POLICY, PROGRAM, AND PRACTICES REVIEW GUIDE:

Strengthening Supports and Services for Muslim Women and Girls Facing Gender-based Violence

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December 2022

Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)
Le conseil canadien des femmes musulmanes (CCFM)

Women and Gender Equality Canada   Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada

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ABOUT CCMW

The Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW) is a national charitable organization dedicated to attaining equality, equity, and empowerment for all Muslim women in Canada. Founded in 1982 by the late Dr. Lila Fahlman, the organization works to promote Muslim women's identity in the Canadian context. For 40 years, CCMW has proudly advocated on behalf of Muslim women and their families and developed projects that enrich the identity of Canadian Muslims, encourage civic engagement, and empower communities. CCMW works extensively on the issue of violence against women, advocating for an end to forced marriage and female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C). CCMW also advocates replacing the term "honour killings" with the word "femicide." CCMW is composed of a National Board that works to further CCMW's objectives at a national level and 17 chapters across Canada and members, whose passion and hard work advance the vision of CCMW within local communities. To learn more about CCMW, visit: http://www.ccmw.com/.

Guiding Principles of CCMW

- We are guided by the Quranic message of God's mercy and justice, and of the equality of all persons, and that each person is directly answerable to God.

- We value a pluralistic society and foster the goals of strength and diversity within a unifying vision and the values of Canada. Our identity as Muslim women of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds is integral to being Canadian.

- As Canadians, we abide by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the laws of Canada.

- We believe in the universality of human rights, which means equality and social justice, with no restriction or discrimination based on gender or race.

- We are vigilant in safeguarding and enhancing our identity and our rights to make informed choices amongst a variety of options.

- We acknowledge that CCMW is one voice amongst many who speak on behalf of Muslim women, and that there are others who may represent differing perspectives.

- We aim to be actively inclusive and accepting of diversity amongst ourselves, as Muslim women.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABOUT THIS GUIDE AND CCMW'S GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) PROJECT

This guide has been developed as part of CCMW's Gender-Based Violence (GBV) project, which focuses on identifying and addressing the barriers to supports and services for Muslim women and girls facing GBV. The goal of this project is to develop a strategy for change and tools to address these barriers.

Part of the change strategy involves a review of policies, programs and service delivery practices of organizations that provide GBV-related services to diverse communities, including Muslim women and girls. The purpose of this guide is to assist your organization with the review process. It is a resource that you can use to assess your policies, programs, and practices, determine where their strengths lie, where the gaps are and where changes are needed.

While the focus of this project is on Muslim women and girls in Canada, it will also address the disproportionate impact of violence on, and systemic barriers faced by trans, gender queer/gender non-binary, and two-spirit individuals who identify as Muslim.

Note: *For the purposes of this project, CCMW has partnered with a select few organizations that will apply the guide and conduct the reviews. Partner organizations will share all findings of their reviews with CCMW, based on which CCMW will develop recommendations for change. However, this guide is publicly available, and our hope is that a wide range of organizations and institutions will be able to use it voluntarily from time to time to conduct their own, independent reviews.*

Objectives of the Guide

- To provide a resource for service providers, such as community organizations, religious institutions, and law enforcement agencies to assess the *effectiveness and appropriateness* of their policies, programs, and practices in serving Muslim women and girls, as well as trans, two-spirit and gender queer/gender non-binary Muslims facing GBV.

- To build capacity of organizations and institutions to effectively prevent and address GBV by critically examining their policies, programs and service delivery practices and making the necessary changes.

- To improve policies, programs, and service delivery practices with the goal of ensuring the following for Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary

individuals facing GBV:

- o Effective, appropriate, and timely supports and services that comply with principles of human rights, anti-racism and anti-oppression, cultural safety, and a trauma and violence-informed approach;

- o Enhancement of justice, safety, and equality;

WHY IS THIS GUIDE IMPORTANT? UNDERSTANDING GBV IN CANADA AND THE NEEDS OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Gender-based violence is a global phenomenon. It exists in all societies and communities. It is violence that is directed at someone because of their gender, gender expression, gender identity or perceived gender.[1] Although it may manifest differently in different spaces, all forms of gender-based violence are rooted in gender inequality and the universal culture of patriarchy. It is informed by beliefs of male superiority over women, girls, trans and gender diverse people.

Gender-based violence can take many forms. It can be perpetrated by a stranger or someone the victim knows, including family members and intimate partners. It can happen at home, in the workplace, in public or private spaces, or online. Gender-based violence is not limited to physical violence. It can include emotional/psychological, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse, as well as coercive control.

In Canada, gender-based violence is a serious issue. While it affects everyone, women, girls, trans, two-spirit and gender queer/gender non-binary people are disproportionately impacted. Approximately every six days, a woman is killed by her intimate partner.[2] More than 4 in 10 women have experienced some form of intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetimes.[3] Women and girls are also the primary victims of human trafficking[4] and workplace sexual harassment in Canada.[5] According to a 2019 Trans Pulse Survey, "three in five

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[1] Women and Gender Equality Canada, *What is Gender-Based Violence?* https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-violence-knowledge-centre/about-gender-based-violence.html

[2] Canadian Women's Foundation, *The Facts about Gender-based Violence*, https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/gender-based-violence/

[3] Ibid.

[4] Public Safety Canada, *About Human Trafficking*, https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/hmn-trffckng/abt-hmn-trffckng-en.aspx

[5] Employment and Social Development Canada, *Harassment and Sexual Violence in the Workplace*, https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/health-safety/reports/workplace-harassment-sexual-violence.html

transgender women experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 16."[6] "Transgender Canadians were more likely to have experienced violence since age 15, and also more likely to experience inappropriate behaviours in public, online and at work than cisgender Canadians."[7] Factors such as age, indigeneity, race, religion, immigration status, family status, socioeconomic conditions, and sexual orientation increases one's risk of violence. Any combination of these factors give rise to unique and complex vulnerabilities to, and experiences of violence. Because of the gaps in our systems and structures, these factors also intensify the barriers to support and services.

Unfortunately, like any other community, GBV is also prevalent in the Muslim community. Canada is home to a large Muslim population. According to Statistics Canada, "after Christianity, Islam was the second most commonly reported religion in Canada in 2021, with nearly 1.8 million, or 1 in 20, people. In 20 years, the share of the Muslim population in Canada has more than doubled—up from 2.0% in 2001 to 4.9% in 2021."[8]As a result, it is becoming more and more important to address the growing needs of Muslims, particularly those of women, girls, trans, gender queer/gender non-binary and two-spirit individuals. During the Covid-19 pandemic, GBV increased significantly, and the Muslim community has not been immune. Therefore, now, more than ever, it is critical to ensure that service providers are understanding the unique needs of Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people, challenging structural and systemic inequalities that pose barriers for them, and making necessary changes within systems and practices to make sure that they receive the support that they need.

Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people face many forms of violence, including intimate partner violence, family violence from extended family members, forced marriage, human trafficking, sexual assault, cyber harassment, and stalking. While these types of violence happen in all communities, the experience of Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit, and genderqueer/gender non-binary people in Canada is unique because of the violence that they face both within and outside their communities.

Racism and Islamophobia often heighten the violence faced by Muslims. Stereotypes and prejudices against Muslims and Islam, laws that restrict religious freedom, hate crimes on the

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[6] Supra note 2

[7] Brianna Jaffray (2020), Statistics Canada, *Experiences of Violent Victimization and Unwanted Sexual Behaviours among Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and other Sexual Minority People, and the Transgender Population, in Canada, 2018,* https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00009-eng.htm

[8] Statistics Canada (2022), *The Canadian census: A Rich Portrait of the Country's Religious and Ethnocultural Diversity,* https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026b-eng.htm

street, and other forms of discrimination shun them away from critical supports and services and push them further into situations of violence. Gendered Islamophobia provides the lens through which we understand women, girls, trans, two spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary individuals' experience of Islamophobia. For example, women who are visibly Muslim, including those who observe the hijab or religious dress, are more vulnerable to racism, Islamophobia, hate crimes, and prejudicial attitudes and discrimination. Women who have been isolated because of situations including coercive control or marital discord are also more vulnerable as they are perceived to be without visible support.

It is also important to note that the Muslim community is not homogeneous. There is incredible diversity within Muslims in terms of levels and types of spiritual practice, sect, socioeconomic status, ethnic and national background, cultural practice, etc. There is also cultural diversity within Muslims who belong to the same ethnicity. These differences are critical in understanding the unique experiences and needs for support faced by members of the Muslim community. It is also important to remember that certain identity markers such as sectarian differences, sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression can make them prone to discrimination within mainstream Muslim spaces (e.g., in circles of the dominant Muslim sect, in religious institutions, etc.). These forms of discrimination add an additional layer to the experiences of Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/non-binary people when they seek help for violence both inside and outside the community.

It is this complexity that we must keep in mind when we are addressing systemic barriers and improving services for Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people. Supports and services that are not informed by this nuanced understanding or an anti-Islamophobic and anti-racist approach create further barriers for women by forcing them to choose between living in an abusive situation and compromising their religious values.

CCMW has created this guide to foster a better understanding of the complexities of GBV faced by Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people. Given the urgency of better supports and services for GBV victims/survivors in Muslim communities, we hope that this guide will provide your organization with the tools needed to critically assess your policies, programs and services and address the needs of your GBV clients who identify as Muslim.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE FOR YOUR REVIEW – A BRIEF ORIENTATION

The guide is divided into the following sections:

Preliminary Considerations

In this section, you will get an understanding of:

- *What to review*: which aspects of your organization will you be reviewing?
- *Purpose of review*: why are you conducting this review?
- *The overarching question to ask in your review*: What are you trying to find out through this review?

Framework for Review

In this section, you will get an understanding of the analytical framework you will be using for your review:

- You will be introduced to [Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+)](#) as the overarching analytical tool to use in assessing your organization's policies, programs, and service delivery practices.
- You will also be introduced to four guiding frameworks (human rights law, trauma and violence-informed approach, anti-racism and anti-oppression (ARAO), and cultural safety) to make sure your polices, programs and practices are meeting the needs of Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people. To check whether your policies, programs and practices are effective and appropriate, you will be assessing whether they comply with these four guiding frameworks.

Review Questions and Case studies: Assessing Compliance with Guiding Frameworks

In this section, you will see a set of questions developed to check compliance of your policies, programs, and service delivery practices with each guiding framework. Your goal is to answer these questions as you conduct your review and analyze your findings from the data you collect.

Each set of questions is further divided into three parts. In other words, you will see a set of questions developed for policy review, one for program review, and one for your review of service delivery practices. For example, under the human rights section, you will see three sets of questions to assess whether your policies, programs and services are in compliance with human rights law. The same has been done for the three other guiding frameworks.

With each set of questions, you will see a case study that will give you an example of how you can assess whether a policy, program or service delivery practice is in compliance with a particular guiding framework. In each example, we will examine some gaps and best practices for an effective and appropriate policy, program or practice. This will help you with your reviews.

Conducting the Review: A Practical Manual

This section of the guide will help you with the method of conducting the review. It provides guidance on the following:

- *Your information source*: Where will you get the information to answer your review questions?
- *Data collection method:*
    - How will you collect and organize the data?
    - How will you apply GBA+ along with the frameworks of human rights, trauma and violence-informed approach, ARAO and cultural safety in designing and planning your data collection method and carrying out your review?

Results of the Review: Reporting your Findings

This section of the guide explains how to document and report your findings. It provides you with an outline of a report.

Glossary of Terms

Important terms are bolded and hyperlinked throughout the guide. You will find the definitions of bolded words under this section.

Other Guides and Projects Consulted

This section provides you a list of other guides and projects that we have consulted for ideas to create this guide.

Appendices

This section contains templates that you can use to help you record your findings from your review. It includes a Master document for answering all your review questions, as well as templates for your documentary review, organizational leader interviews, and service user interviews/focus groups.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

What to Review

The first step in the review process is to determine which aspects of your organization you will be reviewing. For a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and gaps in the organization's services, the following key pieces should be reviewed:

● Organizational policies relevant to services for clients facing GBV (e.g., Human Resources (HR) policies, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies, and other specific policies geared towards services for victims/survivors of GBV)
● Program design and implementation
● Service delivery practices on the ground (i.e., interactions of management, staff, and volunteers with service users)

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the review is to assess whether the needs of Muslim women and girls, as well as trans, two-spirit, and genderqueer/gender non-binary Muslims who are facing GBV are being met when it comes to supports and services.

Overarching Inquiry: Are the Policies, Programs, and Practices "Effective and Appropriate?"

The main question to ask:

Are the policies, programs, and service delivery practices *effective and appropriate* for Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people facing GBV ?

● Do they exclude or create barriers for Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and gender queer/gender non-binary people facing GBV?
● If the policies, programs, and services are specifically targeted towards members of Muslim communities, do they have consequences for different groups within or outside Muslim communities?
● Do they take into account the different experiences, barriers, and needs of Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people facing GBV based on their intersectional identities (gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnic

background, disability, family status, sectarian differences, sexual orientation, and resulting discrimination both within and outside the Muslim community)?
- What are the strengths and gaps?
- How can the policies, programs and practices be improved?

FRAMEWORK FOR REVIEW

Applying Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) as an Analytical Tool

To analyze the effectiveness and appropriateness of programs, policies, and service delivery practices, it is important to use Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+).

What is GBA+?

GBA+, or gender-based analysis plus, is an analytical tool that was developed by the Government of Canada. This tool is meant to help institutions and organizations to critically assess how their programs and policies impact diverse groups based on their gender, as well as other intersecting identities, such as race, disability, age, religion, ethnicity, etc. The goal of GBA+ is to assess the experiences diverse groups may have in engaging with policies and programs, and to address systemic inequalities.[9]

Importantly, GBA+ acknowledges that people have multiple, intersecting identities, and therefore, we must move beyond sex and gender to consider all those identities that create unique experiences for groups when they are accessing services.[10] This intersectionality is crucial in recognizing people's diverse identities and how they create unique experiences when engaging with policies and programs.

EXAMPLE

A settlement agency has a program for newcomers, which involves delivering workshops on intimate partner violence (IPV) and the legal rights of victims/survivors. Men and women can both sign up for the workshops, which are held once every two weeks on a Saturday afternoon for two hours between 1-3 pm. The workshops are held in the agency's building on the first

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[9] Women and Gender Equality Canada, *What is Gender-based Analysis Plus*, https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus/what-gender-based-analysis-plus.html

[10] Women and Gender Equality Canada, *Introduction to GBA Plus*, https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/gbaplus-course-cours-acsplus/eng/mod02/mod02_03_01.html

floor, which requires people to go up a flight of six steps and walk to the back of the building to the room where the workshops are conducted. The workshops are delivered in English, and refreshments include meat sandwiches, orange juice and cookies. The goal of the workshops is to educate newcomers about their legal rights and ways to protect themselves and access services if they are facing intimate partner violence.

