



MEGAN  
STEPHENS  
LAW

October 7, 2022

Commissioners MacDonald, Fitch, and Stanton  
Mass Casualty Commission  
1791 Barrington Street, Suite 310  
Halifax, NS B3J 3K9

**By email only:** [participation@masscasualtycommission.ca](mailto:participation@masscasualtycommission.ca)

Dear Commissioners MacDonald, Fitch, and Stanton:

### **Re: Final Written Submissions**

#### **Introduction**

During a period of just over 13 hours on April 18 and 19, 2020, the perpetrator went on a rampage that started with a vicious, terrorizing attack on his common-law partner of 19 years, in which he set fire to their cottage and warehouse. After she managed to escape and fled to the woods, the perpetrator continued his violent attacks on the community, ultimately shooting 24 people and leaving 22 dead (including a pregnant mother). Countless people in Nova Scotia and across the country were traumatized by the perpetrator's actions, coming as they did while many were isolated in their homes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The families of all of the victims have suffered an immeasurable loss. We wish them all strength and healing.

While the public hearings have now drawn to a close, the Coalition of Women's Shelters Canada (WSC), Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (THANS), and the Be the Peace Institute (BTPI) (collectively, the Coalition) recognizes that your hard work is not done. You now have the daunting task of digesting the massive amounts of information tendered during the hearings to make findings in relation to the causes, context, and circumstances giving rise to the mass casualty, the responses of the police, and the steps taken to inform, support, and engage those most affected. Those findings will be just part of your final report, which must set out both lessons learned as well as recommendations that could help prevent and respond to similar future incidents. We provide these submissions on behalf of the Coalition to assist you with that task.

In what follows, we focus our submissions on the issues in the Commission's mandate with which the Coalition has the most expertise – namely the role of gender-based violence (GBV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) and related issues (including prior interactions and relationship of the perpetrator with police and social services, and police actions). We begin by setting out the factual findings we ask you to make – including recognizing the important connections between the perpetrator's history of gender-based and intimate partner violence and the mass

casualty of April 2020 – and explain both the evidentiary basis for those findings in the record as well as why those findings should be made. We then set out recommendations for your consideration. We have attached two appendices to these submissions: Appendix A, which summarizes all of our recommendations in one chart, and Appendix B, the recommendations from the Roadmap to the National Action Plan to end Gender-Based Violence that we ask you to recommend be implemented.

## I. The Coalition Members

On May 13, 2021, you issued your [Participation Decision](#) granting Women’s Shelters Canada, Transition Houses Association of Nova Scotia, and Be the Peace Institute the right to participate in the Mass Casualty Commission, and directing the three organizations to form a coalition.

**Women’s Shelters Canada** provides a strong, unified, pan-Canadian voice on the issue of violence against women. It brings together 16 provincial and territorial shelter organizations and supports the over 600 shelters across the country for women and children fleeing violence.

**Transition House Association of Nova Scotia** is the provincial not-for-profit organization that exists to eliminate violence against women in Nova Scotia. THANS member organizations provide transitional services to women (and their children) who are experiencing violence and abuse, including culturally relevant services to Mi’kmaq people. THANS’ ten member organizations work with women and their children in twelve locations across Nova Scotia.

**Be the Peace Institute** is a community non-profit working to address the roots and consequences of gender-based violence, through a feminist intersectional lens, establishing projects and partnerships that advance systemic change for gender equity, social justice and peace.

## II. Factual findings the Coalition asks the Commissioners to make

The Coalition is focusing its submissions on the factual findings that it sees as most relevant to the issues in the mandate relating to the causes, context, and circumstances giving rise to the mass casualty of April 2020, particularly the role of gender-based and intimate partner violence. We submit that the Commission should make the following factual findings:

- There are important connections between the perpetrator’s history of gender-based and intimate partner violence and the mass casualty of April 2020 that need to be recognized. The longstanding dichotomy between private and public violence must be rejected as it obscures those important connections, which may assist in preventing future mass casualties.
- The police missed several opportunities to investigate the perpetrator in the years before the mass casualty, despite reports and concerns raised about his violent conduct and access to firearms.

- Other institutions and individuals missed opportunities to intervene that could have altered the perpetrator’s propensity for GBV and IPV.
- The RCMP decision to lay criminal charges against Lisa Banfield and of the Crown to pursue the prosecution created real impediments to the work of this Commission, had a harmful impact on Ms. Banfield personally, and could deter victims of IPV from reporting to police.

**A) There are important connections between the perpetrator’s longstanding history of GBV/IPV and the April 2020 mass casualty**

The Commission’s investigation has revealed that the perpetrator had a history of violence, particularly GBV and IPV, but also family violence more generally. We ask you to find that there are important connections between his history of GBV/IPV and the mass casualty. The violence that the perpetrator was exposed to at an early age normalized its use; he was comfortable using violence and sexually aggressive behaviour towards both those close to him – and those he barely knew. The mass casualties of April 18-19, 2020, cannot be isolated from the perpetrator’s history of violence.

We also ask the Commission to find that the violence and mayhem that night began with the perpetrator’s vicious assault on his common-law partner, Lisa Banfield. She too was one of the innocent parties subjected to his violence that night.<sup>1</sup> When she escaped into the woods, his violence did not change or morph into “real” violence; his violence continued as he set off on the murderous rampage, first near his cottage at the Blair family home, continuing throughout the Portapique community, and then extending to other locations in rural Nova Scotia.

In what follows, we begin by providing a high-level overview of the evidence concerning the perpetrator’s well-established history of both exposure to – and use of – violence (much of it gendered), which spanned his whole life. We do so to help show how this violence became normalized throughout the perpetrator’s life, and ultimately helped set the stage for the mass casualty in April 2020. We then explain why it is important to see this violence not as separate and distinct from the mass casualty, but as something with important connections to the murderous rampage.

***Exposure to violence from an early age***

As set out in the Foundational Document [Violence in the Perpetrator’s Family of Origin](#), the perpetrator grew up in a violent home, as was true of his father. The violence in the family extended back at least two generations.<sup>2</sup> The perpetrator’s father, Paul Wortman, abused both his wife, Evelyn, as well as the perpetrator. Several other family members either witnessed the abuse themselves or told the police the perpetrator had witnessed it, including incidents where

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<sup>1</sup> We ask you to reject the submission of Senior Commission Counsel that suggests otherwise: see [Transcript February 28, 2022](#) at pp 17-18.

<sup>2</sup> See [Violence in the Perpetrator’s Family of Origin](#), at paras 29-32.

Paul Wortman was on top of Evelyn, choking her or pointing a gun at Evelyn's head, threatening to kill her if she ever left him.<sup>3</sup>

The perpetrator's uncle Glynn Wortman told the RCMP that Paul Wortman "never treated [his son] like a little boy. He treated him like an animal."<sup>4</sup> Another uncle, Chris Wortman, spoke about a time when the perpetrator was seven years old and his father put a loaded gun in his hands and told his son to shoot him.<sup>5</sup> His father reportedly made him kill his dog when he was not yet 10.<sup>6</sup> The perpetrator told at least one person that his father and uncle had sexually abused him as a child.<sup>7</sup>

Lisa Banfield, the perpetrator's common-law partner, told the RCMP what she knew about Paul Wortman's abuse of the perpetrator as a child, including one incident in which he believed his father was going to kill him. She believed the perpetrator did not like women because he felt that "growing up, his mother really wasn't there for him at all."<sup>8</sup>

The perpetrator's early exposure to violence at home led to his deep-seated resentment towards both of his parents. On a trip to Cuba with Ms. Banfield and his parents, he beat his father, leaving him with significant injuries to his face and partial vision loss in one eye.<sup>9</sup> On June 1, 2010, the perpetrator threatened to drive to his parents' home in New Brunswick to kill them.<sup>10</sup> This was apparently in relation to a property dispute. The perpetrator remained estranged from his parents after that dispute.

There were no documented interventions either by individuals or institutions (schools, social services, the health care system) to address the perpetrator's exposure to violence in his home as a child (and teenager).

### ***Violence towards others***

The Commission's investigation revealed that the perpetrator's use of violence was not confined to his family. He had a long history of violence against vulnerable people, including gender-based and intimate partner violence. He was physically abusive to men and women, sexually harassed his staff (and others he met through work, including patients), was sexually aggressive, and sexually assaulted and exploited vulnerable women.

Many of these incidents are documented in the [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#) Foundational Document. By way of examples, the perpetrator is reported to have:

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<sup>3</sup> See [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), at paras 38-42.

<sup>4</sup> See [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), para 40.

<sup>5</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), para 46.

<sup>6</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), paras 50-52.

<sup>7</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), para 61.

<sup>8</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), paras 48-49.

<sup>9</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), paras 66-71.

<sup>10</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), paras 72-83.

- Asked his uncle to come watch him as a girl performed oral sex on him when he was a teenager;<sup>11</sup>
- Subjected his first wife to highly controlling and intimidating behaviour; physically assaulted her after he'd been drinking; destroyed shelving in their home; and prevented her from leaving;<sup>12</sup>
- Bragged about beating up a Black man late at night, because "he figured he'd get away with it" and about beating up a homeless person;<sup>13</sup>
- Taken patients' dentures out of their mouths and smashed them, forcing them to go home without teeth, when they hadn't been able to pay or had complained about their dentures;<sup>14</sup>
- Invited women he met through work (sales representatives, job applicants) back to his cottage where they were subjected to aggressive sexual advances;<sup>15</sup>
- Exposed his penis to his receptionist when they were alone at the clinic;<sup>16</sup>
- Assaulted a teenage boy in 2002, leading to criminal charges that were resolved by way of a guilty plea and a conditional discharge with nine months' probation;<sup>17</sup>
- Claimed to pay "young girls" in exchange for sex while on trips south;<sup>18</sup>
- Bragged about "different ways to get rid of bodies," and claimed to have used large fires on his property to burn bodies;<sup>19</sup>
- Engaged in threatening behaviour towards his neighbour, parking in front of her house, watching her when she was home alone, and threatening to kill her;<sup>20</sup>
- Engaged in sexual intercourse with a young woman after providing her with alcohol to the point that she had passed out; she awoke to find him performing non-consensual oral sex on her;<sup>21</sup>
- Had a long-term covert sexual relationship with his neighbour (the mother of the woman he sexually assaulted), who suffered from addiction issues and lived in extreme poverty. He would let her use his bathtub (as she had no running water) and hired her to clean his cottage. She agreed to engage in sexual conduct that was not of interest to her in exchange for alcohol, including threesomes and oral sex while she was passed out (which would constitute sexual assault as one can only consent to sexual activity if conscious throughout: *R v JA*, [2011 SCC 28](#));<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), para 19.

<sup>12</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 27-33.

<sup>13</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 38, 78.

<sup>14</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 39-43; 76-77.

<sup>15</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 69-71; 96-98.

<sup>16</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 72-73.

<sup>17</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 90-93.

<sup>18</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), para 94.

<sup>19</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), para 110.

<sup>20</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 118-132.

<sup>21</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 133-143.

<sup>22</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 144-149.

- Targeted homeless or low-income patients for sexual relations, bragging about measuring their mouths to see if he could “fit in.” He offered to reduce women’s bills for denture services if they engaged in sexual activity with him;<sup>23</sup>
- Would treat his patients aggressively or in a sexually inappropriate manner;<sup>24</sup>
- Hosted young women for drinking sessions in his warehouse, where the unmarked police cars were on visible display, and persisted in unwanted sexual contact with one of the women, even when she made it clear she was not interested and was extremely intoxicated, perhaps due to having been drugged;<sup>25</sup> and
- Said he wanted to “kill a cop,” and was in possession of at least one handgun and several long rifles; this was the subject of an Officer Safety Bulletin on May 4, 2011.<sup>26</sup>

Much of the perpetrator’s violence was seemingly rooted in the abuse of his power, as a privileged, white, wealthy professional. Much of it was targeted at women, consistent with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee’s definition of gender-based violence, which is helpfully included in the Commission’s Foundational Documents concerning his use of violence:

Gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. Gender-based violence can include sexual, physical, mental and economic harm inflicted in public or private. It also includes threats of violence, coercion and manipulation. This can take many forms, such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation, and so-called ‘honour crimes.’<sup>27</sup>

The perpetrator also subjected Ms. Banfield to years of intimate partner violence. His violence on April 18, 2020, began with his assault on her.

### ***Violence targeting his common-law partner***

During their 19-year relationship, the perpetrator physically and sexually abused Ms. Banfield, including in brazen public physical assaults that others witnessed. He verbally and emotionally abused her regularly. She had no financial independence, having quit her job to work for him, and he paid her a meagre salary. While Ms. Banfield was subjected to the specific incidents of physical violence that are most commonly associated with intimate partner violence, she was also subjected to controlling behaviour characteristic of coercive control.

Katreena Scott defines coercive control in her Report for the Commission as:

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<sup>23</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 152-153; 178.

<sup>24</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 177, 179; 200-201.

<sup>25</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 183-194.

<sup>26</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 207-211.

<sup>27</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), para 7.

[A] pattern of behaviours to assert control over a person through repeated acts that disempower the other partner in a number of possible ways, including through fear for the safety of self or others, removal of rights and liberties or fear of this removal, by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, removing the victim's rights and liberties, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance, and escape, or regulating their everyday behaviour.<sup>28</sup>

The perpetrator and Ms. Banfield met in the spring of 2001, about a year after Ms. Banfield had separated from her ex-husband. At the time, she was living with her sister, Maureen Banfield. Less than three months later, she moved in with the perpetrator at his home on Portland Street in Dartmouth; the top floor was their home and the bottom was the denture clinic. The perpetrator bought the cottage in Portapique in October 2002.<sup>29</sup>

Ms. Banfield left her job at the Royal Bank of Canada about a year or two into her relationship to go work in the perpetrator's denture clinic.<sup>30</sup> In addition to working in the clinic, she was responsible for all household chores – cooking, cleaning, and doing his laundry.<sup>31</sup> She was paid an hourly wage by the perpetrator, which she believed was \$25 an hour at the time of the mass casualty. She explained that he dealt with “all the money things.” He would write her cheques or give her cash, but sometimes deducted money that he would say he was putting towards their retirement. While she owned her own car when they got together, he had her sell it and then bought a new car that he put in his name. The home in Dartmouth, the Portapique cottage, and the warehouse were all in his name.<sup>32</sup>

The perpetrator's physical abuse of Ms. Banfield started early in their relationship, perhaps with the Sutherland Lake assault around 2003.<sup>33</sup> She told the RCMP that there was no clear pattern to when he would physically assault her. She had trouble recalling how many times he had abused her physically, “because there's so many.” He would punch and kick her, often leaving bruises that she concealed with her clothing. He would also choke her, leaving marks she had to cover with makeup. He pulled her hair “all the time.”<sup>34</sup> On at least a couple of occasions, the perpetrator put a gun to her head and once discharged the handgun inside their house.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Katreena Scott, [“When We Know Something is Wrong: Secondary and Tertiary Intervention to Address Abuse Perpetration”](#) (Report prepared for MCC), p i [hereinafter Scott].

<sup>29</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 22-29.

<sup>30</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 45-53.

<sup>31</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 30-31.

<sup>32</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 54-73.

<sup>33</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), para 76. She clarified that it was in 2003 in her evidence at the inquiry: see [Transcript, July 15, 2022](#) at pp 70-71.

<sup>34</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 87-96.

<sup>35</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 150-153.

He was very controlling, questioning why she wanted to see her family and looking to restrict the time she spent with them.<sup>36</sup> He did not like her socializing with others, especially if he was not there. He would come and physically pull her away from neighbourhood gatherings.<sup>37</sup>

The perpetrator was also verbally abusive and threatening towards Ms. Banfield. He threatened to harm her or her family if she left him. This fear kept her from leaving. He would embarrass her at work, often humiliating and reprimanding her in front of patients.<sup>38</sup> He would terrorize her with dangerous driving, and when she asked him to slow down, he would fly into a rage.<sup>39</sup>

There were several incidents where the perpetrator's physical assaults on Ms. Banfield were witnessed by others, including:

- **The Sutherland Lake assault in 2003.** When she tried to leave the Sutherland Lake party, the perpetrator jumped into the jeep she was driving and started hitting her in the head. She jumped out but he came running after her, caught her, and started dragging her back to the jeep. She was able to get away and her friend found her in the woods. The police came and drove the perpetrator home. When she later returned to the cottage to get her car, he had taken the wheels off so she could not leave. She called her niece to come get her.<sup>40</sup>
- **The assault at the cottage when Tom Evans and another man were present.** On that occasion, the perpetrator was choking her on the bed, and hitting and punching her. Tom yelled at him to stop but did not come in. She ran down to the beach area and wanted to leave in her car, but the perpetrator was there and chased her around the car while Tom and the other man did nothing. She went inside and wanted to go to bed, but the perpetrator grabbed her by the hair and pulled her into the kitchen to make them something to eat.<sup>41</sup>
- **A choking incident on the front lawn at the cottage.** During that incident, the perpetrator held her down on the front yard and was choking her and punching her in the face. His uncle Glynn came up and told him to get off. He stopped and Ms. Banfield ran off. Several people witnessed that incident – and this is the incident that Brenda Forbes was told about and has said she reported to police.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 79-86.

<sup>37</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 99-103.

<sup>38</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 114-119.

<sup>39</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 161-163.

<sup>40</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 120-145.

<sup>41</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 146-149.

<sup>42</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 154-160.

### ***The violent attack on April 18, 2020***

The perpetrator's final violent attack on Ms. Banfield took place on April 18, 2020 – the day before their 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They spent much of the day driving on back roads, stopping at Springhill Penitentiary and the home of another dentist in Amherst. They picked up more beer and frozen pizza on the way back to the cottage.<sup>43</sup>

When they got back to the warehouse, they spoke with their American friends Sean Conlogue and Angel Patterson, mentioning that they were planning a commitment ceremony for the next year on their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. When Ms. Banfield heard Angel tell the perpetrator “don’t do it,” she got upset and left to go back to the cottage. Before long, she turned back as she realized that she was upset with Angel, not the perpetrator. When she got back to the warehouse, the perpetrator was “irate,” screaming, yelling, and pacing. She left again to go back to the cottage.<sup>44</sup>

When she got to the cottage, she heard the perpetrator rattling the door and ran into her bedroom to pretend to be asleep. She began to hear a “whishing” sound, which she later realized was him pouring gas around the cottage. He came into her room, screaming. He pulled down the covers, grabbed her phone, and smashed it. He pulled her out of bed and got on top of her, strangling her. He kicked her and she flew across the room, striking her back so hard that she could barely get up off the floor. He was pulling her up by her hair until she finally stood up. He told her to get dressed and then put a “rope” around one of her wrists, forcing her to follow him. He pulled her into his bedroom to grab his gun. At the door, she put on a coat and her sneakers. He told her to turn around and she saw their cottage “going up in flames.”<sup>45</sup>

Ms. Banfield tried to calm him down, telling him “it doesn’t have to go any further” and that she would accept the blame for the cottage burning. He told her, “at the end of this night, I’ll be dead and if you don’t run away from me you won’t be.” As they walked back to the warehouse, she stopped in the middle of Portapique Beach Road and got on the ground, screaming and trying to kick him away, without success. He took her sneakers and threw them, telling her “now you can’t run, you little bitch.” The police later found sneakers consistent with her description.<sup>46</sup>

The perpetrator kept dragging her to the warehouse, telling her they were going to burn it and then go to Dartmouth and burn their home there, and then go to her sister, Maureen’s. He had her by the arm and the back of her coat, but at some point she slipped free of the coat and started running. She tripped and fell, but he had a flashlight and found her. When they got to the warehouse, he poured gasoline on the vehicles parked outside. Once inside, he put one handcuff on her left hand; she refused to give her second hand and dropped to the floor thinking he would kill her. He told her to get up, and when she refused, he fired the gun into the ground on either

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<sup>43</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 278-293.

<sup>44</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 294-298.

<sup>45</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 299-308.

<sup>46</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 309-311.

side of her. The RCMP later found 3 shell casings in the southwest corner of the burnt-out warehouse consistent with her recollection.<sup>47</sup>

The perpetrator forced Ms. Banfield into the back of the replica RCMP cruiser, shutting the door and trapping her inside. He loaded several firearms into the front seat of the cruiser. She tried to kick open the windows or doors, but failed. She managed to get the handcuff off, which left a scar. She dropped the handcuffs on the floor of the cruiser and managed to slide the window open in the silent patrolman. She dove through that window, opened the driver's door, and ran into the woods to hide.<sup>48</sup>

She was scared that the perpetrator would see her from the warehouse windows, so she ran along the side of the road past a blue house. She stopped at a parked truck and went inside looking for extra clothes to wear but was worried he would see the light so left, crawling through the woods. As she did so, she heard what sounded like her name being called through a PA. She kept hearing explosions or gunshots that she thought were getting closer to her, and finally found a stump in which to hide. She spent the night in that stump, wearing only leggings and a long sleeve top. She was barefoot. The temperature that night reached a low of 0.3 degrees Celsius.<sup>49</sup>

When daylight struck, she ran out of the woods, and knocked at the first house she came to – Leon Joudrey's. He called 9-1-1 for her at 6:28 am on April 19, 2020, telling them she was “freaking out” and “scared to death.” He told the operator she was not able to answer questions and asked them to send the police down.<sup>50</sup>

Four members of the RCMP Emergency Response Team went to retrieve Ms. Banfield. Cst. McLeod said he had only ever seen one person in his career who was as petrified as Ms. Banfield that morning – a woman who had been kidnapped and held for three days. Cpl. Ivany believed that her condition was consistent with moderate hypothermia.<sup>51</sup>

Ms. Banfield was brought by EHS to Colchester East Hants Health Centre, where she was admitted and treated for five nights. Her injuries included tenderness in her lower right flank; abrasions on her hands, feet, and legs; bruising to her upper back; and fractures to her ribs and lumbar spine. The police took several statements from her during that time, but never took photographs or otherwise documented her injuries.<sup>52</sup>

We ask you to find that the mass casualty began with that violent attack on Lisa Banfield. She too was a victim of his violence that night – the mayhem began in their private home and continued as he went from door to door killing his neighbours. Those were not distinct violent acts; they are part of the same chain of events. Lisa Banfield was physically injured that night – and has been

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<sup>47</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 312-314; 317-321.

<sup>48</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 322-327.

<sup>49</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 328-342.

<sup>50</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 343-348

<sup>51</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 349-358.

<sup>52</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 359-363.

left with the psychological scars and guilt of having to wonder whether he went to those homes looking for her. As she explained in her testimony before the Commission when asked if it was possible that he went to the Blair home looking for her:

That's what – like I just think, like, this is what haunts me, is because I feel like he was targeting me and my family, and if I didn't get out of that car, I often think would any of those people [have] died so that's something that haunts me all the time because I feel like that they weren't targeted, that he was looking for me in the beginning.<sup>53</sup>

***Why it is important to recognize the connections between the perpetrator's history of violence and the mass casualty***

Much of the perpetrator's violence was the type of violence typically understood as “private” – involving gender-based or intimate partner violence against individuals he knew. As Professors McCulloch and Maher explain in their Report for this Commission, gender-based and intimate violence are often seen as “different and separate from violence that takes place in public between strangers,” with troubling consequences.<sup>54</sup> This siloed approach – where GBV and IPV are treated (and studied) separately from public violence – is reflected in the fact that GBV tends to be a lower priority for police in Western jurisdictions.<sup>55</sup> It also affects views concerning the culpability of perpetrators – and the recognition of victims. As McCulloch and Maher explain:

Perpetrators of intimate partner violence are typically seen as less culpable than other offenders; and victims are often seen as responsible for provoking violence and are not always fully recognized as victims... A reflection of this diminished culpability is that often men who kill intimate partners are not seen as ordinary killers but as ordinary men driven to spontaneous acts of violence in moments of passion.<sup>56</sup>

The dichotomy between private and public violence also affects how mass casualties are typically studied and understood. Mass shootings are often defined to exclude shootings where the sole victims were family members. The initial targeting of a specific woman (or women) is often seen simply as “trigger events” and not part of the mass shooting or casualty itself.<sup>57</sup>

While this Commission has taken the time to carefully investigate the perpetrator's history of violence, we ask you to find that his history of “private” violence is not different nor separate from the “public” violence that took place on April 18-19, 2020. The attack on his common-law

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<sup>53</sup> [Transcript, July 15, 2022](#), p 93.

<sup>54</sup> Jude McCulloch & JaneMaree Maher, [Understanding the Links between Gender-Based Violence and Mass Casualty Attacks: 'Private' Violence and Misogyny as Public Risk](#) (Report prepared for MCC), at p 4 [hereinafter McCulloch & Maher].

<sup>55</sup> See [McCulloch & Maher](#) at p 4 [references omitted].

<sup>56</sup> [McCulloch & Maher](#), at p 5.

<sup>57</sup> [McCulloch & Maher](#) at p 6. See also, Tristan Bridges & Tara Leigh Tober, [Mass Shootings and Masculinity](#) (Report prepared for MCC) [hereinafter Bridges & Tober].

partner on April 18, 2020, was not a “trigger” for later events, but part of the mass casualty itself.<sup>58</sup> Ms. Banfield is also one of the innocent victims of these events, caught up in the mayhem that the perpetrator unleashed on others through no fault of their own.

It is important to understand this violence as a “continuum” in order to recognize the important connections between the perpetrator’s GBV and IPV and the mass casualty. Professors McCulloch and Maher explain the importance of this as follows:

The policy implications of this research are clear. In order to better understand, prevent, and respond to mass casualty attacks, there is a need to better understand, prevent, and respond to gender-based violence. In the overwhelming number of cases, those who commit gender-based violence will not commit mass casualty attacks – though many of those who do commit such attacks have histories of gender-based violence, and many such attacks are gender-based. While it is important that agencies that assess the risk of mass casualty attacks include gender expertise, in most instances, accurately predicting the exact who and when of an attack will prove elusive, if not impossible. Preventing everyday gender-based violence is critical, then, in preventing mass casualty attacks.<sup>59</sup>

Ignoring the risks of IPV/GBV and continuing to treat it as a private matter obviously puts the lives of those who live with violent perpetrators at risk. But it also potentially puts those in the broader community at risk too.

During their testimony before the Commission, Professors McCulloch and Maher said that there are significant connections between gender-based violence and mass casualty attacks. As they explained, “men who commit gender-based violence, particularly family violence, are often the same men who commit mass casualty attacks.”<sup>60</sup> During their testimony, they emphasized that studies have shown that:

- A “typical mass casualty attack ... includes an attack on a specifically targeted woman, and often begins with an attack on that woman”;
- If mass casualties are defined simply in terms of the number of people killed that “familicide is the most common form of mass casualty attack”; and
- More than one-third of mass public shootings were “motivated by a grievance against women,” and the targeting of a specific woman against whom the attacker had a grievance was the most common of gender-based mass shootings.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> See also the evidence of Professor McCulloch about why it is problematic to use the term “trigger” when describing the specific women targeted in mass casualty attacks: [Transcript, July 13, 2022](#), pp 15-16.

<sup>59</sup> [McCulloch & Maher](#), p 28 [emphasis added]. See also Roundtable discussion: Understanding Mass Casualties and the Role of Gender-Based and Intimate Partner Violence, [Transcript, July 18, 2022](#).

<sup>60</sup> [Transcript, July 13, 2022](#) at p 8.

<sup>61</sup> [Transcript, July 13, 2022](#) at pp 11-14 (McCulloch).

Professor Maher powerfully explained the importance of recognizing these connections in her testimony before you:

[W]hat is helpful here is that if we begin as a society to take gender-based violence seriously and respond to it effectively with the mechanisms that we have at hand, we have then a chance of bringing into view people whose patterns of behaviour in that context are escalating ... moving towards threatening other types of violence that then move on to affect others.

I think one of the things we would want to say about the continuum of private and public violence is that even when the private violence doesn't come into the public sphere, it has public impacts. It impacts those around... both the victim and the perpetrator. It impacts children. It impacts family members. It impacts health services. It impacts workplaces. So there is always a sense in which private violence is always already having public effects that we are increasingly aware of. It seems that given the difficulty of predicting those pathways, or catching them, or recognizing them, that one of the mechanisms that we have to hand [sic] is a clearer and stronger and more solid attention to private violence as a critically important public problem... that needs our attention, and we need to seek to make women, children and those affected by private violence safe at home, because that does assist us in identifying perpetrators who may, who are likely because of the patterns that we've seen, to be those who go on to commit mass public casualty events, even if we can't work out exactly which ones.<sup>62</sup>

While Drs. Maher and McCullough suggest using “all mechanisms at hand,” as we heard during the July roundtables, many are inadequate and ineffective at preventing, responding, or minimizing the harms that flow from violence. Current mechanisms increasingly backfire by criminalizing women, especially Black and Indigenous women who disproportionately victimized, criminalized, and incarcerated in Canada. Innovative, and collaborative mechanisms must be developed to more effectively address the scourge of GBV and the needs of victimized women.

It is essential to recognize the connections between the perpetrator's history of gender-based and intimate partner violence and this mass casualty in order to underscore the importance of taking that “private” violence seriously, since it almost always has very public impacts.

#### **B) The police missed several opportunities to investigate the perpetrator in the years before the mass casualty**

We ask you to find that the police missed several opportunities to investigate the perpetrator's use of violence in the years before the mass casualty. The evidence tendered during the public hearings underscores the fact that the perpetrator was known by many in the community to be violent and to have firearms. Most of his violence, however, was seen as “private” and, even

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<sup>62</sup> [Transcript, July 13, 2022](#), pp 22-23 (Maher) [emphasis added].

when brought to the attention of police, did not seem to garner the type of scrutiny that would have followed from more public manifestations of violence.

We recognize that the RCMP record retention policy is such that there are imperfect records in relation to some police involvement, an issue in itself that warrants attention. However, in our submission, there is sufficient evidence available from which you can infer that the police opted not to engage in detailed investigations concerning the reports they did receive about the perpetrator.

### ***The 2003 Sutherland Lake assault***

As discussed above, one of the first physical assaults on Ms. Banfield took place at a party at Sutherland Lake in 2003. After Ms. Banfield's friend, Rene Karsten, found her in the woods and brought her back to the cottage, the police were called and drove the perpetrator home. According to Ms. Banfield, "this was the only time the police got involved in the perpetrator's physical violence towards her."<sup>63</sup>

There are no apparent records of whether there was any follow-up investigation by the police about this incident. If this occurred in 2003, as Ms. Banfield recalled in her testimony,<sup>64</sup> the perpetrator would have either still been on (or just completed) his probation for a violent offence – i.e. the assault on a teenage boy for which he was discharged conditionally with 9 months' probation, including a term requiring him to attend for anger management assessment, counselling, and programs as directed by his probation officer.<sup>65</sup> Given this, one would expect that the police might have taken some time to investigate the events that necessitated their attendance at Sutherland Lake, even in the absence of a police report by Ms. Banfield.

