

DATE:
02.10.21

TIMES:
10:30-12:30 PST
11:30-1:30 MST
12:30-2:30 CST
1:30-3:30 EST
2:30-4:30 AST



CONSULTATION REPORT

National Settlement Sector GBV Strategy

Gender-Based Violence Settlement Sector Project Consultation Session
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021

OBJECTIVES

- To consult with subject matter experts on our draft National Settlement Sector GBV Strategy
- To receive focused input on the strategic actions for each of the identified priorities in the Strategy
- To connect and build support for the project's upcoming activities
- To provide a space for subject matter experts to connect with each other across Canada in an energizing and engaging manner



TIME AGENDA ITEM

15 mins	Welcome & Connection
25 mins	Presentation of the Strategy and Consultation Framework
10 mins	Guidelines for Feedback
5 mins	Bio Break
25 mins	Small Group Discussions <i>Pre-assigned break out groups with a facilitator</i>
20 mins	Large Group Discussion: <i>What did we share? Each group reports back on discussion highlights followed by Q&A</i>
15 min	Reflection and Next Steps
5 mins	Thank You & Closing



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This February 10th, 2021 consultation provided an opportunity for feedback on the draft of the strategy through participation in a presentation and breakout sessions on the different priorities. Each facilitated group discussion provided reflection, reaction and suggestions on content, clarity, and implementation.

This Report summarizes the thoughtful and much appreciated feedback collected and suggestions made which will both inform the finalization of the strategy and activities going forward.

In 2019, with funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), four organizations from the anti-violence and settlement sectors partnered to begin collaborative work on developing a national strategy to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV) for newcomers, immigrants, and refugees.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out priorities and activities for responding to GBV for newcomers and refugees by building the capacity of service providers in both the settlement and anti-violence sectors.

It highlights the critical importance of collaboration between the anti-violence and settlement sectors as this is key for more and better information sharing, conversations and relationship building – all of which have the potential to improve safety for newcomers, immigrants and refugees experiencing GBV.

This strategy is based on research that includes an online survey of 276 settlement and anti-violence sector workers across Canada, review of over 250 publicly available materials including existing strategies, policies, research reports and protocols about gender-based violence in Canada, including academic and community-based research, as well as key informant interviews with 18 leaders in the field.

Thank-you to everyone who participated in our project needs assessment research and in this strategy consultation!

PARTNER GROUP
National GBV Settlement Sector Strategy



Funded by:
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :
Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

OUTREACH CONSULTATION MEETING

Building Capacity & Collaboration

OUTREACH CONSULTATION WITH SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS SMEs

The consultation opened with a welcome and connection activity. The Land Acknowledgment was given. Partners were introduced and guests welcomed with a fun Zoom ice-breaker; along with a note on self-care.

Opening remarks were shared from the Executive Director of the Elmwood Community Resource Centre, the CISSA-ACSEI partner representative about the context of African Heritage month and leadership of women. Then Brilliance Mastery said a brief word about the visual tools in the session, the use of the chat for feedback, questions, and the digital recording process.

Participants listened to upbeat music at breaks. We kept our cameras on to encourage engagement and connection. After this welcome, introduction and opening remarks the project research consultant and other partner facilitated a presentation about the partnership, the background of our strategy, and the purpose of the day.

Then the goal of the day was explained as being the outreach consultation for the strategy with the idea that we are close to a final version to share publicly.



30+

people with representation from most provinces and regions – including academics, small and large service providers, front line staff, managers, and leaders in the settlement and anti-violence sectors.

PARTICIPATION

- EVA CAN
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- South Asian Legal Clinic Toronto
- Canadian Ethnic Studies Association
- YMCA
- Alberta Men's Network
- CISSA ACSEI
- Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research UNB
- OCASI
- GBV-MIG Canada Research Program
- Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS)
- North End Women's Centre
- Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
- Transition House Association of NS
- Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration
- NB Immigrant Women's Association
- StratHR Solutions

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- The Break-out groups for small group discussion of the 5 priority areas were pre-assigned based on area of expertise of the participants.
- Each group provided feedback on one Strategic Priority.
- The project working group members from each partner organization facilitated a group discussion on the five priority areas.

THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR WAS TO:

- Welcome everyone.
- Provide a brief background on the Strategic Priority.
- Provide an overview of how the feedback exercise would work.
- Take notes from the discussion "live" on the screen.
- Feedback was collected in two ways. The first was through participant input into the chat box. The second was by the facilitator annotating the slides during small group discussion.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION ON:

- Review of the priority information and the strategic actions listed for:
 - Systems and Stakeholders Centered Actions &
 - Services and Clients Centered Actions

Once we went through all of the actions, we took a step back to ask "what else is missing? in terms of concrete actions that can be taken to make this priority a reality."

EACH OF THE SMALL GROUPS FOCUSED THEIR DISCUSSION ON ONE OF THE FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.