On the surface, this program is a great initiative that seeks to help victims/survivors of IPV. However, a GBA+ analysis will help the agency to look specifically at the needs of the intended audience of the workshop, namely diverse groups of newcomers, and some of the challenges the program creates for them. Here are some concerns a GBA+ analysis could raise:

- Since women are disproportionately the victims of IPV, and men the perpetrators, putting men and women in the same room can retraumatize women and discourage many of them from signing up for the workshops.
- Many women will feel uncomfortable sharing their experiences in a group setting. Some women may also feel uncomfortable meeting in-person, which may require separate virtual and in-person workshops.
- For newcomer women, a workshop in English can be a barrier without an interpreter.
- Holding the workshop exclusively on a Saturday afternoon will create a barrier for single mothers who do not have childcare on weekends. The timings may have to be flexible and offered during different times of the day/week.
- For observant Muslim women, not providing a prayer break in the middle of the session and not having a proper prayer space will discourage some Muslim women from signing up.
- Holding the workshops in a space where there is no wheelchair ramp will make it inaccessible to women who have a disability.
- Those who do not have access to transportation may be discouraged to attend unless the agency provides them with transportation allowance (e.g., bus tokens).
- For Muslim women who eat halal food, having meat sandwiches with no vegetarian, seafood or halal meat options will create an inequitable experience for them.

A GBA+ analysis, therefore, supports organizations to intentionally consider how their policies and programs can be more equitable and inclusive for diverse groups.

The entry point in our project is the intersection of gender and one's identity as Muslim. It is obvious that any kind of initiative around gender-based violence must use a gendered lens. This means that any approach to equality, safety and justice for victims/survivors of GBV must take

into account the disproportionate impact of violence on women, girls, trans, two-spirit and gender queer/gender non-binary people, and the barriers they face when accessing supports and services.

Our project will specifically look at the unique needs of and barriers to supports and services faced by women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary individuals who also identify as Muslim. Within this group, we will also look at how other intersecting factors, such as ethnicity, sect, age, immigration status, socioeconomic status, disability, family status, etc. further impact their experience of violence and their interactions with policies, programs, and services.

The Government of Canada states that it is committed to using GBA+ to advance gender equality in Canada as part of the ratification of the *UN Beijing Platform for Action*, as well as gender equality rights enshrined in the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (*The Charter*).[11]

The Government of Canada also states that GBA+ is not limited to federal government public servants, but can also be used by other stakeholders, such as for-profit and non-profit organizations.[12]

We have used GBA+ in designing this guide and creating the process for your review. Your review should also check for GBA+ compliance as you assess your organization's policies, programs, and practices. GBA+ principles should be incorporated when creating policies and programs and when delivering services.

These are the steps in the GBA+ process for an upcoming initiative:[13]
1. Identify the issues: what are the issues motivating an upcoming initiative?
2. Challenge assumptions: Challenging assumptions when investigating the issue
3. Gather the facts – research and consultation: Research and consult stakeholders to determine how best to design the initiative
4. Develop options and recommendations: Develop different options for the initiative and make recommendations on how to maximize positive impact and minimize negative ones
5. Monitor and evaluate the impact of the initiative

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[11]Women and Gender Equality Canada, *What is Gender-based Analysis Plus*, https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus/what-gender-based-analysis-plus.html#gender
[12]Women and Gender Equality Canada, *Introduction of GBA Plus*, https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/gbaplus-course-cours-acsplus/eng/mod00/mod00_04_01.html
[13]Women and Gender Equality Canada, Introduction to GBA Plus, https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/gbaplus-course-cours-acsplus/eng/mod03/mod03_03_02.html

Each step of the process should be documented and communicated, including the results of the GBA+ process.

Since this project does not involve creating a new initiative, but rather assessing existing programs, policies, and services, we will be starting the GBA+ process from **Step 5, the Monitor and Evaluate stage**, which is going to be our review. Since the GBA+ process is cyclical, our review (monitoring and evaluation) will determine the issues that arise from evaluation and will engage GBA+ again in recommending changes to improve the polices, programs and services.

Guiding Frameworks for Assessing Whether Policies, Programs and Services are "Effective and Appropriate"

In your review using a GBA+ analysis, we encourage you to not only apply the values enshrined in international human rights instruments and *The Charter*, but also check for compliance with domestic human rights law, as well as principles of anti-racism and anti-oppression, cultural safety, and a trauma and violence-informed approach. These are the guiding frameworks that we suggest that you use in your review.

In other words, to assess whether a policy, program or service is "effective and appropriate," check whether it is grounded in principles of:

- Human rights law
- Trauma and violence-informed approach
- Anti-racism and anti-oppression (ARAO)
- Cultural safety

To examine some of the criteria for the abovementioned frameworks, we can look to our laws and critical scholarship on them.

Human Rights Law

There are several international and domestic laws that guide us on how best to assist GBV victims/survivors. Because GBV is rooted in patriarchy and gender inequality, support for GBV victims/survivors must be based on laws that promote gender equality. In Canada, advancing gender equality falls within the umbrella of human rights legislation.[14] Therefore, it is important

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[14] Government of Canada, *Federal Gender Equality Laws of Canada*, https://www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/gender_equality-egalite_genres/lois_can_gen_eq_laws.aspx?lang=eng

to use a human rights framework when assessing your organization's policies, programs, and practices.

Disclaimer: None of the discussion on the law in this guide is legal advice. It is legal information only. It is beyond the scope of this guide to explain all aspects of the law that your organization needs to comply with. This guide provides an orientation to the relevant human rights laws to help you with your understanding of the legal framework that applies to your organization. If you are not sure about whether certain aspects of your policies, programs or practices are in compliance with the law, please seek advice from a lawyer.

International Law

There are a number of United Nations Declarations and Conventions that uphold the principles of gender equality and recognize that gender-based violence is a violation of human rights and equality. Declarations are not legally binding on countries, but they are statements recognizing a universally valid principle.[15] A convention or a treaty, on the other hand, is an agreement where countries agree to legally bind themselves under international law to conform to it.[16] When the government of a country finally approves the international agreement, it is called "ratification." Ratification means that the agreeing country's government must make sure that its domestic laws and policies incorporate the values and principles outlined in the international legal instruments.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, is a global framework for protecting the rights of all individuals everywhere. Article I of the UN declaration on human rights states that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."[17]

Article 2 states that, "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status..."[18]

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[15]Government of Canada, *Glossary of Terms – Human Rights*, https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/human-rights-glossary.html

[16]Ibid.

[17]United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights

[18]Ibid

Canada's human rights laws stem from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[19]

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

This is the first international instrument that clearly addressed violence against women and provided a framework for national and international action.

It states that, "violence against women constitutes a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and impairs or nullifies their enjoyment of those rights and freedoms."[20] It also states that "violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men."[21]

It recognizes that "some groups of women, such as women belonging to minority groups, indigenous women, refugee women, migrant women, women living in rural or remote communities, destitute women, women in institutions or in detention, female children, women with disabilities, elderly women and women in situations of armed conflict, are especially vulnerable to violence."[22]

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

"The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or CEDAW requires countries to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas and promotes women's equal rights. CEDAW is often described as the international bill of rights for women."[23]

Canada ratified this Convention in 1981.

"The Convention defines discrimination against women as "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the

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[19]Canadian Human Rights Commission, *Human Rights in Canada*, https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/about-human-rights/human-rights-canada

[20]United Nations, *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*, https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-elimination-violence-against-women

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] UN Women (2022), *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for Youth*, https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/cedaw-for-youth

recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."[24]

It includes gender-based violence in the definition of discrimination against women.[25]

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Although this is not a legal instrument, this global policy framework is the most comprehensive and important blueprint for countries for advancing gender equality.[26] *The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* was formed after the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995 in Beijing. It "made comprehensive commitments under 12 critical areas of concern..."and "imagines a world where each woman and girl can exercise her freedoms and choices, and realize all her rights, such as to live free from violence, to go to school, to participate in decisions and to earn equal pay for equal work."[27]

Domestic Law

In Canada, we have a number of domestic laws that apply directly to and are legally binding with respect to the obligations of organizations and institutions.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms provides the constitutional protection of individual human rights.

Section 15 of the Charter ensures the equal protection and equal benefit of the law "without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability." These are called enumerated grounds. Court decisions have expanded this list to prohibit discrimination on other grounds, such as citizenship, marital status and sexual

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[24] UN Women, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm

[25] Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *General recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19*, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_35_8267_E.pdf

[26] UN Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: Beijing+5 Political Declaration and Outcome*, https://www.icsspe.org/system/files/Beijing%20Declaration%20and%20Platform%20for%20Action.pdf

[27] UN Women, *The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20*, https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about

orientation (these are called analogous grounds) and have recognized that multiple grounds of discrimination may intersect in particular cases.

Section 28 of the Charter guarantees that all rights covered in the Charter apply equally to male and female persons. Section 28 is often cited as a companion section with section 15 in cases alleged to raise gender discrimination issues (R. v. Park, [1995] 2 S.C.R. 836, Symes v. Canada, [1993] 4 S.C.R. 695)."[28]

Section 15 does not only deal with direct or intentional discrimination. Adverse impact discrimination occurs when a seemingly neutral law has a disproportionate impact on members of groups protected on the basis of a prohibited ground.[29] It means that instead of explicitly singling out those who are in the protected groups for differential treatment, the law indirectly places them at a disadvantage.[30]

Section 15 asks two things:

- Does the law create a distinction based on an enumerated or analogous ground?
- Is the distinction discriminatory?

A law or government action can make a distinction directly, (for example, giving a benefit only to persons over 65 years of age) or the distinction can happen because of the adverse effect of a law or government action on an individual because of their personal characteristic(s). (For example, a rule asking all employees to work on Saturdays but not on Sundays, which can affect people differently based on their religious beliefs).[31]

To assess whether the distinction is discriminatory, the Supreme Court of Canada asks us to focus on whether the distinction "imposes burdens or denies a benefit in a manner that has the effect of reinforcing, perpetuating, or exacerbating disadvantage."[32]

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[28] Government of Canada, *Section 28 – Gender Equality Rights*, https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/rfc-dlc/ccrf-ccdl/check/art28.html

[29] Government of Canada, Section 15 – Equality Rights, https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/rfc-dlc/ccrf-ccdl/check/art15.html

[30] Ibid

[31] Ibid

[32] *Fraser v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 2020 SCC 28

Section 15 guarantees "substantive equality", rather than "formal equality." Formal equality means everybody gets treated the same. Substantive equality focuses on achieving equality of outcomes. This means that different and special rules may be needed to ensure equal access and opportunity for culturally, socially, economically, and historically disadvantaged groups.[33]

The Charter does not apply to all organizations. It only applies to actions of government entities, or entities on which the government exercises a high degree of control.[34]If you are a government entity, all your actions will be subject to the Charter. If you are technically non-government, but certain activities are routinely or regularly controlled by the government, then the Charter will apply to those activities.[35] For example, if you are a hospital, delivering medical services to the public will be subject to the Charter because it involves implementing a government objective, even though you are a non-government entity.[36]

Note: If you are unsure of whether the Charter applies to your organization, seek legal advice.

Federal and Provincial Human Rights Legislation

The federal and provincial human rights legislation of Canada is the most relevant when it comes to assessing your legal obligations with respect to your policies, programs, and services. *The Canadian Human Rights Act* applies to First Nations governments or federally regulated companies, such as banks, trucking companies, broadcasters, and telecommunication companies.[37] Each province and territory has its own Human Rights legislation that applies to provincially regulated bodies.

Most service providers in Canada are bound by provincial human rights laws.

Note: If you are unsure of whether the federal or provincial legislation applies to your organization, seek legal advice.

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[33]Government of Canada, *Jordan's Principle – Substantive Equality Principles,* https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1583698429175/1583698455266

[34] Government of Canada, *Section 32(1) – Application of the Charter*, https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/rfc-dlc/ccrf-ccdl/check/art321.html

[35] Ibid

[36] The Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre (ACLRC), *Who does the Charter Apply to*, https://www.aclrc.com/who-does-the-charter-apply-to

[37] Human Rights Commission Newfoundland and Labrador, *Understanding Human Rights*, https://thinkhumanrights.ca/general-questions/

Canada's human rights laws (both federal and provincial):

- Protect against [discrimination](#) and [harassment](#) by service providers on certain grounds, such as race, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, etc. These are called prohibited grounds of discrimination.
- Make it a duty for service providers to accommodate people by adjusting rules, policies and practices so that they have equal access to services.

"The Supreme Court of Canada has made it clear that society must be designed to include all people...systems should be designed so they do not create physical, attitudinal or systemic barriers."[38]

If you are a service provider, you are legally obligated to ensure that service users are not discriminated against based on their sex, gender, gender identity and other grounds, and that they are reasonably accommodated when receiving services.

What is discrimination and harassment?

The federal and provincial human rights laws each have their own definition of discrimination and harassment, but broadly:

[Discrimination](#) is an action or decision that treats a person or group badly because of certain aspects related to their identity (i.e., prohibited grounds of discrimination), such as race, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, etc.

[Harassment](#) is a form of discrimination and includes any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates someone based on the prohibited grounds...It is behaviour that persists over time, but serious one-time incidents can also be harassment.[39] Harassment can include unwelcome jokes or remarks, threats or intimidation, and unwelcome physical contact.[40]

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[38]Ontario Human Rights Commission (2013), *A policy primer: Guide to developing human rights policies and procedures*, https://www3.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/A%20policy%20primer_Guide%20to%20developing%20human%20rights%20policies%20and%20procedures_2013.pdf

[39] Canadian Human Rights Commission, *What is Harassment,* https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/about-human-rights/what-harassment

[40] Ibid

What is the duty to accommodate?

Duty to accommodate means that sometimes service providers may have to make different rules or provide special treatment to ensure equal participation of marginalized groups and make sure that discrimination doesn't happen.[41] For example, if a client wants to come to your office at a different time than your regular appointment times for clients because of a religious obligation, you have a legal duty under human right legislation to accommodate the client.

Accommodation has a limit, which is called "undue hardship." In other words, if providing the accommodation is too costly for the organization or creates health or safety risks, that becomes a point of hardship and accommodation can no longer be provided.

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[41] Canadian Human Rights Commission, *What is the Duty to Accommodate*, https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/about-human-rights/what-the-duty-accommodate

In the following chart, we have outlined the different human rights legislation (federal, provincial, and territorial), the prohibited grounds for discrimination under reach jurisdiction, which areas of society the laws apply to, and further reading materials and guides to assist you in assessing whether your policies, programs, and practices are complying with the applicable law.

