DIGNITY NETWORK CANADA | LE RÉSEAU DIGNITÉ CANADA

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Dignity Network Canada
2025-2026 Annual Report



Message from the Executive Director & Board Chair

Looking Back at 2025-2026

This past year has been one of significant change and renewed determination for Dignity Network Canada, our partners around the world, and the global movement for the human rights of LGBTIQ+ people.

Across many countries, our communities face growing pressure. Organized backlash, restrictive laws and policies, online hate and disinformation, shrinking civic space, and pressures on international assistance have made the work of human rights movements more difficult and urgent. Yet activists and organizations around the world continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience, creativity, and solidarity.

Here in Canada, the election of a new federal government led by Prime Minister Mark Carney marked an important moment for our work. Dignity Network Canada has been building new relationships with the government and Parliament while making the case for sustained Canadian leadership on LGBTIQ+ human rights globally. At a time when these rights are increasingly contested, Canada's engagement through foreign policy, diplomacy, and international assistance remains critical.

A defining moment of our year was our International Roundtable in Ottawa in June 2026, our largest convening to date. Hundreds of activists, advocates, partners, and allies from across Canada and more than 40 countries came together to share knowledge, strengthen relationships, and consider how our movements can respond to a rapidly changing world. It was a powerful reminder that international solidarity is built through relationships, shared learning, and opportunities to come together across borders.

This was also an important year in Dignity Network Canada's organizational development. The successful conclusion of our Beyond Borders campaign provided a strong foundation for our next stage of growth. We expanded our staff team, adding capacity in operations and finance, program development, campaigning, and research. We also finalized a new communications strategy and launched a new brand and website. These investments are helping us build a stronger, more visible, and sustainable organization better equipped to support our members, strengthen our advocacy, and develop new partnerships.

Looking Ahead

In the year ahead, we will continue working with the federal government, parliamentarians, civil society partners, and our members to make the case for strong and sustained Canadian leadership on LGBTIQ+ human rights. We will build on the relationships and ideas generated through the Ottawa Roundtable 2026 while creating new opportunities for activists in Canada and around the world to connect, collaborate, and advocate together.

We do so at a difficult moment. Across the world new and proposed laws and policies threaten the rights, safety, and freedoms of LGBTIQ+ people and those who defend them. In Türkiye, LGBTIQ+ organizations and activists face an intensifying crackdown and shrinking civic space. Globally, the multilateral human rights system is also under growing pressure, challenging institutions and mechanisms that movements have relied upon for decades.

These developments remind us why international solidarity, and Canadian engagement, matter. But they are not the whole story. Around the world, LGBTIQ+ activists continue to organize, build alliances, defend gains, and imagine more just and inclusive societies. We see that same determination across our growing network in Canada.

We enter the coming year clear-eyed about the challenges ahead, but with determination, hope, and deep gratitude to our members, partners, funders, donors, staff, volunteers, and friends in Canada and around the world. Together, we are contributing to a global movement that continues to stand up for dignity, equality, freedom, and human rights for all.

With gratitude and solidarity,

Doug Kerr
Executive Director

Paula Tenaglia
Board Chair



Mission, Vision, & Principles

MISSION

To build a global movement for the rights and dignity of diverse SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics) communities.

VISION

A world where people of diverse SOGIESC can thrive and be treated with dignity.

Our Principles

Nothing About Us Without Us

People of diverse SOGIESC and marginalized communities should lead their own liberation. LGBTIQ+ organizations must be at the forefront of rights and development work, and broader actors should listen and remove barriers to equality.

Everyone Has a Role to Play

Engaging various societal sectors—including the state, media, and culture — is crucial for change. Collaboration and openness are essential to transcend silos and echo chambers.

We Will Not Be Divided

Freedom and equality are interconnected; unity strengthens the movement. DNC will support the most excluded and build coalitions with feminist, racial, Indigenous, and economic justice groups to combat division.

We Are Accountable to a Global Movement

DNC is rooted in the global pride movement and committed to supporting LGBTIQ+ rights leadership, particularly in the Global South and East. This includes a commitment to decolonization and promoting racial and Indigenous justice.

Ways of Working

Dignity Network Canada's work is structured around five overlapping workstreams informed by our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

Building Collaboration & Critical Knowledge

Influencing

Programming

Communicating

Operations & Development

Building Collaboration and Critical Knowledge

Research and Learning Strategy

Over the course of the year, Dignity Network Canada has been bringing its diverse research and learning work together into a single coordinated program and has started developing a **Research and Learning Strategy** to guide our work from 2027 to 2030. The strategy grows out of the direction set in DNC's Strategic Plan, which named the building of a sector-leading research and learning program as one of the ways the organization would strengthen its influencing, programming, and communications work, and foster a shared culture of learning across and beyond the network.

The core of the strategy is set to position DNC as a knowledge broker, as well as convener and driver for knowledge production, including by working in collaboration with members and wider partners.

Collectively, these roles are meant to establish DNC as a bridge linking global movement knowledge with Canadian policy decision-making, rather than acting predominantly as a research producer.

The strategy has been shaped by consultations with Canadian civil society organizations, francophone partners, academic researchers, and global movement colleagues. These discussions have helped clarify DNC's most impactful contributions and guide the establishment of the strategy's emerging priorities:

1. **Translation:** Gathering and distilling global LGBTIQ+ and wider gender justice and human rights research and making it accessible and relevant for Canadian audiences, including policymakers, practitioners, and the general public.
2. **Filling Gaps:** DNC's research efforts will be guided toward unresolved questions within the sector rather than replicating existing work. We will also continue to grow our 'rapid response' work which gathers and platforms real-time intelligence with frontline movements as crises emerge.
3. **Convening and Amplification:** Broadening the impact of evidence and analysis, especially that produced by under-represented movements in the Global South and East, and convening and partnering to multiply impact.





Advancing Dignity Report

In early 2026, Dignity Network Canada was pleased to publish the Advancing Dignity Summary Report.

This summary is based on findings from **Canada's Global Support for 2SLGBTIQI People: Assessing the Implementation of Canada's Foreign Policy (2016–2025),** commissioned by Dignity Network Canada (DNC) and completed in November 2025. The full report provides the first comprehensive, independent assessment of how Canada's pro-LGBTIQ+ foreign policy has been implemented in practice over the past decade.

The research was conducted by an independent academic team with internationally recognized expertise in global LGBTIQ+ rights, foreign policy, and international development:

- **Professor Momin Rahman** (Trent University)
- **Professor Stephen Brown** (University of Ottawa)
- **Bartosz Neumann** (Concordia University)
- **Dr. Morgane Rosier** (Université du Québec à Montréal)

Their analysis draws on policy review, academic and grey literature, and in-depth interviews with Canadian government officials and civil society organizations alongside sustained engagement with DNC and its members. This summary translates the core findings, evidence, and recommendations of that research into accessible language for a broad audience.

