



Fund for Innovation
and Transformation

Fonds pour l'innovation
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For immediate release

Over \$3 Million Dollars Awarded to Innovative Development Solutions Advancing Gender Equality: Third Intake Represents 13 Projects in 12 Countries

Winnipeg, MB – Thirteen small and medium organizations (SMOs) from across Canada have been selected for funding by the Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT) to test innovative solutions that will improve the lives of women and girls in the Global South.

The successful organizations will be awarded between \$150,000 - \$250,000 to test their ideas in twelve different countries across Africa and Latin America.

The selected innovations address challenges related to education, social justice & human rights, agriculture among others, all with a focus on gender equality. Examples include professional learning communities for women teachers in The Gambia, Improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for health care facilities and women's health in Malawi, mobile legal clinics for women in Honduras and empowering women and adolescent girls with Albinism in rural regions of Sierra Leone, among others. Each idea will be tested over 6-15 months, giving organizations an opportunity to gather evidence, adapt and improve.

“We are now halfway through our program and have 31 organizations testing innovative solutions in 23 different countries throughout the Global South,” said Christina MacIsaac, Director of Innovation for FIT. “As testing results start to trickle in, we will share their learnings publicly. This approach has great potential to impact work in the international development sector and more importantly have a significant impact on the lives of women, girls and vulnerable communities.”

The funding is part of a unique national initiative, the Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT), that supports ideas at the testing phase. Launched in May 2019, FIT funds Canadian small and medium-sized organizations from different sectors to test new or improved practices, policies and approaches with local partners around the world. The fund also provides a platform for selected organizations to share their ideas and challenges with each other and eventually others in the innovation and international development sectors. The 5-year, \$16.5 M program is an initiative of the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils, funded by Global Affairs Canada and managed by the Manitoba Council





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“We know that Small and Medium organizations are very good at adapting and innovating, and the Fund for Innovation and Transformation allows them the opportunity to test their innovative solution to advance gender equality and provides them with evidence to prove it,” said Janice Hamilton, Executive Director of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation. “We appreciate the leadership of Global Affairs Canada and the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation that this innovation fund can be piloted within the Canadian international development community.”

FIT's 4th Intake is now closed, and decisions will be announced early in 2022. The 5th Intake will be launched in September 2021. FIT will be prioritizing shorter term and lower funding requests in Intakes 4 and 5. Find more information on how to apply at <https://fit-fit.ca/process/>.

For more information about the third round of funding recipients, please see Backgrounder attached.

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About the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation:

The Inter-Council Network is a coalition of the eight Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation. The independent Councils are committed to global sustainable development, social justice and social change. They are rooted in communities across Canada and represent nearly 350 diverse civil society organizations from across Canada. Council membership varies from locally based cultural community civil society organizations to highly recognizable international organizations.



About the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC):

MCIC is a coalition of Manitoba-based organizations involved in international development. Its mission is to support, connect and amplify the work of its members and partners, while directly engaging and collaborating with Manitobans for global sustainability. MCIC encourages dialogue on global issues and helps empower Manitobans to become active global citizens — individuals who understand that their actions here make a difference around the world. MCIC is also responsible for distributing Government of Manitoba and Government of Canada funds designated for international development and humanitarian projects.



About Global Affairs Canada: Global Affairs Canada manages Canada's diplomatic relations, provides consular services to Canadians, promotes the country's international trade, and leads Canada's international development and humanitarian assistance. FIT is a program undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada.





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BACKGROUND

FIT Funding Announcement Intake 3:

FIT has selected 13 Canadian small and medium-sized organizations to receive funding in the program's third intake. Each SMO will receive up to \$250,000 to test their innovative solutions in partnership with local organizations over a 6-15 month period.

1. L'AMIE (Quebec)

Project: **Bakobwa Byuka (Wake up Girls)**

Testing Country: **Rwanda**

Testing period: **14 months**

Amount: **\$235,000**



L'AMIE will be testing an innovative solution which aims to foster more equitable access for young girls who have been victims of gender-based violence (GBV) to non-traditional professional training, by providing a safe and empowering environment. To achieve this, they will receive financial support for the training, as well as for their basic needs (child support, health care). They will be accompanied by women mentors who work in the same areas and they will receive psychosocial support for the prevention of GBV, including training on sexual and reproductive health. After their training, the girls will be set up in cooperatives. Activities will also be organized with targeted groups (employers, male counterparts) to raise awareness in the community about the participation of girls in non-traditional training and jobs.

