



A Future without Gender-Based Violence:
BUILDING NEWCOMERS' RESILIENCE
through Community Education

A TOOLKIT FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS



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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is for staff at community organizations that serve immigrants, refugees, and people without status. It is available in English and French versions. We have developed it to support service providers in providing community-based education to newcomers about gender-based violence, and begin to equip them to address challenging situations. Although gender-based violence is present in nearly every society worldwide, it can affect newcomers in unique ways, and there are many factors that can make it difficult for members of immigrant and refugee communities who experience this kind of violence to get support.

We hope the information and resources shared here will build capacity within agencies and organizations that serve newcomers to increase understanding of gender-based violence in immigrant and refugee communities.

Objectives

What is this toolkit intended to do?

- Support program staff at community organizations in connecting with immigrants, refugees, and people without status to share accurate and culturally relevant information about gender-based violence
- Provide practical ideas and guidelines for hosting community-based educational events, which service providers have identified as a best practice in addressing this issue

Some notes about language

The term “gender-based violence” describes violence that is directed at someone because of their gender or perceived gender expression. Gender-based violence can take many forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, financial, or spiritual. We use this term rather than “violence against women” because “gender-based violence” includes a broader range of experiences and

identities, such as those of people who are queer, transgender, nonbinary, genderfluid, or gender non-conforming. Our definition of “women” includes anyone who self-identifies as female or femme, including trans women. It is well documented that women and people who appear feminine experience disproportionate amounts of violence; trans women are at particularly high risk.

Sources:

Bauer, G. R. & Scheim, A. I. (2015). *Transgender people in Ontario, Canada: Statistics from the Trans PULSE Project to inform human rights policy*. Retrieved from www.bit.ly/2QY7upP

Sinha, M. (ed.). (2013). *Juristat article: Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*. [Catalogue number 85-002-X]. Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/2SOifrY>

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit is a resource that you can work through at your own pace. We suggest that you read it with others at your organization and in your community, to foster discussion and share ideas. The toolkit assumes that you are already familiar with gender-based violence and how it affects newcomer communities. It is a starting

point for learning about community-based education, and for planning direct actions. In doing this work you may find gaps in your own knowledge – OCASI is ready to support you with online training at LearnAtWork.ca and other initiatives to increase your understanding.

The roots of our approach

At OCASI, we approach our work from fundamental commitments to anti-racism, anti-oppression, and feminism. We recognize that a person's gender identity is only one part of their being. Gender intersects with race, ethnicity, culture, age, ability, sexual orientation, class, religion, immigration status, and many other factors. These have powerful effects on how people understand and experience violence, and on the kind of support that is available to them.

Gender-based violence can happen when a person has strong expectations about normative gender roles, and feels that their own power and control over someone else is threatened because these expectations are not being met.

"Gender relations are power relations."

– Najia Zewari, Global Women's Network

OCASI recognizes that gender-based violence occurs globally, in nearly every community. It is not unique to any culture, class, race, or religion, and it is never acceptable.

Honouring all identities

In addressing gender-based violence in immigrant and refugee communities, it is crucial to acknowledge the different risks, vulnerabilities, and barriers that people face depending on different aspects of their identity. All of OCASI's work is rooted in anti-racist, anti-oppressive principles that honour all parts of each person, including who they are and what they have experienced.

Experiences of gender-based violence can intersect with the effects of disability status, age, racialization, immigration status, language proficiency, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and culture. Later in this toolkit, we highlight some examples of programs and projects that have addressed gender-based violence as it intersects with specific marginalized identities, to encourage you to do the same in your own events and projects.

Taking a trauma and violence-informed approach

Experiencing gender-based violence is usually traumatic, and many newcomers, especially refugees, have been traumatized in other ways as well. Trauma can happen to individuals, communities, and entire societies. It can come from a single event, or from a series of smaller events whose effects build up over time. Its effects can be passed down through generations.

A trauma and violence-informed approach acknowledges that experiences of trauma are extremely common, and can affect people's ability to cope with everyday life. Everyone reacts to trauma differently, and there is no "right" way for traumatized people to handle

it. OCASI strongly encourages all service providers to learn about the potential effects of trauma and how to avoid making them worse. In this toolkit, we will describe some ways that you and your organization can make your interactions with community members, the spaces for your events, and the events themselves as safe as possible for people who carry the effects of trauma with them.

Promoting culturally sensitive responses to gender-based violence

It is only within the last few decades that white feminists have prompted Canada to recognize gender-based violence as a distinct issue, needing a response from the country's systems and institutions. This response has largely been criminalization. People who experience or witness an incident of physical gender-based violence are encouraged to call the police, who generally assume that the perpetrator is male, the victim is female, and the appropriate response is to arrest the man and charge him with a crime.

This approach misses a lot:

- It prevents people from many cultural and racialized communities from reporting abuse, because of previous negative experiences with police and the criminal justice system (in Canada or in their home countries)
- It prevents people from reporting because they fear that there will be impacts on immigration status
- It does not address the harm done by abuse that is not physical (such as emotional or financial abuse)
- It denies the capacity of the community itself to respond to gender-based violence in ways that build and draw on the community's connections and strengths
- It does not consider the impact of an arrest on a family's immigration status
- It stigmatizes men who experience domestic violence
- It erases the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in violent or abusive relationships

"Domestic violence is a universal problem, but its cultural expressions differ. Drawing attention to such differences can serve to confirm stereotypes because nuanced complexities are hard to convey; but advocacy that is not rooted in cultural contexts is even more problematic."

– Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

www.apiidv.org/violence/dynamics.php

We believe that there is strength, connection, and resilience within communities, and that the most effective and long-lasting responses to gender-based violence come from building and sharing knowledge within them.

Any discussion of gender-based violence in Canada must acknowledge the crisis of violence against Indigenous women and girls, who are missing and murdered at rates far higher than women and girls in the general population. This violence stems from Canada's founding as a settler colonial country under the "Doctrine of Discovery," a concept in international law going back to 1452 that white, Christian Europeans who "discovered"

land could claim legal title and sovereignty to it. The violent displacement of hundreds of Indigenous nations who have lived on this land for thousands of years continues to this day, in many forms, including gender-based violence.

While the experiences of Indigenous people and immigrants and refugees are certainly different, there can be strong parallels. Many newcomers to Canada also carry the intergenerational traumas that result from white supremacist, patriarchal colonialism, because they come from colonized countries. Work to address violence experienced in immigrant and refugee communities must acknowledge violence in Indigenous ones.

Background of OCASI's initiatives about gender-based violence

OCASI has had a strong commitment to addressing gender-based violence in immigrant and refugee communities for many years. Of our 232 member organizations, 38 focus on serving immigrant and refugee women. Our current initiatives and campaigns include the following:

Online training courses on LearnAtWork.ca to educate front-line workers and service providers about gender-based violence, sexual violence, and family violence in immigrant and refugee communities.

The Neighbours, Friends and Families Immigrant and Refugee Communities Project, a culturally and linguistically sensitive training program that assists settlement workers at participating organizations to reach out to those closest to victims of domestic abuse

– teaching them to recognize the signs of abuse and know what actions to take in response.

Telling Our Stories: Immigrant Women's Resilience, a graphic novel developed in collaboration with MOFIF by immigrant and refugee women about gender-based violence and sexual violence. The novel, which has four stories that address issues such as marital rape, Islamophobia, workplace harassment, and homophobia, is now available in 11 different languages. *Telling Our Stories* planted the seeds for this toolkit.



HOW WE DEVELOPED THIS TOOLKIT

We have worked hard to make sure the information in this toolkit is accurate, useful, and effective. We **reviewed academic articles** and **project and research reports** to learn about promising practices in educating members of immigrant and refugee communities about gender-based violence. We **reached out online and in person** to service providers and survivors in newcomer communities across Ontario. We **surveyed nearly 200 service providers**, and conducted **interviews, focus groups**, and **roundtable discussions** to find out what agencies and their staff need to foster understanding and appropriate responses to gender-based violence within newcomer communities.

