

Dear decent work ally,

We can't build a decent work movement without women.

47% of Canada's labour force consists of women workers¹. However, women, especially racialized, immigrant, and Indigenous women, women from the LGBTQ community, and women with disabilities, experience unequal labour market outcomes across sectors. Let's build a stronger decent work movement together so we can impact the most marginalized workers, while raising the floor for everyone.

We want to work with like-minded allies like you

You are committed to the movement and are already mobilizing with similar values. So let's combine, share, and amplify the movement together to increase our impact.

Expanding the way we think about decent work

One of ONN's policy priorities is strengthening Ontario's nonprofit sector labour force, which is 80% women and highly racialized. Our research on women's employment experiences in the sector revealed that:

- The sector is women-majority but not women-led
- Women have lower compensation than men
- Women experience sexism at all levels
- Women overwhelmingly experience bullying and some sexual harassment
- Gender plays a significant role in shaping labour market structures in the nonprofit sector
- Racism and ageism are other common forms of discrimination

These experiences and their solutions often get lost in the broader decent work movement while adverse impacts on different groups of women are not included.

Decent work for women in nonprofits is:

- Equal pay, equal pay for work of equal value, and pay transparency
- Stable employment
- Maternity and parental leave top-ups
- Safe reporting mechanisms for discrimination and harassment
- Pathways to professional development and advancement
- Gender parity and diversity in sector leadership
- Not reproducing gendered roles in organizations
- Recognizing the impact of being a feminized sector on the type of employment opportunities available

¹ ONN uses an inclusive definition of women that recognizes and welcomes trans women, queer women and nonbinary people.

Every time we talk about decent work, let's make it clear we also mean decent work for women

Here are the ways we can work together:

1. Spread #decentwork across networks with shared messages:

Our [#decentwork](#) includes decent work for women. Decent work means looking at supports women workers particularly need in the workplace.

Decent work for women is equal pay, equal pay for work of equal value, and pay transparency for all women across all sectors.

Investing in women-majority sectors is equally as important as investing in non-traditional sectors. Women should have decent work in whichever industry and occupation they choose to work in (STEM, trades, carework).

2. Advocate together on public policy impacting women workers:

Advocating to the Government of Canada:

Modernizing EI maternity and parental benefits is an opportunity to promote gender equity by reducing the EI benefit waiting periods for new parents, reducing the number of hours required to qualify for benefits, and providing adequate income replacement levels during maternity and parental leaves.

Advocating to the Government of Ontario:

Transparent pay scales, not asking for salary history, no reprisals of sharing salary info, and gender wage gap reporting levels the playing field for women workers to earn a fair living. We know that when employees are earning fair wages, organizations are better equipped to meet their missions. Learn more about pay transparency from a nonprofit lens in ONN's Ministry of Labour consultation [submission](#).

3. Share resources:

New evidence to help inform your advocacy work:

[Decent Work for Women - A Literature review of women working in Ontario's Nonprofit Sector](#)

[Women's Voices: Experiences of women working in Ontario's nonprofit sector](#)

ONN's [10 solutions](#) to increase decent work for women in nonprofits

Tools to use or replicate:

[Decent Work Charter](#) and [Checklist for Organizations](#)

Maternity and parental leave top-ups: How we can do better in Ontario's nonprofit sector (*coming soon*)

A gender-based intersectional approach to compensation practices in nonprofits (*coming soon*)

Share your work, messages, tools, and success stories so we can amplify them

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The ONN is the independent nonprofit network for the 58,000 nonprofits in Ontario, focused on policy, advocacy and services to strengthen the sector as a key pillar of our society and economy. We work to create a public policy environment that allows nonprofits to thrive. We engage our network of diverse nonprofit organization across Ontario to work together on issues affecting the sector and channel the voices of our network to government, funders, and other stakeholders.

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