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Policy and Advocacy at EWB Canada

At EWB Canada, we like to do things differently. We advocate for better policies, develop globally-minded systems change leaders and strengthen purpose-driven businesses. We believe that at the intersection of these activities is the real possibility to create a sustainable and inclusive global economy, and contribute an economic future that is equitable, participatory and sustainable for all.

We are a registered charity and our mission is to bring people and ideas together to tackle the most crucial causes of poverty and inequality. We are working to ensure that people that have been systematically marginalized and pushed to the outer counters of economic markets

have access to financial services and economic opportunities, and the means to live a life of dignity.

Through our non-partisan policy and advocacy work, we aim to achieve our mission by improving the rules that govern our global economic system by improving policies, shifting resources and transforming institutions to expand opportunities for people living in poverty around the world. We put this into practice using three strategic approaches: direct engagement with policymakers, campaigning, and thought leadership.

Strategic Approaches







1. Engaging Policymakers

By engaging policymakers, EWB Canada brings the voices of Canadians directly to those in public office. Our members meet with Members of Parliament (MPs) to discuss global development issues and how Canada can make a positive difference and demonstrate global leadership. Through these meetings, pre-budget consultations, and MP outreach, we go directly to those that have the power to change Canada's international development approach.

Our most valuable asset is our community of approximately 1,600 active members, made up of student leaders and young professionals. EWB Canada has a unique ability to engage and mobilize young people from across the country to take campaign actions, participate in Days of Action on Parliament Hill, and use their voices to create change. We have been doing it for over a decade.

2. Campaigning

Through campaigning, EWB Canada and our members reach out to the Canadian public to raise awareness about international development issues and to inspire them to take action to create policy change. When EWB Canada creates campaigns, we equip our volunteer and supporter network with the necessary skills, tools, and knowledge to implement the campaign strategy and lead local actions.

Throughout the year, we provide ongoing support, share resources, and host trainings and events to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of our community. Annual events such as our National Conference and Day of Action on Parliament Hill provide members an opportunity to build skills and strengthen relationships with like-minded changemakers across the country, and create moments capable of sparking policy change.

3. Creating Partnerships

International development challenges nowandaheadarecomplex,intertwined and affect us all, sowhen addressing them, we choose not to operate in isolation. EWB Canada brings together people from a host of different industries and disciplines across public and private spaces to influence our thinking and define our approach to international development. In these partnerships, we invest in research, learning, evaluation and review to propose innovative solutions to policy problems. We have collaborated with Nanos Research, the Canadian International Development Platform (CIDP) at Carleton University, the School of International Development and Global Studies at the University of Ottawa, and the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Toronto to research, develop and support our policy recommendations.

We work with partner civil society organizations and networks in the international development sector, as well as global development councils, such as the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC), the Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC) and the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation (ACGC), to raise awareness about important economic and social issues and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our work is also informed by our ventures and development partner organizations across East and West Africa, as much of our policy work is intended to create a better enabling environment for social enterprises and reduce poverty and inequality in the region.

Thematic Areas

EWB Canada's policy and advocacy work focuses on three thematic areas: Canada's Official Development Assistance (ODA), innovative development finance, and policy coherence across foreign affairs, trade and innovation.

1. **ODA**

ODA is a form of government aid that aims to improve economic development and social welfare in developing countries by funding infrastructure, education, healthcare, and other essential services. ODA can be delivered in the form of grants, concessional and non-concessional loans, or a mix of both grants and loans.

At EWB Canada, we push the Canadian government to increase and improve ODA to ensure that it improves the lives of some of the world's most underserved and disadvantaged people.



2. Innovative Development Finance

There is a \$5 trillion finance gap to reach the SDGs, and public funding alone will not be able to close it. Private financing can help eradicate poverty, provide public goods, and assist in sustainable resource management.

This is an emerging area of development work and one that EWB Canada has developed specialized expertise. We recognize that ODA alone will not provide the funding needed to solve development challenges or meet the SDGs. As innovative finance remains a relatively new space, there is tremendous potential for creating positive impact. EWB Canada works closely with the Canadian government to address how the International Assistance Innovation Program (IAIP) and the Development Finance Institution (DFI; FinDev Canada) can play a catalytic and risk-tolerant role within the sector.

