

## **NCWC Statement on the International Day of Education-*January 24, 2026***

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) joins partners around the world in marking the **International Day of Education**, a day dedicated to recognizing education as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone for peace, sustainable development, and gender equality.

This year's theme reminds us that inclusive, equitable, and quality education empowers individuals and strengthens societies. Yet, millions of children and youth—especially girls—still face barriers to learning due to poverty, conflict, displacement, and discrimination. For Indigenous children and marginalized communities in Canada, these barriers are compounded by systemic inequities that must be urgently addressed.

Education transforms lives. It is not only a pathway to opportunity but also a powerful form of resistance against injustice. Education builds awareness, fosters critical thinking, and equips people to challenge discrimination and misinformation. It strengthens movements for women's rights, safety, climate justice, and democratic participation—especially at a time when rising authoritarianism and extremist ideologies threaten hard-won social progress.

The NCWC reaffirms its commitment to advocating for accessible, high-quality, publicly funded education across Canada—from early childhood to adult learning—and to ensuring that policies reflect the diverse realities of Canadian students.

On this International Day of Education, the NCWC calls on all levels of government to invest in education as a public good, uphold teachers' rights and resources, and integrate gender equality, climate literacy, and human rights education across curricula. These actions are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

Together, let us renew our commitment to education as the foundation for empowerment, equality, justice, and a more peaceful, resilient society.

Penny Rankin

NCWC President

<http://www.ncwcanada.ca>