### ***The 2010 uttering threats police report***

On June 1, 2010, the perpetrator phoned his uncle Glynn and threatened to drive to his parents' home in New Brunswick to kill them. After being warned about this by Glynn, Paul Wortman phoned the RCMP to report the threat, and to tell them that his son had firearms. RCMP records show that Glynn Wortman also called the Codiac detachment to report the threat. Cst. Vickers of the RCMP shared the report with the Halifax Regional Police (HRP). Sgt. Poirier of the HRP was assigned to investigate; his notes show that he was advised that the perpetrator might possess "several long-barrelled weapons."

The steps taken in the investigation by Sgt. Poirier are detailed at some length in the [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#) Foundational Document. He went to the perpetrator's Portland Street home at 3:25 am on July 2, 2010, and was told by Ms. Banfield that the perpetrator had

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<sup>63</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#), para 123.

<sup>64</sup> This would also be consistent with the fact that the Portapique cottage was not bought until 2002 – and he was brought back to the cottage by police.

<sup>65</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 90-92.

passed out drunk in bed two hours earlier. His notes show that she would not confirm or deny the threat to kill his parents but she did say there were no weapons in the home.<sup>66</sup>

Sgt. Poirier searched the Canadian Firearms Registry Online (CFRO) and found that the perpetrator was not licensed to own a gun and had no guns registered.<sup>67</sup> He then reached out to the RCMP Bible Hill Detachment and spoke with Cst. Wiley about his investigation, noting that Cst. Wiley “advised he is a friend” of the perpetrator, and had been to the perpetrator’s cottage several times and never seen a firearm, but would “try to meet with the perpetrator at his cottage to speak to him in relation to this complaint.” Sgt. Poirier told him the primary concern was whether he had weapons at the cottage and that, if he did, they would be seized under a Public Safety Warrant. Sgt. Poirier did not hear back from Cst. Wiley despite follow-up. He closed his file on August 26, 2010, noting that he had “insufficient evidence to proceed at this time.”<sup>68</sup>

Cst. Wiley testified before the Commission that he had no specific recollection of speaking with Sgt. Poirier. He could not recall going to the perpetrator’s cottage to ask about firearms. During Cst. Wiley’s testimony, he seemed to go to some lengths to distance himself from the perpetrator, repeatedly emphasizing that “he was never a personal friend of mine,” but acknowledging that he was a “community contact.” In describing what he meant by community contact, he explained this would be “somebody who is pro-police, somebody you can build a rapport with, and it’s a trust... It’s somebody that might be able to point you in the right direction informally.”<sup>69</sup>

Since he had no recollection of the request by Sgt. Poirier to check on firearms at the perpetrator’s cottage, he spent much of his testimony musing about what he would have done if he had been asked to do so – and how he would have approached the investigation.<sup>70</sup> He was not able to find any notes in his notebook about any visits to the perpetrator’s home – or any investigation into the firearms.<sup>71</sup> When taken to Ms. Banfield’s testimony in which she spoke about Cst. Wiley coming to the cottage and the perpetrator showing him the guns he had, he claimed it did not refresh his memory.<sup>72</sup>

### ***The May 2011 threat to kill a police officer***

Less than a year after the uttering threats report to police, on May 3, 2011, Cpl. Greg Densmore of the Truro Police Service was approached by an unknown source who told him that the perpetrator wanted to kill a police officer, and that he was in possession of at least one handgun

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<sup>66</sup> Ms. Banfield testified that she had lied to the police because when the perpetrator had gone up to bed, he had the handgun in his nightstand and had said he would come down to shoot the police. She didn’t want the police to get hurt: [Transcript, July 15, 2022](#), pp 62-63.

<sup>67</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrators’ Family of Origin](#), paras 72-94.

<sup>68</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrators’ Family of Origin](#), paras 97-105.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, [Transcript, September 6, 2022](#), p 71.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, [Transcript, September 6, 2022](#), pp 75-76.

<sup>71</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrators’ Family of Origin](#), paras 107-109.

<sup>72</sup> [Transcript, September 6, 2022](#), pp 82-83.

and several long rifles. The source told police that he was specifically bringing the handgun between his denture clinic and cottage and that the rifles were stored in the flue of his cottage in Portapique. Given the perpetrator's connection to Dartmouth, he contacted HRP to pass along this information. Cpl. Densmore initiated an officer safety bulletin through the Criminal Intelligence Service Nova Scotia (CISNS).<sup>73</sup>

When Sgt. Poirier read the report issued by Cpl. Densmore, he followed up with him, noting that he felt it was "a viable threat to police." He took some steps to investigate, including reaching out to Cst. MacMinn of the RCMP Bible Hill Detachment to provide a summary report from his 2010 uttering threats investigation, noting that Cst. Wiley had been following up on it. Cst. MacMinn advised Sgt. Poirier that he would follow up with Cst. Wiley and provide him with updated information. Sgt. Poirier told the Commission that he never heard back. Cst. Wiley was also unable to recall ever speaking with Cst. MacMinn – or anyone in the RCMP – about this issue.<sup>74</sup> In his testimony, he claimed to not recall seeing the CISNS bulletin, that he did not even recall working with Cst. MacMinn, and that he "didn't receive any information to further anything or do anything with respect to the perpetrator."<sup>75</sup>

### ***2013 Brenda Forbes Report to the RCMP***

Details concerning Brenda Forbes having reported the cottage choking and assault to police are reviewed in the [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-Law Spouse](#) Foundational Document. Both Ms. Forbes and Cst. Maxwell, who is believed to have taken her report, testified before the Commission in July.

Ms. Forbes has told the RCMP (and the Commission) about going to speak to the RCMP about what Glynn Wortman had witnessed – i.e. the perpetrator choking and assaulting Ms. Banfield in front of the cottage. Cst. Maxwell found one page of handwritten notes, arguably consistent with Ms. Forbes' evidence that she had spoken to police about the choking incident. His notes include her name, as well as those of Glynn Wortman and Richard Ellison (whose brother purportedly also witnessed the assault), along with the perpetrator's name and address. Ms. Banfield's first name is written in brackets in the margin of the notes. Cst. Maxwell ran a CPIC check on the perpetrator on July 6, 2013. The only occurrence report from that date was for a "causing a disturbance," which was resolved as "assist to general public."<sup>76</sup>

During his testimony before the inquiry, Cst. Maxwell did not remember "the name Brenda Forbes," but did claim to "remember responding to a complaint out in Portapique" and that it was "somebody driving around the neighbourhood, being belligerent towards people."<sup>77</sup> While he seemed quite adamant that the complaint was about driving, he could not explain why he had written down the names Glynn, Richard, or Lisa in his notes. Much of his evidence was about

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<sup>73</sup> [Perpetrators' Violence towards Others](#), paras 207-210.

<sup>74</sup> [Perpetrators' Violence towards Others](#), paras 211-215.

<sup>75</sup> [Transcript, September 6, 2022](#), pp 86-88.

<sup>76</sup> [Perpetrator's Violence towards his Common-law Spouse](#), paras 167-184.

<sup>77</sup> [Transcript, July 19, 2022](#) at pp 21-22, 26-27.

what he “would have” done or “believed” he did, not what he actually remembered doing.<sup>78</sup> He testified that his investigation involved going to the perpetrator’s home to try to speak with him, and since he was not there – and he did not see the offence of causing disturbance or driving in an unsafe manner being committed – the file was concluded. He acknowledged that he did not take any statements from anyone, including any of the names listed in his notebook. He testified that he did not have the ability to “spend an hour on this” because other calls would be coming in and files that “you have to go to.”<sup>79</sup>

### ***Summer 2019 Incident with DD, EE, and II***

As detailed in the Foundational Document [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour towards Others](#), the RCMP were called out to Portapique after the perpetrator hosted a drinking session in his warehouse with EE, her daughter DD, and DD’s friend II. On that evening in August 2019, the three went to visit the perpetrator at his warehouse and noticed two unmarked police cars in his driveway and another looking “identical” to an RCMP vehicle in his garage. That night, the perpetrator tried to back DD into a car and kiss her without consent. He kissed II on her face as she walked by. Throughout the evening, he continued to touch II without her consent, including grabbing her breast and squeezing it hard and suggesting a threesome with EE. II told police that although he didn’t rape her, she thought “he was gonna try.” She felt extremely unsafe and anxious while there. II said that EE kept insisting she drink more, and she believed the perpetrator “definitely drugged me with something”; she felt extremely intoxicated despite not drinking that much. DD and II were both “freaked out” by the police cars and the perpetrator’s bathroom, which had women’s clothes in tote bins. They were worried that he was a sex trafficker and hurting women.<sup>80</sup>

DD eventually agreed to leave with II and returned to EE’s cottage. DD had wanted to leave her mother’s cottage with II and when EE would not let her, DD called the RCMP. When the RCMP came, DD did not mention the perpetrator to the RCMP as she was concerned that he had told her that he had a “whole battalion of police officers.” When II tried to tell the RCMP about the perpetrator being inappropriate and touching her without her consent, DD told them that she was “just drunk.” The RCMP records recorded the incident as an altercation between EE and DD. While they reference a friend being there, there are no notes to suggest she spoke to them about the non-consensual sexual touching.<sup>81</sup>

### ***Why it is important to find that the police missed several opportunities to investigate the perpetrator’s use of violence in the years before the mass casualty***

The Coalition asks that the Commission find that the police missed several important opportunities to investigate the perpetrator’s use of violence as it speaks to systemic problems

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<sup>78</sup> [Transcript, July 19, 2022](#), pp 28-48.

<sup>79</sup> [Transcript, July 19, 2022](#), pp 70-82.

<sup>80</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 183-190.

<sup>81</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence Behaviour towards Others](#), paras 191-194.

in policing, specifically policing in rural communities. In particular, the evidence before the inquiry was that rural police detachments do not have many members yet are required to cover a lot of territory. This requires police to prioritize the calls that seem most urgent, and close files quickly. When police in rural communities know and trust certain community members (whether because they are friends or because they are respected and privileged members of the community), this can allow them to escape police scrutiny.

We ask you to find that Cst. Wiley was asked to assist with the investigation into the perpetrator's firearms' access in 2010 and 2011, but chose not to prioritize this request in part because he was working in a rural community, things were busy, and he was not convinced the perpetrator would have been there when he went to look. As he put it, "If our radio is busy and we've got other priority calls that we've got to take but we're short on shift, which is not uncommon, didn't have an abundance of members working at any time in Bible Hill, you're busy, you're reacting to things you need to react to here and now."<sup>82</sup>

The general busy nature of rural policing and efforts to prioritize calls and close investigations was also apparent in how Cst. Maxwell appears to have addressed the complaint he received from Brenda Forbes.<sup>83</sup>

We also ask you to find that the complaints and reports about the perpetrator were given a low priority in part because he was a privileged member of the community, a privilege that such men know masks their violent and criminal behaviour. As Cst. Wiley explained, the perpetrator "was polite, and...well-spoken." He got to know the perpetrator after investigating a property crime, and seemed impressed with him – with how handy he was, but also with how he "seemed to have an ear to the ground in the community, he seemed like a good person to have as a community contact." As he noted, the perpetrator that he knew "was level-headed, articulate, well spoken, mannerly."<sup>84</sup>

The low priority given to specific and credible reports about the perpetrator's use of violence is also consistent with the themes that emerged from many of the July roundtables – namely that GBV, IPV, and family violence more generally tend to be seen as "private violence," and less worthy of police attention.<sup>85</sup>

Finally, the lack of investigation and follow-up by police is also consistent with the evidence before the Commission about systemic biases within police institutions that affect what they investigate, whom they believe should be investigated, and how they investigate such offences. As Dr. Palmater noted with reference to the May 2022 report she co-authored, *The Toxic Culture of the RCMP: Misogyny, Racism, and Violence Against Women in Canada's National Police*

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<sup>82</sup> [Transcript, September 6, 2022](#), p 76.

<sup>83</sup> See cross-examination of Maxwell, [Transcript, July 19, 2022](#), pp 70-82.

<sup>84</sup> [Transcript, September 6, 2022](#), pp 70, 127.

<sup>85</sup> See [McCulloch & Maher](#); see generally Roundtable discussions, Police and institutional understanding and responses to intimate partner violence and family violence; Police and institutional understanding and responses to sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence: [Transcript, July 20, 2022](#).

*Force*,<sup>86</sup> their research uncovered disproportionate numbers of RCMP as perpetrators of domestic violence, sexualized violence, and corruption. They found this “in many police forces but disproportionately the RCMP, in First Nations, remote communities, rural communities.” As she explained, “To say that that would impact the way in which the RCMP investigates domestic violence calls would be a gross understatement.”<sup>87</sup>

The systemic biases in rural police forces also affect how certain communities end up being over-policed, over-criminalized, and over-incarcerated – e.g. Indigenous and African Nova Scotian communities. Pro-charge, pro-prosecution policies are implemented in different ways depending on one’s relative privilege (or vulnerability).<sup>88</sup>

### **C) Other missed opportunities for intervention by institutions and individuals**

We ask the Commission to find that there were other missed opportunities to intervene to address the perpetrator’s longstanding and well-known history of violence, both on the part of institutions and individuals.

#### ***Institutional opportunities to intervene to address the perpetrator’s exposure to and use of violence***

While the Commission’s investigation revealed that the perpetrator had a longstanding relationship with violence – both exposure to violence from his early years in his family of origin, and use of violence and aggressive behaviour towards others throughout his life – there were almost no meaningful interventions to address this.

The perpetrator grew up in a family where he was regularly exposed to his father’s violence against his mother – and himself. There were, however, no known attempts to provide him with the tools to make sense of – or escape from – the violence in his home, whether through schools or the health care system. There were no institutional interventions in his life to stop the cycle of violence in his home or to address the adverse childhood experiences he grew up with.

#### ***i) Health care system***

Later in life, as an adult, the perpetrator had contact with health care professionals about mental health challenges and substance abuse concerns. However, those contacts with the health care system did not seem to result in meaningful interventions.

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<sup>86</sup>Shivangi Misra, Ashley Major, Pamela Palmater, and Shelagh Day (The Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action: 2022). [The Toxic Culture of the RCMP: Misogyny, Racism, and Violence Against Women in Canada’s National Police Force](#). [Exhibit P-003654].

<sup>87</sup> Police and institutional understanding and responses to sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence: [Transcript, July 20, 2022](#), pp 92-93.

<sup>88</sup> See, for example, Roundtable discussions, Police and institutional understanding and responses to intimate partner violence and family violence; Police and institutional understanding and responses to sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence: [Transcript, July 20, 2022](#).

Between 1996 and 2000, he was treated by a family doctor who ultimately referred him to a psychiatrist, Dr. Maynes. He saw that psychiatrist four times and was diagnosed with “narcissistic personality,” but it is not clear if he received any specific treatment.<sup>89</sup>

His family doctor for 15 years (from 2001 through 2016) saw him at times of significant stress and anxiety, including apparently after the breakup of a relationship (in 2003 – perhaps when Ms. Banfield left him briefly after the Sutherland Lake incident) and the day after he reportedly threatened to kill his parents (on June 2, 2010). Neither of these visits seemed to lead to referrals for therapy or anything like anger management counselling. After the June 2, 2010, appointment, Dr. Sanders prescribed him blood pressure medication.<sup>90</sup>

He was also treated for hypertension by a different doctor, whom he saw in the Fall River Family Practice twice in 2009 and then from 2018 to 2020. In June 2009, notes from the appointment indicate that he had reported a history of alcoholism (with heavy and regular consumption), and that he did not think he would have trouble weaning himself off alcohol but wanted to wait until later in the summer. While she had suggested he see a psychologist to help with stress, he wasn’t interested. The issues with stress and alcohol dependency do not appear to have been addressed during his later visits between June 2018 and 2020, when he was being treated for hypertension.<sup>91</sup>

## ***ii) Oversight by the Denturist Licensing Board of Nova Scotia***

Between 1998-2020, the Denturist Licensing Board of Nova Scotia received at least eight complaints from the perpetrator’s patients about his inappropriate behaviour, including his angry and often aggressive reactions when patients voiced concerns with him about how their dentures were fitting; inappropriate sexual discussions with patients; and concerns about fraudulent billing practices.

When the Board reached out about complaints, the perpetrator denied any wrongdoing and often lashed out at the complainants, suggesting they suffered from mental health issues or were being vindictive, etc. His responses to some of these complaints were both misogynistic and ageist. For example, in response to the complaint by one patient about how he kept talking about sex during her appointment, he said, she was clearly “not well” as he “could never imagine having a sex talk with a 52 year old edentulous woman” as the thought made him “ill.”<sup>92</sup>

In December 2005, the perpetrator expressed frustration with those investigating the complaints against him, calling it a “witch hunt.” After the complaints regarding inappropriate behaviour were referred to a hearing panel, he entered into a settlement agreement, admitting the

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<sup>89</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator’s Family of Origin](#), para 157.

<sup>90</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator’s Family of Origin](#), para 156.

<sup>91</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator’s Family of Origin](#), para 168.

<sup>92</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), paras 45-68.

allegations and that his conduct constituted professional misconduct. He was suspended for one month, directed to attend counselling to improve his communications with clients, and ordered to pay costs of \$8,000. When subsequent complaints came in, he continued to deny responsibility, despite the apparently continued patterns of behaviour.<sup>93</sup> Complaints that followed after that time did not result in further disciplinary sanction (despite the similarities between those complaints).

### ***Opportunities to intervene by individuals and community members***

Throughout the perpetrator's life, many individuals witnessed the violence and abuse he was exposed to as a child and the abuse he inflicted on others, but no one appears to have taken meaningful steps to intervene to stop the violence. As a child, many in his own family knew that he was regularly exposed to his father's violence towards his mother and himself, including his uncles Glynn, Alan, and Chris. None of them seemed to take any effective steps to intervene in Paul Wortman's abusive treatment of his wife or son. The perpetrator apparently resented his mother for having not left his father and taken him away.<sup>94</sup>

Most of those who witnessed the perpetrator's violent behaviour towards others (or were the victims of such violence) did not intervene either to stop the perpetrator or call him out on his conduct, whether concerning his stories bragging about assaulting vulnerable people,<sup>95</sup> or his verbally and physically abusive treatment of his patients,<sup>96</sup> or his sexually aggressive and/or inappropriate behaviour towards women,<sup>97</sup> or in relation to the particular incidents where individuals witnessed him physically assaulting or verbally abusing others (other than his common-law partner).<sup>98</sup>

Many people knew that the perpetrator kept guns stored around his home and observed him showing them off and discharging them. Many were aware that he was not authorized to own firearms and that they were not being stored or discharged properly, but no one seemed to

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<sup>93</sup> [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), paras 60-68.

<sup>94</sup> [Violence in the Perpetrator's Family of Origin](#), paras 33-56.

<sup>95</sup> See, for example, [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), para 38 (re him bragging about beating a black guy knowing he would get away with it); para 78 (re bragging about beating up a homeless person).

<sup>96</sup> See, for example, [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), paras 39-43; 76-77 (re assault on BK for missed payments); paras 177-178 (Melinda Daye re his conduct towards her mother and what she had heard from the African Nova Scotian community); paras 179; 200 (re inappropriate and unprofessional conduct re TT).

<sup>97</sup> See, for example, [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), paras 69-71 (re OO); paras 72-75 (BB); paras 94-95 (re observations of Lionel Lewis); paras 96-98 (re SS); paras 108-110 (Robert Doucette's statements that the perpetrator was a sexual predator who would brag about disposing of bodies by burning them); paras 133-137; 140-141; paras 183-192 (re incident from summer 2019 with EE, DD and II where EE and DD did not want to tell police about his inappropriate conduct).

<sup>98</sup> See, for example, [Perpetrator's Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), paras 100-102 (Joe Cartwright re witnessing the perpetrator beating up people who did not complete renovations/work on his home as he wanted); para 114 (Robert Doucette witnessing the perpetrator smashing the fence on his uncle Glynn's property).

challenge him about this or report his gun access to police (with the exception of the incidents discussed above).<sup>99</sup>

Over the years, many people also observed the perpetrator controlling Ms. Banfield or physically assaulting her, but with very limited exceptions they did not intervene or report his abuse to police.<sup>100</sup> As detailed above at p 8, several of the brutal physical assaults were witnessed by friends, family, and neighbours. The only time police were called was after the 2003 Sutherland Lake assault – and their involvement seemed to end after they dropped the perpetrator off at his home. Ms. Banfield had her niece come to pick her up. While her family members and some neighbours had encouraged her to report to this incident to police, she refused to do so and was reportedly scared, in shock, and somewhat ashamed.<sup>101</sup>

Ms. Banfield did not tell many people about the violence and controlling behaviour to which she was subjected by the perpetrator, including her family. After the assault at the cottage that Tom Evans witnessed, she ran to the cottage of her neighbour, Brenda Forbes, and confided in her. She was not, however, willing to go to police on that occasion either, as she was scared the perpetrator would hurt her, or go after her family, which he had previously threatened to do.<sup>102</sup> This is not unusual behaviour for a victim of coercive control or IPV more generally, and in Ms. Banfield’s case, her fears were not unwarranted.

Some individuals explained that they chose not to report the perpetrator – or otherwise intervene – as they found him to be a “scary man,” who was “dangerous and unstable.”<sup>103</sup> Brenda Forbes, who did eventually speak to police about an assault on Ms. Banfield, said she had initially been reticent to report his threatening behaviour as she felt she should be tough enough to handle it on their own. After he found out she had gone to police, she said he threatened her. She and her husband eventually sold their home in Portapique and moved halfway across the country to get away from him.<sup>104</sup>

***Why it is important to find that there were missed opportunities to intervene on the part of institutions and individuals***

The perpetrator grew up in a violent home, and then grew to adopt the same patterns of violent behaviour that had become normalized to him. There were no institutional interventions in his life (that we know of) that might have helped change those patterns – either as a child, or later in life when his violent and aggressive behaviours affected his common-law partner and his patients. There were also almost no interventions on a personal level, either to protect him as a

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<sup>99</sup> See, for example, [Firearms](#), paras 11-26 (re family members); paras 27-45 (re friends, neighbours, workers at his home); para 46-48 (re denturists and patients); paras 89-91 (re shooting and target practice).

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), para 114 (re Robert Doucette observing violence towards Ms. Banfield).

<sup>101</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence Towards His Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 124-144.

<sup>102</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violence Towards His Common-Law Spouse](#), paras 147-149.

<sup>103</sup> See, for example, [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), paras 21; 77; 100; 108-110; 114.

<sup>104</sup> [Perpetrator’s Violent Behaviour Towards Others](#), paras 118-130.

child from the violence in his home, or to stop him from inflicting violence on those close to him, including his common-law partner.

There was nothing akin to the “web of accountability” or a “way of keeping perpetrators in view while working to promote victim safety and perpetrator change”, which Katreena Scott called for in her Commissioned Report. He did not appear to come into contact with service providers with the expertise to manage risk – and promote change.<sup>105</sup> Had there been a proper “web of accountability” in place, there might have been ways to address the perpetrator’s IPV and GBV before it spilled over to the community in April 2020.

As Katreena Scott explained in her testimony before this Commission, this lack of intervention is likely due in part to the fact that, as a society, “we don’t know, and we don’t see, and we don’t recognize risk factors and warning signs of abuse perpetration.” Even when people do recognize the warnings signs and risk factors, “we often don’t know how to lean in and have a conversation...or don’t know who or where to call to get specialized help involved.” This is consistent with what we heard from those who knew the perpetrator was abusing his common-law partner but did not report his conduct (or seek to provide support to Ms. Banfield). As Professor Scott explained, when we do not know how to “lean in”, we “lean away,” potentially blaming the victim, or reduce ties thereby increasing the victim’s isolation. This allows the abuse to continue. As Professor Scott put it: “[B]y not saying anything, by not doing anything, by not noticing, what we do is empower perpetrators to continue to behave abusively.”<sup>106</sup>

#### **D) The impact of the decision to charge and prosecute Lisa Banfield**

We ask you to find that the RCMP decision to lay criminal charges against Lisa Banfield for supplying the perpetrator with ammunition – and the decision of the Nova Scotia public prosecution service to pursue the prosecution of those charges – has had a negative impact on the work of this inquiry, Ms. Banfield, and her family, and could deter victims of IPV from reporting to police.

Immediately after Ms. Banfield emerged from her hiding spot in the woods of Portapique on the morning of April 19, 2020, she began to fully cooperate with police. Despite the trauma that she had just endured, she gave her first interview that morning to the RCMP. She voluntarily sat for three other subsequent interviews with S/Sgt. Vardy on April 20, April 28, and July 28. She was also interviewed by Dr. Logan (with S/Sgt. Vardy present), the RCMP’s forensic psychologist. On October 23, 2020, she returned to Portapique with S/Sgt. Vardy and completed a lengthy video re-enactment of the events of April 18-19, 2020.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> [Scott](#), p 1.

<sup>106</sup> [Transcript, August 31, 2022](#), pp 4-5 [emphasis added].

<sup>107</sup> Banfield Interview, [April 19, 2020, 6:58 am](#); [April 20, 2020, 13:02 pm](#) (S/Sgt. Vardy); [April 28, 2020, 12:16 pm](#) (S/Sgt. Vardy); [May 8, 2020](#) (S/Sgt. Vardy & Dr. Logan); [July 28, 2020, 8:51 am](#) (S/Sgt. Vardy); [Lisa Banfield Video Re-enactment with RCMP](#) dated October 23, 2020, Parts 1-4 (S/Sgt Vardy).

While Ms. Banfield and her family had viewed S/Sgt. Vardy as a support for them, that changed. As Ms. Banfield explained in her interview with the Commission, he had told her that if she needed support, he could be there for her. When she returned to Portapique, she did not seem to understand that he had a full videotaped re-enactment planned; she thought it was going to be just her and his counterpart but he was there with five people to videotape everything. Before that day, all meetings with the police had been organized through her sister, Maureen – but on that day, he contacted Ms. Banfield directly and did not let Maureen know. They met them at the warehouse. There were no mental health professionals there. Her sisters were not allowed to be with her and were kept at a distance. As Maureen told the Commission:

[T]his is the first time in six months that she's at her place that no longer exists. And they're just taking her through the reenactment. It was horrific, and I think it was very damning to her mentally and that's for me, I think the most egregious thing that took place in terms of her well-being and putting her first.<sup>108</sup>

On December 4, 2020,<sup>109</sup> exactly 6 weeks after she completed that re-enactment with the officer she had grown to trust and thought of as her support, the RCMP publicly announced the charges against Ms. Banfield, her brother, and her brother-in-law for supplying ammunition to the perpetrator. When they announced the charges, the RCMP acknowledged that none had prior knowledge of his plans for April 18 and 19.<sup>110</sup> The decision to lay those charges appears to have been approved even earlier than that – by November 16, 2020.<sup>111</sup>

The RCMP announcement regarding the laying of charges took place 6 weeks and 2 days after the Orders in Council (OICs) setting out the mandate for the Mass Casualty Commission were issued. The OICs directed the Commissioners to perform their duties in a way that would ensure that the inquiry “does not jeopardize any ongoing criminal investigation or proceedings or any other investigation.”<sup>112</sup>

Supt. Campbell testified at the inquiry that while he did not play a direct role in the decision to charge Ms. Banfield, he was “engaged in conversations in and around the charging of Lisa Banfield.” The decision to lay charges was made in conjunction with the investigative team with the provincial advisory Crowns, whom he believed were Shauna MacDonald and Mark Heerema. While he could not specify precisely when he had discussions about this, he testified that it was

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<sup>108</sup> Lisa Banfield, Commission Interview, [April 20, 2022](#), pp 31-33.

<sup>109</sup> It bears noting that the charges were publicly announced during the 16 days of activism to address gender-based violence, and two days before December 6<sup>th</sup> – the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

<sup>110</sup> [Common-law spouse among 3 charged with giving N.S. shooter ammunition | CBC News](#).

<sup>111</sup> [Transcript, July 27, 2022](#) (C/Supt. Leather), pp 89-90.

<sup>112</sup> See, [Order in Council: Government of Canada](#), dated October 21, 2020.

somewhere around November 2020. He was not sure whether a “victims service organization” was consulted prior to laying the charges.<sup>113</sup>

Supt. Campbell did speak with C/Supt. Leather and Insp. Marchichiw, without the command triangle, about “the optics of charging Lisa Banfield and what that might look like and how certain groups would perceive that.” While he understood there was sufficient evidence to support the charge, “the central issue was the public interest aspect,” including how the families may have perceived the decision about charging.<sup>114</sup> When asked to clarify what he meant by optics, he emphasized, without elaborating, that he was thinking about “domestic violence victims, victim blaming” and the victims’ families and their expectations, including how sympathetic (or non-sympathetic) they were to Ms. Banfield. He supported the decision made by the investigative team, command triangle, and Crown prosecution service to lay the charges.<sup>115</sup>

In his testimony before the Commission, C/Supt. Leather was asked about the discussions in November 2020 about laying the charges against Ms. Banfield and how it might impact her ability to cooperate with the inquiry. He acknowledged that they did talk “about the impact of the charges, should they be brought against Ms. Banfield, as it relates to the Commission,” but not in any depth. When asked if the police had weighed the significance of a public inquiry versus the laying of a relatively minor charge, he responded, “Well, I’m not sure that it’s the police’s job to weigh that,” suggesting it was for the Crown to decide whether to prosecute.<sup>116</sup>

In March 2022, about 16 months after the charges were laid, the Crown agreed to refer Ms. Banfield’s case to restorative justice. Her charges were eventually withdrawn by the Crown in late July 2022.

***Why it is important to find that the decision to lay charges and prosecute Ms. Banfield had negative impacts***

Both the decision to lay charges against Ms. Banfield and to pursue her prosecution affected the work of this Commission. Until her charges had been resolved – and she was facing criminal jeopardy – she was not in a position to assist the Commission with its work. As soon as the Crown agreed to resolve her charges by way of restorative justice, she began to meet with the Commission, giving five detailed interviews, and offering a perspective on the perpetrator that others could not.

