



## Single Use Plastics and Plastic Packaging

**RESOLVED**, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urges the Government of Canada, and the Provincial, Territorial, and Municipal Governments to expedite the ban on single-use plastics (plastic checkout bags, straws, stir sticks, six-pack rings, cutlery, and food ware made from hard-to-recycle plastics) and to expand the ban to include all problematic and unnecessary non-recyclable plastics including plastic wrapping and packaging, plastic tampon applicators (Change.org), disposable plastic beverage cups & plastic bottle caps and lids and plastic labels on containers; (UK Plastics Pact);

**RESOLVED**, That CFUW urges the Government of Canada to implement Canada's Plastic Science Agenda (CPSA) and, with the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, to provide funding for the full implementation and follow-up of a Canada wide strategy on zero plastic waste;

**RESOLVED**, That CFUW urges the Government of Canada, and the Provincial and Territorial, and Municipal Governments to fully fund development of school curricula and promote programs to educate the public about the dangers caused to habitat, the environment (including terrestrial and aquatic) and to all life forms by discarded plastic waste;

**RESOLVED**, That CFUW urges the Government of Canada and the Provincial, Territorial and Municipal Governments to use incentives including start-up funding to create alternative uses for discarded plastics, biodegradable alternatives to single-use plastic packaging and wrapping and to work with academics and industry to support the creation of those alternatives.

### Background

Plastics, plastic packaging and plastic wrap labelling form a substantial portion of non-recyclable solid waste. In Canada in 2016, only 9% of plastic waste was recyclable while 87% went into unmanaged dumps or landfills. (Environment & Climate Change Canada) These affect the environment and human health. Canada is committed to the Ocean Plastics Charter and to zero plastic waste. The public needs education to end its dependence on plastics. Labelling is a source of consumer information. Canada's Plastic Science Agenda (CaPSA) supporting the 2018 G7 Ocean Plastics Charter, outlines commitments and targets to stop plastic waste flowing into the environment. Canada has the longest shoreline in the world and plastic pollution that ends up in the ocean is a major issue. Support for behavioural change targeting industry and consumers will encourage the adoption of sound practices for the consumption and management of plastic resources; provide the knowledge base to support efforts to treat plastics as a valuable resource; and meet the ambitious plastic waste reduction targets laid out in the Ocean Plastics Charter. Canadians need clear labelling to decide how to properly dispose of plastic products.

### Quick Facts

- "By 2050, the world is expected to increase waste generation by 70%, from 2.01 billion tonnes of waste to 3.40 billion tonnes of waste annually." (World Bank)
- North Americans generate the most solid waste in the world at 2.2 kg per person/per day. The projected waste generation per capita/day by 2030 – is 2.37 kg\* and by 2050 it will be 2.50 kg\*. (World Bank)
- According to Oceana Canada, Canada currently uses 4.6 million tonnes of plastics every year — roughly 125 kilograms per person and approximately half of all plastic discarded in Canada is single-use.
- Some plastic waste is non-biodegradable and can act as vectors for chemical contaminant exposure for both plastic-derived chemicals and environmental pollutants, release chemicals used in their production, such as plasticizers, flame retardants, and UV stabilizers, some of which have been linked to endocrine-disrupting activity and other adverse effects, and are associated with a high capacity to pick up other chemicals present in the environment, such as persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and trace metals, as well as biological contaminants such as bacteria and viruses.



## Single Use Plastics and Plastic Packaging

### Take Action & Implementation of Policy

- [Click here to download a template letter.](#)
- CFUW Regional Councils urge their Minister of the Environment to take action to implement zero plastic waste.
- CFUW Clubs and members contact their local MPs, MPPs, MNAs and MLAs to support the ban of single-use plastics and to share examples of personal buying that could reduce plastic waste in landfills, oceans and lakes. Eg. solid bar of shampoo
- CFUW Clubs and members contact their municipal government about the increasing cost of waste management and ask for a public information campaign to start phasing out single-use plastics.
- CFUW Councils, Clubs and members write to their local MPs, Provincial and Territorial governments to support the strategies of Canada's Plastics Science Agenda and to call for fully funded public education programs and prompt implementation.
- CFUW Clubs and members could review the labelling of plastics and contact their municipal government to find out how their waste management system processes plastics and which they accept.
- CFUW Councils, Clubs and members write to their Provincial Minister of Environment calling for prompt action on the Canada-wide Action Plan on Zero Plastic Waste.
- CFUW Clubs and members assess plastics labelling report to the Canadian Standards Agency if the symbols are difficult to read.
- CFUW members request that restaurants and grocers provide alternatives to plastic packaging for take-out meals.
- Write a letter as a club to both local MP and MPP urging them to implement zero plastic waste
- Letters to news media
  - Letters to the editor or Op-Ed to local news, online news
  - Letters to national media