Summary of Human Rights Legislation Across the Country

Federal/Provincial/Territorial	Legislation	Areas where the law applies	Prohibited grounds of discrimination	Policies/Guides/Information sheets related to the law
Federal	*Canadian Human Rights Act*	• Employment • good, services and facilities • Accommodation • Employment Applications and Advertisements • Wages[42]	Race, National or Ethnic Origin, Colour, Religion Age, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity or Expression, Marital Status, Family Status, Disability Genetic Characteristics, A conviction for which a pardon has been granted or a record suspended has been ordered[43]	Your Guide to Understanding the Canadian Human Rights Act (2010)
Ontario	*Ontario Human Rights Code*	• Contracts • Employment • Goods, services and facilities • Accommodation/Housing	Age, Ancestry, colour, race, Citizenship, Ethnic origin, Place of origin, Creed, Disability, Family status, Marital status (including single status), Gender identity, gender expression, Receipt of public assistance	Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability (2016) Policy on discrimination against older people because of age (2007) Policy on Preventing Discrimination Based on Creed (2015)

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[42] Canadian Human Rights Commission (2010), *Your Guide to Understanding the Canadian Human Rights Act*, https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/sites/default/files/2020-07/chra_guide_lcdp-eng.pdf

[43] Ibid

			(in housing only), Record of offences (in employment only), Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding), Sexual orientation.[45]	[Policy and guidelines on discrimination on the basis of family status (2007)](#) [Policy on preventing discrimination because of gender identity and gender expression (2014)](#) [Policy on preventing sexual and gender-based harassment (2013)](#) [Policy on preventing discrimination because of pregnancy and breastfeeding (2014)](#) [Policy on discrimination and harassment because of sexual orientation (2006)](#) [Policy and guidelines on racism and racial discrimination (2005)](#) [Guide to your rights and responsibilities under the Human Rights Code (2013)](#)
		● Membership in unions, trade or professional associations.[44]		
Alberta	*Alberta Human Rights Act*	● Statements, publications, notices, signs, symbols, emblems or other representations that are published, issued or displayed before the public	Race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, gender identity or	[Religious Beliefs information sheet](#) [Discrimination and the Law: a playlist of scenarios providing examples of potential discrimination under various grounds and](#)

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[44] Ontario Human Rights Commission, *The Ontario Human Rights Code*, https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code

[45] Ibid

		● goods, services, accommodation or facilities customarily available to the public ● tenancy ● employment practices, employment applications or advertisements ● membership in trade unions, employers' organizations or occupational associations[46]	expression, sexual orientation, age, criminal conviction, lawful source of income, retaliation[47]	[areas protected under the Alberta Human Rights Act](#) [Gender Discrimination: a playlist of scenarios providing examples of potential gender discrimination under the Alberta Human Rights Act](#).
British Columbia	*BC Human Rights Code*	● publications ● purchase of property ● tenancy ● employment advertisements ● services ● wages ● employment ● membership in unions or associations[48]	Race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, criminal conviction, lawful source of income, retaliation.[49]	[Human Rights Protection Fact sheets](#)
Manitoba	*Manitoba Human Rights Code*	● Employment ● Contracts ● Housing	ancestry, including colour and perceived race, nationality or national origin,	[Guidelines](#) [Factsheets](#)

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[46] Alberta Human Rights Commission, *Protected areas and grounds under the Alberta Human Rights Act*, https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/publications/bulletins_sheets_booklets/sheets/history_and_info/Pages/protected_areas_grounds.aspx

[47] Ibid

[48] British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal, *Guide to the BC Human Rights Code and Tribunal*, http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/law-library/guides-info-sheets/guides/human-rights.htm

[49] Ibid

			ethnic background or origin, religion or creed, or religious belief, religious association or religious activity, age, sex, including sex-determined characteristics or circumstances, such as pregnancy, the possibility of pregnancy, or circumstances related to pregnancy, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital or family status, source of income, political belief, political association or political activity, physical or mental disability or related characteristics or circumstances, including reliance on a service animal, a wheelchair, or any other remedial appliance or device, social disadvantage[51]	
		● Services ● signs, symbols, notices or statements[50]		
New Brunswick	The *Human Rights Act of New Brunswick*	● Employment ● Housing ● Public services for example schools, stores, motels, hospitals, police and most government services ● Publicity, and Certain associations[52]	Race, Colour, National origin, Place of origin, Ancestry, Creed or religion, Age, Marital status, Family Status, Sex (including pregnancy), Sexual orientation, Gender identity or expression, Physical disability, Mental disability, Social condition,	Frequently asked questions with regards to services Guideline on Social Condition (2019) Guideline on Accommodating People with Service Animals (2017)

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[50] Government of Manitoba, *Human Rights and Reasonable Accommodations*, https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/imd/hr.html

[51] Ibid

[52] New Brunswick Human Rights Commission, *Summary of the Human Rights Act*, https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/nbhrc/human-rights-act/summary.html

			which includes source of income, level of education and occupation, and Political belief or activity. There are also separate provisions for sexual harassment and reprisal.[53]	[Guideline on Accommodating Physical and Mental Disabilities at Work (2017)](#) [Guideline on Family Status (2017)](#)
Newfoundland and Labrador	*Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Act*	● Provision of goods, services, accommodations or facilities, ● Occupancy of commercial or dwelling units, ● Employment, publications and contracts[54]	race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, social origin, religious creed, religion, age, disability, disfigurement, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, family status, source of income and political[55]	[Guidelines Regarding Responsibilities of Service Providers](#) [Guidelines Regarding Gender Identity and Gender Expression](#) [Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission Board of Inquiry Decisions](#) (Board of Inquiry is where complaints of discrimination are sent and decided)
Northwestern territories	*The NWT Human Rights Act*	● Employment including looking for work ● Membership in a professional organization, workers' association, or trade union	Race, Colour, Ancestry, Place of origin, Ethnic origin, and Nationality Religion or Creed, Age, Disability, Sex Sexual orientation, Gender identity	[Human rights and public services guide](#)

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Think Human Rights, *I think I was Discriminated against or Harassed. Can I File a Human Rights Complaint?* https://thinkhumanrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/HRC-Infograph.jpg.png.

[55] Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission, *Frequently Asked Questions,* https://thinkhumanrights.ca/education-and-resources/frequently-asked-questions/

			Gender expression, Marital status, Family status, Family affiliation, Political belief, Political association, Social condition, Pardoned criminal conviction or Record suspension[57]	
		• Access to public services such as health care and education, and to facilities such as stores and restaurants • Tenancy, which is renting a home or apartment, or leasing a business space • Published material such as newspapers, magazines, signs, or advertising[56]		
Nova Scotia	*Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*	• Employment • Housing or accommodation • Services and facilities (such as stores, restaurants or provincially funded programs) • Purchase or sale of property • Volunteer public service • Publication, broadcasting or advertisement • Membership in a professional, business or trade association, or employers' or employees' organization[58]	Age, Race, Colour Religion, Creed, Ethnic, national or aboriginal origin, Sex (including pregnancy and pay equity), Sexual orientation, Physical disability, Mental disability, Family status, Marital status, Source of income, Harassment (and sexual harassment), Irrational fear of contracting an illness or disease •Association with protected groups or individuals •Political belief, affiliation or activity •Gender Identity	[Board of Inquiry Decisions](#)

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[56] NorthWest Territories Human Rights Commission, *Know Your Rights*. https://nwthumanrights.ca/your-rights/

[57] Ibid

[58] Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, *For Individuals*, https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/know-your-rights/individuals

			•Gender Expression •Retaliation[59]	
Nunavut	*Consolidation of Human Rights Act*	• Employment • accessing goods, services, facilities or contracts that are available to the general public; • renting or attempting to rent housing; and publishing or displaying information or written material.[60]	Race, colour, ancestry, ethnic origin, citizenship and place of origin; Religion and creed, Age, Disability, Sex, and Sexual orientation, Marital and family status, Pregnancy, including adoption of a child by a man or woman, Lawful source of income, Gender expression and gender identity, A conviction for which a pardon has been granted.[61]	Nunavut Human Rights Tribunal decisions (The Tribunal is where a complaint is sent and decided)
Prince Edward Island	*PEI Human Rights Act*	• Accommodation • Employment • Lease/Sale of property • Membership in professional, business or trade associations or employee organizations • Publications, Broadcast, Public Displays and Advertisements	age, colour, creed, disability, ethnic or national origin, family status, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or source of income.[63]	Gender identity and Gender expression factsheet [64]

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[59] Ibid

[60] Nunavut Human Rights Tribunal, *General Information*, http://www.nhrt.ca/english/general_information

[61] Ibid

[63] Ibid

[64] PEI Human Rights Commission, *Gender Identity and Gender Expression*, https://www.peihumanrights.ca/sites/www.peihumanrights.ca/files/GI_GE_June2021.pdf

		● Services and Facilities for public ● Volunteer work[62]		
Quebec	*The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*	Employment Housing Public services, transportation and places ● Legal agreements[65]	Race, colour, sex, gender identity or gender expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status/family status, age, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, disability[66]	Your Obligations – Service providers (Schools, Daycares, Businesses)
Saskatchewan	*The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*	● Employment or occupations ● Education ● Housing ● Publications ● Public services (restaurants, stores, hotels, government services, etc.) ● Contracts or purchase of property Professional associations or trade unions.[67]	Religion, creed,marital status, family status,sex, sexual orientation, disability age (18 or more), colour ancestry,nationality,place of origin, race or perceived race, receipt of public assistance, and gender identity.[68]	Policies Policy on Equity Programs Policy Relating to Women as a Designated Equity Group Policy Relating to Persons With Disabilities as a Designated Equity Group Policy Relating to Visible Minorities as a Designated Equity Group Policy Relating to Aboriginal People as a Designated Group

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[62] PEI Human Rights Commission, *Areas and Grounds of Discrimination*, https://www.peihumanrights.ca/about-your-rights/areas-and-grounds-of-discrimination

[65] Quebec Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission, *Discrimination*, https://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/en/your-obligations/prohibited-practices/discrimination

[66] Ibid

[67] Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, *How are you Protected?* https://saskatchewanhumanrights.ca/your-rights/how-are-you-protected/

[68] Ibid

| | | | | Information sheets

Human Rights of Transgender people

Developing an Anti-Discrimination Policy – (although this is in the employment context, you can use it in the service context as a template) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yukon | *Yukon Human Rights Act* | ● Employment
● Housing
● Services, goods, and facilities
● Membership in in a union or occupational, trade, or professional association
● Contracts[69] | Ancestry, colour race, national origin, religion or creed
age
sex, including pregnancy, gender identity or gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, criminal charges or criminal record, political belief, association or activity, marital or family status, source of income and actual or presumed association with other individuals or groups whose identity or membership is determined by any of the above.[70] | |

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[69] Yukon Human Rights Commission, *What is Discrimination*, https://yukonhumanrights.ca/what-is-discrimination/

[70] Ibid

Trauma and Violence-Informed Approach

If we are looking to effectively serve victims/survivors of gender-based violence, it is crucial that we undertake a trauma and violence-informed approach.

"Trauma and violence-informed approaches are policies and practices that recognize the connections between violence, trauma, negative health outcomes and behaviours. These approaches increase safety, control and resilience for people who are seeking services in relation to experiences of violence and/or have a history of experiencing violence."[71]

What is Trauma?

"Trauma is both the experience of, and a response to, an overwhelmingly negative event or series of events, from wars and disasters to accidents and loss. Events are traumatic due to complex interactions between someone's neurobiology, their previous experiences of trauma and violence, and the influence of broader community and social structures.[72]

For example, trauma can also be caused by a system that does not adequately recognize or respond to a violence survivor's experience.[73] Responses to trauma can include substance use and poor mental health. Trauma can cause neurobiological changes that can have long term effects on one's behaviour. These can create triggers where present events can lead to perceiving potential threats as real, even if they are not, by recreating past traumatic events.[74]

Key Principles of a Trauma and Violence-informed Approach

- Understanding what trauma and violence are, and how they impact peoples' lives and behaviours.[75]
- Understanding that violence and trauma are shaped by gender stereotypes and inequities.[76]

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[71]Government of Canada, *Trauma and violence-informed approaches to policy and practice*, https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/health-risks-safety/trauma-violence-informed-approaches-policy-practice.html

[72] EQUIP Health Care, *Trauma- & Violence-Informed Care (TVIC): A Tool for Health & Social Service Organizations & Providers*, https://equiphealthcare.ca/files/2021/05/GTV-EQUIP-Tool-TVIC-Spring2021.pdf

[73] Ibid.

[74]Supra, note 71.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

- Understanding that women, girls, trans, two spirited and non- binary people are not only at higher risks of violence, but also face greater barriers when accessing services.
- Understanding that intersecting factors such as racial discrimination and colonial systems of oppression, disability, and precarious immigration status create even higher risks and disproportionate experiences of violence and often retraumatize survivors.
- Understanding that different types of violence can lead to different experiences of trauma. For example, a victim of human trafficking will not experience trauma in the same way that a victim of a hate crime will.
- Creating emotionally and physically safe environments.[77]
- Fostering opportunities for choice, collaboration, and connection.[78]
- Providing a strengths-based and capacity-building approach to support client coping and resilience.[79]
- Understanding that a 2–3-hour training on trauma informed approaches is not effective on its own. There must be consultation with people with lived experiences and linkages with experts.

The goal of this approach is not to treat trauma, but to minimize the potential for harm and re-traumatization.[80]

Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression (ARAO)

What is ARAO?

"An anti-oppressive framework is the method and process in which we understand how systems of oppression such as colonialism, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, and ableism can result in individual discriminatory actions and structural/systemic inequalities for certain groups in society. Anti-oppressive practices and goals seek to recognize and dismantle such discriminatory actions and power imbalances."[81]

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[77] Ibid.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, *Anti-Oppression*, https://www.etfo.ca/socialjusticeunion/frameworks

"An Anti-Racism/ Anti-Oppression (ARAO) framework, at an organizational level, is a way of looking at our work in the sector, which allows us to change our personal and systemic practices in order to reduce or eliminate service barriers for...clients. It is a process that starts with continuous self-reflection as individuals and as organizations, but moves the organization (its staff, its volunteers and peers, and its board of directors) to concrete, planned changes to policy and programs"[82] with the goal of better outcomes for clients.

We must analyze the impact of policies, programs and practices on Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit, and genderqueer/gender non-binary individuals with an understanding of the broader context of power imbalances, racism, colonialism, sexism and ableism that impact a their experience of violence, as well with the goal of subverting power imbalances and systems of oppression.

Going one step further, we encourage you to utilize an Integrative Feminist Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression framework.

What is Integrated Feminist Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression (IF-ARAO)?