The fact that she was facing charges for the first 16 months that the inquiry was conducting its investigations and beginning the public hearings arguably affected how the Commission could present its evidence, leaving issues relating to Ms. Banfield’s relationship with the perpetrator

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<sup>113</sup> See [Transcript, July 26, 2022](#) at pp 151-157. Ms. Banfield’s counsel, James Lockyer advised the Commission that these two crowns were the same two who conducted the prosecution, until “they dropped out”: [Transcript, July 26, 2022](#) at p 155.

<sup>114</sup> [Transcript, July 26, 2022](#) at pp 158-159.

<sup>115</sup> [Transcript, July 26, 2022](#) at pp 160-161.

<sup>116</sup> [Transcript, July 27, 2022](#) at pp 89-92.

(and the violent assault on her at the beginning of the mass casualty) unaddressed in public hearings until July 2022.

While the Commission left room for her story and experience to emerge (and allowed for sufficient time during the hearings to explore related issues through roundtable expert discussion), by then, many of those following the proceedings had already decided what they were (or were not) willing to believe. It meant that the examination of connections between the perpetrator's history of violence and the events of April 18-19, 2020 could not commence until after evidence had already been presented during the public hearings about the unfolding of the mass casualty, leaving the impression that the attack on Ms. Banfield was a different form of violence – distinct from what followed.

The RCMP decision to lay the charges, and the Crown decision to proceed with the prosecution, also had a serious and negative impact on Ms. Banfield. She was already living with the emotional and physical trauma that she endured that night, as well as the guilt of wondering whether the perpetrator had gone looking for her as he killed their neighbours in Portapique. In her testimony before the inquiry, she explained that the supports she had in the initial aftermath of the mass casualty stopped when she was charged:

We had a lot of people that reached out to us and Red Cross in the beginning and the women's advocacy groups...Lots of people that I don't know have reached out and supported me until I got the charges, and then it stopped.<sup>117</sup>

When those charges were laid against Ms. Banfield, it reinforced stereotypes too often seen in the context of IPV about who can be a real victim. It helped fuel speculation that she was somehow involved and/or complicit in the perpetrator's violent rampage that night – that she should be responsible for his actions. While her charges were ultimately withdrawn, she spent 16 months being tried in the court of public opinion – an easy scapegoat for the horrors of her deceased common-law partner.

That decision to lay the charges also sent a chilling message to other victims of IPV and GBV: come forward and seek the help of police (or assist them with their investigations) at your peril. In a world where we work to process horrifying events by finding someone to blame, the female partners of the men who commit extremely violent acts are often the targets of that blame. Women are hyper-responsibilized; in their roles as wives and mothers, more is expected of them.

Indeed, the decision to lay charges in this case is consistent with concerns that are being raised increasingly about the impact of pro-arrest/prosecution policies, particularly for women from marginalized and vulnerable communities.<sup>118</sup> Women are increasingly criminalized when they

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<sup>117</sup> [Transcript, July 15, 2022](#) at p 110 [emphasis added].

<sup>118</sup> See generally, Roundtable discussions, Police and institutional understanding and responses to intimate partner violence and family violence; Police and institutional understanding and responses to sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence: [Transcript, July 20, 2022, and particularly Emilie Coyle, at pp 89-92; Dr. Palmater,](#)

take steps to defend themselves in the face of their partners' violence, or when their partners manipulate the situation to blame them.

### III. Recommendations

The recommendations the Coalition is asking the Commission to consider flow from the factual findings we ask you to make above. In particular, our recommendations focus on the need to take intimate partner and gender-based violence seriously given what we have learned about the connections between IPV/GBV and mass casualty attacks. To paraphrase Professors McCulloch and Maher, to better understand, prevent, and respond to mass casualty attacks, we must better understand, prevent, and respond to gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence. We are asking the Commission to issue both general and cross-cutting recommendations to address this reality, as well as recommendations specific to four areas: prevention; community-based services, supports, and advocacy both for victims and perpetrators of IPV and their families; responsive justice and legal systems; and improved social infrastructure.

#### (A) General recommendations that cut across all areas

Our first recommendation flows from the evidence Professors McCulloch and Maher presented in their Commissioned Report and in their testimony at roundtables in July and the factual finding we ask you to make about the connections between the perpetrator's history of violence and the mass casualty of April 2020. **We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government work to better understand, prevent, and respond to gender-based violence as a means to better understand, prevent, and protect our communities from mass casualty attacks.**

This will require an acknowledgement of the breadth of the problem. Almost ten years ago, in 2013, the World Health Organization issued a report detailing the pervasiveness of gender-based violence globally and issued a call to action commensurate with the scope of the problem:

[V]iolence against women is not a small problem that occurs in some pockets of society, but rather a global public health problem of epidemic proportions, requiring urgent action. It is time for the world to take action: a life free of violence is a basic human right, one that every woman, man and child deserves.<sup>119</sup>

In the summer of 2022, the jury on the inquest into the triple femicides in Renfrew County, Ontario, recommended that the province declare intimate partner violence an epidemic.<sup>120</sup>

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[at pp 92-97; see also generally Roundtable discussion: IPV, GBV and Family Violence: Personal and Community Responses: Transcript July 21, 2022, and particularly Emma Halpern, at pp 36-37; Dr. Rachel Zellars, at pp 59-62.](#)

<sup>119</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). (2013). Executive Summary: [Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence](#) [emphasis added].

<sup>120</sup> See CKW Inquest – [Verdict Recommendations](#) [Exhibit P-004601].

**We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government in Canada declare gender-based and intimate partner violence as an epidemic that warrants a more meaningful response.**

A meaningful response to the epidemic of GBV will require the adoption and implementation of a National Action Plan to End Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence (NAP), as recommended by Women’s Shelters Canada and its many partners and endorsers, going back to 2013.<sup>121</sup> New recommendations are not needed. There are thoughtful and sound recommendations ready to be implemented and properly resourced. **We ask the Commission to recommend that all of the recommendations set out in the 2021 Roadmap to the NAP be implemented by federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments.**<sup>122</sup>

To better address and respond to the threat of mass casualty attacks, we must take seriously the need to respond to and address the epidemic of GBV and IPV. While each of the specific areas we target for recommendations will be discussed in more depth below, there are several requirements that cut across all of these areas, including the need for: stable funding, an intersectional and trauma-informed approach, coordinated and collaborative efforts, and meaningful oversight and accountability mechanisms.

As the Commission heard in its roundtable discussions and consultations, appropriate funding remains an ongoing challenge for the VAW/GBV sector. As Dawn Ferris (THANS) put it, “the biggest challenge barrier would be funding.” As Kaitlin Geiger-Bardswich (WSC) explained, while the shelter system received COVID-19 funding between 2020 and 2023, that funding is ending. The money that was essential to help shelters stay open during the pandemic will stop in 2023. The lack of sustained funding leaves shelters scrambling “to fundraise to keep [their] doors open,” while GBV and its long-term impacts continue to rise. The sector is forced to turn to individual and corporate donors to keep essential services operating, instead of governments.<sup>123</sup>

**We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government commit to providing sustained and escalating operational funding that prioritizes women’s and children’s lives by supporting the VAW/GBV sector, including programming for perpetrators.**

As the Commission heard throughout the roundtable discussions in July – and in Part 3 consultations – the lived realities of those affected by violence vary depending on the intersectional perspectives of Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, racialized, and 2SLGBTQ+ people, as well as those living in poverty or with disabilities, and in rural and remote communities (among others).<sup>124</sup> The 2021 Roadmap to the NAP report reviewed past recommendations

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<sup>121</sup> Amanda Dale, Krys Maki & Rotbah Nitia, Women’s Shelters Canada. (2021). [Roadmap for the National Action Plan: A Report to Guide the Implementation of a National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence](#), at p 7 [Exhibit P-003509; hereinafter Roadmap to NAP].

<sup>122</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), recommendations at pp 18-134.

<sup>123</sup> See Transcript, [August 31, 2022](#) at pp 12, 27-28, 86-87. See also [Roadmap to the NAP](#), at p 9.

<sup>124</sup> See, in particular, perspectives of Dr. Myrna Lashley and Robert Wright in July 14, 2022 [Roundtable: Prediction and Prevention of Mass Casualty Events](#) and see also [July 20, 22 Roundtable Discussions: Police and Institutional Understanding and Responses to Intimate Partner Violence and Family Violence; Police and Institutional Understanding and Responses to Sexual Violence and Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence](#). See also Kristina Fifield, Kat Owens & Kienna Shkopich-Hunter, [“We Matter and Our Voices Must be Heard”](#) (Report prepared for Commission concerning marginalized survivors’ experience of the perpetrator’s violence.

targeting GBV and found many “required significant re-analysis and updating in light of the intersectional impacts of VAW/GBV.”<sup>125</sup> As helpfully articulated in that report:

Given the inter-constitutive nature of multiple and distinct experiences of structural oppression and violence, we need to be alert to the ‘interlocking systems of oppression’ that occur. We thus would benefit from seeking deeper understandings of how these different systems of oppression interact, and to be careful of our assumptions in centering one experience of marginalization over another.<sup>126</sup>

**We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government commit to adopting an intersectional and trauma-informed response to addressing GBV that recognizes the systemic and structural differences in how women and non-binary people with different identities experience GBV.**

Neither governments nor community-based service providers can act alone to successfully address the longstanding patriarchal structures that sustain GBV. Significantly more collaboration and coordination are needed. And governments must be accountable to the grassroots, including community-based advocates and those with lived experience of GBV. **We ask the Commission to recommend that addressing the epidemic of GBV include developing infrastructure for ongoing collaboration, collective learning, and active application of new knowledge and research to policy, practice, and legislation. This would require meaningful coordination between all levels of government, within government (i.e. between different departments or agencies within the same level of government), community-based service providers, academia, and those with lived expertise who are routinely omitted from planning and decision-making tables.**

Accountability and oversight are essential to learn what is working to address GBV – and help replicate those programs. We suggest that monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) strategies be adopted to monitor the governmental efforts to address GBV.<sup>127</sup> **We ask that the Commission recommend that all levels of government work to incorporate accountability and oversight into the implementation of the NAP and the recommendations of the Commission. This would include an implementation plan, time frames, milestones and accountabilities.**

## **(B) Prevention**

We need to have a meaningful cultural shift in how we understand GBV/IPV and family violence<sup>128</sup> that meets the specific needs of different communities, particularly rural and remote

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<sup>125</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), at p 9. See also pp 107-108.

<sup>126</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), at p 10 citing Doris Ranjan (2021). Local Safety and Inclusion Solidarity Networks [unpublished manuscript]. Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society.

<sup>127</sup> See Rotbah Nitia, Capturing the Realities of Survivors of Gender-Based Violence: Applying an intersectional and feminist lens for Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) in Canada’s National Action Plan to End VAW/GBV, [Roadmap to the NAP](#), Appendix D, p 203 ff.

<sup>128</sup> [Transcript, August 31, 2022](#) (Participant Consultations: Gender-Based Organizations).

communities. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work. **We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government prioritize the need for GBV prevention so that GBV will be actively and effectively negatively sanctioned at the personal, interpersonal, community, and societal levels.**

The prevention rationale set out in the Roadmap to the NAP highlights this concern and the multiple areas of prevention that need to be addressed:

Within Canada, there are important specific prevention needs related to different communities and geographies. In rural and northern areas, transportation and cell phone service are factors for prevention. Where these are not available, women are in more danger... To make an impact in the prevention of VAW/GBV, people of all genders need to be involved. Men and boys have a significant role and meaningful opportunity to affect change, both on the individual level and as a group that has been afforded structural and institutional power. Any successful efforts towards reducing VAW/GBV must include a plan to address harmful norms around masculinities. Punitive action and carceral responses have been the standard answer, but in order to change existing power dynamics, new approaches are needed... Although existing prevention has a considerable focus on youth work, either in schools or at the community level, the context demands transformation of all ongoing work in the community and beyond... There are important educational needs that are age-appropriate and fit into most provincial education plans. There is also a need to ensure that VAW/GBV knowledge is included in training for state and institutional actors (police, health, education, armed forces, etc.) for both prevention and the purpose of overhauling institutions... All these must be met, avoiding the one-size-fits-all measures that have not worked in the past.<sup>129</sup>

**We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of the 20 prevention-specific recommendations in the Roadmap to the NAP.**<sup>130</sup>

As discussed during the July roundtables and phase 3 consultations, there is a need to integrate into the core elementary and senior school curricula learning about gender equity and expression, emotional and relational intelligence as core competencies in life, GBV, IPV, and family violence,<sup>131</sup> including violence prevention, healthy relationships, consent, and rape culture, and to address toxic masculinity more generally.<sup>132</sup> **We ask the Commission to call on provincial governments to require elementary and senior school curricula to include learning about GBV/IPV, family violence, violence prevention, and toxic masculinity at every grade level in sequential and developmentally appropriate ways. We strongly suggest that all school regions be mandated to create stand-alone policies, guidelines, protocols, and accountabilities**

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<sup>129</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), Table 2: Prevention Rationale, p 25.

<sup>130</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), Table 2: Prevention Recommendations, pp 25-58.

<sup>131</sup> See, for example, [Carmen Gill and Mary Aspinall, Understanding Violence in Relationships](#), the report commissioned for this inquiry. Which underscores the complexities of these forms of violence.

<sup>132</sup> See, for example, [Transcript, August 31, 2022](#) (Participant Consultations: Gender-Based Organizations); [Transcript, July 11, 2022 \(Dr. Bridges\)](#), pp 47-48)

**for reports of sexualized violence and harassment. Further, curricula for teachers should include mandatory courses in engaging youth in discussing these materials, so that all teachers are prepared to address these sensitive issues in their classrooms, including any disclosures from students or colleagues.**

As we heard from Katreena Scott during her testimony before the Commission, there are key gaps in the webs of accountability for perpetrators of GBV and IPV.<sup>133</sup> Individuals and institutions need the information and training to recognize abusive behaviour, call it out, and help support perpetrators in changing their conduct so that we can prevent violence from continuing – and escalating. **We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal government develop and fund a public education campaign like Neighbours, Friends, and Families, that would inform the general public about warning signs and risks for IPV and GBV, how to intervene safely, and whom to turn to for support.**

**We ask the Commission to call on all levels of government to support the development and implementation of bystander intervention training for children and youth in schools, and for adults in all applicable settings including universities, workplaces, health care settings, and throughout the justice and corrections system.**

Angelique Jenney discussed the types of challenges that children who experience complex trauma within their families face – where “the people that should love you the most and care for you the most are those that you’re most afraid of.” Children exposed to that type of complex trauma or adverse childhood experiences require mental health supports to avoid being funnelled into the justice system later in life (or put into child protection, with its own trauma).<sup>134</sup> Community and societal responses are necessary to respond to the realities of what is happening in the families of those children. **We ask the Commission to recommend that provincial governments invest in trauma-specialized mental health supports for children and youth who have been the victims of violence, whether directly at the hands of an abusive perpetrator or indirectly through exposure to family violence.**

### **(C) Community-based services, supports, and advocacy for survivors/perpetrators of IPV and their families**

There is a clear need to expand the services and supports available to those subjected to GBV, as well as to develop and fund programs to target and support the perpetrators of such violence. Services and supports must be available to all survivors of violence, whether living in urban or rural and remote communities, and also specialized services for populations who face intersectional oppressions of race, culture, gender and sexual diversity, disability, and low-socioeconomic means. **We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government strengthen the support system for survivors of GBV that allows for reliable, timely, trauma-**

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<sup>133</sup> See [Scott](#) and see, [Transcript, August 31, 2022](#)

<sup>134</sup> [Transcript, July 14, 2022](#) (Dr. Jenney), pp 91-96.

**informed, and culturally adept support and services that are delivered in a manner that honours their lived experiences and realities. This must include programs for shelters and outreach services, as well as programs that support the safety of survivors who stay in their homes.**

The rationale for supporting survivors and their families is framed, in part, as follows in the Roadmap to the NAP:

Our recommendations lean into the establishment of a full continuum of VAW/GBV services designed and delivered “by and for” communities who continue to be systemically and institutionally excluded and disenfranchised. “By and for” is one approach that would enable services and supports to help address this legacy. Originally coined by South African disability rights advocates in the 1980s “nothing about us without us” is a self-determination call that continues by others who advocate for inclusion and intersectionality in VAW/GBV service delivery.<sup>135</sup>

**We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of the 20 supports for survivors and their families-specific recommendations in the Roadmap to the NAP.**<sup>136</sup>

The continuum of services needed to support survivors includes both traditional shelters and outreach services offered by shelters. As Kaitlin Geiger-Bardswich (WSC) told the inquiry, shelters support more than just those who stay there. For every 2 women served in a shelter, another 5 are receiving outreach services.<sup>137</sup> Funding for the full continuum of services cannot be based on per capita funding, which leads to the under-resourcing of rural and northern communities, despite the fact that victims of IPV in rural and northern settings face a higher risk of femicide than those in urban locations.<sup>138</sup>

Services are also essential for those women who choose to stay in their homes (with their abusive partners). As Dr. Doherty told this inquiry, women in rural communities often have unique needs, and in the rural context, some women feel it is safer to stay with their abusive partners “because they can read the situation. If they leave, what’s he doing? Where is he? When will he come?” As she explained, instead of assuming that women will leave, “[w]e need resources to promote safe staying.”<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), p 97.

<sup>136</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), Table 4: Support for Survivors and their Families Recommendations, pp 96-103.

<sup>137</sup> [Transcript, August 31, 2022](#), pp 85-86.

<sup>138</sup> See [Transcript, July 21, 2022](#) (Cross re experiences of women in rural communities), pp 28-32; Transcript, July 18, 2022 (Cukier, re rural communities and gun violence), pp 57-58. See also Victoria L. Banman (University of Western Ontario: 2015), [Domestic Homicide Risk Factors: Rural and Urban Considerations](#) (MA Thesis supervised by Dr. Peter Jaffe); Pertice Moffitt, Wendy Aujla, Crystal J. Giesbrecht, Isabel Grant, Anna-Lee Straatman (2020), “Intimate Partner Violence and COVID-19 in Rural, Remote, and Northern Canada: Relationship, Vulnerability and Risk”, [Journal of Family Violence](#), pp 775-786.

<sup>139</sup> [Transcript, July 11, 2022](#), p 86.

Programs like Circles of Safety, which was developed in PEI and which Women’s Shelters Canada has helped to expand to rural communities in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon, adopt a trauma-informed, survivor-centred, collaborative approach to safety planning that brings together a survivor, service providers, and informal support networks to generate creative, holistic safety solutions for those staying in their homes.<sup>140</sup>

The continuum of services required to support survivors of GBV and IPV must also include services and programs for those children living in homes that have witnessed such abuse. The British Columbia Society of Transition Houses’ Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment (PEACE) program is one example of a free and confidential program for youth who have experienced IPV that seeks to help children and youth understand what GBV is, and that the violence is not their fault; help identify support networks and develop a safety plan; and identify their feelings and express them in healthy ways. Women’s Shelters Canada is working to expand the PEACE program nationally.<sup>141</sup> **We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments fund programs, like PEACE, that help support children and youth who have been exposed to/experienced GBV or IPV.**

Supports are also needed for the perpetrators of IPV and GBV, in part because the research tells us that change is possible. As Katreena Scott told the Commission, “change is possible... Between one-third and two-thirds of those who engage in abusive behaviour go on to end their use of abusive behaviour.” Interventions need to be flexible and be attuned to the individual needs of abuse perpetrators. Victim safety needs to remain a “core and guiding priority of service,” but “[c]hange is possible, we should expect change, and we know a lot about how we need to improve interventions for abuse perpetration.”<sup>142</sup>

In some cases, men can leave their homes and access supports elsewhere, allowing women and children to stay in a familiar environment without uprooting their day-to-day lives. By way of example, the Safe at Home Program in Alberta is designed to help individuals take some time away from home (typically a 2-5 day cool-down period) and accept support services to help the “move from using unhealthy and abusive behaviours to healthy behaviours.”<sup>143</sup>

In Nova Scotia, the Men’s Helpline was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of a longer-term provincial action plan to prevent domestic violence. Callers to this free, confidential service are directed to a men’s helpline counsellor and then can be referred for ongoing counselling and/or to other resources. An evaluation of the Men’s Helpline showed high satisfaction from callers, those who answered the calls and help them navigate or access counselling services, and service providers.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> [Transcript, August 31, 2022](#), pp 85-86. See also [End Violence Against Women | Women’s Shelters Canada Circles of Safety - End Violence Against Women | Women’s Shelters Canada \(endvaw.ca\)](#).

<sup>141</sup> See [PEACE – BC Society of Transition Houses \(bcsth.ca\)](#) and WSC website: <https://endvaw.ca/peace/>.

<sup>142</sup> [Transcript, August 31, 2022](#), pp 8-11.

<sup>143</sup> See [Safe at Home Alberta \(safeathomeab.ca\)](#).

<sup>144</sup> See [Nova Scotia Men's Helpline Evaluation Report: Final Report \(learningtoendabuse.ca\)](#).

Another program targeting the needs of perpetrators is Caring Dads, a group intervention program for men who have abused, neglected, or exposed their children to domestic violence. It seeks to include dads in the work to improve the safety and well-being of their children. Caring Dads currently run programs in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Ontario, Manitoba, BC, and Alberta.<sup>145</sup> We note that in some provinces, such as Nova Scotia, funding for the man’s treatment is only available if he is a father. Such funding models will continue to miss men who do not have children such as the perpetrator. Shelters continue to consume their own budgets attempting to help every woman and man who comes seeking treatment.

Katreena Scott’s Commissioned Report emphasizes that services and programs for perpetrators need to be integrated and coordinated as part of a comprehensive and holistic community-based response. Coordinated community responses should “break down silos, reduce fragmentation of services to victims to enhance their safety and well-being, and close gaps and loopholes in services to perpetrators to increase accountability.” Not only must services be coordinated, but they must also be expanded to avoid the problems of “one-size-fits-all interventions.”<sup>146</sup> **We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government strengthen the coordination and integration of services and programs for perpetrators of GBV.**

While an emphasis on services and supports is critical, these alone will not stem the tide of GBV that continues unabated. Shifting the systemic patterns and patriarchal structures that sustain gender inequality and violence requires collective, strategic social and political advocacy that is beyond the capacity of most community-based organizations, whose limited resources must go to supporting the needs of their clients. **We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government contribute to sustainable funding for advocacy efforts in the GBV sector to shift the social narrative and systemic forces around GBV and amplify the voices and needs of women and children that have gone ignored for too long.**

Finally, the general public needs to be aware of the supports available both for perpetrators and those experiencing or exposed to violence. Individuals may be better positioned to help their friends, family members, neighbours, and colleagues experiencing or perpetrating violence if they know what services are available and how to access them. As an example, Women’s Shelters Canada recently ran a 6-month national awareness campaign<sup>147</sup> for its website Sheltersafe.ca, an online clickable map that connects women to their closest shelter or transition house. One of the key messages was that anyone can phone a local shelter to find out how to help a loved one; they do not need to be experiencing violence personally. We know that the most dangerous time for a woman in an abusive relationship is when she leaves; shelters and other services can safety plan with women to ensure they exit relationships – if they choose to do so – safely. **We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government run public awareness campaigns on the services available for those perpetrating and experiencing GBV/IPV and how to access them. These public awareness campaigns should also help educate the public about GBV/IPV,**

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<sup>145</sup> See [About Caring Dads — Caring Dads™](#).

<sup>146</sup> [Scott, pp 18-19](#).

<sup>147</sup> <https://sheltersafe.ca/more-than/>.

in all its forms (including coercive control), and signs of GBV/IPV to help push back on persistent myths about this violence.

#### **(D) Responsive justice/legal systems**

The work of this Commission has helped to shine a light on the limitations of the legal and justice systems as a response to GBV or IPV. The pro-charge, pro-prosecution policies that were seen in the 1980s and 1990s as necessary to taking IPV seriously have had unintended and harmful consequences, particularly for vulnerable communities such as African Nova Scotians and Indigenous communities. Police still do not prioritize reports of GBV or IPV, treating it as a private matter. Indeed, these pro-charge, pro-prosecution policies have resulted in the increasing criminalization of women, particularly Indigenous and Black women. **We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments take steps to transform the justice system to ensure that those facing GBV can access justice that is equitable, consistent, and takes into account their lived realities while providing protection from further harm.**

Survivors of GBV/IPV who seek redress through the justice system often find policing and legal systems alienating, de-humanizing, and re-traumatizing, even as they are actively managing the trauma of the violence they endured. The justice system strips survivors of agency, voice, and choice, compounding their trauma and harm. **We ask the Commission to recommend that federal, provincial, and territorial governments establish and resource specialized, community-based, and properly trained GBV navigators. GBV navigators would accompany and assist survivors by liaising with the legal system's actors and explaining requirements throughout criminal, family, and civil proceedings, to ensure that survivors fully understand their rights and options, and to inform and support them in making the best decisions for themselves and their families.** <sup>148</sup>

The justice system will often refer accused persons to programs offered by women's shelters or transition houses throughout Canada. **We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments ensure that adequate funding is provided for programs offered by women's shelters for accused persons, as currently many shelters accept referrals even when they do not have the budget to deliver them.**

Women who have been the victim of IPV/GBV also need support as they navigate the family law and criminal justice systems. While victims will often be referred to women's shelters for support, this work is often not adequately funded and leaves shelters with insufficient resources to properly support victims navigating the court system.

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<sup>148</sup> See [Gender-Based Violence Navigator](#), Proposal prepared by Be the Peace Institute, July 2019 (COMM0063521). See also Recommendation 9L, [Roadmap to the NAP](#), at p 72. See also [Transcript, July 21, 2022](#), (Pamela Cross) at pp 66-67 re Ontario's Family Court Support Worker Program.

The rationale for the Promotion of Responsive Legal and Justice Systems recommendations in the Roadmap to the NAP explains:

Legal and justice structures play an important role in setting precedents that have impacts across other systems... These structures are also the mechanisms by which societal norms, state agendas, and rules are enforced. Survivors of VAW/GBV look to justice and legal systems from different perspectives. Often, those who are already the privileged turn to those systems, assuming they will provide justice. They are often disappointed. Those who have been marginalized often reject those systems, assuming they will cause further harm. Their fears are often proved correct. If legal and justice systems are to have meaning and be truly responsive, they must be developed through trauma-informed, strengths-based, and ground-up strategies in a way that reflects this. Our recommendations are intended to reflect the reality we see that survivors of VAW/GBV, whatever their privilege or lack thereof, are seldom served well by existing justice and legal systems, and that those with less privilege are often actively harmed by their interactions with those systems... [W]ithout a strong human rights foundation, strategies to respond to and eliminate VAW/GBV across the spectrum of lived experiences of those affected by it would be incomplete, unsustainable, and fleeting. Building on this it was crucial that our recommendations reflect the notion that lifting those who are most vulnerable will lift us all.<sup>149</sup>

**We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of all 20 recommendations concerning the promotion of responsive legal and justice systems in the Roadmap to the NAP.**<sup>150</sup>

The Commission heard a lot of evidence about the perpetrator’s use of violent and controlling behaviour, including the coercive control that he imposed on Ms. Banfield. We recognize that some countries have opted to criminalize coercive control, in recognition of just how devastating it can be as a form of IPV (and the fact that it is often a precursor to fatalities). Criminalization can have unintended consequences, however, particularly for those from vulnerable communities who are over-policed. We think it would be premature to ask the Commission to recommend that the federal government criminalize coercive control at this time.

We believe this issue warrants further study and consideration, informed by those with different intersectional realities and lived experiences with the justice system. **We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal, provincial, and territorial governments strike an expert advisory group, drawing on community experts, frontline service providers, and survivors, to examine how criminal law could better address the context of persistent patterns of controlling behaviour at the core of GBV/IPV. The group should examine the possible benefits – and potential unintended negative consequences – of creating a new *Criminal Code* offence of coercive control, as well as review how existing offences (such as criminal harassment, uttering**

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<sup>149</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), Table 3: Promotion of Responsive Legal and Justice Systems, p 63.

<sup>150</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), pp 63-88.

**threats, or the non-consensual distribution of intimate images) could be better used to address the types of controlling behaviours experienced in intimate or domestic relationships.<sup>151</sup>**

While we recognize that the firearms that the perpetrator used in the mass casualty of April 2020 were not ones that he legally owned, we nevertheless have concerns about the lack of enforcement by the police – and the lack of intervention by his family, friends, neighbours, and others despite their apparent knowledge that the firearms were not legal and not being properly stored or used. Given the ways in which the perpetrator used his guns to terrorize others, including Ms. Banfield, we would adopt the submissions of the Canadian Coalition for Gun Control from the September 22, 2022 hearings and ask you to consider issuing their 10 recommendations.<sup>152</sup>

**We ask the Commission to call on all levels of government to recognize the proliferation of firearms and the injuries and deaths related to firearms as an urgent public health concern that requires a public health approach.**

**We ask the Commission to call on the federal government to establish a national firearms hotline to allow individuals to report concerns about firearms directly to staff accountable to the Commissioner of the RCMP.**

**We ask the Commission to call on the federal government to ban all military-style assault weapons and to amend the *Criminal Code* to define “military-style assault weapons” precisely.**

**We ask the Commission to recommend that provincial and federal governments issue clear directives explaining that the imposition of a prohibition order imposes a duty on the Chief Firearms Officer to suspend or revoke a licence.**

**We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government implement a system to track sales and trace firearms ownership to stem the diversion of firearms from different means, including from a deceased licence holder.**

**We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments change administrative tracking to prevent the unlawful transfer of firearms from the States and track firearms belonging to expired licences.**

**We ask the Commission to recommend that all provincial and territorial governments impose a duty to report on health care professionals where individuals are assessed as a risk to themselves and others and may have access to firearms.**

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<sup>151</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), Recommendation 17L, pp 85-86.

<sup>152</sup> [Transcript, September 22, 2022](#), (submissions of Joanna Birenbaum for Canadian Coalition for Gun Control). We have not repeated their justifications for these recommendations.

**We ask the Commission to recommend that all federal, provincial, territorial and municipal police agencies, as well as the Canadian Border Services Agency, be required to submit all confiscated firearms for tracing.**

**We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal government work to confirm a bilateral agreement with the United States designed to prevent smuggling and trafficking of firearms.**

**We ask the Commission to call for a review and revision of the types of data required to be collected by the Chief Firearms Officer to strengthen accountability and transparency in the administration of the law.**

Another core concern that came to light during the Commission’s hearings was the policing responses to the perpetrator over many years. As detailed above, we ask you to find that there were several missed opportunities on the part of police to investigate the perpetrator in relation to reports of violence – and access to firearms. When Cst. Wiley testified before the Commission, his evidence underscored the fact that the perpetrator was able to fly below the police radar in part because of *who* he was – a white, university-educated, wealthy professional. He owned multiple properties and lots of fancy vehicles that seemed to impress. He lived not with intersecting oppressions, but intersecting privileges that helped insulate him from police scrutiny.

