



**CANADIAN CENTER
FOR WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT**

**CENTRE CANADIEN
POUR L'AUTONOMISATION
DES FEMMES**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Economic Justice and Health Equity Advocate Named to Ottawa's Forty Under 40

The Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE) is pleased to announce that CEO Meseret Haileyesus, has been named a recipient of Ottawa's Forty Under 40 Award for 2021. The award honoured and applauded 40 of the brightest leaders, entrepreneurs, and business professionals in the Capital National Region under 40.

Meseret Haileyesus is changing the landscape for economic safety and security for victims of Gender Based Violence to recover from economic abuse and injustice with her non-profit Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE). Driven by her passion for gender equality and equity, Haileyesus has spent over 16 years working with various national and international organizations on countless projects centred on issues from economic empowerment to health equity. With the goal of addressing systemic barriers that hold women and girls back from realizing their full potential, Haileyesus is a remarkable change maker in her community and beyond.

Meseret addresses financial security and long-term safety for survivors while focusing on how economic and financial abuse affects women across different socio-economic backgrounds, ages and ethnicities. CCFWE provides a much-needed support system for Canadian women's empowering survivors of gender-based violence through advocacy, education, public policy change, and more, including pushing Canadian banks to eliminate banking practices that target women with excessive burdens, such as debt and bad credit score.

CCFWE is working with various stakeholders and and policymakers to end Economic injustice that brings together women's community organizations, financial institutions such as banks, utilities, and essential service providers, telecommunications companies, industry regulators and ombudsman services, local and national government, the family justice system, consumer lawyers, and researchers and academics.

Currently, she is influencing policy makers that led to the inclusion of economic abuse within the statutory definition of domestic abuse and National Action Plan to end Gender Based violence.

Haileyesus was inspired to found the CCFWE after observing how organizations from women's shelters to financial institutions lacked the resources to identify or help survivors recover from Economic and injustice . Now, she wants to fill that gap and give domestic abuse survivors the tools to work toward financially independent futures and mental wellness. "I believe that Economic Abuse is a systemic problem in our society which we are severely lacking the infrastructure to address," she said.

When a woman wants to leave an abusive relationship, her financial situation is a critical factor in her ability to do so. Perpetrators know this, which may partly explain why 95 percent of women who experience intimate partner violence also experience Economic Abuse.

Economic Abuse—which occurs when a domestic partner interferes with a partner’s access to finances, employment or social benefits, such as fraudulently racking up credit card debt in their partner’s name or preventing their partner from going to work, prohibiting the victim from using credit cards, writing checks, and accessing marital accounts, prevent the victim’s career advancement and sabotaging employment by making the other spouse miss work, controlling the use of property, such as a mobile phone or car, refuses to contribute to costs and child support, make the victim sign legal papers without knowing what they are and dragging out divorce proceedings in order to cripple victim financially has a devastating effect on victims and survivors of domestic partner violence, yet it’s rarely talked about in Canada.

Haileyesus is grateful to the Forty Under 40 Award. “With your support, we will empower more Canadians to know how to identify and respond to Economic Abuse, whether the victim is you, your sister, your friend, your colleague, your client or your constituent.”

ABOUT CCFWE: [Canadian Center for Women’s Empowerment](#) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to raising awareness about Economic Abuse and working with policy makers, survivors, and financial institutions to help Domestic Abuse survivors heal, build resiliency and lead healthy, independent lives. Watch the CCFWE Women of Worth award video [here](#).

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