



WE CAN DO BETTER

ELECTION TOOLKIT

Canadians will head to the polls on October 19. And it's time to ensure that candidates, from all political parties, hear from Canadians that they care about climate change, women's rights, and ending poverty and global inequality. But it's not just voting that matters. The lead-up to election-day is a time for action – time to put the We Can Do Better campaign issues on the political agenda. All candidates need to know that the next federal government must and can do better to address these issues at home and abroad.

WHAT'S IN THIS TOOLKIT – A HOW-TO GUIDE TO:

01 GETTING OUR ISSUES ON
THE POLITICAL AGENDA

03 BEING AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

04 ENGAGING WITH CANDIDATES

15 GETTING OUR MESSAGE OUT

19 USING A CANDIDATES'
QUESTIONNAIRE

21 ADHERING TO
ELECTION RULES

21 FOLLOWING-UP
POST-ELECTION



GETTING OUR ISSUES ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA - THE GOOD AND THE CHALLENGING

FIRST, THE GOOD:

THE CANDIDATES – Election campaigns provide an opportunity to talk about issues that are important to Canadians. And now, more than at any other time in the political process, party candidates and MPs up for re-election are willing to listen. Actually, they're seeking out ways to [engage](#) with voters. From town hall meetings, to door-to-door canvassing, to the ubiquitous summer political barbeque, you have an "all access" pass to your candidates. Use it.

THE MEDIA – Election campaigns are also a [media](#) bonanza. At the national and local levels, reporters will be assigned to cover various candidates and political parties. Reporters will also want to hear from voters. They'll want to know what voters think about their candidates and what issues are important them. Tell them.

THE MATERIALS – The We Can Do Better campaign has a [primer on the campaign](#), [backgrounders on the issues](#), [social media](#) tips and [actions](#) up and ready to use. All the We Can Do Better resources can be used "as is", personalized or adapted for the election campaign.

Use these materials to talk with your neighbours. When candidates knock on your door. Or to ask questions at an all-candidates' debate. Help get the message out: We can do better on climate change, women's rights and ending inequality. Be heard.

NOW, THE CHALLENGING PART:



THE CANDIDATES – Election campaigns should be a time for discussions about the kind of country we want Canada to be. But often, real discussions are drowned out by the noise and fanfare of electioneering. Getting the We Can Do Better message out will be a challenge.

Candidates will want to stay on message – a message determined by their political party. And they will not want to say or do anything that may lose them votes.

This means, although they may be more accessible, candidates might not be willing to offer specifics or make commitments. The summer barbeque, for candidates, is a time to be seen and to shake hands. The all-candidates' debate, a time to “beat” their opponents and shore up votes.

But, no matter the venue or the candidates' goals, our objective remains the same: to get decision makers to act on climate change, women's rights and ending poverty and inequality.

So, show up. Ask [questions](#). Use any and all opportunities to get the message out.

THE MEDIA – Your local media will be covering the local candidates, but also the national campaign issues. The challenge is to make the We Can Do Better themes (climate change and environmental sustainability, women's rights and gender equality, human rights and inequality), issues that your local media will want to cover. The challenge is to make international and national issues resonate locally.

Take the We Can Do Better [climate change](#) backgrounder and link it to a local issue. For example, pipelines and the impact a pipeline would have on your community.

Take the We Can Do Better backgrounder on [women's rights](#) and relate it to the income wage disparity for women in Canada or the number of women candidates running in your riding, or the [need for a national debate](#) on issues that matter to women.

Take the We Can Do Better backgrounder on [inequality](#) and highlight the impact of cuts to social services in your community on the most vulnerable.

Make the We Can Do Better key themes election issues.

BEING AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE – TOP FIVE TIPS:

1 BE KNOWLEDGEABLE

When talking to a neighbour or asking questions to a candidate at your door or during a public event, you need to prepare for (and encourage) follow-up questions and engagement. Be ready to provide further information, or to point people to where they can find out more.