A review of the literature

To get a picture of what research has revealed about gender-based violence in immigrant and refugee communities, we looked at academic articles, including small-scale studies, systematic and critical literature reviews, and critical analyses of policy and law, as well as some reports and resources developed by service providers and independent researchers. We focused on two main areas of research:

- Factors that put members of immigrant and refugee communities at greater risk of gender-based violence
- Barriers that may prevent immigrants, refugees, and people without status from seeking help after experiencing gender-based violence

What factors put immigrant, refugee, and non-status people at particular risk of gender-based violence?

Again: gender-based violence is not unique to any ethnicity or culture. However, there are many factors that can put immigrant, refugee, or non-status women at greater risk.

- **Language barriers** (Menjívar & Salcido, 2002; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2009; Timshel, Montgomery, & Dalgaard, 2017)
- **Precarious immigration status** (Bhuyan, 2012; Bhuyan, Osborne, Zahraei, & Tarshis, 2014; Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018; Robillard, 2018)

- **Trouble adapting to the new culture, especially to changes in gender roles** (Menjívar & Salcido, 2002; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2009; Shalabi, Mitchell, & Andersson, 2015; Timshel et al., 2017; Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018)
- **Experiences of trauma** (Jiwani, 2005; Timshel et al., 2017)
- **Social isolation** (Guruge & Humphreys, 2009; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2009)
- **Poverty and low socioeconomic status** (Timshel et al., 2017)
- **Acceptance of gender-based violence as normal** (Fortune & Enger, 2006; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2009; Alhabib, Nur, & Jones, 2010)

"...a focus on immigrant women and domestic violence translates into an engagement with issues of gender, race, class, ethnicity, cultural values and beliefs, language and social skills, and legal status"

(Menjívar & Salcido, 2002)

What prevents immigrants, refugees, and people without status who have experienced gender-based violence from seeking help?

A number of themes emerged about why members of newcomer communities may not be willing or able to seek help:

Expectations about family and culture

(Menjívar & Salcido, 2002; Alaggia, Regehr, & Rishchynski, 2009; Guruge & Humphreys, 2009; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2009; Singh, 2010). Many cultural communities, in particular those from patriarchal societies, place a very strong emphasis on marriage and childbearing, assigning worth to a woman depending on her status as a wife

and mother. A woman experiencing abuse may not report for fear of losing this status.

Racism (Guruge & Humphreys, 2009; Du Mont & Forte, 2012). Immigrant women may not report violence because they have experienced discrimination on the basis of their race, ethnicity, or language, and do not believe the system will support them.

Social isolation (Menjívar & Salcido, 2002; Alaggia et al., 2009; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2009; Battered Women’s Support Services, 2010; Du Mont & Forte, 2012). Women who are isolated from their friends, relatives, and communities may believe abusers who blame them for the violence, and may not trust others enough to talk about experiencing it.

Immigration status (Menjívar & Salcido, 2002; Alaggia et al., 2009; Singh, 2010; Bhuyan, 2012; Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018). Many people do not report because they fear deportation or other effects on their immigration process, for themselves, their partners, or their whole families, especially if the person experiencing violence and their partner are both undocumented.

Involvement of the criminal justice system (Singh, 2010; Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016). People in communities that have poor relationships with police often do not want contact with the criminal justice system because they do not believe they will be treated fairly.

Lack of knowledge about rights, services, and supports (Guruge & Humphreys, 2009; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2009; Tam, Tutty, Zhuang, & Paz, 2016). Some newcomers do not know that gender-based violence is illegal in Canada, or that help is available for people who are experiencing it.

Lack of available or appropriate supports (Guruge & Humphreys, 2009; Bhuyan, 2012; Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018). Newcomers who do reach out for support sometimes find that it is not available, because of language barriers, budget cuts, or limits on eligibility.

Homophobia and transphobia (Guadalupe-Diaz & Jasinski, 2017; Rios, 2017). People whose gender and sexual identities are stigmatized in their own cultural communities may not want to reach out for help when they experience violence.

Consultations with the community

To develop this toolkit, we consulted with the community in many ways. We recruited English and French advisory committees of service providers representing immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and agencies that address gender-based violence across Ontario, and we met with them over the course of the whole project to draw on their

expertise and knowledge. We also conducted an online survey of service providers, including OCASI’s 232 member agencies, to find out what you know and what you need, and nearly 200 of you responded. In addition, we held focus groups and roundtables to hear from service providers and survivors:

- Two English-language roundtables with service providers: one in Ottawa with Immigrant Women’s Services Ottawa, and one with Women’s Health in Women’s Hands and the Rexdale Women’s Centre in Toronto
- One French-language roundtable for Francophone service providers in Toronto, led by MOFIF
- Two focus groups in English with survivors of gender-based violence:
 - one at the Teresa Group and one at Working Women’s Community Centre
- One French-language focus group with survivors in Toronto, led by MOFIF at the TAIBU Community Health Centre
- One conference call with francophone men, led by MOFIF

This toolkit reflects the findings of our research.



SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

Conversations about gender-based violence in immigrant and refugee communities need to be culturally sensitive and nuanced. Agencies or organizations that engage in professional development and training about gender-based violence, as well as those that learn about this topic through work in the community, can offer much more effective community-based education on this topic. This section covers some of the basics.

What the organization needs to do

To work effectively with communities in ending gender-based violence, your organization needs a strong sense of its own mission, mandate, and values, and how these are consistent with anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and feminist practices. If you work at a non-profit agency, there are almost certainly policies and procedures that guide your work. These depend on the history of the organization and

the values of the board and management. Some organizations have anti-oppressive principles and intersectional approaches woven deeply into their fabric, while for others, these principles and approaches are relatively new. For your community-based approach to work toward ending gender-based violence, it is important for everyone in your organization to stand on the same foundations.

An intersectional approach is key. The organization's work must take into account how different aspects of social location and identity can affect a person's experiences and needs. Also, a trauma and violence-informed approach must be part of every aspect of your work – you must be mindful of how trauma can affect people, and aware of how to avoid retraumatizing them. At an agency, this includes everyone from the board and executive director to management to program staff to the cleaning staff.

People who have experienced violence and abuse may have lost the sense that they have power and control over their own lives. Even small things such as communicating in non-judgemental ways and giving service seekers the chance to decide what or how much information they want to share can make a huge difference.

Your organization's goal should be to build a safe, trusting space where people are willing and able to share their experiences as they feel comfortable to do so. Here are some suggestions for specific actions your organization can take to help create a sense of safety and connection.

- Make sure all staff understand the importance of using the inclusive term “gender-based violence” rather than “violence against women,” to acknowledge the complexity of gender and gender identities.
- Review the organization's policies and procedures to make sure that staff know how to support people who are experiencing or have experienced gender-based violence.

- Take the time to make sure everyone at your organization learns about trauma and violence-informed approaches. The Public Health Agency of Canada's Trauma and Violence-Informed Approaches to Policy and Practice is an excellent resource.
- Provide staff with opportunities and individual plans for professional development and training. This includes building time into schedules and staffing plans for workshops, conferences, webinars, and online courses. If your organization is eligible, you can apply for funding through OCASI's Professional Education and Training (PET) program.
- Encourage staff members and managers to practice self-care.
 - As an organization, commit to a culture of caring for yourself and for others. Directors and managers have a massive role to play in modeling self-care and encouraging reasonable workloads.
 - Make sure program staff are able to take regular breaks from their work. These can be short breaks during the day, or longer intervals of time off, so that staff members can recharge.
 - Offer flexible work schedules.
 - Provide opportunities for nonjudgemental debriefing.

for front-line workers who are exposed to stories of trauma. These can be a chance to talk with peers or supervisors, a consulting social worker, or someone outside the organization.

- Consider a weekly mindfulness meditation group for staff.
- **Listen** to staff members when they speak about what support they need to take care of themselves.
- Hire program staff that represent the communities that you serve. Some people feel much more comfortable attending programs and talking about trauma and violence in their own language without having to explain basic beliefs and values of their culture.
- Acknowledge that some service seekers will not want to work with people from their own communities. Gender-based

violence is such a taboo topic for some that they may not want to discuss it with anyone that they fear might disclose information within the community.