This is true in part because of policing culture in Nova Scotia – and particularly the RCMP culture. As Justice Bastarache found following his assessment of the effects of sexual harassment on women in the RCMP, “the culture of the RCMP is toxic and tolerates misogynistic and homophobic attitudes among its leaders and members.” While he found this had led to “incalculable damage to female members of the RCMP” noting that “[w]hat the women told the Assessors shocked them to their core”,<sup>153</sup> that damage extends beyond the confines of the RCMP to those communities that it polices. The recommendations that Justice Bastarache issued in that report to respond to the ongoing toxic RCMP culture are ones that warrant implementation in response to the concerns seen in this inquiry, as well.

**We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of the recommendations in the Bastarache Report, particularly as they concern recruitment, training at Depot, human resources and staffing, grievances and discipline, and mental health.**<sup>154</sup>

### **(E) Improved social infrastructure**

Systemic barriers can make it impossible for survivors of IPV/GBV to deal with the impacts of that violence and/or to leave violent homes. Women who have no income of their own, have no

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<sup>153</sup> The Honourable Michel Bastarache, [Broken Dreams, Broken Lives: Final Report on the Implementation of the Merlo Davidson Settlement Agreement](#) (2020), p I-II [Exhibit P-003648; hereinafter Bastarache Report].

<sup>154</sup> [Bastarache Report](#), pp 65; 69; 75; 86.

assets, cannot access affordable housing, have been financially abused, and/or cannot pay for public transportation face remarkably constrained choices in the face of IPV. Many women worry that their children will be taken away from them if they leave their relationship and are concerned about pets or livestock they may need to leave behind. Survivors of IPV require improved economic security – and access to social infrastructure to deal with the impacts of GBV and leave violent homes. **We ask the Commission to call on all levels of government to eliminate systemic barriers to gender equality and economic justice, including those that hinder access to and the use of social protection and public services by GBV survivors, centering the needs of the most marginalized while ensuring access for all.**

As explained in the Roadmap to the NAP’s rationale for recommendations relating to enabling environment and social infrastructure:

We believe that universal basic services are at the heart of social infrastructure and preferable to programs that provide cash alone. The value of social infrastructure is infinitely higher to low-income households than the cash equivalent. Vouchers or cash transfers do not address supply-side deficits, nor do they guarantee quality. The realities and practicalities of Canadian federalism pose considerable barriers to the objective of the NAP to ensure consistency in access to any social infrastructure across the country. Efforts to ensure a Canada-wide approach to many systems must take into account jurisdiction, as well as the specific place of Quebec in the federation, and relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples and the need for Indigenous-led solutions. While these dynamics are complicated, we do not believe they should be a barrier to progress, particularly if the federal government shows leadership within its own jurisdiction, and provides the incentive of long-term, sufficient funding to provinces and territories. Privatization of infrastructure and public services means higher costs from higher long-term financing costs for building infrastructure, more risk, the need for admin and legal oversight, and less transparency and accountability. Privatization creates increased user fees and tolls, shifting control of public facilities to unaccountable, private, for-profit corporations. It also diverts public funds from core services, needed by people, to corporate profits. Keeping infrastructure and services public is a wise investment of public funds and provides greater local control, flexibility and efficiency in operations, lower costs, accessibility, and quality services for members of the public.<sup>155</sup>

**We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of all 20 recommendations concerning the enabling environment and social infrastructure in the Roadmap to the NAP.**<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> [Roadmap to NAP](#), Table 1: Enabling Environment and Social Infrastructure Rationale, p 19.

<sup>156</sup> [Roadmap to the NAP](#), pp 19-33.

We thank the Commission for the opportunity to participate in this inquiry, and to provide these final submissions and recommendations.

All of which is respectfully submitted on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2022.



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Megan Stephens  
Counsel for WSC

Shawna Paris-Hoyte, QC  
Counsel for BTPI

Jamie Goodwin  
Counsel for THANS

**Appendix A –  
Recommendations of Women’s Shelters Canada, Transition House Association of Nova Scotia,  
and Be the Peace Institute**

<b>General Recommendations</b>	
1	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government work to better understand, prevent, and respond to gender-based violence as a means to better understand, prevent, and protect our communities from mass casualty attacks.
2	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government in Canada declare gender-based and intimate partner violence as an epidemic that warrants a more meaningful response.
3	We ask the Commission to recommend that all of the recommendations set out in the 2021 Roadmap to the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence (NAP) be implemented by federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments.
4	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government commit to providing sustained and escalating operational funding that prioritizes women’s and children’s lives by supporting the VAW/GBV sector, including programming for perpetrators.
5	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government commit to adopting an intersectional and trauma-informed response to addressing GBV that recognizes the systemic and structural differences in how women and non-binary people with different identities experience GBV.
6	We ask the Commission to recommend that addressing the epidemic of GBV include developing infrastructure for ongoing collaboration, collective learning, and active application of new knowledge and research to policy, practice, and legislation. This would require meaningful coordination between all levels of government, within government (i.e. between different departments or agencies within the same level of government), community-based service providers, academia, and those with lived expertise who are routinely omitted from planning and decision-making tables.
7	We ask that the Commission recommend that all levels of government work to incorporate accountability and oversight into the implementation of the NAP as well as the recommendations of the Mass Casualty Commission. This would include an implementation plan, time frames, milestones, and accountabilities.

**Recommendations Targeting Prevention**

8	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government prioritize the need for GBV prevention so that GBV will be actively and effectively negatively sanctioned at the personal, interpersonal, community, and societal levels.
9	We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of the 20 prevention-specific recommendations in the Roadmap to the NAP.
10	We ask the Commission to call on provincial governments to require elementary and senior school curricula to include learning about GBV/IPV, family violence, violence prevention, and toxic masculinity, at every grade level in sequential and developmentally appropriate ways. We strongly suggest that all school regions be mandated to create stand-alone policies, guidelines, protocols and accountabilities for reports of sexualized violence and harassment. Further, curricula for teachers should include mandatory courses in engaging youth in discussing these materials, so that all teachers are prepared to address these sensitive issues in their classrooms, including any disclosures from students or colleagues.
11	We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal government develop and fund a public education campaign like Neighbours, Friends, and Families, that would inform the general public about warning signs and risks for IPV and GBV, how to intervene safely, and whom to turn to for support.
12	We ask the Commission to call on all levels of government to support the development and implementation of bystander intervention training for children and youth in schools, and for adults in all applicable settings including universities, workplaces, health care settings, and throughout the justice and corrections system.
13	We ask the Commission to recommend that provincial governments invest in trauma-specialized mental health supports for children and youth who have been the victims of violence, whether directly at the hands of an abusive perpetrator or indirectly through exposure to or witnessing of family violence.

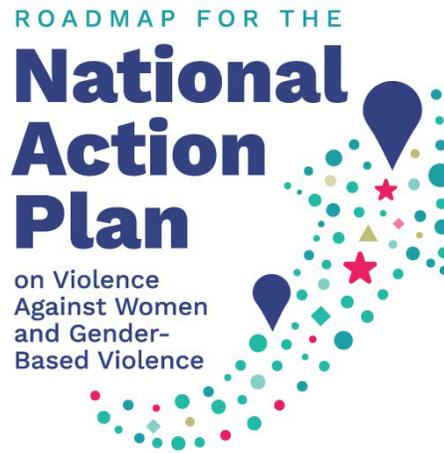
**Recommendations targeting community-based services, supports, and advocacy for survivors/perpetrators of IPV and their families**

14	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government strengthen the support system for survivors of GBV that allows for reliable, timely, trauma-informed, and culturally adept support and services that are delivered in a manner that honours their
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	lived experiences and realities. This must include programs for shelters and outreach services, as well as programs that support the safety of survivors who stay in their homes.
15	We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of the 20 support for survivors and their families-specific recommendations in the Roadmap to the NAP.
16	We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments fund programs, like PEACE, that help support children and youth who have been exposed to/experienced GBV or IPV.
17	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government strengthen the coordination and integration of services and programs for perpetrators of GBV.
18	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government contribute to sustainable funding for advocacy efforts in the GBV sector to shift the social narrative and systemic forces around GBV and amplify the voices and needs of women and children that have gone ignored for too long.
19	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government run public awareness campaigns on the services available for those perpetrating and experiencing GBV/IPV and how to access them. These public awareness campaigns should also help educate the public about GBV/IPV, in all its forms (including coercive control), and signs of GBV/IPV to help push back on persistent myths about this violence.
<b>Recommendations targeting responsive justice/legal systems</b>	
20	We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments take steps to transform the justice system to ensure that those facing GBV can access justice that is equitable, consistent, and takes into account their lived realities while providing protection from further harm.
21	We ask the Commission to recommend that federal, provincial, and territorial governments establish and resource specialized, community-based, and properly trained GBV navigators. GBV navigators would accompany and assist survivors by liaising with legal system’s actors and explaining requirements throughout criminal, family and civil proceedings, to ensure that survivors fully understand their rights and options, and to inform and support them in making the best decisions for themselves and their families.
22	We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments ensure that adequate funding is provided for programs offered by women’s shelters for accused persons, as currently many shelters accept referrals even when they do not have the budget to deliver them.

23	We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of all 20 recommendations concerning the promotion of responsive legal and justice systems in the Roadmap to the NAP.
24	We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal, provincial, and territorial governments strike an expert advisory group, drawing on community experts, frontline service providers, and survivors, to examine how criminal law could better address the context of persistent patterns of controlling behaviour at the core of GBV/IPV. The group should examine the possible benefits – and potential unintended negative consequences – of creating a new <i>Criminal Code</i> offence of coercive control, as well as review how existing offences (such as criminal harassment, uttering threats, or the non-consensual distribution of intimate images) could be better used to address the types of controlling behaviours experienced in intimate or domestic relationships.
25	We ask the Commission to call on all levels of government to recognize the proliferation of firearms and the injuries and deaths related to firearms as an urgent public health concern that requires a public health approach.
26	We ask the Commission to call on the federal government to establish a national firearms hotline to allow individuals to report concerns about firearms directly to staff accountable to the Commissioner of the RCMP.
27	We ask the Commission to call on the federal government to ban all military-style assault weapons and to amend the <i>Criminal Code</i> to define “military-style assault weapons” precisely.
28	We ask the Commission to recommend that provincial and federal governments issue clear directives explaining that the imposition of a prohibition order imposes a duty on the Chief Firearms Officer to suspend or revoke a licence.
29	We ask the Commission to recommend that all levels of government implement a system to track sales and trace firearms ownership to stem the diversion of firearms from different means, including from a deceased licence holder.
30	We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal and provincial governments change administrative tracking to prevent the unlawful transfer of firearms from the States and track firearms belonging to expired licences.
31	We ask the Commission to recommend that all provincial and territorial governments impose a duty to report on health care professionals where individuals are assessed as a risk to themselves and others and may have access to firearms.

32	We ask the Commission to recommend that all federal, provincial, territorial and municipal police agencies, as well as the CBSA, be required to submit all confiscated firearms for tracing.
33	We ask the Commission to recommend that the federal government work to confirm a bilateral agreement with the US designed to prevent smuggling and trafficking of firearms.
34	We ask the Commission to call for a review and revision of the types of data required to be collected by the Chief Firearms Officer to strengthen accountability and transparency in the administration of the law.
35	We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of the recommendations in the Bastarache Report, particularly as they concern recruitment, training at Depot, human resources and staffing, grievances and discipline, and mental health.
<b>Recommendations targeting improved social infrastructure</b>	
36	We ask the Commission to call on all levels of government to eliminate systemic barriers to gender equality and economic justice, including those that hinder access to and the use of social protection and public services by GBV survivors, centring the needs of the most marginalized while ensuring access for all.
37	We ask the Commission to call for the implementation of all 20 recommendations concerning the enabling environment and social infrastructure in the Roadmap to the NAP.



## **A Report to Guide the Implementation of a National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence**

### **Excerpt: Recommendations**

**April 30, 2021**

#### **Authors:**

Amanda Dale, PhD, with

Krys Maki, PhD, and

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[Full Report available here](#)

Women's Shelters Canada (WSC) is based in Ottawa, Ontario. Bringing together 14 provincial and territorial shelter organizations, we represent a strong, unified voice on the issue of violence against women on the national stage. Through collaboration, knowledge exchange, and adoption of innovative practices, we advance the coordination and implementation of high-quality services for women and children accessing VAW shelters and transition houses.

Women's Shelters Canada acknowledges that the location of our office and the work that we do in Ottawa is on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people.



**WOMEN'S  
SHELTERS  
CANADA** | **HÉBERGEMENT  
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The members of the **Blueprint Group** who developed *A Blueprint for Canada's National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Girls* (2015).

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## Table Key/Codes

<p><b>Timeframe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Immediate, 6 months (I)</li><li>- Short-term, 1-2 years (S)</li><li>- Medium-term, 3-5 years (M)</li><li>- Long-term, 5-10 years (L)</li></ul> <p><b>Stakeholder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Federal (F)</li><li>- Provincial/Territorial (P/T)</li><li>- Municipal (M)</li></ul>
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***Vision:*** Canada fulfils its state obligation to ensure that all individuals within its borders are free from VAW/GBV and from threats of such violence. Canada is a place where everyone is safe to pursue their human rights and fundamental freedoms irrespective of their citizenship or geography.

***Ultimate Outcome:*** Elimination of VAW/GBV and threats of such violence for all, regardless of where they live.

Table 1: Enabling Environment and Social Infrastructure Rationale

We believe that universal basic services are at the heart of social infrastructure and preferable to programs that provide cash alone. The value of social infrastructure is infinitely higher to low-income households than the cash equivalent. Vouchers or cash transfers do not address supply-side deficits, nor do they guarantee quality. The realities and practicalities of Canadian federalism pose considerable barriers to the objective of the NAP to ensure consistency in access to any social infrastructure across the country. Efforts to ensure a Canada-wide approach to many systems must take into account jurisdiction, as well as the specific place of Quebec in the federation, and relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples and the need for Indigenous-led solutions. While these dynamics are complicated, we do not believe they should be a barrier to progress, particularly if the federal government shows leadership within its own jurisdiction, and provides the incentive of long-term, sufficient funding to provinces and territories. Privatization of infrastructure and public services means higher costs from higher long-term financing costs for building infrastructure, more risk, the need for admin and legal oversight, and less transparency and accountability. Privatization creates increased user fees and tolls, shifting control of public facilities to unaccountable, private, for-profit corporations. It also diverts public funds from core services, needed by people, to corporate profits. Keeping infrastructure and services public is a wise investment of public funds and provides greater local control, flexibility and efficiency in operations, lower costs, accessibility, and quality services for members of the public.

**GOAL:** *Elimination of systemic barriers to gender equality and economic justice, including those that hinder access to and use of social protection and public services by VAW/GBV survivors, putting the needs of the most marginalized at the centre while ensuring access for everyone.*

**OVERALL OUTCOME:** Improved enabling environment for economic security and equitable access to the public services and social infrastructure necessary to deal with the impacts of VAW/GBV, leave violent situations, and promote health, well-being, and resilience.

#	Recommendation, Rationale, and Action	Timeframe	Stakeholder	Considerations for outcome measurements
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**Theme 1: Income Security**

**PROPOSED OUTCOME:** Improved income security and social protection for women and gender-diverse individuals in crisis, especially the most marginalized and those experiencing elevated rates of poverty.

1E	<p><b>Extend financial support to low-income CERB recipients most impacted by COVID-19 employment losses, and now facing heightened financial insecurity related to large tax bills and/or the requirement to pay back benefits.</b></p>	I	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Analysis on income security must take into consideration poverty, and, particularly, how poverty increases marginalization for those who are already marginalized because of SOGIE, race, Indigeneity, immigration and migrant status, disability, or homelessness.</li> </ul>
2E	<p><b>Improve income security supports and social protection for women in crisis by strengthening provincial/territorial social assistance systems and federal income support to lift individuals and families out of poverty and provide a minimum income guarantee for (working-age) people experiencing violence. Actions must specifically prioritize groups experiencing elevated rates of poverty and/or the deepest rates of poverty, advancing reforms to enhance benefit take-up and impact. Actions shall include:</b></p> <p><b>a) Federal / Provincial / Territorial</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Remove immigration status eligibility criteria for all income support benefits for people facing VAW/GBV at all levels of government to support people with no/precarious immigration status with options to enhance safety (e.g. ability to leave a situation of violence).</li> <li>● Ensure reforms respond to the unique needs of women at high risk of poverty, including those trying to re-establish their lives after experiencing violence. Indigenous women living off-reserve, immigrant and refugee women, women with disabilities, and street-involved young women all face specific barriers that need to be centred in reform efforts.</li> </ul> <p><b>b) Federal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase funding to the Canada Social Transfer (CST) by \$4 billion, and provide sufficient, stable, and predictable funding that recognizes regional economic variations. As part of this initiative, establish minimum standards for income benefits and social services funded through the CST in collaboration with provincial/territorial governments.</li> <li>● Strengthen existing income support programs including the Canada Child Benefit, Canada Workers Benefit, Employment Insurance, and Canada’s patchwork of disability programs to reduce Canada’s rate of</li> </ul>	S/M/L	F/P/T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Perspective of VAW/GBV survivors, especially Indigenous women, immigrant and refugee women, Black and racialized women, women with disabilities, street-involved young women, individuals with other SOGIE and other intersecting identities on the impacts of income security (or lack thereof) in their ability to leave a violent situation.</li> </ul>

<p>poverty by 50% by 2025. Actions must specifically prioritize groups experiencing elevated rates of poverty and/or the deepest rates of poverty, advancing reforms to enhance benefit take-up and impact.</p> <p><b>To this end:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take action to lower barriers to income support programs for women fleeing violence, (e.g., facilitate access to needed documentation, such as birth certificates, expand the circle of people able to attest to residency, etc.) as well as offer alternative delivery systems to the tax system.</li> <li>• Take immediate action as emergency benefits are wound down to reform Employment Insurance (EI) to facilitate expanded access for premium payers currently excluded, extended access to new enrollees, a permanent reduction of qualifying hours, and an increase to the benefit rate.</li> <li>• Create a Canada Disability Benefit—in collaboration with the disability community and provincial/territorial governments—that ensures that people with disabilities can live with dignity and fully participate in community life.</li> </ul> <p><b>c) Provincial:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a lump-sum payment (e.g., 3-4 months of social assistance benefits) for people fleeing violence to help them get established (e.g., Alberta’s Escaping Abuse benefit). This program would be offered outside of the social assistance system and be subject to an appropriate income test.</li> <li>• Establish dedicated caseworkers to liaise with shelters and other services to provide wrap-around supports (e.g., transportation, emergency housing, childcare, health services, related community supports).</li> <li>• Provide help to apply for social assistance, if needed, and other available income and service supports (e.g., social housing, housing benefits, drug benefits, childcare subsidies).</li> </ul>			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate the asset eligibility threshold for women fleeing violence to ensure women’s financial and social security are not jeopardized in the aftermath of violence.</li> <li>• Replace the “shortest route to work” principle with an emphasis on upgrading skills and finding decent and sustainable work, removing barriers to all FTP education and training programs for victims of VAW/GBV seeking supports.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Theme 2: Decent Work</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved employment standards and government accountability mechanisms to prevent, address, and respond to violence and harassment at work for all workers across the formal or informal economy and in all jurisdictions</b></p>				
<p><b>3E</b></p>	<p><b>Improve employment standards and occupational health and safety protections for workers in all jurisdictions. Actions shall include:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the federal minimum wage immediately to \$15.00 per hour and working with provinces/territories to raise the minimum wage across Canada and index it to inflation. Legislate increases to the minimum wage on an annual basis, based on existing data on the increases to cost of living. Strongly encourage all provinces/territories to also increase provincial/territorial minimum wage.</li> <li>Ensuring that employment standards and occupational health and safety legislation apply equally to workers in non-standard employment (e.g. gig economy) and migrant workers.</li> <li>Immediately ratifying and implementing ILO Convention 190. Initiate a tripartite process with employers and trade unions to review all FTP employment legislation to ensure consistency with measures outlined in the convention. Legislation on violence and harassment should meet the comprehensive definition of employee in the Convention and apply to all situations arising in the course of, linked with, or arising out of work, including when home is a place of work.</li> <li>Recognizing domestic violence as a workplace safety hazard, expand access to domestic violence leave to a minimum of 10 paid days and 10</li> </ol>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statistics on VAW/GBV and harassment at work and remedy/action taken. In particular, data collection on incidents should not be limited to official filing of complaints. Safe and anonymous data collection portals or other mechanisms should be established for individuals who do not wish to proceed with formal complaints procedures. Any data collected through these anonymous systems should be cumulated towards</li> </ul>

	<p>unpaid days across the country. Require employers to develop workplace policies and to provide supports, including risk assessments and safety planning. The federal government should provide leadership by negotiating these provisions or better into its collective agreements.</p> <p>e) Ensuring access to paid sick days and other forms of leave to support reconciliation of work and family responsibilities for all workers.</p>			<p>national statistics on prevalence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Perspective of survivors on the quality of support provided.</li> <li>○ Perspective of workplace leadership on their role in promoting a safe and respectful workplace.</li> <li>○ Audit of workplaces with highest incidence of workplace violence and harassment reported.</li> <li>○ Creating low-barrier reporting mechanisms for those involved in the informal economy to report on abuse and harassment without being further victimized and further marginalized.</li> <li>○ Enforcing and tracking mandatory workplace risk assessment as set out in C-190.</li> <li>○ Tracking government reforms around employment legislation, including health and safety; applies to all workers in the world of work, including part-time, temporary and contract</li> </ul>
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				<p>workers, migrant workers, and others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessing government legislations across all jurisdictions to monitor if legislations have been reformed to include the right to equality and non-discrimination in employment and occupation for all, including women, migrants, people with disabilities and multiple and intersecting identities—whether race, ethnicity, Indigenous status, sexual orientation, and gender identity</li> <li>○ Tracking employers to ensure their workplace policies meet legislative requirements, especially around DV.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme 3: Making Work Better and Safer</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved opportunities for women and gender-diverse people to access work that is inclusive, provides fair income and safe working conditions, and promotes equality</b></p>				
4E	<p><b>Enhance pathways for access to decent work for women and gender-diverse people. Actions shall include:</b></p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statistics on employment and work to measure progress in achieving the</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Introducing a designated training fund for women and others with barriers to employment who need to re-train due to post-pandemic industry restructuring and new workforce demands, such as digital literacy.</li> <li>b) Adopting a range of training-to-employment initiatives within federal programs and shared jurisdictions to improve gender equality outcomes, supports for VAW/GBV survivors, and help reduce the gender wage gap.</li> <li>c) Addressing discriminatory Skills Accreditation processes that increase vulnerabilities among immigrant women.</li> <li>d) Developing and implementing a national plan for a federally-managed but regionally-defined strategy that requires women's training and employment in all new social and physical infrastructure projects funded by the federal government. Regionally-defined community-based agreements must include training/employment opportunities with wrap-around holistic supports for women and require reporting on progress.</li> <li>e) Launching a federal task force on care work and care jobs in Canada that is tasked with examining paid and unpaid care work; develop a federal strategy to meet the increasing demands for care and create a labour market strategy for care jobs.</li> <li>f) Expanding access to high quality, publicly funded education and training by restoring, to 1996 levels (accounting for enrolment growth and inflation), federal transfers to the provinces/territories for post-secondary education, and establishing national standards for post-secondary education, upholding the principles of universality, accessibility, comprehensiveness, public administration, and freedom of expression.</li> </ul>			<p>ILO's decent work framework and its indicators while applying an intersection, anti-oppressive/anti-racist lens in data collection and analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review of the Skills Accreditation process especially for immigrant women.</li> <li>○ Using feminist women empowerment indices (such as IFPRI's women empowerment in agriculture index (WEAI), OXFAM's 'How To' guide on measuring women empowerment, compendium on measuring women's economic empowerment by CGD and Data2X), and other models to assess how supported women and gender-diverse individuals, especially the most marginalized and survivors of VAW/GBV, feel about access to decent work</li> <li>○ Systematic post-training assessment on the perspectives of duty</li> </ul>
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				bearers and employers' knowledge, attitudes on decent work and their capacity to enforce decent work standards
<b>Theme 4: Housing</b>				
<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved, consistent, responsive, and inclusive access to permanent, affordable, and supportive housing—including emergency and transitional housing for women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals</b>				
<b>5E</b>	<p><b>Immediately implement the right to housing for all women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals taking into consideration the needs of different groups (e.g. people living in rural and remote communities, newcomers, seniors, youth, Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, people with precarious immigration status, LGBTQI2S+ people, victims of human trafficking, persons with disabilities). Actions shall include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Immediately appointing the Federal Housing Advocate. Fully budget staff, and resource the Office of the National Housing Advocate without further delay.</li> <li>b) Developing an accountability mechanism that measures the impact of Canada's National Housing Strategy (NHS) on people facing VAW/GBV.</li> <li>c) Redefining homelessness and collect better and disaggregated data to understand how women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals across all social identities experience homelessness.</li> <li>d) Allowing women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals to apply for subsidized housing options while they are still living in violence.</li> <li>e) Auditing existing spending under the NHS to confirm whether it aligns with the 25% commitment made, develop an action plan to meet the 25% requirement if it is not met, and set a new target % for funding in NHS based on needs of women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals, with particular consideration of those experiencing VAW/GBV.</li> </ul>	I/S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ F/P/T /M</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Formation of an independent oversight body that tracks and evaluates the implementation of Canada's National Housing Strategy (NHS) on people facing VAW/GBV.</li> <li>○ Robust intersectional data collection on homelessness, including participatory qualitative data collection to better track the impact of homelessness amongst women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals in regard to VAW/GBV.</li> <li>○ Perspectives of VAW/GBV survivors on right to housing in relation to their ability to leave violent situations, including the</li> </ul>

6E	<p><b>Increase funding for the expansion of, and reduction of barriers in access to emergency shelters, second stage (transitional) housing, and accompanying wrap-around services to meet the unmet needs of people facing VAW/GBV, with attention to the needs of different groups (e.g. people living in rural and remote communities, newcomers, seniors, youth, Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, people with precarious immigration status, LGBTQ2S+ people, victims of human trafficking, sex workers, and persons with disabilities). Actions shall include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Formal Services—Emergency shelters/safe spaces for those seeking immediate safety from violence, with particular emphasis on under-resourced communities (e.g. the North) to i) Ensure that every community has 24/7 access to a safe place to shelter from violence, addition of strategies to support safe access to services for these communities/ individuals e.g., mobile programs, local dispatch, access to services in local languages; and ii) Ensure transportation to safe shelters as required.</li> <li>b) Second stage housing—increasing capacity of second stage housing as well as core (ongoing operating) funding.</li> <li>c) Target funds in an expanded Rapid Housing Initiative—allocating \$7 billion to significantly expand the Rapid Housing Initiative by no less than 24,000 units over the next 2-3 years) for the most marginalized, including those fleeing violence.</li> <li>d) Remove time limits on stays in shelters and transitional housing—recognizing that shelters and transitional housing spaces will require enhanced funding and resources to support longer short-term stays for people facing complex VAW/GBV and working towards long-term housing options.</li> <li>e) Removing barriers for eligibility for housing services (e.g. immigration status).</li> </ul>	S/M	F/P/T/M	<p>elimination of barriers to housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Data collection—both quantitative and qualitative—from survivors of VAW/GBV on their experiences in accessing (or inability to access) emergency shelters, and second stage housing.</li> <li>○ Perspectives of survivors of VAW/GBV on the access, availability, and quality of wrap-around support and services.</li> </ul>
7E	<p><b>Permanent, affordable, and supportive housing units are necessary to address Canada's housing and homelessness crisis for women, girls, and gender-diverse people facing VAW/GBV. Increase public and low-cost private housing options for people facing VAW/GBV. Actions shall include:</b></p>	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	<p>a) Significant investment in public housing options to significantly increase the number of public housing units, including dedicated units for Indigenous housing and supportive housing options.</p> <p>b) Enhancing portable housing benefits (e.g., Canada Housing Benefit) and ensuring availability across jurisdictions.</p> <p>c) Removing barriers for eligibility for housing services (e.g. immigration status requirements).</p> <p>d) Setting a target for an increase in affordable housing (e.g. 25%), and establish a tool to measure effectiveness.</p> <p>e) Develop concrete pathways to home ownership for people facing VAW/GBV.</p>			
8E	<b>Immediately begin development of an Urban Indigenous Housing and Homelessness Strategy—developed by and for Indigenous people—that meets the unique needs of urban Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people.</b>	I	F	
9E	<b>As we expand the Canada Housing Benefit, also implement immediately a Residential Tenant Support Benefit that preserves tenancies during COVID-19, and for a reasonable time thereafter, seeking to ensure no one loses their housing because of lost income due to the pandemic.</b>	I	F	
<b>Theme 5: Childcare</b>  <b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Increased availability and access to affordable early learning and childcare services, including recognizing that early learning and childcare are critical social infrastructures</b>				
10E	<b>Immediate recommendation—\$2 billion in immediate one-time COVID-19 relief spending to support the safe and full recovery of regulated early learning and childcare, and to respond to the immediate care needs of school-age children through the pandemic.</b>	I	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Perspectives of women and gender-diverse people, especially survivors of VAW/GBV on the impacts of availability of affordable early-learning and childcare and their ability to access</li> </ul>
11E	<b>Accelerate and institutionalize the Multilateral Framework Agreement, by boosting on-going early learning and childcare spending by \$2 billion annually, to speed up national progress. These new federal funds should be used by the federal government to move Canada towards a fully publicly funded and publicly managed system, in partnership with the</b>	S	F	

	provinces/territories and Indigenous governments. The MFA should be made a permanent (not time-limited) program, with long-term and committed funding. The MFA should be managed by the Early Learning and Childcare Secretariat to oversee funding and policy, research, and evaluation.			<p>support to address abuse, violence or workplace harassment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tracking unmet needs of early-learning and childcare services nationwide especially amongst racialized, Black, and Indigenous communities and parents of children with disabilities.</li> </ul>
12E	Support Indigenous communities with dedicated funding. A full 20% of all new and existing funding should be earmarked to support the Indigenous Early Learning and Childcare Framework, with a long-term and stable commitment. The distribution and use of funds for Indigenous Early Learning and Childcare should be decided by the Indigenous peoples responding to the distinct needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nations.	S	F/P/T	
13E	The federal government should require the provinces /territories to use federal investment to fund the supply of not-for-profit and public licensed early learning and childcare services. Each province/ territory should be required to develop a plan, in full consultation with the sector and other stakeholders, to improve simultaneously the availability, affordability and quality of the supply of licensed early learning and childcare programs, and to ensure that programs are inclusive, flexible, and responsive. All expansion of childcare services should be limited to the not-for-profit and public early learning and childcare sectors.	S/M	F	
14E	Develop an early learning and childcare workforce strategy that includes raising the wages and improving employee benefits of early childhood educators, leaders, and others in the sector. The workforce strategy must also include measures to raise the formal qualifications of early childhood educators and provide for on-going professional development.	S/M	F/P	
<b>Theme 6: Healthcare</b>  <b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Strengthened healthcare system that is able to provide timely, trauma- and violence-informed, inclusive, and equitable service for survivors of VAW/GBV regardless of their geography, immigration status, Indigeneity, SOGIE, disability, or other grounds</b>				
15E	Increase access to primary care, recognizing the public health crisis of VAW/GBV and the devastating impact of traumatic brain injury (TBI), particularly for those facing the largest health disparities (e.g. people living in rural and remote communities, northern communities, newcomers, Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, incarcerated women, people with	I/L	F/P/T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence gathering on nine key areas championed by SRHR advocates: contraception,</li> </ul>