Read the “We Can Do Better” campaign [primer](#), themes sections and backgrounders on [inequality and human rights](#), [climate change and environmental sustainability](#) and [gender equality and women’s rights](#). Since the new [sustainable development goals](#) (SDGs) that will be adopted by the United Nations are universal – they apply to all countries from Canada to Cameroon, and bring with them global responsibilities – we have also provided a simple backgrounder on what the [concept of universality](#) means for Canada and Canadians. And encourage people to visit the [We Can Do Better campaign site](#) for more info.

2 BE PRESENT AND PERSISTENT

Show up. Find out who your [current MP](#) and who the candidates are in your riding and in your wider community. Call their campaign offices and find out what events the candidates will be attending and – show up.

Contact the candidates by [phone](#) or [email](#) and let them know that you care about climate change, women’s rights and poverty and inequality.

Show up at public events and debates and ask [questions](#) of the candidates.

Write blogs, [letters to the editor](#) or commentaries.

Tweet the answers candidates give to your questions at town hall meetings or debates. **Remember [rules for engagement differ for individuals and for charities](#). If acting as a representative of a charity, be sure not to be partisan.**

Post photos on Instagram or Facebook.

Use or Adapt the We Can Do Better [Express yourselfie](#) for the election.

3 BE TIMELY

An election campaign is like a sprint. To get our message out, you have to be aware of what’s going on and react quickly. Once any political party issues a policy statement or platform position related to any of the We Can Do Better issues, respond.

Use both social media and traditional media. Tweet, write a short letter to the editor, write blogs or post comments on your Facebook page. Let people know what you think about party positions (without being partisan). And do it immediately, before media attention moves on to the next campaign issue or event.

4 BE ON TARGET

Know what the current party ([Conservative Party](#), [Liberal Party](#), [New Democratic Party](#), [Bloc Québécois](#) and [Green Party](#)) and candidate positions are on the environment, women’s rights, and poverty and inequality. Ask questions that are appropriate to the candidate. Follow comments and announcements and tailor your actions, tweets, questions to reflect the changing environment.

5 BE ENTHUSIASTIC

We Can all Do Better. We want positive change. We want Canada to play a leadership role in the world. And we want our elected officials to act. To fight climate change. To promote women’s rights. To end poverty and close the inequality gap. The federal election campaign is the time to make this message of positive change resonate with candidates and Canadians.



ENGAGING WITH CANDIDATES – LET’S TALK.

Engaging with candidates is the first step in building a relationship with your soon-to-be elected member of parliament. As with all relationships, start off on the right foot.

Here are the top five tips for engaging with candidates:

- 1 BE COURTEOUS AND RESPECTFUL.** This doesn't mean that you can't engage in discussion or even debate, but your goal is to move your candidate to action. Engage in a way that will make your soon-to-be elected MP want to listen to your concerns and to act.
- 2 BE EFFICIENT.** Candidates and, if elected, MPs are very busy. Make the most of your time with them. If meeting in person, arrive on time, be organized and be focused.
- 3 BE CLEAR AND CONCISE.** Use simple, plain language. The candidates will be bombarded with a ton of information from a number of advocacy organizations during the election campaign. Stand out by making your message clear and simple to understand. And remember three is the magic number. Have no more than three key messages.
- 4 BE USEFUL.** Ask what you can do for them. Is there any follow-up information they need? Data or statistics that would help them move your issue along?
- 5 BE CONCRETE.** Ask for something specific. Ask for the candidates to raise your concerns with their fellow MPs in caucus once elected. Ask them to include statements on climate change, women's rights and poverty and inequality in their campaign speeches. Ask them to tweet about your meeting.

Still want more information on contacting your candidate or MP? Watch this [Results Canada video](#).

ON THE PHONE:

When calling your candidate or the campaign office:

- State who you are.
- Give brief background on the issues you care about.
- Be clear about your ask: a meeting with the candidate, inviting the candidate to an all- candidates' meeting, filling out the all-candidates' questionnaire, obtaining a calendar of events, etc.
- Get contact information.
- Be courteous and efficient.



Follow this [sample script](#).

SCRIPT FOR CALLING YOUR CANDIDATE

Here's a sample script you can use when calling a candidate's office. Call your candidate's office to:

- Let your candidate know that climate change, women's rights and ending poverty and inequality are important election issues.
- Ask your candidate to fill out the all-candidates questionnaire.
- Invite your candidate to a debate or town hall meeting.