A Decade of Progress: *Policy, Partnership, and Civil Society Leadership*

Over the past decade, Canada has emerged as one of the world's most consistent and visible champions of LGBTIQ+ rights in its foreign policy. This progress reflects not only political leadership within government, but also **sustained advocacy and partnership from Canadian civil society,** particularly **Dignity Network Canada and its member organizations.**

For more than ten years, DNC has served as a leading Canadian civil society voice on global LGBTIQ+ issues. Working alongside its more than 60 member organizations, DNC has played an important role in helping shape Canada's international engagement by:

- **Advocating** for the creation of Canada's first explicit pro-LGBTIQ+ foreign policy
- **Pressing for dedicated international assistance funding**, including Global Affairs Canada's LGBTIQ+ International Assistance Program
- **Providing policy expertise** grounded in the lived realities of partners in the Global South
- **Acting as a trusted interlocutor** between Canadian officials and global movements
- **Convening dialogue, learning, and coordination** through roundtables and communities of practice

The research makes clear that many of the advances achieved since 2016—particularly the articulation of a coherent policy framework in 2019 and the expansion of development assistance—were direct responses to sustained, coordinated civil society advocacy. Canada's progress is therefore best understood as a shared achievement: the result of constructive engagement between government and civil society.

Read the full report here.



Networks and Platforms

Connecting Canadian civil society with global movements - and bringing global perspectives into our work in Canada.

Advancing global LGBTIQ+ human rights increasingly requires collaboration across borders, sectors, and movements. Dignity Network Canada participates in a range of international networks, coalitions, and platforms that bring together civil society organizations, activists, governments, diplomats, funders, and other allies.

Through these networks, DNC helps connect Canadian civil society with global movements while bringing international perspectives and priorities into our work in Canada. Our engagement also creates opportunities to coordinate advocacy, influence policy and funding priorities, and build solidarity in the face of growing threats to LGBTIQ+ rights around the world.

NETWORK/PLATFORM		2025-2026 ACTIVITIES
The Amsterdam Network	The Amsterdam Network brings together civil society organizations from major donor countries to collaborate with governments and development agencies on LGBTIQ+ human rights and inclusion in international assistance. DNC is one of three Canadian organizations in the network, alongside our members Égides and Egale.	• Co-hosted the Amsterdam Network annual meeting in Ottawa with members Égides and Egale, bringing together approximately 20 organizations from across the network.
Equal Rights Coalition	The Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) brings together 44 governments committed to protecting and promoting the rights of LGBTIQ+ people worldwide. DNC engages with the ERC's Donor Coordination Thematic Group and the International Diplomacy Thematic Group.	• Attended the ERC Core Group meeting in Cartagena, Colombia, alongside DNC member Rainbow Railroad and Global Affairs Canada.
Pride 7	Pride 7 is a civil society engagement group focused on protecting and promoting LGBTIQ+ human rights across G7 countries. DNC participates alongside our members Egale Canada and Égides.	• Continued to connect with civil society partners across G7 countries and support collective advocacy on LGBTIQ+ rights.
Diplomats for Equality	Diplomats for Equality is a group of informal networks of embassies, international organizations, and diplomatic staff interested in the human rights, dignity, and inclusion of LGBTIQ+ people worldwide. DNC supports the Ottawa D4E group in strengthening relationships across the diplomatic community and elevating LGBTIQ+ human rights.	• Supported two D4E events in Ottawa. • D4E also participated in our Roundtable 2026 events through a reception co-hosted by the High Commission of Malta and the Embassies of Spain and Colombia.
InterPride & WorldPride	WorldPride Amsterdam 2026, organized by InterPride, brought together activists, CSOs, government representatives, and allies from around the world in Amsterdam to celebrate LGBTIQ+ communities and advance human rights. The WorldPride Human Rights Conference provides an important space for dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and collective action on global LGBTIQ+ rights.	• Participated in the Human Rights conference alongside representatives from member organizations and a delegation of Canadian legislators. • Connected with Canadian and international colleagues, exchanged knowledge and strategies, and strengthened solidarity across movements working to advance LGBTIQ+ human rights globally.
ILGA and ILGA NAC	Dignity Network Canada is a proud member of ILGA and ILGA North America and the Caribbean (NAC), connecting with LGBTIQ+ movements globally and across the region.	• Supported engagement in the LGBTIQ Pathways Survey. • Participated in the Pan Africa ILGA Conference in Johannesburg, alongside members Egale Canada and Égides. • Hosted a welcome social with the Canadian High Commission to South Africa and The Other Foundation.

2026 International Roundtable

Connecting Global Voices, Building Collective Action

Overview

Dignity Network Canada hosted the fifth edition of the Dignity Roundtables in Ottawa on June 10-11, 2026. Over 200 delegates from more than 40 countries attended, spanning Latin America, the Caribbean, West and East Africa, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. Canadian government officials from Global Affairs Canada joined, along with several of our Amsterdam Network partners, including OutRight International, Kaleidoscope Trust, Council for Global Equality, FRI from Norway, and Fundación Triángulo from Spain. A number of global LGBTIQ+ leaders joined us for the event this year for keynote addresses, including Julia Ehrt, ED of ILGA World and Victor Madrigal-Borloz, former United Nations Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

200+
Attendees

40+ Countries
Represented

The Roundtable opened with perspectives from speakers from the Global South and East, emphasizing perspectives from organizations directly involved in frontline work and facing the most pressure. The plenary sessions examined the global state of LGBTIQ+ rights from a Global South and East perspective, discussed coalition efforts against anti-gender and anti-democratic movements, Canada's foreign policy trajectory, and the influence of donor governments within the current funding environment. Breakout groups focused on funding and partnership models, humanitarian aid and displacement issues, human rights and security concerns, the inclusion of SOGIESC in Global Affairs Canada's policies and programs, feminist foreign policy initiatives, and strategies for safeguarding democratic space and further building public awareness and action.

Receptions

The week kicked off with an incredible opening reception at the German Ambassador's residence. Over 300 people from across government, the diplomatic community, civil society, and the Canadian parliament attended, with remarks from Senator Kris Wells and MP Ernie Klassen, Co-Chairs of the Pride Caucus, and German Ambassador Tjorven Bellmann. The evening also featured a vibrant drag performance, adding a celebratory touch to the gathering.

