

# Keep the Promise.

## An open letter to Canada’s Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland.

Dear Minister Freeland,

Canada’s international cooperation sector is an effective partner in delivering on the government’s international development commitments.

Under your government’s leadership, and with the support of an active NGO community, Canada has made progress on empowering women and girls; improving access to quality health services and education; fighting hunger and poverty; promoting human rights, peace and democracy; and helping others adapt to climate change.

Your vision – our vision – has changed the lives of millions of people for the better.

Today, as the world emerges from the pandemic, confronts the challenge of war, grapples with the impacts of inflation, and addresses budgetary pressures, we cannot afford to take a step back. In fact, we need to continue doing more.

Foreign aid is not a handout. It is an investment in the type of world we all want to see. Our investments have acted as a bulwark against rising authoritarianism by supporting democracy, women’s and children’s rights, and development in countries where rights are under attack.

Canada’s feminist policy transformed aid by investing in programs with lawyers defending women’s rights in Honduras, supporting women journalists’ training in South Sudan and empowering refugee girls to go to school in Jordan.

If Canada fails to maintain its commitment to year-on-year increases in international assistance in the federal budget this Spring, all of this is under threat.

As you work to finalize the upcoming federal budget, we have one clear request:

**Show the rest of the world that it can continue to count on Canada and keep the promise to increase our international assistance contributions.**

NGOs - with millions of Canadians supporting them - are united in calling on you to increase international aid beyond last year’s \$8.15 billion envelope and to commit to a predictable, three-year increase to reach \$10 billion by 2025.

At a time when communities around the world need the support of Canada, we cannot afford to let them down.

Sincerely,

### Canada’s leading international aid agencies

