uncertainty of the aftermath and uncertainty of influx of displaced populations as these impact our capacity to scale up humanitarian services. The project cycle takes time and too often the context changes by the time funding arrives. GAC should continue employing stage-by-stage criteria and decision-making process to fund first responses (following the immediate aftermath of a shock); and further, from the onset with the potential to provide more significant funding for the second phase of recovery.

Proposals need to have a minimum amount of flexibility in the implementation. For example when describing the target population, these might include registered *and* unregistered refugees as potential beneficiaries. This will allow Canadian partners to serve based on needs, independent of UNHCR registration: given that there might be months when the backlog of refugees to be registered (or who prefer not to register) is immense, and other months in which field teams struggle to find a family that would fit such criteria.

- How can Canada better support the protection of vulnerable populations in crises and strengthen respect for humanitarian principles?

We should be aware of the great impact that our interventions have at the local level. Both, blanket distributions (in the sense of giving the same to all) as well as targeting can at times save lives and alleviate suffering, but at times, can also perpetuate, create or increase inequality and social division or forcing beneficiaries into falling to negative practices to qualify for assistance (the same has reported to be the case, here in Canada). There are strong arguments for sustainability. We must avoid dependency as much as possible, but there are differences between development work and humanitarian response. We need to recognize that not all programs will be self-sustained – particularly among displaced populations which are forbidden to engage in income generating activities to provide for their own.

Programming, that supports the protection of vulnerable populations is achieved when a most careful integration of all relevant considerations are made (e.g. having separate NFI kits for different age-gender groups or family compositions; preparing different shelter repair kits depending on the extent of the damage). Beneficiary consultation is key.

In too many parts of the world, humanitarian aid continues to be extremely constrained and there are not many agencies allowed to work. Canada must prioritize the response to displaced people as closer as populations are to ‘home’ or place of origin. In order to do this, Canada must be very vocal to deescalate the trend of humanitarian organizations being targets in armed conflict. Canada must also stand against the use of hunger, destroying or impeding access to natural resources (such as water) as a political lever and weapon of war which compounded the desperation of civilians. As a second priority, our humanitarian assistance should be directed to the affected region -- recognizing when refugees are not only feeling war but also are fleeing the region (where they could find some cultural links) due to the lack of relief aid they can access there.

- How can we facilitate more comprehensive and coordinated responses to better meet the needs of populations affected by crises and optimize the impact of humanitarian, development and peace and security initiatives?

The Sphere Project and other international standards not only give basic indicators on the quantity and quality of aid. A key principle is to coordinate among agencies and, as much as possible to harmonize assistance. UNHCR, OCHA, IOM and the Shelter Cluster, to name a few, are key partners that coordinate responses. Canadian organizations overseas and its partners must be represented at relevant clusters or working groups at the field level. Humanitarian workers also overlap on different missions. Same Canadians that responded to the South-Asia Tsunami in 2004 also responded to the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013; to the earthquakes in Haiti in 2010 and in Nepal in 2015. Lessons learnt are passed over, knowledge is being built. Canada can contribute further with technical expertise. In practical terms, Canadian funding should include a budget line or offer a set number of hours for consultancy work as needed (e.g. structural engineering; nutritional science).

Canada needs to also recognize that Canadian citizens work for non-Canadian humanitarian organizations and non-Canadians work for Canadian NGOs. Most agencies balance the ratio between expat and local staff depending on the capacity and human resources found in a given country. Experienced Canadian humanitarian

workers are effective to setup programmes and set the expected quality standards. Whenever needed, Canadian Embassies could do much more to advocate and facilitate visas for Canadian humanitarian workers.

WFP has technical, humanitarian, logistic and managerial experience to calculate the number of calories needed per person per day. The guidelines are adapted to the local climate and food available. A basic basket is calculated for summer, another with a few extra calories for winter. Further, not only malnutrition rates, but also aggravating factors are considered before determining a nutrition intervention. Yet, deep cuts for several of its country programs are done related to lack of funding, not nutritional science. Canada should continue to support and increase its support for the World Food Program (WFP). While the expertise of most Canadian NGOs is in development work, often development agencies find themselves responding to humanitarian crises. Some are well placed to do so, but certainly not most. There is a humanitarian imperative to alleviate hunger, but there is no need to duplicate the efforts to set up food aid programs.

Middle-income and low-income countries host the vast majority or the world's refugees responding with basic services, but too soon their housing, education and health systems are overwhelmed. This stress results in aggravated tensions and refugees are often exploited or at risk of *refoulement* if they engage in income-generating activities. Recognizing this, Canada should include host community issues in its programming and funding, without taking over the role and responsibility of the local government. These approaches should include advocacy for integration: allowing refugees to engage in livelihood activities.

We also need to recognize (encourage and support) that not every action is dependent on the local government, the UN or Canadian or International NGOs. Humanitarian responses are also the numerous cases of solidarity from local residents and groups.

- Do you have any other comments concerning "Responding to Humanitarian Crises and the Needs of Displaced Populations"?

Our humanitarian mandate must focus on the alleviation of suffering at a much faster pace than politics will ever do. Our first purpose overseas is to contribute towards recovery by offering assistance, not as charity, but based on quality standards so that families are able to regain a semblance of normal lives that take them beyond the need to struggle for mere survival.