The week came to a close with a reception co-hosted by the embassies of Spain and Colombia and the High Commission of Malta. The reception welcomed over 200 people from the roundtable and partners across government. We were joined by H.E. Mark Pace, High Commissioner of Malta, H.E. Ambassador Carlos Arturo Morales from the Embassy of Colombia and Juan Manuel Sánchez-Terán Lledó from the Embassy of Spain. The event concluded with a performance by MC Sandy Duperval and an International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biophobia (IDAHOBIT) video campaign message from Fondation Émergence.



Thematic Highlights

Across the two days, a few themes were discussed in various sessions. The summaries below are from conversations that took place in the individual sessions.

- Participants discussed the importance of maintaining clarity and consistency as Canada's foreign policy priorities evolve. Some noted perceived uncertainty about how existing LGBTIQ+ and feminist international assistance commitments intersect with increased emphasis on trade, defence, and economic security, particularly at the mission level.
- Participants highlighted the importance of building stronger connections between global LGBTIQ+ movements and broader movements working on shared and intersecting challenges. As pressures on democracy, civic space, gender equality, climate justice, refugee and migrant rights, and human rights more broadly continue to intersect, the discussions pointed to the value of working across movements, building solidarity, and identifying opportunities for collective action.
- Participants recognized existing inclusion infrastructure within GAC that has been developed over the past decade or more on 2SLGBTIQ+ issues, including resources for managers, in-house expertise, and the GAC Pride Network. Discussion also highlighted opportunities to strengthen the consistent application and uptake of these tools across the department.
- Across the sessions, participants emphasized the importance of long-term, flexible funding, including support for core operating costs. Discussions also highlighted the challenge of balancing accountability and reporting requirements with the realities faced by organizations of different sizes and operating environments.
- In the session on Economic Power, Prosperity, and Equality, participants emphasized that LGBTIQ+ inclusive approaches can contribute to broader economic prosperity and security. Trade, procurement, and export capacity were identified as areas where economic and human rights objectives may increasingly intersect. The role of labour can also help strengthen protections and inclusion.
- Participants emphasized Canada's role as a leading donor and diplomatic advocate for LGBTIQ+ human rights and called for sustained leadership amid growing backlash and retreat by other governments.



Advocacy and Government Relations

Policy and Advocacy Highlights

2025–26 was a critical year for Dignity Network Canada's policy, advocacy and government relations work. The federal election and the arrival of a new government under Prime Minister Mark Carney created both new opportunities and new questions about Canada's role in the world. Dignity Network Canada is non-partisan, and throughout the year—both before and after the election—we engaged with representatives of all major parties in Parliament to build understanding and support for Canada's continued leadership on the human rights of LGBTIQ+ people globally.

This engagement has taken on particular importance as Canada reorients its foreign policy in response to a changing international environment. The Carney government has placed increased emphasis on economic and national security, strategic autonomy, and diversifying Canada's international partnerships. In his January 2026 address in Davos, Prime Minister Carney described a fundamental "rupture" in the international order while also arguing for middle powers like Canada to work together to build a new approach grounded in cooperation and values, including respect for human rights.

For Dignity Network Canada, this changing context makes sustained advocacy essential: ensuring that human rights—and the rights of LGBTIQ+ people in particular—remain part of Canada's evolving approach to foreign policy and international assistance.

Our advocacy is grounded in the voices and priorities of international LGBTIQ+ movements themselves. We draw on our relationships with human rights defenders and organizations globally, including our Global Advisory Committee, as well as the expertise of Dignity Network Canada members through our regular convenings, including our Working Groups. During our International Roundtable in Ottawa in June 2026, members of our Global Advisory Committee and other international activists brought these perspectives directly to Parliament, participating in engagements with more than 20 MPs, from the government as well as opposition parties. These conversations gave parliamentarians an opportunity to hear directly from activists about the realities facing LGBTIQ+ communities around the world.

Alongside our parliamentary advocacy, we continue to work closely with colleagues at Global Affairs Canada and to support spaces for sustained dialogue between government and civil society. Dignity Network Canada co-chairs the Standing Table on SOGIESC Issues with GAC's Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion Division, providing an ongoing forum for exchange on global LGBTIQ+ human rights issues. We also co-chair the Community of Practice for the LGBTQ2I International Assistance Program, bringing together Canadian organizations funded through the program for shared learning, coordination and dialogue. Together, these relationships help ensure that our advocacy is informed by global movements and grounded in relationships with our Canadian members and government partners.



MP Ernie Klassen (left), Senator Dr. Kristopher Wells (right)

DNC Roundtable Week Advocacy Meetings

Dignity Network Canada works with a Global Advisory Committee made up of 15 individuals from around the world who are local and regional leaders in LGBTIQ+ movements. Many of these advisors work closely with Canadian Embassies and High Commissions in their work and also with Canadian organizations, including several DNC members.

As part of DNC's commitment to being accountable to our global movement, we work closely with these advisors and other civil society leaders from around the world in our non-partisan advocacy. As part of our Roundtable Week this year, we set up 12 meetings with Canadian parliamentarians, with the goal to educate, share and discuss Canada's important role in the area of LGBTIQ+ rights. Global Advisory Committee members met with 10 MPs from the governing Liberal Party of Canada, including the Minister of Women and Gender Equality, Hon. Rechie Valdez, two MPs from the Conservative Party of Canada and two MPs from the New Democratic Party.

These meetings focused on sharing stories and information on the importance of Canadian diplomacy and international assistance to our movements. Delegates reiterated DNC's call for at least 0.3% of Canada's Official Development Assistance budget to go to LGBTIQ+ civil society organizations, through a renewal of the LGBTQI International Assistance Program and a new global funding mechanism. Additionally, movements called for strengthened commitments to ensure LGBTIQ+ communities are not left behind or discriminated against in wider programming and policy, including by mainstreaming diverse SOGIESC inclusive approaches across GAC's work.

Dignity Network Canada also partnered with the Canadian Pride Caucus on a welcome breakfast for Global Advisory members and other special international guests. The event, with remarks from Canadian Pride Caucus Co-Chairs Senator Kris Wells and MP Ernie Klassen, welcomed nearly a dozen Members of Parliament and Senators in conversation with delegates from 20 countries.



MP Ernie Klassen (centre-left), Hon. Randeep Sarai (centre), and members of DNC's Global Advisory Committee

The Amsterdam Network Meeting

Ahead of the Roundtable, Dignity Network Canada hosted a two-day meeting of the Amsterdam Network in Ottawa on June 8 and 9. The Amsterdam Network convened LGBTIQ+ organizations from donor countries, alongside international partners, to coordinate advocacy toward donor governments on global LGBTIQ+ funding and foreign policy.

