

TAKING ACTION TOGETHER

CANADA'S 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals



Taking Action Together:

Canada's 2025 Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals

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Foreword message

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is more than a global framework — it's a call to action to build a stronger, more resilient Canada and a better world for all.

Canada is making meaningful progress across many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through domestic and international action. From advancing gender equality and protecting our oceans to improving opportunities for all, we are taking action to address systemic inequities and to ensure no one is left behind.

At the same time, global uncertainties, including geopolitical tensions and trade disruptions, pose additional challenges to economic stability and sustainable development. Despite the hurdles that lie ahead, the SDGs represent our shared hope for a more peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable future for our people and the planet. It is with this commitment in mind that we are pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

This year's report reflects the collective efforts of Canadians across sectors who are driving innovation, building resilient communities, and championing the SDGs both at home and abroad. These stories — gathered through extensive engagement with Indigenous Peoples, youth, civil society, municipalities, academia, and individuals — showcase the achievements, lessons learned and work still ahead.

We are working with provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners to support kids and families through \$10-a-day childcare, the creation of new childcare spaces, and a National School Food Program. Programs like Canada's Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Program are helping young people gain valuable experience, while the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program supports First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and those in urban spaces in achieving long-term career goals.

This past year, the SDG Funding Program supported 30 projects focused on climate action, community building, youth engagement, and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Canada also participated in the Together | Ensemble national conference, bringing together hundreds of delegates to track SDG progress.

In 2025, Canada demonstrated global leadership as President of both the G7 and the United Nations Economic and Social Council. In these roles, Canada is committed to advancing the SDGs through inclusive, rights-based international cooperation.

Canadian international assistance reached over 40 million people in 2023 to 2024, resulting in efforts that prevent, respond to, and eliminate sexual and gender-based violence, including eliminating harmful practices such as child marriage, and female genital mutilation. For over 2 decades Canada

has been a leading advocate for global health, investing \$1.4 billion annually through its 10-Year Commitment to Global Health and Rights—half of which supports comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Through flagship programs like the Women's Voice and Leadership Program, the Equality Fund, and the Alliance for Feminist Movements, Canada has also supported more than 3,000 women's rights organizations in more than 30 countries, contributing to the reform of over 200 discriminatory laws and policies, reinforcing Canada's role as a champion for gender equality and human rights worldwide.

Advancing the SDGs is a collective journey. In the face of significant global challenges, Canadians continue to come together to improve lives and build a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable future.

Strength lies in unity. And through strong partnerships and shared purpose, we will rise to meet the challenges of our time.

We thank the dedicated people across the country who work tirelessly to advance the SDGs. Let's keep working together to build a safer, more inclusive, and brighter future for all generations.



The Honourable Patty Hajdu,
Minister of Jobs and Families &
Minister responsible for the Federal
Economic Development Agency for
Northern Ontario



The Honourable Randeep Sarai,
Secretary of State (International
Development)

Executive summary

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a plan for a more inclusive and sustainable world. They were adopted by all United Nations (UN) member states in 2015, and Canada remains committed to advancing them.

This report is about actions taken in 2024 by people and organizations collaborating to advance the SDGs in Canada and around the world. Statistics to measure and quantify Canada's progress are presented alongside stories¹ gathered through a questionnaire open to the public, and engagement with youth, Indigenous organizations, civil society organizations, municipalities, academia, other orders of government, and individuals.

The report begins with a short statistical overview of progress on all 17 SDGs, and then focuses on the following 5 SDGs that were assessed at the 2025 [UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#):

- SDG 3 (Good health and well-being)
- SDG 5 (Gender equality)
- SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth)
- SDG 14 (Life below water)
- SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals)

Canada took important steps toward these SDGs in 2024. For example, the federal government:

- continued to be one of the largest international donors in spending on global health, with annual funding for global health amounting to \$1.4 billion
- worked with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners to improve access to high-quality mental health and wellness services. Budget 2024 provided \$630.2 million, over 2 years, starting in 2024 to 2025, to renew support for a suite of trauma-informed health and cultural support programs, crisis lines, and distinctions-based mental wellness services
- implemented a renewed strategy to take action against the illegal drug supply and overdose crisis
- supported [community-based projects](#) to improve mental health among young Canadians and their caregivers. The Mental Health Promotion Innovation Fund invests \$4.9 million annually

¹ The views and opinions expressed in the stories are those of the people featured and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

and, since 2019, its projects have reached 324,901 children, youth, families, and practitioners in more than 209 communities across Canada

- continued to promote gender equality to ensure women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+² people can thrive in all aspects of life in Canada and around the world. For example, in 2024 a new [2SLGBTQI+ Projects Fund call for proposals](#) was launched, making up to \$25 million available to support 2SLGBTQI+ organizations across the country
- supported youth and Indigenous people to improve their skills and gain experience in the labour market. For example, from 2023 to 2024, over 105,000 youth were served by the [Youth Employment and Skills Strategy](#), including many youth facing barriers to employment or under-represented in the labour market
- witnessed a slow narrowing of the gender wage gap. Women earned \$0.88 for every dollar earned by men in 2024, up \$0.02 compared to 2023³
- continued to establish new marine protected areas and move closer to the national target of conserving 30% of Canada's marine and coastal areas by 2030. The proportion of marine and coastal areas conserved accounted for 14.7% of Canada's marine territory or 842,849 km² in 2023, up approximately 22 km² from 2022⁴

While Canada has taken action to advance the 2030 Agenda, there is more work to do. Globally, and here in Canada, we experienced many shared challenges in 2024 related to climate change, increased cost of living, food insecurity, access to affordable homes, inequality, and mental health and substance-use related harms. For example, just under half (49.9%) of women perceived their mental health as very good or excellent, compared to 57.7% for men.⁵ Similarly, Canada's employment rate declined from 62.2% in 2023 to 61.3% in 2024.⁶

Despite global setbacks for some SDGs, the whole-of-society stories are evidence of Canadians' commitment to hope and collaboration. In the face of significant challenges, people across the country continue to come together to improve lives in their communities.

The ultimate crosscutting objective, and the central transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda, is to leave no one behind. In Canada, meaningful work toward reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis is essential to this promise and reflected in the stories included in this report. While much more work is required, progress in 2024 toward the SDGs in review included partnerships with Indigenous

² Note that different acronyms are used throughout this report in keeping with the preferred terminology of individual organizations.

³ Statistics Canada, [Labour Force Survey](#).

⁴ Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators program, [Canadas Conserved Areas](#).

⁵ Statistics Canada, [Canadian Community Health Survey – Annual Component](#).

⁶ Statistics Canada, [Labour Force Survey](#).

communities to establish new marine protected areas, [Indigenous-led mental wellness frameworks](#), and collaboration on [Indigenous early learning and child care](#).

The Government of Canada cannot realize the promise of the 2030 Agenda on its own. As the stories show, Canadians combined their efforts in 2024 in inspiring ways. Included here are stories about a youth innovator working to reduce plastics in our oceans; free menstrual products distributed to over 3.5 million people who struggle to access them; and a sustainability initiative that creates meaningful employment for people with diverse abilities. Internationally, Canada supported global health and care work in low- and middle-income countries. It focused on achieving women's economic empowerment, inclusive growth and economic resilience through supporting the needs of lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex plus groups and feminist movements around the world. As you read the stories, keep in mind that while they're included under one SDG in review, most could relate to several SDGs because of their interconnected nature.

Areas for improvement with respect to the 5 SDGs reviewed in this report include:

- providing people in Canada with the health and wellness support they need
- ending gender-based violence
- promoting an equal distribution of unpaid care responsibilities so that women can fully participate in the workforce
- ensuring sustainability, inclusivity, and worker protection in Canada's agri-food industry
- addressing the declining proportion of key fish stocks in the cautious and healthy zones and
- meaningfully supporting people and families impacted by the overdose crisis

As we collectively rise to the challenges of our times, what remains clear is that Canada is focused on implementing the 2030 Agenda in an inclusive, whole-of-society way, both at home and internationally.

Methodology

This report presents activities taken in 2024 to advance the 5 SDGs under review at the UN. Throughout the report, the 3 crosscutting objectives in Canada's [Federal Implementation Plan](#) are woven throughout the narrative:

- leaving no one behind—this means advancing gender equality, empowering women and girls and advancing diversity and inclusion
- reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples—this requires working in partnership to support Indigenous voices, traditional knowledge, and self-determination
- ensuring coherence within Canada's international efforts—this means aligning international and domestic efforts to help achieve the SDGs

Measuring progress with statistics

The statistical analyses included in the report use a selection of 2 indicators per SDG from the [Global Indicator Framework](#) or the [Canadian Indicator Framework](#). The Global Indicator Framework was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2017 and provides an initial set of indicators to measure SDG progress. The Canadian Indicator Framework includes ambitions, targets, and indicators that are specific to Canada.

This report focuses on progress achieved in 2024. Data are not collected for all indicators on an annual basis. In these cases, where data from 2024 are not available, data for the most recent available year are included.

Engagement

The report includes feedback received during engagement and collaboration with whole-of-society stakeholders and partners.

An online questionnaire was open from December 8, 2024, to February 28, 2025, asking all orders of government, National Indigenous Organizations, civil society organizations, academia, businesses, and individuals to share their activities and work to advance the SDGs. The opportunity to provide input was promoted through information sessions, on social media, and at public events. More than 150 people, organizations and all orders of government provided information about how their work contributed to advance the SDGs and the obstacles they faced while doing so. Other engagement activities included targeted outreach with National Indigenous Organizations, provinces, territories, youth, and civil society organizations.

Statistical perspective

MACRO-LEVEL OVERVIEW OF SDG PROGRESS

Reliable information is key to measuring, monitoring and understanding Canada's progress toward achieving the SDGs. More specifically, tracking Canada's progress on the SDGs is essential to understanding the areas where progress is on track toward achieving ambitions or targets and serves to highlight areas where progress may be slower or stalled. A complete assessment of Canada's progress can be viewed in the [Canadian Indicator Framework for the SDGs Data Hub](#).

Ensuring the continued relevance of the framework through its ambitions, targets and indicators is essential to reflect the evolving priorities and changing society. At the same time, framework continuity is important to enable the measurement of trends. To balance the need for stability and the need for the framework to remain current, strategic reviews of the Canadian Indicator Framework are done every 3 years, with the last one completed in 2024.

As a result of this review, 2 new ambitions and 15 indicators were added or modified in the framework to better measure progress on emerging priorities. In addition, 10 targets in the framework were updated to maintain relevance while 5 indicators were removed to address data limitations and leverage newer or more comprehensive data.

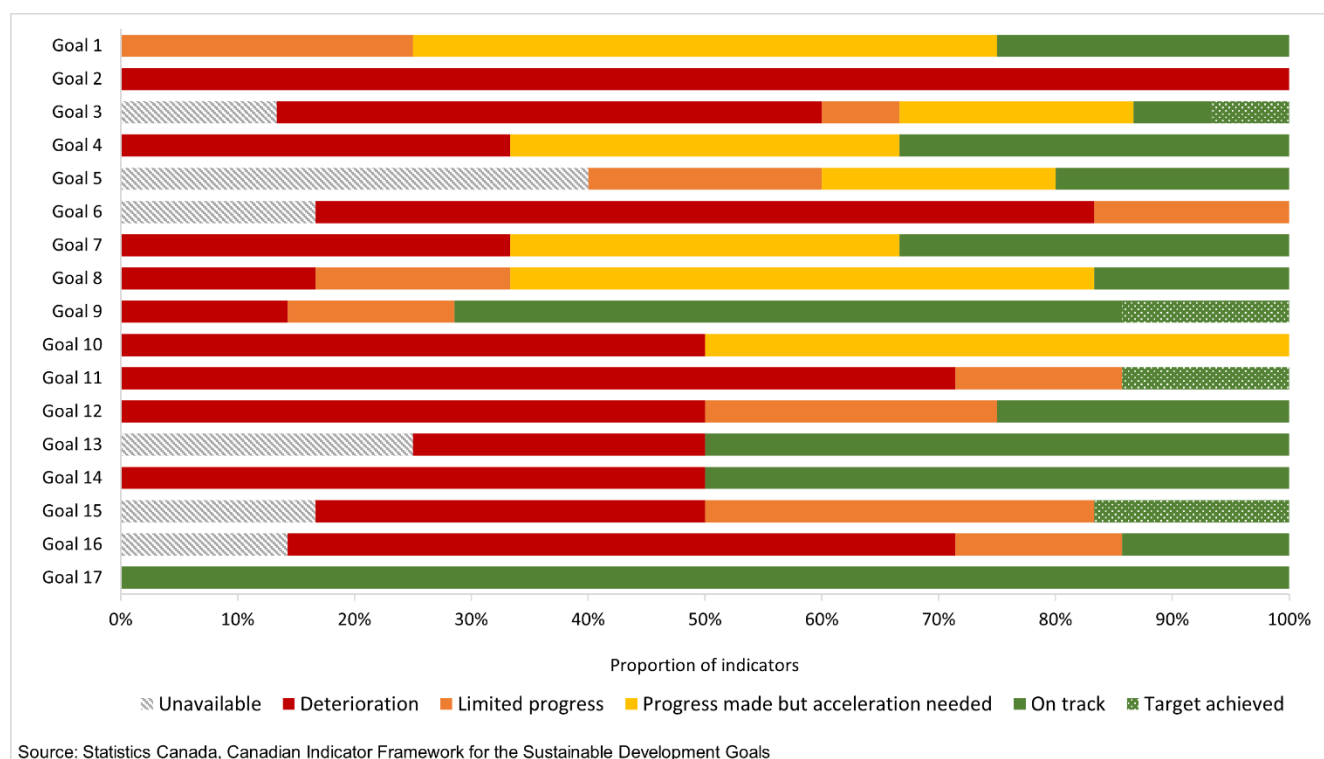
For example, indicators measuring the debt load of Canadians, access to health care, use of early learning and child care services as well as the proportion of discarded plastic leaked permanently into the environment were added to provide a more comprehensive measure of progress.

Among the 86 indicators of the Canadian Indicator Framework, Canada achieved its targets for 5% of indicators in 4 goals (goals 3, 9, 11 and 15) and is on track to achieve the target for another 21% by 2030. However, there are still indicators under all 17 goals where progress has slowed or deteriorated. For example, 14% of indicators demonstrated that progress was made, but an acceleration is needed to achieve the target, while 13% of indicators show limited progress. Finally, 38% of indicators show a deteriorating trend toward their target, and progress is currently unavailable for 9% of indicators due to current data limitations.

Figure 1 illustrates Canada's progress toward achieving the goals from 2015 to February 28, 2025, based on the Canadian Indicator Framework. Progress is illustrated through a series of bars, each representing 1 of the 17 Goals. Each bar is then divided by colours, each representing a different progress status, as described below:

- grey (striped): Progress status unavailable
- red: Deterioration
- orange: Limited progress
- yellow: Progress made but acceleration needed
- solid green: On track
- dotted green: Target achieved

Figure 1: Canada's progress on the achievement of the goals based on the Canadian Indicator Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, from 2015 to February 28, 2025, by goal



Legend

- Goal 1: No poverty
- Goal 2: Zero hunger
- Goal 3: Good health and well-being
- Goal 4: Quality education
- Goal 5: Gender equality
- Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation
- Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy
- Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth

- Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Goal 10: Reduced inequalities
- Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production
- Goal 13: Climate action
- Goal 14: Life below water
- Goal 15: Life on land
- Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals

SDG 3

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



SDG 3 Policy Context

Preventing premature death, improving access to health care, and promoting healthy behaviours and healthy, satisfying lives are key ambitions under SDG 3.

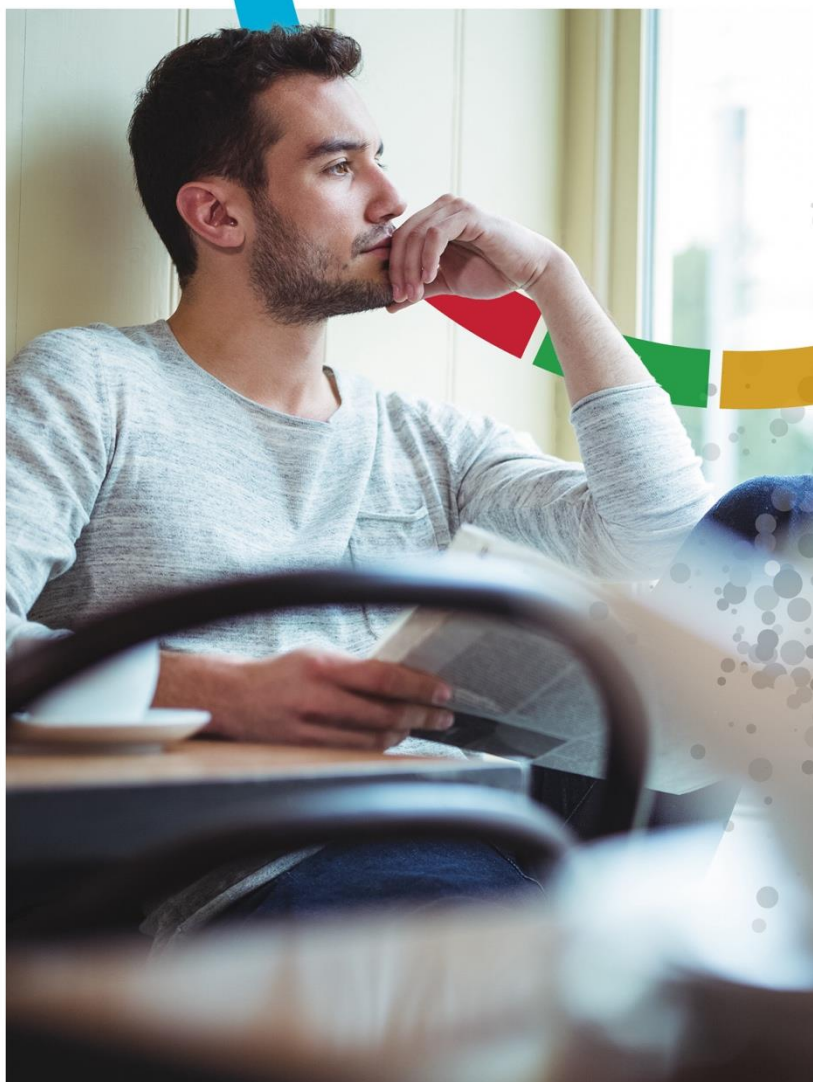
Health care in Canada

The federal government administers the *Canada Health Act* to ensure universal and equitable publicly funded public health and health care systems, working closely with provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous partners. Canada takes pride in its universal health care and is working to make sure all Canadians have equitable access. Reducing health inequalities and systemic barriers, domestically and globally, is a federal priority.