USE THIS SAMPLE SCRIPT AND ADAPT IT TO MEET YOUR NEEDS.

Hello, I'm [insert your name here]. I'm voting in this riding. I want [insert candidate's name] to know that, as a supporter of the We Can Do Better campaign, I'll be voting for the candidate that will act to fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality. These issues aren't just important to me, they are important to all Canadians. I have a questionnaire that I'm emailing to all candidates. And I would like [candidate's name] to let me know how she stands on these issues.

Or

Hello, I'm [insert your name here]. I'm voting in this riding. I want [insert candidate's name] to know that, as a supporter of the We Can Do Better campaign, I'll be voting for a candidate that will act to fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality. These issues aren't just important to me, they are important to all Canadians. I'm part of a group organizing a town hall meeting and we are inviting all the candidates including [insert candidate's name] to attend. We are expecting a good turnout and voters want to hear from [insert candidate's name]. Where should I send the invitation with more information about this event?

Thank you and I'll follow up by email shortly.

BY EMAIL:

The same [rules](#) apply for contacting your candidate by email, with the added bonus of being able to supply background information on your concerns, calling on the candidates to act and including a link to the We Can Do Better website.

- 1 Here's a [sample email](#) to your candidate covering the three We Can Do Better issues. Be sure to adapt and personalize the email. But do keep it short.
- 2 And here are three sample emails with one for each theme:



INEQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

- 3 Again, be sure to adapt, personalize and keep it short.

SAMPLE EMAIL TO CANDIDATE (ALL ISSUES IN ONE EMAIL)

Dear [Insert Name],

As a supporter of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign I will vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality. These issues aren't just important to me, they are important to all Canadians.

Canadians are deeply concerned by the growing economic gap. And I am shocked by the fact that the 80 richest individuals globally control as much wealth as the poorest half of the planet. In Canada, the richest 86 people have more wealth than the bottom 11.4 million Canadians combined. This ever-widening gap is making the poor poorer.

Climate change is a threat to every single aspect of sustainable development everywhere. And it has a stronger impact on the most vulnerable, such as people in developing countries. Local impacts of the crisis are galvanizing communities across Canada. Canadians want cuts to greenhouse gas emissions, investment in clean energy and we want our government to take a leadership role here at home and on the international stage to reach a meaningful agreement in Paris in December on how to avoid a global environmental catastrophe.

Inequality and climate change disproportionately affect women. Women represent 70 per cent of the world's poor and are often relegated to low-paying jobs in precarious working conditions. Not all women have access to rights like education, freedom from violence, and economic equality. Achieving women's rights is essential to the health of families, communities, and economies.

Will you push for action on these issues if elected as my MP? Please let me know what action you and your party would take to tackle climate change, promote women's rights and narrow the income gap.

Attached you'll find the We Can Do Better Candidates Questionnaire. I have sent the questionnaire to all candidates in my riding. I want to hear from you. Please fill out the questionnaire and let me know what you and your party will do to act on these issues of critical importance to Canadians.

I thank you in advance. And I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]

Attachment: Questionnaire



**WE CAN
DO BETTER**

SAMPLE EMAIL TO CANDIDATES (THREE EMAILS, ONE ISSUE EACH)

SAMPLE EMAIL - CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Dear [Insert Name],

As a supporter of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign I will vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change. This issue isn't just important to me, it's important to all Canadians.

Sustainable and peaceful communities aren't possible unless we DO BETTER on climate change and the environment. Climate change is a threat to every single aspect of sustainable development everywhere.

The cost of inaction is high. Unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, the degradation of our natural environment, biodiversity and ecosystems, and the impacts of climate change put our collective well-being at risk. In addition, both climate change and environmental degradation exacerbate existing social, political and economic stresses, with women and girls bearing the brunt.

Unfortunately, Canada's environmental track record needs to be improved. In recent years, we have dismantled key pieces of legislation, policies, and institutions that supported environmental sustainability. And we also need to substantially improve Canada's global standing on climate.