"An Integrated Feminist Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression (IF-ARAO) lens allows us to analyze the ways in which forms of systemic oppression, including colonialism, racism, classism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism...and sexism marginalize survivors of violence, leaving them with less social, political and economic power than cis-gendered men in our society."[83]

"An IF-ARAO framework is survivor-centered and focuses on the lives and realities of women and marginalized people. It affirms every victim/survivor's right to contribute to, and to determine, social, political, and economic changes in their lives. It affirms victim/survivors' right to safe spaces in the groups, agencies, and institutions they encounter in their lives, including their pathways out of violence and their healing journeys."[84]

An Integrative Feminist Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression framework recognizes the need to use an intersectional perspective to understand women and gender-diverse people's oppression."[85] "The framework recognizes that power and privilege exist and that these are based on skin

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[82] HIV Resources Ontario, *Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression*. http://www.hivresourcesontario.ca/sector-orientation/anti-racism-anti-oppression/
[83] EMBRAVE, *Who We Are*. https://embrave.ca/about/who-we-are/
[84] The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA), *About Us*, http://www.pcawa.net/about-us.html
[85] Ibid.

colour, sexuality, gender, orientation, class, age, faith, and ability; it recognizes that privileges are institutionalized and maintain unequal relationships between people and groups."[86]

Principles of IF-ARAO

Below we have summarized some of the principles of an Integrative Feminist ARAO Framework:

- It recognizes that power and privilege exist in society and that these are based on skin colour, sexuality, gender, orientation, class, age, faith, and ability...privileges are institutionalized and maintain unequal relationships between people and groups[87]

- Victims/survivors are the experts of their own lives and are not to be blamed for their experience of violence[88]

- Women and gender-diverse people's oppression needs to be understood by using an intersectional perspective.[89]

- Every victim/survivor has a right to contribute to, and to determine, social, political and economic changes in their lives. Every victim/survivor has a right to "safe spaces in the groups, agencies, and institutions they encounter in their lives, including their pathways out of violence and their healing journeys."[90]

- The ideas, thoughts and beliefs of people who "belong" to groups that are highest on the social hierarchy create "dominant culture." Dominant culture becomes the standard or norm by which everyone is compared. [91]

- People who are marginalized and exploited experience limited access to the power to shape their own past, present and future. For example, Canadian history has been written from the perspective of white skinned, European descent colonialists. This historical perspective is perpetuated through dominant education institutions as the only true view of history. [92]

- "When people have [multiple] marginalized identities, they do not merely face extra barriers; their lived experience is entirely different...Integrated anti-oppression work

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[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Supra, note 83.

[89] Supra, note 84.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Springtide Resources, *An Integrated Anti-Oppression Framework for Reviewing and Developing Policy*, 2008, http://www.oaith.ca/assets/files/Publications/Intersectionality/integrated-tool-for-policy.pdf.

[92] Ibid.

requires that individuals accept responsibility for their role in perpetuating oppression both interpersonally and systemically. To bring about change, individuals and systems must be changed."[93]

Reducing power imbalances and addressing systemic oppression can look like the following:

- Diversity on the board, staff, and management through bias-free hiring: Having a diverse board that is representative of diverse communities, including victims/survivors can work to reduce the hierarchy and power imbalance between the organization's leadership and stakeholders. For example, if you are a shelter serving Muslim women facing GBV, your board could consist of Muslim women from diverse sects, socioeconomic, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The lived experiences of victims/survivors could add tremendous value in the strategic planning and other leadership activities of your organization.

- Assess how many Muslims and/or women of colour are being hired in leadership positions, and what opportunities are available for staff to progress to management and other leadership positions.

- Incorporate ARAO in all policies.

- Provide ARAO training to all management and staff.

- Create accountability measures to check for ARAO compliance.

- "To be anti-racist is to acknowledge the permanence of racism through organizations, industries and communities, and to recognize that racism is a system of disproportionate opportunity and penalties based on skin color,"[94] as well as identity markers such as religion.

- An anti-racist organization will acknowledge systemic racism within the workplace.[95]

- "(Anti-Oppression means) giving up power, being inclusive of all groups, of all marginalized groups, having representation from these groups and having joint decision-making about policy, procedures and practices."[96]

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[93]Ibid.

[94]Jennifer Liu, CNBC (2020), *Companies are Speaking out Against racism, but Here's What it Really Looks Like to Lead an Anti-racist Organization*, https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/15/what-it-means-to-be-an-anti-racist-company.html

[95]Ibid.

[96]Helen Wong and June Ying Yee, Association of Children's Aid Societies, Ontario Child Welfare Anti-Oppression Roundtable, August 2010, *An Anti-Oppression Framework for Child Welfare in Ontario*, http://www.oacas.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Framework.pdf

Cultural Safety

Normally, the term we hear is "cultural competence." Cultural competence is an aspect of anti-oppression practice.

"Cultural competence "encourages people to work across cultural differences. It asks individuals and organizations to focus on understanding the characteristics and needs of "diverse groups". Cultural competence encourages people to include diverse groups in existing frameworks. This approach is limited because the dominant group's culture is accepted as the norm and diversity is identified as anything outside of those norms. Often, with cultural competence, the dominant group does not critically examine its power and privilege."[97]

We propose going beyond cultural competence and encourage your organization to practice cultural safety.

What is Cultural Safety?

"Cultural Safety" is a term that emerged from the health sector in New Zealand during the 1990s (Papps & Ramsden, 1996; Ramsden, 2002)..."[98] "It grew from concerns about the health status of Maori peoples...the Indigenous people of New Zealand."[99]

The concept grew from an understanding of patient needs in the context of social determinants of health, such as racism and inequality (Paradies et al., 2015).[100]

The concept of "cultural safety" extends beyond cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. Cultural safety is the outcome you achieve through respectful engagement and understanding and addressing the power imbalances inherent in our systems.[101] It urges service providers to recognize the impact of their personal culture on their professional practice. The practice of

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[97]Supra, note 91

[98]Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Projects with Action Research initiative (2020), *Cultural Safety Principles and Guidelines,* https://d2rn9gno7zhxqg.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/20101356/CALD-PAR-Cultural-Safety-2020.1.pdf

[99]The University of British Columbia (2021) , *How do We Foster Cultural Safety in the Workplace*. https://vpfo.ubc.ca/2021/04/how-do-we-foster-cultural-safety-in-the-workplace/

[100] Ibid

[101]First Nations Health Authority, *Cultural Safety and Humility*. https://www.fnha.ca/wellness/wellness-and-the-first-nations-health-authority/cultural-safety-and-humility

cultural safety prioritises how service users define safety for themselves.[102] A culturally safe environment is where people with diverse backgrounds and experiences feel spiritually, physically, socially and emotionally safe and free from discrimination and a denial of their identity and needs.[103] It is a way of working rather than specific knowledge about cultures.[104]

Cultural safety spectrum:[105]

Cultural safety can be achieved by moving through the following steps:

Step 1: Cultural awareness – recognizing that there are differences and similarities in cultures.

Step 2: Cultural sensitivity – starting to see the influences of the dominant culture and acknowledging biases.

Step 3: Cultural competence – developing an understanding of other cultures and skills for interacting in respectful ways

Step 4: Cultural humility – A continuous effort to learn and self-reflect. Recognizing the dynamics of power and privilege and being comfortable with not knowing everything. "It involves listening without judgment and being open to learn from and about others in order to develop mutual understanding, successful partnerships, and cultural safety.[106]

Principles for Achieving Cultural Safety

Reflecting on your practice as a service provider:
- Examine how your beliefs and values, families and community influence how you interact with others.
- Reflect on our own privilege and acknowledge power relationships, the context of white privilege, and actions that disempower on an individual and collective level.[107]
- It doesn't matter if you did not intend to make someone feel unsafe. When someone feels that way, their experiences may be part of a long history of discrimination and should be taken seriously. Respond with openness and generosity. [108]

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[102]Ibid

[103]Supra, note 98

[104]Kathleen Martin, Charles Darwin University Centre for Remote Health, *Culturally Safe Practice*, https://ntcoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Culturally-Safe-Practice-2.pdf

[105]Supra, note 99

[106]Ibid

[107]Supra, note 98

[108]Ibid

- Work to build critical knowledge about controversial issues that makes space for different views and a nuanced understanding.[109]
- Take your actions and reflections on cultural safety back to your wider organizations and workplaces[110]

Minimizing the power differentials between yourself and your clients:
- Working along-side your clients, making space for marginalized communities to share their lived experience and treating them as experts of their own experience.
- Understanding their needs and taking steps to ensure they are not alienated from the organization.
- Engaging in a conversation with clients without making assumptions.
- Building relationships and practising two-way learning.

Undertake a process of decolonisation:
- Begin with an approach that recognises culture as a strength.[111]
- Question colonial power relationships and language and collaborate with marginalized groups to create other ways of knowing and being in the world.[112]
- Avoid the tendency to view "others" as exotic and one's own cultural group as the "norm."[113]
- Understand that people from the same ethnicity may have similar culture, but not identical. How culture is practised in a particular family can differ greatly and therefore, culture cannot be seen as a homogenous entity. This is very important for avoiding stereotypes and racism.
- Continue to educate ourselves about the diversity of cultures, experiences of racism, practices of privilege and identities that we engage with throughout the initiative. [114]
- Ensure that you do not diminish, demean or disempower others through your actions.[115]
  - Refrain from stereotyping, discrimination, and racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or other demeaning and harmful commentary.

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[109] Ibid

[110] Ibid

[111] Ibid

[112] Ibid

[113] Ibid

[114] Ibid

[115] Supra, note 104

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND CASE STUDIES: ASSESSING COMPLIANCE WITH GUIDING FRAMEWORKS

For each of the four frameworks discussed above, we have developed a set of questions you can ask when you are reviewing your policies, programs, and service delivery practices. These questions will help you determine whether your policies, programs and practices are aligned with the frameworks.

Human Rights Law

Here are some guiding questions to check compliance with the principles of human rights. Note: The first step is to figure out which laws apply to your organization. If you are unsure, please seek legal advice.

Questions for assessing policies

- Does my organization contain policies on anti-discrimination and anti-harassment?
- Has there ever been any feedback on the policies?
- When were they last revised and who created the policies?
- Do my organization's policies articulate the principles of gender equality according to international and domestic law?
- Do those policies clearly acknowledge the disproportionate impact of gender-based violence on women, girls, trans, two-spirit and genderqueer/gender non-binary people as well as the increased vulnerability and barriers faced due to intersectional factors, such as race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, etc.?
- Do the policies comply with federal or provincial legislation? Some questions you can explore include:
  - Do they clearly articulate what discrimination and harassment are?
  - Do they articulate the obligations of management and staff and the rights of service users in the policy?
  - Do they provide for accommodation based on religion, disability, family status, pregnancy, etc., to reduce barriers for individuals facing violence?
  - Do they lay out the process of making an internal complaint about discrimination or harassment as well as filing a human rights compliant under the appropriate legislation?

- Are employees who are newcomers, immigrants, and refugees aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights during orientation when they start employment?
- Are service users/clients aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights when they reach out to my organization?
- Are the policies readily available and accessible for all, including service users/clients (e.g., in various languages, as well as ASL and braille)?

Note: To make sure your policies are fully compliant with human rights laws, seek legal advice.

Case study

A women's shelter in Ontario has a policy that all shelter residents must use the pots and pans provided by the shelter when cooking in the common kitchen. The shelter has a large number of Muslim residents who eat halal food. There is no written policy that outlines the steps to ask for accommodation to deviate from this rule and how that request will be handled.

Problems

- A Muslim woman who sincerely believes that using the same pots where pork is cooked will violate her practice of eating halal, will not be able to cook her food.
- If she wants to request accommodation and bring her own pots, she may be too afraid to ask or may not even think she has a legal right to do so if those rights under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* are not articulated in the policies or communicated to her clearly.

Best practices

- Have a clear policy on anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and accommodation, and make it available to shelter residents in various languages and formats.
- Communicate to residents that if they have dietary restrictions, the shelter will accommodate them.
- Train outreach staff of agencies to educate Muslim clients about their rights when referring them or helping them to get into a shelter.
- Create online modules for shelter clients to watch when they move into a shelter to learn all about living in a shelter.

Questions for Assessing Programs

For each program you review, answer the following guiding questions:

- Is the program in compliance with federal or provincial human rights legislation?
  - Is it designed in a manner that is accessible to diverse groups of the target population and provides accommodation as needed?
    - Consider:
      - Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g., remote or in-person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters or multilingual staff), languages of written material) and formats of delivery, content of the program and processes that participants have to go through, feedback mechanism (present or absent and how it is designed if present)
  - Is the program implemented in a manner that is accessible and anti-discriminatory? (i.e., what is actually happening on the ground in terms of how the program is being delivered)
    - Consider:
      - Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g., remote or in-person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters, multilingual staff, languages of written material)and formats of delivery, content, and processes that participants have to go through
      - Is an accessible feedback mechanism being used where community members/participants can share their input, reservations, and comments?

Case study

A settlement agency delivers a weekly group workshop for women who are GBV victims/survivors. Participants have to sign up for the program by filling out an online form. The form has a question that asks which age group a participant belongs to. This is a required field, which means the form does not progress unless this question is answered. Although the program is not meant to be for young women only, there is no option to choose an age group over 60 in the form. The only options are 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, and 46-59. Additionally, the workshop begins with an icebreaker which requires everyone to remove any headgear.

Problems

- Discriminates against Muslim women who observe the hijab, based on religion or creed.
- Discriminates against senior women facing violence.
- Excludes a vulnerable group from a potentially helpful resource and service in their journey of healing from GBV.

Best practices

- Make an exception for headgear worn for reasons of religion, disability or another relevant ground mentioned in the applicable human rights law.
- Include age groups from 60+ in the form.

Questions for Assessing Service delivery Practices

- Are any of the actions of those delivering services discriminatory?
- Are diverse groups being accommodated based on their needs?
- Are services provided based on community needs and interests?
- Have diverse sections of the community been consulted to ensure services are responsive to their needs?
- Are diverse communities reaching out and using the services, and participating in the feedback process?

Case study

A mosque in Alberta has a clear policy on welcoming everyone to the mosque that wants to pray or speak to the Imam, regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. The Imam's office is on the second floor and the elevator is out of order. One day, when a Muslim trans woman in a wheelchair tries to enter the mosque, she asks a staff person to speak to the Imam about her experience of family violence and requests to speak to him on the first floor due to the condition of the elevator. The staff person refuses to accommodate the woman and does not call the Imam down to the first floor. Further, he states that the mosque does not allow trans people to enter its premises.

Problems

- Violation of human rights around services based on more than one prohibited ground: gender identity, gender expression, and disability.
- Creates a significant barrier for a vulnerable group of Muslim women who require supports and services for GBV.

Best practices

- At the policy and program level, there should be a training requirement for mosque [Shura](#), volunteers and the Imam, on human rights policies.
- Staff (including mosque Shura, volunteers and Imams) should acquire the necessary training, and read and understand the policies on anti-discrimination and anti-harassment.
- If staff is unsure about the policy, they should speak to management and ask questions.
- In this case, the staff member should have welcomed the individual into the mosque and requested the Imam to meet the individual on the first floor.
- The staff member should have provided the individual with a comfortable space to wait in until the Imam arrived.

