



Gender Budgeting and Housing

Current State in Canada

Canada had a reputation around the world for its progressive housing policies. However, in the past two decades, housing policies have been systematically dismantled as a result of housing budget cuts at the federal level, and in many provinces. In the near future the Federal Government is expected to repeal its financial commitments under the 1973 to 1993 national housing programme. As income supports at the federal level, and in every province are being reduced at every turn, many Canadians are left with even less income to pay for ever-increasing housing costs.

As of the 2007 Federal budget, at least 1.5 million households (more than 4 million people) were officially classified as being in "core housing need" and 25% of all households in core housing need are households headed by single mothers.

Upon the conclusion of a recent exploratory mission to Canada, Miloon Kothari, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing made the following recommendations to Canada in his preliminary findings.

"Canada should implement measures to address urgent, short term and long term needs of women in the country. Immediate implementation at all levels of the government of the recommendations from the United Nations treaty bodies on these specific measures, would eliminate the various barriers that women face both in urban and rural context in their daily life.

Very progressive legislations to address violence against women are being implemented in several provinces. These legislations should include, among other components, the sustainable access to housing for all women.

The implementation of policies, to comply with international and domestic legislation addressing the fulfillment of women's right, needs to be supported by the necessary funds and resources at all levels of the government.

Accountability on the creation, funding and implementation of programmes and policies that address housing and domestic violence must be undertaken at levels of the Government. Effective participation and consultation with women is not only a right but the best manner to ensure that policies and laws achieve their objectives."

(October 2007)

Current Response

The 2007 federal budget promised no new investments in housing or the eradication of homelessness and made no mention of the development of a national housing strategy. This budget does not recognize that there is a housing crisis in Canada and certainly does not recognize that it has gender dimensions.

Housing investment as potential result of gender budgeting

Australia's government has made a financial commitment to \$102.8 million over four years to maintain the real value and improve the effectiveness of the Australian Government's Indigenous Housing investments.