In 2015, Canadians were moved when we saw the picture of Alan Kurdi. However, we cannot change our perspective of the crisis and of refugees *only* because of these photographs. It was said that it took a picture of an innocent boy to change the position of the country. We must not be indifferent but we need to go further into discussion and action. If it took just one picture of an innocent boy to welcome refugees let it not be a different picture to swing the pendulum to feelings of hostility. We need to keep the conversations open and pay attention to even the nuances of language. In Canada, our most important call is for tolerance, acceptance and integration; a call to combat prejudice and fear.

UNHCR reports that in 2016 there are over 65million refugees and displaced people in the world: more than at any point in history. Further, refugees spend an average of 17 years displaced. It is important to add nuances to the figures. We need to recognize the impact that secondary and tertiary displacement has on individual, families and communities that have been expelled or forced to flee from a second and a third country (e.g.

Somalis now fleeing Yemen) as well as whole generations being born without full citizen rights of citizenship (e.g. Palestinians born in Lebanon).

## **Delivering Results**

- What concrete steps could Canada take to make its international assistance delivery approaches and mechanisms more efficient, effective and innovative? How can we promote greater coherence between our development, trade and diplomacy efforts?

Wherever we establish trade partnerships, or offer international cooperation or humanitarian assistance, we must promote equality. Promoting equality contributes towards a culture (in the broad understanding of the word) or an environment (including institutional environments) that respects all persons in an integrated manner (not only accommodating a special need or difference) and without discrimination based on the perception of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical ability.

We will be able to reach the SDGs when this respect is evident in the ways of working, in everyday life, through increased opportunities and fairer access to new opportunities – and when we recognize that just as Canadian culture evolves, so too do other cultures continually evolve. Cultures change through the development of new ideas within a society but also through the diffusion and exchange of cultural traits and tools from one society to another. Over the centuries, and across the globe, humanity has advanced in terms of gender equality and even if so slowly dissolving or questioning the concept of “race”. However, a small number of reactionaries in some countries see these advancements as a direct threat to the power they have or wish to have. Imposing our Canadian values might create conflict in the societies we aim to support. On the other hand, we should not be paralyzed by attempting to honour every tradition when some of these traditions might be harmful for vulnerable sections of the society (e.g., female genital mutilation). It is likely that internal groups are also challenging these practices. Therefore, we need to recognize local agents of change, and support them.

- How can Canada foster development innovation?

Four aspects must be considered in determining whether or not to take on projects: Technical feasibility, economic feasibility, cultural feasibility and environmental feasibility. Too many international cooperation programmes dismiss cultural feasibility from the proposal stage. Meaningful beneficiary participation is not only important to see if a community will welcome an intervention, but also provides clear indicators – and opportunities to share responsibilities. Is the local community interested in maintaining the project? Are our priorities also the priorities of the community?

Innovation is an ongoing process. Not every action needs to steer and turn. Two approaches that will naturally foster development innovation are, one the one hand, ensuring the feasibility of the projects and, on the other hand, allowing flexibility, accepting some risk and sharing the direction with our local counterparts.

- How can we enhance broader engagement of Canadians in our international assistance efforts?

Incorporating global social justice and sustainable development education into Canadian elementary and secondary school curricula could be made mandatory. This education might include information about

Canadian international development organizations, the work they do and the partners they work with around the world.

The funding for provinces to engage in international development efforts should be reinstated, and this should include funding for students to engage in international immersion experiences so that this education is fully inclusive for all, regardless of socioeconomic background. Provide tools and funding for marginalized Canadian communities to engage in international development education at all levels and ages.

Include Canadians with multicultural backgrounds (diaspora) and international living and working experience, especially youth, through funding projects and ongoing consultation processes in a manner that ensures that their voices are well represented in Canadian development policies. Celebrate Canada's diversity by engaging new Canadians in international assistance, and using multicultural recognition days as a means of raising awareness of the work happening overseas.

Work with the private sector more to leverage their expertise and grow awareness of international assistance in the private sector.

Educate Canadians in Canada about global affairs. Fight against prejudice and fear. Engage in marketing (social media, TV, print) and public information campaigns across government departments to provide greater transparency in the work of GAC as well as Canadian international assistance efforts and the projects, programs and people we support. Build confidence in the quality and transparency of the funds spent abroad.

Core funding of Canadian organizations would reduce the administrative fees that need to be taken from individual donations in order for the organization to do its work. Many donors are still sending funds on their own to avoid paying "admin" or bureaucratic costs. Regrettably, however, the good will with which these gifts are sent often results in money lost due to lack of monitoring. As mentioned in the backgrounder, remittances exceed Official Development Assistance. For many countries, remittances are at the top of the sources of foreign income. While remittances are important for the country, the work done is not necessarily international humanitarian cooperation -- in terms that humanitarian cooperation, for instance, should seek to serve the most vulnerable (which do not have friends and relatives in Canada sending them support). We need more clarity on what is solidarity, what is person-to-person assistance and what is development work for international cooperation.

## **Acronyms**

ECE – Early Childhood Education

CO2 – Carbon dioxide

GAC – Global Affairs Canada

GMO – Genetically modified organism

IOM – International Organization for Migration

LGBT – Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender

OCHA – Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

NFI – Non-food item

NGO – Non-governmental organization

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WFP – World Food Programme