Trauma and Violence-informed Approach

Questions to ask when checking compliance with a trauma and violence-informed approach:

Questions for Assessing Policies

- Does my organization have a policy on a trauma and violence informed approach? If not, are principles of a trauma and violence-informed approach clearly articulated across the policies that are relevant to serving diverse GBV victims/survivors?
- Are trauma and "trauma-informed" clearly defined in the policies and are the definitions grounded in the experiences of diverse GBV victims/survivors?
- Were GBV victims/survivors with lived experience as well as community experts who serve them consulted in creating these policies?
- Are the policies easily accessible to GBV victims/survivors? (Consider: physical or online location, languages, and formats)?
- Are they written in plain language?

- Is there a requirement for training of staff, board and management on trauma and violence- informed approach in the policies? Do the policies include training on how to deal with clients who are facing trauma when applying the trauma and violence approach? (i.e., active listening, trigger words, responding with empathy)
- Do the policies include hiring staff, board and management who have expertise on trauma and violence or lived experience?
- Do the policies outline the obligations of staff and management in applying a trauma and violence-informed approach?
- Do they outline the steps involved in applying this approach consistently?
- Do they include a mechanism to investigate breaches of the policies?
- Do the Human Resources (HR) policies emphasize hiring board, staff and management that understand violence and trauma?

Case study

A non-profit organization with a large Muslim clientele has drafted a policy on counselling services for GBV victims/survivors based on a trauma and violence-informed approach. The policy was drafted by a committee consisting of a couple of board members and staff. The policy has a definition of "trauma" and "trauma-informed" and examples of scenarios where violence can lead to trauma. The policy was approved without any feedback from community experts working with Muslim clients facing GBV. In the scenarios where the connection between violence and trauma are explained, it only mentions colonial violence and its impact on Indigenous populations, but nothing about current forms of racism against Black, Asian and Muslim groups. It does not mention anything about the connection between violence, Islamophobia, and other factors leading to trauma such as precarious immigration status, poverty, lack of knowledge of the system, etc. Rather, the only time it mentions Muslims is when it states that Muslim women are victims of an overly violent and patriarchal culture. It also requires clients to disclose their immigration status on the intake form.

Problems
- A narrow and incomplete definition of "trauma" and "trauma-informed" which excludes certain groups, such as Muslims, and undermines their experiences.
- This can lead to exclusionary program design and service delivery which has the potential to alienate or retraumatize Muslim women through stereotypes and a lack of understanding of the various factors that lead to their unique experiences of violence and trauma.

- Asking clients to disclose immigration status can create barriers for those with precarious status and increase harm by heightening the fear of deportation.

Best practices
- While or after drafting the policy, invite feedback from diverse members of board, staff, and community members, particularly GBV victims/survivors from various backgrounds as well as service providers with expertise on GBV on ensuring that the definition of trauma and trauma-informed is inclusive of various groups.
- Acknowledge all forms of racism and systemic inequalities that heighten someone's experience of violence and trauma.
- Avoid cultural and religious stereotypes.
- Remove the requirement to disclose immigration status.

Questions for Assessing Programs

- Is the program designed in a way that can increase harm for victims/survivors?
- Who delivers the program? What type of training do they have?
- Does it have the effect of excluding or alienating certain groups of victims/survivors?
- Were diverse groups of victims/survivors consulted when developing the program?
- Is there an accessible mechanism for feedback from service users/clients?
- Is there support for service users/clients regarding referrals? (as one program does not have capacity to address the range of issues clients come with)

Case Study

During the Covid-19 pandemic, your organization stopped providing in-person services. During this time, it launched a program for [family violence](#) victims/survivors, where they can download an app and fill out an online intake form outlining their experience of violence and the help they need. The form also has a question about their immigration status. The form can be translated into various languages online. Once the form is completed and clients submit it, they receive a confirmation email in their inbox. Following that, they receive a Zoom link for a follow-up meeting.

Problems

- Assumes that everyone is at the same level of computer and technology literacy.

- Does not consider the fact that during Covid-19, many victims/survivors have been stuck at home with their abusers and may not have a safe space to use the app or conduct a zoom meeting.
- Victims/survivors may share a phone and computer with the abuser which is under surveillance.
- The abuser may have access to the victim/survivor's email.
- Questions about immigration status may heighten a victim/survivor's trauma as many with precarious status live in constant fear of deportation.

Best practices

- Conduct a survey on whether clients have access to a safe phone and/or computer and a safe space for remote meetings.
- Ask how proficient they are in technology and whether they have someone to help them.
- For those who do not have a safe space or access to safe technology, arrange for alternatives.
- Provide phones to clients which they can pick up at a safe spot, such as a grocery store where they can go without being questioned by their abuser.
- Arrange for a space or a trusted person to keep the phone with and arrange for safe timings to conduct the meetings.
- Take out questions about immigration status from the intake form.
- Arrange for a support person to join the Zoom meeting so that the client does not feel isolated.

Questions for Assessing Service Delivery Practices

- Are those delivering services (management, staff, and volunteers) creating a physically and emotionally safe environment through their actions and words?
- Are they meeting the clients where they are at? Are there instances of probing the client for information even if they are not ready to share details yet?
- Are any of your staff members being judgmental about clients' faith, their culture, or any part of their identity of experience? Are they making any assumptions?
- If a client reacts in an unexpected way, are they taking the time to reflect and try and understand what may have happened to them?
- Are they exercising compassion, and empowering them through recognizing their strengths, and acknowledging and validating their experiences?

- Are they providing the space for them to communicate their needs and concerns freely?
- Are they equipped to recognize triggers?
- Do they listen attentively, and ask questions if there is something they don't understand?
- Do they ask them if they would like a break, or if there is anything else they can do to support them?
- Do they follow up with them on a regular basis?

Case study

A South Asian, Muslim woman who has faced GBV has come to your agency for housing support. The worker at the agency sits down with her to complete her application for subsidized housing. The client has not disclosed that she has faced GBV. In the next room, another worker is speaking on the phone with another client. The worker in the next room is speaking loudly enough for this client to hear parts of the conversation. The worker in the next room is reiterating the incidents of violence faced by the other client, and this triggers the first client. She begins to cry, and asks to leave. The worker who is helping her with her housing application begins probing for information, and finally, the client discloses that her husband used to beat her regularly and although she has left him, he still stalks her and abuses her over the phone. The client is Muslim and wears the hijab. The worker remarks, "Well, this is what happens when you practice such backward faiths. Why didn't you leave earlier?"

Problems

- Not recognizing the trigger and de-escalating the situation by closing the door in the other room or asking the other worker to speak more quietly.
- Instead of asking what the worker can do to help the client, and offering assistance, probing for questions and retraumatizing her by making judgments about her faith.

Best practices

- Ensure client safety by providing a comfortable and welcoming physical space (i.e., a private room).
- Offering the client water when she began to cry and immediately closing the door or asking the other worker to close the door.
- Offering a break to the client, or if the client insists on leaving, ensuring that she leaves safely.

- Offering to call a taxi or Uber for the client depending on the relationship/trust with the client and comfort level (check in with client first).
- Asking if the client would like to reschedule the meeting.
- When the client disclosed the abuse, offering compassion by acknowledging and validating her experience rather than making stereotypical remarks about her faith and culture.

Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression

Questions you can ask when checking for compliance with an ARAO framework:

Questions for Assessing Policies

- Does my organization contain a policy on Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression?
- Are ARAO principles embedded in all policies?
- Did my organization consult or learn from the lived experience of GBV victims/ survivors to create the ARAO policy or the policies that have the ARAO principles embedded in them?
- In addition to GBV victims/survivors, were perspectives of vulnerable, isolated, and at-risk women and girls considered? Were they consulted?
- Do the policies specifically acknowledge the historical systems of power and oppression, the colonial legacy of Canada as well as the current existence of racism in our society?
- Do the policies have the effect of perpetuating systemic racism against vulnerable groups, including Muslim women and girls?
- Do the policies contain requirements of ARAO training for management, staff and board?
- Are accountability measures built into the policies to measure compliance with ARAO principles? Does it lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?
- Do the Human Resources (HR) policies emphasize the hiring of diverse board, staff, and management to ensure representation of the client group?
- Are the policies readily available and accessible for all? (In various languages and formats, such as ASL and braille)?
- Are they written in plain, easy language?
- Are they placed in a location that people can easily access?[116]

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[116]Supra, note 91

- Do the process of creating the policies and the language of the decision-making provisions outlined in them centre the lived realities of diverse groups of GBV victims/survivors, including Muslims?
- Who creates the policies?
- Is there an opportunity and a safe space for feedback on policies by management, staff, and service users?

Case study

A legal clinic has a policy that a client will not be turned away when they ask for help with reporting their partner to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) for marriage fraud. (Marriage fraud is when someone marries a Canadian citizen or permanent resident (PR) just to get permanent resident status In Canada and then leaves the relationship once they become PR. The partner looking to get status is sponsored to Canada by the Canadian citizen or permanent resident. The partner who sponsors can report the fraud to IRCC with the goal of having the other partner deported.) The clinic is composed of an all-White, mostly male board, management, and staff. The policy was drafted by some members of the management team and approved by the board.

Problems

- While the intention may be to help women who have been used by their partners as a vehicle to enter Canada, this policy does not align with IF-ARAO principles.
- It does not take into account that many women who have been sponsored by men who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents are often reported by their abusive sponsors with an allegation of marriage fraud as a revenge tactic for leaving the abusive relationship.
- The effect of this policy is to also assist abusive men in their effort to deport their female partners, which overlooks the gendered elements of the sponsorship program and essentially further victimizes already marginalized groups.
- It perpetuates the systemic racism embedded in our immigration policies that often create immigration precarity, facilitate deportation and penalize racialized groups, particularly vulnerable women who are already facing abuse.
- The policy is drafted and approved by dominant, privileged groups without any input from victims/survivors of violence.

Best practices

- Have a clear policy on applying ARAO principles.
- If there is no member of staff, management or board who represents the target groups the clinic is meant to serve, train staff, management, and board on ARAO principles.
- Consult with victims/survivors of violence for feedback on the draft to ensure that they are not retraumatized and penalized through this policy.

Questions for Assessing Programs

Answer the following guiding questions for each program you review:

- Is the program design informed by lived experiences of service users, i.e., diverse groups of GBV victims/survivors?
- Is the program designed in a way that could alienate any group or discourage them from using the program? In our case, we would be looking at whether it excludes Muslim women, girls, trans and non- binary people in any way (Consider content, process, and framework of the program)
- Is the program implemented in a way that has the effect of alienating any group or discourages them from using the program?
- Is there a mechanism for regular feedback from clients on whether the program addresses their needs? Describe the mechanism.
- Were GBV victims/survivors consulted in designing the programs, and is there a consultation mechanism in place? What is the consultation process?
- Are there resources for staff training for serving diverse clients?
- Are there resources for staff wellness to maximize services for diverse clients?

Case study

A community organization in an Ontario city with a large Muslim population has launched an online counselling program for GBV victims/survivors where they can have sessions online with a counsellor of their choice from a list of counsellors on the website. None of the counsellors are racialized or a member of a faith group. The program was designed without any input from GBV victims/survivors. In order to qualify for free counselling, clients would have to submit proof of income or income assistance online for assessment of whether they meet the low-income threshold.

Problems

- The design and implementation of the program does not centre the voices of victims/survivors and their needs as no feedback was requested or consultations were done when the program was being designed.
- The fact that there is no racialized or Muslim counsellor, and no language interpretation services will create a gap in cultural and linguistic understanding between the counsellor and the client. It will also discourage many from applying.
- Keeping no alternative for submitting documents assumes that all clients have access to a scanner or smartphone, which may not be the case for many GBV victims/survivors, especially those facing poverty.

Best Practices

- Consult with Muslim and other GBV victims/survivors in the community to ensure the program design and implementation is in alignment with their needs.
- Consult with mental health experts in the community who identify as Muslim as well as survivors to see which counsellors would be best suited.
- Recruit counsellors who speak languages that are spoken by the target groups.
- Have options for mailing proof of income for clients who do not have access to a smartphone, scanner, or fax machine.

Questions for Assessing Service Delivery Practices

- Are staff or volunteers perpetuating systems of inequality and oppression through their words and actions?
- Are trainings being completed by staff and volunteers?
- Are staff wellness resources being used?
- Are clients feeling safe and understood when accessing services?
- Are services being advertised in various languages and formats?
- Are clients being responded to in a timely manner?
- Are clients' agency to make their decisions and express their needs being respected?

Case Study

A women's shelter has a policy on ARAO, which requires all staff to complete ARAO training upon being hired. A staff member who was hired while the Executive Director was away on

vacation, did not complete the training. The training requirement was overlooked by the supervisor of the new staff member. One day, while speaking on the phone with a Muslim woman who was facing GBV and looking for general information about shelters, the staff member made a remark that she doesn't understand why the woman wouldn't leave her violent culture and family immediately and come to the shelter.

Problems

- The checks and balances for ensuring that all staff complete ARAO training were not applied.
- The employee completely disregarded the woman's needs and experience, imposed her own worldview and perspective in offering assistance and reinforced the Islamophobia and racism that Muslim communities face.

Best Practices

- Ensure that all staff complete required ARAO training on a regular basis.
- Receive client feedback regularly to check whether staff are complying with ARAO.
- Ensure staff members are communicating with clients in a non-judgmental manner and treating GBV victims/survivors as experts of their own experiences.

Cultural Safety

Questions to ask when checking for compliance with the framework of cultural safety:

Questions for Assessing Policies

- Does my organization have a policy on cultural safety?
- Are principles of cultural safety embedded in other policies across the organization that are relevant to specific groups, such as GBV victims/survivors who identify as Muslim?
- Does the cultural safety policy or other policies with cultural safety principles embedded in them articulate principles of cultural safety as a vision and goal of the organization's practices?
- Do the policies lay out the duties of the organization in conducting cultural safety training for staff and management?

- Do service users have access to the policies? Are the policies made available to diverse groups of service users, i.e., in different languages and formats?
- Do they lay out the responsibilities of staff, board and management in practising cultural safety?
- Do they lay out the steps involved in ensuring consistent application of this policy?
- Do they lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?
- Were the policies created in consultation with and based on the expertise of diverse marginalized groups, including members of the BIPOC, faith-based, disability and LGBTQ2S+ community?

Case study

A shelter has a policy which outlines the intake and referral process for victims/survivors of GBV. It outlines a standard set of questions the caseworker must ask the client, the response time, situations in which referrals will be made, and the timeline for providing referrals to clients.

Problems

- Nothing in the policy indicates:
  - How the intake will be conducted.
  - What communication skills the caseworker should use in terms of applying cultural safety.
  - The training requirement for the caseworker in cultural safety.
  - What questions should be asked/avoided so that diverse groups of clients, including faith-based groups, feel welcome and safe.

Best practices
- Include a preamble explaining the principles and importance of practicing cultural safety.
- Lay out how caseworkers ought to apply cultural safety when conducting interviews.
- Include a mechanism of feedback from the client and the steps of self-reflection and tangible actions that must be followed by the case worker, including re-training.

