

**grandmothers**  
Advocacy Network



Mouvement de soutien des  
**grands-mères**

Advocating for the human rights of older women  
Défense des droits de la personne des femmes âgées

January 8, 2024

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen  
Minister of International Development  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN), we are requesting a meeting with you to discuss three things:

- the deepening global hunger crisis,
- the role that Canada can play to support sustainable solutions, and
- how Canadian grandmothers can help build support for international assistance.

GRAN is a national grassroots network of older women. We work together to advocate for the human rights of older women, children, youth, and gender-diverse persons in the Global South. Our special concern is for older women in sub-Saharan Africa, who are the most affected by the multiple intersecting crises of climate change, poverty, and food insecurity.

GRAN members, presently numbering around 300, have been actively advocating for social justice since 2011. We have worked to influence policy change related to access to life-saving medicines, education for girls and women, mining justice, climate justice, and ending gender-based violence. We are currently focused on the Right to Food.

Older women in Canada play an important role in the political space – we bring our life experience, our professional skills, and our knowledge of the political system to the work we do. Our “grandmother power” is key to our advocacy success as we engage our communities, meet with parliamentarians, partner with other civil society organizations, and raise our voices at public events and on social media.

We welcome your recent statements about the importance of effective international assistance, and the need to build partnerships with local groups to support sustainable economic development.

To be effective, Canada's development assistance needs to be flexible and long-term, while supporting projects and program initiatives that recognize the value of local knowledge and expertise. Local communities know their land and resources and what they need to build capacity. In many parts of the Global South, it is women who are providing leadership in their homes, communities, and beyond. To support their efforts, partnerships with organizations that are collaborating with small-scale women farmers and entrepreneurs are critically important.

Through our outreach to parliamentarians and the broader public, GRAN wants to help build support for increased and focused funding for international development. We will soon be encouraging our members to reach out to their MPs to speak with them about the importance of international assistance and seek their support.

We will be calling your office soon to ask for a meeting to discuss these important issues and Canada's role in supporting effective and sustainable solutions to the global hunger crisis. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sharon Graham" followed by a stylized signature for "Linda Kulkarni". The signature is written on a light blue horizontal line.

Sharon Graham and Linda Kulkarni, Co-Chairs  
Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN)  
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cc. Anita Vandenberg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development