- Provide resources in plain language, and offer resources that have been translated into other languages.
- Understand that fears around precarious immigration status can make people more vulnerable to gender-based violence as well as preventing them from seeking help. Your organization should discuss and implement ways to serve people regardless of status.
- Build partnerships with other agencies so that referrals can be made to specific people. Talk regularly with agency partners to maintain the connections and ensure they stay relevant.
- Build partnerships with healthcare providers and learn about their processes.

What front-line workers need to do

To provide effective, respectful, culturally sensitive support, we must reflect critically on ourselves, and remain open to new ideas and knowledge. We all have biases and gaps in what we know – these come with being human. It is crucial that you take the time to recognize and understand yours.

Reflect on yourself, your social location, and your biases and assumptions

Self-reflection is an integral part of any social service work. You cannot share information or provide services effectively if you have not critically examined your assumptions about race, religion, disability status, immigration status, or any other aspect of a person's social location or identity. This includes your own. There are many resources to support you in this kind of reflection, which should continue throughout your career.

Unlearning the oppressions that cause gender-based violence to happen is a lifelong process that you can practice every day.

Follow the social media accounts of people whose social locations are very different from yours, and just listen. Being aware of the realities of gender-based violence instead of the myths is the number one way you can be ready to support survivors.

Sometimes people who work to end gender-based violence are also survivors of such violence themselves. In doing this work, you must be willing to reflect on your own experiences and consider how they inform what you do. Don't be afraid to seek support for yourself if you need it.

Commit to supporting survivors

People who have experienced gender-based violence need support, not judgement. To help ensure that survivors feel safe, make a commitment to supporting survivors in ways that will help them.

- Listen, actively and without judgement. While they're speaking, don't get lost in thought about how you're going to respond: just affirm that you hear them.
- Offer options instead of advice and make sure to ask permission first. For example, you can ask questions such as "Do you want to brainstorm some ideas about how to stay safe tonight?"
- Don't offer advice unless you are directly asked for it.
- Don't question their accounts of what happened, or suggest that they could have done more to protect themselves. Believe survivors.
- Remember that different survivors of violence may react to the experience in very different ways. Some may be very distressed, while others may act as if nothing has happened.
- Let the survivor share what they want to, when they want to, at their own pace.

- Respect the survivor’s right to control their response to the violence. They may or may not choose to report it: do not judge them for their decision.
- Explain your limits of confidentiality -- you must make a report to the authorities

only when someone is going to harm themselves or someone else, or when a child is experiencing or witnessing abuse or neglect. In all other cases, keep the survivor’s story confidential. There is no duty for front-line workers to report domestic or sexual violence.

Source: National Sexual Violence Resource Centre, 13 Ways to Support Survivors During Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Look after yourself

Front-line workers and program staff who hear about traumatic experiences are themselves at risk of second-hand trauma, also known as vicarious trauma. Vicarious trauma can harm a person’s emotional, spiritual, and even physical health. Bearing witness to other people’s pain can bring sadness and anxiety, and lead to lost motivation and sleepless nights. It can interfere with how people create a sense of meaning, and even cause a crisis of faith.

It is critical that entire organizations commit to the health of every worker, and that this commitment is modeled by the organizations’ leaders. These are some ways to take care of yourself:

- Build relationships with colleagues and supervisors who understand and respect confidentiality, and set up regular times to debrief nonjudgementally with them.

- Spend time with friends and supportive family.
- Practice mindfulness: set time aside each day, even if it is only a few minutes, to pay attention to your breath and your body. Meditation can also help. There are smartphone apps available to support your meditation practice, such as Calm, Buddhify, and Insight Timer.
- Set a regular bedtime, and stick to it.
- Cry if you need to.
- Build time into your day to move around. If you can, climb an extra flight of stairs each time you use the washroom, or take a walk around the building.
- Spend time outside. Go for a walk at lunchtime.

- Find physical activities that you enjoy, such as yoga, running, hiking, dance, or team sports, and plan them into your schedule to reduce stress.
- Express yourself in creative ways. Keep a journal or a sketchbook. Make and listen to music. Practice creative hobbies such as cooking, sewing, woodworking, photography, or knitting.
- Engage in the forms of spiritual practice, such as attending religious services, meditating, or prayer, that feel comfortable and reassuring to you. You may find support from a spiritual leader as well.
- Seek counselling if you are finding it difficult to cope with everyday life.

Engage in professional development and training

As service providers, we are never finished learning ways to improve our practice, or unlearning harmful or unhelpful biases and approaches. There are countless opportunities available to support you in

lifelong learning about your work, and we strongly encourage you to take advantage of them. The Tools and Resources section of this toolkit is an excellent place to start.



WHAT IS COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION?

Community-based education is a way of sharing information with communities in formal and informal ways that respect their values, needs, and culture. Organizations that do this kind of education develop programs in collaboration with communities to build their capacity to address common issues, and to improve quality of life.

In 1991, Larry Horyna and Larry Decker of the National Coalition for Community Education, based in the United States, shared the following nine principles for community education.

- **Self-determination.** Members of the community are the ones who know what the community needs and wants.
- **Self-help.** Fostering people's capacity to help and support themselves enables them to become more independent.

- **Leadership development.** Identifying and fostering leadership from within the community is crucial.
 - **Localization.** Making sure that programs, services, and events are easily accessible to the community increases the likelihood that people will participate.
 - **Integrated delivery of services.** Service users are best served by providers who can make the best use of their own resources while also being part of a strong network of other organizations and agencies.
 - **Maximum use of resources.** This includes physical, financial, and human resources, which the community can draw on to meet diverse needs.
- **Inclusiveness.** Conscious, deliberate inclusion of people of different genders, racialized identities, sexual orientations, ages, abilities, sizes, incomes, religions, and immigration status ensures that the whole community is represented and served.
 - **Responsiveness.** Effective education and programming responds to the changing needs of the community.
 - **Lifelong learning.** Learning does not stop when we finish school – it continues for our entire lives.

Source: bit.ly/gbv-edu [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, as archived on the Internet Wayback Machine]

Community-based education offers a unique opportunity to share information on a sensitive subject with the public in culturally sensitive ways.



BEST PRACTICES

In our research and consultations, we heard about many innovative approaches to sharing information and raising awareness about gender-based violence with immigrant and refugee communities. The following themes came up repeatedly:

- The most effective way to reach newcomers is to share information and hold events and workshops in places where they are likely to go. These include ESL and LINC classes, childcare centres, and faith-based organizations.
- Many newcomers seek community through their faith. Building partnerships with religious groups and leaders can be a powerful way for immigrant and refugee-serving organizations to reach communities and attract people to educational events.

- Because gender-based violence can be such a taboo topic, members of immigrant and refugee communities are likely to avoid events and activities that discuss it directly. Sometimes you need to approach it “through the side door,” sharing information about it at events on other topics such as employment or parenting.
- The language you use is key. Simple, plain language in outreach materials,

printed resources, and intake forms can help people understand what violence is and what supports are available.

- Conversations about gender-based violence can be triggering. During workshops and events, it is critical to have someone available to provide one-on-one support, including active listening and referrals if necessary.

Every community is unique, and outreach and education efforts for each community must be unique as well. To help you in planning and developing engaging community events, here are some of examples of innovative tools and programs that individuals, groups, and organizations have already created. As you read about these projects, think about how they address intersecting aspects of people’s identities.

Toolkits

First Response Toolkit for Frontline Staff

Women Against Violence, an action group of the Toronto West Local Immigration Partnership, has developed a new toolkit to help front-line staff:

- Respond to clients and situations with sensitivity
- Increase women’s safety
- Provide information on resources and options
- Make effective, timely referrals to specialized services and supports

- Encourage women to take action to end the violence and begin to take steps towards positive changes in their lives.

Women Against Violence aims to promote the message that gender-based violence is everyone’s issue to address. The Action Group supports local community organizations in enhancing knowledge and building capacity to address this issue.

 bit.ly/gbv-westlip

Race, Gendered Violence, and the Rights of Women with Precarious Immigration Status

This toolkit was created by Deepa Mattoo, Legal Director at the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic in Toronto, with support from Roopa Mann and Julia Romano.