Answer for each program you are reviewing
- Who was involved in developing the program? Do they represent the target groups that the program is meant to serve? If not, do their knowledge and skills reflect an understanding of the cultures and practices of target group service users/clients, and an ability and willingness to learn from their experiences?
- Are program facilitators trained in cultural safety or do they represent the target groups?
- Were target groups consulted for the design and implementation plan of the program?
- Does any aspect of the design or implementation perpetuate stereotypes about other cultures or the experiences of others?

Case study

Your agency has a wellness/support group for women who are victims/survivors of forced marriage. This program enables them to come together once every month to confidentially discuss their experiences, provide mutual support, and share information/resources. The program has two facilitators, and both of them identify as White and female. When they signed up for the role of facilitators, they were not required to complete any cultural safety training. Participants get to know about this program through the organization's flyer. In the flyer, the program is titled "You don't have to tolerate abuse here." The flyer also mentions the *Criminal Code of Canada* provisions on forced marriage, which states that it is a crime in Canada and those who are involved in a forced marriage, including family members, can go to jail. It states that participants have the right to call the police.

Problems

- Saying that "you don't have to tolerate abuse here," assumes that violence against women happens outside of Canada, or that women are more supported in Canada than elsewhere in the world. This automatically creates a dichotomy of a dominant and inferior culture. It perpetuates stereotypes against other cultures.
- There is nothing in the flyer that informs participants that the facilitators are trained in cultural safety and will treat them as experts of their own experiences.
- Stating the *Criminal Code* provisions assumes that participants would want their families to go to jail. This may not only raise confidentiality concerns for them, but also silence them further due to their desire to protect their families.

- Stereotypes about their culture may make them hesitant to ask for culturally specific services, such as referral to a religious institution.

Best Practices

- Involve participants in the design and plan of the implementation. Ask them what they need.
- If the program is geared towards Muslim women, ask them whether they would prefer Muslim facilitators.
- Involve experts in the community to develop cultural safety training for the facilitators.
- Do not use language that assumes that Muslim-majority countries are more patriarchal and violent than Canada.
- Use language that ensures that participants will be in a safe and confidential space where they are free to share their experiences and issues and needs without judgment.
- Outline the principles of cultural safety in the flyer or sign-up forms for participants.
- If you are providing information about their legal rights and the *Criminal Code* provisions, articulate it in a way that gives them the choice to report to the police or ask for other avenues to stop the violence.
- Have a referral binder/file with culturally appropriate services. Consult with community experts, such as other agencies or victims/survivors who have found help from culturally appropriate services.
- Design an evaluation that allows program facilitators and staff and management of the organization to learn about the gaps in the program, critically reflect on them, and take action to make changes.

Questions for Assessing Service Delivery Practices

- Even if those who are delivering the services are trained in cultural safety, are they practicing it on the ground? What is the client's experience?
- Are they using language that is advancing stereotypes against certain cultures?
- Are they speaking in a condescending manner, without allowing the clients to express their needs and share their experiences?
- In the efforts to ensure cultural safety, are they inadvertently excluding other groups?

Case study

You are responsible for referring clients facing GBV that contact your organization to appropriate services. You have two clients, both with apparently Muslim names, who have come to you for referral to legal services for family violence. You immediately refer them to a Muslim lawyer who specializes in family law. It turns out that one of the clients does not identify as Muslim, and has already had a negative experience with this lawyer who has made discriminatory remarks against non-practising Muslims, queer Muslims, and those who belong to minority Muslim sects.

Problems

- An assumption that just because somebody's name sounds Muslim, they identify as Muslim.
- As assumption that someone who identifies as Muslim will automatically want a Muslim lawyer.
- These assumptions can create barriers for Muslim women to seek support from your organization.

Best Practices

- Ask clients if they identify with any particular faith and whether they would like to be referred to a Muslim lawyer.
- Ask if they have worked with this particular lawyer before and what their experience was.

CONDUCTING THE REVIEW: A PRACTICAL MANUAL

Now that we have an idea of which questions to ask in our review, we have to think about how we collect our answers to the questions. In other words, what should be our methodology in conducting the review? Here, too, we will be using GBA+ considerations.

Reminder

Target group:

Muslim women, girls, trans, non-binary and two spirit people facing GBV
- Look at other intersectionalities:
    o Age
    o Ethnic or national background
    o Race
    o Religion
    o Immigration status
    o Family status
    o Disability
    o Socioeconomic status
- As we ask our review questions, we must also consider whether policies, programs and services that effectively serve the Muslim communities may have unintended negative consequences for other marginalized groups

Information Source for Your Review

When you conduct your review, the answers to the questions that have been developed in this guide can be obtained through multiple sources.

Below is a summary of different sources of information you can use to answer the review questions.

- **Policy review:**
    o Organizational policy documents
    o Organization's website
    o Knowledge and experience of organization's leadership (Executive Director, CEO, Management)

- Knowledge and experience of service users (i.e., victims/survivors of GBV)

- **Program review:**
  - Project proposals for specific programs
  - Any other document that describes the program and implementation design
  - Organization's website
  - Knowledge and experience of organization's leadership (Executive Director, CEO, Management)
  - Knowledge and experience of service users

- **Review of the service delivery practices on the ground**
  - Knowledge and experience of service users

Data collection method

Here are three methods through which you can obtain your data from your information sources.

- **Documentary Review** of policies, website information, project proposals, and other relevant documents

- **Interview of Organizational Leaders (Executive Director, CEO, Management):** The interview can be conducted by someone else, or it can be a self-assessment exercise by leaders.

- **Service user interviews/focus groups:** You can organize one-on-one interviews or focus groups discussions with service users and conduct a qualitative analysis of all the data collected. Focus group/interview participants should include your clients, those who have had brief interactions with your organization, as well as those who have contacted your organization/thought about contacting your organization but have refrained from using your services.

GBA+ considerations in data collection method

In applying GBA+, consider the same principles of human rights, ARAO, cultural safety and trauma and violence - informed approach that we discussed earlier.

Understanding non-response bias when collecting data through service user interviews/focus groups

Non-response bias happens when a percentage of participants in your sample cannot or do not want to respond to/take part in your study because of factors that make them differ greatly from people who respond.[117]

> Example: you are studying the barriers to supports and services for newcomer women in a particular neighbourhood, and you create a survey that is only in English. You ask a community organization that serves women in that neighbourhood to send the survey to a particular number of women. It is very possible that many of them will not respond, as many newcomer women have language barriers. Therefore, if only a few women who speak English respond to the survey, this will skew your results by overrepresenting the number of women who do not face significant barriers to supports and services due to their proficiency in English.

Non-response bias can happen for a variety of reasons

- The questions you used in your survey or focus group interview asks for embarrassing or sensitive information[118]
- Design flaws. For example, a paper survey for young adults or an online smartphone survey for older adults can both to lead to a lower response rate for your targeted population[119]
- Some people simply forget to return the survey[120]
- Your survey may not reach all members in your sample. For example, email invites might go into the Spam folder, or your members' email addresses may have changed[121]
- Certain groups are more inclined to answer because of their level of safety and comfort. For example, people who have already left an abusive situation may be more inclined to respond to a survey about the challenges they faced in accessing support rather than people who are still in an abusive relationship.

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[117]Formplus, *Response vs Non Response Bias in Surveys + [Examples],* https://www.formpl.us/blog/response-non-response-bias#:~:text=What%20is%20Non%20Response%20Bias,for%20the%20lack%20of%20response

[118]Government of Canada (2019), *Integrating Gender-Based Analysis Plus into Evaluation: A Primer (2019),* https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/evaluation-government-canada/gba-primer.html#H-09.

[119] Statistics How To, *Non-Response Bias: Definition, Example,* https://www.statisticshowto.com/non-response-bias/

[120]Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

Some things to consider to minimize non-response bias and make sure that different groups in your target population are being included:

- Are you making sure your participants' identities are confidential?
- Who is collecting the data and who is the target population for the study?
- How is the data being collected?
- When is the data being collected?
- Where is the data being collected?[122]

As you will be working with vulnerable people in the data collection phase, it is important to consider certain existing barriers that may prevent people from sharing information. Victims/survivors of GBV often deal with trauma, stigma of sharing information because of the familial or community context in which they are situated, and fear of losing their immigration status if they have precarious status, or fear of being deported if they have no status. They may fear repercussions or further violence when sharing information. Therefore, data collection methods, such as surveys and interviews should be designed in a manner that maximizes participation by reducing barriers and creating a safe and trustworthy environment.

Are you making sure your participants' identities are confidential?

Participants must be reassured that the entire process will be anonymous. Their names and other identifying information should only be available to the organization and kept confidential. In addition to reassuring participants, surveys, interviews or focus group questions must be designed and conducted in a manner that protects identity.

Who is collecting the data and who is the target population?

Who is collecting the data?

When you are conducting interviews, facilitating focus group discussions, or collecting survey responses in person, consider the following:

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[122]Supra, note 118.

- Female participants may hesitate to share sensitive information, such as domestic violence, sexual assault or any personal information with a male interviewer.

- While some Muslim participants may prefer to speak with someone from Muslim communities due to a common understanding of the faith, or speak to someone from the same linguistic background, some may specifically choose not to speak to a Muslim interviewer or someone from the same ethnic background due to a fear of judgment or that information might leak into the community.

- In a preliminary questionnaire/survey, consider asking participants who they would be most comfortable being interviewed by.

- Recruit interviewers who represent the diversity of the participants and accommodate the requests of the participants.

Who is the target population?

- Refer to the target population section above and ensure that your call out for participants specifically asks for people from various marginalized groups.

- The common factors across all groups should be Muslim + someone who has faced GBV + woman/girl/trans/genderqueer/gender non-binary + someone who knows of, has previously used or currently using your organization's services.

- Try to get a wide range of participants – e.g., diversity in age, income, immigration status, sect, ethnic background, family status, etc.

How and where is the data being collected?

Considerations:

- Should you collect data online, via phone, or in-person?
- Should you hold focus groups or individual interviews?

These will depend on age, educational background, access to safe space at home, health, and the sensitivity of the information shared.

Online versus in-person considerations:

- o Generally, youth are more technologically savvy than someone from an older generation. Therefore, seniors may be more receptive to an in-person interview/survey and younger people may be more responsive in an on-line survey/interview.
- o Someone with a language barrier may prefer to conduct an in-person or phone interview rather than filling out a survey online. However, translating the survey in their preferred language may encourage them to fill it out online.
- o In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, people may generally be more inclined to conduct interviews remotely, but this will depend on whether GBV victims/survivors have a safe space at home to speak about the violence they are facing. Those who are living with their abusers may be reluctant to do so.
- o Mobile and other technological devices may be monitored by the abusers.
- o If participants are coming in-person for an interview or focus group, is the space accessible? Can they travel safely and conveniently to the venue?

Focus group versus individual considerations:

- o GBV victims/survivors may be reluctant to come together in a group to share information as people from their community might recognize them.

- o Even if group zoom interviews are conducted where cameras are turned off and names are hidden, participants may be afraid of voice recognition.

When is the data being collected?

- ● Ensure data collection happens at different times and days of the week.
- ● Single mothers with childcare responsibilities, working participants, or participants who have abusers living with them, participants who have other obligations such as hospital visits, etc. may only be available at certain times and days of the week.
- ● Ensure availability is asked about in the initial survey to make sure maximum participation is achieved.

Designing and Carrying out your Review: Practical Tips

Organizing your Data

- Create a master word or excel file with all the questions (for policy, program and service delivery practices review) developed in this guide for each of the four guiding frameworks. (See Appendix A for the **Master Template**)
- Once you have completed gathering all the information from your review, you can record your findings in this master template.

Planning your Documentary Review

The documentary review will probably be most relevant when reviewing policies, and program design and implementation.

Estimated timeline for document review:

Compiling documents for review: 1 month
Reviewing documents and recording answers: 2 months

- Make a list of all the organizational documents that outline policies and describe programs relevant to clients facing GBV.
- Answer the policy and program related questions for each guiding framework in a document. We have created a **Documentary Review Template** that you can use to record your answers. (see Appendix B)
- Later, you can transfer your answers to the **Master Template.** (Appendix A)

Planning the interview with a leader of the organization (e.g., ED, Management, CEO)

Answers to the policy and program related questions can also be obtained from the knowledge and experience of organizational leaders. (See Appendix C for an **Interview Template**)

Estimated timeline for interviews: 1 month

- Have someone from your organization or a partner organization interview the Executive Director (ED), CEO, or someone from the management team.
- The ED, CEO or management staff can also do a self-assessment by asking themselves the interview questions.
- Record the interview and transcribe the answers on to the **Interview Template.** ([Appendix C](#))
- Later, you can transfer the answers on to the relevant columns in the **Master Template.** ([Appendix A](#))
- For the purposes of this project, CCMW will conduct these interviews.

Planning your interviews/focus groups with service users/clients

The questions on service delivery practices will be best answered by service users who are facing/have faced GBV. However, service user interviews or focus groups can also help answer some of the policy and program review questions.

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Estimated timeline:

Creation of flyers/posters, reaching out to victims/survivors, recruiting participants, setting dates, translating surveys and focus group questions: 1.5 months

Completing surveys and focus group discussions/interviews: 1.5 months

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- Conduct the interviews/focus groups in four stages:
    - Reaching out to victims/survivors to recruit them as participants
    - Preliminary questionnaire
    - Survey
    - Focus group or individual interview[123]

- The preliminary questionnaire will determine how best to create a safe and comfortable environment for participants when they fill out the main survey and attend the focus group or individual interview (e.g. language preference, childcare needs, preference for online or in person session, etc.).(see [Appendix D](#) for a sample **Preliminary Questionnaire**)

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[123] Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA), (forthcoming), *Research Study on The State of Gender-based Violence in South Asian communities During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic*

- The survey will determine participant characteristics, such as age, sectarian affiliations (if any), income, ethnic background, immigration status, etc. (see Appendix E for a sample **Survey**)

- The focus group discussion will ask questions on participants' experience of violence, as well as with accessing supports and services. (see Appendix F for a sample Focus Group Questionnaire/individual interview)

Recruiting Participants

- Create a flyer/poster in different languages to let people know about the review and recruit participants (depending on your clientele, decide which languages the flyer/poster should be translated into). Each organization should have its own flyer or poster.

- Introduce the review process in your flyer/poster in clear, accessible, language. Briefly explain the process and ensure participants that their identities will be protected. Ask them to indicate their preferred language.

- Flyer/poster should ask present or former clients of the organization and those who know about the organization to participate.

- Ask participants to respond through a safe phone number or email and to indicate a safe phone number or email for you to contact them. If they are in a shelter, ask them to contact you through their shelter (If you are a shelter yourself, reach out to your existing resident clients directly).

- When they respond, ask them their preferred method of filling out the preliminary questionnaire (phone or email). Ask them their preferred language of communication.

- Try approaching clients you already have a relationship with so that the trust is already there. At the same time, make sure your study captures clients who have only accessed your services briefly (for example, someone who has only called you once) or someone who wanted to contact you but did not. This will help you assess what barriers (if any) they faced in getting help. Otherwise, the results of your study will over-represent the number of clients who have had positive experiences only, because it is more likely that long-term clients have overcome certain barriers to get help from your organization and are satisfied with your services.