Members travelled from across Europe, North America, and the Asia-Pacific, including OutRight International, ILGA World, the Global Philanthropy Project, Kaleidoscope Trust, Egale Canada, Égides, FRI, RFSL, LGBT Danmark, LSVD+, the Council for Global Equality, Equality Australia, and Fundación Triángulo.

Over the two days, members worked through the geopolitical realignment reshaping global LGBTIQ+ rights, coordination and competition in development funding, responses to anti-gender and anti-democratic politics, and the future direction of the Network. The meeting also included a breakfast with the Canadian Pride Caucus, a visit to Thunderhead, Canada's new National 2SLGBTQI+ Monument, and a reception at the German Ambassador's residence, before members joined the Roundtable that followed.



A Moment of Pride on Parliament Hill

Pride Flag Raising Ceremony

Ahead of our 2026 International Roundtable, Dignity Network Canada staff, alongside international activists and human rights defenders from over 40 countries, attended the Pride Flag Raising ceremony on Parliament Hill.

It was encouraging to hear remarks from Prime Minister Mark Carney, WAGE Minister Rechie Valdez, and Pride Caucus co-chairs Senator Dr. Kristopher Wells and MP Ernie Klassen reaffirming their commitment to advancing the rights and freedoms of 2SLGBTIQ+ communities at a time of growing opposition and government retrenchment around the world.

The ceremony served as a meaningful reminder that symbolic gestures must be matched by concrete action. As global challenges to LGBTIQ+ rights continue to grow, Canada has an important role to play in advancing human rights, supporting civil society, and standing in solidarity with LGBTIQ+ communities worldwide.

> *"We exist everywhere, but we are not free everywhere. We raise [the rainbow flag] as a beacon of hope to those who are not free."*
>
> **Prime Minister Mark Carney**

Programming

Act Together For Inclusion Fund (ACTIF)

The **Act Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF)** is the result of significant advocacy by Canadian civil society, coordinated by Dignity Network Canada, to secure greater Canadian support for advancing the human rights of LGBTQ2I people internationally. Funded by **Global Affairs Canada** and managed by **Equitas in partnership with Dignity Network Canada**, ACTIF aims to enhance the respect, protection, and fulfilment of the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, Two-Spirit, and intersex (LGBTQ2I) people in countries in the Global South eligible for Official Development Assistance.

Since 2021, ACTIF has strengthened a network of Canadian LGBTQ2I organizations while building solidarity and partnerships with local LGBTQ2I civil society organizations across the Global South. Through funding and partnership opportunities, ACTIF has enabled Canadian and international organizations to develop and implement programming that advances LGBTQ2I rights, strengthens movements and organizations, and supports locally led change.

As ACTIF enters its final year in 2026–2027, Dignity Network Canada is reflecting on the partnerships, achievements, and lessons that have emerged through six years of collaboration. The 2026 International Roundtable provided an important space for this reflection, bringing together ACTIF partners and allies to share experiences, examine lessons from the program, and consider what these learnings can tell us about the future of international LGBTQ2I rights programming and funding.

ACTIF at a Glance

25 Total Projects

39 Countries

52 International Partners

17 Canadian Partners

7 Regions

ACTIF's Five Result Areas

1. Protecting and Supporting Individuals
2. Strengthening Organizations
3. Campaigning for Acceptance
4. Inclusive Institutions, Services, and Networks
5. Improving Law, Policy, and Resourcing

Introducing the Final ACTIF Projects

Indigenous Sexual Diversity, Inclusion, and Two-Spirit Solidarity from Guatemala to Canada

Project Partners:

- Inter Pares
- Indigenous Secretariat at Asociación Lambda in Guatemala

Target Country:

- Guatemala

Project Description:

Asociación Lambda is a counterpart of Inter Pares working to promote the recognition, inclusion and wellbeing of LGBTQI+ people in Guatemala. Lambda has long supported Indigenous grassroots groups across the country and, with support through ACTIF's Inclusion Strategy, the organization has been able to expand and strengthen its Indigenous-led programming, ensuring it can grow sustainably into the future.

This renewed support comes at a pivotal time, as Indigenous queer and trans people are increasingly organizing for recognition in Guatemala—both within their communities and the broader LGBTQI+ movement. In this context, the project "Indigenous Sexual Diversity, Inclusion and Two-Spirit Solidarity from Guatemala to Canada" is part of a growing movement to reclaim identities, challenge systems of oppression and build futures grounded in dignity and belonging.

As part of these efforts, Lambda launched its Indigenous Secretariat, an Indigenous-led body that:

- **Designs and leads** programming grounded in Indigenous realities and experiences
- **Supports** Indigenous queer and trans communities across different territories
- **Challenges** racism within the broader LGBTQI+ movement

Besides work in Guatemala, the project also aims to foster meaningful international connections and solidarity. As part of this efforts, Indigenous queer and trans organizations in Guatemala and Colombia are taking part in international exchanges, including in Canada.

Project Highlight:

The First Self-Convened Indigenous Consultation with Gender Diverse People

Between August 13 and 14, 2026, Lambda's Indigenous Secretariat celebrated the first Consultation on Indigenous Peoples and Gender Diversity in Quetzaltenango, a historic event and milestone in matters of human rights in Guatemala.

Using the Mayan methodology of the Pixab, a Council of Mayan Spiritual Guides and Community Leaders listened to the experiences of dozens of Indigenous participants from eight Mayan linguistic communities.

The Consultation raised awareness of and highlighted the sexual diversity of Indigenous peoples, recognizing their voices, identities, and realities within their own communities, and paving the way for a model of self-convened consultation that could serve as a benchmark for the region.

The consultation process was supported by the Mexican Consulate in Guatemala, as well as accompanying organizations and international observers, including Nathalia Santos Ocasio from Inter Pares, and Jaylene McRae and Ella Dufault from Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC)'s Two-Spirit Program.



I find it particularly powerful how this First Consultation has brought together two supposedly "distinct" worlds, such as sexuality and cultural identity, which have been separated by the process of colonization...[the Consultation] brought together the people who were consulted along with the representatives of the Maya K'iche' people, in this case, who made up the ancestral authorities, to a reality that is present. That never went away.

I would finish by comparing how Indigenous peoples, despite processes of extermination, continue to exist. But also, how people of sexual diversity live—we live a process of extermination and yet we still exist.