Addressing inequities in mental wellness

The Government of Canada's efforts to address inequities and barriers experienced by Indigenous Peoples in mental wellness are strongly guided by Indigenous-led frameworks, such as the [First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework](#), [Honouring our Strengths](#), and the [National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy](#). The federal government works with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners to support access to high-quality mental health and wellness services; improve well-being in Indigenous communities; and support Indigenous Peoples in assuming control of the delivery of services they choose.

The third National Summit on Indigenous Mental Wellness was held in October 2024, in Calgary, Alberta. The Summit brought together representatives from First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, organizations and leaders in mental wellness, as well as direct service providers and



researchers working with Indigenous populations to share knowledge and connect on what is working to improve First Nations, Inuit and Métis mental wellness.

Through the [Mental Health Promotion Innovation Fund](#), the Government of Canada supports community-based mental health promotion projects for diverse populations that aim to build protective factors, address underlying conditions needed for positive mental health, and promote health equity through systems-level change innovations.

Addressing substance-use-related harms

Substance-use-related harms and the overdose crisis continue to have devastating impacts across Canada, affecting individuals, families, and communities. Reducing substance use-related harms and addressing the illegal drug supply and overdose crisis are priorities for the Government of Canada.

The [Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy](#) is an all-substances, public health, and public-safety-focused strategy covering both legal and illegal substances such as tobacco, cannabis, alcohol, stimulants, and opioids. It is based on 4 interconnected elements: prevention and education, substance-use services and supports, evidence, and substance controls. The Strategy uses principles of equity, compassion, collaboration, and comprehensiveness to guide federal actions to address the overdose crisis.

Supporting health globally

Despite significant progress over the past 3 decades in strengthening global health outcomes, significant challenges remain. Ongoing conflicts and crises, rising inflation and food prices, and climate change have had a significant impact on the physical, social and economic well-being of the poorest and most vulnerable, especially women, adolescents, and children. Health systems, still rebuilding from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, are being challenged to cope with, as well as be better prepared for, existing and emerging infectious disease threats and their consequences.

Canada's whole-of-government international assistance efforts in global health are guided by an inclusive and human-rights-based approach. Global health policy priorities include support for better access to quality health services for the most marginalized (SDG 3.8), enhanced comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SDG 3.7), and better access to gender-responsive nutrition services (SDG 3.8 and 2.1).

Canada has been a longstanding leader in advancing global health and nutrition for the past 20 years and is the sixth largest donor⁷ in terms of its total spending on global health. The current phase of Canada's leadership in global health is guided by its [10-Year Commitment to Global Health and](#)

⁷ SEEK Development, [Donor Tracker](#).

[Rights](#), which increased annual funding for global health to \$1.4 billion, including \$700 million dedicated to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Canada's programming is implemented in close partnership with governments, global health initiatives, Canadian and international civil society organizations, multilateral development banks, UN organizations, as well as private sector organizations and academic institutions. Key partners include the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; Gavi the Vaccine Alliance; the UN Population Fund; UNICEF; Grand Challenges Canada; Nutrition International; Plan International Canada; and Oxfam Canada, among others.

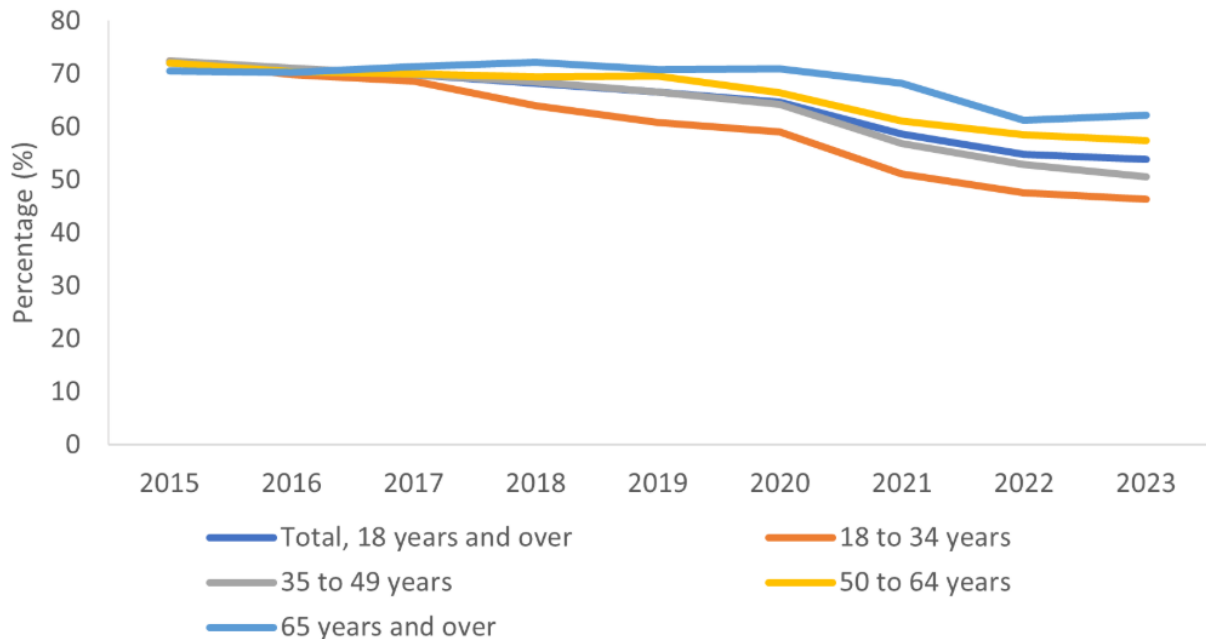
SDG 3 Statistical Analysis



Domestic Indicator 3.8.1: Percentage of Canadians who perceived their mental health as very good or excellent

Overall, 53.8% of Canadians perceived their mental health as very good or excellent in 2023, down from 54.8% in 2022. As a result, a smaller proportion of Canadians perceived their mental health as very good or excellent in 2023 compared to previous years, which indicates a deterioration of progress toward the ambition that Canadians have healthy and satisfying lives (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Domestic Indicator 3.8.1 – Percentage of Canadians who perceived their mental health as very good or excellent, by age group, Canada



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey

As Canada endured the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the proportion of Canadians perceiving their mental health as very good or excellent fell nearly 12 percentage points from 2019 to 2022. Nevertheless, this most recent decline from 2022 to 2023 represents a substantial decrease from 2015, when 72% of Canadians perceived their mental health as very good or excellent.

Women were less likely to report their mental health as very good or excellent. Just under half (49.9%) of women perceived their mental health as very good or excellent in 2023, compared to 57.7% for men. This furthers a mental health gender gap that has been observed since 2015 but widened in 2020 as women experienced unique economic and social challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸

Perceived mental health also varies noticeably between age groups in Canada. Younger Canadians continued to report lower levels of mental health than older age groups in 2023, a trend that has been noticeable since 2018. Among Canadians aged 18 to 34, 46.4% perceived their mental health as very good or excellent in 2023, a decline from 47.6% in 2022.

Mental health of young Canadians differs substantially between gender. Among younger women aged 18 to 34, 40.2% reported very good or excellent mental health in 2023, down from 42.4% in 2022. This represented the lowest proportion of Canadians reporting very good or excellent mental health among all ages in 2023 and is 12 percentage points lower than the proportion of men aged 18 to 34 (52.2%). On the other hand, the proportion of Canadians aged 65+ who perceived their mental health as very good or excellent grew from 61.3% in 2022 to 62.2% in 2023.



Domestic Indicator 3.13.1: Rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths per 100,000 population

The opioid crisis has become one of the most serious public health threats in recent history, intersecting with other challenges such as housing instability, mental health issues, and cost-of-living challenges. Further, most accidental apparent opioid toxicity deaths also involve a stimulant or another psychoactive substance. Since 2016, the illegal drug supply has increasingly become contaminated with fentanyl and other highly potent opioids, increasing the risk of accidental overdose and overdose-related deaths.⁹

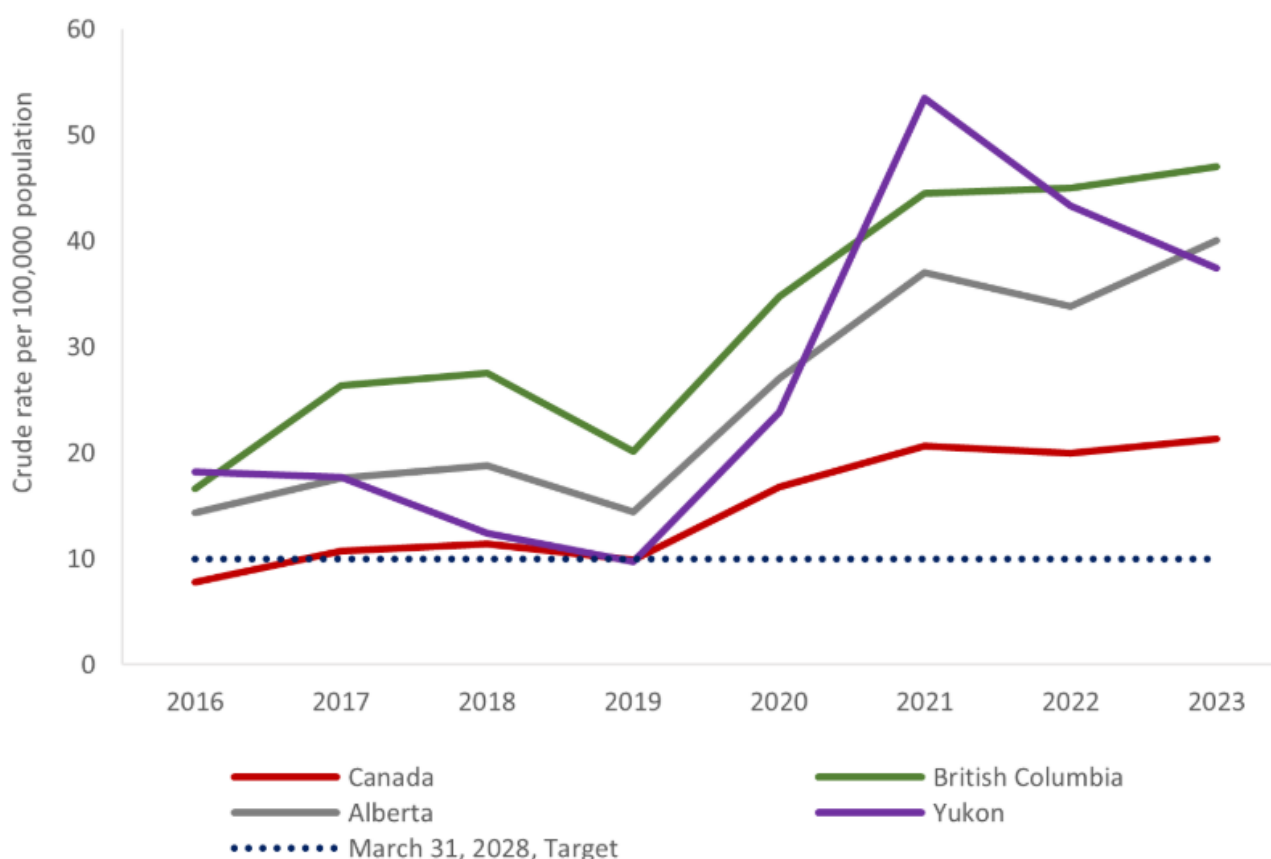
The rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths per 100,000 population measures deaths due to acute opioid toxicity where one or more of the substances involved was an opioid.⁹

⁸ Statistics Canada, [Mental health among women and girls of diverse backgrounds in Canada before and during the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

⁹ Public Health Agency of Canada, [Opioid- and Stimulant-related Harms in Canada](#).

The rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths began to rise in 2016 and further increased at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and has remained high, with 21.3 deaths per 100,000 population in 2023, up from 20.0 in 2022 (Figure 3). This represents a deteriorating trend toward the target of 10.0 deaths per 100,000 by March 31, 2028, and is more than 2 and a half times higher than in 2016, when national surveillance began.

Figure 3: Domestic Indicator 3.13.1 – Rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths per 100,000 population, Canada and selected provinces and territories



Source: Public Health Agency of Canada

The rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths was higher in western Canada, as British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon, Saskatchewan and Manitoba all recorded rates above the national average in 2023. British Columbia's rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths grew for the fourth consecutive year to reach 47.0 deaths per 100,000 population in 2023, representing the highest rate nationally and an increase from 45.0 the previous year. Alberta had the second-highest rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths with 40.0 per 100,000 population in 2023 after recording the largest increase nationally from 33.8 in 2022. Meanwhile, Yukon's rate of apparent opioid toxicity deaths declined for the second consecutive year from a peak of 53.5 deaths per 100,000 population in 2021 to 37.4 in 2023.

Men continue to be more affected by opioid toxicity deaths, accounting for 72.0% of all apparent opioid toxicity deaths in 2023.⁹ Men working in trades such as construction, mining and forestry saw higher rates than those working in other fields, likely as a result of the physically demanding and stressful nature of the work.¹⁰ The increased presence of injuries and pain in this line of work can lead to alcohol or other substance use for pain relief, which is one way people are introduced to opioids.

The highest number of apparent opioid toxicity deaths among all age groups was among adults aged 30 to 39, accounting for 29% of all apparent opioid toxicity deaths in 2023. This was followed by adults aged 40 to 49 (24%) and those 50 to 59 (19%). Together, Canadians aged 30 to 59 accounted for 72% of all apparent opioid toxicity deaths in 2023.

SDG 3 Feature stories

The overdose crisis: In Plain Sight

The overdose crisis has devastating impacts on individuals, friends and families, and communities across the country. "In Plain Sight," a Health Canada audio series, shares the stories behind the numbers.

This crisis has a face. It is the face of a friend, a co-worker, a family member. Meeting those eyes and seeing our own reflection is the first step toward ending the stigma that often prevents people who use drugs from receiving help.

[In Plain Sight](#) explores the personal stories of people affected by the overdose crisis. The intention is to demonstrate, using personal stories, that the overdose crisis is happening in plain sight, and has the potential to impact anyone.

One of the stories is about Elsa, a social worker at a harm reduction organization. She offers support and compassion to people with substance use disorders. In her role, she offers a variety of harm reduction services, including referrals to treatment services, and providing clean and sterile equipment, such as injection kits and naloxone kits. She describes her role in helping people who use drugs: "We meet them in their environment, always with the aim of improving their living conditions and meeting their needs in terms of the distribution [of the resources] and equipment they need. The person is truly at the heart of our interventions and our mission; our priority is always the well-being of the person being helped."

Harm reduction services, such as supervised consumption sites and administration of naloxone, are a component of the Government of Canada's comprehensive public health strategy through the [Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy](#). Supervised consumption sites provide a safe, clean

¹⁰ Public Health Agency of Canada, [Men in trades and substance use](#).

space for people to bring their own drugs to use, in the presence of trained staff, where they can also properly dispose of used equipment. They may offer a range of evidence-based harm reduction services including drug checking, in addition to other medical services, including wound care, counselling, disease testing, as well as connections to other health and social services, including treatment for those who are ready. These sites help prevent accidental overdoses, reduce the spread of infectious diseases, such as HIV, reduce public drug use, and reduce the strain on emergency health services.

Elsa's work continues to support stigma reduction efforts. Elsa says, "The stigma attached to substance use, and by extension to substance users, is probably the biggest barrier in our work." It is important to continue stigma reduction efforts to help reduce the stigma of asking for help.

To learn more about the overdose crisis, visit the [opioids web page](#).

The full transcript of Elsa's story, and more stories, can be found at: [Stigma Gallery – Health Canada Experiences](#). The opinions expressed and language used by individuals on this program are those of the individuals and not those of Health Canada. Health Canada has not validated the accuracy of any statements made by the individuals on this program.

Inuit-led advocacy tools to improve health and well-being

Food insecurity and poverty are major factors impacting a person's ability to live a healthy and prosperous life. This demonstrates how interconnected the SDGs are—if SDG 1 (No poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero hunger) are not addressed, people cannot enjoy SDG 3 (Good health and well-being).

Food insecurity and poverty are experienced differently and far more prominently by Inuit living in [Inuit Nunangat](#) compared to the rest of Canadians. The median income for Inuit in Inuit Nunangat is among the lowest in the country, with 37% of Inuit families having income below the poverty line, in contrast with 6.4% of Canadians living in southern Canada (2020).¹¹

In 2024, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the national Inuit representational organization, worked toward addressing poverty and food insecurity among Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat through the ongoing development of the Inuit Nunangat Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Strategy is a call-to-action and roadmap for a holistic poverty reduction approach, developed by Inuit for Inuit. With an expected release date in the coming year, the Strategy will be the first of its kind to define poverty from an Inuit perspective and provide the key actions necessary to reduce poverty in Inuit communities.

ITK also continues to advance progress toward creating and implementing a comprehensive school food program across Inuit Nunangat. Another advocacy tool developed by ITK is the Inuit School

¹¹ Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Finding a Path away from Poverty.