It is intended for service providers who work with racialized women who have experienced gender-based violence, and who have precarious immigration status in Canada.

It explores the immigration process and Canadian privacy legislation, and discusses how

those affect access to benefits and services such as housing, education, health care, and welfare. It also considers how gender interacts with the regulations about refugee claims in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

Finally, it contains lists of legal resources available to racialized women with precarious status.

bit.ly/gbv-schlifer

Stepping Up to the Plate

Lesbian, bisexual, and trans (LBT) women who are members of immigrant and refugee communities are at significant risk of gender-based violence, and those who have experienced it need specialized support that honours the different aspects of their identities.

Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services, an immigrant and refugee-serving agency in downtown Toronto, has developed a toolkit detailing an innovative 12-week arts-based program for supporting LBT newcomer women in addressing issues of violence and community safety.

Promising Practices in Arts-based Programming to Address Issues of Violence and Community Safety for Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans (LBT) Newcomer, Immigrant and Refugee Women contains lists of resources for referral, training, and capacity building, and gives specific suggestions and recommendations for implementing an Expressive Arts Therapy Program and evaluating its effectiveness.

bit.ly/gbv-lbt

Addressing Domestic Violence in Canadian Muslim Communities: A Training Manual for Muslim Communities and Ontario Service Providers

This manual, released in 2010, examines domestic violence in the context of Canadian Muslim communities. It looks at Canadian legal responses to domestic violence, Islamic perspectives and cultural practices around it, and the concept and characteristics of so-called “honour” violence. It also explores the deep difference between societies that are based on individualism and those based on collectivism, and Muslim families’ fears of losing their cultural and religious identities as they integrate into Canadian society.

One section of the manual reviews the Muslim Family Safety Project, which took place in London, Ontario, in 2003. This project addressed domestic violence in Muslim communities in that city in two ways: first, through community education for people

in Muslim communities about Canadian conceptions of domestic violence, and second, through training of Canadian service providers about cultural differences and barriers to help-seeking for Muslim families living with violence and its effects.

Part II of the manual contains suggested statements about domestic violence in general, the response of the criminal justice system to it, and domestic violence within Muslim families, to discuss at workshops. Asking participants in your own workshops and events to talk about such statements can get people to reflect on their own assumptions, beliefs, and knowledge, and can start powerful conversations.

bit.ly/gbv-manual

The In Her Shoes Toolkit

In Her Shoes is a toolkit developed by the GBV Prevention Network in Kampala, Uganda, in alliance with the InterCambios Technical Secretariat of Latin America, to build empathy for women who have experienced gender-based violence. It uses storytelling and an interactive “choose your own adventure” approach to educate participants about how to support survivors, and how to prevent gender-based violence from happening in the first place.

The kit, available in English and Kiswahili, contains a facilitator’s guide, a set of ten stories

about women experiencing violence in sub-Saharan Africa, and 16 station cards to be used as props during a three-hour activity. The exercise is intended for service providers, students, healthcare workers, police officers, government officials, religious and cultural leaders, and members of the community. You can download the kit from the GBV Prevention Network’s website, and you can also adapt the materials to be more relevant to the community you serve.

bit.ly/gbv-africa

The Creative Interventions Toolkit: A Practical Guide to Stop Interpersonal Violence

The Creative Interventions Toolkit is the result of a three-year project that took place in California to address all forms of interpersonal violence, not just violence based on gender. It does not focus specifically on immigrant and refugee communities, but it was developed by a large coalition of groups, including many that support racialized immigrant and refugee women.

The toolkit is very large, with many charts, worksheets, and checklists to plan for safety, assess allies and barriers, set goals, support survivors, ensure accountability, work together, and stay on track.

bit.ly/gbv-inter

Programs

The Redwood

The Redwood, a shelter in west Toronto, is a safe haven that provides a variety of supports to women and children fleeing abuse. The Redwood meets people's immediate needs for shelter and safety planning, offers help in

making the transition back into the community, and runs programs that build participants' sense of self-worth and independence. Participants in our focus groups described two programs that have been very successful.

The Women on the Move Leadership Program

This is a one-year program for women who have experienced abuse. It focuses on sharing ideas and experiences, discussing belief systems, starting to value yourself, and making new worlds. The Redwood established Women on the Move as a pilot project in 2008 for newcomer women who had been resident or community clients at the shelter, to build their leadership skills and support them in raising awareness within newcomer communities and immigrant and refugee-serving organizations

about violence against women and girls. The Redwood now has two programs, Women on the Move and Young Women on the Move, that teach participants about self-assessment, leadership development, and community development and advocacy.

The Redwood offers a comprehensive package of resources and information for other organizations that want to start their own Women on the Move program,

or host a screening of the forty-minute Women on the Move documentary, which shows the stories of three participants.

The survivors we spoke to who had participated in the program described it as transformative. They talked about the value of setting goals through the program, and about how helpful it had been for the facilitators to

keep following up with them after they had completed it. Two women who had been through it said that it had been crucial for them to be asked “What do you want to do?” and to be told, “You are still valuable,” and to learn skills for becoming independent.

 wotm.ca

Arts Together

This is a ten-week program offered three times a year, run by volunteers. Female participants who have experienced gender-based violence create

poetry, paintings, pottery, and photographs, and their children participate in the last few sessions. The program is supported by private donations.

Springtide Resources: Building Bridges Across Barriers

Springtide Resources is a Toronto-based registered charity that provides programs and training to those who are working to end gender-based violence. Springtide’s Building Bridges Across Barriers project is a community-based leadership training program that brings together women with disabilities, Deaf women, and immigrant and refugee women to identify overlapping identities and build solidarity and allyship.

Building Bridges Across Barriers takes a strongly intersectional approach, encouraging participants to consider parallels in the ways that women who are marginalized in different ways experience oppression.

 bit.ly/gbv-bridges

Rexdale Community Hub’s movie nights

Rexdale Community Hub is a community centre with a variety of agencies serving diverse populations in the northwest corner of Toronto. One such agency, the Rexdale Women’s Centre, has had success in organizing movie nights for

newcomer women. Movies that touch on themes of gender-based violence and abuse are chosen to play for the group. After watching part of the movie, participants discuss the segment and their reactions to it, and then participate

in an open conversation about the issues that the segment has raised for them. These movies help the newcomer women become aware of abusive situations and recognize that abuse is

not acceptable. They learn about types of abuse and how to deal with such situations. After the movies the participants discuss the scenarios, and also improve their listening and speaking skills.

Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention's Caribbean Women Cookouts

The Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention provides services relating to HIV/AIDS and sexual health for members of the South Asian community. One of their initiatives has been Caribbean Women Cookouts, events where participants learn to look a Caribbean dish as well as fusion dishes. According to participants, the fusion dishes are an adventure into the different cultural influences of the many

ethnicities that reflect and influence the majority of Caribbean dishes. These cookouts have been instrumental in building trust and opening up conversation in safe, confidential spaces where participants talk freely about cultural and social attitudes towards various issues, such as menstrual cycles and sex, as well as attitudes towards women and their independence and what it really means.

Projects

Neighbours, Friends and Families – Engaging Immigrant and Refugee Communities

The NFF campaign was launched in 2005 by the Government of Ontario as a response to recommendations of the Chief Coroner's Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. It is a public education campaign to raise awareness of the signs of woman abuse so that those close to an at-risk woman or an abusive man can help.

Recognizing the unique issues concerning gender-based violence within immigrant and refugee communities, OCASI has created the Immigrant and Refugee Communities -

Neighbours, Friends and Families (IRCNFF) Campaign to raise awareness about the warning signs of woman abuse and promote bystander intervention within immigrant and refugee communities across Ontario. IRCNFF also aims to raise awareness about the unique barriers newcomer women face when they are seeking support for abuse, and advocate for the elimination of those barriers.