Fernando Us

Member, DNC Global Advisory Committee and
Coordinator, Lambda's Indigenous Secretariat

Building and Connecting Transfeminist Movements for Global Change

Project Partners:

- International Trans Fund
- Diversidades Trans Masculinas (DTM)
- Ruby Social Enterprise
- African Trans Women's Alliance

Target Region:

- Global

Project Description:

As a global trans-led participatory funder, the International Trans Fund (ITF) is dedicated to resourcing and strengthening transfeminist movements advocating for trans rights and gender justice worldwide. Through a project supported by Act Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF), "Building and Connecting Transfeminist Movements for Global Change," ITF uses participatory grantmaking to provide core funding to trans-led organizations working from transfeminist perspectives, and to support connections and strategy sharing across movements

In an era marked by shifting global funding landscapes and rising anti-gender opposition, this initiative delivers flexible general support grants and ongoing support and relationship-building, ensuring community-led groups sustain their essential operations while building long-term organizational resilience.

The main elements of the project include the successful awarding of $192,000 USD in general support grants ($32,000 each) to six trans-led organizations, directly funding their core infrastructure and programs. A specific participatory process was designed to identify and select the grantee partner organizations.

Beyond direct grantmaking, ITF fostered horizontal peer learning through an online workshop on financial resilience and organizational development that engaged 51 activists from 40 groups, alongside an in-person Transfeminist Convening in June 2026 that brought together the project's grantee representatives, a Canada-based trans activist, and members of ITF's Grant Making Panel and staff in powerful discussions on issues and movement organizing for trans-led communities.

Colombia Diversa Receives 2025 Global Pluralism Award

ACTIF partner Colombia Diversa was named a 2025 Global Pluralism Award recipient, **selected from more than 300 submissions across 64 countries.** The award recognizes individuals and organizations advancing more inclusive societies where diversity is valued and protected.

This recognition celebrates **over 20 years** of Colombia Diversa's work advancing LGBTIQ+ rights through dialogue, bridge-building, and other efforts to reduce discrimination. Its "Building Bridges" project exemplifies this work, bringing together LGBTIQ+ communities and religious leaders to foster dialogue, reduce tensions and misinformation, and build greater understanding across differences.



"We believe this experience [the Building Bridges Project] has been, by itself, a reparative one for those who took part in it. It has also produced a methodology and numerous lessons that can be replicated in various contexts."

Colombia Diversa

Comprehensive Health Options Through Innovative Community Engagement (CHOICE)



This year, Dignity Network Canada partnered with our member organization **Oxfam Canada** on the newly launched **Comprehensive Health Options Through Innovative Community Engagement (CHOICE)** Project, a seven-year initiative working to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in **Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe**. Implemented by Oxfam Canada and 13 partners, the project supports women, girls, adolescents, and people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) to realize their rights through stronger health systems, community engagement, and access to inclusive SRHR services.

As the project's public engagement partner, Dignity Network Canada works to connect international issues with Canadian audiences by raising awareness of global SRHR and SOGIESC rights, amplifying the voices of movement leaders and partners, and fostering greater public understanding of the links between global solidarity, human rights, and gender equality. Much of the year's work went into establishing the public engagement workstream and delivering its first activities under three categories:

1. **The development of knowledge and learning products on global SRHR and SOGIESC issues.**
2. **A set of online learning events through the Dignity in Dialogue series, which shares the work and perspectives of underserved civil society organizations with Canadian and international audiences.**
3. **Public engagement anchored in Pride season, delivered with member and partner organizations across several Canadian cities.**

The public engagement work focuses on community outreach, direct advocacy, and engagement with decision-makers. DNC also worked to extend the reach of the CHOICE-funded activities by drawing in support from partners in the Canadian labour movement and from member pride organizations, so that events have a wider reach. This foundational work sets up the workstream for knowledge production and public engagement in coming years as CHOICE moves further into implementation.

The CHOICE Project

Celebrating Pride Across Canada

Toronto

Building Global Solidarity Through Pride

Dignity Network Canada proudly continued its longstanding partnership with Pride Toronto by sponsoring the 2026 International Grand Marshal Program and supporting a series of events that amplified global 2SLGBTIQ+ voices throughout Pride Month. This year's International Grand Marshal, **Mac-Darling Cobbinah** of Ghana, is a pioneering advocate whose leadership has strengthened grassroots organizing, advanced visibility, and created safer spaces for LGBTIQ+ communities. In collaboration with Pride Toronto and our member organization Rainbow Railroad, we welcomed elected officials, community leaders, and partners to a breakfast reception celebrating Mac-Darling Cobbinah, creating space for meaningful exchange on the role of international solidarity in advancing equality and human rights.

As a partner of **Tapestry 2026: Human Rights Roundtable**, Dignity Network Canada joined Pride Toronto, the European Union, CUPE/SCFP, Maple Leaf Pharmacy, and the Canadian Labour Congress to convene activists, human rights defenders, and community leaders from Canada and around the world. Through keynote remarks and facilitated discussions, participants explored the global rise of anti-rights movements, shared strategies for advancing human rights, and reflected on the importance of international solidarity in protecting human rights.

Throughout Pride Month, Dignity Network Canada also created opportunities for dialogue beyond the conference space. In partnership with Journalists for Human Rights, we hosted **Who Tells the Story?**, a conversation examining how media and storytelling shape public understanding of 2SLGBTIQ+ rights, featuring journalist **Justin Ling** and **Yvee Oduor** of GALCK+ Kenya.

Halifax

The CALL-ACAL Prisme Conference

Dignity Network Canada participated in our member organization CALL–ACAL's Prisme Conference in Halifax, engaging members of Canada's legal community on emerging global LGBTIQ+ human rights issues and opportunities for international solidarity. DNC's International Research and Campaigns Manager, **Dr. Ayodele Sogunro**, moderated the International Legal Issues panel, where panellists **Sherylle Dass, Kim Vance-Mubanga** from Egale Canada, and **Michaël Arnaud** from Égides, examined significant global legal developments, emerging trends, and the evolving challenges facing LGBTIQ+ communities worldwide.

Through the conference, Dignity Network Canada strengthened connections with legal professionals, shared resources, and encouraged greater engagement between the Canadian legal sector and global LGBTIQ+ movements in support of human rights advocacy and justice.



Pride Toronto 2026 International Grand Marshal Mac-Darling Cobbinah

Vancouver

Unapologetically Queer

This year, Dignity Network Canada supported Vancouver Pride Society's 2026 International Grand Marshal Program, welcoming **Zhanar Sekerbayeva**, an internationally recognized human rights defender, feminist, and LGBTIQ+ activist from Kazakhstan.

Throughout Vancouver Pride Week, Dignity Network Canada partnered with Vancouver Pride Society, Rainbow Refugee, CUPE National, and government leaders to celebrate the launch of Pride, co-host **Pride Without Borders: An Evening with Zhanar Sekerbayeva**, and participate in the official Pride flag raising at Vancouver City Hall. Secretary of State for International Development **Hon. Randeep Sarai** officially welcomed Zhanar to Canada at the flag raising ceremony, reaffirming Canada's commitment to supporting the dignity, safety, and human rights of LGBTIQ+ communities worldwide.