Food Workshop Report, which includes: the successes and challenges of school food initiatives in Inuit regions; a collective vision for a universal Inuit Nunangat school food program; actions to develop an Inuit-specific universal school food program that considers Inuit culture, country food, and values; and ways to improve access to funding and resources to better support existing school food programs.

The report is the result of an Inuit School Food Program Workshop, which was supported by the [SDG Funding Program](#) and brought together knowledge-holders from across all 4 Inuit regions.

One of the challenges ITK faces in developing such advocacy tools is data and information gaps for the Inuit population, making Inuit-led research and information gathering essential.

The importance of Inuit-led data collection

The [Qanuippitaa? National Inuit Health Survey](#) (QNIHS) is an ongoing Inuit-owned and Inuit-determined survey of Inuit health and well-being coordinated by ITK. Currently, much of the information on Inuit health is out-of-date and fails to accurately reflect the state of Inuit health and wellness. QNIHS collects up-to-date information that will help program and policy makers at the local, regional and national levels be informed of the health status of Inuit and guide Inuit health program and policy development.

Jaylene Ukatiku, an Inuk youth from Qamani'tuaq (Baker Lake, Nunavut), is a research assistant working on the QNIHS. Jaylene is specifically working to collect information on the health of Inuit populations in the National Capital Region. The objective is to inform decision-making, evidence-based policies, and comparisons with Inuit living in the Inuit homeland, Inuit Nunangat.

The survey will look at many factors, including food security, culture and identities, mental wellness, schooling and family support, housing and living environment, land-based activities, and time in nature.

Jaylene explains, "I want to better serve the Inuit community. I want to help people and know how to help them, which is why I love the job that I do. It gives me the opportunity to figure out ways that I can help my people and my First Nations and Métis cousins."

When asked about lessons learned, Jaylene says, "I think back to what my parents, grandparents, and community taught me. I want to make sure the work is grounded in cultural respect and Inuit values."

Self-determined data collection is key to addressing health inequities and ensuring that policies are informed by lived experiences and Inuit priorities. Both ITK and Jaylene's work help to advance the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda to [leave no one behind](#).

Strengthening home care while fostering a sense of community

Many older adults and individuals with disabilities require support to keep their home in good condition. Supporting people to continue to live in their homes can improve their health and well-being and empower them in their communities.

Solidarité de L'Ange-Gardien is an organization working to improve citizens' quality of life in Quebec's L'Ange-Gardien municipality. In 2022, they launched Service AIDE-MOI!, an initiative that pairs volunteers with citizens in need of assistance with minor interior or exterior maintenance work on their property.

To begin, they launched an awareness campaign to recruit volunteers and inform citizens about the service. Then they established partnerships to mobilize the necessary resources for the program. These collaborations helped build a supportive and inclusive network, with impactful results.

In 2023, over 800 volunteer hours were offered to citizens in need of support, of which 50% were individuals aged 71 and older. Fifty-one percent were women living alone for whom maintaining their home involved tasks they were no longer able to do. One program recipient said, "I am alone and elderly. Without this, I would no longer be able to live here."

Another said, "Before, when it snowed, I would feel anxious. I hated winter. Now I no longer feel anxious because I know I have help with the snow removal."

Addressing loneliness and self-isolation are important parts of good health and well-being. Service AIDE-MOI! leads to bonds of trust and empathy between volunteers and people seeking help. It creates intergenerational links that contribute to mental wellness and a strong, healthy sense of community.

Rebuilding nations by reclaiming birth

Birth, and the prenatal period, set the stage for a child's life, a person's journey as a parent, and the beginning of a family. Strong, healthy communities are built by strong, healthy families.

But all too often, First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in Canada must travel far from their communities to give birth. The ongoing impact of colonization means they may birth in places where their culture, language, connection to the land, and ceremonies are not recognized, and where they might face racism during their most vulnerable moments. An important part of [leaving no one behind](#) is ensuring that the reproductive care an Indigenous person and their child receive is culturally appropriate, close to home, informed by tradition, and backed by skill.

This is what Indigenous midwives do every day, and every long, labouring night.

Midwifery-led care has been associated with fewer interventions during labour, a greater likelihood of spontaneous vaginal birth,¹² and high levels of breastfeeding.¹³

In 2023, at the International Confederation of Midwives conference in Indonesia, midwives from the Inuulitsivik Inuit Midwifery Program presented data about the impact of their work in the Nunavik region of Quebec, where 85% of births are attended by midwives and 97% of births are spontaneous vaginal deliveries.¹⁴

Indigenous midwives play a critical role in communities. Today more midwives are needed as most Indigenous Peoples in Canada don't have access to midwifery care.

Alisha Julien Reid, co-chair of the [National Council of Indigenous Midwives](#) (NCIM), explains that, "If there aren't enough midwives, it makes it difficult to restore birth in communities. In many cases, Indigenous people must travel far to receive education for reproductive care, bringing their skills and knowledge with them."

NCIM is working to change that.

They've produced a number of [resources](#) to support communities' reclamation of birth, such as a community readiness guide, a framework of competencies, and a workbook on restoring midwifery and birth. They've initiated a project that promotes learning in and from a community. For example, a student might first gain credentials by working in their community as a lactation consultant or doula, taking online courses toward midwifery along the way. This approach provides flexibility while keeping important skills in the community.

When asked about lessons learned through NCIM's work, Alisha Julien Reid quotes her dad, who said, "There are more allies than you realize." She explains that change is happening, and it will benefit everyone. When births return to communities, the impacts are felt far beyond the delivery room, and far beyond the immediate family.

Every community has the right to hear the cries of a newborn baby, and to welcome that child with love, language, and culture.

Indigenous midwives are a way to make that a safe and viable option.

¹² Cochrane, [Are midwife continuity of care models versus other models of care for childbearing women better for women and their babies?](#)

¹³ Canadian Medical Association Journal, [Perinatal outcomes of midwife-led care, stratified by medical risk: a retrospective cohort study from British Columbia \(2008 to 2018\)](#); BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth, [Inadequate prenatal care use and breastfeeding practices in Canada: a national survey of women](#).

¹⁴ PubMed, [Remote midwifery in Nunavik, Québec, Canada: outcomes of perinatal care for the Inuulitsivik health centre, \(2000 to 2007\)](#).

Addressing the global need for medical oxygen

Medical oxygen is the cornerstone for saving lives and treating chronic conditions. Yet, for millions of people around the world, access to oxygen therapy is a critical, unmet need.

[Grand Challenges Canada](#) (GCC) supports innovative medical oxygen solutions that help bridge the global oxygen gap. They've invested in a wide range of solutions to address immediate and long-term challenges in oxygen delivery.

Two of their standout innovations include:

- the Solar-powered Oxygen Concentrator (SPO2), developed at the University of Alberta in collaboration with Global Health Uganda, to test the use of solar-powered oxygen systems in rural Ugandan hospitals. The objective is to reduce deaths among children under the age of 5 by providing more reliable power supply for oxygen delivery. Initially tested in Uganda, the World Health Organization later scaled this project in Somalia. The SPO2 team has been rapidly scaling, reaching over 20 hospital sites in Uganda and supporting the World Health Organization in the installation of 3 sites in Somalia
- HewaTele was developed in Kenya to increase access to medical oxygen through an innovative business model that combines locally produced, cost-effective technology with support services for health care facilities. HewaTele partners with county governments by locating its Pressure Swing Absorption oxygen plants in high-traffic regional government hospitals, which then supply oxygen to other health care facilities within their catchment area. HewaTele serves over 400 facilities in Kenya, has saved over 20,900 lives and improved over 33,400 lives through essential oxygen therapy.

There are many barriers that prevent access to medical oxygen across the globe. For example, pneumonia continues to be one of the leading causes of infant mortality and many countries lack access to medical oxygen.

GCC's approach to collaborating with and supporting partners globally focuses on high-impact innovations that are designed to suit the needs of specific regions and environments. With support from the Government of Canada, GCC continues to invest in oxygen innovation and remains committed to working with partners around the globe to scale impactful solutions.

SDG 5

GENDER EQUALITY



SDG 5 Policy context

Canada is focused on advancing gender equality domestically and internationally to promote global equality and ensure women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+¹⁵ people can thrive in all aspects of life.

Supporting women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations

In 2024, the Government of Canada continued to fund organizations that advance equality for women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people and support their full participation in all aspects of Canadian society, as well as internationally through the [Equality Fund](#) and support for the Alliance for Feminist Movements.

Investments in Canada include: \$140 million for multi-year projects starting in 2024 that break down barriers and increase women and girls' economic security and prosperity; \$32.6 million for multi-year projects starting in 2024 that address barriers to equality faced by 2SLGBTQI+ people and their communities; and \$1.5 million to Fierté Canada Pride to support security needs for the 2024 Pride season. Since September 2023, Canada has invested \$27.9 million into a national [Menstrual Equity](#)



¹⁵ Note that different acronyms are used throughout this report in keeping with the preferred terminology of individual organizations.

[Fund pilot](#) to address the barriers related to affordability and stigma that some Canadians face when accessing menstrual products.

In 2024, the Government of Canada continued its partnership with the [Rainbow Refugee Society](#) to help Canadians and permanent residents privately sponsor LGBTQI+ refugees in need of resettlement to Canada. It also launched a [call for proposals](#) to make funding available to support newcomers facing barriers to settlement and integration, including women, 2SLGBTQI+ populations, and racialized newcomers, and to address issues such as sexual and gender-based violence and mental health.

Canada also continued to provide dedicated funding to Indigenous Women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations through the program [Supporting Indigenous Women's and 2SLGBTQI+ Organizations](#). In 2024 to 2025, \$7.36 million in funding was provided to support longer-term projects with Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations across the country.

An inclusive approach to policy development

In 2024, the federal government continued to use Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) in the development of its policies and initiatives. To learn more about GBA Plus, visit the [GBA Plus web page](#).

Canada continued to strengthen its relationship with Indigenous women's organizations through whole-of-government agreements with 3 national Indigenous women's organizations: the [Native Women's Association of Canada](#), [Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada](#) and [Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak](#). These agreements set out how Canada and the organizations will work together to include Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people's priorities in federal policy, program and legislation.

Increasing access to high-quality, inclusive, and affordable health care

The federal government is working with provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners to build a Canada-wide early learning and child care (ELCC) system, to ensure every family has access to affordable, high-quality, inclusive and flexible child care no matter where in Canada they live. One of the objectives of the Canada-wide ELCC system is to reduce fees for regulated child care to \$10-a-day or less on average across the country.

As of February 2025, 8 provinces and territories are delivering regulated child care at an average of \$10-a-day or less, including Quebec and Yukon (jurisdictions which achieved these fees prior to the Canada-wide system). In all other provinces and territories, fees for regulated child care have been reduced by at least 50% on average, including Ontario, which achieved an average fee of \$19-a-day, and Alberta which achieved an average fee of \$15-a-day.

The federal government is also supporting the creation of 250,000 new child care spaces across the country by March 2026. Provinces and territories are making significant progress and, to date, have announced measures that will support the creation of more than 150,000 new child care spaces.

Studies show that for every dollar invested in early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.¹⁶ External research¹⁷ estimates that provincial and federal investments in affordable child care will result in an increase in gross domestic product of between 0.075 and 0.078 percentage points, or between \$2.25 billion and \$2.48 billion (2023). In 2021, it was estimated that federal investments supporting increased access to affordable, high quality ELCC could add up to 240,000 workers to the labour force.

From 2019 to 2024, the labour force participation rate of women aged 25 to 54 with young children aged 0 to 5 increased by 3.3 percentage points. This increase represents approximately 74,200 additional women either employed or actively seeking work. In 2024, a record-high 1.2 million core-aged mothers of young children were participating in the labour force.¹⁸ More research is needed to confirm how mothers' labour force participation has been impacted by federal investments in ELCC.

The federal government continues to work in partnership with the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council to implement the co-developed [Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework](#), and improve access to Indigenous-led, culturally-relevant ELCC programming.

No matter the child care option parents choose, the Canada Child Benefit provides direct, tax-free support, helping about 3.5 million families, including over 6 million children every year. While families can use the benefit however they need, for many it significantly reduces the burden of child care expenses—in some cases, cutting them entirely thanks to federal, provincial and territorial investments to reduce child care fees in the Canada-wide ELCC system.

Ending gender-based violence

Canada is committed to a society free of gender-based violence that supports victims, survivors, and their families, no matter where they live. Actions taken from 2023 to 2024 include: signing 13 bilateral funding agreements with provinces and territories to support implementation of the [10-year National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#); holding the second National Indigenous-Federal-Provincial-Territorial Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ People; supporting funding agreements across 13 jurisdictions to provide independent legal advice

¹⁶ [Special Report: TD Economics, Early Childhood Education has widespread and long-lasting benefits, 2012 \(PDF\)](#).

¹⁷ Centre for the Study of Living Standards, 2024.

¹⁸ Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0396-01.

and legal representation to victims and survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence; and continuing to work with Indigenous shelter networks and Indigenous organizations to prevent gender-based violence and support survivors. Indigenous Services Canada's [Family Violence Prevention Program](#) supports culturally appropriate violence prevention and awareness activities, including enhanced wraparound services for shelter clients. The program also continues to work closely with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on the Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative, through which 69 projects have been selected to date, including 37 emergency shelters and 32 transition homes.

Each year, the federal government releases a progress report on the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#). Key highlights from 2023 to 2024 can be found on the [Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report web page](#). The Federal Pathway reflects a distinction-based approach and is Canada's contribution to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan. Options are in development on how to establish a national Indigenous and human rights ombudsperson, as called for in [Call for Justice 1.7](#).

Canada has been a leader in promoting support for women's rights organizations and feminist movements. It ranks among the top bilateral donors in funding efforts to promote gender equality and address sexual and gender-based violence, including harmful practices such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Canada supports and collaborates closely with organizations, such as the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, to implement initiatives that prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence, support survivors, and improve legal and social systems globally to protect women and girls. In November 2024, Canada and Zambia co-led a [UN resolution](#) to end child, early and forced marriage.

SDG 5 Statistical analysis

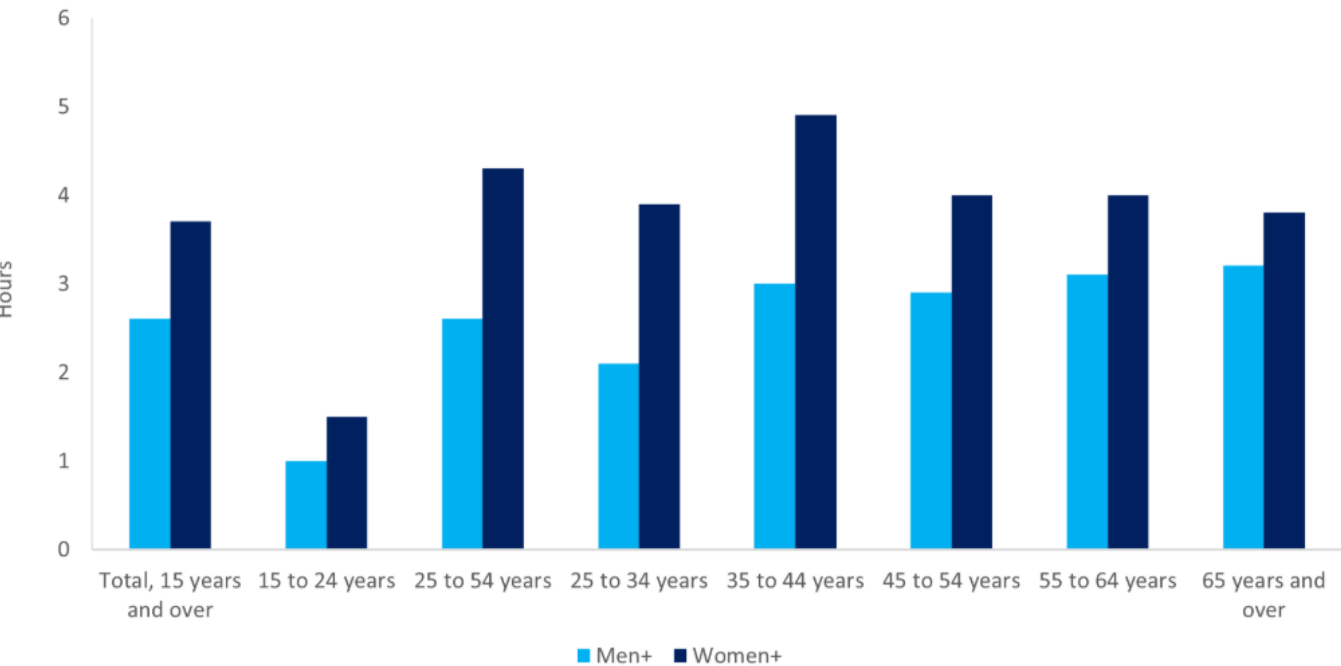


Domestic Indicator 5.4.1: Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work

How Canadians spent their day varied substantially between men and women and across age groups, and this was especially noticeable for the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work. Canadians spent, on average, 13.3% or 3.2 hours of their day in 2022 on unpaid domestic and care work, which includes activities such as household chores, care of household children or adults, and shopping for goods and services. This represented a slight increase from 3.0 hours in 2015. As the proportion of Canadians working mostly from home grew with the onset of the COVID-19

pandemic in 2020 and persisted until 2022, some of the time saved by not commuting was reallocated to other activities such as unpaid domestic and care work.¹⁹

Figure 4: Domestic Indicator 5.4.1: Daily average time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by age group and gender, Canada, 2022



Source: Statistics Canada, Time Use Survey

The proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work differed between men and women, but the gap has narrowed slightly from 5 percentage points in 2015 to 4.6 percentage points in 2022, demonstrating limited progress toward the target of equal sharing of parenting and household responsibilities. Women spent an average of 3.7 hours per day or 15.4% of their day on unpaid domestic and care work in 2022, up from 3.6 hours per day in 2015 (Figure 4). Meanwhile, men spent approximately 1 hour less than women on unpaid domestic and care work in 2022 (2.6 hours per day).