IRCNFF recruits and trains Peer Champions from immigrant and refugee communities to hold educational events that raise awareness and

promote action. After their training, each Peer Champion designs and runs two educational events in their community about domestic violence. Peer Champions have the freedom to design these events in creative ways.

Action Ontarienne is carrying out a similar initiative, Voisins Amis et Familles, in francophone communities.

immigrantandrefugeenff.ca

voisinsamisetfamilles.ca

White Ribbon

White Ribbon is a global movement of men and boys who are working to end violence against women and girls, and promote gender equity, healthy relationships, and a new conception of masculinity. Founded in Toronto in 1991, White Ribbon leads campaigns against gender-based violence in more than 60 countries.

One of their most recent campaigns is a partnership with the Immigrant and Refugee Communities – Neighbours, Friends and Families (IRCNFF) Campaign. Based on IRCNFF’s Peer Champions model, this project is designed to train 10 to 15 “passionate men 18 years and over, who are ready to challenge

toxic masculinities and become role models in their communities by standing up against all forms of violence against women.”

Recruitment is focused on cultural organizations and institutions, workplaces, and male-dominated professions such as the taxi industry. The campaign is paying particular attention to the Syrian newcomer community, and there are plans to create new resources for raising awareness of gender-based violence and its effects. COPA is adapting this initiative for francophones as well.

whiteribbon.ca/projects

cacomenceavectoi.ca

METRAC’s TransFormed project: Addressing partner violence from Two-Spirit, Nonbinary and Trans Perspectives

METRAC is a non-profit community agency that works with individuals, communities and institutions to end gender-based violence. The TransFormed project is a community-based research and intervention

project that received funding from Public Health Agencies of Canada in 2017 to:

- understand how partner violence is experienced from Two-Spirit, nonbinary,

trans, gender non-conforming and gender-questioning perspectives

- respond to the needs of community members through interactive peer-led approaches and capacity-building activities

This innovative three-year project is guided by members of the Peer Leadership Group, who

are Two-Spirit, nonbinary, and trans survivors of gender-based violence, in collaboration with multi-sector organizations of service providers and academics, to conduct a trauma-informed research study and develop health promotional tools for community members as well as training opportunities for service providers.

 metrac.org

The Strengthening Families in Canada Family Violence Prevention Project

This was a community education project that took place in Canada in 2008 (Simbandumwe et al.). A report about the project, published in an academic journal, outlines a number of approaches that community educators about gender-based violence in newcomer communities have used:

- Training sessions for newcomers about family violence as part of their orientation to Canada
- Training delivered through ESL classes and parenting groups
- Engagement of community leaders, including religious leaders
- Collaboration between anti-violence agencies and immigrant and refugee communities

- Culturally sensitive programming that acknowledges different understandings of relationships and violence, and that builds on community values and norms
- Emphasis on building stronger family relationships

Male participants interviewed during the program said that it is important to address domestic violence within the community rather than relying on those outside it. They recommended school-based programs to educate children and youth; orientation for newcomers; community workshops on a variety of family-related topics; and “train-the-trainer” programs for newcomers so they can share information within their own communities (Simbandumwe et al, 2008).

Source: Simbandumwe, L., Bailey, K., Denetto, S., Migliardi, P., Bacon, B., & Nighswander, M. (2008). Family violence prevention programs in immigrant communities: Perspectives of immigrant men. Journal of Community Psychology, 36(7), 899-914.



COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION: HOSTING EVENTS

Planning

There's a lot to keep in mind when you are planning an event. This is a list of questions to ask yourself and your partners as you get ready for the big day.

- Who are the intended participants? Reflect on the audience – some activities may be appropriate only for certain groups. Will men and women participate together, or separately? How will you create space for non-binary and trans people? Are you addressing survivors, those who have caused harm, or bystanders?
- Where will the event take place?
 - Faith-based spaces: churches, mosques, temples, synagogues, gurdwaras
 - Community recreation centres
 - Community hubs
 - LINC classes
 - Immigrant and refugee-serving organizations
- Are you partnering with anyone else to host the event? Think about how other agencies, organizations, or individuals can contribute. If your organization is not as familiar with the issue of gender-based violence in immigrant and refugee communities, you may want to create partnerships with groups who have more expertise.
- What kind of event will it be? Will there be a presenter and an audience, or will participants engage in shared activities? Or will it be a combination of both?
- How will you publicize the event? Remember that events that are marketed as focusing on gender-based violence may not be well-attended. You may want to take a different focus, such as on healthy relationships or strengthening families, and then introduce more sensitive issues when there is a facilitator to help handle them.
- Who leads the discussion? A professional facilitator, a staff member, a member of the community, or someone else?
- When does the event take place? Different people are available at different times of the day, depending on their schedule, employment status, and responsibilities for childcare.
- Is it accessible? Think about transportation, interpretation, and childcare. Can people who use mobility devices enter the space? What accommodations are available for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing?


- What resources, such as flyers, pamphlets, and websites will you have available to share?
- Will the event happen only once? Or will it take place regularly, perhaps once a week or once a month? If it happens more than once, will it be a program of a fixed length, such as four to six weeks, or will it be more of a weekly or monthly drop-in?
- What kind of connections and referrals will you be able to make for participants?

Where can they go after the event to continue the discussion?

- Will participants register in advance, or drop in? If they need to register, how and where do they do so? How much personal information will you ask for, and why? What will you do with this information after the event is over? People may be unwilling to share any information that they fear will put them at risk.

Practical steps: do's and don'ts

- Provide food, and make sure options for different diets are available and clearly labelled. Depending on your participants, you may need to make sure the food is halal, kosher, vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, nut-free, or dairy-free.
- Discuss guidelines for appropriate speech and behaviour to establish an atmosphere of safety and respect.
- Check in with participants before and after the event – acknowledge their emotional and spiritual needs.
- Remind participants of the need for (and limitations on) confidentiality: what is said in the space stays in the space.
- Provide opportunities for participants to share experiences and stories with others who have similar ones.
- Ask participants to speak in general terms without sharing details of triggering experiences that could traumatize others in the room.
- Have people available for debriefing if someone becomes upset or triggered.
- Make sure there is professional support such as counselling available after the event if people need it. This can include referrals.
- Provide incentives besides food for people to attend, such as transit fare, childcare, translators, and time before and after the event for people to socialize and build community.
- Accommodate religious needs such as prayer space, and facilities for washing before prayers.
- Do not invite police. If you must include them, ask them not to wear uniforms.



Is there bright lighting outside?

Does the space feel safe? Is it decorated in warm colours, with art from the community on the walls?

Is there an active listener available?

Are there resources available in a variety of languages?

Is there a place for children to play?



Is there space for parking strollers?

Are there posters and resources depicting women from a broad variety of backgrounds and racialized communities, of different ages, religions, abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities?

Are there one or more gender-neutral washrooms available?

Is the space physically accessible to people who use mobility devices, including wheelchairs and walkers?

Is there comfortable seating, in public and private areas?

Information to share

When you are designing your program or event, you must think carefully about what information you are going to share with participants. How people understand gender-based violence can vary widely from community to community, and even from person to person.

A central message should be that gender-based violence is not unique to any specific community, but there are different risk factors and impacts in different communities. If you are providing definitions of violence and abuse, they should be clear, with examples.

These are some key concepts you can share:

- Gender-based violence is never acceptable.
- The person experiencing gender-based violence is not to blame for it.
- Survivors are strong, creative, and skilled, and they are masters at coping with the abuse they live with.
- Escaping abuse and healing is a process, not a specific event.
- Leaving the abuser and the abusive situation can increase risk to the survivor.
- Services and supports are available, but participants may need help navigating the system.

- Everyone has the right to decide what supports they seek, and when (or if) to seek them.
- Nuance in discussions of gender-based violence is critical, especially with immigrant and refugee communities. As we noted earlier, the standard approach to gender-based violence in Canada over many years has been to criminalize it. In Ontario, the model of one person as perpetrator and the other as victim does not work in many situations.
- Some gender-based violence takes place in employment relationships. Women who work as caregivers are at risk, as are people in traditionally feminized professions such as cleaning, sewing, childcare, and personal support work.

