

grandmothers
Advocacy Network



Mouvement de soutien des
grands-mères

Advocating for Grandmothers, Vulnerable Children and Youth in Africa

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

May 6, 2021

Open Letter to Minister Freeland:

Budget 2021 included important targeted humanitarian assistance to the people of war-torn countries who are experiencing acute hunger and are at high risk of famine. It was also encouraging to see the support for Canadian farmers to build a climate resilient approach to food production that includes regenerative agriculture, protection of sensitive ecosystems and support for clean energy.

The Grandmothers Advocacy Network is very concerned about the state of food insecurity around the globe and the need for long-term solutions. Global hunger has been rising steadily since 2015 due to the intersecting crises of protracted conflicts, the rapidly changing climate and, more recently, the pandemic. In 2020 the [UN Food and Agriculture Organization](#) estimated that 690 million people around the globe were malnourished, with one in ten people living with severe food insecurity. The rate of chronic hunger is rising most rapidly in Africa. [Here](#) is a three-minute video clip with the highlights of the FAO report.

In sub-Saharan Africa, small-scale farmers provide approximately 80% of the food for the continent. Based on the most recent statistics, women comprise over 50% of this workforce. Most often it is the women who provide food security for their communities, and yet they face multiple challenges related to lack of access to information and resources.

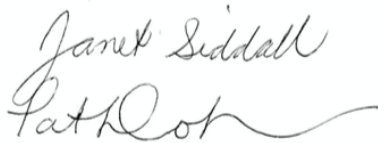
We are writing today to ask for an increase in international climate financing that would be consistent with Canada's fair share of the \$100 billion annual financing agreed to by the international community. This would be new funding in addition to existing Official Development Assistance (ODA). Within this funding envelope we ask specifically that you include:

- stable long-term funding to small-scale farmers in sub-Saharan Africa for development of regenerative agriculture similar to the focus of the funding you have provided to Canadian farmers; and
- consistent with Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, dedicated funding for agricultural initiatives led by women's organizations.

Canadian NGO's have existing strong relationships with small-scale farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and are in a good position to work with local leaders in these communities.

Strengthening and expanding sustainable agriculture in the Global South will substantially address the food security needs of the world's most vulnerable people. Canada's leadership in agriculture through international investment reflects Canadian values and would make all Canadians proud.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Janet Siddall and Pat Dolan in cursive script.

Janet Siddall and Pat Dolan, Co-Chairs
Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN)
<https://grandmothersadvocacy.org>

Cc The Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of International Development
The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change