Differences between men and women further widen when comparing the time spent on unpaid domestic and care work for age groups that are more likely to have younger children living at home. For example, in 2022, women aged 35 to 44 spent 4.9 hours per day on unpaid domestic and care work, representing the most among all age groups and an extra 1.9 hours compared to men of the same age. Similarly, women aged 25 to 34 also spent substantially more time on unpaid domestic and

¹⁹ Statistics Canada, [Time Use Survey](#).

care work in 2022 than men of the same ages (3.9 hours vs. 2.1 hours). Together, these age groups recorded the widest gender gap in unpaid domestic and care work in 2022 as women continued to take on a larger share of tasks such as the care of children under 18 years, shopping for goods or services, preparing or serving meals, and cleaning.

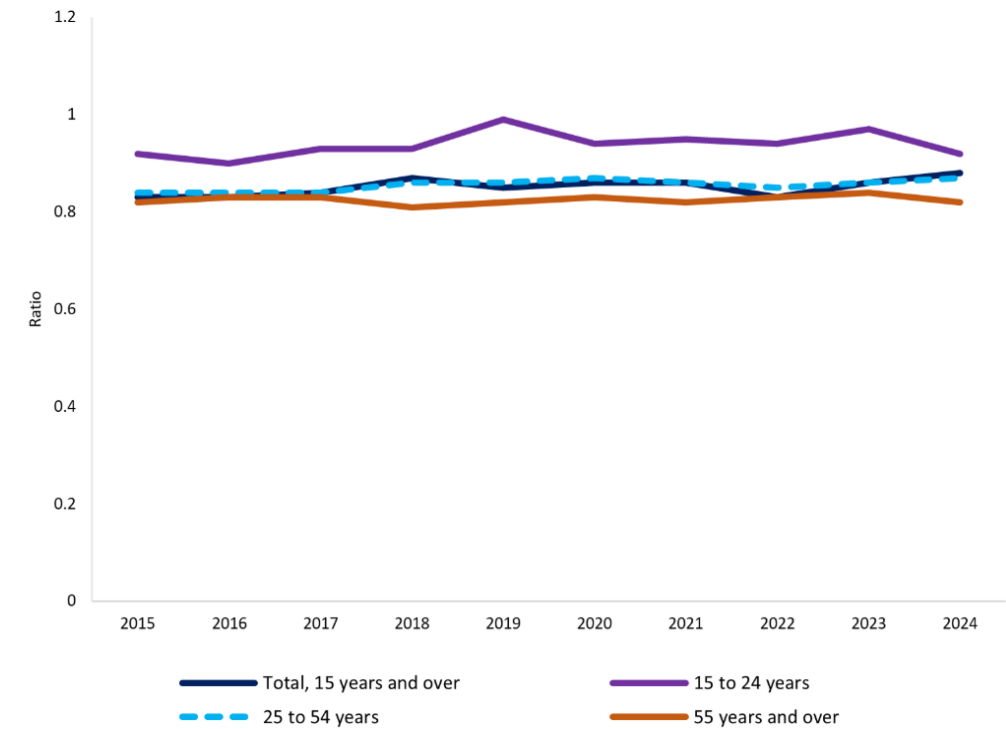


Domestic Indicator 5.5.1: Median hourly gender wage ratio

The median hourly gender wage ratio measures the proportion of a dollar that women earn for every dollar earned by men. This indicator contributes to the measurement of progress related to gender equality in the labour market.

The median hourly gender wage ratio of both full- and part-time employees aged 15 and over grew from 0.86 in 2023 to 0.88 in 2024, which represents the narrowest median hourly gender wage gap since comparable data became available in 1997 (Figure 5). This means that women earned \$0.88 for every dollar earned by men in 2024, up \$0.02 compared to 2023. This narrowing of the gender wage gap shows that progress toward the Canadian ambition has been made but an acceleration is still needed to achieve a reduced gender wage gap.

Figure 5: Domestic Indicator 5.5.1: Median hourly gender wage ratio, both full- and part-time employees, by age group, Canada



While the median hourly gender wage ratio increased from 0.86 in 2023 to 0.87 in 2024 for all employees aged 25 to 54, the situation differed for other age groups. For example, the median hourly gender wage ratio for employees aged 15 to 24 fell to 0.92 in 2024 from 0.97 in 2023. Despite this decline, women aged 15 to 24 represented the age group that earned the most relative to their male counterparts in 2024, partially due to the prevalence of part-time work among women in this age group.²⁰ The median hourly gender wage ratio for part-time employees was 1.11 in 2024, which means that women working part-time earned \$0.11 more than men per hour. On the other hand, women aged 55 and over experienced a decline in their earning relative to men as their median hourly gender wage ratio decreased to 0.82 in 2024, representing the lowest gender wage ratio among all age groups.

Among the provinces, Prince Edward Island had the highest median hourly gender wage ratio where the wage ratio between women and men was 1.0 in 2024, indicating parity. This follows a ratio of 1.04 in the previous year. New Brunswick (0.94) posted the second highest in 2024 followed by Nova Scotia (0.93). On the other hand, the 2 lowest median hourly wage ratios in 2024 were in the prairies. Alberta's median hourly wage ratio grew to 0.78 in 2024 from 0.76 in 2023, while Saskatchewan recorded the only other decline among provinces as its median hourly gender wage ratio fell to 0.82 in 2024 from 0.83 the previous year.

The median hourly gender wage ratio grew for most types of occupation²¹ in 2024 compared to 2023. Health occupations excluding management recorded a lower median hourly gender wage ratio in 2024 (0.94) compared to 2023 (0.98). Despite this decrease, health occupations excluding management remained the occupation type with the narrowest median hourly gender wage gap. At the same time, several occupation types had median hourly gender wage gaps substantially lower than the national average. For example, women employed in non-managerial occupations in education, law and social, community and government services earned the least relative to their male counterparts in 2024 (0.75), alongside women employed in non-managerial occupations in natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations (0.75).

SDG 5 Feature stories

Federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners working together to support early childhood educators

For families in Canada, access to high-quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive child care is not a luxury—it's a necessity. That is why the federal government supports a vision for a [Canada-wide early](#)

²⁰ Statistics Canada, [Labour Force Survey](#).

²¹ Occupational categories used are from the National Occupational Classification.

[learning and child care](#) (ELCC) system that will create 250,000 new child care spaces across the country by March 2026.

Unpaid child care responsibilities are a barrier for women's labour force participation. From 2019 to 2024, the labour force participation rate of women aged 25 to 54 with young children aged 0 to 5 increased by 3.3 percentage points in Canada.²² More research is needed to confirm how mothers' labour force participation has been impacted by federal investments in ELCC but it is expected that these investments in ELCC will increase in the long term.

High-quality ELCC cannot exist without early childhood educators. They provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment, and plan, organize, and lead programs for children. Their work helps children develop skills to thrive in a rapidly changing world. In 2016, child care workers were predominantly women (96.3%) and nearly 1 in 3 (32.7%) were immigrants or non-permanent residents.²³

As in other care economy sectors where women and racialized people are disproportionately overrepresented, early childhood workers often don't receive the recognition they deserve for their invaluable contribution to children's well-being and the country's economy. Low wages, poor working conditions, limited advancement opportunities, and the lack of men entering this field have led to ongoing ELCC workforce shortages in Canada.

With federal support, provinces and territories in Canada are implementing measures to support the ELCC workforce within their jurisdictions, including wage grids, pension plans, benefits plans, and workforce strategies. Federal, provincial, and territorial partners are also working on a workforce strategy centred around recruitment, retention, and recognition.

These challenges are further magnified in the Indigenous ELCC sector, particularly regarding navigating labour force shortages, establishing competitive wage grids, and eliminating barriers to education and training, while also dealing with the ongoing impacts of colonization. Indigenous partners are working to develop culturally appropriate training modules and build human capacity grounded in culture and language revitalization.

Working together, federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners have expanded access to regulated ELCC services for families. As of March 2025, the families of approximately 900,000 children are benefiting from high-quality child care across the country.²⁴ Federal investments are supporting 35,000 affordable spaces across nearly 1,000 Indigenous ELCC sites, in addition to more than 10 new centers opened in Métis communities, with several more planned to open over the next 2

²² Statistics Canada, [Labour Force Survey](#) – Custom tabulation

²³ Statistics Canada, [Child care workers in Canada](#).

²⁴ [Affordable child care, a stronger economy | Prime Minister of Canada](#), March 6, 2025.

years. Furthermore, 8 provinces and territories are delivering ELCC for an average of \$10-a-day, while all others have reduced fees by at least 50%.²⁵

In March 2024, Canada's commitment to providing access to affordable, high-quality, and inclusive child care for families and children was cemented in law when the [Canada Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) received royal assent.

Signal for Help

If someone in your life told you they were experiencing abuse, would you know how to help? More than 11 million Canadians have experienced some form of psychological, physical, or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner since the age of 15.²⁶

Canadians experience violence every day because of their sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or perceived gender. This is known as gender-based violence, and women, girls and gender-diverse people are statistically at the highest risk of experiencing it. People who experience gender-based violence are often shamed, silenced, and stigmatized, and few people feel they have the confidence or knowledge to support survivors.

The Signal for Help, a Canadian Women's Foundation initiative funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada, was developed and launched in April 2020 in response to an increased risk of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Signal for Help is a one-handed gesture someone can use to silently communicate they need someone to safely check in and support them. This simple tool went viral shortly after its launch and it has been shared around the world in more than 50 countries and 20 languages.

To help people learn how to support someone experiencing gender-based violence, the Canadian Women's Foundation developed a free [Signal for Help Responder's Action Guide](#) and email learning journey, a free [Signal for Help Responder Mini Course](#), and a special [Signal for Help podcast series](#) featuring interviews with survivors and experts. Today, 47% of Canadians recognize the Signal for Help, 10% have used it or seen it used, and over 89,000 people have become Signal for Help Responders.

One Signal for Help Responder shared her story: "There were 4 of us meeting online, and while we were in the middle of our conversation, behind one of the women we could hear this noise . . . I could tell by the look on her face that she was surprised to hear that noise, and she had that sort of fearful look . . . Change came over her right away, and then she made the hand signal. And so, we all knew, and you sort of freeze in that second because you're just not expecting it at all . . . And so we just kept

²⁵ Annual reports on ELCC from provinces and territories.

²⁶ Statistics Canada, [Intimate partner violence, since age 15 and in the past 12 months, Canada, 2018](#).

talking and I had her cell phone number, so I texted her and just asked her if she had a safety plan . . . We ended up calling 911 for her because she asked for that in the chat."

The Signal for Help is not only saving lives but also shifting the culture around gender-based violence from one of stigma and silence to one of awareness, support and empowerment. When you know what gender-based violence is and how to respond to signs of abuse, you can change the story.

Men and boys using theatre to address gender-based violence

In Halifax, a group of young men and boys from newcomer communities gathered in a modest theatre space. For many of them, this was unfamiliar territory—not just the stage but the conversations they were about to have. They were here to confront one of society's toughest issues: gender-based violence.

For many young men and boys, opportunities to meaningfully engage in efforts to prevent gender-based violence can feel out of reach. Yet, growing evidence shows that when men and boys are engaged in efforts to challenge rigid gender norms and promote gender equality, they can play a critical role in transforming harmful behaviours and create stronger, safer communities.²⁷

The YMCA Halifax's Gender-Based Violence Prevention program brought together a diverse group of participants for an innovative approach. Partnering with Adeb Arianson, the Director and Founder of the Growth Initiative for Dedicated LGBTQ+ Advocacy (GIDA Movement), they turned to theatre as a tool for change. In this workshop, the stage became a space for exploration and learning—a place to emphasize the importance of gender-based violence prevention, practice safe interventions, and inspire advocacy.

At first, there was hesitation. The subject matter was deeply personal and, for many, uncomfortable. But Adeb and the facilitators knew the power of breaking through that discomfort. They set the tone with respect and empathy and navigated cultural and religious sensitivities with care, emphasizing shared values like safety and equality. This approach helped foster trust and dialogue among the group.

Through interactive role-playing exercises, the young men practised responding to real-life scenarios. They learned practical skills to intervene safely and effectively, gaining confidence in their ability to stand up against harmful behaviours. "I never realized how small actions could make such a big difference. Now, I know how to step up safely," one participant shared. Many participants echoed this sentiment, leaving the workshop feeling more equipped and motivated to promote equality in their communities.

²⁷ International Planned Parenthood Federation, [The Men and Boys Collection \(PDF, 2.9 MB\)](#).

Recognizing the broader potential of the project, the organizers filmed the workshops to raise awareness and encourage greater community involvement. By stepping onto the stage, these young men and boys chose to step up in real life—one conversation, one action, and one community at a time.

Addressing period poverty in Canada

Choosing between menstrual health and adequate nutrition is not a choice anyone should be forced to make—and yet it happens in Canada every day. Period poverty²⁸ affects millions of menstruating people in this country.²⁹

Across the 5,500 food banks and community organizations supported by Food Banks Canada, staff and volunteers see firsthand that too many people are forced to choose between buying menstrual products or enough food to eat. They see families where adults must miss work, or teenagers must miss school because they can't afford enough menstrual supplies.

In 2023 and 2024, Food Banks Canada distributed 72.7 million free menstrual products to approximately 3.5 million people who typically struggle to access them. It also provided \$2.5 million to help organizations scale up existing education and awareness activities that reduce period stigma and help people manage menstruation in ways that keep them healthy and comfortable.

Nearly 400 food banks and other community organizations served as distribution locations as part of the pilot program, which reached every province and territory. An additional 2,000 organizations participated by further distributing menstrual products from these locations. The range of these organizations ensured that refugees, unhoused people, Indigenous communities, transgender and non-binary people, and people living in rural and remote areas were included in the project.

"Everyone—whether they were dispensing the products or receiving them—was so pleased that this has been recognized as a need," confirmed a report from Community Bridge, a participating organization in Fort St. John, British Columbia.

Some individuals mentioned that the program helped them cope with period stigma. To quote a client of the Just Friends Food Bank in Stanley, New Brunswick: "I'm non-binary, and the fact that [Just Friends] provides me with menstrual products with no questions asked and no judgment makes my anxiety that much better."

²⁸ Period poverty is a lack of access to menstrual products, education, hygiene facilities, waste management, or a combination of these.

²⁹ Environics Research on behalf of Women and Gender Equality Canada, [public opinion research](#).

Many people focused on the relief of meeting their essential needs. Says a client of Cambridge Food Bank in Ontario, "I have a very heavy period, and being able to get enough pads and tampons has saved me more than \$40 this month. That may not seem like much, but for me on disability support, it's a week's worth of groceries."

The free menstrual products not only reduced financial strain on people who were struggling to make ends meet, but also improved their well-being in other ways. For example, according to Tereena Donahue, Executive Director of the Canadian Mental Health Association's Cariboo Chilcotin Branch in British Columbia, removing the barrier of cost has meant that "individuals can manage their menstrual hygiene with dignity."

"Clients no longer have to worry about the availability of supplies or compromise their hygiene," she adds. "This has not only improved their physical well-being, but also contributed to their emotional and mental health."

Advancing First Nations women's political participation and responding to gender-based violence

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy organization that works to advance the collective priorities of First Nations individuals and communities across Canada on matters of national or international nature and concern.

In 2024, the AFN led national-level advocacy work to support implementation of the [231 Calls for Justice](#) from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. They made parliamentary submissions to support establishing an Indigenous human rights framework and advocated internationally to eliminate gender-based violence.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls described 4 ways that colonial violence is perpetuated against Indigenous women: historical, multigenerational and international trauma; social and economic marginalization; maintaining the status quo and institutional lack of will; and, ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. As a result, First Nations women and girls are disproportionately represented in experiencing violence, overrepresented in correctional facilities, and experience both poverty and homelessness.

Disruptions in First Nations societies by colonial policies have also displaced First Nations women from their traditional leadership roles within their Nations. In 2024, the AFN worked on advancing First Nations women's political participation and saw an increase in female representation in leadership roles.

In 2024, they hosted the 3-part Virtual Speaker Series (VSS) for First Nations Women in Leadership, comprised of Elected Leaders in Communities, the National Chief, Regional Chief Leadership, and Members of Parliament. This VSS created space to empower women as leaders by sharing insights and experiences of First Nations women leaders. Following the VSS, a report titled First Nations

Women Leaders: Advice for Leaders was prepared to summarize discussions. The report will provide a support tool for both current and future First Nations women leaders. Similarly, the AFN hosted a Women's Leadership Luncheon for the National Caucus of Women Leaders to facilitate networking and connecting.

The AFN's work has been, and will continue to be, informed by the AFN Women's Council along with First Nation survivors and families. For example, the AFN Women's Council and AFN 2SLGBTQQA+ Council provided valuable input on the AFN's [progress report on the Calls for Justice \(PDF, 1.5 MB\)](#), which was released in June 2024. This 2024 report examined progress carried out over the past 5-years by all levels of government, including Canada, in addressing the [231 Calls for Justice](#).

The AFN continues to advocate for the criminalization of [forced and coerced sterilization \(PDF, 1.7 MB\)](#). During the July 2024 AFN Annual General Assembly, the AFN Women's Council met with the national Survivors Circle for Reproductive Justice to discuss [Bill S-250](#).

At its Special Chiefs Assembly in December, the AFN held a panel around the issue of human and sexual trafficking of First Nation women, girls, and gender-diverse people. Raising awareness through the use of such panels is important since advancing discussions about this topic is the first step.

Preventing violence and promoting social cohesion in Southeast Asia

Empowering Women for Sustainable Peace: Preventing Violence and Promoting Social Cohesion in the [Association for Southeast Asian Nations](#) (ASEAN) is a project that aims to advance the Women, Peace, and Security agenda within ASEAN. It focuses on preventing violence against women and fostering regional social cohesion. UN Women, the project's implementing partner, is supporting ASEAN-owned initiatives, including a regional hub of knowledge and innovation on Women, Peace, and Security.