	<b>precarious immigration status, LGBTQ2S+ people, persons with disabilities), and work with the provinces/territories to ensure uniform coverage across Canada for gender-affirming surgeries and other medical care for trans people</b>			<p>sexual and reproductive health service availability, knowledge about SRHR, adolescent fertility, quality of care (including respect for rights), prevention of STIs, abortion, comprehensive sexuality education and gender equality in SRHR. Further co-relational analysis should be done to see how these are related to SDG goals on Education, Health and Gender Equality especially around Canada's commitment to these SDGs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Systematic post-training assessment on the perspectives of healthcare workers' capacity/expertise for when they are handling cases of VAW/GBV, especially for cases of sexual assault and rape, and assessment of their sensitivity to the challenges faced by survivors of VAW/GBV</li> <li>○ Formation of independent task force of civilians and</li> </ul>
<b>16E</b>	<b>Allocate \$3.5 billion to initiate the implementation of universal single-payer Pharmacare immediately (or \$15.3 billion for full universal single-payer Pharmacare). Ensure that any national formulary includes all prescription medications that relate to sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-affirming care, and other issues of critical concern.</b>	I	F	
<b>17E</b>	<b>Improve mental health services and access to comprehensive, gender-responsive addictions supports in all areas of Canada, targeting resources for those in greatest need and with a particular focus on trauma- and violence-informed care.</b>	S/L	F/P/T	
<b>18E</b>	<p><b>Ensure access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Enforcing the Canada Health Act by withholding funding transfers from provinces/territories failing to ensure the availability and accessibility of abortion services, and work to narrow access gaps for abortion services in rural and remote regions.</li> <li>b) Holding consultations with intersex people and stakeholders on subsection 268(3) of the Criminal Code, which allows for surgeries on intersex people. Consider the postponement of genital normalizing surgeries on children until the child can meaningfully participate in the decision, except where there is immediate risk to the child's health and medical treatment cannot be delayed.</li> <li>c) Thoroughly investigating all allegations of forced or coerced sterilizations of Indigenous women in Canada. Establish policies and accountability mechanisms across Canada that provide clear guidance on how to ensure sterilizations are only performed with free, full, and informed consent. Provide access to justice for survivors and their families.</li> </ul>	I/S/M/L	F/P/T	
<b>19E</b>	<b>On-going and in-depth training on VAW/GBV for all healthcare professionals, including workers in long-term care, home care, and workers providing care services for people with disabilities. Training must integrate a consideration</b>	S/M	F/P/T	

	of the factors impacting the experiences of VAW/GBV, the experiences of those suffering from TBI, barriers to support for people with multiple and intersecting identities, and support for trauma-informed responses.			sector experts on the violence perpetrated by systems intended to support—especially towards Indigenous women allegations of forced or coerced sterilization.
<b>Theme 7: Transportation and Public Transit</b>				
<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Increased safety, affordability, and accessibility of public transportation systems across Canada, especially in northern and remote regions</b>				
<b>20E</b>	<p><b>Build a pan-Canadian safe, accessible, and affordable transportation system. Actions shall include:</b></p> <p>a) Establishing a federal task force to tackle VAW/GBV in transportation and transit to provide direction for building a pan-Canadian transportation system that prevents and mitigates VAW/GBV.</p> <p>The task force will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridge the gap between the understanding of women’s needs and the implementation of policies that address these needs, by incorporating the diversity of women’s lived experience into the planning process.</li> <li>• Identify the greatest needs related to domestic and VAW/GBV in urban, rural, and northern locations, and develop action plans to address them.</li> <li>• Research and conduct cross-jurisdictional scans of each province/territory transportation infrastructure, including description of municipal bylaws, provincial/territorial legislation related to transportation, map of funding/budgets currently allocated to</li> </ul>	I/S/M/L	F/P/T/M	<p>Considerations for outcome measurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using participatory and inclusive approaches, assess the effectiveness of measures/mechanisms taken/established to reduce VAW/GBV in transportation.</li> <li>○ Using time and cost as key variables in assessing effectiveness of transportation as key factor for VAW/GBV victims to access the support they need.</li> <li>○ Measuring rates of VAW/GBV occurring</li> </ul>

	<p>transportation, and identification of areas and domains related to transportation that are implicated in VAW/GBV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a GBA+ lens and advice from the task force to direct spending on transit to prevent and reduce VAW/GBV by improving access to safe, affordable, accessible public systems of transportation, and by improving design and taking other measures to reduce VAW/GBV in transit. Reducing VAW/GBV should be a condition for receiving federal funds for transit.</li> <li>• Improve data collection on VAW/GBV in transportation to measure effectiveness of reduction measures.</li> <li>• Provide funding for research projects for women’s groups to identify, advocate for and work with governments to eradicate VAW/GBV related to local, provincial, inter-provincial, and national transportation.</li> <li>• Attach meaningful conditions to social transfer to provinces/territories for transit and transportation that are consistent with building a pan-Canadian transportation system that prevents and mitigates VAW/GBV.</li> </ul>			<p>during the use of transportation systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Monitoring actions taken in response to VAW/GBV incidences during the use of transportation.</li> <li>○ Mapping of unmet need for safe, affordable, and reliable transportation, and tracking actions taken by different levels of government across all jurisdictions to reduce gaps in access.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Recommendations</b></p> <p><b>Theme 8: Digital Infrastructure</b></p>				
21E	<p><b>As supports, services, and the justice system move online, access to information and services via ICT are critical to support people facing VAW/GBV. Implement universal access ICT, including infrastructure (e.g. high-speed internet and cellular service), services (e.g. cell phone and data plans), and hardware (e.g. cell phones, computers, laptops, tablets, and other devices).</b></p>	I/S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	<p><b>Actions shall include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Completing of a cross-jurisdictional scan and needs assessment of the current gaps in Canada's ICT infrastructure and ICT device access (e.g. people in the North face some of the highest rates of VAW/GBV and have some of the lowest availability to much-needed ICT supports).</li> <li>b) Amending legislation (e.g. <i>Telecommunications Act</i>) to move away from the provision of ICT via the private sector to a publicly funded and accessible system for people facing VAW/GBV.</li> <li>c) Enabling affordable access to services and hardware in the identified under-resourced areas (e.g. rural and remote areas).</li> <li>d) Creating a system to provide access to ICT services to low-income and vulnerable populations, including people facing VAW/GBV.</li> <li>e) Immediately providing a monetary benefit for people facing VAW/GBV as a means to access current private ICTs options while working towards a public system.</li> <li>f) Work toward creating universal free access to internet services across all jurisdictions (e.g. noting examples such as universal access for all school-aged children in Uruguay).</li> </ul>	<p>S</p> <p>M</p> <p>M</p> <p>M</p> <p>I</p> <p>L</p>		
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Table 2: Prevention Rationale

Within Canada, there are important specific prevention needs related to different communities and geographies. In rural and northern areas, transportation and cell phone service are factors for prevention. Where these are not available, women are in more danger. Many safety concerns are exacerbated in the context of the pandemic. Canada’s rising housing prices and crisis of availability are factors everywhere, manifesting differently in the North, where overcrowding and expense lead to intergenerational family violence, vs urban centres, where women often have to choose between housing or safety. To make an impact in the prevention of VAW/GBV, people of all genders need to be involved. Men and boys have a significant role and meaningful opportunity to affect change, both on the individual level and as a group that has been afforded structural and institutional power. Any successful efforts towards reducing VAW/GBV must include a plan to address harmful norms around masculinities. Punitive action and carceral responses have been the standard answer, but in order to change existing power dynamics, new approaches are needed. Exactly how they can be applied without causing further harm must be considered, so that the needs of those harmed are centred. Although existing prevention has a considerable focus on youth work, either in schools or at the community level, the context demands transformation of all ongoing work in the community and beyond—in terms of language, power dynamics, punitive approaches, ableist systems, trauma-informed care etc. There are important educational needs that are age-appropriate and fit into most provincial education plans. There is also a need to ensure that VAW/GBV knowledge is included in training for state and institutional actors (police, health, education, armed forces, etc.) for both prevention and the purpose of overhauling institutions. Prevention, data, and legislation have not kept pace with increased and now habitual use of social media for personal interactions. It has been well-documented that online and offline behaviour are indistinguishable, but that women are subject to particular kinds of harms online. All these must be met, avoiding the one-size-fits-all measures that have not worked in the past.

**GOAL:** *VAW/GBV is actively and effectively negatively sanctioned at the personal, interpersonal, community, and societal levels*

**OVERALL OUTCOME:** Transformed cultural, social, and institutional norms and narratives that underpin VAW/GBV across the lifespan of women and gender-diverse people

#	Recommendation, Rationale, and Action	Timeframe	Stakeholder	Consideration for outcome measurement
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1P	<p><b>Provide safe drinking water to everyone living in Canada.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to safe water is an alarming problem facing many people in Canada, particularly in First Nations communities.</li> <li>• Having access to clean drinking water will keep people safe because they do not need to put themselves in precarious situations to access water (e.g., going on long trips to potentially dangerous locations to access water). Additionally, water is essential for sanitation, so having access to clean water will be essential for basic health needs. Such needs can be exacerbated by violence and then lead to a cycle of additional violence (e.g., an abusive partner may cause a wound that then becomes infected because it can't be properly treated, preventing someone from performing household duties, thus inducing more violence from the partner).</li> </ul>	S/M	F	<p><b><i>Proposed outcome: Improved government resourcing and accountability on community-based VAW/GBV prevention and early response mechanisms, such as feminist organizations, youth-run safe houses, national hotlines, and access to clean drinking water nationwide.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improved knowledge, attitudes, and practices amongst trained duty bearers, community leaders, and anti-VAW/GBV advocates on gender transformative approaches to policy making, advocacy, campaigning, and programming.</li> <li>○ Ensuring data collection for GBA+ analysis focuses on participatory data collection approaches and includes sector and community experts, front-line service providers, and survivors, with a focus on gender transformation.</li> <li>○ An indicator for the outcome should focus on the number of annual effectiveness studies</li> </ul>
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				<p>conducted by federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal government departments on their meaningful implementation of GBA+.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mapping of underserved communities'/geographies' access to clean, safe, and sustainable sources of drinking water.</li> <li>○ Tracking of the percentage of the population having access to and using improved drinking water sources.</li> <li>○ Indicators of access to safe drinking water require greater refinement to reflect the large, continuing gaps in access to safe drinking water among Canada's poorest populations, and measure progress towards attainment of the universal right to water.</li> <li>○ Monitoring access to adequate climate-resilient water and sanitation systems is particularly critical in light of the increasing impacts of temperature change and</li> </ul>
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				<p>extreme weather on water sources, sanitation systems, and human health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Greater inclusion of public health agencies in Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) will accelerate the broader application of IWRM, which provides a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach for the identification and management of water-related health risks, such as VAW/GBV.</li><li>○ Using anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and intersectional lens in holding government to account on their approach to address anti-Black and anti-racist policy and legislations, service provision, and campaigning.</li><li>○ Holding the government accountable, especially for violence perpetrated within government support systems, such as the police.</li></ul>
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				<p><b>Proposed outcome:</b> Improved availability, access, and use of data on VAW/GBV across all levels of government and communities for evidence-based policy making and programming.</p> <p>Considerations for outcome measurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tracking of sustained government investment towards data and evidence gathering.</li> <li>○ Tracking timely and free access to data by community-based organizations, educational organizations, and the public.</li> </ul> <p><b>Proposed outcome:</b> Increased and sustained core funding for community-based organizations to implement programs best suited for their local contexts.</p> <p>Considerations for outcome measurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improved tracking of investments towards education, income security, employment opportunities, access to</li> </ul>
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				<p>health care (including mental health care), and in all of the fundamental social services in marginalized and underserved communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tracking education sector curriculum reforms (including assessing educators' capacity and expertise) on the inclusion of content geared towards education, including supporting educators in taking action on racism, systemic oppression, transphobia, homophobia, Islamophobia, LGBTQI2S+ rights, rights of Indigenous community, and unequal gender and power relations.</li> <li>○ Nationwide tracking of government investment in youth-led programming and programming for youth focused on safety, healing, and justice in the aftermath of violence.</li> <li>○ Indicators to track sustained funding and improved resourcing of VAW/GBV prevention hotlines.</li> </ul>
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				<p><b>Proposed outcome: Improved investments by government in youth-led action and prevention strategies in order to strengthen the ability of youth to recognize and take responsibility for and be protected from violence.</b></p> <p>Considerations for outcome measurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessing the expertise/capacity of educators to educate on issues related to VAW/GBV, gender and power relations, comprehensive sexuality education, addressing disclosures, educating on identifying risk, de-escalation strategies, and bystander intervention.</li> </ul> <p><b>Proposed outcome: Increased promotion of positive masculinities among men and boys.</b></p> <p>Considerations for outcome measurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adapting the International Men and Gender Inequality (ICRW/Promundo) survey</li> </ul>
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				<p>to measure and monitor behaviours and attitudes regarding gender equality and VAW/GBV in the Canadian context applying a feminist intersectional lens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using lessons learned from international best practices in engaging men and boys (Promundo, UNFPA, WHO, MenEngage Alliance) to develop performance indicators for assessing government strategies to address toxic masculinities and on positive norm modelling.</li> <li>○ Using innovative and inclusive, participatory, and community based social engagement strategies for narrative- and storytelling-based analysis on the perspectives of youth (especially youth living in precarious situations, LGBTQ2S+ youth, Black youth, racialized youth, youth with disabilities, immigrant, and non-status youth) and educators on healthy relationships,</li> </ul>
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				VAW/GBV, gender and power inequalities, and aspects of comprehensive sexuality education. In particular, space should be created to allow Indigenous storytelling as evidence.
2P	<p><b>We call upon the FPT governments to sustain funding commitments—with a focus on core funding rather than project-based funding—to local, regional, and national Canadian feminist and women’s organizations; marginalized feminist and women’s organizations and programs (e.g., racialized, refugee, other migrant status and non-status, Black African, 2SLGBTQQA+, Deaf and dis/ability, youth, elders); and Indigenous feminist and women’s communities, organizations and programs. We also call upon the FPT governments to ensure all funding programs and relevant research are accessible in terms of literacy levels, class and education biases, multilingual and ASL/LSQ; available in accessible formats and online technologies for diverse experiences of dis/ability; are reaching the most marginalized populations of women; and recognize and support capacity issues for applying for funding.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presently, many funds given to community organizations are minimal and limited to single projects. This is rarely helpful for long-term impacts and empowering organizations to implement multiple strategies to help their communities in a variety of ways. Violence prevention cannot be one-size-fits-all, and so community organizations need many strategies that enable them to effectively provide support. Additionally, Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized feminist organizations rarely receive the funding they need, so they must be prioritized, because these communities are most at risk for</li> </ul>	M	F/P/T	

	<p>experiencing violence. Further, providing accessible resources for those with disabilities also requires additional support, so this needs to be accounted for in fund distribution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing community organizations with stable funding will enable them to implement programs that are long-lasting and therefore more likely to be useful and effective. This will also enable these organizations to effectively evaluate and improve upon these programs, further establishing their efficacy. Additionally, as many funds will be earmarked for marginalized and Indigenous organizations, we can be sure that these funds will be distributed to the communities which need it most, while allowing these groups to implement the programs that they feel they most need (as opposed to what governments might think they need)</li> </ul>			
3P	<p><b>Develop youth workshops on accountability, including workshops that strengthen ability of youth to recognize, end and take responsibility for violence. This includes: learning how to stop harmful behaviour; learning how to listen to the people impacted by the harm and acknowledging the impacts of the harm to the individual and community; apologizing for the harm and making reparations to individuals and the community; being open to receive requests for accountability; and healing and addressing the root causes of violence.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding how to respond to and prevent violence is complex and challenging. Similarly, knowing how to apologize for the harm one has caused, to listen, to make reparations, and to contribute to healing is far from easy. However, these skills are essential for the healing process and future violence prevention. Using restorative and transformational justice approaches will better help heal individuals and communities than the punitive and carceral structures currently used when harm occurs. Teaching youth early on how to prevent and address violence will increase safety in communities and promote healing when violence does occur.</li> </ul>	I/S	P/T/M	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These workshops will develop youth (and adults) who know how to stop harmful behaviour when they see it, appropriately listen to those who have been impacted by harm, and to apologize for harm that they may cause. These skills will help strengthen and heal both individuals and communities. Accountability is essential for making reparations and rebuilding after individual and structural harms have been committed. This will be beneficial for many individuals who have experienced violence and are seeking healing reparations, as well as for individuals who have caused violence in the past, as they will learn strategies that will prevent them from being violent again.</li> </ul>			
4P	<p><b>Invest in accessible and safe housing for youth (especially 2SLGBTQQIA+ youth) involved in the sex trade. Invest in healthcare and mental health care services for youth. Create and fund open, youth-run safe houses in every neighbourhood, where youth can congregate, sleep, eat, bathe, and get assistance with community resources. These harm reduction services must be deemed safe by youth, and not engage in carceral and punitive practices, such as calling the police or requiring youth to register as social, legal, or psychological “cases.” Many youth involved in the sex trade do not seek health or social services because they are afraid of the system. Many times, they visit pop-up clinics in community centres that are safe for 2SLGBTQQIA+ young people who are homeless and involved in the sex trade. We need to fund and create more of these resources.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presently, youth involved in the sex trade face a great deal of social stigma and punitive responses from carceral systems. Social supports for these individuals are highly limited, and when they do exist, they can deny youth their agency and often refer them to carceral systems. To ensure that youth involved in the sex trade are supported, these individuals need to guide the creation of the systems that will aid them. Otherwise, they will fear accessing systems that they cannot trust, which will lead to them experiencing further harm and alienation.</li> <li>• Investing in key social supports, such as housing and health care for youth involved in the sex trade, will ensure that youth have a safe place</li> </ul>	M/L	P/T/M	

	<p>to live (and, if desired, work) and to access medical support when needed. Involving youth in the creation of these resources will also help ensure that they are used, as present supports are often avoided by youth involved in the sex trade because they fear a punitive response. Having access to these resources will also provide youth with more agency, which will enable them to determine for themselves whether they want to continue working in the sex trade or transition to a different type of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe houses will ensure that youth (especially those involved in the sex trade) have a safe place to go where they can access resources and connect with other youth. A non-punitive location to rest and heal will help keep these individuals away from law enforcement and other people or structures that may pose a threat to them. Safe houses will also enable youth to connect with each other, to share resources and information, and to help keep them safe when they are outside of the safe house.</li> </ul>			
5P	<p><b>Engage with boys, young men, and men from a feminist lens to promote critical thinking about gender socialization (empower them to choose what kind of man they wish to be), acknowledge and prevent violence (including normalized forms of violence and microaggressions, sexual harassment, use of humour): to promote positive and healthy masculinities—including skill for de-escalation of male/male verbal and physical violence, empathy training and creating enough safety for boys to be open and vulnerable with each other and foster connection in order to counter profound feelings of isolation, and encourage broader and more inclusive gender expressions; to deconstruct and challenge gender norms; binary, socialization, and entitlement; to understand (from personal and legal perspectives), value, and practice consent; to manage emotions of fear, anger, and rejection; bystander skills to intervene within their peer groups in instances of oppression, to recognize and act against misogyny, transphobia, homophobia and other oppressions. Recognize that empowerment work with women and girls is still critical; however, working with boys and men is key to ending VAW/GBV. Also recognize that working towards gender transformation involves non-binary approaches, practices, and sharing. Challenge boys and young men around</b></p>	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	<p><b>entitlement issues and the upsurge of INCELS. Education on and deconstruction of “misandry” movement.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patriarchy and toxic forms of masculinity are key contributors to violence, but many men and boys do not believe that violence prevention is relevant to them, or they feel excluded from prevention efforts. Helping men and boys understand gender socialization, empathy expression, and oppression recognition will enable them to identify and address potential violent tendencies in themselves and to prevent violent acts in others. Further, current societal norms around masculinity are profoundly isolating and harmful, so showing men and boys that there are other ways to express masculinity which can involve empathy, compassion, and connection will be essential in helping men lead happier and healthier lives, which is also relevant for violence prevention.</li> <li>• Educating men and boys will enable them to understand and address many of the complex privileges they possess, which uphold patriarchal elements of our society. Showing men and boys how to perform masculinity in a way that is not harmful will simultaneously strengthen their identities and keep others safe. Teaching men and boys how to de-escalate violence will also keep people safe, as men and boys are often involved in violent situations, so knowing how to prevent violence in the moment is essential to harm reduction and prevention. This combination of practical skills and personal understandings will further the development of a society in which gender is no longer a contributing factor to violence.</li> </ul>			
6P	<p><b>We call upon the federal government to build a national data collection framework on VAW/GBV in Canada. This includes data collection on all manifestations of VAW/GBV, including (but not limited to): family violence, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, adolescent dating violence, femicide, hate crimes, elder abuse, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, child abuse, harassment, stalking, technology-facilitated violence, workplace violence, and police violence. Data collection and analysis are critical to</b></p>	S/M	F	

	<p><b>understanding and ending VAW/GBV in Canada. To this end, these types of data should also be publicly accessible so that they can be used by local communities. Finally, we call for oversampling in all national survey data collection for socio-demographic categories, including but not limited to: Indigenous women, girls and non-binary individuals; visible minority women, girls and non-binary individuals; women, girls and non-binary individuals experiencing dis/abilities; youth with dis/abilities; women, girls and non-binary individuals experiencing homelessness; women, girls and non-binary individuals living in rural/remote locations; and 2SLGBTQIA+ populations, in order to allow sufficient sample size for intersectional analysis.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being able to easily access data is essential for violence prevention work, especially at the community level. Currently, community organizations often struggle to access national data or acquire their own local data. Additionally, the data that do exist are rarely disaggregated, which means that learning how to help marginalized individuals who are most in need is further complicated. Oversampling these populations and disaggregating their data will help us better understand their needs and keep them safe.</li> <li>• This framework will ensure that everyone at all levels of government and within communities has easy access to knowledge about violence which they can then use in whatever way is most useful for them. For example, governments may use this data to determine how to best allocate resources, while communities may use the data as part of the development of a violence prevention program. As data will be disaggregated with underrepresented populations over-sampled, we will be able to better help those who have previously been neglected in research (e.g., we may learn more about health and wellness needs of trans individuals).</li> </ul>			
7P	<p><b>Engage with school systems from pre-primary to post-secondary (as well as teachers' colleges) to teach or enable the teaching of (and improving school policies around): healthy relationships; consent and coercion; accountability; gender equality and equity; body and bodily autonomy and power;</b></p>	M/L	F/P/T/M	

<p><b>boundaries (own and others); sexual harassment and sexual assault; gender norms, binary, socialization, and entitlement (gender transformative); emotions of fear, anger, and rejection; domestic violence; sexual assault; child sexual violence and abuse; identify and report abuse, grooming, and exploitation; bystander intervention; recognizing and acting against misogyny, transphobia, and homophobia and other oppressions; normalized forms of violence and microaggressions; sex ed (update curricula and capacity in line with the 2019 Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health Education); pornography; media and digital literacy (on-line bullying, sexual harassment, coercion); pleasure—with leadership from community-based, anti-violence feminists. Community-based, anti-violence feminists sitting at department of education tables with regard to curriculum development and outcomes, and at policy and practice tables with post-secondary institutions.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools and other educational systems (e.g., community-based youth workshops) are crucial for informing youth of topics that will influence them throughout their lives. Present education systems are severely lacking in their ability to teach youth about subjects that will enable them to lead safe and healthy lives, and to also recognize and prevent violence. A lack of understanding of subjects such as gender, sexuality, entitlement, emotions, and oppression can hinder youth in their ability to understand themselves, others, and experiences of violence. Additionally, schools can be used to teach practical skills such as bystander interventions, responding to disclosures of abuse, identifying and reporting abuse, and other methods of responding to acts of violence. Finally, schools are inherently rooted within communities, so communities must be involved in the development of such curricula, to ensure that the needs of the community as a whole are being addressed, as youth are, and will continue to be, key community members.</li> <li>• Teaching these programs will lead to youth, and eventually adults, having a solid understanding of sex, sexuality, gender, social roles, and strategies to identify and prevent violence. This education will allow</li> </ul>			
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	<p>people to better understand themselves and others, enabling happier and healthier lives. Practical skills taught via curricula such as bystander intervention programs will help prevent violence in the moment, and broader recognitions of systemic issues like toxic gender roles will help address root causes of violence, which is another essential form of prevention. The community involvement element of this recommendation will ensure that all these programs are tailored and therefore applicable to those involved, rather than standardized to the point that they are not relevant (e.g., for marginalized populations).</p>			
8P	<p><b>Fund a network of community-based, anti-violence feminists (and core/organizational funding for their organizations) across Canada to lead and create standards and adaptations to support the sharing of knowledge and resources and “making even” prevention education efforts across jurisdictions via a 10-year project. All work should be accountable to community-based, anti-violence feminists and their specialized expertise and work on these issues over decades and currently (shown via leadership, funding, and references to, etc.). All work is feminist, critical, intersectional, and human-rights based. Community-based includes but is not limited to independent organizations not directed (financially or administratively) by large institutions and governments, at arms length from funders support, and ultimately responsible to local grassroots movements and community members at large. Funding for schools K-12 for implementing programs.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-violence feminists live throughout Canada and have countless ideas to address and prevent violence. However, these individuals do not have equal access to funding and resources, which can limit their ability to enact their ideas. Additionally, they are not always connected to each other, which hinders their ability to share and build upon ideas that could prevent violence. We therefore need a system that will build connections between individuals and organizations seeking to prevent violence (especially educational systems), and to ensure that resources are equally distributed (with a particular focus on people and groups from marginalized backgrounds, who are especially underfunded).</li> </ul>	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An easily accessible network will allow individuals from many backgrounds to connect and share knowledge and resources, which will further prevention education in many different ways. For example, perhaps a group of individuals in a school in Alberta develops an educational program about healthy sexuality that was helpful for their students. They could then share this program via this network, enabling schools in other provinces/territories to implement the program and make adjustments as needed for their populations. The diversity within the network would also help ensure that the resources being shared are useful and effective for people (esp. youth) from all backgrounds, not just those with specific identities.</li> </ul>			
9P	<p><b>Prevention must take a gender-transformative approach. The aim of this approach is to transform the prevailing social systems and structures that produce and maintain gender inequality and drive gender-based violence. In order to be gender transformative, prevention work must actively challenge and change (rather than inadvertently reinforce or perpetuate) those harmful gendered social norms, structures, and practices. Gender transformative prevention work therefore deliberately questions and challenges rigid and hierarchical gender roles, stereotypical constructions of masculinity and femininity, and promotes alternative norms, structures, and practices that are based on gender equality and respect.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenging structures (e.g. patriarchy, colonialism) that cause harm is essential for violence prevention. A gender-transformative approach will ensure that we are not only addressing violence at the individual level but also at systemic levels. Violence prevention necessitates transforming social norms, structures, and practices, which is why we believe this recommendation should be accounted for when implementing all recommendations.</li> </ul>	M/L	F/P/T/M	
10P	<p><b>That specific work is done in the context of anti-Black racism and the intersections of VAW/GBV, including but not limited to public awareness campaigns, sustainable funding to Black community-based organizations, and equity for Black-owned businesses.</b></p>	M	F/P/T/M	

	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Black racism is a root cause of VAW/GBV in Canada. All recommendations must be implemented with this in mind.</li> <li>• In particular, public awareness campaigns will ensure that the public is informed about origins of anti-Black racism, its relation to VAW/GBV, and how to address both these issues.</li> <li>• Providing funding to Black community-based organizations and business will ensure equity for Black people in Canada. Economic precarity, lack of access to resources, and routine structural violence (e.g. police violence, racism) are factors that further contribute to VAW/GBV. Resourcing and supporting Black communities will help prevent future harms.</li> </ul>			
11P	<p><b>Reallocate a portion of the police funding budget in all provinces to distribute to public housing, education, and community centres.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We write this recommendation amidst an urgent, growing conversation about police violence in Canada and globally. In many circumstances, police do not adequately respond to violent situations, and they often escalate or even cause harm. Even when not responding to violence, police regularly respond in harmful ways (e.g. when interacting with disabled people). Historical and modern traumas have created a valid fear of the police, particularly in Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities. Further, police responses are almost always reactive (i.e. after violence has already occurred). Instead of funding institutions that respond to harm, we must fund organizations that will prevent harm from occurring, thus eliminating the need for a response in the first place. We recognize that systems must still be in place to respond to violence, but our other recommendations prioritize a transformative and restorative justice approach, rather than one that is carceral and punitive. Because we seek to transform the way we approach both violence and violence prevention, we recommend that</li> </ul>	S/M	P	