## “Right to Repair” for Large Household Appliances

**RESOLVED**, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Federal, Provincial, Territorial, and Municipal governments to work together and create “right to repair” legislation, including a minimum five-year warranty on parts and labour, making the repair of large household appliances used in Canada easier, in an effort to reduce waste, greenhouse gas emissions, and create local jobs.

### Background

Over the last century, Canadian households have shifted towards a model of higher consumption of household appliances. Many consumers have become resigned to appliances that are short-lived and cheaper to replace than to repair. In Canada, the first household appliances were manufactured domestically in the 1920's, 1930's and 1940's. As major household expenditures, these appliances were expected to last for many years and therefore, reliability became a major success factor for manufacturers. Today, the lifespan of modern home appliances is 10 to 15 years, down from 20 to 30 years when these machines were mostly mechanical (American Home Shield, n.d.). Due to the high cost of repair, once the machine is out of its short warranty period, many consumers find it cheaper to replace the machine rather than to repair it (CBC Marketplace, February 28, 2020). The current “take-make-waste” linear model of consumption is enabled through the availability of inexpensive labour and material inputs. The full environmental and social costs of this consumption model are typically not included in the up-front purchase cost of a product. Encouraging a shift towards a more circular economic model through “right to repair” legislation whereby large household appliances (washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and cooking ranges) are manufactured with the intention of a long usable life and local repair with easily accessible parts would benefit both the consumer and the environment.

### Quick Facts

- Over the last century, Canadian households have shifted towards a model of higher consumption of household appliances.
- Canadian manufacturing of large household appliances is virtually extinct and the manufacturing of these appliances is primarily carried out offshore with cheaper labour and less durable parts.
- A Consumer Reports survey shows that although appliances should last over 10 years, within the first 5 years 40% of refrigerators, 30% of washing machines, 30% of dishwashers, and 25% of cooking ranges require repair (Consumer Reports, 2019).
- Women may be particularly vulnerable to this system of “take-make-waste”
  - Women are more likely to use household appliances
  - Women comprise the majority of single-family households
- According to the OECD Global Material Resources Outlook to 2060 (2019), the world demand for global primary materials will double between 2019 and 2060. Population growth and increasing standards of living, particularly in developing countries, will drive this growth. The extraction and recycling of these materials come at an environmental cost.
- European Commission regulations making the repair of domestic appliances easier came into effect in 2021.
  - require manufacturers to design longer-lasting machines, make spare parts easily and readily available for a minimum of 10 years and make the repairs easy to carry out with simple tools.



## “Right to Repair” for Large Household Appliances

### Take Action & Implementation of Policy

- [Click here to download a template letter.](#)
- CFUW Clubs could start at home by researching and educating themselves about their own household appliance purchases, and are encouraged to take a life cycle approach to costing when making their decision to purchase an appliance (not just the up-front purchase cost, but also the costs of repair, lifespan, replacement, and disposal of the appliance). They are also encouraged to share their decision-making framework with friends and family members to help build education and awareness within their immediate social networks.
- CFUW Clubs could contact their local governments to help build the capacity for local repair, through training programs and by providing incentives to local businesses to support a right-to-repair model.
- CFUW Clubs could contact their federal representatives (Members of Parliament) to establish a federal “right-to-repair” program with national standards. Extended producer responsibility schemes need to be strengthened.
- CFUW could contact the Manufacturers and Exporters Association, the Canadian Manufacturing Coalition and the Canadian Standards Association, asking them to state their policies on this issue, and what they and their members are doing to mitigate the environmental effects of the “take-make-waste” linear model of consumption that promotes tons of waste each year.
- Write a letter as a club to both local MP and MPP urging them to support the development of “right to repair” legislation
- Letters to news media
  - Letters to the editor or Op-Ed to local news, online news
  - Letters to national media