The project's impact is already clear. For example, in August 2024, Viet Nam launched its first National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in peace and security.

UN Women provided technical support to Viet Nam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop the Plan, with support from the Government of Canada, the United Kingdom, and South Korea. Key drivers for Viet Nam's success include strong ownership across various ministries and partnership with external partners. The Plan has revitalized the commitment to gender equality and has the potential to transform the lives of women and girls and promote a meaningful contribution of women to conflict prevention and sustaining peace in Viet Nam, ASEAN and beyond.

Viet Nam's National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security is an example of what can be achieved by extending partnerships and leveraging resources to ensure no woman or girl is left behind.

SDG 8

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



SDG 8 Policy context

Canada's ambitions for this goal are to ensure that Canadians have access to quality jobs and contribute to and benefit from sustainable economic growth.

Canada's sustainable jobs approach

In 2024, the [Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act](#) became law. The Act will foster the creation of sustainable jobs, support workers, industries, and communities across Canada, and help workers gain skills, training, and tools for new, sustainable job opportunities.

The Act legislates the publication of an [action plan](#) every 5 years, beginning in 2025, outlining how the federal government will support workers in the low-carbon economy.

The Act also establishes the [Sustainable Jobs Partnership Council](#), which will meet with stakeholders across Canada and develop independent advice for the federal government on how to best support workers and communities and advance low-carbon economic growth. The Council will ensure Canada's sustainable jobs measures are aligned with local realities and reflect the needs and experiences of partners and stakeholders, such as other levels of government, labour unions, workers, industry, civil society and Indigenous organizations.



Photo by CIRA.CA

The Youth Employment and Skills Strategy

The [*Youth Employment and Skills Strategy \(YESS\)*](#) is a horizontal Government of Canada initiative led by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and delivered in collaboration with 11 other federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations. The Strategy provides supports to youth (aged 15 to 30 years) to prepare them to enter the labour market and gain work experience in key sectors of the economy. From 2023 to 2024, over 105,000 youth were served under YESS, including 93,000 supported through ESDC's YESS Program and Canada Summer Jobs. Programs under the YESS foster inclusivity. For example, 14% of participants in ESDC's YESS Program identified as Indigenous youth, 39% as visible minority youth, and 21% as youth with disabilities.

Newcomer youth are also supported under the YESS through services like training and work placements. From 2023 to 2024, over 4,600 newcomer youth were supported.

Women Entrepreneurship Strategy

The [*Women Entrepreneurship Strategy*](#) funds initiatives that increase access for women-owned businesses to the financing, networks, and expertise needed to start up, scale up and access new markets. From 2023 to 2024, over 20,900 women entrepreneurs received support in accessing networks, training, and mentorship; 400 diverse women entrepreneurs received \$10 million in loans; 2,200 women entrepreneurs gained access to venture capital funding; and 28,900 women participated in sponsored networking events.

Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program

The Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (ISET) supports First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban/non-affiliated Indigenous People to improve their skills and work toward their long-term career goals. From 2023 to 2024, the [*ISET*](#) Program funded over 115 Indigenous service delivery organizations to provide skills and employment training and other supports to Indigenous People. These organizations have the flexibility to design and deliver programming based on the unique needs of their communities. Over 54,000 Indigenous participants received training and other supports. This resulted in over 19,000 Indigenous People finding employment and over 6,500 returning to school for further training and development opportunities. The ISET Program contributes to the federal government's efforts to build renewed partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and support reconciliation.

As a complement to the ISET Program, the Skills and Partnership Fund is a project-based fund that supports partnerships between Indigenous organizations and employers to provide skills training for Indigenous people relevant to economic opportunities at the local, regional, and national level. In 2023 to 2024, training and other supports were provided to 1,773 Indigenous people, with close to 500 people finding employment.

Supports for Student Learning Program

The [Supports for Student Learning Program](#) funds youth-serving organizations to provide supports to youth who are most likely to drop out of education or not be employed or in training (NEET). It helps youth complete high school, transition to and through post-secondary education, and enter the labour market with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

Pay gap reporting and regulations

In June 2024, Canada brought 2 sets of regulations into force to support the advancement of the *Pay Equity Act*. These include regulations to encourage compliance with the Act and support the application of the Act in ministers' offices.

Under the *Employment Equity Act*, federally regulated private sector employers with 100 or more employees must collect and report data that identifies compensation and representation gaps in their workplaces that impact women, Indigenous People, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. In 2024, the website [EquiVision](#) was launched to provide comparative online information on designated group pay gaps and representation rates for federally regulated private-sector employers.

Supporting women's employment internationally

Canada supports SDG 8 by focusing its international development efforts on achieving women's economic empowerment, inclusive growth, and economic resilience. This support includes skills training, entrepreneurship, inclusive finance, and decent work opportunities for women, girls and the most vulnerable in developing countries.

As part of its \$100 million commitment to address inequalities in unpaid and paid care work in low- and middle-income countries, Canada supports more women to seek paid employment opportunities and promotes decent working conditions for care workers, who often work in the informal sector and face hazardous and unsafe working conditions.

SDG 8 Statistical analysis



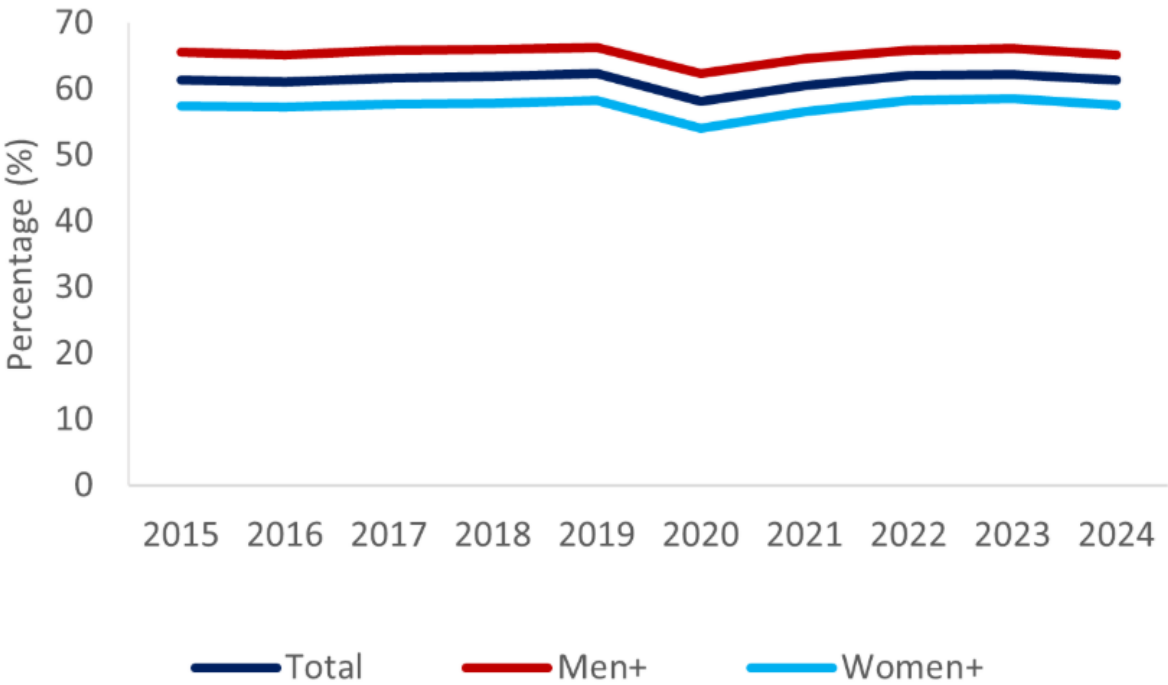
Domestic Indicator 8.2.1: Employment rate

The employment rate helps present an overview of the health of the labour market and economy by measuring the number of persons employed expressed as a share of the population aged 15 and older.

In 2024, Canada's employment rate declined to 61.3% from 62.2% in 2023, marking the first decline since 2020 when Canada experienced the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 6). While the number of employed persons grew by 395,700 (+1.9%) between 2023 and 2024, these

gains were outpaced by stronger population growth (+2.3%) from the fourth quarter of 2023 to 2024.³⁰ As a result, while population growth slowed in 2024 compared to 2023 (3.1%), mainly due to a substantial dampening of the growth of non-permanent residents, it continued to outpace employment growth resulting in a lower employment rate.³¹ Consequently, the employment rate in 2024 was lower than the employment rate in 2015. As a result, the progress has deteriorated when measured against the SDG ambition that Canadians have access to quality jobs.

Figure 6: Domestic Indicator 8.2.1: Employment rate, persons aged 15 years and over, by gender, Canada



The employment rate gap between women and men persisted in 2024 as the rate for women declined from 58.5% in 2023 to 57.6% in 2024, while it stood at 65.1% for men, down from 66.1% in 2023. Employment for women grew slower among women aged 25 to 44 (+3.0%) compared to their male counterparts (+4.3%) from 2023 to 2024. Meanwhile, employment among men (-0.1%) and women (-0.1%) aged 45 to 64 similarly declined. The employment rate among Canadians aged 15 to 24 fell to 54.8% in 2024 from 58.0% in 2023, marking the second consecutive decrease and the lowest rate

³⁰ Statistics Canada. [Table 17-10-0009-01 Population estimates, quarterly.](#)

³¹ Statistics Canada. [Table 17-10-0121-01 Estimates of the number of non-permanent residents by type, quarterly.](#)

since 1999, except for 2020 when the labour market in Canada experienced the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The employment rate among the Indigenous population^{32,33} aged 15 and over living off a reserve declined to 57.1% in 2024 from 58.7% in 2023. While this marked the second consecutive annual decrease, following a high of 60.9% in 2022, it represented an increase from an employment rate of 54.9% in 2015. Among Indigenous groups, Métis posted a lower employment rate in 2024 (60.7%) than in 2023 (62.9%). Similarly, the employment rate among First Nations declined to 54.0% in 2024 from 55.3% in 2023.



Domestic Indicator 8.3.1: Proportion of youth not in education, employment or training

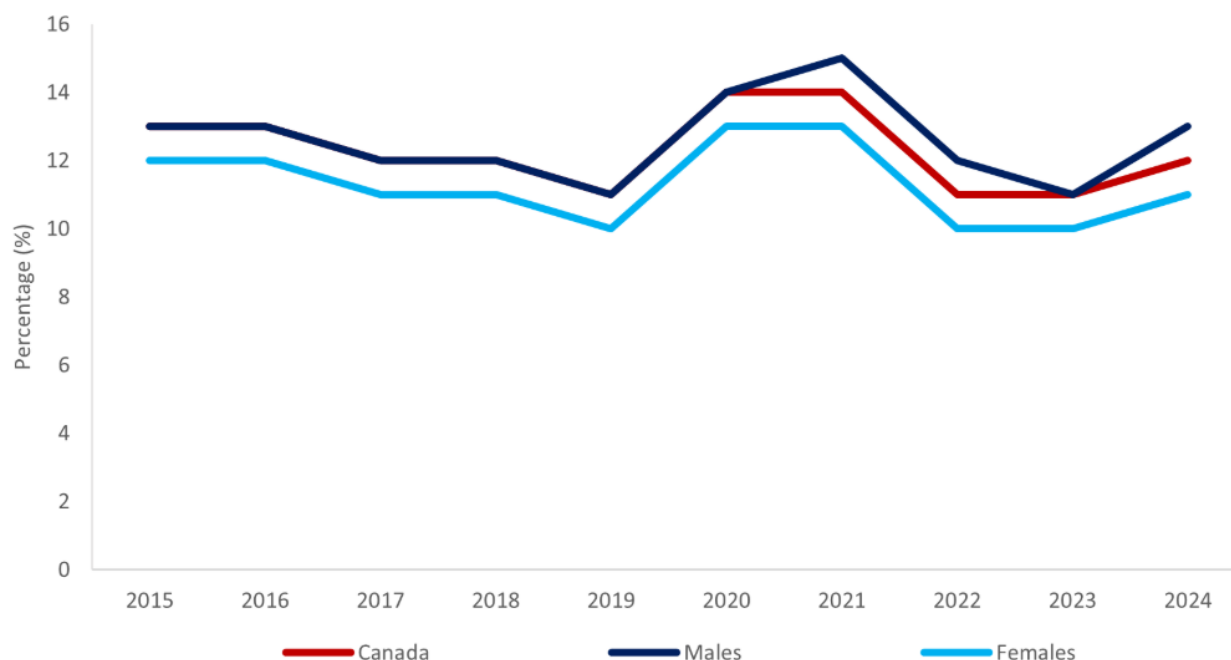
The proportion of youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) is an indicator used globally to measure how youths aged 15 to 29 transition from education to employment, which can highlight any potential gaps. Gaps in the transition can sometimes be by choice, such as taking time off between school and work to travel or to start families and care for young children. However, sometimes these gaps can be for other reasons. For example, as youth encounter challenges joining the working world, they may decide to temporarily halt their job search, thereby contributing to higher NEET rates.

The proportion of youth not in education, employment or training in Canada rose to 12% in 2024 from 11% in 2023 (Figure 7). Progress has been made since 2015 (13%), but an acceleration is needed to achieve the ambition that Canadians have access to quality jobs. Several recent events contributed to the movement in NEET rates. Most notably, NEET rates rose to 14% in 2020 and remained at that level in 2021 as youths experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impacts. However, it subsequently fell to 11% in 2022 as economic activity picked up and the impacts from the pandemic subdued. Most recently, NEET rates increased as employment among youth not in education declined.

³² Includes persons who reported having an Indigenous identity, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit), or those who reported more than one Indigenous identity. Excluded from the survey's coverage are persons living on reserves and other Indigenous settlements in the provinces, as well as those living in the territories.

³³ Data for this indicator are not available for Inuit.

Figure 7: Domestic Indicator 8.3.1: Proportion of Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training by sex, Canada



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Within Canada, NEET rates were lowest in Manitoba (10%) and British Columbia (10%) in 2024. At the other end of the spectrum, youth in Nunavut reported the highest NEET rate at 38% in 2024, up from 34% in 2023. This was followed by the Northwest Territories (17%) reporting the second-highest NEET rate nationally. Both Alberta (14%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (14%) posted the highest NEET rates among provinces in 2024.

A consistently higher proportion of men than women were not in education, employment or training, resulting in comparatively higher NEET rates for men over the 2015 to 2024 period. The NEET rate for women grew to 11% in 2024, up from 10% in 2023. Despite this increase, the NEET rate for women remains 2 percentage points lower than the men's NEET rate, which was 13% in 2024, up from 11% the previous year.

Not surprisingly, since 2015, younger Canadians aged 15 to 19 have consistently recorded the lowest NEET rate, which was 6% over the 2022 to 2024 period. On the other hand, youth aged 25 to 29 had the highest NEET rate, increasing from 13% in 2023 to 15% in 2024. These differences highlight the challenges youth face as they transition into the labour market.

SDG 8 Feature stories

Opening doors for youth

The [Youth Employment and Skills Strategy](#) (YESS) is a federal initiative to help Canadian youth develop skills and gain work experience. Through programs under the YESS, like Canada Summer Jobs and the Science and Technology Internship Program, doors are opened for people like Sarah Crowe and Janelle Flett.

For Sarah Crowe, the [Canada Summer Jobs](#) (CSJ) program was an important step in her career journey. While pursuing her studies in textile and apparel design, Sarah landed a summer position at Quidi Vidi Village Artisan Studios through the CSJ program.

This opportunity allowed her to work alongside established craftspeople, gaining hands-on experience and valuable connections in the craft industry. "My summer job at the Artisan Studios gave me the connections and experience I needed to apply for my own studio and start my own business upon graduation," Sarah shared. Today, as the founder of Sarah Crowe Designs, she credits her CSJ experience for providing her with the foundation to turn her passion into a successful venture.

Janelle Flett, a member of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, has always been deeply connected to the environment. Growing up near the oil sands in Alberta, she developed an awareness of the region's energy production and its impact. Her experiences sparked a desire to explore sustainable alternatives. "I wanted to find better solutions to creating energy," Janelle shared.

Her journey toward making a difference began when she joined Indigenous Clean Energy's Generation Power cohort and they were able to connect her to the Science Technology Internship Program at the Barkley Project Group, a clean energy consultancy working with First Nations communities in British Columbia and the Yukon.

Encouraging other young Canadians to consider similar opportunities, Janelle emphasized the program's flexibility and benefits: "To other young Canadians, I would definitely say take the opportunity to apply to the Science Technology Internship Program—there are so many different fields and options."

With her sights set on a future in clean energy, Janelle is determined to use her skills and knowledge to help Indigenous communities and Canada transition to more sustainable energy solutions.

By connecting youth to meaningful work experiences in high-demand sectors, programs under the YESS are shaping a workforce equipped to meet the challenges of the future, one opportunity at a time.

Empowering youth to overcome systemic barriers to career success

Youth living in low-income communities in Canada often have limited access to mentors and networks to advance their professional growth. These barriers can reduce their likelihood of finishing high school and moving on to post-secondary education or training, further entrenching their economic disadvantage.

Pathways to Education is committed to breaking the cycle of poverty through education. It supports youth living in low-income communities by equipping them with skills and competencies they need to graduate from high school and transition to post-secondary education, training, or meaningful employment. Across the 31 communities in Canada that Pathways serves, youth regularly participate in structured programming designed to expose them to new career paths and develop practical career-readiness skills.

One example of this work is Pathways Spryfield's annual Career Week, led by Danielle Truen, the Post-secondary and Career Development Coordinator. Career Week empowers students to explore diverse industries they may not typically have access to—such as astrophysics, pharmacology, film, and computer science—and connect with professionals from organizations like Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia Health, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Students have the opportunity to engage with professionals to learn about their daily work and the diverse trajectories they took to reach their current positions. "I wanted to show students that no 2 people will have the same journey, but they can have a very similar destination," Danielle explains.