More info about **L'AMIE**: <https://www.amie.ca>

2. Canadian Humanitarian (Alberta)

Project: **Holistic Gender-Based Violence Prevention & Response**

Testing Country: **Guatemala**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$244,702**



Canadian Humanitarian, and its local Guatemalan partner, Asociación SERniña/REALgirl, will test the impact and effectiveness of a holistic, family-centered, gender equity focused violence prevention and response program in Guatemala, as a way of reducing rates of sexual and domestic violence in Guatemala and improving recovery for survivors of violence. Their innovative, 'Holistic 3-Pronged Approach' includes: Family Trauma Healing and Empowerment Sessions, Community Violence Prevention Education and Comprehensive Violence Response Programs for Victims of Abuse. Key innovations of the H3P Approach include incorporating Mayan restorative justice methodologies, offering a healing-focused approach to violence prevention and response, and engaging whole families and boys and men throughout the process.

More info about **Canadian Humanitarian**: <https://www.realhumanitarian.ca>

3. Canadian Teachers' Federation (Ontario)

Project: **Mobile technology: Mentoring and professional learning communities for women teachers in The Gambia**

Testing Country: **The Gambia**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$243,000**



The Canadian Teachers' Federation will work in partnership with The Gambia Teachers' Union to test a technological solution that aims to equip and empower women teachers in The Gambia in order to retain them in the teaching profession. Selected women teachers will receive mobile phones, tools which will enable mentorship relationships and facilitate learning through virtual professional learning communities. This solution would also ensure that more girls and young women in school have teachers (and therefore role models) who are women.

More info about **The Canadian Teachers' Federation**: <https://www.ctf-fce.ca>

4. Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST) (Alberta)

Project: **Creating Safe Spaces for Learning: My Body, My Health, and My Future (M3 virtual platform)**

Testing Country: **Honduras**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$250,000**



The Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST) and Pure Water for the World Honduras will be testing an interactive learning platform to increase knowledge, shift attitudes and change behaviours around menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) in Trojes, Honduras. By delivering MHH programming that is not confined to traditional classroom settings, this virtual platform will put information and tools about MHH directly in the hands of students and other key community members in ways that are engaging and fun, making an otherwise uncomfortable topic accessible.

More info about **CAWST**: <https://www.cawst.org>

5. Dalhousie University / Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security (Nova Scotia)

Project: **Building Bridges for Prevention: Women and Security Actors Prevent Child Recruitment and Use in South Sudan**

Country: **South Sudan**

Testing period: **11 months**

Amount: **\$249,045**



The Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security at Dalhousie University will be testing a comprehensive prevention program to protect children from being recruited and used as soldiers, with a focus on conflict related sexual violence in Juba, Central Equatoria State, South Sudan. The Dallaire Institute will mobilize local police forces and women leaders from civil society organizations to work collectively to prevent the recruitment of children as soldiers and conflict related sexual violence against children. Round tables between community groups and local security actors, as well as gender responsive training for police, will help increase dialogue and

coordination between women and local forces leading to strengthened prevention strategies to protect children vulnerable to recruitment and exploitation.

More info about the **Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security**: <https://dallaireinstitute.org>

6. Lucky Iron Fish Enterprise (Ontario)

Project: **Improving resilience to increase nutritional outcomes for women and children in Benin**

Testing Country: **Benin**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$250,000**



Lucky Iron Fish Enterprise will be testing new digital tools and other innovations like 'talking books' to provide information, and influence behavior and practices to reduce iron deficiency anemia prevalence through their Lucky Iron Fish product. Because of COVID-19, training can no longer be conducted in large group settings or by frontline workers at the household level. The project will promote women's empowerment to reduce women's vulnerabilities due to the pandemic and increase women's decision-making roles in improving household nutrition.

More info about **Lucky Iron Fish Enterprise**: <https://luckyironfish.com>

7. OGOW Health (Alberta)

Project: **Improving maternal, newborn and child health outcomes by using innovative and community-centric approaches**

Testing Country: **Somalia**

Testing period: **13 months**

Amount: **\$239,904**



OGOW Health will test a technological solution designed to improve access to high-quality, affordable care for women, new mothers, and newborns in Somalia. The goal is to support rural and urban health facilities in medical records and health promotion by providing needed information to providers and caregivers to make informed decisions. By offering support to women and girls, OGOW's easy-to-use in the Somali language platform offers a personalized immunization schedule for each family member's vaccination needs and provides individualized reminders on when and where to go for services; ultimately improving their standard of care, and further building trust between patients and healthcare systems. OGOW will also test a powerful dashboard designed to help administrators and governments to access real-time, consolidated data on various health indicators, leading to more data-driven planning and decision making aimed at achieving their desired health outcomes.