## Canada's Opioid Crisis

**RESOLVED**, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to work together to address Canada's opioid crisis, as outlined in the Government of Canada December 16, 2020 document, Federal Actions on Opioids to Date, by: **1.** increasing the number of safe injection and overdose treatment sites and providing improved access; **2.** expanding public awareness of (a) addiction to prescription and street drugs, and (b) protection under the 2017 Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act amending the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act **3.** increasing awareness about the stigma of addiction and the resulting reluctance to seek help; **4.** updating current prescription and treatment guidelines for pain management and/or opioid addiction; **5.** improving access to harm reduction treatments, such as: (a) easier access to Naloxone for emergency use, and (b) Suboxone, and other detoxification treatment alternatives; **6.** supporting and enhancing efforts to restrict the influx of illegal opioids and the tainted drug supply;

**RESOLVED**, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to work together in order to address Canada's opioid crisis by moving the focus of the opioid crisis from corrections to health care through, but not limited to the following: **1.** working with multi-discipline stakeholders and professional health and security organizations to implement alternatives to criminal justice approaches, including evidence-based decriminalization of drugs for personal use; **2.** working with stakeholders, including health practitioners and counsellors, on best practices in pain management and/or opioid addiction; **3.** increasing support and psychosocial services for vulnerable people by increasing the number of trained professionals available to address the opioid crisis; **4.** increasing and improving training of first responders, counsellors and public security personnel to better recognize and address addiction, and the associated stigma, by integrating such training into the core curriculum at post-secondary institutions and ongoing professional development; **5.** establishing a cross-Canada electronic prescription drug registry

### Background

More Canadians - teenagers, young adults, as well as older adults - are dying or are having to be hospitalized due to opioid toxicity, overdose of street drugs or prescription drugs than from any other problem. Fischer et al. (CMAJ, 2016) state in the Canadian Medical Association Journal that use of prescription opioids to treat pain has increased over the past two decades, leading to a public health crisis. Substance abuse disproportionately impacts the vulnerable, those with mental health issues, the indigenous, and those living in stressful circumstances. The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA, 2016) notes that the public health opioid crisis in Canada from both prescription and street drugs continues to be exacerbated by the influx of newer, more powerful synthetic opioids. CPHA advocates supporting research into the causes and determinants of problematic substance use, and recommends increased access to Naloxone, to the extent of making it available as an over-the-counter product for those in need. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA, 2018) supports a public health management approach to tackling the problem of opioid addiction by treating it as a health care issue, with support and treatment for those facing opioid addiction, rather than as a criminal offence. The CMHA advocates decriminalizing personal drug use and focusing on harm reduction and treatment, along with easier access to harm reduction and detoxification treatments.

### Quick Facts

- Data from the Government of Canada (2020) show that in the last four and a half years, there have been over 17,000 opioid-related deaths, and almost 22,000 hospitalizations due to opioid-related poisoning.
- The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA, July 2020) noted over 15,000 opioid related deaths from 2016–2019.
  - Two-thirds of the deaths were attributed to 20- to 49-year-olds and three-quarters of those were males.
- The CCSA states that data show 11.8% of the population used opioid pain relievers in 2017 (July 2020)
- The Canadian Mental Health Association policy report (CMHA, 2018) states that Canada is the second highest per capita consumer of opioids in the world and is facing “an unprecedented public health crisis”.
- BC experiences the highest per capita use and harm from opioid use; its capacity- building experience provides a basis for other provinces and territories to update or establish guidelines in this area.



## Canada's Opioid Crisis

### Take Action & Implementation of Policy

- [Click here to download a template letter.](#)
- CFUW members could write letters to discuss advances and actions proposed and being taken by various government departments, and dialogue with:
  - elected representatives at all levels of government to increase the number of safe injection sites and to improve access to those sites;
  - the provincial and municipal governments, and post-secondary institutions, urging them to integrate training into the core curriculum and the professional development of health care and public security personnel, to better recognize and address addiction and stigma, including better identification of vulnerable populations and persons with mental health issues, and to remain abreast of the latest research in pain management techniques;
  - the provincial health authorities to:
    - (a) improve access to Naloxone and opioid substitutes, and
    - (b) establish a cohesive cross-Canada electronic prescription drug registry.
- CFUW could prepare a presentation for educating members on the opioid crisis, and Clubs should include the opioid crisis as part of their monthly speaker programme.
- Write a letter as a club to both local MP and MPP urging them to work to address Canada's opioid crisis, as outline in the Government of Canada December 16, 2020 document "Federal Actions on Opioids to Date"
- Letters to news media
  - Letters to the editor or Op-Ed to local news, online news
  - Letters to national media