Forms of private sector engagement can be further understood by reviewing agreements such as the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, and the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.²

In understanding the scope for possibility, it is important to recognize that while private financing has the potential to attract significant investment to developing countries, the cost of creating and deploying new financing mechanisms and the limited involvement of investors poses a challenge for innovative financing.³

3. Policy Coherence

Recently, EWB Canada has begun work on policy coherence to add to our efforts to improve Canada's aid effectiveness and allow us to improve the economic, social, environmental, and feminist lenses through which we view our national and international policy work. Having policy coherence built into our framework will ensure that when we are advocating for policy and systemic changes our recommendations are comprehensive and intersectional.



EWB CANADA'S POLICY WINS

Over the past 10 years, EWB Canada has been very successful in its policy and advocacy work. We work from a grassroots level up, and focus on finding sustainable solutions to complex global problem

Increasing Canada's Spending on Development Assistance

ODA is a crucial source of income for developing countries because it helps address the root causes of poverty and inequality. ODA provides crucial support to low-income countries for social welfare and economic development. Together with innovative financing for development and complementary investments made FinDev Canada, ODA helps to create the conditions for global economic growth, stability and prosperity.

As of 2018/19, Canada spends about 0.26 percent of its annual GNI on ODA which is well below the 0.32 percent average for the 29 Development Assistance Countries and the 0.7 percent target established by the United Nations in 1970.4

For the past 10 years, EWB Canada has advocated for more and better ODA. In 2017, EWB Canada's Time to Lead campaign asked Canada to increase the International Assistance Envelope (IAE) by 10 percent annually through 2019-2020. We also asked for a commitment to a publicly available timetable to double the IAE by 2023 with the intention of reaching the UN target of 0.7 percent of GNI before 2030. In 2018, our Bring Canada Back campaign made a similar ask of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau while challenging his famous quote, "Canada is back".

This persistent effort contributed to a \$2 billion increase in ODA and in \$1.5 billion for innovative financing for development over 5 years in Budget 2018, the most significant increase in Canada's ODA in a decade. As a result of advocacy from Canadian civil society, during the 2018 G7, it was announced that Canada raised \$3.8 billion for girls' education in conflict-affected and fragile states, including \$400 million in new ODA from Canada. At the Women Deliver conference in June 2019, Prime Minister Trudeau announced a commitment to provide \$1.4 billion for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and maternal newborn and child health (MNCH) per year for 10 years



starting in 2023, with \$700 million reserved for SRHR. Recently, the federal government also announced \$330 million for a new Equality Fund that will fund women's rights organizations (WROs) in Canada and abroad, which is expected to generate \$1 billion through private partnership. These are wins for all of Canada's international development sector.

Despite these gains, the Government of Canada must do more to reach the international 0.7 percent target. We know from our 2018 Nanos Research poll that over 50 percent of Canadians say a federal party's stance on international aid and development will be important or somewhat important to how they cast their vote in the 2019 federal election and 10,000 Canadians signed our Hello 2030 campaign pledge to support efforts to build a world of equality, sustainability and prosperity for all by 2030. Our Hello 2030 campaign asked people across Canada what they want the world to look like in 2030. Visions of eradicating poverty, preventing climate change, increasing equality around the world, and achieving world peace were just a few of the visions Canadians shared. It's clear that Canadians care about international development and their representatives in government can, and should, do more to achieve the SDGs worldwide.

⁴ Sevunts, Levon, Canada's foreign aid spending still below OECD average after budget boost, CBC, Feb 28, 2018. https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-foreign-aid-budget-1.4556537

Untying Canada's Aid

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) classifies tied aid as, "offering aid on the condition that it be used to procure goods or services from the provider of the aid." With that condition, recipient countries are "forced" to purchase food aid, and all contractors and vehicles used to implement aid must be imported from the country that is providing the aid. Tied aid may result in recipient countries having to pay about 15 to 30 percent more for development projects, which reduces their effectiveness. Under this system, aid money is wasted because of the inherent advantage to Canadian companies: competitive bids for cost-effective development projects are not viable. Untied aid addresses this issue by allowing aid receiving countries to procure aid and services from any country they wish, often at a lower cost.