Here are some suggestions about other information to share, depending on the type of event you are hosting. You can adapt them according to the needs of the community.

- Culturally sensitive definitions of gender-based violence
- Intersectionality and different aspects of identity and social location
- The impacts of structural barriers on people's willingness and ability to acknowledge the issue or seek help

- Misogyny and misogynoir
- Racism
- Xenophobia
- Homophobia
- Transphobia
- Ableism
- Ageism

- Classism
- Sizeism
- Islamophobia
- Visual representation of the cycle of abuse
- Risks of re-entering an abusive relationship

Ideas for activities

Most people are familiar with workshops where a presenter shares information, maybe with slides on a screen, and participants listen and ask questions. Community-based education takes a different approach: it draws on the knowledge, experiences, and needs of the participants to create a safe environment of shared learning. Choose activities that are accessible and engaging to a wide variety of people with different first languages and different learning styles. Arts-based activities can be especially effective in opening challenging conversations because they enable people to share experiences and knowledge that they might not be able to express in words.

Here are some suggestions for activities that you can offer at your events.



Poetry and spoken word. Find videos online of people reciting poetry about topics around gender, such as gender inequality, feminism, gender roles, or gender stereotypes. Show one or more of the videos, to encourage discussion about the themes and messages, and then encourage participants to write their own, and present them if they feel comfortable doing so.

Art. Choose an activity such as drawing, painting, or sculpting with materials such as clay or wax. Provide participants with appropriate supplies such as paper or fabric and markers, pencil crayons, and easy-to-clean paints such as watercolour or tempera; or polymer or self-hardening clay or sculpting wax. Suggest a theme, such as “a world without violence,” “a human tree,” or “self-portrait,” and allow participants to work individually or collaboratively. Set up a place to display participants’ work if they choose.

Craft. Making things by hand can be a meditative, soothing process. Spending time with people who are doing the same thing can help create a fun, enjoyable atmosphere of sharing and mutual respect. In many cultures, there are crafts that are traditionally done by women, such as embroidery, beading, weaving, and basketry. Your event can offer participants a space to engage in familiar activities, or learn new ones. A facilitator can run a workshop, walking participants through the steps of a simple project from start to finish. Or people can come with their own projects in progress and take a couple of hours to work on them in the company of others. Here are some suggestions for possible activities:

- Fibre crafts such as knitting, spinning, crochet, weaving, rug hooking, needle felting, embroidery, needlepoint, or cross-stitch
- Sewing and quilting
- Paper crafts such as origami, making paper flowers, scrapbooking, and stamping
- Beading and jewelry making

During the activities, a leader can guide the conversation toward discussions of healthy and unhealthy relationships, power and control, feelings of safety, understandings of gender roles and expectations, and ideas around self-worth.

Stories. As writer Thomas King stated, “The truth about stories is, that’s all we are.” Stories are the most powerful way we have to communicate with each other and understand ourselves. There are many ways to use stories to address gender-based violence and its effects:

- Offer a weekly, biweekly, or monthly book club. You can select books or articles to spark discussion about gender roles, relationships, violence, and support; you can also ask for suggestions from participants for books and articles that they would like to share and discuss.
- Use short stories, novels, movies, TV shows, and other media, including OCASI’s graphic novel *Telling Our Stories*, as a springboard for raising awareness and starting conversations. Some possible activities:
 - Ask participants to read a story, and then write their own alternative endings, or accounts of what happened before or after the story.

They can fill in an interval in the story that is not depicted, or depicted only visually. Another great exercise is to take a prose passage from a traditional novel and rewrite it as dialogue in a graphic novel, then create the pictures to go with it.

- With copies of *Telling Our Stories*, blank out the text in the comic bubbles and ask participants how they would respond after someone has disclosed to them or what they can say to support them.
- Read one story and ask participants to write or draw what they are feeling. They can keep their work private, but if they are willing to share, you can encourage them to put their responses together and create a collective zine.

Cultural showcases. Offer participants a chance to share aspects of their culture, such as traditional music and dance, food, stories, and anything else from their culture that has positive associations for them. These celebrations are likely to be well-attended. At these events, you can introduce guest speakers to give presentations and lead discussions of gender-based violence.

Theatre exercises and roleplay. Theatre has long been recognized as a powerful medium for conveying stories, connecting people, fostering empathy, and educating audiences and participants. Many community-based education programs use theatre exercises, roleplay, and performances to engage community

members on sensitive topics, and to work through potential responses to them. One very effective approach to theatre for education is the Theatre of the Oppressed, a set of methods and games developed over 40 years by Brazilian educator and dramatist Augusto Boal. One of the techniques of Theatre of the Oppressed is Forum Theatre, where audience members are no longer spectators but “spect-actors” -- after watching a complete performance of a play, whether scripted or improvised, they watch it once more and can intervene in the action, stepping up to replace the protagonist and redirect the scene. This provides opportunities to explore the impacts of different responses to conflict, to observe multiple perspectives and to empathize with the characters in a unique way.

- Theatre exercises are a great way to increase awareness and empathy among bystanders who have not experienced gender-based violence themselves, but who are interested in supporting those who have. They should be used with caution if you are working with survivors or people who have caused harm. There are professional theatre companies that can support your organization and train facilitators in using theatre with such groups, such as Mixed Company Theatre in Toronto (bit.ly/2WGG2Nh), and Branch Out Theatre (bit.ly/2UAh7ZO) in Toronto and Ottawa.
- This is a resource explaining Boal’s approach and many of the games that he developed. (bit.ly/2I3W3d9)
- Boal himself also wrote a book, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (bit.ly/2RDvU4d), which is available online.

Movie nights. Movies are a powerful form of communication and a way to start conversations on challenging topics. Showing movies that touch on themes of gender-based violence and abuse, and allowing for guided discussion with a facilitator, can be very effective in raising awareness and creating environments for discussing such sensitive issues.

Gardening workshops and community gardens. In many areas, there are programs for sharing plots of land or green roofs where community members can create and tend to gardens, and share in the harvest at the end of the season. You can check with local

government or landowners to find places where you can start a gardening program that will build community and create a communal space where people can build trusting relationships and eventually engage in conversations about the more challenging aspects of their lives.

Cooking clubs. Some of the best conversations happen over food, and most people are excited to share foods from their own cultures as a way of building connections. Hosting a cooking club in a community kitchen can enable participants to reduce their social isolation and improve their knowledge of community resources and supports.

Scheduling

There are different celebrations and commemorations throughout the year that provide rich opportunities for community-based education. You can connect your events to established efforts to raise awareness of women's issues, social justice, and gender-based violence, such as Black History Month, Women's History Month, Take Back the Night marches, the Transgender Day of Remembrance every November 20, and the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women every December 6.

You can also connect your events to festivals, holidays, and other celebrations within the communities you serve. People are likely to attend events that celebrate their own cultures and bring the community together, and you can use these events as opportunities to share information about gender-based violence and the resources that are available to support those it affects.

Taking care of each other

Discussing gender-based violence can be very difficult, even without personal experience of it. Gender-based violence occurs in nearly all

societies, and this means that there is a strong chance that someone in the room has lived through or witnessed it, even if they have not

disclosed this. It is our collective responsibility as a community to support survivors: this is one way we can take care of each other.

Participants and even staff members may find some discussions to be upsetting and possibly triggering. You can take several steps to help support people through any distress:

- Build in time for breaks during the event.
- Let everyone know that they can step out at any time.
- Make sure there is someone available to debrief anyone who needs support. Ideally, this could be a person trained

in crisis intervention, but it can also be a staff member or volunteer who can listen actively, without judgement, and if necessary, connect a person in distress with further support such as the Assaulted Women's Helpline (1-866-863-0511), or a referral to a counselling service.

- End on a positive note. A short, guided meditation can be a powerful way to calm the mind and reduce stress. Alternatively, participants might draw or write about messages of hope that they can take from the event, or talk briefly to a neighbour about hope and resilience before reporting back to the group.



EVALUATION: HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS

Evaluation is a critical part of any program. It is the key to making sure that what you did was effective, and that what you are going to do will be even better.