But solutions are within reach. I want my MP to make sure that Canada is put on the path towards an efficient, sustainable, clean-energy economy. I want my government to show leadership at the Paris climate talks this December by contributing towards an ambitious and legally binding universal climate agreement. I want my government to Do Better on the environment.

Will you push for action on climate change if elected as my MP? Does your party have a clean-energy plan? How would your party show leadership at the Paris climate talks? Please let me know what concrete actions you and your party would take to tackle climate change.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]

WE CAN
DO 
BETTER

SAMPLE EMAIL - GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Dear [Insert Name],

As a supporter of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign I want to vote for a candidate and a party that will act to promote women's rights. This issues isn't just important to me, it's important to all Canadians.

The historic Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on Women's Rights turned 20 this year. But we still live in a world where women represent 70 per cent of the world's poor and are often relegated to low-paying jobs in precarious working conditions. Not all women have access to rights like education, freedom from violence, and economic equality. Achieving women's rights is essential to the health of families, communities, and economies.

Canada, once a global leader on women's rights and gender equality, has seen its commitment wane. Over the last five years, the Canadian government allocated only 2% of its aid budget to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Recent years have seen federal de-funding of women's groups, at home and abroad, drastically undermining their capacity to offer frontline services to women and combat the root causes of sexism and inequality.

Meanwhile, inequality persists in Canada. Violence against women remains a huge problem, as does income inequality, women's poverty, and women's access to leadership roles, economic opportunities, and job security. And there has been no resolution to the murder or disappearance of more than 1,000 Aboriginal women and girls since 1980.

I want my government to Do Better in promoting women's rights and gender equality.

Will you push for action on women's rights if elected as my MP? How would you invest in women's rights at home and abroad? And what action would you take to end women's economic and social inequality?

Please let me know what concrete actions you and your party would take to promote women's rights and gender equality.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]

WE CAN
D 
BETTER

SAMPLE EMAIL - INEQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Dear [Insert Name],

As a supporter of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign I want to vote for a candidate and a party that will act to end poverty, close the inequality gap and promote human rights. These issues aren't just important to me, they are important to all Canadians.

Canadians are deeply concerned by the growing economic gap. And I am shocked by the fact that the 80 richest individuals globally control as much wealth as the poorest half of the planet. In Canada, the richest 86 people have more wealth than the bottom 11.4 million Canadians combined. And tax evasion and avoidance by individuals and multinational corporations is further increasing the gap between haves and have-nots.

When people - especially women - can barely afford to make ends meet, they can't invest in the skills and education they need to find decent work. And inequality often goes hand in hand with other human rights injustices. It is both a cause and an effect of almost every kind of discrimination, including gender, ethnicity, race, caste, religion, disability, and age.

Canadians are concerned about how Canada has fallen behind on this issue. Our country now ranks 12th out of 17 developed countries and scored well below the average in areas such as child poverty, working age poverty, income inequality, and the gender income gap.

And the international community has underscored the importance of addressing inequality. Inequality threatens global stability and slows growth. Whereas tackling inequality can help lower crime rates, build social stability and cohesion, and improve personal well-being.

I want my government to Do Better on ending inequality and promoting human rights.

Will you push for action on inequality and human rights if elected as my MP? Will your party work to ensure that implementation of the new global sustainable development framework addresses inequality in all its forms? Would your party increase aid spending on universal essential services (such as education, health care and sanitation and running water)? And what action would you take to close loopholes that facilitate tax evasion?

Please let me know what concrete actions you and your party would take to end inequality and promote human rights.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]

WE CAN
DO 
BETTER

IN PERSON:

To request a meeting with your candidate, send an [email](#) and be sure to follow-up with a phone call. Now that you've got your meeting set up, follow these three simple steps:

1 PREPARE:

- Do your homework. Read up on the candidates and look for any statements they may have already made on climate change, women's rights and poverty and inequality.
- Know and practice your [key messages](#). No more than three.
- If more than one person is attending the meeting, be sure everyone knows what role they will be playing in the meeting and what issues they'll be speaking to.
- Prepare leave-behind packages.

2 ENGAGE:

- Be on time.
- Be courteous.
- Be concise.
- Be clear about your "asks".
- Don't talk too long: you are there to hear what the candidate has to say.
- Take notes.

