

16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence

The 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence begins on November 25, the International Day to End Violence Against Women and ends on December 10, International Human Rights Day. Begun as a grassroots campaign by women's rights organizations, it was officially adopted by the United Nations in 1999.

The campaign is an opportunity to reflect on the impact of gender-based violence on our lives, work and communities, and to take action to eliminate it. In Canada, unions and many other organizations hold events and actions on December 6, the day set aside to remember the women murdered at Montreal's École Polytechnique in 1989.

This year the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) will continue our push to address gender-based violence at work through our Domestic Violence at Work initiative. Following up our groundbreaking survey, we have taken action by:

- Launching an education program to empower union representatives to recognize and respond to domestic violence at work, to promote awareness of the issue in workplaces, and to help keep members safe and supported at work;
- Developing collective bargaining language to assist unions in negotiating workplace supports, including paid domestic violence leave and women's advocates;
- Lobbying governments in all jurisdictions to amend health and safety legislation to recognize domestic violence as a form of workplace violence, and to follow Manitoba's example and amend employment standards to give all workers paid domestic violence leave;
- Working with the global labour movement to press for an international labour standard on violence and harassment in the world of work.

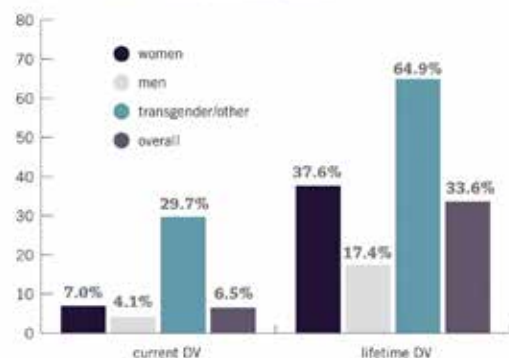
This year, we have developed a partnership with the producers of the documentary film *A Better Man* (<https://abettermanfilm.com/>), which portrays

a series of conversations between a survivor of domestic violence and her former abuser. It is a powerful film intended to provoke conversations about accountability, healing and the possibility of restorative justice. A companion piece called *#ItWasMe* (<https://itwasme.abettermanfilm.com>) features the voices of men who are taking responsibility for their violence responding to questions posed by survivors.

The film premieres on TVO at 9:00 pm on November 25 (with additional screenings throughout the 16 Days) and will be available for streaming on <https://tvo.org/>. The CLC will use the film as a launching point for a broader conversation about domestic violence and how individuals, unions and workplaces can act to break the silence and end the cycle of violence. We will encourage union members to watch the film and share their reactions on social media, as well as discuss their ideas and reactions with friends, neighbours and co-workers. Labour councils can organize community screenings and public events to highlight labour's domestic violence at work initiative.

On November 25, visit our online resource centre at www.domesticviolenceatwork.ca and @CanadianLabour on Twitter for tips and tools to help guide these conversations, and follow the hashtags #16Days and #DVatWork to participate.

FIGURE 2: DV Prevalence and Gender



Oxfam Emergency Appeal: Rohingya Refugee Crisis

The world is witnessing a large-scale and escalating humanitarian crisis.

Rohingya, a stateless Muslim minority of civilians in Myanmar, began fleeing over the border into Bangladesh after an outbreak of violence at the end of August due to what the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is calling “brutal, well-organized, coordinated and systematic attacks.” These attacks were orchestrated by the Myanmar security forces, says a newly released UN report.

It is estimated that over half a million Rohingya are currently living in dire conditions in Bangladesh without clean water, sanitation, or even basic shelter. These individuals need life-saving assistance now, including clean drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, essential food items and emergency supplies.

In response to this crisis, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is supporting the work of Oxfam Canada, which has established a strong presence on the ground, reaching 100,000 displaced people with desperately-needed supplies, as well as providing clean drinking water, portable toilets, and sanitation facilities.

Oxfam aims to reach a further 200,000 people with:

- water tanks, water treatment plants, and containers for clean drinking water;
- portable toilets and sanitation facilities;
- 30 tons of flattened rice, 23 tons of sugar, and 23,000 fortified biscuit packs; and
- plastic sheets and other essential Non-Food Items (NFIs).

The CLC is contributing \$10,000 to support Oxfam’s work and we urge you to support this appeal as well.

For more information on Oxfam’s work on the Bangladesh Rohingya Refugee Crisis, please visit their website. To donate, please visit:

<https://secure.oxfam.ca/?=&project=Rohingya%20Refugee%20Crisis%20in%20Bangladesh&source=union-clc>



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Canadian Labour Congress denounces Quebec's Bill 62 as discriminatory

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) says the Quebec government's new legislation on religious neutrality is clearly discriminatory and puts workers in an untenable situation.

The legislation imposes dubious restrictions on religious accommodation and includes controversial rules which prevent anyone who covers their face from giving or receiving public services. Women who wear face veils as part of religious practice have decried the Bill as a violation of their freedom of religion and of expression, as they already show their faces upon request for identification and security purposes.

Bill 62 applies to Quebec ministries, school boards, universities, public health care institutions, subsidized daycare centres, municipalities, public transit authorities, doctors, dentists, and other health care professionals.

Provincial legislators have not provided any clear guidelines, nor outlined the consequences workers will face should they object to the discriminatory nature of the law.

"This is a harmful, undemocratic, and unnecessary bill that violates the fundamental freedoms of women through state control over their bodies," says CLC President Hassan Yussuff. "The CLC unequivocally condemns any law which creates two classes of citizens in our country."

To date, one bus driver may face sanctions for publicly showing support to a protest against the Bill that took place last Friday in Montreal.

Further, the union representing workers at the STM, the Montreal public transit authority, has stated that bus drivers do not want the responsibility of having to interpret the law. Nor should they have to.

"Every Canadian is fully entitled to the rights promised to them under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as well as provincial human rights codes," says Yussuff. "It's wrong to ask workers to participate in the violation of those rights – especially while delivering the public services every Quebec resident is entitled to receive."



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3.5 million Canadians can't afford to fill their prescriptions. Many are splitting their pills or skipping days to stretch the prescriptions they do fill.

Nobody should be forced to choose between paying for groceries and paying for the medication they need.

That's why we're working to win a universal prescription drug plan that covers all Canadians regardless of their income, age or where they live.

Join our call for a universal prescription drug plan at aplanforeveryone.ca

 Canadian Labour Congress
Congrès du Travail du Canada