Following the event, students shared that the experience was successful in opening their perspectives to different possibilities. "It's so important to show young people that even if their own journey doesn't follow the typical structured path, it's okay. You can change your path, then change your path again, and still find something you love," Danielle explains.

While these activities helped expose students to new career opportunities, the reality for many students living in low-income communities is that the barriers to post-secondary education are multifaceted. Many students lack the financial resources to pursue higher education, as well as the professional network to build social capital. To address these complex challenges, Danielle also created a comprehensive toolkit to help high school students develop practical skills for success, such as developing a budget or writing successful bursary applications. Additionally, students receive financial supports through the Pathways Program, such as access to a scholarship toward post-secondary education or training.

By helping students explore their potential—and giving them the practical supports they need to achieve it—the Pathways Program is empowering young people to overcome the barriers they face, equipping them for long-term success and economic independence.

Making the link between inclusivity, employment and sustainability

Reena, a non-profit organization, launched an initiative to create meaningful employment opportunities for people with diverse abilities. Aptly named GReena, it is designed to make environmental engagement more inclusive and accessible, and is a lifeline for its participants, who find purpose, dignity, and self-confidence through meaningful work.

In 2024, the organization collaborated with the social enterprise, Growcer, to launch an accessible, vertical hydroponic farm producing kosher vegetables. The innovative project combined sustainable farming with inclusion, offering participants hands-on agricultural experience and training for green jobs.

The initiative's accessible design included adjustable workstations and barrier-free pathways, ensuring full participation for individuals with mobility challenges. Participants gained vital skills, confidence, and independence through therapeutic work that fostered both physical and mental well-being. This contributed to community resilience by enhancing local food security, reducing environmental impact, and creating meaningful pathways for local economic growth.

GReena's farming initiatives were expanded through collaboration with community organizations, including the Learning Enrichment Foundation, the Oakwood Vaughan Community Hub, and the Bathurst Clark Resource Library. The result was a recycling project in York Region which helped refine local waste management practices. These partnerships fostered a shared vision, enabling community groups to promote environmental stewardship while creating green jobs for individuals with diverse abilities.

GReena managers Rob and Fred emphasized the transformation they saw in participants, noting their increased confidence and independence through therapeutic, skill-building work. One participant, JB, stated, "... it makes me feel independent." Sophie, a community member involved in the project, highlighted how growing vegetables boosted her confidence and skills.

GReena creates a supportive environment where individuals feel valued and connected, while also contributing to sustainability and food security. There have been challenges, such as designing a fully accessible farming model and sustaining community engagement and resource support. To overcome barriers, GReena formed strategic partnerships to promote resource sharing, knowledge exchange, and community buy-in to create a strong network of support for the initiative.

GReena demonstrates that inclusivity, employment, and sustainability can go hand in hand. It showcases how local initiatives contribute to global goals by combining sustainable development with community-focused action. By empowering individuals, strengthening community resilience, and showing how environmental stewardship can be integrated with meaningful work, GReena paves the way for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Advancing social dialogue across the agri-food sector

Both nationally and internationally, 2024 marked a historic milestone in promoting social dialogue within the agri-food sector. In May 2024, the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW Canada) convened North America's first Social Partner Forum on Decent Work in the Agri-Food Sector. This groundbreaking event brought together key stakeholders to share insights, exchange best practices, and collaboratively develop a roadmap for strengthening one of Canada's most critical industries: the food production system.

The forum emphasized an economic growth agenda grounded in Canada's commitments to core international labour standards, including the ratification of key conventions, and the promotion of other essential elements of decent work. By fostering meaningful dialogue among social partners, this initiative represents a significant step toward ensuring sustainable, inclusive, and equitable outcomes across Canada's agri-food landscape.

Representatives from unions, industry, and government gathered for a full-day session in Toronto to engage with the newly established Decent Work Guidelines for the Agri-Food Sector. These guidelines are the result of a UN mandate to the International Labour Organization to lead global, sectoral efforts toward advancing decent work.

UFCW Canada played a pivotal role in this process as part of the global food workers group, contributing to negotiations alongside employers and government representatives. Through a rigorous tripartite process, the parties reached consensus on the guidelines, marking a significant achievement in promoting decent work across the global agri-food landscape.

The Decent Work Forum heard first-hand from migrant workers, some of whom were survivors of labour trafficking schemes. As vulnerable workers, unable to speak the language and dependent on their employer for everything from meals to housing and transportation, these workers shared their heroic story to uncover abuse and mistreatment happening in the shadows of Canada's temporary labour programs.

Participants were moved by personal stories of triumph, sanctuary, and the goodwill of support networks that work tirelessly to ensure workers are protected and wrongdoers are held to account.

The Decent Work Forum underscored the critical role of social dialogue among stakeholders in business, government, and labour unions to advance the implementation of the Decent Work Guidelines as a core strategy for achieving SDG 8 across Canada's agri-food industry.

The forum's success clearly demonstrated the strong appetite among social partners to collaboratively address the most pressing issues facing the sector. However, it also raised important questions about the lack of formal opportunities for such dialogue in Canada, particularly when compared to other highly industrialized countries.

To meet the 2030 SDG targets, more must be done to establish and formalize tripartite forums in Canada. These platforms are essential to advancing decent work and driving meaningful progress on all SDGs.

Setting the standard for psychologically healthy workplaces

The Canadian Standards Association, operating as CSA group, has developed a key standard ([CAN/CSA Z1003-13/BNQ 9700-803/2013 \[R2022\]](#)) to foster psychological health and safety in the workplace.

The voluntary standard, known as CSA Z1003, provides management system requirements to prevent harm, promote health, and resolve incidents. It aims to reduce workplace-related stress and support organizations in creating healthier, safer, and more supportive work environments.

The standard identifies 13 key workplace factors—such as organizational culture, workload management, and psychological protection from violence, bullying and harassment—that influence psychological safety and contribute to overall health.

A recent case study conducted by CSA and Delphi Group, set to be published in spring 2025, noted that organizations adopting CSA Z1003 have reported improved employee engagement, morale, and reduced absenteeism. For example, in one organization employees indicated that they experienced less burnout and stress-related illnesses.

CSA Z1003 sets the requirements for inclusive and meaningful employee participation. It supports the involvement of workers, from all backgrounds, in the engagement of decision making. It encourages a supportive work environment and mental health training for leadership. As mental health challenges evolve, CSA Group plans to update the standard to consider and address emerging issues and topics, such as diversity and inclusion.

By providing guidance on inclusive and safe work environments, CSA Z1003 promotes accountability and transparency; supports the protections of labour rights; improves employee retention, morale and engagement; and shows that prioritizing and promoting the health of workers leads to a more productive workforce.

Aligning workplace health initiatives with SDG goals and targets, CSA Z1003 helps create resilient, sustainable workplaces, fostering positive long-term impacts for businesses, employees, and society.

Opening Doors: More and better opportunities for domestic workers in Peru

In 2021, Canada committed \$100 million to support unpaid and paid care work in low- and middle-income countries. Several projects have since been implemented, including the Opening Doors project in Peru.

Implemented by the [International Labour Organization](#), the project aims to directly improve the lives of 1,500 women domestic workers in Peru by making national policies more supportive of their needs and rights. It helps enhance programs like the Domestic Workers Law and the National Care System and fosters collaboration with unions and women's organizations to empower domestic workers.

In 2024, the project held a Training of Trainers workshop in 3 locations, educating 88 women leaders from various organizations on addressing gender-based violence, mental health, and negotiating with employers. These leaders then trained more than 700 affiliates across 9 regions.

The training informed domestic workers of their social benefits, associated deductions and how to calculate income tax. For Flor Angélica Masa, a leader of the National Federation of Domestic Workers in Trujillo, the workshop was a great learning experience. "I found the workshop very interesting. What I have learned will be very useful to me because I will be able to calculate the (tax and benefit) payments that I have to make and to guide the members of my union." She added that she'll be able to pass her knowledge on to other domestic workers who may not know about benefits.

Projects like Opening Doors for domestic workers in Peru are key to protecting [labour rights](#) and promoting safe working environments.

SDG 14

LIFE BELOW WATER



SDG 14 Policy context

Canada's ambition for this goal is to protect and conserve marine ecosystems, ensure sustainable fisheries, reduce pollution, safeguard at-risk whale populations, and strengthen global ocean conservation.

Marine protected areas and conservation measures

Canada continues to work toward establishing new [Marine Protected Areas](#) (MPA) and [other effective area-based conservation measures](#) (OECM), which are essential for safeguarding biodiversity and conserving critical habitats. These protected areas support conservation of sensitive species and habitats, promote the recovery of ecosystems, and contribute to the resilience of marine ecosystems in the face of various threats such as overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution and climate change. Canada also works to restore and protect marine ecosystems by reducing [underwater noise](#); safeguarding at-risk whale populations through vessel management measures; enforcing the [Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act](#) and leading efforts to reduce invasive species from [ship biofouling](#).



Source © Destination Canada

Ocean planning and conservation collaborative activities

The federal government collaborates with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous governments and communities, and industry and environmental groups to advance effective ocean planning and conservation activities. For example, Canada is collaborating with Indigenous

organizations to inform conservation efforts under the [Oceans Management Contribution Program](#) and [Project Finance for Permanence](#) to protect unique and fragile marine ecosystems. By engaging with partners and Indigenous Knowledge, important expertise is used to enhance the effectiveness of conservation tools (such as MPAs and OECMs) and ensure that they align with Indigenous practices and governance.

Another example of partnership is the work between the Mamalilikulla First Nation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and British Columbia to protect a unique and fragile marine ecosystem in Knight Inlet, British Columbia. The recently established marine refuge, Gwa̓xdlala/Nalaxdlala (Lull/Hoeya), is an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area that will protect the inlet's rare species, high biodiversity, and cultural significance. To learn more about how partners are working together to protect the area, visit the [Collaboration on Ocean Protection web page](#).

Canada has been advancing [marine spatial planning](#) as a way to guide the sustainable use of our oceans. These collaborative processes can help Canada better understand and coordinate where, when and how we use and manage the ocean and its resources, and achieve ecological, economic, social and cultural objectives.

To ensure key fish stocks are managed and harvested sustainably, the federal government sets and [implements limit reference points and harvest control rules](#) to help maintain healthy stocks levels. It also works to include more major fish stocks in the [Fisheries Act's Fish Stocks provisions](#), to ensure sustainable management and develop plans to rebuild depleted stocks.

Research monitoring

The federal government conducts scientific research and monitoring activities to better understand aquatic ecosystems and build a stronger evidence base for decision-making. Through scientific research and science advisory processes, data is collected on fish stocks, aquatic habitats, and the impacts of stressors on marine species and environments. This knowledge is crucial for implementing effective fisheries management strategies, setting sustainable catch limits, preventing overfishing, and reaching conservation objectives.

As well, monitoring activities, such as data collection on ecosystem variables, stock assessments, and bycatch monitoring, provide valuable information for making informed decisions and adjusting fishing practices to help ensure these stocks are maintaining a healthy level and support marine conservation objectives.

International agreements and collaboration

The federal government actively supports international agreements aimed at protecting the world's oceans and its biodiversity, including the [UN Convention on the Law of the Sea](#), which provides the legal framework for the use and conservation of the oceans, and the associated [Agreement on the](#)

[Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction.](#)

Canada is also a member of the International Maritime Organization, leading the development of international guidance on the in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling, and the development of the [Revised guidelines for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life](#) (PDF, 333 KB).

It is committed to various multilateral and bilateral partnerships and initiatives, including the [High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy](#), and the [Global Ocean Alliance](#). It supports regional global marine conservation by sharing experience, expertise and scientific research with other members of the [Americas for the Protection of the Ocean coalition](#) and the [Arctic Council's Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group](#).

The federal government is also committed to reducing marine pollution by, among others, promoting circular economies and increasing recycling efforts. For example, as a signatory to the G7 Ocean Plastics Charter, Canada committed to addressing the growing problem of plastics in the ocean.

SDG 14 Statistical analysis

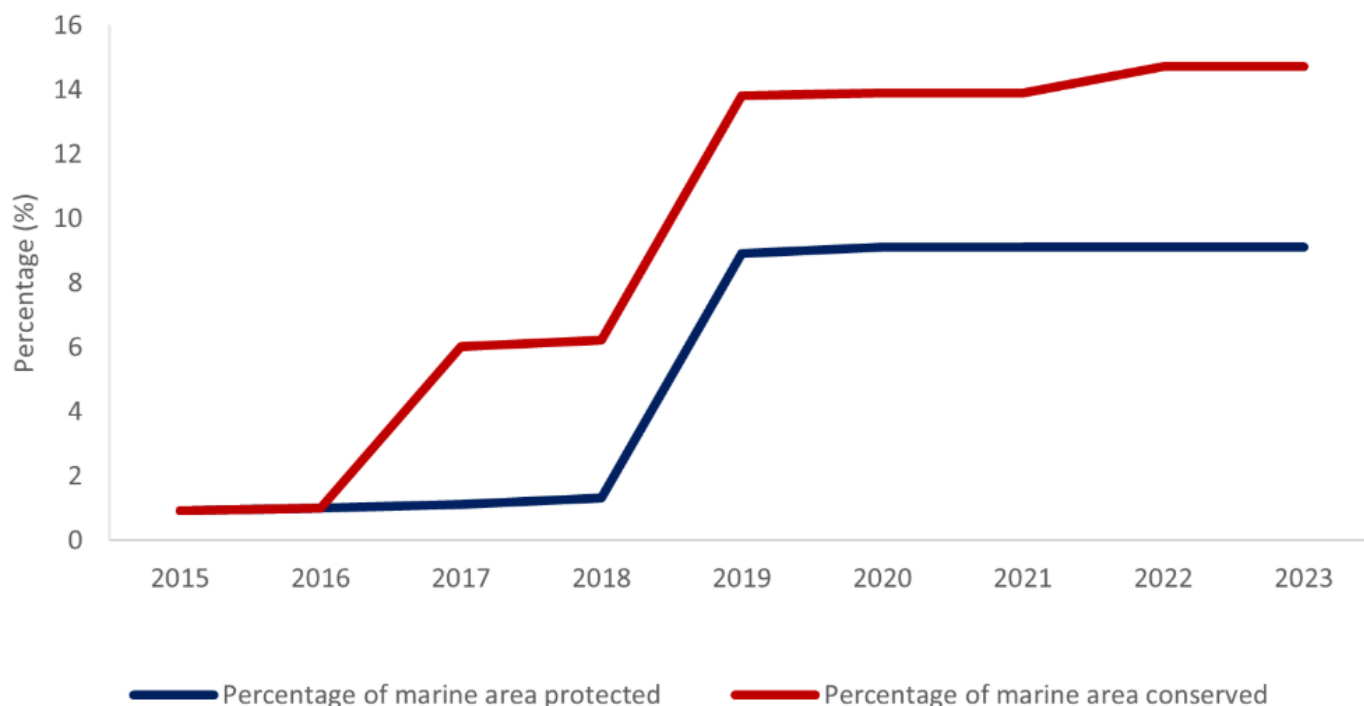


Domestic Indicator 14.1.1: Proportion of marine and coastal areas conserved

Conserved areas safeguard biodiversity for present and future generations by reducing stresses from human activities while providing opportunities for people to connect to nature.³⁴ The proportion of marine and coastal areas conserved accounted for 14.7% of Canada's marine territory or 842,849 km² in 2023, up approximately 22 km² from 2022 (Figure 8). This demonstrates progress that is on track to reach the target, which is a global commitment to conserve 30% of Canada's marine and coastal areas by 2030.

³⁴ Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program, [Canada's Conserved Areas](#).

Figure 8: Domestic Indicator 14.1.1: Proportion of marine and coastal areas conserved, Canada



Source: Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program, Canada's conserved areas

Conserved areas are classified in 2 categories. Accounting for 9.1% of Canada's marine territory in 2023, protected areas include national, provincial or territorial parks, Indigenous protected areas, migratory bird sanctuaries and marine protected areas. Meanwhile, other effective area-based conservation measures account for the remainder, representing 5.6% of Canada's marine territory in 2023. These areas are managed to conserve biodiversity over the long term; however, they do not necessarily meet the formal definition of a protected area. They can include areas such as Indigenous territories and watersheds or resource management areas.

Conserved marine areas can be found across the country. However, larger ones are mostly located offshore and in northern Canada where human use is infrequent. The Tuvaijuittuq Marine Protected Area is the largest conserved area, accounting for 5.55% of Canada's total marine area. Totalling 319,411 km², the designation of this area in 2019 accounted for the lion's share of the increase observed between 2018 and 2019. Located off the coast of Ellesmere Island in Nunavut in the Arctic

Ocean, this area is considered unique due to the presence of multi-year pack ice and is the area with the oldest and thickest sea ice in the Arctic Ocean.³⁵

From 2019 to 2023, the proportion of marine conserved area grew by 48,301 km² (6.1%). Accounting for much of this increase with nearly 44,000 km², the Eastern Canyons Conservation Area was added in 2022. Located in the Scotian Shelf-Bay of Fundy Bioregion, off the coast of Nova Scotia, this area was conserved to help protect the cold-water coral and deep-water frontier area. For example, the area contains the only known living *Lophelia pertusa* coral reef in Canada's Atlantic waters. More recently, the Gwa̓xdlala/Nalaxdlala (Lull/Hoeya) marine refuge was added in 2023 to help conserve its unique shallow sill coral and sponge gardens, estuaries, eelgrass beds and kelp forest. Located in the Northern Shelf Bioregion in British Columbia, this marine refuge totals 21.4 km² and accounted for the increase observed between 2022 and 2023.