3 FOLLOW-UP

- Send a "thank you" [email](#) and use it to recap what you talked about at the meeting and remind the candidate of any commitments made.
- Send any follow-up information or do any follow-up action you committed to at the meeting.
- Use social media to share comments and commitments made.

Want to find out more about talking to your candidate? Check out [Talking about the issues that matter](#) by Development and Peace or the [Meet your MP](#) guide by Canadian Foodgrains Bank.



SAMPLE EMAIL TO CANDIDATE REQUESTING A MEETING

Dear [Insert Name],

As a supporter of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign I will vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality. These issues aren't just important to me, they are important to all Canadians.

I, along with two or two other We Can Do Better supporters, would very much like to meet with you to talk about what you and your party would do to show leadership, on these issues of critical importance to Canadians.

Please let me know when you would be available to meet.

Also, attached you'll find the We Can Do Better Candidates' Questionnaire. I have sent the questionnaire to all candidates in my riding. I want to hear from you. Please fill out the questionnaire and return to me by [insert date here].

I thank you in advance. And I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]

Attachment: Questionnaire

SAMPLE KEY MESSAGES

The key messages should be adapted and used in all communications – from emails to candidates, to letters to the editor, to Facebook posts and tweets. Keep your messages short and repeat them as often as possible.

OVERALL MESSAGE:

As a supporter of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign I will vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality. These issues aren't just important to me, they are important to all Canadians. We can do better.

THREE THEME MESSAGES:

- Canadians are deeply concerned by the growing economic gap and they want their elected leaders to act. The 80 richest individuals globally control as much wealth as the poorest half of the planet. In Canada, the richest 86 people have more wealth than the bottom 11.4 million Canadians combined.
- Climate change is a threat to every single aspect of sustainable development everywhere. Canadians want cuts to greenhouse gas emissions, investment in clean energy and for the next federal government to act, at home and on the international stage, so that a global environmental catastrophe can be avoided.
- Inequality and climate change disproportionately affect women. Women represent 70 per cent of the world's poor. Achieving women's rights is essential to the health of families, communities, and economies. The next federal government can and must do better to fight inequality and promote women's rights at home and abroad.

SAMPLE THANK-YOU EMAIL

Send a “thank-you” email after meeting with your candidate, after receiving the filled-out questionnaire or after the town hall meeting or debate. Here’s a sample email for you to adapt.

Dear [Insert Name],

Thank you for participating in our town hall meeting [or debate]. The turnout for the event was excellent and it provided a great opportunity for voters in this riding to hear from you about issues that they care about.

As I have already mentioned, as a supporter of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign I will vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change, promote women’s rights and end poverty and inequality. These issues aren’t just important to me, they are important to all Canadians.

[Insert paragraph following up on comments made by candidate during debate/town hall meeting.]

Again, I thank you for coming to our town hall meeting.

Sincerely,

[Insert name]

AT ELECTION CAMPAIGN EVENTS:

Often interaction with candidates can be brief and informal. At the summer barbeque or when the candidate knocks on your door, take the opportunity to let them know why fighting climate change, promoting women’s rights and ending poverty and inequality at home and abroad are important to you.

Here are a couple of tools you can use to make sure that your messages are communicated to the candidate as quickly and efficiently as possible.

THE ELEVATOR SPEECH

An “Elevator Speech” is a tool used to briefly and clearly communicate your goals. It’s short and succinct, lasting only as long as an elevator ride.

Here’s an example:

I will vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change, promote women’s rights and end poverty and inequality, both at home and abroad. These issues aren’t just important to me, they are important to all Canadians. Will you push for action on these issues if elected as my MP? Let me leave you with some background information. I want you to know that I’m part of a Canada-wide campaign called We Can Do Better 2015 – and we believe that Canada must and can do better.

HANDOUTS

Print and carry the We Can Do Better campaign [primer](#), [backgrounders](#), and the [collective calls to action](#) (what we want leaders to do). Hand them out to the candidates, the candidates’ staff and anyone else you see at these election events.

AT A TOWN HALL MEETING OR LOCAL DEBATE

A town hall is an event where voters and candidates can meet to discuss issues. They are not debates and the format allows for an exchange of information. An all-candidates debate's format mainly allows for questions from a moderator, with some questions from the audience, and answers provided by the candidates.

