



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Call to Action: Intersectional Feminist Housing Agenda Goes to Parliament

Housing & homelessness advocates and lived experts from across Canada deliver 15 calls to action to the Federal Housing Minister, outlining & demanding solutions to the gendered housing crisis

Vancouver, BC (Dec. 7, 2023): Although Canada's housing crisis makes headlines on an almost daily basis - data shows that households led by women and gender-diverse people are the hardest hit yet most under-served. **That is why an intersectional, nation-wide coalition of feminist advocates have joined together to deliver a clear call to action to the Government of Canada.**

During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence that culminates on Human Rights Day this December 10, advocates, lived experts, and organizations have come together to demand that the Government of Canada address the gendered aspect of the housing and homelessness crisis. The group comprising over a dozen individual and organizational representatives has identified 15 calls to action for the government to implement, which range from targeted investments in housing, scaling solutions to the level of need, to taking meaningful steps that will realize the right to housing for this often under-served and marginalized population of women, gender-diverse, children, and 2SLGBTQIA people.

“No one can escape or avoid violence without a safe place to call home. If we really want to make a significant change to end gender-based violence and abuse, housing is the answer. Housing represents safety for women, gender-diverse people and their families,” said Sarah McIntosh, Executive Director with Atira Women's Resource Society.

Recently, the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing proclaimed that, “Everyone in Canada deserves a home. And if someone can't afford a home, they should be given one,” at the 2023 National Conference on Ending Homelessness. **We couldn't agree more.** Yet the status quo of the National Housing Strategy and the prevailing gender neutrality within current housing policies will not deliver on that sentiment – not unless necessary funding commitments and policy changes happen, as outlined in the Intersectional Feminist Housing Agenda.

“The reality is, the Government of Canada is currently not on track to meet its own goals to address housing precarity or homelessness among women and gender-diverse people,” says Khulud Baig, Director of Policy & Community Engagement with the Women’s National Housing & Homelessness Network . “And the problem will only get worse if the government fails to heed our calls to action.”

Even as billions of dollars are being invested by governments and the private sector to increase housing supply, households led by women and gender-diverse people continue to be disproportionately impacted by unmet housing needs. The system also does not track or measure whether or not these investments are actually reaching this population.

The coalition is demanding action to address the inequities in access to safe, affordable, appropriate housing for women, children, and gender-diverse people in all communities across Canada.

We will be looking for commitments that deliver on our calls to action —

- Updates to the National Housing Strategy to reflect the voices, perspectives and calls to action from women and gender-diverse people with lived expertise of the housing crisis.
- Investments that ensure the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women and gender-diverse people are specifically addressed in new housing and housing strategies.
- Prioritize capital and infrastructure funding for housing that supports the needs of women, their children and gender-diverse people.
- Flexible, sustained, predictable and adequate operating funding for housing agencies serving the needs of women, their children and gender-diverse people.
- Deliver a Universal Basic Income that reflects different regions’ needs.

[Read An Intersectional Feminist Housing Agenda for Canada here.](#)

Quick Facts:

- 9,078 women and girls in Canada experience homelessness on any given day.
- Nearly 1,000 women and their children are turned away from Violence Against Women shelters on an average day. Most will return to situations of violence and precarity because of it.
- 90% of families using emergency shelters are headed by single women.
- 43% of gender-diverse people reported experiencing discrimination from their landlords and/or property managers on the basis of gender.

- Research has shown that housing remains one of the leading barriers for women escaping violence and that domestic violence is one of the main causes of homelessness among Canadian families.
- Women's homelessness is vastly underestimated and often hidden. Women are often among the "invisible homeless", over-represented in shelters and transition houses.
- The coalition includes the Women's National Housing & Network, the Pan-Canadian Voice for Women's Housing, and many advocates, lived experts, and sector leaders

-30-

Media Contact:

Stefania Seccia, Women's National Housing & Homelessness Network

stefania@womenshomelessness.ca

778-628-1159

Feminist Housing Advocates are available to provide comments on the urgent need for improvements that matter to women, their children and gender-diverse people experiencing homelessness, who are precariously housed, and/or fleeing violence. Contact Stefania to coordinate interviews.

- **Andrea Reimer is available in British Columbia**
- **Sarah MacIntosh is available in British Columbia**
- **Chevi Rabbit is available in Alberta**
- **Khulud Baig is available in Alberta**
- **Hilary Chapple is available in Alberta**
- **Cindy Chiasson is available in the Yukon**
- **Lori Deets is available in Saskatchewan**
- **Dr. Kaitlin Schwan is available in Ontario**
- **Michaela Mayer is available in Quebec (*bilingual*)**
- **Dr. Jayne Malenfant is available in Quebec (*bilingual*)**
- **Annick Mondat Allemann is available in Prince Edward Island (*bilingual*)**

[Pan-Canadian Voice for Women's Housing \(PCVWH\)](#) is a national project focused on ensuring housing policies across Canada include and prioritize women, their children and gender-diverse people. PCVWH is overseen by a national Advisory Committee and through its annual symposium, PCVWH is convening important conversations with activists, academics, elected officials, and decision-makers from coast-to-coast-to-coast about why elevating the voices of women and gender-diverse people is essential work for all of us who care about housing.

Women's National Housing & Homelessness Network (WNHHN) is a leading national organization working to eliminate homelessness and housing insecurity for women, girls, and gender-diverse peoples across Canada through research, policy advocacy, community engagement, human rights work, and strategic litigation. The WNHHN is comprised of over 1000 members, organizations, and agencies from across Canada with diverse expertise, including leading academics, individuals with lived/living experience of homelessness, social service providers, human rights experts, grassroots activists, and community-based organizations.

National Indigenous Housing Network (NIHN) is a movement of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples who are dedicated to improving the living situations of Indigenous women and girls, Two-Spirit, and gender-diverse persons across Turtle Island and ending incidents of becoming unsheltered. All members have the lived experience of needing adequate shelter and a place to call home.