WPSN-C Strategic Priorities
2026 and Beyond

This effort was led by the Steering Committee from September to November 2025. The Steering Committee thanks the members of the Governance Working Group for co-leading the consultation process and for their input into this document.

The Women, Peace and Security Network – Canada (WPSN-C) brings together more than 80 Canadian non-governmental organizations and individuals committed to advancing Women, Peace and Security (WPS) through dialogue, collaboration, and advocacy initiatives led by members.

Our mandate is to:
- Promote and monitor the Government of Canada's implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS); and
- Provide a forum for exchange and action by Canadian civil society on WPS-related issues.

As a volunteer-run network operating in a context of limited political attention and constrained funding for feminist and peacebuilding work, our strategy focuses on what is most feasible, sustainable, and impactful over the next five years.

This document outlines short-term (2026) priorities and longer-term (2026–2030) directions, grounded in the collective insights shared by members through consultations held from September to November 2025.

Our Approach

WPSN-C remains unique in Canada: a voluntary, non-partisan, and inclusive space where practitioners, researchers, and advocates exchange perspectives and collectively shape feminist peace and security action.

Our work is grounded in shared principles that guide how we collaborate and evolve:
- Feminist and intersectional: We strive to centre gender justice, anti-racism, and decolonization in all that we do, while recognizing that we are still learning and do not always get it right. We commit to continual reflection, listening, and improvement.
- Collaborative and caring: We value relationships, trust, and mutual respect, recognizing both the emotional labour of advocacy and the importance of collective care.
- Evidence-based and principled: We ground our advocacy in the lived experiences of women and gender-diverse peacebuilders and in feminist analysis.
- Sustainable and realistic: We prioritize what we can do well with our volunteer capacity, rather than overextending our commitments.

Short-Term Priorities (2026)

a. Strengthen Core Functioning and Internal Cohesion

- Maintain simple, transparent governance, including monthly meetings for information-sharing with members; an Annual General Meeting for reporting and Network decision-making; and open calls for Working Groups and leadership in Network initiatives.
- Re-energize Working Groups only where there is active leadership and interest, allowing dormant groups to pause without pressure.
- Host informal brown-bag discussions, reflective sessions, and debriefs that strengthen trust and social cohesion—foundational elements of a feminist peacebuilding network. These spaces enable members to share insights, surface emerging issues, and collectively sharpen the Network's ability to respond to developments in Canada's and the global WPS landscape.
- Adopt lightweight communications practices by finalizing a concise internal communications guide to ensure consistency, ethical practice, and safe platform use; maintaining the monthly members' newsletter as the central tool for coordinated advocacy and knowledge-sharing; and continuing to use LinkedIn as the primary public channel to amplify evidence-informed analysis and elevate Canadian WPS leadership without stretching volunteer capacity.

b. Focus Thematic Work Where Members Already Lead

As a network of diverse organizations and individuals, WPSN-C does not take positions on behalf of all members. Rather, the Network provides a platform through which members can collaborate, coordinate advocacy, and amplify initiatives led by interested members or coalitions of members.

Indicative areas of interest for 2026 include:
- Palestine, Sudan, and Afghanistan – continued solidarity and advocacy,
- Canada's increasing defence spending – feminist critiques and calls for peace-centred approaches,
- Domestic implementation of WPS – strengthening links with Indigenous, northern, and diaspora women's leadership, and
- Climate and security – pursued through partnerships rather than new structures.

c. Maintain Realistic, Targeted Advocacy
- Continue constructive engagement with Global Affairs Canada on CNAP3 implementation and feminist foreign policy, including through the WPS Advisory Group co-chaired by WPSN-C and Global Affairs Canada.
- Organise one advocacy initiative in 2026 (for example, an open letter, policy brief, or parliamentary briefing) rather than multiple campaigns.
- Engage selectively with Parliament and other departments (such as DND and Veterans Affairs) where there is clear feminist value-added and reciprocity.
- Strengthen relationships with allied networks and coalitions, including member organizations, to share effort, visibility, and impact.

What success looks like by end of 2026:
- Members feel informed, connected, and supported.
- At least one well-positioned and visible advocacy output—such as a public statement, policy brief, or collective letter—is developed by interested members and recognized within the wider WPS community.
- Clear, caring, and sustainable internal communication and coordination practices are in place, enabling engagement without burnout and ensuring continuity, transparency, and shared ownership across the Network.

Longer-Term Directions (2026–2030)

a. Build Modest but Sustainable Infrastructure
- Explore micro-funding or partnership opportunities to support essential coordination functions, such as part-time administrative support, website maintenance, and events.
- Develop a small resource-mobilization team under the leadership of the Finance Committee to identify realistic opportunities, including joint grant proposals or co-hosted events with academic partners.
- Encourage leadership renewal by mentoring new Working Group leads and supporting intergenerational participation.

b. Consolidate WPSN-C's Role as a Feminist Policy Voice
- Focus on depth rather than breadth by providing concise, evidence-based inputs to government and allied institutions (such as universities and women's rights organizations), ensuring accountability while reducing coordination burdens.
- Publish an annual State of WPS in Canada reflection analysis summarizing civil society perspectives. This analysis will serve as a tool for tracking national progress, surfacing systemic gaps, and informing government commitments.
- Host one low-cost annual national convening or virtual dialogue bringing together women's rights organizations, peace and security institutions, and key policymakers to sustain visibility of WPS priorities, generate evidence-based recommendations, and influence national policy processes.

c. Strengthen Advocacy Principles and Boundaries
- Continue dialogue with the Canadian government guided by transparency, reciprocity, and feminist ethics.
- Advocate for fair resourcing of feminist peacebuilding and for Canada's policy commitments to be matched with adequate funding.
- Maintain independence and create space for various member advocacy priorities, while engaging respectfully with multiple actors.

What success looks like by 2030:
- A stable, respected, volunteer-driven network with modest operational support.
- Continued recognition by government and partners as a credible and principled voice on WPS.
- An active and diverse membership contributing to policy dialogue and feminist knowledge-sharing.

Annual Review

To maintain trust and continuity, the Steering Committee will produce a timely Annual Report each year summarizing key activities, advocacy milestones, and lessons learned. The report will be distributed to Network members and made publicly available in the first quarter of the year.

In summary

This strategy is intentionally realistic and sustainable. It acknowledges that the current political context offers limited institutional attention to WPS, while recognizing that WPSN-C's strength lies in its continuity, credibility, and collective voice. By translating these principles into concrete practices, the Network can continue shaping agendas even within constrained environments.

By centring care, coherence, and principled advocacy, WPSN-C remains both a vital space and a steady voice for feminist peacebuilding in Canada, as well as a strategic actor capable of contributing to the advancement of the WPS agenda globally.