DEBATES

- Find out when debates are taking place and attend.
- Show up prepared.
 - Have handouts to distribute to the candidates and audience.
 - Have two or three questions for the candidates. Always prepare two or three, just in case someone else asks the question you were going to ask.
- Go to the microphone as soon as questions are opened to the audience.
- Don't take too long getting to your question. Listen to the answers.
- Go up to the candidates, after the debate is over, give them your handouts and ask more questions.
- Tweet answers.
- Post photos and messages.

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

- Find out when town hall meetings are taking place and attend.
- Show up prepared.
 - Have handouts to distribute to the candidates and others at the event.
 - Have two or three questions for the candidates.
- Introduce yourself and use your "elevator speech" to introduce your issues.
- Listen to what the candidates are saying.
- Ask follow-up questions.
- Tweet about the event.
- Post photos and messages.

ORGANIZING YOUR OWN TOWN HALL OR DEBATE

- Don't do it alone. Set up an organizing committee.
- Invite the candidates.
- Let people know the theme (Climate Change, Women's Rights, Poverty and Inequality).
- Find a location.
- Pick a date.
- Be clear about format.
- Make sure there are no technical glitches (microphones, etc.).
- Publicize.
- Contact local media.



GETTING OUR MESSAGE OUT - USING MEDIA

IN THE NEWS

During election campaigns the traditional media market will be saturated. We Can Do Better campaign themes will be competing for space in the media spotlight with the political parties, advocates for other issues (everything from health care to the economy) to leadership issues and election photo-ops and stunts.

Here are the top five media tips:

1 KNOW WHO'S COVERING THE ELECTION AND CANDIDATES:

- [Call](#) your local radio and television stations and community newspapers and ask for the name and contact information for the reporters covering the election.
- Have your We Can Do Better campaign materials at hand and be ready to answer any questions.

2 FOLLOW ELECTION COVERAGE:

- Read, listen and watch coverage daily. And follow reporters on twitter.

3 REACT:

- Tweet links to articles or re-post tweets by reporters.
- [Write letters to the editor](#) or commentaries.

4 BE A RELIABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION:

- Raise issues with reporters by calling them or writing a [news release](#).
- Build relationships with reporters by supplying them with reliable information and by making the link between the election campaign and issues of importance to your community.

5 REMEMBER, EVERYTHING IS ON THE RECORD:

- When talking to a reporter, assume that everything you say could appear in print or be broadcast. Act accordingly.



THE SOCIAL NETWORK

Social media can mobilize supporters and activists. And politicians are increasingly using social media to get their messages out and to talk to Canadians. Let your followers know about upcoming election events. Keep them up to date on what the candidates and parties have to say about the We Can Do Better issues. Encourage them to act.

We Can Do Better already has plenty of tips on using social media. Check out the [Social Media Toolkit](#) and [Tip Sheet](#). Remember to personalize and adapt for use in the election.

And here are three additional ways you can use social media during the election campaign



TWITTER:

- Engage directly with the candidates. [Tweet](#) your messages and [questions](#) directly at the candidates, using their handle and the hashtags for the campaign.
- Re-tweet any response you get.
- Live tweet events you attend.



FACEBOOK:

- Post messages on your Facebook page to promote local debates, invite your friends to attend and ask questions.
- Post photos of the events and comment on what's happened.



BLOGS:

- Identify influential bloggers and let them know about the campaign.
- Submit posts to blogs you like and follow.

SCRIPT FOR CALLING MEDIA

Be sure to call reporters to let them know of any upcoming events that you may be organizing such as a debate or town hall meeting.

Here's a sample script for you to use and adapt.

Hi, I'm [insert your name] and I'm a supporter of the We Can Do Better campaign. I'm part of a Canada-wide action calling on the next federal government to do better on ending poverty, promoting women's rights and fighting climate change.

We're organizing a town hall meeting and all the candidates in my riding [insert riding name] have committed to attend. It's taking place [insert date] at [insert place]. Who should I be sending our news release to?