	<p>money be redirected from the police that respond to violence, to organizations that will prevent violence from occurring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in public housing, education, and community centres will help prevent violence because these will enable people to live in safer environments, learn about systems that perpetuate violence so that they can be addressed (e.g., developing healthy gender roles, sexualities, and relationships), and access resources that will ensure not only basic health and safety, but also the ability to thrive within supportive and connected spaces.</li> </ul>			
12P	<p><b>That the government of Canada works towards data collection, public education campaigns, and increased VAW/GBV sector funding in connection with VAW/GBV and the COVID-19 pandemic for the purpose of sharing information with the public (public awareness campaigns, data for gender-based violence sector, and resources for prevention around violence including social and mental effects of COVID-19) that educates on the shadow pandemic of VAW/GBV and its interrelatedness.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are already well aware that VAW/GBV has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this needs to be addressed swiftly and strategically.</li> <li>Data will help us learn more about the relationship between COVID-19 and VAW/GBV. Understanding these dynamics via data collection will enable us to help people who are at increased risk for violence by better understanding the origins of violence, as well as the needs of those who are being harmed by it. Having a deeper understanding of violence is key to preventing it.</li> <li>Public awareness campaigns will ensure that all members of the public are knowledgeable about the increased risk for violence associated with COVID-19, which could help them protect themselves and their loved ones. For example, a campaign could be developed that offers people strategies on how to check in on their loved ones, and to provide them with resources to share if they believe someone is in danger. Having more people aware of violence and its warning signs</li> </ul>	I/S	P	

	can help decrease the risk of violence and provide support more rapidly to those who have been harmed.			
13P	<p><b>Using a GBA+ lens, we call upon the federal government to coordinate the implementation of population-specific Acts.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a GBA+ lens is essential to collecting data, monitoring and evaluating initiatives, administering funds, and implementing policies. The GBA framework will enable us to assess how research, programs, and policies might affect relevant individuals (especially those who are marginalized) with the goal of reducing and preventing harm.</li> <li>The consideration of intersecting identities (e.g. gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, age, and disability) during development will ensure that programs and policies are not harmful. For example, someone seeking to collect qualitative data on rural Indigenous individuals could use a GBA+ lens to ensure that their method of collecting and using the data is not harmful (e.g. by determining whether the interview is accessible to people with all abilities, considering whether it accounts for colonial trauma, empowering the community to guide the research).</li> <li>Using tools such as the gender equality intersectional analysis toolkit from CRIAW.<sup>24</sup></li> </ul>	M/L	F	
14P	<p><b>Establish/develop transformational youth action prevention strategies that address the disinvestment in marginalized urban and rural neighbourhoods—specifically, the compounding factors associated with poverty, under-resourced schools, and high levels of all types of violence. Racial inequities that exist in areas such as schooling, income, access to health care and mental health care, and in all of the fundamental social services that will make or break the wellbeing of a community.</b></p>	S/M/L	P/T/M	

	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historically and presently, marginalized communities, both urban and rural, receive little attention and resources, and these problems are exacerbated by racial inequities present in key structures such as schools and health care. To prevent violence currently perpetuated by these systems, we must transform them and ensure that these marginalized communities are given the support that they need. We must particularly invest in youth, as violence experienced early on and harmful lessons about social norms (e.g. toxic gender roles) will profoundly affect them throughout their lives and ripple over generations.</li> <li>Investing in marginalized communities—particularly in key structures like schools, health care, and other social services—will lead to better educated and healthier communities that are less likely to experience violence. Present lack of supports lead to stress, tension, and unhealthy norms; eliminating these and empowering marginalized folks will allow these groups to thrive.</li> </ul>			
15P	<p><b>Establish/ develop transformational youth action prevention strategies that engage youth in critical analysis of socio-historical antecedents, power analysis and examination of policies, laws, organizations, and cultural practices that affect their lives and perpetuate VAW/GBV. Develop anti-oppression workshops that engage students and facilitators in critical analysis of power, dominance, and oppression.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many factors contribute to violence, including existing systems with social-historical contexts that disadvantage certain groups. Teaching youth to recognize and understand the policies, laws, and practices that impact themselves and their communities will help them to understand the root causes of violence, which is a key step in violence prevention.</li> <li>Workshops that teach youth and adults to identify and critically analyze systemic sources of power, dominance, and oppression will empower these individuals to not only understand these root causes of violence, but also develop methods of addressing violence. Different</li> </ul>	S/M/L	P/T/M	

	<p>communities and individuals with different intersecting identities are impacted by these power structures in different ways. Learning about them will enable people to then develop means of addressing them in ways that are most beneficial to their own unique circumstances. For example, if trans youth were to learn about how and why trans issues are often neglected in sex education classes, this may help them to see how they can transform school systems to include trans issues in classes in the future.</p>			
16P	<p><b>Promotion of positive individual and group development of youth by enhancing resiliency and agency to ensure that youth have the autonomy, capacity, and skills to manage their decisions and negotiate environments that ignore or devalue their race, socioeconomic background, or culture. This can be done through the arts, by engaging youth on these issues through music, writing, engagement with land and nature, etc. Implement strategies that create and cultivate the very things we know help to prevent violence, such as resilience, safety, healing, connection.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although we are striving for a world free of violence, we acknowledge that the road ahead is long and far from easy. Given this, we must empower youth to navigate the many environments they will encounter which will not be welcoming to them. We must also allow youth to engage in activities that bring them joy (e.g. art, nature), as this is an important goal in and of itself, but also one that further promotes resiliency and healing during hardship.</li> <li>• Fostering agency and resiliency will give youth and adults strength when they encounter challenging situations and will also help them, and their communities heal when violence occurs. Investing in activities that bring fulfillment and connection will strengthen communities, thus empowering them to endure the hardships they will face from the systems we seek to address in other recommendations.</li> </ul>	S/M/L	P/T/M	
17P	<p><b>Conduct research to facilitate the eventual establishment of a fully accessible, national, text/call-in hotline for people who want to take pro-active measures to prevent harm they want to cause. Individuals will be directed to immediate</b></p>	L	F	

	<p><b>and community-based prevention and intervention tools/options, referrals, and/or resources (e.g. community safe hubs). Responses will be non-punitive and separate from law enforcement, and they will enable individuals to develop knowledge and skills to build healthy relationships. Research must be conducted to determine how to use a restorative approach in a one-on-one context. Additionally, the best way to handle duty-to-report obligations must be addressed.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who are aware that they want to cause harm, know that they should not, but are not sure how to address these feelings, have limited (if any) options. Without access to resources and alternative outlets for feelings such as fear, anger, sadness, isolation, disempowerment, and loss of control, people may act violently, causing harm to others and themselves. Developing a national hotline that people can text, or call would help them feel less isolated and help them cope with their emotions in a healthy and non-violent way. Not only would this help prevent violence, but it would also reduce the need for responses to violence. Additionally, being provided with someone to speak to and strategies for coping with violent feelings would enable people wanting to cause harm to eventually become happier and healthier individuals, thus further reducing the chances of them wanting to be violent. However, given how something like this has never been developed before (to our knowledge), we would want to ensure its safety and effectiveness via thorough research prior to implementation.</li> <li>• Although this hotline will need to be well researched before it is developed, it will eventually directly stop perpetration by providing resources to those who are considering causing harm. For example, someone thinking of hurting their girlfriend could call the hotline and be directed to a community safe hub where they could stay the night and access resources to help them better understand why they want to cause harm and learn non-violent alternative responses. This would not only keep their girlfriend safe in the moment, but it would help the</li> </ul>			
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	person wanting to cause harm build relational skills that would protect her and others in the future.			
18P	<p><b>Engage with and fund Indigenous peoples to develop and deliver community-oriented and culturally based action based in Indigenous knowledge, ways of and approaches of knowing and learning, connected to understanding consent pre-colonization, treaties, the Indian Act, Residential Schools, Sixties Scoop, Millennial Scoop, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and other histories and present forms of colonialism, resistance, and resilience. Creating and maintaining reciprocal channels for Indigenous and non-Indigenous sharing towards reconciliation work is necessary to decolonizing our conceptions around and about VAW/GBV. This work will inform other prevention education work.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous peoples have experienced countless historical traumas and remain extremely under-resourced and at risk for violence. Many attempts to support Indigenous individuals come from outside their communities, and, while they may be well-intentioned, are not always what they need. Indigenous communities know what they need, and their own methods for educating themselves and sharing knowledge should be supported. Historical colonial trauma is closely tied to VAW/GBV; helping both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people better understand this root cause of violence will further our ability to prevent it in all communities in Canada.</li> <li>Empowering Indigenous communities to educate themselves using their own means of knowledge sharing will help combat the oppressive colonial systems that continue to perpetuate violence. Promoting sharing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities will help resource these under-supported communities (without imposing anything unwanted on them), while simultaneously helping non-Indigenous people to decolonize their own ways of thinking about topics related to VAW/GBV (e.g. settler gender roles). These deeper understandings of the root causes of violence, particularly in a colonial</li> </ul>	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	context, will aid in the development of violence prevention programming.			
19P	<p><b>Invest in initiatives that provide job training, life skills development, leadership guidance, and critical education about social injustice for youth (especially those involved in the sex trade). Initiatives should provide youth the opportunity to lead and take part in task forces, research units, boards, and decision-making tables.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth (especially those involved in the sex trade) need to have access to job and general life skills in order to survive and thrive in society. Youth are often denied agency, but we need to shift society's understanding of how youth are viewed in order to better support them and help them develop into adults. Denying youth skills that will enable them to advance in society prevents them from using their agency and from accessing opportunities that could help them leave violent circumstances.</li> <li>Teaching youth skills to help them enter the workforce while also trusting and empowering them to be members of their community by letting them participate in decision-making processes will reduce their economic and social precarity, which are related to violence. Increasing employment and community involvement are effective means of violence prevention.</li> </ul>	M/L	P/T/M	
20P	<p><b>Invest in intervention and training to increase knowledge of adults across the board, but especially in key caring economy roles (health, education, early learning, community organizations, frontline workers etc.), on VAW/GBV. The purposes of interventions and training are to change social norms and behaviours that underpin VAW/GBV and to identify and support individuals, families, communities etc. when VAW/GBV is identified.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention must be life-long and include explicit means by which to change norms, addressing areas where this is most needed. Most prevention focuses on youth and there is a need to include this as part</li> </ul>	S/M/L	P/T/M	

	<p>of professional training, ongoing training, and workplace training so that knowledge on VAW/GBV becomes normalized. Everyone should know what to do if they see VAW/GBV.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults shape and role model gender norms in our society. They also have significant control over decision and policy making. In order to shift norms, attitudes, and behaviour significantly, adults need to be engaged.</li> </ul>			
<b>Additional Recommendations</b>				
<b>21P</b>	<b>We call upon the FPT and municipal governments to ensure that the policy development process for VAW/GBV ensures an increase in participation and support for the leadership of marginalized women and gender non-binary peoples (e.g. women and gender non-binary peoples with dis/abilities, Indigenous, racialized, low-income, rural, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, refugees, Blacks/Africans, youth) in all stages of policy making, as well as prioritizing policy issues that are important to those groups.</b>	M/L	F/P/T/M	
<b>22P</b>	<b>In regard to evaluation and monitoring of prevention initiatives, we call upon the FPT governments to instruct their departments and agencies to conduct evidence-based evaluations to ensure that funding programs are working to identify and meaningfully serve the needs of persons experiencing VAW/GBV, frontline services, community organizations, and their employees in order to address VAW/GBV. There also need to be clear targets and measurable outcomes for the NAP that ensure that relevant measurement and evaluation is meaningful to those groups it is measuring, and allows for understanding of what works, for whom, and in what contexts. Finally, it is important that evaluation is holistic in terms of outcomes and methods, and emphasizes depth over breadth, to ensure that strategies are meaningfully meeting the needs of target communities.</b>	M	F/P/T	
<b>23P</b>	<b>Create and fund open youth-led programs and projects that are culturally competent, gender specific, and trauma-informed. Appoint youth to boards, task forces, and research units—anywhere that decisions are made about this topic.</b>			
<b>24P</b>	<b>Engage with and fund diverse and marginalized groups of youth to address the intersectional nature of VAW/GBV among other forms of violence (and oppressions) and of identities experiencing violence, including, but not limited</b>			

	to people living with disabilities, Deaf people, newcomers, and migrants (immigrants and refugees), and 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities. This work will inform other prevention education work, see #1.			
25P	We call upon the FPT and municipal governments to conduct historical and political contextual analyses of all data (including evaluation and monitoring data) in relation to Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples, Black/African peoples, racialized peoples, migrant peoples, older adults, people with dis/abilities and 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities.	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	
26P	The Government of Canada needs to grant the right to stay in Canada to individuals who have precarious citizenship or are stateless, including all children and individuals currently and thereafter in immigration detention centres.	I/S	F	
27P	Create local and provincial campaigns around childhood sexual violence among BIPOC girl and boys, children who identify as 2SLGBTQQIA+, and girls and boys with disabilities.	S/M	P/M	
28P	Canada to develop a public awareness campaign to educate the violent harm of sexualized racism, hyper-sexualization, and invisibling of BIPOC women, girls, and trans, non-binary individuals.	M	F/P	
29P	Repeal sex work-specific criminal laws as a first step to address the state repression that increases sex workers' vulnerability to violence. Decriminalize sex work across Canada, in each province, and in consultation with sex working peoples, to allow them agency to exercise their rights about how they work; create safety and minimize harm using their own strategies (as opposed to criminalizing their safety strategies) from a perspective of decriminalization of poverty. Support community-based efforts of sex workers' rights campaigns and advocacy for decriminalization of sex work as a necessary step to protecting the health, safety, and human rights of sex workers.	M/L	M/P	
30P	Increase funding supports and promote the mobilization of prevention efforts in university and college setting including Sexual Violence and Education Centres and support student-led directives on campus, including funding the creation of anti-sexual assault policies in administration and student unions.		P/M	
31P	Prioritize that funding prevention programs tailor their content and approach to be universally accessible, culturally sensitive, and secure and relevant to	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	participants. This can only be effectively accomplished through the direct involvement of diverse community members/stakeholders in the planning of a program. Prioritize developing prevention programs that centre a disability justice framework.			
32P	Implement strategies that foster the development of community norms and supports that contribute to the ability of individuals who identify as 2SLGBTQI2S+ and their communities to thrive while addressing risks associated with hate crimes and violence originating outside their communities	S/M/L	M/P/T	
33P	Develop strategies that move non-protective bystanders towards taking protective actions to stop violence, to create a culture of accountability, and to engage in shifting power towards more equity.	M/L	P/T/M	
34P	Develop strategies that provide security through community accountability frameworks by strengthening social networks, and increasing community members' willingness to address VAW/GBV as a community issue.	M	M/P/T	
35P	Develop transformational youth action strategies to address the societal conditions that perpetuate VAW/GBV within a community.	M	M/P/T	
36P	Fund accessible and multiple options for services, supports, healing, and accountability in parallel to or complementary of prevention education efforts—e.g. disclosure and trauma training—with a focus on underserved areas and communities, rural and remote areas.			
37P	Acknowledge that youth exist within families and communities (their lives apart from school). Engage with the adults in the lives of youth (parents/guardians/caregivers, coaches, etc.) who need to be supported to amplify prevention education messages. Create parallel or complementary programming for the adults in the lives of youth.			
38P	Review and overhaul of youth apprehension systems and child protective services			
39P	Create a child sexual violence and abuse action plan			
40P	Create a childhood and youth poverty (multiple, accessible, and safe educational and employment opportunities) and housing plan			
41P	Centre strategies that support youth agency, their ability to identify options, to access material assistance and skills, and that support ongoing healing and	S/M/L	P/T/M	

	accountability. Implement strategies that centre the understandings of trauma and healing			
42P	Strategies and programming must be inclusive, and address the experiences of all genders.			
43P	Ensure all initiatives for youth are youth-positive—youth positive includes, but is not limited to: no criminalization of youth; no stigma or shaming of youth; meeting youth where they are (their range of experiences, questions, and concerns; and their strengths and resiliencies); small groups and skills (critical thinking and analysis about social justice/injustice, power, privilege, oppression, empowerment/ability/agency, decision-making); discussion and conversation; sex positive; body positive; gender inclusive content and delivery; peer-to-peer (facilitators are part/leaders of the in-group); arts/sports-based/nature-based programming; youth leadership; youth are at the tables that are about youth; all youth have multiple, accessible, and safe educational and employment opportunities			
44P	We need to reframe and differentiate the issue of youth in the sex trade. Increase public awareness on youth in the sex trade through the understanding that human trafficking and youth in the sex trade are not synonymous. The commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth who exchange sex for money or other survival needs are distinct. These distinctions must be addressed. Law enforcement, social service personnel or the youth themselves do not share definitions of each. There is great variation among the conditions of youth in the sex trade. Attempting a “one-size fits all” approach to determining the unique needs of myriad youth is failing.			
45P	<b>LANGUAGE:</b> When dealing with youth prevention strategies, avoid terms such as perpetrator, perps, abusers, offenders, rapists, and criminals. These terms assume that people who have committed harm will always carry that label. Include language and terminology to describe violence that is inclusive of 2SLGBTQQA+ people. For example, use of “gendered violence” or “domestic and sexual violence,” where “violence against women” is used. Prevention educators should be knowledgeable about, and comfortable with, discussing the complexities of sexuality and gender, including trans identities, and implications for violence prevention. Violence prevention programs incorporate examples of 2SLGBTQQA+ sexual violence in all exercises.	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

#	Recommendation, Rationale, and Action	Timeframe	Stakeholder	Considerations for outcome measurement:
<p><b>Table 3: Promotion of Responsive Legal and Justice Systems Rationale</b></p> <p>Legal and justice structures play an important role in setting precedents that have impacts across other systems—a contextual reality that influenced which recommendations to bring forward. These structures are also the mechanisms by which societal norms, state agendas, and rules are enforced. Survivors of VAW/GBV look to justice and legal systems from different perspectives. Often, those who are already the privileged turn to those systems, assuming they will provide justice. They are often disappointed. Those who have been marginalized often reject those systems, assuming they will cause further harm. Their fears are often proved correct. If legal and justice systems are to have meaning and be truly responsive, they must be developed through trauma-informed, strengths-based, and ground-up strategies in a way that reflects this. Our recommendations are intended to reflect the reality we see that survivors of VAW/GBV, whatever their privilege or lack thereof, are seldom served well by existing justice and legal systems, and that those with less privilege are often actively harmed by their interactions with those systems. We were informed by both international and domestic human rights frameworks, as they impact both migrant and non-migrant communities, understanding that without a strong human rights foundation, strategies to respond to and eliminate VAW/GBV across the spectrum of lived experiences of those affected by it would be incomplete, unsustainable, and fleeting. Building on this it was crucial that our recommendations reflect the notion that lifting those who are most vulnerable will lift us all.</p> <p><b>GOAL: <i>Ensure anyone facing VAW/GBV has access to justice that is equitable, consistent and takes into account their lived realities and provides protection from further harm</i></b></p> <p><b>OVERALL OUTCOME: A transformed justice system that is inclusive, responsive, and equitable for survivors of VAW/GBV</b></p>				
<p><b>Theme 1: Education</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved perspectives and outcomes for survivors of VAW/GBV who engage with legal and justice system</b></p>				
1L	<p><b>To ensure equitable access to justice for survivors of VAW/GBV, we recommend ongoing, mandatory education and training for all legal and justice actors who work or could work with VAW/GBV survivors in their respective roles. Education and training for all legal and justice actors is an important component of working towards equitable access to justice for survivors of VAW/GBV. However, education without accompanying anti-oppression work, positive and identifiable outcomes and a commitment to</b></p>	I/M/L	F/P/T/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Perspective of survivors on the responsiveness of the support received. With special considerations for anti-oppression and anti-racist work, positive and identifiable outcomes, and</li> </ul>

	<p><b>meaningful accountability is inherently limited and will have only limited success in achieving the desired goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Stable, sustainable, and adequate funding for such education and training shall be provided by FPT governments and, where appropriate, by professional governing bodies such as law societies.</li> <li>b) All such education shall be grounded in the intersectional experiences of bias and discrimination faced by people living in poverty, with mental health and/or substance use challenges, disabilities, Indigenous, Black, racialized, cis-women, gender non-conforming, trans, and migrant people (including those who are precariously employed or who have precarious immigration status or no status), those living in rural and remote communities, and others who have been historically excluded. There shall be emphasis on the experiences of marginalization and historical oppression of Indigenous peoples, including the impacts of colonialism, and the legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade that results in anti-Black racism and its continued adverse impact on Black people in the justice system.</li> <li>c) By way of example, the following is a non-exhaustive list of those who should be required to receive this education and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates seeking to be eligible for appointment as a judge in either criminal or family courts; Crown Attorneys; Defence lawyers; Family law lawyers; Refugee and Immigration lawyers; Lawyers employed by legal aid services; All law students (law schools); Staff Lawyers employed by clinics or not-for-profit organizations; Lawyers employed by all ministries in family law and justice programs; All law enforcement personnel to include police and Correctional Services of Canada employees, provincial correctional and any third parties hired to run detention or corrections facilities; Administrative Tribunal Adjudicators (pursuant to all income security, labour, human rights, employment standards, occupational health and safety, refugee and immigration legislation); All officers with adjudication and enforcement mandates pursuant to all income security, labour, human rights, employment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			<p>meaningful accountability. Specifically, data collection should enable honouring Black and Indigenous lived experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Measuring changes on knowledge, trauma- and violence-informed and supportive attitudes and practices amongst trained legal and justice actors.</li> <li>○ Systematic post-training assessment on the perspectives of police, court, and other legal and justice actors’ capacity/expertise for when they are handling cases of VAW/GBV, and assessment of their sensitivity to the challenges faced by survivors of VAW/GBV.</li> </ul>
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	<p>standards, occupational health and safety, refugee and immigration, border security (CBSA) safety, intelligence services (CSIS), Landlord and Tenant, child protection legislation; All public facing workers, officers and first responders pursuant to all income security, labour, human rights, employment standards, occupational health and safety, refugee and immigration, housing, CBSA, CSIS, child protection legislation.</p> <p><b>Using the intersectional lens identified above, this training shall address, among other topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implicit bias with respect to the intersectional issues identified above and how that bias affects or impacts the individual’s work or practice;</li> <li>• the need for trauma-informed services;</li> <li>• the full spectrum of sexual harassment and violence, intimate partner violence (including coercive control), trafficking in persons for the purpose of labour, sexual exploitation and economic coercion, with special attention to identifying indicators and adequate remediation measures;</li> <li>• VAW/GBV and harassment in the world of work; and</li> <li>• first-stage training for screening of signs of trauma and risk of gender-based violence.</li> </ul> <p><b>For those involved with post-separation cases in family and criminal law systems, training and education shall focus on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dynamics of abuse, including post-separation abuse;</li> <li>• an understanding of coercive control;</li> <li>• the impact of trauma on family court litigants who have survived family violence;</li> <li>• the importance of giving priority to family violence when weighing the best-interests-of-the-child criteria;</li> <li>• the role of family violence in determining appropriate court processes; and</li> <li>• an understanding of litigation abuse and strategies for responding to it.</li> </ul>			
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	All education and training programs shall be developed in consultation with survivors of IPV and the groups and organizations that support them, and shall contain an evaluation and review component to ensure trainings are completed as required and are kept current.			
<b>Theme 2: Human Rights Law Recommendations</b> <b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved accountability of the Government on Canada’s international human rights obligations</b>				
2L	<p><b>The Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission and their office should be established as an independent officer of Parliament (akin to the Auditor General, or Parliamentary Budget Office), responsible for reporting directly to parliament rather than to the government or a federal minister. This shall include requirements for annual reporting to standing parliamentary committees and the creation of a human rights advisory council that engages civil society as part of the overarching mechanism for oversight, transparency, and accountability to the Canadian public.</b></p> <p>a) Essential to ensure the independence of the Human Rights Commission and its accountability and transparency to the Canadian public, allowing for the Commission to work on issues of particular significance to combat human rights violations without political interference or influence.</p>	S/M	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statistics, including qualitative analysis from survivors, in regard to law and its enforcement with international and regional human rights standards, as set forth in various conventions, agreements, and mechanisms.</li> <li>○ Online violence against women, gender-diverse people, and the LGBTQI2S+ community should be recognized as a human rights violation and a form of discrimination and VAW/GBV. All levels of government should duly apply core international human rights instruments.</li> <li>○ Analysis on the impacts of poverty and co-relation to VAW/GBV and including poverty as a key variable</li> </ul>

				for policy and legislative analysis as it is an exacerbating condition with respect to other grounds of discrimination.
3L	<p><b><u>Amendment to the <i>Canadian Human Rights Act</i> and to all provincial/territorial human rights legislation to recognize “social condition” as a ground of discrimination.</u></b></p> <p>a) Responding to the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) recommendation that social and economic rights be expressly incorporated into human rights legislation, addresses how poverty is itself a source of serious disadvantage in Canada, as well as an exacerbating condition with respect to other prohibited grounds of discrimination, frequent intersection of poverty and gender, disability, race, etc.</p>	M	F/P/T/M	
<p><b>Theme 3: Sentencing/Incarceration</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved accountability by the government in addressing racial bias within the justice system particularly in relation to sentencing and incarceration.</b></p>				
4L	<p><b>The FPT governments shall commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of racialized, Indigenous, and Black women and girls in custody in Canada, both in youth custodial facilities and in adult correctional facilities. While recognizing the racial bias that can happen at all levels of the justice system, as a first step towards fulfilling this commitment, the federal government shall immediately amend the <i>Criminal Code</i> to allow judges to exercise their discretion, upon giving reasons, to depart from all mandatory minimum sentences (MMPs) and restrictions on the use of conditional sentences, particularly for those most affected by overrepresentation in Canada’s prison system, including racialized, Indigenous and Black women. The federal</b></p>	S/M	F/P/T/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of laws/policies/tools amended to address systemic racial bias.</li> <li>○ Using narratives of racialized, Indigenous, and Black women and gender-diverse persons in custody on their experiences in</li> </ul>

	<p><b>government shall also commit to take steps to amend the <i>Criminal Code</i> to remove all MMPs and restrictions on the use of conditional sentences.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lengthy sentences of imprisonment in penitentiaries and jails are the starting point for many BIPOC women, girls, and persons of marginalized genders to experience state-sanctioned and state-committed VAW/GBV and institutionalization, which perpetuates a cycle of violence, harm and dehumanization.</li> <li>• Data show significant overrepresentation of Black and Indigenous women in Canada's prisons and also leads to intergenerational harms, as women are taken away from their children. (Referred to as today's residential schools in the context of Indigenous women).</li> <li>• Over-incarceration leads to distrust of police.</li> <li>• Judicial discretion should not just be exercised in favour of privileged white people who have the means to put together “good plans” for serving their sentences safely in the community.</li> </ul>			<p>regard to trust of the justice system as a means of assessment. Particularly in the case of Indigenous women and Indigenous peoples with diverse gender-identities, enabling participatory and qualitative data collection approaches like this will honour their ways of storytelling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Robust, disaggregated, intersectional, statistical and qualitative data collection and analysis. Data collection needs approaches beyond standard reporting mechanisms and needs to create options for safe and anonymous sharing of lived experiences.</li> </ul>
5L	<p><b>The federal government shall take immediate steps to eliminate systemic biases in Correctional Service Canada’s (CSC) risk assessment tools that disproportionately impact racialized, Black, and Indigenous women. This must include a review of how Gladue factors and/or Impact of Race and Culture Assessments (IRCA) are being misused when determining risk.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current tools used by CSC have been shown to be unreliable for Indigenous people. <a href="#">CSC – Ewert v. Canada</a></li> <li>• The Custody Rating Scale that is used by CSC fails to provide accurate security classifications for all people in prison because of the systemic bias inherent in the tool, resulting in Indigenous and Black people being classified at higher security classifications levels than their white counterparts. The higher security classification affects access to programming, and can result in longer time spent in prison because of delayed parole. <a href="#">Senate Report</a></li> </ul>	M/L	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Meta-analysis of the use of judicial discretion in cases, especially for BIPOC and people with diverse-gender identities to examine how privileged standing such as race, class, status, etc. affect sentencing and incarceration.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Custody Rating Scale was not validated for women and unjustly turns a need (which is identified at sentencing with Gladue reports) into risk resulting in systematic bias against Indigenous and Black women. A <a href="#">2004 study</a> showed that the CRS had no predictive validity.</li> </ul>			
6L	<p><b>The FPT governments shall end the use of solitary confinement, segregation, intensive psychiatric care, strip searching, and all other related forms of physical isolation of women in detention, including immigration detention, specifically for those with no status, which includes but is not limited to young women, women with mental health issues, trans women and men, non-binary people, Two-Spirit people, racialized and Indigenous and Black women, as well as non-status women.</b></p> <p>a) The federal government shall immediately order and fund an independent public inquiry with a mandate to examine the issue of staff-to-prisoner sexual coercion, violence, and abuse, with clear mechanisms in place to support and protect the people who come forward—including the state sanctioned sexual violence experienced by those subjected to strip searches—in order to understand the full scope of the issue and to prevent such harm from continuing or happening in the future.</p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to address state-sanctioned and state-committed violence and to meet Canada’s obligations not to commit torture and inhuman conditions of detention, etc.</li> <li>There is a lack of data on the subject of staff-on-prisoner violence. It is also a difficult topic because people who have experienced sexual assault often do not feel comfortable or safe coming forward in the most supportive of environments. Prisons are places where people fear reprisal for minor issues, and it follows that coming forward to report a sensitive topic like sexual assault (especially given that most people in the prisons designated for women have experienced prior trauma related to sexual violence) would elicit similar fears.</li> </ul>	I/S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As recommended 25 years ago in The Commission of Inquiry into Certain Events at the Prison for Women - <a href="#">The Arbour Report</a></li> </ul>			
<b>Theme 4: Family Law</b>				
<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Enhanced equitable protection for survivors of VAW/GBV under family law, regardless of family status and geographic location.</b>				
7L	<p><b>That all levels of government work together to ensure that all family laws—federal, provincial/territorial—align with one another in responding to family violence, in particular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in the context of post-separation parenting arrangements to ensure that family violence is prioritized in weighing the best interests of the child criteria;</li> <li>b) in the recognition and enforcement of restraining/protection orders, including between jurisdictions; and</li> <li>c) in ending distinctions in some jurisdictions in the manner in which property division and exclusive possession of the family’s home are dealt with for people in married vs common-law relationships.</li> </ul> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canadian society is a mobile one, with individuals and families often moving from one part of the country to another. Survivors of IPV often wish or need to relocate for reasons of safety, employment, or to find the supports they need.</li> <li>The rate of partners living in common-law rather than married relationships is growing steadily throughout the country.</li> <li>With the exception of the <i>Divorce Act</i>, family laws are a matter of provincial/territorial jurisdiction, and, at the present time, there are a number of differences in how those laws address such issues as post-separation parenting of children, safety, and property division.</li> <li>A number of jurisdictions differentiate between people who have lived in a common-law relationships and people who are married with</li> </ul>	S	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Harmonization of legal provisions under family law across provinces and territories</li> <li>○ Perspectives of survivors on the justice system’s effectiveness in safeguarding their rights in order for them to leave abusive situations</li> </ul>