More info about **OGOW Health**: <https://ogowhealth.com>

8. Royal Roads University (British Columbia)

Project: **Improving WASH for health care facilities and women's health: Testing the STREAMS approach in Malawi**

Testing Country: **Malawi**



Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$240,444**

Royal Roads University and its partner Transform International (Canada) will test an innovative solution to improving water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in health care facilities (HCF) in Malawi, specifically for women since they constitute the majority of the HCF users, often for delivery and postpartum recovery. This project will focus on the STREAMS (systems, training, education, and monitoring support) approach by combining WASH best practices and two circuit riders to implement, support and sustain WASH infrastructure and improved behaviours and practices.

More info about **Royal Roads University**: <https://www.royalroads.ca>

9. Sombrilla International Development Society (Alberta)

Project: **Equal Access to Justice for Women in Honduras**

Testing Country: **Honduras**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$234,500**



Sombrilla International Development Society will be testing the concept of a “mobile legal clinic” offering legal and support services to local women facing gender-based violence in Honduras. This innovation will seek to empower women and girls in their ability to protect their rights, in particular the right to a life free of violence. This will be accomplished by raising awareness and increasing knowledge with community members on gender-based violence and by offering women and girls improved opportunities to engage with the legal system. Through this innovation, women who are victims of gender violence will have effective mechanisms for access to legal and psychological assistance in order to guarantee their physical and emotional integrity, within a framework of justice and equity.

More info about **Sombrilla International Development Society**: <https://sombrilla.ca>

10. University of the Fraser Valley (British Columbia)

Project: **'Leaving No One Behind': Empowering Persons with Albinism, particularly Women and Adolescent Girls in Rural Regions of Sierra Leone**

Testing Country: **Sierra Leone**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$242,910**



The University of the Fraser Valley & Albinism Royal Foundation will work on a project to empower women and girls with albinism, as well as women with children with albinism in Sierra Leone. These women and girls, who experience marginalization, and stigmatization, will be empowered to be leaders, role models, and advocates for the rights of persons with albinism and gender equality. The project focuses on building women's and girls' skills in advocacy and leadership, secure livelihoods, and financial literacy. The experiences of these women and their families will also be captured through the use of participatory tools and approaches such as photovoice and digital storytelling. Telling their own stories (including successes and challenges), and sharing them with policymakers, government officials, community leaders, law enforcement bodies, schools, health workers, business leaders, and other NGOs and donors can build a better and a more equitable future for all persons with albinism.

More info about the **University of the Fraser Valley**: <https://www.ufv.ca>

11. Wapikoni Mobile (Quebec)

Project: **Human rights and Indigenous Women Empowerment through Audiovisual Activities in Brazil**

Testing Country: **Brazil**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$247,280**



The Wapikoni Mobile Corporation will test the expansion and adaptation of the “Learn by Creating” methodology to support the strengthening of Indigenous communities in Brazil, and of Indigenous women in particular, in their struggle to defend their rights and their territory. The innovative solution will be tested with a group of young women in Bahia and a mixed group in the Mato Grosso.

More info about **Wapikoni Mobile Corporation**: <http://www.wapikoni.ca>

12. Waterlution – A Water Learning Experience (Ontario)

Project: **Adolescent Girl Empowerment through Capacity Building and Water Innovation in Northern Mozambique**

Testing Country: **Mozambique**

Testing period: **8 months**

Amount: **\$150,000**



Waterlution and local partner Girl Move Academy will be testing to see how capacity building and water innovation workshops will embolden and empower adolescent girls to design permaculture solutions that address sanitation and water challenges in local school settings in Mozambique, while increasing dignity, safety and attendance of students. Several training methods will be tested in small groups to support knowledge expansion on current water system at the schools, knowledge transfer, community building and practical hands-on learning rooted in permaculture that brings a systems-thinking approach together aligning WASH with local small-scale agriculture.

More info about **Waterlution**: <https://waterlution.org>

13. World Neighbours Canada Society (British Columbia)

Project: **Empowering rural women in Burkina Faso**

Testing Country: **Burkina Faso**

Testing period: **15 months**

Amount: **\$221,275**



World Neighbours Canada Society will be testing an approach to facilitating an animal-fattening enterprise which focuses on structuring and supporting the transition to more equitable labour roles and power relations in households, particularly for women but also crucially for men, girls, and boys as they learn from and assist women in a cooperative enterprise. The proposed innovative solution will seek to advance gender equality and empower women by directly addressing patriarchal constraints and by working to improve women’s access to, and control over assets, which can support food security in rural Gourma.

More info about **World Neighbours Canada Society**: <https://worldneighbours.ca>