Thank you, I'll follow-up with them.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

Here's a sample news release you can adapt and use to let reporters know about an upcoming town hall meeting or debate.

NEWS RELEASE

Embargo: For Immediate Release

Climate Change, Women's Rights and Inequality on the Agenda
Candidates for [insert riding name] attend Town Hall Meeting

What: Election Town Hall Meeting

Where: [Street address and room number]

When: [Date and time]

Who: [Name all candidates attending]

Poverty, climate change and women's rights will be on the agenda as candidates for [insert riding name] attend a town hall meeting next [day] at [time] at [place].

The town hall is being organized by supporters of the [We Can Do Better](#) campaign. This town hall meeting is an opportunity for voters to hear from the candidates, but also for the candidates to hear about the issues that matter to Canadians.

"As a supporter of We Can Do Better, I want to vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality," says [insert name] a town hall organizer. "These issues aren't just important to me, they are important to all Canadians."

The 80 richest individuals globally control as much wealth as the poorest half of the planet. In Canada, the richest 86 people have more wealth than the bottom 11.4 million Canadians combined. Climate change is a threat to every single aspect of sustainable development everywhere. And inequality and climate change disproportionately affect women. Canadians are deeply concerned about these issues and they want their elected leaders to act.

We Can Do Better is a Canada-wide movement calling on the next federal government to do better on climate change, women's rights and ending poverty and inequality.

For more information contact:

[insert name]

[phone number]

[email]

www.wecandobetter2015.ca



**WE CAN
DO BETTER**



SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Here's a sample letter to the editor. It should be adapted to reflect campaign issues in your riding perhaps drawing on the text from some of the sample [key messages](#).

To Letters to the Editor:

I want to vote for a candidate and a party that will act to fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality. We need to hear more from the candidates about these issues. These issues need to be put on the federal election campaign agenda.

Why? Because the 80 richest individuals globally control as much wealth as the poorest half of the planet. In Canada, the richest 86 people have more wealth than the bottom 11.4 million Canadians combined. Climate change is a threat to every single aspect of sustainable development everywhere. And inequality and climate change disproportionately affect women, with women representing 70 per cent of the world's poor.

Canadians care about these issues and they want their elected leaders to act.

[insert name]

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FEDERAL POLITICAL PARTIES - WHERE DO THEY STAND?

The party questionnaire is a common and useful tool in election campaigns. The questionnaire can be sent to party officials or individual candidates. The questionnaire is dual-purposed. First, it can help clarify where the party/candidate currently stands on a specific issue. And secondly, the questionnaire can be used to get commitments for action once the candidate is elected.

Use the We Can Do Better [Election Questionnaire](#) to find out where your candidate stands. You can also draw from the questionnaire when you meet with a candidate or go to a town hall meeting.

Send the questionnaire directly to the candidate. Let them know that every candidate in your riding has received the questionnaire and that the results will be shared widely, both on social media and with traditional media. Suggest a deadline for completing it.

CANDIDATES QUESTIONNAIRE

Here are 20 sample questions for your Candidates Questionnaire. Don't include all 20 questions. Your goal is to get the candidates to respond. They won't if they think responding will take too much time. Pick and choose from this list and add your own. Just make sure that all candidates get the same questionnaire.

QUESTIONS - INEQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- 1 Do you and your party support increasing revenue streams by closing tax loopholes? What, specifically, would you propose?
- 2 How would your party address inequality in Canada? What concretely would you do to narrow the income gap and ensure access to essential services?
- 3 How would you and your party support the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework and work to ensure that it addresses inequality in all its forms, in Canada and abroad?
- 4 If elected, would your party increase spending on foreign aid, and in particular spending on universal essential services like health care, education and sanitation and running water?
- 5 What role do you see for Canada on the international stage? What would you do to show leadership on the issues of inequality and human rights?
- 6 The next federal government can and must do better to narrow the inequality gap and promote human rights. How would your party make this a priority at home and abroad?