	<p>respect to property division regimes, and the ability of one partner to obtain an order for exclusive possession of the family home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As well, family court orders falling under provincial/territorial laws are not automatically enforceable if either party relocates to another jurisdiction within Canada.</li> <li>• To ensure that survivors of VAW/GBV, regardless of where they live or their family status, have access to equitable protection of family law, it is necessary to ensure that FPT laws align with one another in their responses to family violence.</li> </ul>			
8L	<p><b>That FPT Ministers of Justice work together to ensure a rapid and smooth transition to a properly resourced unified family court system in all jurisdictions in Canada. Unified Family Courts (UFC) must:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) be staffed by legal and non-legal professionals, including judges, with specialized training in family violence;</li> <li>b) provide continuity on family cases, which will help address litigation abuse; and</li> <li>c) reflect, in the physical courthouses, and their processes and procedures, the gendered and differential impacts of family violence.</li> </ol> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of UFCs has been uneven across provinces and territories. Research has established that a UFC system reduces confusion and delay by bringing all family court proceedings under the umbrella of one court. Especially in a time when so many family court litigants are unrepresented, any steps to simplifying the process are important in increasing access to justice.</li> <li>• Survivors of VAW/GBV are especially vulnerable in jurisdictions without a UFC, because their former partner may try to take advantage of the confusion between the two systems to slow down proceedings and increase the legal costs to the survivor.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Unified Family Court</a> Summative Evaluation, Department of Justice  <a href="#">Unified Family Courts</a>, The Canadian Bar Association</p>	I/S	F/P/T	

<b>Theme 5: Legal Representation</b>				
<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved and sustained resourcing across a wide spectrum of legal advice and representation services to allow survivors of VAW/GBV access to timely, responsive, and equitable services.</b>				
<b>9L</b>	<p><b>All levels of government shall coordinate and commit to ensuring that survivors and targets of VAW/GBV have adequate access to effective legal representation and supports. Specifically:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the federal government shall provide adequate, stable, long-term funding for legal aid services, inclusive of the wide variety of civil, family, criminal, immigration, refugee, and administrative proceedings with which a survivor of VAW/GBV may engage;</li> <li>b) all levels of government shall provide long-term funding for legal aid programs to ensure universal access to legal aid across the country;</li> <li>c) provinces and territories shall ensure that sufficient funding be allocated so that survivors of VAW/GBV—including sexual violence, human trafficking, and IPV/DV—can obtain at least four hours of independent legal advice to assist them in navigating criminal justice processes;</li> <li>d) this funding shall extend to trauma-informed, survivor-centred systems navigators to support access to justice by survivors of VAW/GBV. In appropriate situations, the legal representation and system navigation can be provided through or assisted by technology using best practices learned over the COVID-19 pandemic; and</li> <li>e) given the access to justice challenges for survivors of VAW/GBV, when there are language barriers or interpretation needs based on disability FPT governments must provide funding for interpretation and translation services in legal proceedings, including court and administrative hearings, procedures, and preparation for the same.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Canada has undertaken consultations on the Canada 2030 Agenda Strategy as well as the Canadian Indicator Framework (CIF). The proposed new CIF includes a stand-alone ambition on access to justice and a related indicator that is people-focused.</li> <li>○ All federal departments will be accountable for implementing the 2030 Agenda, including examining policies and programs to identify gaps and areas where action is needed.</li> <li>○ Nation-wide tracking of government funding on a wide spectrum of legal services.</li> <li>○ Interviews with legal service providers (across all levels and jurisdictions) who specialize in</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survivors of VAW/GBV who seek redress through the justice system soon come to realize that the system that they are told is there to support them is frequently yet another site of violence and trauma. In the midst of an access to justice crisis that threatens faith in all systems of justice, survivors are disproportionately harmed by patchy, ineffectual, underfunded, and inequitable justice system access.</li> <li>Many also are led to believe that certain justice system participants—such as Crowns—are their advocates, when they are not. They require their own advocates and system navigators to ensure that their constitutionally protected rights are given due consideration at all stages of the process.</li> <li>Canada has undertaken consultations on the Canada 2030 Agenda Strategy, as well as the Canadian Indicator Framework (CIF). All federal departments will be accountable for implementing the 2030 Agenda, including examining policies and programs to identify gaps and areas where action is needed. The proposed new CIF includes a stand-alone ambition on access to justice and a related indicator that is people focused. <a href="#">Open Justice Commitment for Canada: Discussion Paper</a></li> </ul>			<p>supporting VAW/GBV survivors</p>
<p><b>Theme 6: Labour</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved government accountability mechanism to monitor and negatively sanction violence and harassment in all workplaces for all workers whether in formal or informal economy.</b></p>				
<p>10L</p>	<p><b>The Government of Canada should immediately ratify and implement International Labour Organization Convention 190 (C-190) with consideration of Recommendation 206. All levels of government must adopt an inclusive, integrated, intersectional, and gender-responsive approach for the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work by strengthening their laws to include an expansive definition of harassment and violence that includes VAW/GBV and harassment; provides comprehensive coverage of workers (e.g. interns, volunteers and job seekers along with employees); includes incidents in the course of, linked with, or arising out of</b></p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statistics on workplace VAW/GBV and harassment and remedy/action taken. In particular, data collection on incidents should not be limited to official filing of complaints. Safe and anonymous data collection portals or other</li> </ul>

<p><b>work; addresses third party violence; supports and addresses the impact of domestic violence in the world of work.</b></p> <p><b>To be effective, the laws must prohibit violence and harassment in the world of work; ensure policies address violence and harassment including recognition of particular factors that increase the likelihood of violence and harassment, including psychosocial hazards and risks; adopt a comprehensive strategy to prevent and address violence and harassment; establish enforcement and monitoring mechanisms; ensure effective access to remedies and supports for victims; provide for sanctions; develop tools, guidance, education and training, raise awareness in accessible formats; and ensure effective means of inspection and investigation of cases of violence and harassment.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO Convention 190, Recommendation 206 ensures that the harassment and violence that takes place in the hiring, training, and working conditions for women in the world of work and the way domestic violence enters the workplace is not missed.</li> <li>• The new Convention affirms everyone’s right to a world of work free of violence and harassment. It takes an inclusive and integrated approach, extending protection to all workers whether in the formal or informal economy, and irrespective of their contractual status and including jobseekers, trainees, interns, apprentices, and volunteers. The Convention also makes it clear that violence and harassment involving third parties—whether they are clients, customers, patients, or members of the public—must be considered and addressed. This recognition is extremely important for workers whose jobs involve dealing with the public and in public space.</li> <li>• <a href="#">International Labour Organization</a>, R 206</li> <li>• <a href="#">International Labour Organization</a>, Guidance on Ratification</li> <li>• Often, people working in VAW/GBV use the filter of intimate partner/domestic violence and sexual violence. This can miss the particular gendered sexual harassment and violence that takes place in</li> </ul>			<p>mechanisms should be established for individuals who do not wish to proceed with formal complaints procedure. Any data collected through these anonymous systems should be cumulated towards national statistics on prevalence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Perspectives of survivors on the quality of support provided.</li> <li>○ Perspectives of workplace leadership on their role in promoting a safe and respectful workplace.</li> <li>○ Audit of workplaces with highest incidence of workplace violence and harassment reported.</li> </ul>
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the world of work, including in hiring, training, and working conditions. There is also a lack of awareness about the way domestic violence enters the workplace, and the preventative and responsive role the workplace can play.

### **Domestic Violence and the Workplace**

- A [2009 Stats Can report](#) found Canadian employers lose \$77.9 million annually due to the direct and indirect impacts of DV. The pan-Canadian study [Can Work Be Safe When Home Isn't?](#) found that one-third (33.6%) of respondents reported ever experiencing DV from an intimate partner, and there were differences by gender. Aboriginal respondents, respondents with disabilities, and those indicating a sexual orientation other than heterosexual were particularly likely to have reported experiencing DV in their lifetime. Sixty-five percent of trans respondents reported experiencing DV. Of those who had experienced DV, 53.5% said it continued at work. Among all respondents 91.5% think that DV impacts the work lives of workers. Among those exposed to DV, 38% reported that DV affected their ability to get to work and 8.5% had lost a job due to DV.
- In a study of [perpetrators](#), one-third of respondents were in contact with their (ex)partner during work hours to engage in abusive or monitoring behaviours. Of these, 25% used workplace time to drop by her home or workplace. Nearly 1 in 10 reported that they caused or almost caused a work accident as a result of being distracted or preoccupied by these issues. About 25% of respondents indicated that violence issues led to difficulties getting to and staying at work, and about 25% reported taking paid time off work to deal with DV issues.
- The [impact of DV on the workplace](#) has been seen [internationally](#). And studies have shown that workers often work in the [same workplace](#) as their abuser.
- High profile domestic murders at work have identified ways in which employers and other workplace actors [could have intervened](#). In the case of Lori Dupont, the inquest found 84 separate missed opportunities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working from home has now increased without the safeguards that can come from an external workplace.</li> <li>• Concrete tools, such as paid leave, protection against discipline, specific enumeration of DV in OH&amp;S legislation, DV training for management and coworkers, and a workplace support person increase safety for women.</li> </ul> <p><b>Gendered Violence/ Harassment and the Workplace</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New labour standards increasingly use an integrated definition of <a href="#">harassment and violence</a> in the workplace. <a href="#">Canadian studies</a> illustrate that women face an elevated risk relative to men for almost all types of workplace violence, not just sexual assaults. These sex/gender differences have important implications for primary prevention activities.</li> <li>• Recent <a href="#">federal government surveys and consultations</a> found high levels of sexual harassment and VAW/GBV in Canadian workplaces, and demonstrated the importance of looking at harassment from the perspective of VAW/GBV and other forms of discrimination.</li> <li>• <a href="#">International Labour Organization Convention 190 and Recommendation 206</a> provide a comprehensive roadmap to addressing harassment and violence in the world of work that includes a specific consideration of the gender as well as the identities and status that makes women and others more vulnerable to violence.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Theme 7: Immigration</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved immigration pathways that protect vulnerable immigrants, especially women, from precarious living conditions, exploitation, and abuse regardless of their status, race, and SOGIE.</b></p>				
11L	<p><b>The federal government shall announce regularization of status for all and prioritize permanent residency for survivors of VAW/GBV in Canada.</b></p> <p>a) The federal government shall immediately commit to convert all of the temporary pilot programs for temporary resident permits and other</p>	I/S/M	F/P/T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Perspectives of new immigrants, especially racialized immigrants, immigrants with</li> </ul>

	<p>precarious status holders into permanent policy-based solutions for protecting vulnerable people. The permanent solution will apply to temporary foreign workers, sponsored spouses, in-land spouses and common-law partners of permanent residents or citizens, undeclared family members, survivors of labour trafficking, forced marriages, and international students, so they can feel safe to leave abusive work or family relationships and/or reunite with immediate family members.</p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada’s immigration system disadvantages and actively marginalizes women seeking to migrate to Canada. Women with intersecting identities related to factors such as gender<sup>1</sup>[1]; sexual orientation; race; religion; Islamophobia; disability<sup>2</sup>[2]; and class, among many others, experience multiple layers of discrimination while navigating Canadian immigration processes. Immigrants of colour; immigrants with disabilities; and trans, queer, and non-binary immigrants in particular experience discrimination.</li> <li>• The current flow of global human migration is a direct result of histories of racism, colonialism, and imperialism<sup>3</sup>, and instability fueled by extractive industries that Canada is connected to as an international actor. Indeed, the majority of people who migrate to Canada are racialized.<sup>4</sup> Specifically, China (14%), India (24%), and the Philippines (5.2%) were the largest sources of origin for new migrants to Canada in 2018 and together provide more than one-third of all Canada’s incoming residents. For this reason, it is essential to centre the issues of racialized women, along with non-binary people, in formulating</li> </ul>			<p>disabilities, trans, queer, and non-binary immigrants on their immigration journey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tracking of pilot projects that become permanent programs.</li> </ul>
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<sup>1</sup> In discussing gender-based discrimination, it is important to note that gender is a self-identification that does not necessarily correspond with assigned sex at birth. For example, the gender “woman” represents all those who self-identify as women, including but not limited to cisgender women, transgender women, intersex women and Two-Spirit women. It also recognizes the ways in which non-binary individuals experience misogyny.

<sup>2</sup> There is no accessibility support in the asylum process for people who are deaf or living with disabilities.

<sup>3</sup> Avtar Brah. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996,); Sunera Thobani. *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*. (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 71.

<sup>4</sup> “Migration flows”, Canadian International Development Platform, November 28, 2019. <https://cidpnsi.ca/migration-flows/>

	<p>recommendations aimed at achieving gender equality in the Canadian immigration system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women engaged with the immigration system who are physically or psychologically abused may hesitate to leave, seek assistance, or report to authorities for fear of jeopardizing their status. This can also occur when women are economically insecure from not being able to fully participate in the labour market at a level commensurate with their qualifications and experience. Many such vulnerable women fear deportation even if they have the right to remain in Canada. Their partner may keep them uninformed of their full rights, withhold financial information, and hold hostage their immigration documents.</li> <li>• The coercive control that immigrant women face because of their status relative to their relationships with spouses, employers and/or families is further heightened by the isolation they face. This control could be lessened if newcomer women had the support of their extended families, but many newcomer women do not. It is difficult for them to sponsor their extended family members to come to Canada and impossible to bring in their undeclared or adopted children.</li> <li>• Special measures need to be taken to ensure that all immigrant women, regardless of their status, race, gender identity, and sexual orientation, are supported by our immigration system and not ignored or rejected. This includes permanent residents, temporary residents, migrant workers, live-in caregivers, and non-status women in Canada. The creation of permanent immigration pathways would protect migrants from precarious working and living conditions, exploitation, and abuse.</li> </ul>			
12L	<p><b>Immediate measures need to be taken to ensure that all immigrant women, regardless of their status, race, gender identity, and sexual orientation are supported by our immigration system by creating permanent immigration pathways that would protect them from precarious working and living conditions, exploitation, and abuse. These measures must include:</b></p>	S/M	F	

	<p>a) providing clear and timely pathways to permanent residency for temporary residents, migrant workers, live-in caregivers, and non-status women in Canada;</p> <p>b) elimination of immigration detention including the detention of children and women and implement alternatives to detention;</p> <p>c) ending the practice of deportation based on criminality to eliminate any differential treatment based on hierarchy status; and</p> <p>d) immediate decriminalization and removal of expectation of cooperating with the criminal justice system for survivors of trafficking, forced marriages, migrant workers, and labour exploitation.</p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See 12L above</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Theme 8: Community-Based Responses and Supports</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Enhanced measures by government to allow safety planning and wrap-around-access to equitable, culturally appropriate, and trauma-informed support services for survivors of VAW/GBV regardless of their status and geographic location.</b></p>				
13L	<p><b>That all levels of government work together to ensure continuous (not short-term or project-based) funding for Survivor Advocates with specialized training in VAW/GBV, including DV and IPV to represent and advance survivor interests through legal systems including criminal, family, immigration and workplace and administrative tribunals. Survivor Advocates have been shown to play a critical role in creating safety for people experiencing VAW/GBV by providing expertise in safety planning, and by providing continuity in support that extends before and beyond most court procedures. Survivor Advocates can be trained to conduct sexual assault and VAW/GBV case reviews (Philadelphia Model/Advocate Case Review). Survivor Advocates can also provide a continuum of legal support services in rural and remote communities that may lack legal services and courthouses. Priority for funding should be given to advocacy organizations that promote gender equality, provide culturally appropriate and trauma-informed services, and that provide accessible and inclusive services.</b></p>	I	F/P/T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Indicators for this outcome should focus on tracking funding for advocacy organizations, funding to rural and remote communities.</li> <li>○ Nationwide service quality assessment of support services providers to ensure adequate funding is provided for equitable and comparable levels of service across geographies.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are providing copies of a number of references that confirm the important protective role that advocates play in supporting people who have experienced VAW/GBV.<sup>25</sup> This is not surprising since advocates bring to the legal process the very expertise, experience, and training in VAW/GBV that lawyers and judges so often lack.</li> <li>• Survivors of VAW/GBV, including sexual assault, do not often avail themselves of protections provided by the law and when they do, they often report re-victimization and/or re-traumatization. Since the services that are available are usually underfunded and piecemeal (i.e., legal aid lawyers frequently have strict limits on their hours and cannot complete all aspects of a file) survivors also require continuity of support. In the criminal law context, unless victims are also the accused, they do not have their own lawyer. Survivor Advocates can play a critical role in supporting and advocating on behalf of survivors throughout legal proceedings, including administrative proceedings.</li> <li>• Neither the criminal nor family law systems have served survivors of VAW/GBV well. The <i>Criminal Code</i> was amended in 1992 to include amongst other things the so-called “rape-shield” provisions in section 276. Section 276 stipulates that prior sexual activities is not admissible to support the “twin myths” that the complainant is more likely to have consented or less worthy of belief. Much of criminal law uses objective “reasonable person” standard in addition to subject tests; it is unusual in criminal law (unique we think?) to have to have provisions aimed directly at curtailing the biases of judges and decision makers, which tells us something about how pervasive these biases are. Notwithstanding these changes, the myths are so pervasive that we are still dealing with them (for example in <a href="#">R v Barton</a>, as well as high profile instances of judges deploying outdated stereotypes such as in the Judge Camp hearing). Crown counsel is not the victim’s lawyer. Victims have no representation in criminal proceedings, and advocates are the only people who are there for the victims’ benefit.</li> <li>• Women can seek to have lawyers in child protection cases (against the state) or in family cases (private), but legal aid is underfunded in these</li> </ul>			
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	<p>areas and there are fewer resources spent for family than in the criminal area, leading to women receiving proportionately fewer legal aid resources. West Coast LEAF did a <a href="#">study</a> specifically in BC demonstrating the disproportionate spending. Rise did a recent report on the ways in which BC family law system continues to rely on stereotypes and myths (<a href="#">Rise Women’s Legal Centre 2021</a>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The failure of legal aid and the fact that governments do not want to provide enhanced legal aid with lawyers specializing in representing survivors is all the more reason why it’s necessary to have community-based services providing expertise and continuity.</li> <li>• Survivor Advocates also can be trained to perform case reviews of sexual assault, domestic violence, and gender-based violence using the Philadelphia Model.</li> </ul>			
14L	<p><b>That all levels of government work together to ensure a continuum of services, including transition housing, second stage housing, counseling, interpretation, and advocacy within provinces/ territories and across Canada to ensure women and gender-diverse people in rural and remote communities, and communities on and off reserve, receive comparable levels of service.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and gender-diverse people in all parts of the country should be able to receive similar levels of support and services when facing VAW/GBV. Your postal code should not dictate your safety. Achieving this consistency will require coordination and funds from all levels of government. Deficits in remote and smaller communities are particularly evident and should be prioritized.</li> <li>• The holistic services that are required to meet the complex needs of people experiencing violence are overlapping. One of the critical factors in connecting small communities to services in larger centres is internet, which will require federal input (<a href="#">CBC 2020</a>). Leaving aside the issue of whether police are a good idea, many small communities do</li> </ul>	S/M	F/P/T	

	<p>not have their own police and contract RCMP. The territories, which have small populations and are geographically remote get unconditional transfer payments from the federal government to be able to deliver services. Unlike the provinces the federal Crown conducts criminal prosecutions in territories. Many women and gender-diverse people experiencing violence have intersecting family and immigration issues, which means they require access to both provincial and federal systems. Transition houses may be funded provincially or territorially but may still require consent from municipal governments for safety features on buildings or exemptions from bylaws to operate in some neighbourhoods. It will require coordination between all levels of government to pave the way for consistent levels of service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The federal government also shows through this project the importance of pan-Canadian funding for bringing together women’s organizations to discuss national standards and share information.</li> </ul>			
<b>Theme 9: Systems Accountability</b>				
15L	<p><b>We call on municipal, provincial/territorial, and federal levels of government to establish a robust, stable, and well-funded interjurisdictional and independent civilian body, comprised of expert community members and survivors, representative of diverse communities in Canada (particularly those from Indigenous and Black communities), with authority to investigate complaints related to gender-based violence experienced by women, girls, and other marginalized genders. This body shall have the authority to investigate complaints within corrections and policing, including municipal, provincial/territorial, Indigenous police, and the RCMP. Specifically, this body shall have the authority to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) investigate and/or oversee all complaints received related to VAW/GBV, including but not limited to rape and other sexual offences;</li> <li>b) investigate incidents of any decisions and/or failures to investigate complaints of gender-based violence;</li> </ul>	S/M	F/P/T	<p><b>N.B.:</b> The two recommendations in relation to Systems Accountability have also emerged from other WGs. As such, it will also be listed as an overlap/cross-cutting theme/recommendation. To that end, no specific outcome for this theme has been proposed.</p>

	<p>c) investigate misconduct and/or negligence, and all forms of discriminatory practices and mistreatment as a result of intersections related to VAW/GBV;</p> <p>d) observe and oversee investigations of cases involving VAW/GBV against Indigenous peoples;</p> <p>e) have independent representatives authorized and available to accept complaints within municipal, provincial/territorial correctional institutions, and across police forces so as to ensure access to a complaint system for those impacted by VAW/GBV;</p> <p>f) have the authority to accept, review, and use for the public interest, disaggregated data collected by municipal, provincial, territorial and federal levels of government related to gender-based violence;</p> <p>g) make publicly available all its issued reports; and</p> <p>h) ensure government budget allocations for this body shall be publicly available.</p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A civilian body is necessary, as there are systemic biases regarding VAW/GBV within the current justice system structures that preclude the appropriate and unbiased administration of complaints related to VAW/GBV. Furthermore, there is an inherent conflict of interest in the current systems available, where a complaint involves law enforcement or corrections officers. Lastly, a civilian body comprised of experts and survivors aims to ensure that the complaint mechanism will be based on an understanding of trauma.</li> <li>• The scope of authority aims to encompass the range of issues that may exist within the current system. As such, not only will the body be authorized to deal with complaints, but it will be authorized to investigate when there is the potential for concealment of complaints (or a failure to investigate, or as a result of negligence). The authority will also ensure that complaints within Indigenous police forces are dealt with by experts in trauma and VAW/GBV violence, thereby ensuring transparency.</li> </ul>			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The placement of representatives within or across municipal, provincial/territorial correctional institutions and police forces endeavours to ensure access to justice for victims of VAW/GBV. It also aims to encourage victims to feel comfortable knowing that a complaint, where it involves law enforcement, will not result in reprisal. Further, it aims foster confidence in a system that has typically failed survivors of VAW/GVB, or failed to take their concerns seriously.</li> <li>• This is linked to the previous recommendation. The goal of access to disaggregated data is to ensure transparency and accountability.</li> <li>• The aim of making reports publicly available is to ensure transparency and accountability.</li> <li>• Public budget allocations will reinforce the goal of a stable and well-funded authority. The failure of government to adequately fund a civilian body aimed at dealing with VAW/GBV sends a message that VAW/GBV is not a priority.</li> </ul>			
16L	<p><b>We call upon municipal, provincial, territorial, and federal levels of government to design and implement coordinated systems for the collection of, and to collect, disaggregated data related to VAW/GBV experienced by women, girls and other marginalized genders across the criminal justice system, including in policing and corrections. This data must be publicly available and must include information related to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the number of complaints received;</li> <li>b) disaggregated anonymous data related to the identity of the complainant;</li> <li>c) the number of investigations launched into complaints and the outcomes of such complaints;</li> <li>d) the number of complaints where there is a refusal to investigate and reasons why;</li> <li>e) the steps taken to assist with trauma experienced by the survivors of violence; and</li> <li>f) disciplinary measures implemented on offenders.</li> </ol>	M	F/P/T	

	<p><b>Further, that the design and implementation of the data collection must be conducted in partnership with expert community members and survivors who are representative of diverse communities in Canada.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Without disaggregated data about VAW/GBV that reflects the reality of intersectional experiences of violence, we have no pathway for properly understanding and addressing the extent of and inequalities in experiences of VAW/GBV. We cannot understand structural inequities without disaggregated data. Good data will lead to better policy development; it supports a human rights framework to understanding VAW/GBV and allows for compliance with international obligations. <a href="#">BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (2020).</a></li> </ul>			
<p><b>Theme 10: Other (Criminal Law, Gun Control, Policy and Legislation, and Technology)</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED OUTCOME: Improved systematic use of GBA+ analysis on criminal justice proceedings, all federal and provincial legislative and policy making, and for the implementation and enforcement of effective systems of gun control, including Bill C-71.</b></p>				
17L	<p><u>Criminal Law</u></p> <p><b>The federal, provincial/territorial governments shall strike an expert advisory group, drawing on community experts, frontline service providers, and survivors, to examine how the criminal law could better address the context of persistent patterns of controlling behaviour that lie at the core of VAW/GBV, including DV/IPV. The group shall examine the possible benefits—and potential unintended negative consequences—of creating a new offence of coercive control. The group shall also review how existing offences, such as criminal harassment, uttering threats, or the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, could be better used to address the types of controlling behaviours experienced in intimate or domestic relationships. This would include looking at how the criminal law has typically failed to recognize that survivors experience DV/IPV as a pattern of controlling behaviour and not something that is confined to specific or discrete incidents of violence. This</b></p>	S/M	F/P/T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of GBA+ analysis to assess the best criminal response to IPV, including the possible criminalization of persistent coercive behaviour of abusers in the cases of IPV and DV, as well as consideration of possible unintended negative consequences.</li> <li>Ensuring data collection for GBA+ analysis focuses on participatory data</li> </ul>

	<p><b>could include examination of the type of evidence, circumstantial and direct, that could be used in prosecutions of these existing offences, with an eye to improving police investigations and criminal prosecutions in cases involving domestic/intimate partner violence.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intimate Partner Violence remains a pervasive and widespread problem in this country. One in 3 women in Canada experience IPV and other forms of VAW/GBV. On average, a woman or girl is killed every other day in Canada. In Quebec alone, a woman is the victim of an attempted murder every 10 days. The risks are greatest for women who live with multiple intersecting inequalities, including Indigenous, Black and racialized women, women with disabilities, and migrant women.</li> <li>• The criminal justice system has struggled to deal effectively with IPV /DV, which has led to significant distrust in the system for survivors. The system focuses on investigating, charging, and prosecuting individuals for isolated incidents of criminal conduct and is less well suited to dealing with the patterns of persistent controlling behaviour. The course of intimidating, degrading, and regulatory practices that abusers use to instill fear and threat into the lives of their victims are often dismissed by police as not worthy of charges. The cycle of violence is known to escalate dramatically at the time of separation.</li> <li>• This behaviour, which lies at the core of DV/IPV, and is known by front-line workers and academics as “coercive control” is a highly gendered practice that often seeks to maintain or expand the gender-based privilege of a male partner, while destroying the freedom of partners. There is a need to examine both whether there are existing offences in the Criminal Code that could be better used to target this type of conduct (and what evidence might be marshalled in those investigations and prosecutions), or whether it would be worth creating a new offence to criminalize coercive control, as has been done in jurisdictions such as the UK in recent years. Three US states—California, New York, and Texas—have either already implemented or are actively considering legislative reform to address coercive control.</li> </ul>			<p>collection approaches and includes sector and community experts, front-line service providers, and survivors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An indicator for the outcome should focus on the number of annual effectiveness studies conducted by federal departments on their meaningful implementation of GBA+.</li> </ul>
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18L	<p><u>Gun Control</u></p> <p>The impact of gun violence is highly gendered. Accordingly, federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments must enforce existing laws, and implement additional measures and/or laws to address harm that is the result of firearms access and use against women, girls, and other marginalized genders, particularly those living in rural communities while respecting Indigenous sovereignty regarding land rights, including the right to hunt. The federal government must immediately implement Bill C-71, which received royal assent June 21, 2019. Steps must also be taken to strengthen the protections enacted in Bill C-71, instead of seeking to pass Bill C-21, which is too flawed in its current form to warrant enactment. This would include drawing on a GBA+ analysis to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) restore transparent firearms data collection and analysis of use of firearms in crime, death, and injury as well as evidence-based policies, and education about the public health and safety risks of firearms;</li> <li>b) require licensed firearm dealers to record sales details including the firearm license number as well as the number, make, model, and serial number of firearms, and make those records available to police on request;</li> <li>c) enact a national ban on the import and sale of handguns, instead of proposing that individual municipalities or cities impose their own bans, which will have little meaningful impact;</li> <li>d) make handguns that are currently in circulation in Canada prohibited weapons;</li> <li>e) subject individuals and dealers who are owners of multiple firearms to greater scrutiny to mitigate the risk of those firearms being misused or mishandled, including through stronger application of existing powers to conduct annual inspection of storage facilities;</li> <li>f) support the prohibition of military assault weapons with a mandatory buyback; and</li> </ul>	I/S/M	F/P/T	
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	<p><b>g) ensure resources are in place to properly screen firearm license owners, and to remove firearms and licenses expeditiously when a potential risk is identified to the firearm owner or any other person.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to a firearm in the context of DV increases the likelihood of femicide by 500%; the presence of a gun in the home is the primary risk factor for lethality in DV (<a href="#">Toronto Star 2020</a>). Firearm ownership is a critical factor in whether VAW/GBV or IPV results in death, and is the cause of horrific psychological threats, coercion, and intimidation of women and girls (<a href="#">Canadian Women’s Foundation 2018</a>). Women living in rural and remote communities, and particularly Indigenous women, are especially vulnerable to gun violence. Most firearms used to kill women—or their children—are legally owned rifles and shotguns. Between 2006 and 2010, all the firearms used in domestic homicides were obtained legally.<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>			
19L	<p><u>Policy and Legislation</u></p> <p><b>The federal government shall take concrete actions to identify and address barriers that prevent the systematic conduct of rigorous GBA+.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Such actions shall address barriers that prevent departments and agencies from taking gender-based analysis into consideration during the development, renewal, and assessment of policy, legislative, and program initiatives, so that they can inform decision makers about existing or potential gender considerations in their initiatives.</li> <li>Women and Gender Equality, with the support of the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, to the extent of their respective mandates, shall periodically assess and report on the</li> </ol>	I/S/M/L	F	

<sup>5</sup> Taken from NAWL submissions re Bill C-71: “[i]n Canada, the majority of the firearms used to kill women are not smuggled or illegally owned – they are legally owned rifles and shotguns. In cases reviewed by the Ontario Domestic Violence and Death Review Committee, most of the firearms used were legally acquired.” In Ontario alone, from 2006 to 2010, all of the firearms used in domestic homicides were legally obtained. The presence of a gun in a house is the top risk factor in determining lethality in cases of domestic violence. This risk factor could be eliminated, or at least mitigated, by more gun control. Therefore, helping to put more safeguards in place in relation to legally purchased weapons is an incredibly meaningful way to help prevent violence against women, and their children.