When you are evaluating a program or activity, consider: What are the goals of the activity? What are you hoping to achieve? Does the activity tie into broader program or organizational goals? Are there any success indicators for your activity or program? Project goals, logic models, and success indicators are your reference points in determining what to evaluate. For instance, are you measuring participant impacts? If so, what impacts are you

measuring for? Some of the common indicators for community outcomes include the following:

- Increased awareness and understanding
- Improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and empowerment
- Strengthened relationships
- Sense of belonging
- Increase in knowledge
- Improved skills and capacity

Here are some key things to consider when you conduct evaluations with immigrant and refugee populations:

Language: English and French language barriers may prevent participants from expressing themselves fully in the evaluation. With any evaluation method you choose (such as a survey, focus group, or evaluation form), consider that participants can participate more fully in their first language, or have translators or peer researchers present to help with interpretation. Also, use simple language as much as possible.

Literacy: If you distribute surveys or questionnaires, participants with low literacy will have trouble completing them. Instead, you can conduct the evaluations by using focus groups, interviews, or group exercises that require minimal reading and writing skills.

Cultural sensitivity: Evaluation methods should be inclusive and adapted to the

populations they are intended for. Consider the diversity of identities, cultural norms, and practices amongst the immigrant and refugee communities you serve. Ensure that the evaluation is sensitive to all backgrounds. Also, using peer researchers is recommended to ensure that activities are well adapted.

Wellbeing of survivors: Be considerate that there are participants in the room who have experienced violence. The safety and emotional wellbeing of participants is the first priority; no one should feel pressured to disclose information they are not comfortable sharing.

On-site support: In the event that participants are triggered by the evaluation exercise, please ensure that a social worker or counsellor is on site to provide support. In addition, have contact information ready for anyone seeking immediate help.

Top tips to measure success:

- Use images instead of text to overcome language barriers – for instance, use emojis (happy, sad, neutral) or thumbs (up, down, or horizontal) to assess how satisfied participants are with an activity or program.
- Try to deliver the evaluation in a language that participants are comfortable with. Alternatively, use a facilitator that speaks one of the dominant languages amongst participants, and/or recruit volunteers to provide translation or interpretation.

- Following standard research ethics protocols, communicate to all participants that their participation is voluntary. Also, ensure participant anonymity as much as possible. Other than the facilitator or researcher conducting the evaluation, no one else should see the individual feedback of participants – only aggregated findings are typically shared more widely.
- Consider an evaluation activity that you think is best suited to

your context and local population.
Popular methods include:

- Group exercises such as “Dotmocracy” or “Thorn, Rose, Bud”
- Focus groups (language-specific using peer facilitators)
- Feedback forms
- Surveys or questionnaires (remember, keep it simple!)

Evaluation resources:

Better Evaluation

www.betterevaluation.org

Endeavour Volunteer Consulting

www.endeavourvolunteer.org

Ontario Trillium Foundation – Measurement Hub







bit.ly/2tDQkjW









** See an example of an evaluation feedback form below. This was adapted from a form used by OCASI during educational workshops on sexual violence and harassment, with immigrant and refugee communities across Ontario in 2017. You can adapt it further as necessary. Note that because the form was only available in English and French, many participants had difficulty completing it individually. Instead, the facilitator conducted a group exercise to complete one feedback form per workshop.

Date: _____ City: _____ First language: _____

1. What did you learn from today's event?

Please read each statement below. Next to each statement, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement. Put an 'X' on the face that best represents your opinion.

The event increased my understanding of...	Disagree	Undecided/ Neutral	Agree
a) sexual violence and harassment facing immigrant women			
b) the kinds of barriers that can increase risks of experiencing sexual violence (such as race, religion, immigration status)			
c) the types of settings (such as home, school, or work) where sexual violence and harassment can be experienced.			

The event increased my understanding of...	Disagree	Undecided/ Neutral	Agree
d) how immigrant women can be more at risk of experiencing sexual violence by someone in a position of power (such as a boss, professor, immigration sponsor).			
e) community resources that can help immigrant women who experience violence.			
f) how to support someone who is experiencing sexual violence or harassment.			
g) how to educate others about sexual violence and harassment.			

2. Was the material easy to understand? Circle your answer below.

Yes

Somewhat

No

3. In your opinion, were the activities a good way to learn about sexual violence and harassment?

Yes Somewhat No

4. What is one thing you enjoyed most...

a) About the activities?

b) About today's discussion?

5. Do you have any recommendations on how to improve education on gender-based violence?

Thank you for completing the form.



TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR FRONT-LINE WORKERS

OCASI's online training

OCASI offers a number of online courses about gender-based violence, sexual violence, and the relationship between family violence and refugee and immigration law. If any of the concepts or terms discussed in this toolkit are not familiar to you, or you need a refresher, we strongly recommend these courses, available

at no cost at learnatwork.ca. There are self-directed versions available for you to work through at any time at your own pace, or if you prefer to work with other participants and a facilitator, there are facilitated versions available at different times during the year.

Telling Our Stories: Immigrant Women's Resilience

In 2017, OCASI, MOFIF, and immigrant and refugee women from many communities worked together to produce and promote a graphic novel, *Telling Our Stories: Immigrant Women's Resilience*. This graphic novel contains four stories about experiences of gender-based violence

and sexual violence, and has been used across Ontario to start conversations about these topics in newcomer communities. Copies of *Telling Our Stories* are available from OCASI in 11 languages.

ocasi.org/campaigns/4ImmigrantWomen

IRCNFF's collection of resources

The Neighbours, Friends and Families campaign maintains a collection of resources online, including links to tools for safety planning, fact sheets and research reports, information about immigration and refugee law, and infographics and printable cards that can be shared throughout the community. There

are two parts of this collection that may be particularly useful for users of this toolkit:

- Webinars, which you and your organization can use to increase your knowledge and understanding of gender-based violence

- A video and related lesson plan for use in LINC classes

Language classes can be very effective places to introduce and share information about the topic of gender-based violence, because they provide many newcomers with their first chance to interact with Canadian culture and norms, and they are much more socially acceptable in

many communities to attend than programs or events specifically focused on violence. The Neighbours, Friends and Families campaign, through COSTI Immigrant Services, has developed a lesson plan for LINC teachers to use in classes where students are at Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 5 or higher.

immigrantandrefugeenff.ca/resources-list

OAITH Training Hub

The Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH) offers free online courses for people who support, advocate for, or provide services to women who have experienced violence. These courses are available to work through at your own pace,

and some are part of certificate programs that meet the VAW Training Core Competencies developed by the VAW Learning Network.

oaith.ca/train/training

Consent Comes First (Ryerson University)

Ryerson University's Office of Sexual Violence Support and Education offers two colouring books, including a Pride edition, for survivors and their supporters.

ryerson.ca/sexual-violence

VAWnet.org

VAWnet is a project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, which is based in the United States. VAWnet has a huge collection of materials on gender-based violence and related issues,

including a large section on engagement and collaboration with communities.

vawnet.org

Elder Abuse Ontario

Aging can increase the risk of experiencing gender-based violence. Although Elder Abuse Ontario does not focus on immigrant and refugee communities, their website offers a

comprehensive set of resources in English and French about prevention and intervention.

elderabuseontario.com

Global Disability Rights Now!

Global Disability Rights Now! is an online resource that provides information, tools, and best practices in implementing and enforcing policies and laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities. The United Nations has found that women and girls with disabilities are three times as likely to experience gender-based violence, including sexual abuse,

neglect, maltreatment, and exploitation as women and girls who are non-disabled. The site offers a page of articles, links, and other resources about global efforts to end gender-based violence against people with disabilities.

bit.ly/gbv-global

Migrant Mothers Project



The Migrant Mothers Project is a collaborative research project led by Rupaleem

Bhuyan at the University of Toronto in partnership with a network of service providers, legal advocates, community health workers, and grassroots women. Their recent work has focused on issues facing migrant women who work in Canada as caregivers. They have recently published an infographic titled

“Recognizing Signs of Migrant Caregiver Abuse and Exploitation.” The vast majority of migrant caregivers are women, and the violence that they experience is gendered. You can find the infographic as well as research reports, digital stories, and other resources on their website.