Ottawa

Together We Shine Diplomats for Equality Event

To mark Capital Pride in Ottawa this year, Dignity Network Canada supported a roundtable discussion and luncheon with Diplomats for Equality. Co-hosted with the High Commission of Malta to Canada, the discussion focused on human rights defenders and mental health and included representatives from Global Affairs Canada and DNC members Stephen Lewis Foundation and Égides.

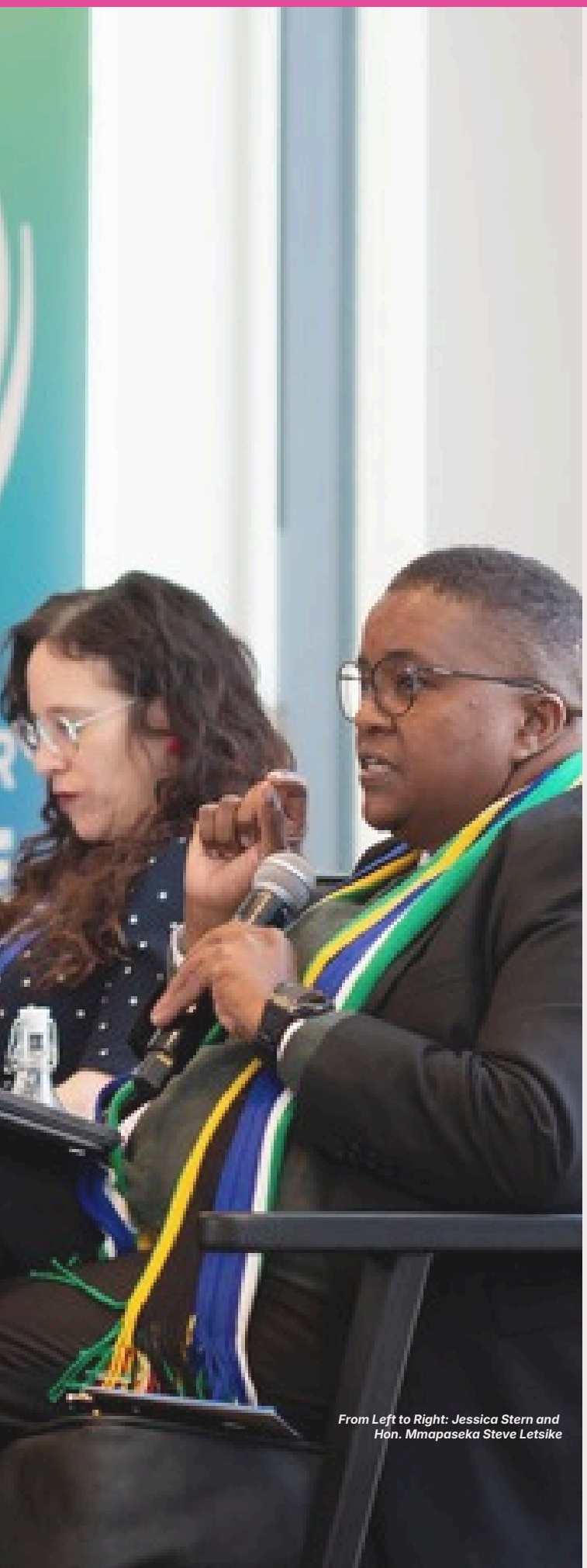
We extend our sincere thanks to all of our partners, speakers, and participants for helping make Prides across Canada powerful platforms for global dialogue, advocacy, and collective action.

*"Unapologetically queer means for me to be **kind and empathetic.** Also **bold and angry,** when the time comes to defend rights and boundaries. **And to share love, when nobody expects that we can share love.**"*

Zhanar Sekerbayeva



From Left to Right: MP Ernie Klassen, Zhanar Sekerbayeva, Hon. Randeep Sarai



From Left to Right: Jessica Stern and Hon. Mmapaseka Steve Letsike

The Ottawa Civic Space Summit

Gender Justice, LGBTIQ+ Rights, and the Politics of Resistance

The inaugural Ottawa Civic Space Summit was co-organized by Cooperation Canada and Resilient Societies. Within it, Dignity Network Canada brought together two of the world's leading voices on LGBTIQ+ rights for a panel on gender justice, LGBTIQ+ rights, and the politics of resistance, examining how attacks on gender and sexual rights are being used to advance authoritarian agendas, and how movements and governments can respond together. **Hon. Mmapaseka Steve Letsike**, Deputy Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities of South Africa, joined **Jessica Stern**, Co-Founder and Co-President of The Alliance for Diplomacy and Justice and former U.S. Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons. The session was moderated by DNC's own **Dr. Ayodele Sogunro**, International Research and Campaigns Manager.

DNC also co-hosted, with the **Canadian Pride Caucus**, a special breakfast welcoming both global leaders to Ottawa for the Summit.

Key Findings & Themes:

The discussion highlighted how weak institutions have enabled rapid rollbacks of LGBTIQ+ rights, and how anti-rights actors are reshaping language around concepts like family, health, and sovereignty.

Panellists emphasized the need to strengthen legal and institutional knowledge, position LGBTIQ+ rights as central to democratic governance and development, and build stronger solidarity between governments and civil society. They also called for sustained funding, cross-movement collaboration, and greater accountability for states whose policies affect global human rights.

> *"Democracy is like a house. Right now, the first room being locked is the one where women, young people, and LGBTIQ+ people gather. The danger is not just that those rooms are closed — it is that the whole house begins to shrink."*
>
> **Hon. Mmapaseka Steve Letsike**

The Montréal Collaboratory

Rising Against the Funding Crisis

40

Organizations Represented



50+

Attendees

In November 2025, the Montréal Collaboratory, co-convened by Dignity Network Canada and our member organizations **Equitas, Égides, and the Equality Fund,** brought together 40 organizations spanning Canadian civil society, philanthropy, and global movement leadership, including several members of our Global Advisory Committee and other international partners from the funding and philanthropic world. The gathering responded directly to a historic and accelerating assault on LGBTIQ+ communities worldwide, one marked by shrinking international support, a coordinated global anti-rights countermovement, and the withdrawal of governments once counted on as allies.

The Collaboratory began with a collective mapping exercise that grounded participants in a shared analysis of the current global landscape for LGBTIQ+ rights and their resourcing. Together, we explored how resources, power, relationships, and narratives shape the conditions in which global LGBTIQ+ movements operate. This process highlighted not only what exists but also what is missing, contested, or shifting—opening space for early solution-focused reflection. Beautiful graphic recordings created by Percolab captured this analysis as it unfolded.