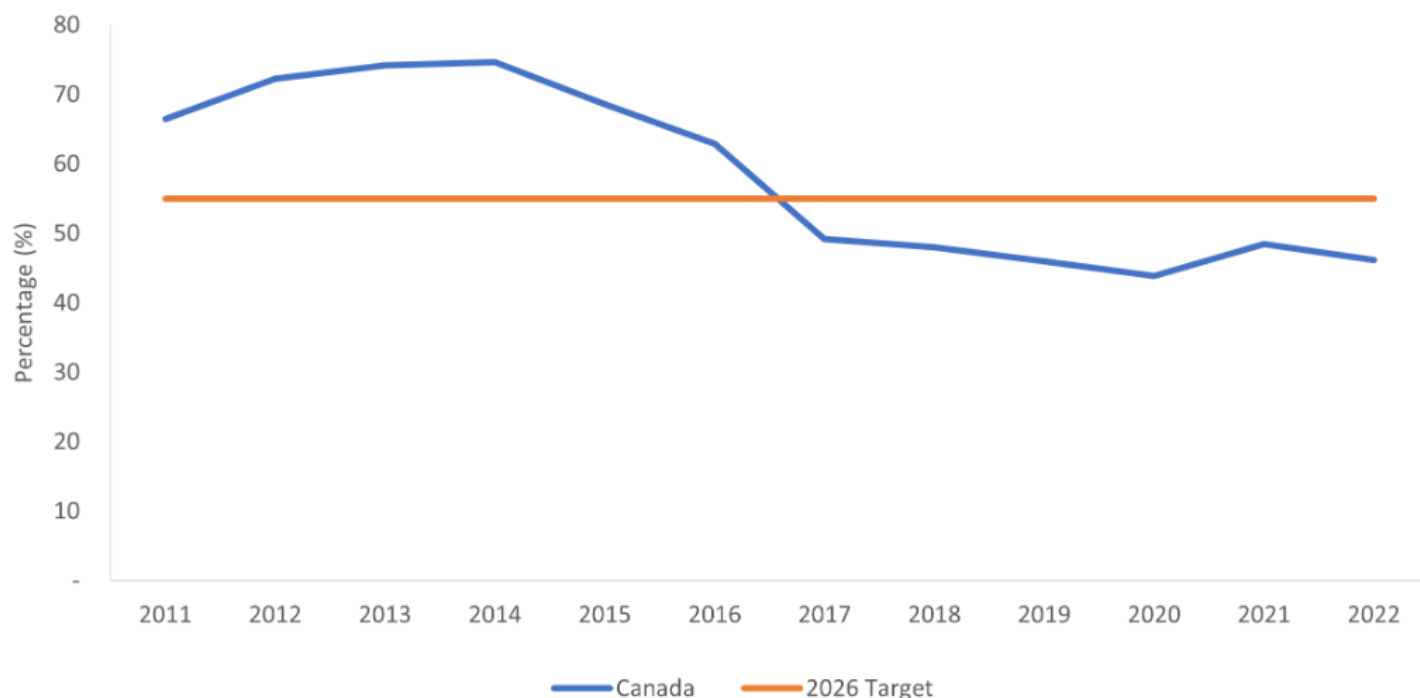
Domestic Indicator 14.2.1: Proportion of key fish stocks in the cautious and healthy zones

The overall health and abundance of fish stocks are affected by environmental conditions and human use of the oceans such as fishing.³⁶ Therefore, measuring and tracking the health and status of fish stocks is key to maintaining them for future generations. To do so, fish stocks levels are assessed, and a status (healthy, cautious, critical or uncertain) is assigned based on a size comparison to reference levels. Their management measures are then adjusted as necessary through actions such as imposing harvest rates and limits to ensure their continued health. This is done for a total of 195 key fish stocks, which were selected due to their importance to the culture, economy, or the environment.

³⁵ Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

³⁶ Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Figure 9: Domestic Indicator 14.2.1: Proportion of key fish stocks in the Cautious and Healthy zones



Source: Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program, Status of key fish stocks

In 2022, the proportion of key fish stocks in the cautious and healthy zones declined to 46% from 48% in 2021 (Figure 9). This declining trend shows a deterioration of progress toward the 2026 target of having at least 55% of Canada's key fish stocks in the cautious and healthy zones. Among regions, the proportion of key fish stocks in cautious and healthy zones was highest in the Pacific at 65% in 2022, following a decline from 68% in 2021. In the Atlantic, 43% of key fish stocks were in the cautious and healthy zones in 2022, down from 45% the previous year. The Atlantic region also registered the highest proportion of key fish stocks with a critical status in 2022 (15%). The Arctic had the lowest proportion of key fish stocks in the cautious or healthy zones in 2022 (14%). However, it had no key fish stocks with a critical status and had a comparatively higher proportion of stocks with an uncertain status (86%) largely due to insufficient information.

The health of key fish stocks varies among stock groups. Crustaceans, which includes species such as crab, lobster and shrimp, is the largest stock group evaluated and represents the group with the highest share of stocks in the cautious and healthy zone (62%). Ground fish stocks (for example, Atlantic Cod and Yelloweye Rockfish) accounted for the second-largest fish stocks group and just under half (49%) of its stocks were in the healthy or cautious zones in 2022. The key fish stock group with the lowest share of stock in the cautious and healthy zones in 2022 was marine mammals (12%), which includes species such as the Atlantic walrus, beluga and narwhal. As marine mammals key

stocks are mostly located in the Arctic, this group had a higher share of stocks with uncertain status due to less frequent surveying and accompanying evaluation challenges due to low data availability.

SDG 14 Feature stories

Generational stewardship: An award-winning Marine Protected Area

The Kitasoo Xai'xais community of Klemtu sits on the east side of Swindle Island in the Great Bear Rainforest, about 500km north of Vancouver, British Columbia. When the herring spawn under the spring moon, the Kitasoo Xai'xais Nation celebrates their new year with the year's first harvest in Gitdisdzu Lugyek, Kitasu Bay. Gitdisdzu Lugyek is a place of critical cultural and ecological importance for their people. The herring spawn, like the salmon run, draws an abundance of life to the bay and other nearshore waters, providing much-needed nutrition for the Kitasoo Xai'xais people, other coastal communities, and a wide diversity of species after a long winter.

In June 2022, the Kitasoo Xai'xais declared [Gitdisdzu Lugyek a Marine Protected Area \(MPA\)](#) under the Nation's laws and jurisdiction, as affirmed through the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. In 2023, the Nation released a management plan outlining strategies to preserve the area's cultural and ecological heritage and ensure food security.

Milas' (Santana Edgar), a marine planning coordinator for the Kitasoo Xai'xais Stewardship Authority, works to protect the territorial lands, waters, and cultural heritage her ancestors have cared for for decades. Milas' reflects on the area's importance, explaining, "There are many places within our traditional territory that we value highly as places of our past generations; places to gather all the things we need like food, medicines, and building materials." She describes the bay as "an area that has been utilized and taken care of by our Nation for millennia," where traditional foods are still harvested, and children are brought to learn teachings, stories, and cultural practices. These visits allow them to connect with the land and water, fostering freedom and joy.

Milas' continues the marine protection efforts initiated by her grandparents in the 1970s. She describes her role as part of an amazing legacy of generational stewardship that "has done so much over the years to protect and preserve all that we have now, so that we too can do what our grandparents did for us, for our future generations."

The 33.5km² Gitdisdzu Lugyek MPA was declared under Indigenous law in 2022, but the bay is also part of a proposed [Central Coast National Marine Conservation Area Reserve](#) (NMCAR), a substantial regional collaboration between the Kitasoo Xai'xais, Gitga'at, Gitxaala, Heiltsuk, Nuxalk, and Wuikinuxv Nations, the Province of British Columbia, and Canada. The NMCAR is expected to cover an area of approximately 7,800km², contributing to Canada's goal of protecting 30% of its marine areas by 2030.

In 2024, the Gitdisdzu Lugyek's MPA received the prestigious Blue Park Award at the Our Ocean Conference in Greece. It became the first Canadian MPA and first Indigenous-led MPA to achieve this recognition, meeting rigorous international standards of marine conservation.

The Central Coast NMCAR is now in the final stages of establishing its official designation, which will help ensure the protection of its rich waters for Milas's children and for future generations.

Water is life: a Métis perspective

Water in all its forms is sacred to the Métis Nation. When it falls as snow, it blankets the land and allows it to rest before replenishing the rivers, wetlands, and lakes in the spring. The snow and ice are important for trapping, harvesting, fishing, and accessing land that can't be reached in other parts of the year.

As the snow melts and rain begins, water flows into the ground for plants and medicines. It fills the wetlands and creeks for the fish to spawn and for the frogs and turtles to wake up for spring. The ground and creek water flow down to join the rivers on their way to lakes and oceans. The summer and autumn are important for travel along the rivers and lakes, for fishing, and for homes to the birds and plants that are important to the Métis way of life.

Water is life, it runs through all life, connecting the air to the land. Water flows through all the SDGs. It's important to recognize women's sacred relationship to water and their leadership role in caring for the water. Water is critically important for health, industry and economic development, key for sustainability and adapting to climate change. It is a human right and connects all people, regardless of borders.

The Métis citizens who live with the land and the water are among the first to notice changes, such as impacts by invasive species, changes in fish, plant and amphibian populations, the impacts of pollution from chemicals, plastics, pharmaceuticals, and fertilizers, and the changes in water levels and flows.

The Métis Nation protects the water by monitoring water quality, fish health, and invasive species. The Nation engages in water-related policy at the watershed, provincial, national, and international levels. The Métis Nation is engaged in the creation of the Canada Water Agency and the modernization of the *Canada Water Act*. The Métis National Council makes sure that water and the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* are embedded in international conventions by participating in the *Convention of Biological Diversity*, the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*, Ramsar, the UN Water Conference, the SDGs, and in negotiations for a new international instrument to address plastic pollution.

To the Métis Nation, water is life: if you take care of the water, everything else will look after itself. Whether it's the clouds and rain, the snow and ice, the wetlands, rivers and lakes, or the oceans, we

all need to take care of the water. Not as a resource, not as something that we just use and forget about, but as a relation, as an ancestor, as life itself.

Quebec's Sustainable Development Strategy and the Quebec Water Strategy

The Government of Quebec's Sustainable Development Strategy aims to integrate sustainable development principles into all mechanisms of government intervention, such as laws, public policies and programs, so that they all contribute to the transition to a more prosperous, green and responsible Quebec. The Strategy is in line with agreements reached between the Government of Quebec, First Nations and Inuit and is in compliance with the Government of Quebec's obligations regarding Indigenous affairs. It constitutes the Government of Quebec's formal response to the *United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

Accountability for the Strategy is governed by law, and provided through regular progress reports on the actions carried out by ministries and organizations to achieve the objectives. The obligation to report on progress has recently been extended to all ministries and public organizations.

The Strategy builds on the implementation of the 2030 Nature Plan, the National Water Plan, the Blue Fund and other initiatives, which represent major contributions to government policy on sustainable development.

The 2030 Nature Plan is the framework policy for biodiversity conservation in Quebec. It aims to achieve most of the targets of the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*, adopted at the 15th Conference of Parties to the *United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity* in December 2022. Aligned with international ambitions, the Nature Plan includes strategic objectives covering a wide range of areas, such as protected areas, ecosystem restoration, the protection of threatened or vulnerable species, the fight against invasive alien species, the sustainable use of biological resources and the consideration of biodiversity issues in economic activities.

The National Water Plan, which is an integral part of the Quebec Water Strategy, aims to support the implementation of measures to protect, restore, enhance and manage water resources. The National Water Plan is financed by the Blue Fund, which, in turn, is financed in part by water use charges. This ensures adequate and reliable funding for the National Water Plan. The measures supported by this funding contribute to the sustainable, equitable and efficient use of water resources and to better conservation of aquatic ecosystems.

The recently announced expansion of the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park by the governments of Quebec and Canada is just one of the latest achievements under the Quebec Water Strategy. Other achievements include an increase in water withdrawals, better regulation of pesticides and greater public awareness of water-related issues.

Protecting oceans through youth innovation

Growing up in India, Praneet Arora saw first-hand the devastating impact of plastic pollution on local waterways and communities. When he moved to Canada at the age of 8, he became hopeful that a cleaner, more sustainable future was achievable.

At 15, Praneet joined the [Youth to Sea program](#) by Ocean Wise, a youth-focused initiative empowering participants to protect and conserve the world's oceans. During the program, Praneet learned about the impact of plastic debris on marine ecosystems and discovered a Dutch initiative called [Precious Plastic](#). The idea of turning trash into repurposed treasure captured his imagination. With a grant from Ocean Wise, he developed a prototype for a plastic shredder that could break down collected waste into reusable granules.

Though the project faced early challenges, including time constraints, Praneet didn't give up.

During his gap year from 2023 to 2024, he revived the initiative with renewed focus. "We are currently working to fund our first extruder, injector machine, and compression oven, allowing us to build fully circular economies in developing countries," he explains. These recycling hubs, designed to fit inside shipping containers, aim to transform waste collection in coastal regions.

Praneet envisions these hubs as a way to improve both the environment and livelihoods. Each year, 2,000 garbage trucks worth of plastic enters the world's oceans, rivers, and lakes, disrupting ecosystems and threatening the livelihood of millions.³⁷ "We want to take coastal regions with high concentrations of plastic and offer compensation for collection, turning ragpicking into an organized venture, cutting out the middlemen, and bettering the livelihood of locals, all while improving life below water," he says.

Now a student at Minerva University, Praneet is expanding the project further through partnerships with Minerva's Sustainability Collective and Ocean Wise. His goal is to bring the initiative to other nations within the next 5 years.

What began as a high school project has now grown into a global initiative, showing the great power youth-led innovation has in driving sustainable change. Praneet's solution to ocean pollution (SDG 14) also helps to address decent work opportunities (SDG 8). He shows how just one action can create a wave of impact to better lives and protect the planet.

³⁷ UN Environment Programme, [Plastic Pollution](#).

SDG 17

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



SDG 17 Policy context

Canadians know we are stronger when we stand united. SDG 17 is about building partnerships to achieve shared goals. By making meaningful connections and taking real action together, we can build a more sustainable and inclusive future where no one is left behind.

Advancing sustainable development through local partnerships

The [SDG Funding Program](#) raises awareness, supports new and existing partnerships, and funds projects that advance the SDGs. Through the program, various domestic partners receive funding to support their work, including not-for-profit organizations, provinces and territories, municipalities, academia, the private sector, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, equity-deserving groups, and individuals in vulnerable situations. It also includes funding for the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council to ensure Indigenous voices, views, and traditional knowledge are included in Canada's work to advance the SDGs. In 2018, a total of \$59.8 million over 13 years was allocated to the SDG Funding Program, which means there is approximately \$4.6 million in annual funding.

To date, the Government of Canada has funded more than 160 projects nationwide. In 2023, 14 projects supported actions to address discrimination, include Indigenous perspectives, and promote sustainable city planning, housing, inclusive education, and youth and community engagement. In 2024, 30 new projects focused on key themes like raising awareness of the SDGs, climate action,



community building, youth engagement, and Indigenous reconciliation. For example, [Cuso International](#) is leading a project to increase SDG awareness and engagement among Inuit youth in the North. Through community dialogue, highlighting the role of land guardians in supporting the SDGs, and promoting broader awareness, this project supports Indigenous youth's contributions to the 2030 Agenda.

Global and national engagement and partnership

Over the past year, the federal government engaged stakeholders and partners to share information about the SDGs, build strong networks, and foster valuable connections. Canada also participated in key events like [Together | Ensemble](#), the national conference dedicated to tracking progress on the 17 SDGs, which brought together 175 delegates in-person and 600 delegates online.

On the international stage, Canada has been at the forefront of financing for development discussions at the UN over the past decade. Since 2016, Canada and Jamaica have been actively engaged as co-chairs of the UN Group of Friends of SDG Financing, a valued platform for timely discussions, including a dialogue between heads of multilateral development banks and UN Member States on the margins of the UN General Assembly High-Level Week in September 2024. More recently, fostering greater collaboration between the UN and international financial institutions was a key priority under Canada's Presidency of the UN Economic and Social Council, including a visit of the ECOSOC Bureau and 13 UN Member States to Washington, D.C., to engage directly with the Executive Boards of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund. Canada also participated in the 2024 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, engaging in discussions on the 2030 Agenda and SDGs with UN agencies and other countries and hosting an official side event on the care economy.

Canada is building partnerships to enhance gender equality globally, recognizing that sustainable development is unattainable without addressing the systemic barriers faced by women and girls. By focusing on partnerships in areas such as health, education, and economic opportunities, Canada seeks to ensure that women and girls are at the centre of its international assistance efforts, promoting their rights and enhancing their roles as agents of change in their communities.

One example of such partnership is the [Equality Fund](#), a consortium of Canadian and international organizations deeply rooted in and connected to women's organizations and movements. These organizations combined their experience to create the first global platform where partners can pool resources to create opportunities to close gender gaps and eliminate barriers to gender equality.

In addition, in 2024 Canada served as co-chair of the Alliance for Feminist Movements, seeking to increase funding and support for feminist movements globally through multi-stakeholder engagement.