- Feedback on other parts of the document, were suggested in the chat by email following the session.
- Facilitators started by giving a brief overview of the priority, and then focused in on the "strategic actions" to get more input from SMEs- (i.e. "what actions need to be taken in order to make this priority a reality?")



FROM THE CHAT

"Cultural humility, go beyond cultural safety."

"GREAT DOCUMENT, VERY READER FRIENDLY!"

"Great discussion and look forward to continuing."

"This work should be shared with those developing national action plan on GBV to work with you all on this."

"This document can be the seed for outreach and including other sectors."

"It would be amazing for a national conference around this to help connect around this."

"Thank you all for a very rich discussion."

Gender-Based Violence Settlement Sector Strategy



Black History | Heritage Month

Let's **C-O-N-N-E-C-T** and **BUILD SUPPORT**

Building Capacity & Collaboration

Remembering 400 years of the history of slavery ...



...looking at our elders and sister's achievements as they paved the way for us to be here.

Background of STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- National partnership formed in April 2019
- Project Needs Assessment - Fall 2019
- Ongoing Consultation & collaboration

Settlement sector does NOT currently have a GBV strategy nationally ...that's a **GAP!**

How do we make these priorities a reality?



STRATEGIC ACTIONS FEEDBACK

1 Time went **FAST** GBV is a multi-faceted issue



2 Community level victim-blaming can lead to **MISSING** cases of GBV or stigmatizing

Sometimes you need to **ASK...** Otherwise things won't surface

3 How to implement this?
Staff need to know what to do & how to do it

4 It is important to have specific attention to non-status/precarious status groups

5 Develop, support & promote a national plan to engage men and boys within settlement programming

What's the role of the government? Take responsibility for a national clearing house of legal info

Self-reflection and capacity building within organizations

Provide peer support, informal places, less structured eg sports, recreation, artistic expression

Overview of PRIORITIES

- 1** Increase **ACCESS** to **INFORMATION** for newcomers, immigrants and refugees about GBV
- 2** **CHALLENGE** victim blaming **ATTITUDES** and **BELIEFS**
- 3** **CLIENT-CENTRED SERVICES** that recognize intersectional needs & experiences of newcomers, immigrants & refugees
- 4** Establish a **COMMON BASE** of **KNOWLEDGE** that service providers can use to increase skills, improve competencies & incorporate best practices
- 5** **ENGAGE MEN** and **BOYS** in GBV awareness, education and allyship strategies



Focus on: Build meaningful collaboration **ACROSS SECTORS**



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Anti-racism
- Gender-based Analysis
- Intersectionality
- Trauma & violence informed approaches
- Cultural safety
- Anti-Oppression



"I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are different from my own."

- Audreya Lorde



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

Increase access to accurate, clear, and consistent information and resources for newcomers, immigrants and refugees about GBV

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

- Newcomer clients accessing settlement services are not consistently receiving information about GBV: only 40% of settlement workers in our survey reported that their organization offered GBV awareness workshops for clients. Only 51% reported that their agency had posters or pamphlets about GBV in-house.
- Newcomers are also not often aware of what services are available, they may not be ready to recognize GBV, and they experience systemic barriers to accessing support. According to workers in our survey, the top systemic barriers included fear of stigma or isolation from community (67%), fear of activating child welfare services (66%), and fear of deportation (65%).
- That is why we are focusing not only on access to information, but also information that accurately reflects the needs and barriers experienced by newcomers, refugees and immigrants experiencing violence.



FEEDBACK

The main theme in this discussion was concern about what sources of information would be used.

- More explanation about “clear, accurate info”
- Funding needs to be provided for actions to be implemented (ie GBV counselors)
- Information needs to be in different languages
- Important to identify and share similar best practices



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:

Challenge victim-blaming attitudes and beliefs.

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

- We define victim-blaming as any action that suggests that a victim of violence is somehow responsible for the violence that has been committed against them. Victim-blaming attitudes and beliefs can be embedded in institutional policies and practices. These attitudes and beliefs can also be communicated in the media, by friends and family, and by other service providers.
- Our research showed that victim-blaming against newcomer, immigrant, and refugee survivors of violence may include or draw from racist, xenophobic, and inaccurate information about culture, status, or other aspects of a survivor’s identity and/or community to blame an individual for violence committed against them.
- Our survey of workers also identified “fear of stigma or isolation from community” as a major barrier that newcomers face when it comes to reporting GBV. This may be an indication of victim-blaming at work in families, communities, and by service providers who put pressure on survivors.



FEEDBACK

The main theme in this discussion was recognizing diversity in terms of identities and experiences.