- Recruit 10 participants per organization.

Preliminary Questionnaire

- Once participants respond to your call-out, recruit volunteers or staff to complete the **preliminary questionnaire** (Appendix D) with participants through one-on-one phone calls, or have participants email the form (if they feel safe to do so).

- Translate the form in different languages based on participant needs.

- For English speaking participants, those who feel comfortable and safe using the internet can submit the English form online (e.g., via google form or survey monkey).

- If you are on a phone call, you can fill out the form for them, or walk them through the survey while they fill out the form and send it to you.

- In your survey,

  o Ask participants about their preferences for completing the main survey and focus group interview (e.g., language preference, online or phone versus in-person, group versus individual interview, etc.).

- Provide each participant with an ID number to protect anonymity (this number will be used throughout the review).

- If participants need help with through the form in their preferred language, see if someone from the organization can provide language specific services or arrange for an interpreter.

Survey

- Translate the **survey** (Appendix E) in different languages based on participant needs.
- For English speaking participants, those who feel comfortable and safe using the internet can submit the English form online (e.g. via google form or survey monkey).
- If a participant wants to attend in person, have them complete it on the same day as the focus group/interview, before the focus group or interview begins.
- If participants need help, walk them through the form on the phone, by zoom or in person (based on their preference).
- If they need help in their preferred language, see if someone from the organization can provide language specific services or arrange for an interpreter.

General

- Plan a group session or individual one-on-one interview based on what the participants want.
- Translate the questions in different languages based on participant needs.
- Recruit a facilitator, backup facilitator and a note-taker.
- Recruit someone who will take care of technology related issues (if conducting on zoom).
- Recruit an interpreter if a facilitator or note-taker who speaks the language is not available.
- Record the sessions (with permission of the participants) and transcribe the notes on to the **Focus Group /Interview Questionnaire** template ([Appendix F](#)).
- Conduct a qualitative analysis of all data received through the focus groups/interviews and based on your findings, answer the relevant questions in the **Master Template** ([Appendix A).](#)

Timing

- Keep focus group sessions to two hours maximum.
- Provide breaks (washroom, prayer, mental health).
- Give time for discussions but also be mindful of the time.

In-Person Sessions (individual or group)

- If offering in-person sessions, arrange for refreshments.
- Ask for dietary restrictions, including religious restrictions and allergies in your preliminary questionnaire.
- Provide honorarium or gift cards and transportation cost to participants.

Zoom Session (group)

- Ask each participant to change their name to their ID number as soon as they log in.
- Turn off camera.
- Ensure that there is no one else in the room with the participant. If someone else is in the room, participant should be asked to be alone, or to leave the session.
- Participants should be muted when they are not speaking.
- If there is someone who starts speaking out of any form of disrespect either by

unmuting themselves or using the chat, remove them from the session immediately.[124]

Phone or Zoom (individual session)

- Ensure that the participant is in a safe space and that there is no one else around. If someone else is in the room, the participant should be asked to be alone, or to leave the session.
- If you are the facilitator, tell the participant that a note-taker and interpreter (if required). is present on the call or zoom session.
- Note-taker will write down the answers.
- Record session with permission of participant.

Ground Rules for Facilitators[125]

- Acknowledge multiple viewpoints and opinions.
- Own your intentions and impact.
- Step Back: Contributions allow for active discussions and important takeaways for each audience member. However, ensure you are giving time for other audience members to speak and provide their thoughts.
- Recognize your own privileges, and honor the different experiences we bring into this space: Privilege comes in many different forms, including race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, etc.
- Challenge with care and empathy: With differing opinions, it's okay to question others, however, doing this with care, allows for audience members to feel welcomed and comfortable.

Additional Reminders for Facilitators[126]

- Create an environment that is physically and emotionally comfortable.
- Monitor the time and ensure that pacing is appropriate to the group.
- Encourage active participation of all group members.
- Acknowledge and draw upon differences within the group.
- Encourage the precise and frank naming of issues.

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[124] Canadian Council of Muslim Women (2021) , *Digital Anti-Racism Education Project: Workshop Manual.*

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

- Draw on the range of knowledge and experience in the group.
- Balance the intellectual and emotional atmosphere.
- Offer information, frameworks, and insights when appropriate.
- Address conflict and discomfort constructively.
- Work democratically with space, resources, time, and people.
- Consciously build a spirit of collective as well as individual inquiry and will to act.

Managing Difficult Situations[127]

You may be required to manage difficult situations during the interviews. Some activities may be met with defensiveness from participants, as they could be difficult to reach and engage. It may be beneficial to ask a difficult participant to observe and reflect, rather than potentially blocking the process.

Disclosures[128]

When participants disclose personal experiences of GBV, racism and/or Islamophobia, practice whole body listening to help participants feel seen and heard. It can also be a first step for the person to seek further support. Co-facilitators can and should offer immediate emotional support and make appropriate referrals. Hearing disclosures about abuse and violence is hard. Be ready to access counselling, debrief with a supervisor or co-workers, write out your feelings in a private journal and/or reflect on your feelings and emotions.

Grief and Mental Health Support[129]

For some individuals, recalling experiences of violence, discrimination, racism, etc. can be traumatic and triggering. It is okay if they don't want to participate anymore. Offer them the space they need and ensure they know that they can come back when they feel comfortable doing so. You can also suggest that they can stay in the zoom breakout room/outside of the physical room until the conversation is over, in which you can go back and inform them.

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[127]Ibid.

[128]Ibid.

[129]Ibid.

Remember to redirect them to the appropriate helpline if they express interest in talking to a health professional. Helplines that are specific to certain regions of the country can be found below.

Helplines

Canada Wide

Naseeha Mental Health Hotline
1-866-627-3342
https://naseeha.org/

Khalil Center Psychological and Spiritual Community Wellness Center
1-855-5KHALIL
https://khalilcenter.com/

Nisa Helpline
1-888-315-6472
https://nisahelpline.com/

Kids Help Phone
1-800-668-6868

British Columbia

Health Link BC
8-1-1
https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/mental-health-substance-use/mental-health

Alberta

Alberta Health Services
Mental Health Helpline: 1-877-303-2642
Addiction Help Line 1 877-332-2322

Saskatchewan

(Central Saskatchewan)

West Central Crisis and Family Support Centre
306-463-6655
24 Hour Crisis Line – 306-463-1860
https://westcentralcrisis.ca/

(North Saskatchewan)

Piwapan Women's Centre
24 Hour Crisis Line - 306-425-4090
https://pwcprograms.com/

Prince Albert Mobile Crisis Unit
Mon - Fri 4 pm - 8 am, Sat-Sun 24 hours
306-764-1011

Regina Mobile Crisis Services
24 Hours - Mobile Crisis Hotline – 306-757-0127

Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service
24 Hours - 306-933-6200

(South West Saskatchewan)

Southwest Crisis Services
 24 Hours - 1-800-567-3334

Manitoba

Klinic Crisis Line
204-786-8686 or 1-888-322-3019

Manitoba Suicide Prevention & Support Line
1-877-435-7170 (1-877-HELP170)

Klinic Sexual Assault Crisis Line
204-786-8631 or 1-888-292-7565

Manitoba Farm, Rural & Northern Support Services
1-866-367-3276

First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line
1-855-242-3310

Ontario

Good2Talk
1-866-925-5454

Mental Health Helpline
1-866-531-2600

Ontario Distress Centres
https://www.dcontario.org/

Anishnawbe Health Toronto
(416) 920-2605, 416-360-0486, 416 657 0379

Tangerine Walk-In Counselling
(905) 795-3530

Family Services of Peel
(905) 453-5775

Quebec

Tel-jeunes Helpline at 1-800-263-2266 or text 514-600-1002.

New Brunswick

Chimo Helpline

1-800-667-5005

Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team (MHMCT)
902-429-8167
1-888-429-8167

Bullying Help Line
1-902-490-7283
For texting: 1-902-233-7283

Avalon Sexual Assault Centre / Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (SANE)
1-902-422-4240

Bryony House Shelter
1-902-429-9002

First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line
1-855-242-3310

Prince Edward Island

The Island Helpline
24 Hours - 1-800-218-2885

Newfoundland and Labrador

Mental Health Services Crisis Line
(709)- 737-4668

Newfoundland and Labrador Health Line
1-888-709-2929

RESULTS OF THE REVIEW: REPORTING YOUR FINDINGS

Once you complete your review and the qualitative analysis of the focus group/service user interview data, document your findings in the format of a report. The report should also record unexpected and miscellaneous findings beyond the questions that were asked in the review.

Sample Report Outline

The Final Report should include:

- Introduction and background on the project
- List of project partners and advisory committee members
- Vision and objective
- Background and context on GBV in the Muslim community
- Analytical framework used in the review
- Review methodology used
- Key findings: Strengths and gaps in services for GBV victims/survivors who are Muslim
- Participant testimonials (anonymous and included with participant permission)
- Summary of change strategy
- Recommendations for the future
- Conclusion

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Sex: Sex is the classification of someone as male, female or intersex based on their biological and anatomical characteristics. Sex is assigned at birth.

Gender: Gender is socially constructed and refers to one's roles, behaviour, identities and expressions which may or may not align with one's sex assigned at birth. For example, a person can be female based on the sex assigned at birth, but may choose to identify as a man.

Gender Identity: A person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum.[130]

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[130] Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Gender Identity and Gender Expression*, https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-because-gender-identity-and-gender-expression/3-gender-identity-and-gender-expression#:~:text=A%20person's%20gender%20identity%20may,up%2C%20body%20language%20and%20voice.

Gender Expression: How a person publicly expresses or presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice.[131]

Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientation is about who someone is attracted to physically, romantically and emotionally.

Transgender/Trans: When someone's gender, or gender identity, is different from the sex they were assigned when they were born.

Two-Spirit: Refers to a person who identifies as having both a masculine and a feminine spirit and is used by some Indigenous people to describe their sexual, gender and/or spiritual identity.[132]

Gender queer/Gender Non-binary: Serves as an umbrella term to refer to a range of gender diverse identities and expressions that do not fall within the gender binary of 'male' and 'female'.[133]

Gender-based Violence: Gender-based violence is violence that is directed at someone because of their gender, gender expression, gender identity or perceived gender.[134] It is informed by beliefs of male superiority over women, girls, trans and gender diverse people.

Emotional/Psychological Abuse: When a person uses words or actions to control, frighten or isolate someone or take away their self-respect... It can include:

threats, put downs, name calling or insults
constant yelling or criticism
controlling or keeping someone from seeing friends or family
making fun of preventing someone from practicing their faith or religion
destroying belongings, hurting pets or threatening to do so
bullying: intimidation or humiliation (including on the Internet)[135]

Financial Abuse: A form of abuse where a person has control over another person's access to economic resources.[136]

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[131] Ibid.

[132] Researching for LGBTQ2S+ Health, Two-Spirit Community, https://lgbtqhealth.ca/community/two-spirit.php

[133]University of Alberta Library, *Equity, Diversity, & Inclusivity: Library Resources*, https://guides.library.ualberta.ca/edi/nonbinary

[134]Supra, note 1.

[135] Government of Canada, About Family Violence, https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/fv-vf/about-apropos.html#emo

[136] Government of Canada, *Abuse: Type of Abuse*, https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/service-delivery/abuse/types-abuse.html

Sexual Abuse: Any situation in which force or threat is used to obtain participation in non-consensual sexual activity or coercing a person to engage in sexual activity against their will[137]

Spiritual Abuse: When someone uses spiritual or religious beliefs to hurt, scare or control another person.[138]

Forced Marriage: "Forced marriage is a practice in which a marriage takes place without the free consent of the individuals getting married, where pressure or abuse is used to 'force' one or both people to marry against their will."[139]

Human Trafficking: "Human trafficking is a crime that involves the control and exploitation of people for profit. It is a violation of human rights and often described as a form of modern-day slavery."[140]

Hate Crime: A crime that is motivated by hate or prejudice against someone because of a particular social group they belong to, such as race, religion, ethnicity, etc.

Family Violence: "Family violence is considered to be any form of abuse, mistreatment or neglect that a child or adult experiences from a family member, or from someone with whom they have an intimate relationship."[141]

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV): Violence that happens within a romantic relationship and is perpetrated by an intimate partner (i.e., spouse or romantic partner)

Discrimination: Discrimination is treating a person or group unfairly because of their sex, race, age, disability, or other personal characteristics.

Harassment: Harassment is a form of discrimination under Canada's federal and provincial human rights laws. It is any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates someone. Generally, it is behaviour that continues over time. But sometimes, one-time incidents can also be considered harassment.[142]

Cyber Harassment: A form of bullying or harassment that is done through electronic means.

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[137] Ibid.

[138] 1800 Respect, *Spiritual Abuse*, https://www.1800respect.org.au/violence-and-abuse/spiritual-abuse#:~:text=What%20is%20spiritual%20abuse%3F,you%20don't%20want%20to.

[139] South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario, *Forced Marriage*, https://salc.on.ca/forced-marriage/

[140] Ontario Women's Justice Network, *Human Trafficking and the Law: Supporting Trafficked People in Ontario*. https://owjn.org/human-trafficking-and-the-law/

[141] Government of Canada, *Family Violence*, https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/fv-vf/index.html

[142] Canadian Human Rights Commission, *What is Harassment*, https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/about-human-rights/what-harassment

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is any unwanted comment, gesture, or action that is sexual in nature, and that makes someone feel afraid, humiliated or offended.

Sexual Assault: Sexual assault refers to unwanted sexual activity (e.g., touching, kissing someone without consent, rape).[143]

Stalking: Stalking is when one person scares or harasses someone else with repeated, unwanted contact, communication, or actions.[144]

Coercive Control: A pattern of controlling behaviour that an abuser uses to dominate their partner and limit their freedom.[145] Controlling behaviour can include isolating, humiliating, manipulating, gaslighting and regulating/monitoring activities.

Duty to Accommodate: This is a legal obligation that employers, landlords, unions, contractual parties, and service providers have under Canada's federal and provincial human rights laws. It means treating someone differently or applying special rules to prevent or reduce discrimination.

Islamophobia: Islamophobia is disliking, fearing, or having hostility or prejudice against the religion of Islam or someone who identifies as Muslim.

Intersectionality: This term was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American civil rights advocate and professor. Intersectionality shows us that people have multiple, intersecting identities and that these identities can overlap and give rise to unique experiences of discrimination and oppression.

Trauma: Trauma is the lasting emotional response that often results from living through a distressing event.[146]

Muslim: Those who identify as adhering to the religion of Islam, in belief or in practice.

Islam: An Abrahamic religion centred around the belief that there is one God, and that Prophet Muhammad is His final messenger.

Halal: An Arabic word that translates to "permissible." In terms of food, Islamic dietary laws define which foods are halal.