From 2004 to 2008, our Untie Aid campaign put pressure on the government through MP engagement, public engagement, and decision-maker engagement. MPs received over 8,500 personally signed postcards from their constituents asking them to untie aid. From 2005-2007 EWB Canada put pressure on Canadian decision makers, including the then Prime Minister Paul Martin, the president of Canada's international development agency Robert Greenhill, the Finance and International Cooperation Ministers, then Governor General Michaëlle Jean, and other senior representatives from the Privy Council Office and the Prime Minister's Office. In every case, decision-makers were confronted with the question, "Why hasn't Canada untied its aid?" along with sophisticated arguments against the existing policy.

In September 2008, after 4 years of campaigning by EWB Canada, the Canadian government announced that it would completely untie all of Canada's aid by 2012. At the time, 40 percent of our bilateral aid was tied - that's \$800 million that was being spent ineffectively! By 2012, all Canadian aid was untied.



⁵ Untied Aid, OECD, https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/untied-aid.htm

⁶ The Tied Aid Round Trip, Oxfam America. https://www.oxfamamerica.org/static/media/files/aidnow-tiedaidroundtrip.pdf

⁷ Untied Aid, OECD, https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/untied-aid.htm

⁸ Ibid.

Increasing Canadian Aid Accountability

In 2006, MP John McKay introduced Bill C-293 the "Better Aid Bill" or the ODA Accountability Act. This bill had several implications to Canada's ODA: it required that ODA contribute to poverty reduction, take into account the perspectives of those living in poverty, and align with international human rights standards. This Act is groundbreaking—the first of its kind in the world—and is an integral first step in the delivery of more effective and transparent aid.

At first, the bill had little support and looked likely to fail, but EWB Canada recognized the importance of aid accountability and seized the opportunity to improve Canada's aid practices. We were amongst the first Canadian non-governmental organizations to throw our weight behind bill C-293. To ensure that it passed the Second Reading in the House of Commons, EWB Canada members nationwide mobilized in September 2006, meeting MPs and encouraging them to vote in favour of the bill. Having EWB Canada stand behind this bill was important and in Mckay's final speech he recognized that EWB Canada's efforts and enthusiasm were well received by him and showed that the community that makes up EWB Canada are creating a brighter future and show promise in becoming future leaders. After numerous public awareness campaigns about the legislation and meetings with MPs, the Bill returned to house in May 2008 and was passed in a unanimous vote!

Increasing Canadian Aid Transparency

Starting in 2009, EWB Canada led over 25,000 Canadians from coast to coast in calling on Canada's development agency to make Canadian foreign aid more accountable and transparent by joining the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). Aid transparency is extremely important because it helps stave off corruption and ensures that development aid is actually reaching the people it is supposed to reach. It also provides developing-country governments information so they can better allocate resources.

Aid transparency measures can take many forms but the underlying goal is always to have a mechanism or a body of people that has oversight into the process from the moment aid is given to a developing country to the point it is used for goods and services. This way processes can be assessed and analyzed to ensure the most efficient and productive use of resources.

In 2011, after a year of EWB Canada advocacy, Canada's development agency demonstrated its commitment to accountable and transparent aid by formally signing on to IATI. By 2013, Canada ranked higher on transparency than some of the other top performing donors, including Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands.¹¹

⁹Follow the Money: Using International Aid Transparency Initiative data to trace development aid flows to their end use, Global Humanitarian Assistance programme (Development Initiatives), Oxfam. March 6, 2018. https://reliefweb.int/report/world/follow-money-using-international-aid-transparency-initiative-data-trace-development-aid

¹⁰ Ibid.

[&]quot; Aniket, Bushan, Aid Transparency Matters, But Is Not Enough, Embassy Magazine, Canadian International Development Platform. November 13, 2013. https://cidpnsi.ca/aid-transparency-matters-but-is-not-enough/

Creating a Canadian DFI

In 2013-14, EWB Canada approached the Government of Canada with a proposal to create a Development Finance Institution (DFI) – to blend public and private finance and provide social enterprises loans and credit that would otherwise be unavailable to them from traditional financial institutions.