SDG 17 Statistical analysis

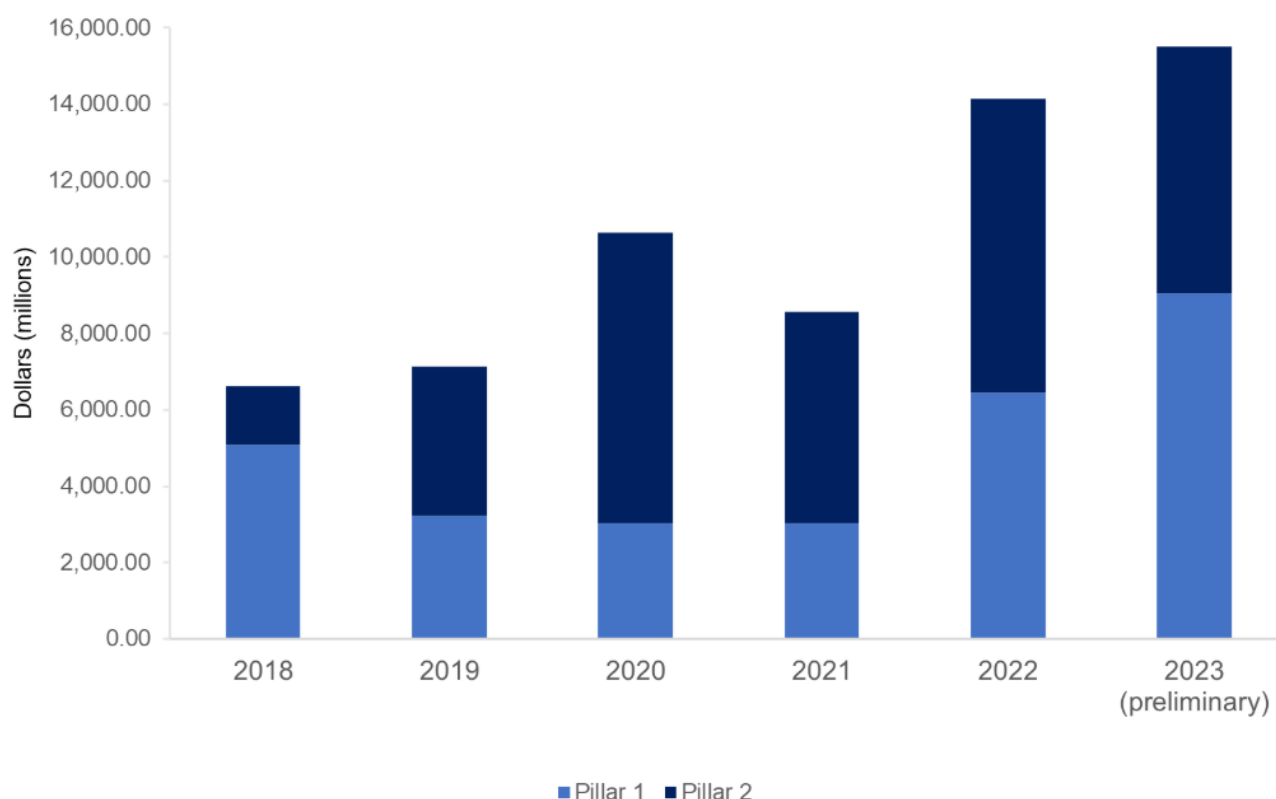


Domestic Indicator 17.2.1: Total official support for sustainable development

Measuring Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) is key to monitor flows of resources in support of sustainable development to developing countries. More specifically, TOSSD measures monetary flows directly contributing to advancing at least one SDG target, while not incurring detrimental effects on others. It includes flows from official sources as well as private resources mobilized through official means.

Preliminary data shows that Canada's TOSSD totalled \$15.514 billion in 2023, up from \$14.143 billion in 2022 (Figure 10). Up substantially from \$6.627 billion in 2018, when the TOSSD measurement became available, it demonstrates progress that is on track to meet the ambition that Canada fosters collaboration and partnerships to advance the SDGs.

Figure 10: Domestic Indicator 17.2.1: Total official support for sustainable development, by type of disbursements, Canada.



Source: Global Affairs Canada

Official support for sustainable development consists of 2 types of resource flows which are classified into 2 pillars. Pillar I, which accounts for bilateral cross-border flows to TOSSD eligible countries, totalled \$9.055 billion in 2023 accounting for 58 % of Canada's TOSSD. Totalling \$6.460 billion in 2023 and accounting for the remainder of Canada's TOSSD, Pillar II measures global and regional expenditures for international public goods. These funds are allocated to multilateral providers such as UN agencies, which are then allocated to developing countries in support of global efforts.

Among regions, support to Europe accounts for the largest share of Canada's total official support for sustainable development. Funds directed to Europe totalled almost \$2.891 billion in 2023, representing a small decline from \$3.045 billion in 2022. Accounting for the largest share for the second consecutive year, these funds are a result of support allocated to Ukraine to aid with its urgent needs and support its economic stability.

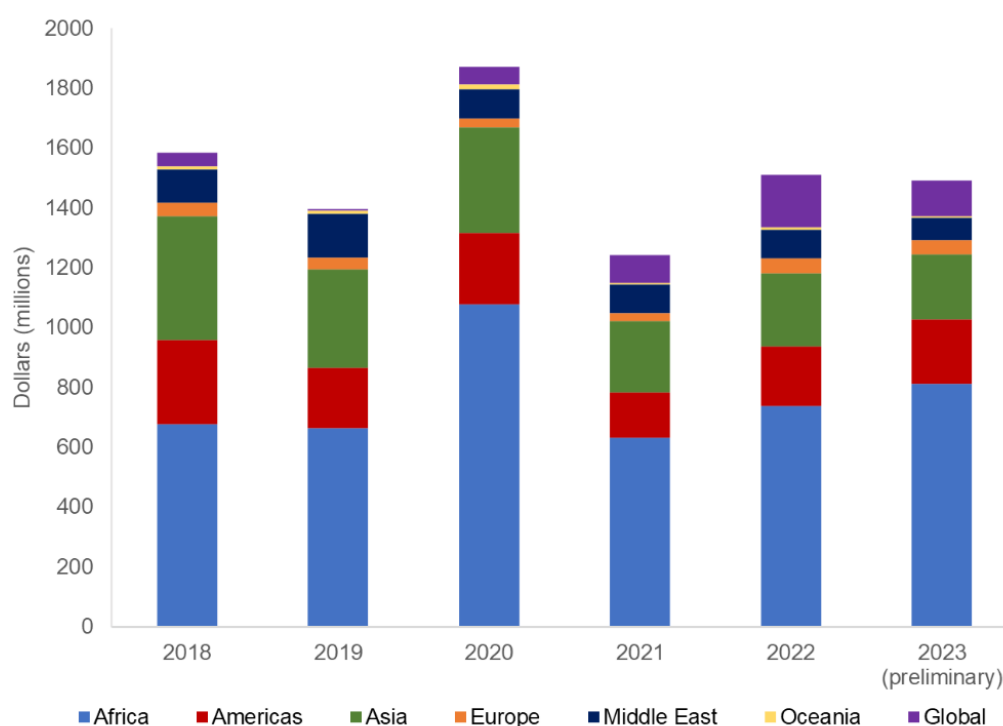
Meanwhile, accounting for the second-largest recipient (15%), TOSSD to Africa totalled approximately \$2.260 billion in 2023, marking the second consecutive yearly decline from a high of \$2.765 billion in 2021. Support allocated to Africa grew substantially in 2021 as Canada dedicated additional funds to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic through improved availability of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics to countries in need, which has since wound down.



Global Indicator 17.9.1: Dollar value of financial and technical assistance (including through North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation committed to developing countries)

Indicator 17.9.1 measures the dollar value of financial and technical assistance disbursed to developing countries for capacity building and national planning. Preliminary data shows that Canada's disbursements to developing countries totaled \$1.493 billion in 2023, a decline from \$1.511 billion in 2022 (Figure 11). Decreasing from \$1.583 billion in 2018 when measurement began to \$1.493 billion in 2023, progress on this indicator has shown to be deteriorating toward the global target of enhancing international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans.

Figure 11: Global Indicator 17.9.1: Dollar value of financial and technical assistance distributed to developing countries, Canada



Source: Global Affairs Canada

Among regions, Africa remained the largest recipient, accounting for more than half (54%) of Canada's disbursements for financial and technical assistance to developing countries. While Africa persistently accounted for the largest share, its proportion varied through the years, from a low of 43% in 2018 to a high of 58% in 2020. The Americas and Asia each accounted for just under 15% of Canada's disbursements to support financial and technical assistance in developing countries to implement the SDGs.

Bangladesh was the largest recipient of bilateral support from Canada in 2023 where a total of \$73 million was disbursed; however, this was a decline from \$81 million in 2022. Totalling \$12.5 million in 2023, the Education for Refugees and Host Community project accounted for the largest share of disbursements toward Bangladesh. A part of a multi-year effort, this project seeks to strengthen the education system and infrastructure to help reach communities impacted by the refugee influx and pandemic.

Ukraine accounted for the second-largest recipient of Canada's bilateral support for capacity building and national planning. Canada disbursed a total of \$40.9 million to Ukraine in 2023, as part of continued capacity-building efforts in the country.

SDG 17 Feature stories

Canada and the Global Partnership Fund

Canada's commitment to advancing the SDGs is grounded in its support for inclusive, collaborative partnerships that drive global progress. For example, this approach is reflected in its continued investment in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), a multi-stakeholder initiative that brings together governments, civil society, international organizations, and the private sector to strengthen education systems in low- and middle-income countries. As a donor, Canada contributes to the GPE's mission of expanding access to quality education, particularly for marginalized children. Through its latest pledge of \$300 million for the 2021 to 2025 period, Canada—along with other donors—has helped the GPE provide foundational skills that are essential for meaningful employment.

More specifically, between 2001 and 2024, thanks to stakeholder funding, including Canada's pledge, the GPE reached 253 million students through grant activities, distributed 169 million textbooks, trained more than 1.9 million teachers and built and renovated 36,000 classrooms. The GPE's innovative financing mechanisms leveraged an additional US\$3.845 billion in co-financing during that time, amplifying the impact of donor contributions such as Canada's.

From supporting inclusive education projects for children with disabilities in Chad to training more than 12,500 teachers, school quality assurance officers and district officers in Sierra Leone to effectively delivering and facilitating numeracy lessons to improving access to quality education through the construction of classrooms in South Sudan, Canada's institutional support to the GPE demonstrates the power of partnerships to achieve meaningful results.

Strengthening collaboration at the Métis National Council's Global Summit

In February 2024, the Métis National Council (MNC) hosted an inaugural Global Summit to provide a platform to explore the connections between Indigenous Peoples and the UN 2030 Agenda and SDGs. In a hope to foster a deeper understanding of these intersections, challenges, and potential solutions, the Global Summit served as a gathering point for Métis Governments and citizens, alongside government officials, diplomats, and Indigenous Peoples globally.

The collective aim of the Summit was to ensure that sustainable development initiatives are not only meaningful but also inclusive, leaving no one behind. On an international scale, global development initiatives have oftentimes overlooked self-determination, and the rights affirmed in the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*.

The Summit brought together Métis citizens from across the Homeland, and Indigenous representatives from 6 of the 7 UN Indigenous socio-cultural regions to host a dialogue on how the

SDGs are being actioned in each of their regions. One participant wrote that "having representatives from other Indigenous Nations was really valuable."

The Summit was open to the public to ensure that a broad range of stakeholders and rightsholders could participate meaningfully in the important knowledge sharing sessions. Participants showed great interest in learning more about Métis-led initiatives and localization of the SDGs at a community level.

The biggest result of the MNC Global Summit was strengthened collaboration. A participant shared "I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to sit with, listen to, and connect with people sharing Métis-specific insights, experiences, and recommendations."

The Summit offered a space for increased co-operation between international bodies, governments, non-governmental organizations, and Indigenous Peoples to share solutions and look toward co-developing policies and programs that reflect Indigenous aspirations and values. It created the space for partnerships, fostering mutual understanding and shared responsibility for achieving the SDGs.

In the future, forums such as this offer the opportunity for enhanced inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in global development through integration of self-determination principles, as affirmed by UNDRIP, into the 2030 Agenda. Platforms like the MNC Global Summit aim to drive innovation, advocacy, and accountability, while helping to shape a sustainable and inclusive future.

Kitchener's SDG Idea Factory

Located in the heart of downtown Kitchener, Ontario, the [SDG Idea Factory](#) is a first-of-its-kind entrepreneurship hub and coworking facility focused on advancing the SDGs. The space brings together multiple organizations that serve social entrepreneurs.

Launched in spring 2023, the SDG Idea Factory boasts 17 working offices, 24 hot desks, bookable meeting rooms, a training room, an event space, communal meeting areas, and a podcast studio. Managed by the Waterloo Region Small Business Centre, the mission is to support entrepreneurs in addressing global challenges and provide a space where local leaders, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders can collaborate and innovate.

For the past year, the SDG Idea Factory has been home to organizations that share a commitment to addressing the SDGs through their work, such as LiftOff, Waterloo Region Community Foundation, The Community Company, the ForUsGirls Foundation, Oktoberfest, Bring On The Sunshine, Mot Mot Mind and the Waterloo Region Small Business Centre.

Upon opening, the SDG Idea Factory embarked on an SDG Talks series aimed at bringing greater awareness of the goals. The "Business as a Force for Good" series engaged hundreds of community members and entrepreneurs alike, bringing the goals to a local level. Sponsored in part by Waterloo Region Community Foundations, the series hosted 17 talks over 17 months with 3 ecofriendly vendor

markets, creating networking and selling opportunities for local business owners. The current series, "Community of Difference Makers" was launched in November 2024 and delves deeper into the stories of regional changemakers and explores the intersectionality of the goals.

The SDG Idea Factory has launched 2 new programs for aspiring entrepreneurs. [Early Sparks](#) is a 5-week program that helps participants turn their ideas into businesses. The Global Goals Edition includes an introduction to the UN SDGs, guidance on how to build a sustainable business and guest speakers with the SDGs at the heart of their businesses.

Championed by Kitchener Mayor and Co-President of United Cities and Local Governments, Berry Vrbanovic, the SDG Idea Factory is the only North American Local4Action hub, placing localization at the centre of global sustainable development.

The building is a symbol of partnership and collaboration, and a testament to SDG 17—it demonstrates how public, private and multi-stakeholder organizations come together at a local level, using community-based economic development approaches.

By working together, tenants share knowledge and expertise, and identify and initiate their own solutions to economic, social and environmental issues, leading to more efficient and effective business and operational processes.

Using the SDGs to design and construct a campus that serves local needs

When Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) began the process of building its newest campus, they wanted to ensure it would not only serve as an educational institution, but also contribute to the revitalization of Sydney, Nova Scotia. By incorporating the SDGs into the design and construction process, they worked to address local social, economic, and environmental challenges.

The design of the Sydney Waterfront Campus included extensive discussions and consultations with a diverse range of community groups. This collaborative approach ensured that the development of the campus aligned with social, cultural, and environmental goals. During construction, 80% of the workforce consisted of residents, including NSCC students who gained valuable experience through part-time jobs or work placements related to their studies. Furthermore, 10% of the workforce was dedicated to women and equity-deserving groups, a metric which was reported on monthly and often exceeded.

Designed to foster social and economic growth, the campus offers more than just conventional classrooms and labs. It features interactive spaces such as a presentation theatre, child care centre, cultural spaces, and a wellness centre. These facilities encourage collaboration and engagement, enriching the experiences of students and residents. By incorporating diverse spaces, the intent was to create an environment that encourages learning, cultural exchange, and community development.

The campus serves as a model for how post-secondary institutions can positively impact their communities. The integration of diverse facilities encourages collaboration and engagement, creating a hub for learning and cultural exchange that benefits both students and the broader community in Sydney.

Meaningful collaboration takes time but leads to more sustainable and impactful outcomes. By investing in community relationships, it is possible to create educational spaces that truly reflect and serve the needs of the local population.

Young leaders working in partnership to address food insecurity

In South Vancouver, food security and access to healthy food are very important. To respond, the Newcomer Leadership Program at the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House undertook a project in partnership with Equitas, a human rights education organization. The partnership aimed to empower young leaders to address food insecurity while fostering community well-being.

Through interactive human rights education activities led by Equitas, the youth participants identified the importance of access to clean water, nutritious food, and a healthy environment. They decided to focus their project on ensuring families in their community had access to healthy meals and education about food waste reduction.

To make the most of their diverse skill sets, the youth were divided into 3 teams:

1. meal preparation team: This group developed recipes, created a budget, purchased ingredients, and prepared meals
2. digital literacy team: This team designed infographics about reducing food waste and repurposing food scraps. The designs were transferred onto tote bags and aprons, which were distributed alongside meals
3. media and awareness team: This group produced a video documenting the project, highlighting the role of youth leadership in fostering community inclusion, addressing food insecurity, and promoting the SDGs at the community level

Working together, the youth turned a shared vision into action. With guidance and a small grant from Equitas, they distributed more than 50 nutritious meals to families in need alongside tote bags and aprons, bringing tangible support to families. Participants also developed essential leadership, teamwork, and digital literacy skills, while gaining a deeper understanding of their rights and responsibility within their community.

The video produced by the Media and Awareness Team reached over 200 people online, spreading awareness about the importance of sustainable practices and the power of youth-led initiatives. The collaboration demonstrated the power of partnerships in addressing systemic challenges, supporting SDG 17, and fostering more inclusive communities.

Way forward

Throughout 2024, meaningful steps were taken in Canada to strengthen progress of the SDGs. Important work took place—from actions to address gender-based violence, to securing more opportunities for youth and Indigenous Peoples in the labour market, to collaboration to advance ocean planning and conservation activities.

However, 2024 was also filled with challenges for people in Canada and around the world. Progress on the SDGs was threatened by high living costs, food insecurity, declining mental well-being, the overdose crisis, discrimination, geopolitical conflict, threats to gender equality globally, and climate change. In the face of these difficulties, the SDGs remain a roadmap toward a future that is fairer, more sustainable, and peaceful.

The importance of partnership is one of the underlying premises of the 2030 Agenda. In 2024, Canadians collaborated with federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments, communities, national networks, and international organizations to help people improve their lives and communities. Canadians provided opportunities for sustainable and inclusive work, supported people in need in their communities, and advocated to ensure no one is left behind both at home and internationally.

Good work is being undertaken to advance the SDGs, but clearly more needs to be done to achieve the objectives set out in [*Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy*](#).

The challenges before us are big, and in the face of them it is important to stay focused on the roadmap together. Areas for action include supporting Canadians' mental health; preventing gender-based violence; protecting key fish stocks; protecting workers in Canada's agri-food industry; and addressing the overdose crisis. It is only through collaboration that we can create a country and world where people enjoy good health and well-being, gender equality, decent work, and healthy oceans.