- In wording of this priority recognize that diversity includes ethnicity, culture, religion and class
- Consult communities about use of language and terminology to avoid stereotyping and assumptions
- Ensure anti-racism lens when talking about victim-blaming
- Recognizing what “victim blaming” can look like in the different context with individualist vs collective ideas and background

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

Facilitate client-centred services that recognize the intersectional needs and experiences of newcomers, immigrants and refugees

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

- Our research showed that both the settlement sector and the anti-violence sector have their strengths and limitations when it comes to supporting survivors from newcomer, immigrant and refugee communities. What we learned from our interviews with GBV experts is that the sectors can come together in ways that facilitate client-centred services.
- We define client-centred services as those that honour lived experience and support clients as autonomous decision makers. For newcomers, immigrants and refugees in particular, this means recognizing the migration journey of clients and providing services that are culturally responsive and relevant.
- Yet our survey found that only 47% of workers had received any training in using anti-racist, anti-oppressive frameworks in supporting newcomers. While many of our survey respondents had received basic GBV training, only 39% had received any specialized GBV training on supporting refugees and newcomers.
- While most of the strategic priorities are one page long, we included a second page for this strategy to go a little deeper into the intersectional needs of this group. We want to avoid treating newcomers, immigrants and refugees as a homogeneous group i.e. as if all of their needs are the same. In our research, we identified 2SLGBTQIA+ clients, people with disabilities and children/youth as specific groups, and we know there are many more.



FEEDBACK

The main theme in this discussion was appreciation of a focus on supporting physical and emotional safety in trauma informed environments for newcomers, immigrants, and refugees

- Be clear and/or give examples about services and organizations being referred to in document (federal, provincial, municipal)
- Important to apply intersectional lens to “health equity” and discussions about social determinants of health
- Need more focus on “safe coming out spaces”

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4:

Establish a common base of knowledge that service providers can use to increase skills, improve competencies, and incorporate best practices for responding to GBV

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

- Our research showed that settlement and anti-violence workers often work in silos, and there are far too few opportunities for knowledge exchange across the sectors.
- This came through in many ways in the research. One unique finding of our survey is that there are forms of GBV that workers across both sectors are less confident about responding to.
- Between 81-89% of service providers reported feeling prepared to respond to clients disclosing forms of GBV like physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, or criminal harassment/stalking. However, a much smaller number of providers reported feeling prepared to respond to forms of GBV like early or forced marriage (51%), so-called 'honour' based violence (53%), or human trafficking (57%).
- In fact, workers were much more likely to say they felt "not at all prepared" to support survivors disclosing early or forced marriage (51%), so-called 'honour' based violence (53%), or human trafficking (57%).
- This finding is even more significant when we consider that less than half (47%) reported receiving training in anti-racist, anti-oppressive frameworks in supporting newcomers.
- Our research also showed that a lot of training already exists, but workers in our survey weren't always sure where or how to access this training.



FEEDBACK

This group was concerned about the capacity of organizations to offer training with time bound project funds and the complexity of immigration laws and policies.

- Shouldn't fall to agencies to train everyone
- Need for more information and data on precarious status
- Limited project funding impacts implementation of priorities
- Need for a clearinghouse of information because of the difficulty of navigating family, immigration and income support laws and requirements.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: Engage men and boys in GBV awareness, education and allyship strategies

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

- Engaging Men and Boys is essential to Gender Based Violence Prevention (GBVP) and has been highlighted by women's organizations, the United Nations and the Minister of Women and Gender Equality as a critical area of focus.
- Our research confirmed that, while men are the main perpetrators of most GBV globally, they are also the least engaged in prevention work. Engaging men and boys is therefore an essential prevention strategy to shift cultural and societal norms.
- When it comes to racialized newcomer, immigrant, and refugee men and boys, we also want to caution against stereotypes of racialized men as more prone to violence and ensure that our approaches are anti-racist and trauma-informed.



FEEDBACK

There was group agreement that there is a need for a national action plan to engage men and boys in GBV awareness, intervention and allyship building within settlement programming.

- Organizations should do some evaluation of their readiness to work with men and boys
- Not just about ally-ship – men need to know about healthy relationships and healthy masculinity
- How to prevent savior mentality, the idea that we *need* men involved (messaging, framing, language used)
- Supportive mentors are important



We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to all who participated for the thoughtful comments and conversations that flowed from this process. It truly reflected the spirit of collaboration which is a guiding principle of this project as well as reflecting the complexity of considerations required to develop a comprehensive strategy such as this. We are committed to ongoing sharing, learning and engagement as the project continues.

National Settlement Sector GBV Strategy Partnership



Connections being created and fostered nationwide through our Cross-Canada Network to better support organizations and service providers in their work



Consultation with communities and leaders from the settlement and anti-violence [both] sectors to build on current expertise and respond to shared needs and concerns



Collaboration between the settlement and anti-violence sectors to coordinate responses to GBV and co-develop a shared base of knowledge and resources



Capacity-building of organizations and service providers in both the settlement and anti-violence [both] sectors to better support newcomers, immigrants, and refugees