## Post-Pandemic Recovery for Women in Canada and Abroad

**RESOLVED**, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Federal, Provincial, Territorial, and Municipal Governments to develop and fund a comprehensive Post-Pandemic(s) Socioeconomic Recovery Plan(s) including specific interventions to address the disparate effect of pandemics on the lives of women in Canada and abroad.

### Background

COVID-19 presents an unprecedented opportunity to envision new policies and strategies not only to address the negative economic impacts of COVID-19 on the economic status of women but to substantially mitigate the systemic barriers women have historically faced. The Feminist Economic Recovery Plan for Canada was formulated by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the Institute for Gender and the Economy (GATE) at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management. They have formulated a plan that addresses the gendered impact of COVID-19 and systemic barriers to the economic security of women in Canada. This Plan (YWCA, 2020) proposes 8 major recommendations to build Canada's economy back better so that it becomes more inclusive and ultimately more resilient for future crises. The eight pillars of the Plan include: 1. Intersectionality: Understanding Power; 2. Addressing Root Causes of Systemic Racism; 3. Care Work is Essential Work; 4. Investing in Good Jobs; 5. Fighting the Shadow Pandemic; 6. Bolstering Small Businesses; 7. Strengthening Infrastructure for Recovery; 8. Diverse Voices in Decisions. As governments and the private sector take action, and develop recovery plans, there is an opportunity for the Government of Canada to develop socio economic interventions that are inclusive and facilitate the full participation of Canadian women in the economy.

### Quick Facts

- Reliable data ([UNSDG, 2020](#); [Gunraj, 2020](#); [CUPE, 2020](#)) indicates the pandemic has fundamentally changed global economic structures and the negative gendered impacts of COVID 19 on women.
- In March 2020, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives reported that **women represented 70% of all job losses** ([Scott, 2020](#)) in the core demographic aged 25 to 54 years
- **1 in 5 women workers** ([MacDonald, 2020](#)) lost their jobs or the majority of their hours in February 2020 and March 2020.
- The economic impact of COVID-19 on women varies greatly depending on the social economic status of individual women and specific populations ([Howard, 2020](#)).
- Canadian Women's Foundation confirms that "women remain highly concentrated in professional roles that put them on the front lines of both healthcare and jobs considered essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic" ([Canadian Women's Foundation, 2020](#))
- The three industries with the highest ratio of women versus men in Canada are health care and social assistance (82.4 per cent); educational services (69.3 per cent); and accommodation and food services (58.5 per cent), ([Moyser, 2017](#)).



## Post-Pandemic Recovery for Women in Canada and Abroad

### Take Action & Implementation of Policy

- [Click here to download a template letter.](#)
- Local clubs could undertake activities to enhance their knowledge about socioeconomic factors related to the status of women in Canada and abroad (and how women and girls have been so negatively affected by pandemics in what has been described for COVID-19 by the UN as a shadow pandemic.)
- CFUW members could advocate with their representatives of government at all levels to support the implementation of a post-pandemic socioeconomic recovery plan, recovery and accountability for specific actions and strategies to address racism, provide affordable childcare and early learning, expand protections for women from domestic violence and enhance the care sector.
- CFUW members could advocate with their representatives of government at all levels to implement recommendations and strategies related to socioeconomic growth and the participation of women in a post pandemic economy.
- CFUW members could work with other organizations and the private sector committed to areas of recovery to ensure diverse voices of women at socioeconomic decision-making tables.
- CFUW members could engage MPs, MLAs, and other government officials to hold them accountable for the promises made regarding post pandemic recovery and rebuilding a more inclusive economy.
- Write a letter as a club to both local MP and MPP urging them to support feminist post-pandemic recovery plan legislation
- Letters to news media
  - Letters to the editor or Op-Ed to local news, online news
  - Letters to national media