

## Women Reducing Poverty Together An invitation to participate

Women's organizations and grassroots groups in the Ottawa area are joining together to identify and address the ways that women, across diversity, experience poverty. We invite your organization to join us.

In this three year initiative City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) seeks to work with community partners and women experiencing poverty to create the conditions by which we can bring about institutional change at the local level, engaging with higher levels of government as needed.

### Together, we will:

- **Draw from the experience of each of our organizations and women in our communities** to identify and address the factors that contribute to women's poverty in Ottawa.
- **Undertake an intersectional gender analysis of poverty** that takes into account the ways in which colonialism, racism, Islamophobia, ageism, and ableism intersect with sexism to contribute to the barriers women experience.
- **Identify opportunities for influencing social policy** to address the causes of women's poverty.
- **Work together with women's organizations and grassroots groups** to undertake collective action to influence policy shapers in the City of Ottawa, as well as other institutions, and higher levels of government as needed.
- **Sharpen our organizations' skills for raising concerns** with city decision makers, speaking to the media, and presenting before committees.
- **Engage women from a wide range of diversity in our organizations and communities** (i.e. indigenous, youth, racialized, immigrant and women with disabilities) to be agents of change, speaking from their own lived experience.
- **Draw upon the insights of five national gatherings of 150 women** over three years to develop national strategies for advancing gender equality. Three local women will represent our local project and bring insights back:
  - Mercy Lawlivi, Exec. Director, Immigrant Women's Services Organization
  - Claudette Commanda, Algonquin Anishinabe Elder
  - Suzanne Doerge, Director, City for All Women Initiative (CAWI)



## How to get involved

- **Hold a one hour kitchen table discussion at your organization** facilitated by CAWI. This could be with approximately 8 staff, board members, community members or clients, so as to share the specific ways that the women in the communities you serve experience poverty (May – July 2017).
- **Send two representatives of your organization to a half day forum on September 13<sup>th</sup> (9:00 – 2:00 with networking lunch)** where we will consolidate our learning.
- **Send a leader and an emerging leader from your organization or group (staff, board or leaders of your organization) to a one day workshop October 13<sup>th</sup>** to learn about the City Budget Process and how to bring your concerns forward.

## To make it possible for you to engage

- **CAWI will provide skills building workshops to meet the strategic needs** that organizations identify for reducing women's experience of poverty. This could include ways to influence elected officials, engaging the media, engaging communities in elections, supporting candidates committed to addressing poverty, storytelling, recognizing and addressing expressions of discrimination, being an ally.
- **We will build relationships with city staff, elected officials, board members of institutions** so as to collaboratively identify the most strategic opportunities for addressing institutional barriers.
- **CAWI will provide plain language and multi-lingual tools** for engaging the women in the communities you serve.
- **Childcare and travel expenses will be covered** for women who need it in order to participate.

For more information, contact Suzanne Doerge, Director, City for All Women Initiative (CAWI), [sdoerge@cawi-ivtf.org](mailto:sdoerge@cawi-ivtf.org), 613-526-5240, [www.cawi-ivtf.org](http://www.cawi-ivtf.org).