



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

What to look for in Budget 2019



**Action Canada
for Sexual Health & Rights**



Being a leader on women's rights means investing in sexual and reproductive rights globally

WE WANT BUDGET 2019 TO ANNOUNCE: INCREASED SUPPORT FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

In response to backlashes against women's rights in the U.S. and around the world, Canada has boldly stepped up through its development assistance. But Canada's funding for the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of women and girls is set to end in less than a year and current global investments for are still failing to meet the needs of women and girls.

- **Every single day, some 830 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.¹**
- **61% of maternal deaths occur in fragile states affected by conflict and natural disaster.²**
- **Each year, 200 million women in developing countries want to prevent pregnancy but do not have access to modern contraception.³**

Now more than ever, the global community needs Canada to scale up leadership on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Stigma around sex and reproduction has led to SRHR being deprioritized. People all over the world can't access the life saving services they need to realize their rights. Greater investment is needed to safeguard the gains that have been made in recent years and to help reach the most marginalized women, girls and adolescents. As a progressive and credible leader, Canada can and must do more.

An investment of \$500 million a year over 10 years (starting in 2020) in the neglected areas of SRHR is a proven cost-effective investment that would prevent backsliding on these critical gender equality issues and solidly position Canada as a women's rights champion. This investment aligns with the Canadian global health sector's broader vision of a comprehensive approach to Canada's post-2020 leadership, which calls for \$1.4 billion for global health.⁴

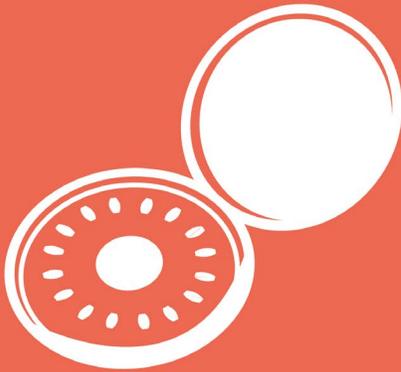
¹ "Maternal Mortality". World Health Organization. 16 Feb 2018. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>

² "Maternal mortality in humanitarian crises and in fragile settings". Nov 2015. <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/maternal-mortality-humanitarian-crisis-and-fragile-settings>

³ "Family Planning/Contraception". World Health Organization. 8 Feb 2018. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/family-planning-contraception>

⁴ The Thrive Agenda is a collective vision for the future of Canadian leadership in women's, adolescent and child health and rights around the world, created and endorsed by over 100 of Canada's leading organizations in global health. Together they are calling for a \$1.4 billion renewed commitment to global health beyond 2020, with \$500M ringfenced for the neglected areas of SRHR.





The right to health means comprehensive drug coverage

WE WANT BUDGET 2019 TO ANNOUNCE:

A NATIONAL PHARMACARE STRATEGY

Canada is the only country in the world with universal healthcare and no national pharmacare strategy. No one in Canada should be without the medicines and devices they need because they can't afford them. The ability to manage your fertility, decide if and when to have children, have healthy pregnancies, affirm your gender, and prevent, treat or manage sexually transmitted infections (including HIV) should not depend on income, place of residence or immigration status.

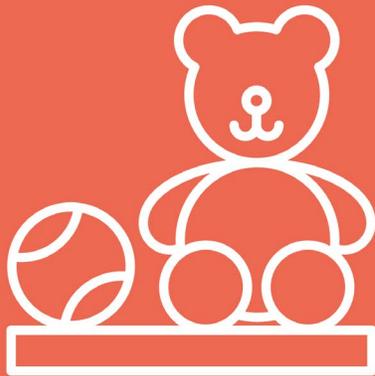
- **Over 6,500 people living with HIV in Canada cannot afford their prescribed medications.**⁵
- **30% of transgender youth report using hormones that come from unprescribed and unsupervised sources, such as friends or the internet.**⁶

Young people are especially at risk when they have to rely on private insurance for vaccines to prevent STIs, antiretroviral medication to prevent or treat HIV infections, and medication to terminate unwanted pregnancies or contraceptive drugs and devices. They often experience barriers from parents and ultimately won't seek the care they need. Only a public, universal, single payer pharmacare strategy will meet human rights standards and fulfil the federal government's obligation to ensure the right to health for all people in Canada. A national pharmacare strategy include all drugs (not just the most commonly prescribed drugs); be universal to ensure that *all* people have full coverage; and be single payer, so that paperwork and red tape doesn't prevent people from receiving healthcare.

⁵ Canadian Treatment Action Council, "Creating a Comprehensive Cascade" 2017. <https://ctac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CTAC-Creating-a-Comprehensive-Cascade-Full-20171127-EN-final.pdf>

⁶ Ibid.





A feminist government invests in childcare

WE WANT BUDGET 2019 TO ANNOUNCE: A NATIONAL CHILDCARE STRATEGY

Childcare is a sexual and reproductive rights issue. Canadian feminists first launched a call for a national child care strategy in 1970. Children born at that time are now in their 50s. Sadly, not much has changed. Too late now for childcare themselves, those advocates and the many that have proceeded them, are hoping their children and grandchildren will benefit from what is proven to be one of the most impactful ways of increasing workforce participation, empowering women, and growing the economy.

Reproductive justice means examining issues such as race, class, culture, and other power structures that support and constrain peoples' ability to make decisions about their lives. This includes the ability to parent children in healthy environments.⁷ Without access to affordable childcare, parents may face constraints when returning to the workforce, which contributes to reduced earnings and creates male-dominated workforces that can perpetuate gender stereotypes and violence.⁸ This often has gender, class, and race implications as women are more often those who exit the workforce to care for children. This can further lead to barriers accessing support services and healthcare more broadly, including sexual and reproductive health care.

⁷ Sister Song: Women of Color for Reproductive Justice. http://sistersong.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=141

⁸ CCPA. 2015. "Time to Grow Up: Family Policies for the Way We Live Now."

https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2015/01/Time_to_Grow_Up.pdf

