



Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming Federal Budget

By: Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment



Recommendation 1: Increase sustainable, long-term funding for the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality

Recommendation 2: Fulfill the Liberal Party's 2025 promise of increasing support for the Women's Economic Leadership and Opportunities Fund (WELOF).

Recommendation 3: Provide stable, multi-year core funding to the Canadian Centre for Women's Empowerment



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INTRODUCTION

Economic Abuse incorporates a range of behaviours that allow a perpetrator to control someone else's economic resources or freedoms. It refers to various tactics that limit an individual's financial autonomy, including but not limited to denying them access to their money, exerting control over their resources, or leveraging intimidation and threats to constrain their economic freedom.

As the federal government prepares Budget 2025 with a focus on strengthening Canada's economy, we urge you to consider that a robust economy requires a strong social infrastructure. Civil society organizations like ours are essential to helping survivors of gender-based and economic violence build financial resilience, contribute to the workforce, and participate fully in public life.

Recent, streamlined top-down decision-making through the rushed passage of bills has shifted the federal policy agenda away from vital community voices, limiting the capacity of grassroots actors to engage meaningfully. This approach risks excluding critical expertise and undermining equitable economic growth.

In addition to collaborating with private sector organizations to strengthen Canada's economy, it is vital that the federal government meaningfully engage and fund civil society organizations. These organizations are on the front lines, translating policy into real-world impact and ensuring that no community is left behind. As the federal government prepares Budget 2025 with an emphasis on economic growth, we urge you to recognize that a strong economy relies on a robust social infrastructure, one in which civil society organizations are fully supported as partners in building financial resilience, workforce participation, and inclusive prosperity.

The Canadian Centre for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE) offers three key recommendations for Budget 2025:



Recommendation 1: Increase sustainable, long-term funding for the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality

The Ministry of Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) is a vital part of Canada's federal framework, ensuring that national strategies like the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (NAP) and critical programs such as the Women's Economic Leadership and Opportunities Fund (WELOF) are fully implemented and well managed. In a period where economic health is a national priority, WAGE plays an essential role in connecting social policy with economic growth, ensuring that women and gender-diverse people are included in efforts to diversify, stabilize, and strengthen the Canadian economy.

As the federal government focuses on building one Canadian economy by removing barriers to interprovincial trade, expediting nation-building projects, and bringing down costs for Canadians, WAGE is a necessary conduit to these priorities. It ensures that economic planning reflects the realities of those most impacted by inequality and gender-based violence, and that programs reach the communities they are designed to serve. Strong, predictable funding for WAGE will allow it to remain robust within government, provide continuity to its initiatives, and drive systemic change that benefits both social well-being and economic resilience.

Recommendation 2: Fulfill the Liberal Party's 2025 promise of increasing support for the Women's Economic Leadership and Opportunities Fund (WELOF).

The Women's Economic Leadership and Opportunities Fund (WELOF) has been instrumental in advancing women's economic empowerment across Canada. It is the only federal fund of its size dedicated to tackling systemic barriers that prevent women and gender-diverse people from achieving economic security and leadership opportunities. By resourcing over 160 organizations nationwide, WELOF has strengthened efforts to close wage gaps, reduce employment discrimination, address gender-based violence and financial abuse, and expand access to training, mentorship, and entrepreneurship. Reinvestment in this fund is critical to sustaining progress toward an inclusive and equitable economy.

At the CCFWE, WELOF funding has enabled us to focus specifically on economic abuse, a pervasive yet often overlooked form of gender-based violence that restricts survivors' access to money, credit, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities. Our current project works to influence policymakers to close gender and racial wage gaps, improve employment insurance to better support survivors, and strengthen labour laws to create safer, trauma-informed workplaces. This work aligns with Canada's international human rights obligations under CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration and ensures that survivors are not left behind in our economic systems.

Through WELOF support, we are also building partnerships with the tourism and hospitality sector to create inclusive workplaces, advance women's leadership, and provide training on evidence-based tools and policies. In addition, we are addressing structural barriers that prevent



survivors from accessing microloans and lending opportunities, so they can pursue entrepreneurship as a pathway to stability and independence. These initiatives are grounded in research, stakeholder consultation, and policy advocacy to create sustainable systems-level change.

Federal commitment to increasing WELOF investment, as promised in the Liberal Party's 2025 platform, will ensure that organizations like CCFWE can continue to address systemic inequities, reduce economic abuse, and equip women and survivors with the tools and opportunities they need to thrive. Strengthening this fund is not just a matter of fairness; it is an investment in Canada's economic future.

Recommendation 3: Provide stable, multi-year core funding to the Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment

For years, WAGE has supported our work, enabling CCFWE to make significant progress in addressing economic abuse, a pervasive yet often hidden form of gender-based violence that restricts survivors' access to financial security, employment, and entrepreneurship. Our ongoing initiatives, supported through WELOF, align closely with the government's priorities for WAGE by removing systemic barriers for women and survivors in the tourism industry, improving access to micro-loans, expanding entrepreneurship opportunities, and addressing persistent wage gaps that undermine women's full participation in the economy. These actions directly strengthen both individual economic security and the health of Canada's overall economy.

Stable, multi-year core funding is essential to sustain and expand this impact. Unlike project-based funding, which limits long-term planning and organizational resilience, core funding would allow CCFWE to invest in strategic partnerships, respond quickly to emerging policy opportunities, and evaluate outcomes in a consistent, evidence-based manner. It would also ensure that our research, education, and advocacy efforts can continue to inform federal priorities such as the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence, wage equity initiatives, and broader efforts to diversify and stabilize Canada's economy during a period of global uncertainty.

Providing predictable resources to organizations like CCFWE is not only a social investment but an economic one. Economic abuse contributes to cycles of poverty, underemployment, and financial instability that ripple outward to the national economy. Supporting our work through sustainable core funding will help ensure survivors are able to rebuild their lives, contribute fully to Canada's workforce, and participate in sectors critical to growth and innovation.



ABOUT CCFWE

The Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE) is Canada's only national non-profit organization dedicated to addressing Economic Abuse and economic injustice in the context of domestic violence through education, research, financial empowerment, policy and system change. CCFWE works collaboratively with organizations and individuals to develop a comprehensive approach that enables domestic violence survivors to recover from Economic Abuse. It also addresses critical policy gaps preventing survivors from recovering and becoming economically secure and independent.

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