Throughout the gathering, conversations delved into how movements, donors, and allies can work together to reshape resourcing models, strengthen partnerships, and broaden support for global LGBTIQ+ and gender justice work. Participants examined opportunities for cross-movement collaboration, collective approaches to philanthropy, public engagement strategies, and reimagined roles for Canada and other donors within evolving global ecosystems.

True to its collaborative spirit, the event was made possible by many hands. Our heartfelt thanks go to the dedicated teams at our co-convening organizations; to everyone involved in designing the program; to our facilitators, notetakers, and event coordinator; and to photographer Selena Phillips-Boyle for beautifully capturing the moments and energy of the space.

The Collaboratory closed with a sense of shared purpose and momentum, offering a strengthened foundation for meeting the global funding crisis with collective strategy, creativity, and possibility.



Communicating

Strengthening Our Communications

This year, Dignity Network Canada invested in strengthening its communications capacity through the launch of a new website, refreshed visual identity, communications strategy, and organizational message guide. Together, these tools provide a clear and consistent foundation for raising awareness of global LGBTIQ+ rights issues in Canada, expanding audience engagement, and supporting stronger collaboration across our network.

We also re-established and refreshed DNC's Communications Working Group to better reflect where DNC is heading and ensure our collective communications capacity can meet the current moment. The Working Group brings together communications specialists from across the DNC network to build community, share resources and expertise, and create space for strategic collaboration. Through knowledge sharing and coordinated efforts, the group aims to amplify members' work and strengthen how global LGBTIQ+ issues are communicated in Canadian contexts.

Communications Milestones

- ☑ Communications Strategy
- ☑ Message Guide
- ☑ Brand Refresh
- ☑ New Website
- ☑ Communications Working Group Re-Established

Dignity in Dialogue

Creating Space for Global Conversations on LGBTIQ+ Rights

At a time of growing backlash against LGBTIQ+ rights, Dignity in Dialogue brings together activists, academics, advocates, diplomats, and community leaders to share knowledge, strengthen solidarity, and respond to emerging global challenges. Co-hosted by Dignity Network Canada and Equitas, the virtual series creates a trusted space for cross-border learning and collaboration. Each session is thoughtfully curated to align with current events, global dynamics, and the challenges and opportunities facing LGBTIQ+ movements worldwide.

We extend our sincere thanks to all of the guest speakers, moderators, and partners who generously shared their time, expertise, and lived experiences throughout the Dignity in Dialogue series.

Dignity in Dialogue 2025-2026

300+ Attendees

6 Sessions

14 Countries Represented

19 Guest Speakers

2025-2026 Dignity in Dialogue Sessions

JUNE 2025

The Power of Our Communities: Centering and Activating Collective Power

Aligned with the 2025 IDAHOBIT theme 'The Power of Communities,' DNC hosted its second Dignity in Dialogue session, titled 'The Power of Our Communities: Centering and Activating Collective Power.' The discussion explored various forms of power, their influence on movements, and the importance of building bridges across organizations and sectors to strengthen communal power.

OCTOBER 2025

Claiming Space & Shifting Power: Winning Campaigns for LGBTQ+ Rights

In a time of rising authoritarianism, far-right populism, and shrinking civic space, activists from across the globe came together to discuss how to reclaim narratives, rebuild movements, and strengthen solidarity across borders. Speakers shared strategies for winning campaigns and sustaining hope in the face of organized backlash.

MARCH 2026

The Soft Power of Heated Rivalry

This conversation explored how Canadian storytelling, culture, and diplomacy can help advance conversations about human rights and 2SLGBTIQI+ inclusion around the world. Using the television series Heated Rivalry as a case study, panellists examined the role of cultural exchange in fostering visibility, dialogue, and international solidarity.

FEBRUARY 2026

Canada's Foreign Policy Leadership on LGBTIQ+ Rights

Dignity in Dialogue launched the year with a discussion of the Advancing Dignity research report, examining how Canada has advanced 2SLGBTIQI+ rights through its foreign policy over the past decade. Participants explored the report's findings while reflecting on the opportunities and challenges shaping Canada's future role in supporting global LGBTIQ+ rights.

MAY 2026

'At the Heart of Democracy'

Building on the 2026 IDAHOBIT theme, this session examined how coordinated anti-rights movements are reshaping democratic institutions, civic space, and LGBTIQ+ rights globally. Participants discussed strategies for understanding these evolving threats and strengthening collective advocacy, solidarity, and movement resilience.

JUNE 2026

Joy, Reflections, Resistance – LGBTIQ+ Lived Realities in Africa

In partnership with international academic institutions, Dignity Network Canada hosted a special dialogue celebrating the launch of Joy, Reflections, Resistance, a collection highlighting the lived realities of LGBTIQ+ communities across Africa. Contributors shared insights from their research and activism while exploring the importance of centring African leadership, lived experience, and transnational solidarity in the global movement for equality.

Operations and Development

Building a Stronger Organization

Organizational development remains one of the core pillars of Dignity Network Canada's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, reflecting our commitment to building the people, systems, and structures needed to sustain our growing role in Canada and internationally. In 2025–26, we continued to make significant progress in strengthening the organization from the inside out.

A major part of this work has been the continued expansion of our staff team, adding new expertise and capacity across operations and finance, program development, campaigning, and research. Importantly, this included the creation of a dedicated Finance and Operations Manager position—a significant step in strengthening our internal management and ensuring that our organizational infrastructure keeps pace with the growth of our programs, partnerships, and funding.

Throughout the year, we also invested in stronger financial systems, policies, processes, and organizational planning, improving how we manage resources and support accountability across our work. Alongside these changes, we continued to strengthen internal coordination, staff practices, governance support, and the systems that enable our team and Board to work effectively as the organization grows.

Much of this progress has been made possible by the successful Beyond Borders campaign, which allowed us to invest intentionally in Dignity Network Canada's long-term capacity. As we move into our next phase, our focus is not simply on becoming a larger organization, but a stronger, more sustainable, and more effective one—with the infrastructure needed to serve our members, support global movements, and deliver on the ambitions of our strategic plan.

Celebrating the Success of Beyond Borders

This year marked the successful conclusion of Dignity Network Canada's **Beyond Borders campaign,** bringing to a close an ambitious effort launched in 2023 to strengthen our organization for the future. Developed in partnership with our member **Rainbow Railroad,** the campaign brought together a group of visionary Canadian philanthropic leaders who recognized the importance of investing in sustained Canadian advocacy for global LGBTIQ+ human rights. **Ultimately, Beyond Borders exceeded its $2 million goal by 25%,** an extraordinary vote of confidence in Dignity Network Canada and our mission. As the campaign formally closes, we are deeply grateful to everyone who helped make it possible.