GLOSSARY

Ableism: a belief system that sees persons with disabilities as less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate, and less valuable than non-disabled people. The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities and perceived disabilities in employment, services, housing and other social areas.

Ageism: a belief system that assigns respect, worth, and consideration to people according to their age, and tends to devalue those who are older.

Allyship: an active, consistent, and challenging practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person of privilege seeks to work in solidarity with a marginalized group.

Canadian citizen: a person described as a citizen under the Citizenship Act. This means a person who either is Canadian by birth (born in Canada, or born outside Canada to a Canadian citizen who was themselves either born in Canada or granted citizenship), or who has applied for and received a grant of Canadian citizenship.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms: the part of the Canadian constitution that guarantees certain political rights to Canadian citizens and civil rights to everyone in Canada, regardless of status.

Cisgender: describes a person whose gender assigned at birth matches the gender identity that they perceive themselves to have.

Citizenship: government-recognized status as a member of a nation, and the rights, privileges, responsibilities, and duties that come with that membership.

Client: a person seeking or receiving services from an agency or organization. Some service providers are moving toward the use of the term “service seeker” to characterize the relationship between those who provide services and those who use them as more egalitarian.

Common-law partner: a person who has been living with another person in a conjugal relationship for at least one year. The term refers to opposite-sex and same-sex relationships.

Conjugal partner: a person outside Canada who has had a binding relationship with a sponsor for at least one year but has not been able to live with their partner. The term refers to both opposite-sex and same-sex relationships.

Convention refugee: a person who meets the definition of “refugee” established in the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. This definition, used in Canadian law, is widely accepted internationally.

To meet the definition, a person must be outside their country of origin and have a well-founded fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

Dependant: A spouse, common-law partner, conjugal partner, or dependent child of a permanent resident or principal applicant.

Dependent child: a biological or adopted child who depends on the financial support of their parent. The legal definition of a dependent child for the purposes of immigration changed in 2017, and is determined by the date of the application. IRCC offers an online tool to help applicants identify whether a child qualifies as a dependant.

Deportation order: A removal order issued by either a CBSA officer or the IRB that requires a person to leave Canada because of serious offences or serious violations of Canada's immigration law. A person deported from Canada may not return without written permission from the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

Domestic violence: behaviours used by one partner in a romantic relationship to exert coercive control over the other partner.

Family Class: an immigration category that includes family members sponsored to come to Canada by a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. Family members as defined by IRCC

include a spouse, common-law partner, or conjugal partner, dependent children (including adopted children), and their dependent children, as well as parents and grandparents.

Family violence: behaviours used by a person to exert coercive control over a member of their family.

Gender-based violence: violence perpetrated against someone based on their gender expression, gender identity, or perceived gender. It takes many forms, including physical, economic, sexual, psychological, and emotional.

Homophobia: hatred, fear, intolerance, disapproval, or disgust toward gays and lesbians. Homophobia is dangerous because it frequently leads to discrimination and violence against people who are, or are perceived to be, homosexual. Homophobia is frequently used as an umbrella term to include biphobia, transphobia, and attitudes leading to the oppression of LGBTQ+ people in general. Homophobia can be both individual and systemic, and it is practiced by various institutions in society.

Illegal immigrant: a controversial and often offensive term, generally used by people who seek to criminalize the person, not the action, when someone enters or remains in a country irregularly. International law recognizes that refugees may need to enter a country without official documents or authorization, so it is inaccurate to call such people "illegal." Similarly,

a person without status may have been coerced by human traffickers: such a person should be recognized as a victim of crime, not an offender.

Immigrant: a person who has moved to a country where they were not born or did not previously have citizenship, with the permission of that country's government, in order to live there permanently.

Immigrant and refugee-serving agency: an organization funded by government, charitable foundations, private donors, or a combination of all three, that provides programs and services specifically for immigrants and refugees. IRCC refers to these agencies as Service Provider Organizations (SPOs).

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): the department of the Government of Canada that is responsible for policies and administration related to immigration, refugees to Canada, and Canadian citizenship.

Intimate partner violence: behaviours used by a person to exert coercive control over a current or former romantic partner.

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC): Free English language training programs for adult immigrants and refugees to Canada. They are funded by the federal government and delivered by school boards, colleges and local organizations that provide services to newcomers. Temporary foreign workers, refugee claimants, and Canadian

citizens are not eligible for LINC classes.

LGBTQ+: an initialism for discussing sexual orientation, gender identity, or both. The language about orientation and gender is constantly evolving, but it is widely accepted that L stands for lesbian, G for gay, B for bisexual, and T for trans or transgender. The Q can mean queer (an inclusive term) or questioning, and the + is intended to include anyone else who does not fit into heterosexual or cisgender identities, such as those who are asexual, intersex, pansexual, or Two-Spirit (a modern term used by Indigenous communities to describe Indigenous people who have both a male and female spirit within them).

Misogynoir: misogyny that is specifically directed toward Black women. Term coined by Moya Bailey.

Misogyny: a strong distrust, dislike, bias, or contempt toward women.

Newcomer: a person who has recently arrived in Canada. This term includes immigrants, refugees, and people without status.

Permanent resident: a person granted the right to live permanently in Canada. The person may have come to Canada as an immigrant or as a refugee. "Permanent resident" is an official legal status under Canadian law. A person who becomes a Canadian citizen is no longer considered a permanent resident.

Person without status: a person who has not been granted permission to stay in the country, or who has stayed after their visa has expired. The term can describe a person who falls between the cracks in the immigration system, such as a refugee claimant who is refused refugee status but not removed from Canada because their country of origin is considered too dangerous.

Precarious status: immigration status in Canada that is temporary and does not entitle the person to full legal rights, protections, and services. Examples of people with precarious status are temporary workers, visitors, students, refugee claimants, and people who have entered without documentation or overstayed their visas.

Racism: the belief that inborn characteristics of certain groups make them inferior or superior to other groups, and the processes and systems that create inequality between these groups. In short, racism is prejudice plus power.

Racialized: categorized or differentiated according to perceived differences in race. When people are racialized as non-white, they often face discrimination that white people do not.

Refugee: a person who has been forced to flee from persecution, and who is outside their home country.

Refugee claimant or asylum seeker: a person who has fled their country and filed

a formal request from inside Canada to the Immigration and Refugee Board to stay here. It is not clear whether the person is a refugee until their case has been decided. Canadian law uses the term “claimant.”

Refugee dependant: a family member of a refugee in Canada, whose application for permanent residence is processed at the same time as the principal applicant’s.

Service seeker: a person who approaches an agency or organization looking for specific help and support, such as translation, information and referrals, or other types of services.

Sexual violence: a sexual act committed against another person without that person’s permission or consent.

Shadeism: a form of discrimination based on skin colour (not race), specifically the idea that darker skin means a person has less value or worth.

Sizeism: a form of discrimination based on a person’s size or weight.

Sponsor: a Canadian citizen or permanent resident who is 18 years of age or older, and who legally supports a member of the Family Class to become a permanent resident of Canada.

Sponsored person: a foreign national who has applied for permanent residence under the Family Class, has an approved

Canadian sponsor, and meets the requirements of the Family Class.

Temporary resident: a person who has permission to be in Canada for a limited period of time. Visitors, students, and temporary foreign workers are considered temporary residents.

Transgender: describes a person whose gender identity does not match the gender assigned to them at birth. A transgender – or trans – person may or may not choose to have gender confirmation surgery.

Violence against women: acts of violence that are committed primarily or exclusively against women and girls.

Woman: a person who identifies herself as female. This includes cisgender and transgender women.

Note. The definitions for many of these terms have been adapted from the following sources:

- Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC's Glossary of terms for frontline settlement workers.
- Canadian Council for Refugees' Talking about refugees and immigrants: A glossary
- Government of Canada Immigration and Citizenship Help Centre Glossary
- PeerNet BC's discussion of allyship

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A TOOLKIT FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