	<p>implementation of gender-based analyses in all federal departments and agencies and their impacts on policy, legislative, and program initiatives. This reporting shall be done annually to the Standing Committee for Status of Women to ensure greater public accountability and transparency.</p> <p>c) All federal departments shall be provided with the capacity to implement and assess annually their effectiveness on meaningful GBA+ implementation.</p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A meaningful <a href="#">GBA+</a> is an analytical process that policymakers use to examine the potential impacts (both intended and unintended) and opportunities of a policy, plan, program, or other initiative on diverse groups of people, taking into account gender and other identity factors. The plus (+) indicates that gender-based analysis goes beyond considerations of sex and gender to include a range of intersectional identity characteristics, such as Indigenous heritage, age, education, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, geography (urban, rural, remote, Northern), socio-economic status, family status, sexual orientation, and mental or physical disability.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Iceland</a> has embellished GBA+ throughout all facets of their government including ensuring on-going policy assessments, and the research, development, and implementations of programs and services that are distinct processes, which build a systematic approach across all government within Iceland to address gender equality.</li> </ul>			
20L	<p><u>Technology-based violence</u></p> <p><b>We demand that all levels of government address this violence and harassment, and ensure inclusion of the world of work in any definitions and responses (including an expansive definition), recognition of the impact of domestic violence on the workplace, innovative investigation techniques and reporting processes (including anonymous reporting), international collaboration to ensure greater responsibility by technology corporations (including social media platforms) for reducing online sexual harassment,</b></p>	I/S/M/L	F/P/T	

	<p><b>online stalking, and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. Online violence against women, gender-diverse people and the LGBTQI2S+ community should be recognized as a human rights violation and a form of discrimination and VAW/GBV, and all levels of government should duly apply core international human rights instruments. Such laws should be grounded in international women’s human rights law and standards, as outlined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, and in other global and regional women’s human rights instruments. Furthermore, all levels of government should ensure that their legal frameworks adequately protect human rights online, including the right to a life free from violence, freedom of expression and access to information, and the right to privacy and data protection.</b></p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work and education using online spaces has accelerated globally during a pandemic and is expected to continue post-pandemic. These are also the spaces for sexual harassment and VAW/GBV. Online and technology-facilitated violence also enters traditional workplaces, as well as the recruitment and training environment.</li> <li>• The pan-Canadian study, <a href="#">Can Work Be Safe When Home Isn’t</a> found that of those who had experienced domestic violence 53.5% said it continued at work. It continued in a series of ways, including 40.6% reporting abusive phone calls and text messages, and 15% reporting abusive emails.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Unifor, Can Work Be Safe When Home Isn’t: Initial Findings</a></li> </ul>			
<b>Additional Recommendations</b>				
<b>21L</b>	<b>It is recommended that federal, provincial/territorial governments commit to engaging in stakeholder consultations to discuss the effectiveness, limitations, and challenges related to mandatory charging, in particular the unanticipated negative impacts on victims and survivors of VAW/GBV such as dual and counter-charging and reluctance of victims to call police out of fear of being</b>	S/M/L	F/P/T	

	<p>charged, as well as the possibility of other approaches that would increase the safety of victims/survivors and their children while also holding perpetrators accountable for their behaviour. The outcome of such consultations would be the development of an appropriate criminal law response to VAW/GBV that would ensure the safety of those affected by VAW/GBV, including children, in the short, medium and long term.</p>			
22L	<p>In 2015, the federal government of Canada passed the <i>Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act</i>, criminalizing the participation in and support of forced marriage. The government’s statements focused on the need to “protect women” from polygamy and forced marriage dubbed “barbaric cultural practices.” However, criminalization became a tool to further target and over-police racialized communities. Survivors of VAW/GBV are reluctant to come forward with experiences of forced marriage or trafficking when it means criminal sanctions or deportation for their families. We recommend that this law be revoked. In addition, we recommend that the federal government and all the provinces should change the minimum age of marriage to 18 years, with or without parental consent, and bring forward meaningful civil protection for people affected by forced marriages. While a change in law is essential, a multi-sectoral approach coupled with an intersectional education strategy is the most effective preventative tool.</p> <p><b>Context:</b>  “Often, conversations about culture exclusively evoke 'stereotyped roles [that] perpetuate widespread practices involving violence or coercion, such as family violence and abuse, forced marriage, dowry deaths, acid attacks and female circumcision'. These practices are, to be sure, real, and discriminatory, but require some perspective and context to avoid a descent into racist stereotypes. Such commentary has 'reinforced the notion that metropolitan of the West contains no tradition or culture harmful to women, and that the violence which does exist is idiosyncratic and individualized rather than culturally condoned.'”<sup>26</sup> European or North American forms of violent discrimination against women seldom receive the same international attention,</p>	M	F	

	and the preoccupation with the lurid and with “alien and bizarre” forms of gender persecution among human rights advocates and Western states, such as Canada, echo former colonial arrogance, and protect states against any national reckoning with the forms of violence that are systemic and condoned within its borders.			
23L	<b>The impact of VAW/GBV against Black women is significant and must be identified throughout the action plan.</b>	S/M/L	F/P/T	
24L	<b>We call upon the FPT and Indigenous governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Indigenous youth in custody over the next decade.</b>	L	F/P/T	
25L	<b>That the FPT ministers of justice work together to review the use of technology in delivering legal services to survivors in rural and remote communities, and rapidly transition to make long-term use of technological solutions piloted during the COVID-19 pandemic. In using technology to advance access to justice it is critical that they consult with community advocacy organizations to ensure that the use of technology does not become a further barrier to accessing justice and does not create additional safety concerns for users. Increased access to support, prevention measures, legal processes and protections for isolated, rural, and remote communities can be realized through gathering best practices that existed prior to the pandemic and those that were developed in response to requirements to physically distance. Funding for technological solutions must be provided by all levels of government, and must be evaluated to ensure technology doesn’t become a further barrier or create safety concerns for survivors.</b>	L	F/P/T	
26L	<b>Develop a cross-ministerial strategy to address VAW/GBV online and technology facilitated VAW/GBV focused specifically on the creation of expeditious, accessible, and meaningful remedies/relief for survivors. This strategy should explore regulation of internet intermediaries, platform responsibility and accountability around the manipulation, ranking, filtering, moderating, and taking down of content or user accounts. This strategy should be trauma-informed and survivor-centred in both its development and implementation.</b>	S/M/L	F/P/T	
27L	<b>We recommend that the FPT governments shall strike an advisory group, drawing on frontline service providers, women’s advocacy groups, survivors of DV and the Correctional services to i) examine and evaluate mandatory</b>	S/M/L	F/P/T	

	<p>programs designed to reduce recidivism among DV perpetrators, with an eye to replicating successful programs across the country; ii) examine and evaluate the potential use of electronic monitoring devices for perpetrators of DV, with an eye to reducing the safety risks for women; iii) review best practices in terms of risks assessment or evaluation of the dangers posed by DV perpetrators; and iv) standardize best practices and requirements to ensure victims are consulted and informed about the perpetrator's conditions of release on bail or parole. This advisory group should have an ongoing mandate to ensure the efficiency of those programs and to coordinate the update of monitoring mechanisms/tools across the country.</p>			
28L	<p>The abuse of temporary and migrant workers by employers, <a href="#">agencies</a>, and recruiters who bring them into the country are <a href="#">well documented</a> and <a href="#">longstanding</a>. Federal immigration and provincial employment law and policy are typically developed separately leading to gaping holes for decent work. Addressing and reducing these abuses include <a href="#">actions</a> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ratify Convention 189 (Domestic Workers) and 190 (Violence &amp; Harassment in World of Work);</li> <li>b) implement recruitment regulation including a recruiter registry;</li> <li>c) improve labour market reviews that undermine decent work;</li> <li>d) make pathways to permanent residency available for all migrant workers;</li> <li>e) remove closed permits tying workers to a specific employer;</li> <li>f) legislate protections built into job offers or the contract of employment;</li> <li>g) provide effective access to the right to unionize and collectively bargain;</li> <li>h) improve enforceability that does not lead to over policing of migrant communities; and</li> <li>i) remove requirement that caregivers live with their employer and support community organizations that are working with migrant workers to collaborate on identifying rights violence.</li> </ul>	S/M/L	F/P/T	

	<p><b>Context:</b> Canadian programs aimed at filling labour shortages in Canada often lead to the exploitation of workers and have a particular <a href="#">gender and racial dimension</a>. The structure of the programs increases women’s precarity and vulnerability to <a href="#">sexual harassment and assault</a>. It can also undermine the wages and working conditions of the existing labour force, further setting back women’s economic security and access to decent work. These programs cover work in all sectors of the economy not just <a href="#">domestic</a> and agricultural work. They can also mask the existence of workers trafficked for labour.</p>			
29L	<p><b>Define and implement a process for women trafficked/exploited for the sex trade, labour, or forced marriage to become permanent residents if they so choose.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Stop investigating women for misrepresentation and fraud when a sponsorship breaks down due to VAW/GBV.</li> <li>b) In the case of VAW/GBV, suspend the enforcement of the sponsorship undertaking.</li> <li>c) For women without status fleeing VAW/GBV, put in place an expedited humanitarian and compassionate process and an expedited temporary residence permit, and issue an open work permit at the start of their application process. Waive all related fees for these applications.<sup>6</sup></li> <li>d) Create a visitor visa process for family members coming to support a woman facing VAW/GBV that specifically exempts income criteria from the visitor visa process and prioritizes VAW/GBV within the processing framework.</li> <li>e) Develop a detailed guideline applicable to all types of hearings for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) officers for dealing with cases involving women and their children, including a focus on women from equity-seeking groups, who are victims of domestic or sexual violence.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>			

<sup>6</sup> This recommendation applies to those who have experienced VAW/GBV anywhere in the world.

<sup>7</sup> Guideline should be comparable to Guideline 4. Women Refugee Claimants Fearing Gender-Related Persecution Guidelines and should include procedural accommodations as well as substantive issues or, alternatively, should be cross-referenced with Guideline 8. Guidelines on Procedures with Respect to

30L	The FPT governments must take steps to ensure that the bail system operating in all jurisdictions—including rural, remote, and northern communities—is sufficiently well resourced and staffed to ensure the rights of accused persons to not be denied reasonable bail without just cause (s. 11(e)) and to be presumed innocent until proven guilty (s. 11(d)) are properly respected. In addition to properly resourcing the bail system, education is needed to ensure that the conditions imposed as part of a judicial interim release order are reasonable and manageable given the personal circumstances of the accused, including their economic circumstances, addiction, or mental health challenges.	S/M/L	F/P/T	
31L	Formulate a definition of what constitutes “hate” or “hatred” that is consistent with Supreme Court of Canada jurisprudence. It is critical that this definition acknowledges persons who are disproportionately targeted by hate speech including but not limited to racial, Indigenous, ethnic, linguistic, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religious groups.	S	F	
32L	Respect, protect, and fulfil sex workers’ rights to health and safety by engaging in a review of the Criminal Code in order to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court of Canada’s 2013 <i>Canada v. Bedford</i> decision.	M/L	F	
33L	Coordinated inter-ministerial (WAGE, Public Safety/ Department of Justice) leadership at the federal level and FPT leadership that includes a structured and transparent process for collaboration and consultation with feminist community-based advocates from across the country to advance policy and practice in the justice system response to sexual assault and violence	S/M/L	F/P/T	
34L	In consultation with grassroots, frontline VAW/GBV workers, feminist legal experts, and survivors of violence, develop mechanisms to ensure that this information flows more readily between criminal and family courts.	M/L	F/P/T	

Vulnerable Persons Appearing Before the IRB should be revised to include specific reference to victims of domestic or sexual violence. Any additional procedural guidelines developed should include reference to the need for interpreters for all official IRCC matters.

Table 4: Support for Survivors and Their Families Rationale

We write this report as the third wave of the COVID-19 global pandemic merges with the ongoing and persistent “shadow pandemic” of VAW/GBV, creating some of the most precarious and lethal situations for survivors and their families that have been documented in recent years. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic impacts are falling hard on those providing VAW/GBV services. These impacts are in effect amplifying the already heightened vulnerability for VAW/GBV. So far in 2021, Indigenous women continue to go missing with more women, including more Black women, killed due to femicide than in the previous three years. While reflecting on recent police killings of Black people in the US, Canada appears to have furthered a reckoning with colonization, white supremacy, and the enslavement of Africans on its own lands. Our recommendations lean into the establishment of a full continuum of VAW/GBV services designed and delivered “by and for” communities who continue to be systemically and institutionally excluded and disenfranchised. “By and for” is one approach that would enable services and supports to help address this legacy. Originally coined by South African disability rights advocates in the 1980s “nothing about us without us” is a self-determination call that continues by others who advocate for inclusion and intersectionality in VAW/GBV service delivery.

**GOAL: Survivors of VAW/GBV have access to timely, reliable, inclusive, formal and informal support services that meet their primary needs for safety, healing, and justice.**

**OVERALL OUTCOME: Strengthened support system for survivors of VAW/GBV that allows reliable, timely, trauma- and violence-informed, and culturally appropriate support and services that are delivered in a rights-based manner honouring their lived experiences/realities.**

#	Recommendation, Rationale, and Action	Timeframe	Stakeholder	Considerations for outcome measurement:
<b>Theme 1: Support and Services for Survivors</b>				
<b>Proposed outcome: Improved and consistent funding, including focused investments to ensure timely, responsive, and equitable access to core support services, including informal and community-based responses for survivors of VAW/GBV.</b>				
1S	<p><b>Core Services for Survivors &amp; Families: Safety, Healing and Justice. Assure adequate and consistent provincial/territorial and federal budgets including consistent operational funding to ensure the availability and accessibility of core services for VAW/GBV survivors.</b></p> <p>a) Shelters/safe place/second stage housing.</p>	S	F/P/T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessing quality of core support services for VAW/GBV survivors by taking into account the distinct needs of the different survivors based</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Sexual assault centres/rape crisis centres; survivor-led, frontline feminist independent community sexual assault centres/rape crisis centres which allow frontline, survivor-directed advocates to expand autonomous SACs/RCCs into areas without current access.</li> <li>c) Campus-based sexual assault response programs and centres.</li> <li>d) 24/7 Helplines staffed by those with training in trauma-informed and violence-specific interventions.</li> <li>e) Specialized services in hospitals; also accessible via referral from health care providers and settings (these may include abortion access, forensic examination kits, STI testing, harm reduction).</li> <li>f) Services (including counselling and safe childcare) for children experiencing sexual abuse, exposure to domestic violence; training for practitioners in recognition and safe response.</li> <li>g) Peer-to-peer programs on VAW/GBV.</li> <li>h) Specialized, feminist, violence-specific crisis, and long-term counselling for all survivors, including children, and their families. This includes access to long-term, trauma-specific, individual counselling and group counselling options available at no cost to survivors.</li> <li>i) Emergency Fund to meet the basic needs of survivors and families in emergency situations including transportation, childcare, and other costs for accessing services.</li> <li>j) The need for better supported community-based first response.</li> <li>k) Ensure appropriate services including counselling and safe childcare for children affected by domestic violence.</li> </ul>			<p>on the form of violence as well as their lived experience (e.g., the needs of survivors of human trafficking will be different than survivors of DV).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Taking into account child protection, safety, and ethical considerations especially for survivors under 16.</li> <li>○ Tracking through statistics, as well as narrative accounts of survivors who select alternate justice system, especially in underserved areas such as rural, remote, and northern regions.</li> <li>○ Using narratives as a form of evidence and evaluative approach in assessing how survivors of VAW/GBV, especially LGBTQI2S+ youth, racialized and Black survivors, and Indigenous survivors are supported. Especially in the case of Indigenous survivors, space should be created to honour Indigenous storytelling as a form of evidence.</li> </ul>
2S	<p><b>To ensure accessibility and equity in all survivors' access to core services on VAW/GBV. These must be integrated and coordinated so services and systems are easy to navigate and based on promising or efficient practices at all levels through embedding a feminist intersectional, anti-oppression analysis. Embedding the understanding of the intergenerational and lifelong cycle of violence experienced by girls, women, and gender-diverse individuals that is rooted in historical and ongoing oppression. The analysis draws on the historic, legal, social, and global contexts that contribute to the marginalization of people of specific groups rendering survivors from these</b></p>	S/M	F/P/T/M	

<p><b>identified groups vulnerable to VAW/GBV in the context of state violence including colonization in Canada and throughout the world, genocide, immigration policies, heteronormativity, the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities.</b></p> <p><b>To ensure equity and access to the above core services, specific communities require focused investments to develop tailored strategies and supports. We recommend identifying, through community-led and transparent consultations, gaps in services for under-resourced communities (rural, remote, Northern, Indigenous); Black and other racialized communities; gender-diverse people; people with disabilities; people with precarious/no immigration status; sex workers; older adults; LGBTQI2S+ communities; male survivors of childhood sexual abuse; criminalized women; and gender-diverse people. Developing an equitable and responsive funding model, within five years, for these communities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) One initial focus should be to reduce wait times by providing new resources for feminist, trauma- and violence-informed counselling services.</li> <li>b) A second focus should be on high-risk cases, via coordinated, survivor-centred risk management and crisis units, to prevent death and serious injuries.</li> <li>c) Ensure that every community in the North has 24/7 access to a safe place to shelter from violence and access to sexual violence services; ensure strategies to support safe access to services for these communities/individuals (e.g. mobile programs, local dispatch, access to services in local languages).</li> <li>d) Emphasis on sexual and domestic violence services, rather than generic or police-based/victim services. Funding and resourcing that reflect the specificity of sexual violence, domestic violence, and other anti-violence work and service delivery. This is different from generic police-based/victim services.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using an intersectional and equity focused lens in tracking and assessing how core support services for GBV survivors are funded, especially in northern regions.</li> <li>○ Allow non-traditional forms of evidence gathering that are healing and transformative for those involved in sharing their experiences for evaluative purposes.</li> <li>○ Taking into account the inter-generational nature of violence in assessing adequacy of support services.</li> <li>○ Taking into consideration that the impact of violence is not isolated within a timeframe and can have lifelong impact in the lives of survivors.</li> <li>○ Ensuring all statistics are collected using an intersectional lens.</li> <li>○ Using perspectives of the families of survivors of VAW/GBV, including families of those whose deaths resulted from</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Develop accountability measures to assess performance of the new finding model.</li> <li>f) Ensure services are designed for the specific needs identified by and centred in a service model that includes “delivered by and for.”</li> <li>g) Ensure Indigenous, First Nation, Inuit and Metis survivors can access cultural- and linguistic-appropriate services run by and for Indigenous communities. This work requires the Inclusion of medicine, culture, ceremony language in all services.</li> <li>h) Ensure Francophone and Anglophone survivors in minority communities can access culturally and linguistically appropriate services run by and for these communities and ensure access to interpreters.</li> <li>i) Ensure funding to community-based organizations that assist new immigrants and refugees who have experienced or are experiencing VAW/GBV.</li> </ul>			VAW/GBV to ensure adequacy equity and responsiveness of support services.
3S	<p><b>Apply a trauma- and violence-informed care analysis to all VAW/GBV services to expand the concept of trauma-informed care to account for the overlapping impacts of interpersonal violence and systemic, structural, and institutional inequities affecting a survivor’s life. To develop and deliver services that are responsive to trauma and violence, including substance use and poor mental health. View this impact as a predictable consequence of highly threatening events recognizing that for many survivors, inequity and system-induced trauma are ongoing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Interpersonal violence, including VAW/GBV should be understood within broad social circumstances, as well as systemic forms of violence and inequity.</li> <li>b) We must also consider that structural forms of violence filter down to everyday experiences, including interactions with health and social services. Because of this, funding and resourcing must recognize the intersectional and intersectoral needs of all survivors, including areas of health, justice, and public safety. Funding should reflect the reality that anti-violence frontline services, including sexual assault centres,</li> </ul>	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	

	shelters, transition housing, and other core services, provide “wrap around” support that often goes beyond addressing violence.			
4S	<b>Public awareness—sustained, VAW/GBV-specific, using the lifecycle approach inclusive of sexualized violence, community-based resources, how to help a friend info, challenging societal norms, raising awareness of VAW/GBV, warning signs, risk factors, and ways to intervene to allow bystanders to support survivors—that is developed on the aforementioned principals</b>	S/M/L	F/P/T	
5S	<b>Emergency Fund to meet the basic needs of survivors and families in emergency situations including:</b> a) transportation, childcare, and other costs associated with accessing services; b) the need for compensation for family members and/or a healing fund for survivors and families; and c) provide comprehensive and consistent victim compensation programs.	S	F	
6S	<b>Ensure that informal supports and peer supports have necessary resources, information, and training to effectively support survivors in a trauma- and violence-informed way.</b>	S	F/P/T	
<b>Theme 2: Support for the Sector</b>				
<b>Proposed outcome: Improved recognition and support for VAW/GBV/anti-violence workers and community-based VAW/GBV advocates to address their psychosocial wellbeing and ensure they are fairly compensated</b>				
7S	<b>We recommend the following protections and supports for VAW/GBV/anti-violence workers:</b> a) A recognition of impacts of providing care on the anti-violence work force (e.g., burn out, vicarious trauma). b) Ensuring adequate wages comparable to public service sector doing similar work. Ensuring adequate wages, benefits, and pensions comparable to public service sector doing similar work. c) Access to ongoing general and multi-sectoral training. d) Dedicated funding to support community-based VAW/GBV advocates and workers to share their expertise, including in the advocate case	S/M/L	F/P/T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tracking the implementation of recommendations put forward by the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime and outlined in the report <a href="#">Community-Based Anti-Violence Worker Wellness: A Review of the Literature and Recommendations for the</a></li> </ul>

	review processes, policy development, training for law enforcement and justice system workers, and other forms of consultation.			<a href="#">Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime.</a>
8S	<p><b>Ensuring that all broader health and social services sector workers, including psychosocial, legal, and medical workers, receive general training on how to recognize and respond to VAW/GBV and offer appropriate referrals as well as multi-sectoral training. Ensure that organizations and professional bodies training future professionals who will potentially intervene with victims of VAW receive adequate and ongoing training to identify violence and risk factors. We recommend:</b></p> <p>a) training for law enforcement, prosecutors, and other in the legal system. Training must include components of sexual assault law, myths and stereotypes, structural violence, sexual assault trauma, and communicating with survivors of sexual violence;</p> <p>b) training must be developed and implemented in consultation with frontline advocates; and</p> <p>c) the establishment of clear mechanisms for oversight on internal training for police and other institutions, such as the Canadian Armed Forces, Corrections, and the RCMP.</p>	S/M/L	F/P/T/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using narratives to gain perspectives of VAW/GBV/anti-violence workers and advocates on their psychosocial well-being and how they feel supported (or not).</li> <li>○ For any training provided, the post-training assessment should assess the capacity, sensitivity and expertise of VAW/GBV advocates and anti-violence workers and other relevant social workers to provide responsive support for survivors of VAW/GBV, especially for Black, Indigenous, and racialized survivors, and survivors of sexual assault and human trafficking. Particular attention should be given to assess their capacity to identify violence and risk factors.</li> <li>○ Tracking wages and presence of benefits, such as health plans and pensions, in comparison</li> </ul>

with public sector workers doing similar work.

**Theme 3: Supportive System/System Transformation**

**PROPOSED OUTCOMES:**

**(1) Enhanced coordination and collaboration amongst VAW/GBV core service providers and community-based services to ensure wrap-around inclusive support for VAW/GBV survivors irrespective of their family status, immigration status, and geography**

**(2) Improved mechanisms, such as culturally responsive and independent civilian oversight body for provinces/territories to hold government accountable, especially for violence perpetrated within government support systems**

<b>9S</b>	<b>VAW/GBV experts to oversee the implementation of the NAP.</b>	S/M/L	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessing the effectiveness of different strategies to incentivize provinces and territories to take action on NAP recommendations.</li> <li>○ Using narratives as a form of evidence and evaluative approach in assessing how government support systems have perpetrated violence. Using anti-oppressive/anti-racist lens especially for survivors of VAW/GBV who are LGBTQI2S+ youth, racialized and Black survivors, and Indigenous survivors. Especially in the</li> </ul>
<b>10S</b>	<p><b>Core VAW/GBV services, including community-based VAW/GBV organizations, should work collaboratively and promote information sharing across systems to ensure proper support and safety of survivors, particularly in high-risk cases.</b></p> <p>a) Development of integrated service delivery model (drawing on existing good practice) that strengthens relationships and referrals across service providers.</p> <p>b) Ensure cross-sector coordination, collaboration, and information-sharing on safety planning. The development and fostering of integrated service models should include resourcing to support dedicated community-based System Navigators, whose role is to develop expertise in identifying the needs and gaps for survivors within and between various systems, and to provide long-term support to survivors as they navigate these systems</p>	S	F/P/T/M	
<b>11S</b>	<b>Use the National Inquiry's Principles for Systemic Change as a guiding framework and link to the MMIWG National Action Plan.</b>	S	F/P/T/M	

12S	<p><b>Establishing a VAW/GBV Ombudsperson, who is outside of policing system, for survivors and families to be able to report people and institutions that do harm within systems.</b></p> <p>a) Explore with advocates the potential for multiple Ombudspersons to respond to the distinct needs of different survivors within different systems.</p> <p>b) For example, a Sexual Assault Ombudsperson who is outside of policing system for marginalized survivors (i.e. sex workers, incarcerated people) to be able to report harm within systems. Therefore, they would be ensuring accountability of the actors in the educational, medical, and judicial system (i.e. nurses, doctors, police officers, judges, social workers, correction officers), while also establishing local, culturally-responsive and independent civilian oversight body to monitor response to VAW/GBV across the country, especially for Indigenous women and girls. They would also ensure efficient and effective cross-jurisdictional enforcement of protection and other court orders, while enforcing the rights and remedies provided by the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Victims' Rights.</p>	M/L	F/P/T	<p>case of Indigenous survivors, space should be created to honour Indigenous storytelling as a form of evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In assessing government accountability, taking into consideration that colonial, patriarchal, ableist, racist, and heteronormative systems create the conditions within which violence against those with the least power in these systems has been and continues to be ignored, accepted, and in some cases encouraged</li> <li>○ Using mixed method approaches that range from statistics and interviews to participatory and inclusive mapping of changes (or lack thereof) to policy, legislation, practice and programming by government and other duty bearers in addressing systemic oppression.</li> <li>○ Taking into consideration the colonial violence perpetuated towards</li> </ul>
13S	<p><b>Examine options for alternative, restorative, or transformative justice.</b></p>	M/L	F/P/T	
14S	<p><b>Address the issue of criminalization of survivors.</b></p>	S/M	F/P/T	
15S	<p><b>Develop a health sector response to VAW/GBV, ensuring integration with and access to all areas of care, including primary care, emergency services, reproductive and sexual health services, as well as mental health, including PTSD.</b></p>	S/M	F/P/T	
16S	<p><b>Stop unnecessary revictimization and systemic violence by creating a coordinated inter-ministerial and interprovincial permanent council that includes a structured and transparent process for collaboration and consultation with feminist, community-based advocates from across the country to advance policy and work toward systemic change.</b></p>	M/L	F/P/T	

	<p>a) There is a lack of an integrated access points for frontline advocates to feed information, make coordinated asks, and get coordinated answers from the federal government on issues related to VAW/GBV.</p> <p>b) There is also a need to ensure that what is happening federally is implemented consistently across the country at the provincial/territorial level.</p>			<p>Indigenous communities, especially First Nations women through the Indian Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using longitudinal studies with survivors of VAW/GBV to assess the quality, adequacy, responsiveness, appropriateness, and inclusivity of wrap-around services or lack thereof</li> <li>○ Taking into consideration that supportive system goes beyond just individualistic support. Envisioning support as systemic change, such as creation of presence of information sharing agreements among government systems (law enforcement, social services, health, and community-based services) for high-risk cases. This information-sharing should include data exchange mechanisms across jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<b>17S</b>	<b>Make changes to regulations in subsidized housing and emergency shelters to allow survivors of VAW/GBV to stay united with their companion animals.</b>	M/L	P/T/M	
<b>18S</b>	<b>VAW/GBV exerts to oversee the implementation of the NAP.</b>	S/M/L	F	
<b>Additional Recommendations</b>				
<b>19S</b>	<b>There is a need for virtual support services to augment traditional services (e.g., crisis lines, online peer support), especially for those individuals and</b>	S		

	<b>communities who would most benefit from additional accessible options (e.g., youth, northern/rural and remote communities). These must be supported by appropriate infrastructure (e.g. Wi-Fi access) and not replace traditional, face-to-face services.</b>			
<b>20S</b>	<b>Formal Services (see 6E): More availability of Victims' Assistance programs and more funding to Victim's Fund. Enhancement of adequate formal support (including counselling and practical support) for families experiencing disappearance and death.</b>	M		
<b>21S</b>	<b>Addition to 2S</b>  <b>Specific groups:</b> a) LGBTQI2S+ youth and adults—community gatherings, peer support programs, counselling services, and sexual violence support services; LGBTQI2S+ youth in rural communities require peer-driven programming; arts-based programs. b) Those working in the sex industry—programs designed and delivered in partnership with people who have lived experience.			
<b>22S</b>	<b>Oversight body holding government account for government systems—Using federal transfer funds to incentivize provinces/territories to take action on NAP.</b>			
<b>23S</b>	<b>Addition to 1S</b>  a) Provide continual and accessible healing programs built on the foundation of promotion of safety and security designed and delivered in partnership with people who have lived experience. b) Fund and implement mechanisms of concerted intervention (crisis units) aimed at preventing homicides or serious injuries. c) Implement a pilot project for an integrated service centre for victims of VAW/GBV.			
<b>24S</b>	<b>Provide financial support for community-based service integration initiatives while also implementing a pilot project for an integrated service centre for survivors and families of VAW/GBV across Canada. The mission of these centres would be to provide high quality, intersectional, and trauma-informed</b>	S/M/L		

	<b>services in both the immediate and longer term while responding to all of survivors and families' complex needs.</b>			
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