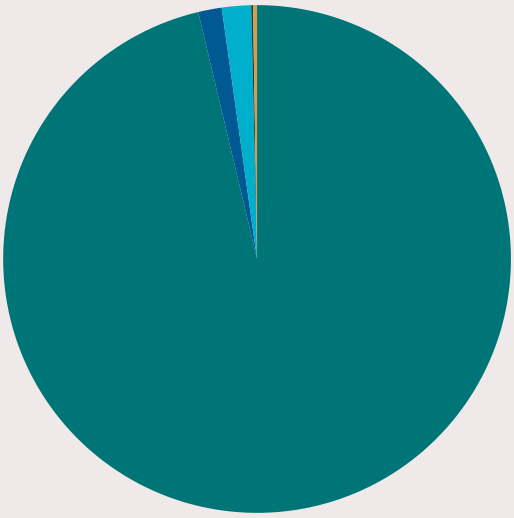
We extend particular thanks to our lead donors: Doug Stollery and the Stollery Charitable Foundation, Martha McCain, Ed Clark, the KM Hunter Charitable Foundation, and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund.

We also gratefully acknowledge Cathy Mann and The Fundraising Lab for their significant in-kind contributions throughout the campaign.



Douglas Stollery

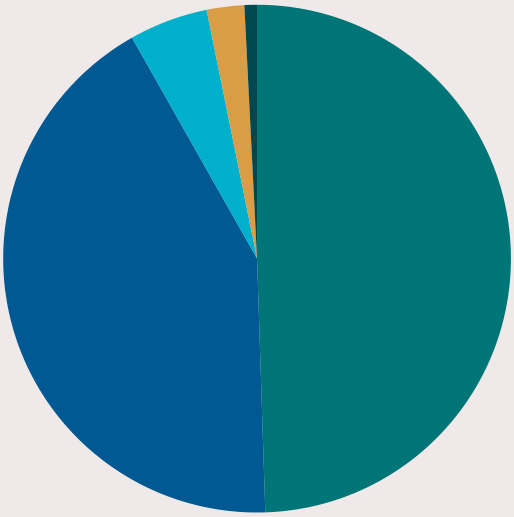
Financials 2025-2026



REVENUE

Grants	*$1,035,358*
Memberships	*$16,100*
Sponsorship	*$20,000*
Donations	*$1,196*
Other Income	*$2,735*

Total: ***$1,075,389 CAD***



EXPENSES

Program Delivery	*$525,140*
Salaries and Benefits	*$449,114*
Accounting and Legal	*$53,172*
General and Administrative	*$25,385*
Other Expenses	*$8,447*

Total: ***$1,061,258 CAD***

Annual Surplus: ***$14,131 CAD***

Audited Financial Statements available upon request.

2025-2026 Staff



Doug Kerr
Executive Director



Dr. Claire House
Programs, Partnerships, and Learning Director



Dr. Ayodele Sogunro
International Research and Campaigns Manager



Taavi Weinberger
Finance and Operations Manager



Sarah Harvey
Communications and Engagement Officer



Emmett Mark
Policy and Advocacy Officer (Feb 2024-Sep 2025)



Summeiya Khamissa
Event Coordinator (Sep-Nov 2025)



Sophie Pepper
Programs Assistant (May-Aug 2025)



2025-2026 Board of Directors



Paula Tenaglia
Chair



Haran Vijayanathan
Co-Chair



Alain Mootoo
Treasurer



Ann Nweke
Finance Chair



Camille Ben
Governance and HR Chair (Sep 2025-Jun 2026)



Nishin Nathwani



Michaël Arnaud



Luka Amona



Jane Thirikwa



Healy Thompson



Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah



Luis Augusto Nobre



Greg Lichti

Thank you to Departing Board Members

A special thank you to departing Board members who are leaving the Board after many years of volunteer service this year:

- **Michaël Arnaud,** a founding Director, for six years of service on the Board of Directors, including on the Executive and Governance Committees, and as Governance Chair.
- **Paula Tenaglia,** for five years of service on the Board of Directors, including on the Executive Committee and as Board Chair.
- **Haran Vijayanathan,** for five years of service on the Board of Directors, including on the Executive and Governance Committees.

2025-2026 Global Advisory Committee



Anan Bouapha
Laos



Carlos Idibouo
Côte d'Ivoire



Grâce Divine Ingabire
Burundi



Fernando Us Alvarez
Guatemala



Artemis Akbary
Afghanistan



Ogochuku Jones Okolie
Nigeria



Kenita M. Placide
St. Lucia



Midnight Poonkasetwattana
Thailand



Pepe Onziema
Uganda



Zhanar Sekerbayeva
Kazakhstan



Joseph Messinga Nkonga
Cameroon



Jean Chong
Singapore/Thailand

Karam Aouini
Tunisia



Cristina Rodríguez Romero
Colombia



Danilo Manzano
Ecuador

2025-2026 Membership



Acknowledgements & Thank-Yous

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our wider institutional funders and partners, who have helped make all of this work possible. We gratefully acknowledge Global Affairs Canada's support for ACTIF, delivered in partnership with Equitas, and CHOICE, delivered in partnership with Oxfam Canada. We also thank CUPE for supporting our public engagement work and Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) for supporting our organizational development.



We would additionally like to thank the following colleagues, consultants, organizations, partners, sponsors, and funders for their collaboration this past year:

- Amplified Voices (Ilana Landsberg-Lewis)
- Bright and Early (HR Consultant)
- British High Commission in Ottawa
- Canadian Embassy in Poland
- Cassels Brock and Blackwell LLP
- Cathy Mann, The Fundraising Lab
- Doug Stollery and The Stollery Charitable Foundation
- Ed Clark
- Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Ottawa
- European Delegation to Canada
- KM Hunter Charitable Foundation
- LeBlanc (& co.) Communications
- Lisa Graziadei, Finance Consultant
- Martha McCain
- Miquel Serrano (The County Business Concierge)
- Naïké Ledan, Facilitator
- Nexus Strategic Consultants
- Rainbow Railroad
- Rex Fyles, Research Consultant
- Rita Nketiah, Research Consultant
- Sandy Duperval, Facilitator and Extraordinaire
- Stephen Brown, Momin Rahman, Bartosz Neumann, and Dr. Morgane Rosier - Research Partners
- Valérie Bah, Translator and Interpreter
- Welch LLP
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund



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