QUESTIONS - GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS



- 1 Would your party increase funding for women's groups and provide support to organizations that provide frontlines services to women, at home and abroad?
- 2 What would your party do, concretely, to end women's economic and social inequality here in Canada and abroad? What step would you take to promote income equality and enable women to have access to secure jobs?
- 3 What actions would your party take to ensure the security for women, in particular Aboriginal women and girls?
- 4 Do you and your party support the development of a national action plan to address violence against women?
- 5 This year marks the 20th anniversary of the historic Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on Women's Rights. This year is also the year that the United Nations post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals will be endorsed. What would your party do to implement the goals addressing the issues of gender equality and women's rights?
- 6 The next federal government can and must do better to fight inequality and promote women's rights. How would your party make this a priority at home and abroad?

QUESTIONS - CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



- 1 Do you and your party support moving towards a low-carbon economy? How, concretely, would your party support the development of an efficient, sustainable, clean-energy economy for Canada?
- 2 Where do you and your party stand on the further development of the Oil Sands and the resulting pipelines?
- 3 What would your party do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- 4 How would you and your party show leadership at the Paris climate talks this December to ensure that the negotiations result in an ambitious and legally binding universal climate agreement?
- 5 The next federal government can and must do better to fight climate change. How would your party make this a priority at home and abroad?

QUESTIONS - UNIVERSALITY OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- 1 This year the international community will adopt the Sustainable Development Goals. These goals are an opportunity to end extreme poverty, to protect our planet and to ensure women's rights. These goals will be universal and apply to all countries. Do you agree that Canada needs its own plan to implement the Sustainable Development Goals?
- 2 How would your party provide support for developing countries, in particular those with limited capacity to realize the Sustainable Development Goals?
- 3 Would your party develop and action plan to clearly articulate how Canada would implement, both at home and abroad, the Sustainable Development Goals?

ELECTION RULES - THE DOS AND DON'TS DURING AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN

[Revenue Canada](#) has specific rules governing the actions of organizations that have charitable status. These rules continue to apply and must be adhered to even during an election campaign. There are also [rules](#) specifically relating to communications during an election.

If you want to know more on advocacy rules for charities, read [Imagine Canada's Blog](#).

And here are the top five Dos and Don'ts:

- Do educate yourself about the rules.
- Do encourage others to act, but be sure the actions fit the guidelines.
- Do focus on the issues.
- Don't be partisan.
- Don't worry. Engage by the rules, and don't let worry paralyze you into inaction. The rules give you room to act. So act.

These rules don't apply to individuals or "ordinary Canadians" who are getting involved in a campaign or lobbying politicians.

POST-ELECTION – IT AIN'T OVER. ACTUALLY, IT'S ONLY JUST BEGUN:

After the ballots have been counted and the new government is back on Parliament Hill, it is time to turn promises into actions.

- [Write](#) to your newly-elected MP to offer your congratulations and to remind your MP of commitments made during the election campaign.

Ask to meet with your MP to follow up on concrete actions they can take to "Do Better" on climate change, women's rights and ending poverty and inequality.

Once the election campaign is over, it does not signal an end to public campaigning. Use the momentum of the election campaign to re-double advocacy efforts. And ensure that in the last two months of 2015 our message is heard loud and clear: **WE CAN DO BETTER!**



SAMPLE CONGRATULATIONS LETTER TO NEW MP

Dear [insert MP's name]

I'm writing to congratulate you on your recent election (or re-election) as my Member of Parliament.

During the election campaign, you filled out a We Can Do Better questionnaire. And I thank you, again, for having taken the time to let me know what you and your party would do to help fight climate change, promote women's rights and end poverty and inequality.

You said that you would [insert some questionnaire responses].

And now, as you head back to parliament, as your constituent I look forward to seeing your election commitments turned into actions.

Once again, congratulations.

Sincerely,

[Insert name]



MORE FROM WE CAN DO BETTER



Link to resources on We Can Do Better 2015 website



Collective [calls to action \(what we want\)](#)



[Social Media Toolkit](#)



[Intro video](#) by Julia Sanchez, President-CEO of CCIC



[Logos and Style Guide](#)



[Social Media Tip Sheet](#)



[Campaign primer](#)



[Backgrounders on three themes](#)



[Express yourselfie](#) instructions and poster



Information on [three themes of the campaign](#)



[Backgrounder on universality](#)



WE CAN DO BETTER

In collaboration with **Beyond2015**