In June 2014, EWB Canada's student leaders met with 55 MPs to discuss the issue and began a letter-writing advocacy campaign called Fix The Gap aimed at encouraging senior ministers to take this idea and implement it on a trial basis.

In 2015, the Conservative government, through its Economic Action Plan, committed to creating a pilot version of the DFI with a capitalization of \$300 million dollars over 5 years. Later, the Liberal government re-committed to creating the DFI and EWB Canada's Time to Lead campaign offered recommendations on the structure and mandate of this new financial tool.

DFIs typically invest in late-stage, tried and tested businesses, but there is huge potential to have a development impact if DFIs invest in early-stage ventures. This is why our Be AdVENTUROUS campaign asked the government to use its new DFI to invest in early-stage, high risk Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in low-income countries that have limited access to conventional banking and financing, especially ventures that are led by women.

When the DFI was launched in January 2018 with the name, FinDev Canada, EWB Canada's suggestions were incorporated its mandate. Boris Martin, CEO of EWB Canada, was invited to join FinDev's advisory board for ongoing strategic support. In 2018, FinDev made its first investment in M-Kopa Solar, a Kenyan startup providing solar-powered lighting to people living in poverty, hired experts to shape its gender strategy, and championed a \$3 billion mobilization for women-led enterprises.

Increasing Transparency in Canadian Mining

In mining, one of Canada's largest and most powerful industries with significant presence in the developing world, local procurement acts as a huge leverage point to expand economic opportunities and capabilities of the world's poor.

As part of the Publish What You Pay Canada (PWYP) Coalition, EWB Canada supported a campaign to advocate for the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act (ESTMA). This campaign, which included having EWB Canada members meet with MPs, was a success as it created the necessary momentum and policy interest to launch ESTMA in 2015, to increase transparency in the sector through public disclosures of payments made by mining and oil and gas companies to governments, both in Canada and abroad.

Since ESTMA was passed into a law, organizations in the sector like Mining Shared Value (MSV) have worked to enhance corporate social responsibility in extractive industries, adding local procurement as an issue for Canada's trade commissioners to provide support to Canadian companies abroad. For example, MSV worked alongside the Canadian Government to ensure local procurement was included in a robust and fair way in the OECD's Shared Value Framework for Extractives, one of the most influential frameworks used and referenced across the global industry. Additionally, it played a role in securing local procurement in the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan, a national plan put forth by the Canadian Federal government to guide the activity of governments, industry and stakeholders in the mining industry.

EWB Canada's partnership with MSV is instrumental in improving economic and environmental practices amongst Canadian and international companies, and in reaching our shared vision of a sustainable and inclusive global economy.



Advocating for a World Without Poverty and Inequality

The scale of global development challenges are massive and complex. And yet, we've made huge strides toward ending poverty and inequality worldwide. Today, less than 10 percent of the world lives in extreme poverty – despite a seven-fold increase in our population. Life expectancy has doubled in the last 100 years. Child mortality has reduced from 32 percent to less than 4 percent. More children are in school, more people live in democratic societies, more women have access to sexual and reproductive health rights than ever before in human history. Our goal is to build on this success and continue to put forth innovative policy recommendations that address the root causes of poverty and inequality, transform global systems, and make sustainable change.

While we will continue to advocate for 0.7 percent of GNI be spent on ODA and to leverage the potential of innovative public-private partnerships, we aim to ensure that Canada's policies are coherent and complementary, and that historically marginalized voices are included in Canada's policy-making processes.

This is why we are integrating a gender lens perspective to its policy advocacy approach. By supporting feminist international assistance policies and practices, we intend to create space for more innovative and progressive development.

With chapters and members across Canada, we will continue to raise public awareness and galvanize support for international development and cooperation, build the capacity of leaders across Canada, leverage innovative partnerships, and work with allies across all political parties to help create a world where everyone has access to the opportunities they need to thrive.

WE CONTINUE TO ASK FOR INCREASED AND MORE EFFECTIVE CANADIAN AID.

WILL YOU JOIN US?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to all our volunteers, staff and partners, particularly the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, whose support makes this work possible.

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