




First Steps on the Road to the NAP

Marking a truly historic milestone, Budget 2021 announced initial investments to develop Canada's first National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-based Violence (NAP) and to establish a NAP Secretariat.

At the same time, anti-violence experts and advocates delivered a report to the federal government that provides a ready roadmap for this work – the why, what, and how of a successful NAP.

So now what?

We're ready to help get the NAP on the road! Here are its first steps ...

-  **Ensuring Proper Governance & Accountability**
-  **Harmonizing Responses to MMIWG**
-  **Ensuring a stable VAW/GBV sector**

Ensuring Proper Governance & Accountability

Canada's NAP should follow two key determinants of success* that emerge from research on the experiences of several countries that created NAPs after they were called for at the World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 and World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna 1993:

Independent oversight (see "Establishing Structures" below)
and
Sufficient and ongoing funding

To be successful, Canada's NAP requires sustained and escalating investment through successive federal budgets.

To implement and sustain the NAP's roll out, a range of sources may be considered, including governmental at central, provincial/territorial, and municipal levels.

Legislative measures to secure funding can specify obligatory, annual budgetary appropriations at different administrative levels of government.

Establishing Structures

Canada's NAP is about fundamentally shifting society – attitudes, norms, and narratives. And the type of all-of-government approach it requires to be successful is unprecedented in Canada.

Such a bold, ambitious, intersectional plan will require clear and strong structures established at the outset to:

- develop, implement, guide, evaluate, and champion the 10-year NAP
- support effective collaboration and cooperation across federal, provinces, territories, and municipal governments
- help the 10-year NAP survive election cycles and government mandates
- ensure harmonization with the *2021 National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People*

Structures will require sustainable resourcing, starting from the initial investment of \$14 million announced in Budget 2021 for developing and implementing the NAP.

Structures will need to involve stakeholders from the federal, provincial and territorial governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), survivors, and other experts.

We propose two key structures to support a 10-year NAP with substantial fiscal commitment to provide guidance and accountability within and outside of government. Together, these two bodies will be responsible for staging Canada's NAP.

1) The NAP Secretariat

A dedicated, resourced bureaucratic function housed within WAGE.

Timeline: Terms of reference and composition for NAP Secretariat by Fall 2021

2) Independent Oversight Body of Expert (IOBE)

All evidence points to the need for independent oversight for the NAP to be successful.

Following global practice, we regard VAW and GBV in Canada as both human rights and public health crisis of pandemic proportions. As such, it requires independent leadership through the type of mechanism with standing, advisory capacity, and credibility that was mobilized for Canada's COVID-19 response.

We propose establishing an arm's length Independent Oversight Body of Experts (IOBE) - free from political interference - that will guide, oversee, and monitor the NAP's progress.

Timeline: Terms of reference and composition of IOBE by Fall 2021

Harmonizing Responses to MMIWG

Disgraceful rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in Canada have drawn the condemnation of international and domestic human rights bodies.

From the start of its journey, strategies, policies, and plans for the NAP must be harmonized with the separate, ongoing efforts to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, including the related Action Plan released June 3. Voices and experiences of Indigenous women and gender-diverse people must be centred in all process to address VAW/GBV.

Ensuring a Stable VAW/GBV Sector

Funding for the VAW/GBV sector should recognize that frontline services provide wrap-around support that often goes beyond addressing violence. Such essential, lifesaving activities include prevention, advocacy, and awareness-raising which are seldom included in operational funding agreements.

Ensuring a stable VAW/GBV sector means ensuring continued stabilization of supports for survivors and their families not covered elsewhere in the budget. It also means ongoing support for the work this sector does every day to the very systems that perpetuate conditions for violence.

From the start of its journey, the NAP must be guided by expertise from a stable, resourced VAW/GBV sector. This stabilization must extend well beyond the two years of funding commitment identified in Budget 2021.

**We're ready to get
the NAP on the road!**

Are you?

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