



FACTUM

Canadians Prioritize Food Security for Children around the World, Support Canadian Government Intervention to Improve Lives of Children Globally

8 in 10 (85%) agree that children around the world face more frightening future than their generation did

Toronto, ON, March 22, 2023 – Canadians believe that the most important thing that governments can do to make the world a better place for children is to ensure that children do not go hungry (24%), according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Save The Children.

But with so many challenges facing children around the world, Canadians have listed other priorities too, including ensuring that we have healthy sustainable planet for future generations (22%), protecting children so that they do not face harm, violence or exploitation (21%), providing accessible healthcare (15%), making sure that all children have access to quality, inclusive education (11%) or some other priority (7%). Interestingly, parents of children here in Canada are a little more conclusive in their choice: 29% say the most important thing is to protect children from violence, far and away the clear leader for parents.

Canadians acknowledge that the challenges facing children around the world are different from those that face Canadian children. According to Canadians...

- The top three risks or dangers for **children overall** include food security (28%), the impacts of climate change (20%) and the affordability and availability of housing (19%).
- The top three challenges that pose the biggest danger/risk to **children in Canada** are affordability and availability of house (35%), food security (19%) and the impacts of climate change (17%).
- The biggest perceived risks for **children in developing (low-income) countries** around the world are thought to be food security (43%), the impacts of climate change (16%) and the affordability of housing (14%).

These are complex issues, and a majority of Canadians acknowledge that they are difficult problems to solve. Four in five say that conflict (83%), climate change (80%) pandemics or other healthcare emergencies (79%) and affordability (79%) are difficult issues to solve, while a majority feel that hunger/food security (76%) and gender equality (57%) are also difficult issues to solve.

Canadians Believe Current Generation of Children Face More Frightening Future

Overall, eight in ten (85%) Canadians agree that the children around the world now face frightening future than their own generation (42% strongly agree/ 44% somewhat agree). To this, Boomers and Gen X are most inclined to agree (87%), more so than Millennials (84%) or Gen Z (78%).

Given these challenges, Canadians would support a number of policy interventions from the Canadian government to help children around the world:

- Eight in ten (77%) agree (20% strongly/56% somewhat) that the government should **leverage its international influence** to end conflicts and war and to build peaceful societies.
- A majority of Canadians (76%) agree (21% agree/55% somewhat) that the Canadian government should **invest in food security** to ensure that children never face hunger, even if it results in higher taxes, more government debt, or decreased spending in other areas.
- Three in four (74%) agree (17% strongly/57% somewhat) that we should invest in **children's right to survive, learn and be protected**, even if it results in higher taxes, more government debt or decreased spending in other areas.
- Two in three (67%) agree (13% strongly/54% somewhat) that Canada should **respond generously to humanitarian crises** like earthquakes, flooding and conflict, even if it results in higher taxes, more government debt or decreased spending in other areas.
- Two in three (64%) agree (19% strongly/46% somewhat) that the government should **invest in halting and reversing the effects of climate change**, even if it results in higher taxes, more government debt or decreased spending in other areas.
- Half (51%) agree (11% strongly/40% somewhat) that Canada should **increase investment in international development programs**, even if it results in higher taxes, more government debt or decreased spending in other areas.

Specifically focused on climate change, Canadians would also support a number of initiatives to help children around the world. Eight in ten (81%) believe it would be beneficial for Canada to invest in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the environment, while three in four (74%) say that prioritizing child rights and wellbeing in its climate response would be beneficial. Seven in ten say that limiting global warming to 1.5 degree would be beneficial to children around the world (71%), or investing in social protection and other activities to help mitigate the impacts of climate change on communities (70%). Still others say that recognizing children as key voices speaking on climate issues (69%) would be beneficial, or Canada paying its fair share of the global climate pledge to high-risk, low incomes countries (68%). Finally, two in three (68%) say that including child and youth activists in global forums where decision-makers are meeting would be beneficial to children around the world.

Many Canadians also recognize that they have a role to play personally in helping children around world. While 26% say that given the state of the world today they are more likely to give locally, 10% plan to continue giving to international development charities and 6% plan to give more than usual on account of the climate crisis, conflict and COVID. Those prepared to give more are more likely to be men (8%) than women (4%) and are between the ages of 18-34 (12%) rather than 35-54 (5%) or 55+ (3%).

Two in ten (20%) say they had hoped to give but simply can't afford to this year given economic pressures, while just 16% of Canadians overall say they'd never give to international development.



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No Shortage of Issues Worrying Canadians and Keeping them Up at Night

Reflecting on life in 2022, Canadians are equally as likely to describe their overall feeling right now in a negative way as a positive. Canadians are both stressed (23%) and hopeful (23%) in equal proportion; they're also equally discouraged (16%) and happy (16%). And the rest are somewhere in between, describing themselves as neutral (22%).

There exists a significant generational divide. Those aged 18-34 (31%) and 35-54 (27%) are more likely to call themselves stressed compared to those aged 55+ (14%). Conversely, older generations are more likely to describe their feeling as hopeful (31%) than younger (20%) or middle (17%) generations.

Driving some of these anxieties is the unique convergence of challenges in which we now find ourselves. Topping Canadians list of fears include the rising cost of living/inflation (85% -- 39% very much/46% somewhat), followed by the potential for the escalation of the war in Ukraine (74% -- 16% very much/58% somewhat). Two in three (66% -- 14% very much/52% somewhat) are fearful of COVID and the potential for other pandemics, while one in four (27% -- 7% very much/20% somewhat) fear losing their home in an extreme weather event. Eight in ten (82% -- 34% very much/48% somewhat) parents of children are also fearful about their children's future.

Moreover, many Canadians say they're frequently or often kept awake at night worrying about various issues, including financial insecurity due to COVID-19, interest rates, inflation (45%, 62% of parents), personal and family issues such as children's stress levels (43% overall, 63% of parents), how global instability will affect future generations (32%, 44% of parents), the impacts of conflict and wars on children around the world (31%, 45% of parents), extreme weather events as a result of climate change (29%, 35% of parents) and Indigenous rights and reconciliation (18%, 26% of parents).

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted from December 14th to 16th on behalf of Save the Children. For this survey, a sample of 1,004 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.



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For more information on this news release, please contact:

Sean Simpson
Senior Vice President, Ipsos Public Affairs Canada
+1 416 324 2002
Sean.Simpson@ipsos.com

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