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[143]Canadian Women's Foundation. *The Facts About Sexual Assault and Harassment*, https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/sexual-assault-harassment/

[144]Ontario Women's Justice Network. *Need to know about Criminal Harassment or Stalking?* https://owjn.org/2012/02/need-to-know-about-criminal-harassment-or-stalking/

[145] Shelley Flannery, domesticshelters.org (2021) *A Guide to Coercive Control*, https://www.domesticshelters.org/articles/identifying-abuse/a-guide-to-coercive-control

[146] CAMH: The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, *Trauma*, https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/trauma

Imam: A Muslim religious leader who leads prayers at a mosque, and provides other services to the Muslim community, such as performing religious ceremonies, delivering sermons and providing religious and spiritual guidance and advice.

Shura: An Arabic word which refers to a consultative council or assembly.[147]

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[147] Dictionary.com, https://www.dictionary.com/browse/shura

OTHER GUIDES AND PROJECTS CONSULTED

Digital Anti-Racism Education Project: Workshop Manual, Canadian Council of Muslim Women (2021)

Review of Emergency Shelter Services in Windsor Essex: Evaluation Plan (Draft), Vink Consulting (September 2019)

Registration Practices Assessment Guide: For Regulated Professions and Health Regulatory Colleges, Office of the Fairness Commissioner (March 2016)

Registration Practices Indicators and Sources: A Companion to the OFC's Registration Practices Assessment Guide (March 2016)

Conducting Entry-to-Practice Reviews: Guide for Ontario's Regulatory Bodies, Office of the Fairness Commissioner (February 2015)

Allies for Gender Equality Toolkit: Enhancing Intersectionality in Engaging Men and Boys, White Ribbon (April 2021)

Research Study on the State of Gender-based Violence in South Asian Communities During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) (Forthcoming)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Master Template for Organizing your Data

This template document has been created to help you record and organize all your findings from your review. We have created a chart for each guiding framework.

For each guiding framework, the chart has been split into three sections – policy review, program review, and service delivery practices review. For each section, the answers to your review questions (on the left column) can come from three different sources, and you can organize your answers based on your source in the appropriate columns ("From Documentary Review," "From Organizational Leader Interviews," and "From Service User Interviews/Focus groups").

Note:

- Policy and program related questions will mostly be answered through the Documentary Review and organizational leader interview. If a particular answer cannot be found in the documentary review, you may be able to ask the question in the organizational leader interview, and vice-versa.
- The questions on service delivery practices will be answered through service user interviews/focus groups. Service users may be able to answer some policy or program related questions. (*See Appendices for a sample documentary review template, the organizational leader interview template, and a template for service user interviews/focus groups to see how the questions have been divided among the three information sources*)

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Policy Review			
List of policies reviewed: ● List of documents relied on: ● List of laws that apply to your organization: ●			
Questions	Answers		
	From documentary review	From organizational leader interview	From service user interviews/focus groups

Questions			
Does my organization contain policies on anti-discrimination and anti-harassment?			
Has there ever been any feedback on the policies?			
When were they last revised and who created the policies?			
Do my organization's policies articulate the principles of gender equality according to international and domestic law?			
Do those policies clearly acknowledge the disproportionate impact of gender-based violence on women, girls, trans and genderqueer/gender non-binary people as well as the increased vulnerability and barriers faced due to intersectional factors, such as race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, etc.?			
Do the policies comply with federal or provincial legislation? Some questions you can explore include: ● Do they clearly articulate what discrimination and harassment is? ● Do they articulate the obligations of management and staff and the rights of service users in the policy? ● Do they provide for accommodation based on religion, disability, family status, pregnancy, etc., to reduce barriers for individuals facing violence? ● Do they lay out the process of making an internal complaint about discrimination or harassment as well as filing a human rights compliant under the appropriate legislation?			
Are employees who are newcomers, immigrants, and refugees aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights during orientation when they start employment?			
Are service users/clients aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights when they reach out to my organization?			
Are the policies readily available and accessible for all, including service users (e.g., in various languages, as well as ASL and braille)?			
Program Review			
List of Programs Reviewed: ● List of documents relied on: ●			
Questions	Answers		

Is the program in compliance with federal or provincial human rights legislation?			
Is it designed in a manner that is accessible to diverse groups of the target population and provides accommodation as needed? Consider: ● Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g. remote or in person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters or multilingual staff), languages of written material) and formats of delivery, content of the program and processes that participants have to go through, feedback mechanism (present or absent and how is it designed if present)			
Is the program implemented in a manner that is accessible and anti-discriminatory? (i.e., what is actually happening on the ground in terms of how the program is being delivered) Consider: ● Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g., remote or in person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters, multilingual staff, languages of written material)and formats of delivery, content and processes that participants have to go through ● Is an accessible feedback mechanism being used where community members/participants can share their input, reservations, and comments?			
<center>Service Delivery Practices Review</center>			
<center>Questions</center>	<center>Answers</center>		
Are any of the actions of those delivering services discriminatory? Are staff providing accommodation to diverse groups based on their needs?			
Are service users made aware of anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies of the organization and their rights to be free from discrimination and harassment when receiving services?			
Are services provided based on community needs and interests?			

Have diverse sections of the community been consulted to ensure services are responsive to their needs?			
Are diverse communities reaching out and using the services, and participating in the feedback process?			

TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE-INFORMED APPROACH

Policy Review			
List of policies reviewed: • List of documents relied on: •			
Questions	Answers		
	From documentary review	From organizational leader interview	From service user interviews/focus groups
Does my organization have a policy on a trauma and violence informed approach? If not, are principles of a trauma and violence-informed approach clearly articulated across the policies that are relevant to serving diverse GBV victims/survivors?			
Are trauma and "trauma-informed" clearly defined in the policies and are the definitions grounded in the experiences of diverse GBV victims/survivors?			
Were GBV victims/survivors with lived experience as well as community experts who serve GBV clients consulted in creating these policies?			
Are the policies easily accessible to GBV victims/survivors? (Consider: physical or online location, languages and formats)?			
Are they written in plain language?			
Is there a requirement for training of staff, board and management on trauma and violence informed approach in the policies? Do the			

policies include training on how to deal with clients who are facing trauma when applying the trauma and violence approach? (i.e., active listening, trigger words, responding with empathy)			
Do the policies include hiring staff, board and management who have expertise on trauma and violence or lived experience?			
Do the policies outline the obligations of staff and management in applying a trauma informed approach?			
Do they outline the steps involved in applying this approach consistently?			
Do they include a mechanism to investigate breaches of the policy?			
Do the Human Resources (HR)policies emphasize hiring board, staff and management that understand violence and trauma?			
Program Review			
List of Programs Reviewed: ● List of documents relied on for review: ●			
Questions (for each program reviewed)	Answers		
Is the program designed in a way that can increase harm for survivors?			
Who delivers the program? What type of training do they have?			
Does it have the effect of excluding or alienating certain groups of survivors or discouraging them from accessing the program?			
Were diverse groups of survivors consulted when developing the program?			
Is there an accessible mechanism for feedback from service users?			
Is there support for clients regarding referrals? (as one			

program does not have capacity to address the range of issues clients come with)			
Service Delivery Practices Review			
Questions	Answers		
Are those delivering services (staff and volunteers) creating a physically and emotionally safe environment through their actions and words?			
Are they meeting the clients where they are at? Are there instances of probing the client for information even if they are not ready to share details yet?			
Are any of the staff members being judgmental about clients' faith, their culture, or any part of their identity of experience? Are they making any assumptions?			
If a client reacts in an unexpected way, are they taking the time to reflect and try and understand what may have happened to them?			
Are they exercising compassion, and empowering them through recognizing their strengths, and acknowledging and validating their experiences?			
Are they providing the space for them to communicate their needs and concerns freely?			
Are they equipped to recognize triggers?			
Do they listen attentively, and ask questions if there is something they don't understand?			
Do they ask them if they would like a break, or if there is anything else you can do to support them?			
Do they follow up with them on a regular basis?			

ANTI-RACISM AND ANTI-OPPRESSION (ARAO)

Policy Review			
List of policies reviewed: • List of documents relied on: •			
Questions	Answers		
	From documentary review	From organizational leader interview	From service user interviews/focus groups
Does my organization contain a policy on Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression?			
Are ARAO principles embedded in all policies?			
Did my organization consult or learn from the lived experience of GBV victims/survivors to create the ARAO policy or the policies that have the ARAO principles embedded in them?			
In addition to GBV victims/survivors, were perspectives of vulnerable, isolated and at-risk women, girls, trans, two-spirit and non-binary individuals considered? Were they consulted?			
Do the policies specifically acknowledge the historical systems of power and oppression, the colonial legacy of Canada as well as the current existence of racism in our society?			
Do the policies have the effect of perpetuating systemic racism against vulnerable groups, including Muslim women and girls?			
Do the policies contain requirements of ARAO training for management, staff and board?			
Are accountability measures built into the policies to measure compliance with ARAO principles? Do they lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?			
Do the Human Resources (HR) policies emphasize the hiring of diverse board, staff and management to ensure representation of the client group?			

Are the policies readily available and accessible for all? (In various languages and formats, including ASL and braille)?			
Are they written in plain, easy language?			
Are they placed in a location that people can easily access?			
Do the process of creating policies and the language of the decision-making provisions outlined in them centre the lived realities of diverse groups of GBV victims/survivors, including Muslim clients?			
Who creates the policies?			
Is there an opportunity and a safe space for feedback on policies by management, staff and service users?			

Program Review			
List of Programs Reviewed: • List of documents relied on: •			
Questions	Answers		
Is the program design informed by lived experiences of service users, i.e. diverse groups of GBV victims/survivors?			
Is the program designed in a way that could alienate any group or discourage them from using the program? In our case, we would be looking at whether it excludes Muslim women, girls, trans and non- binary people in any way. (Consider content, process and framework of the program)			
Is the program implemented in a way that has the effect of alienating any group or discourages them from using the program?			
Is there a mechanism for regular feedback from clients on whether the program addresses their needs? Describe the mechanism			
Were GBV survivors consulted in designing the programs, and is there a consultation mechanism in place? What is the consultation process?			
Are there resources for staff training for serving diverse clients?			
Are trainings being completed by staff?			

Are there resources for staff wellness to maximize services for diverse clients			
Are staff wellness resources being used?			
Questions	Answers		
Are staff and management perpetuating systems of inequality and oppression through their words and actions?			
Are clients feeling safe and understood when accessing services?			
Are services being advertised in various languages and formats?			
Are clients being responded to in a timely manner?			
Are clients' agency to make their decisions and express their needs being respected?			

CULTURAL SAFETY

Policy Review			
List of policies reviewed: • List of documents relied on: •			
Questions	Answers		
	From documentary review	From organizational leader interviews	From service user interviews/focus groups
Does my organization have a policy on cultural safety?			
Are principles of cultural safety embedded in other policies across the organization that are relevant to specific groups, such as GBV victims/survivors who identify as Muslim?			
Does the cultural safety policy or other policies with cultural safety principles embedded in them articulate principles of cultural safety as a vision and goal of the organization's practices?			
Do the policies lay out the duties of the organization in conducting cultural safety training for staff and management?			
Do service users have access to the policies? Are the policies made available			

to diverse groups of service users, i.e., in different languages and formats?			
Do they lay out the responsibilities of staff, board, and management in practising cultural safety?			
Do they lay out the steps involved in ensuring consistent application of this policy?			
Do they lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?			
Were policies created in consultation with and based on the expertise of diverse marginalized groups, including members of the BIPOC, faith-based, disability and LGBTQ2S+ community?			
Program Review			
List of Programs reviewed: • List of documents relied on: •			
Questions	Answers		
Who was involved in developing the program? Do they represent the target groups that the programs are meant to serve? If not, do their knowledge and skills reflect an understanding of the cultures and practices of target group service users, and an ability and willingness to learn from their experiences?			
Are program facilitators trained in cultural safety or do they represent the target groups?			
Where target groups consulted for the design and implementation plan of the program?			
Does any aspect of the design or implementation perpetuate stereotypes about other cultures or the experiences of others?			
Service Delivery Practices Review			
Questions	Answers		
Even if those who are delivering the services are trained in cultural safety, are			

they practicing it on the ground? What is the client's experience?			
Are they using language that is advancing stereotypes against certain cultures?			
Are they speaking in a condescending manner, without allowing the clients to express their needs and share their experiences			
In the efforts to ensure cultural safety, are they inadvertently excluding other groups? (e.g., minority sect Muslims, LGBTQ2S+ Muslims)			

APPENDIX B – Documentary Review Template

Note: If you cannot find the answers to some of these questions from the documentary review, you can ask them in your interviews with the organizational leader.

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

Applicable laws: _____

- Does my organization contain policies on anti-discrimination and anti-harassment?
- Has there ever been any feedback on the policies?
- When were they last revised and who created the policies?
- Do my organization's policies articulate the principles of gender equality according to international and domestic law?
- Do those policies clearly acknowledge the disproportionate impact of gender-based violence on women, girls, trans and genderqueer/gender non-binary people as well as the increased vulnerability and barriers faced due to intersectional factors, such as race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, etc.?
- Do the policies comply with federal or provincial legislation?
  - o Do they clearly articulate what discrimination and harassment is?
  - o Do they articulate the obligations of management and staff and the rights of service users in the policy?
  - o Do they provide for accommodation based on religion, disability, family status, pregnancy, etc., to reduce barriers for individuals facing violence?
  - o Do they lay out the process of making an internal complaint about discrimination or harassment as well as filing a human rights compliant under the appropriate legislation?
- Are employees who are newcomers, immigrants, and refugees aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights during orientation when they start employment?
- Are service users/clients aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights when they reach out to my organization?
- Are the policies readily available and accessible for all, including service users (e.g., in various languages and formats, such as ASL and braille)?

Programs:

Programs Reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

- Is the program in compliance with federal or provincial human rights legislation?
- Is it designed in a manner that is accessible to diverse groups of the target population and provides accommodation as needed?
  - Consider: Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g., remote or in person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters or multilingual staff), languages of written material) and formats of delivery, content of the program and processes that participants have to go through, feedback mechanism (present or absent and how is it designed if present)
- Is the program implemented in a manner that is accessible and anti-discriminatory? (i.e., what is actually happening on the ground in terms of how the program is being delivered)
  - Consider: Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g., remote or in person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters or multilingual staff), languages of written material) and formats of delivery, content of the program and processes that participants have to go through, feedback mechanism (present or absent and how is it designed if present)
  - Is an accessible feedback mechanism being used where community members/participants can share their input, reservations, and comments?

TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE-INFORMED APPROACH

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

- Does my organization have a policy on a trauma and violence informed approach? If not, are principles of a trauma and violence-informed approach clearly articulated across the policies that are relevant to serving diverse GBV victims/survivors?
- Are trauma and "trauma-informed" clearly defined in the policies and are the definitions grounded in the experiences of diverse GBV victims/survivors?
- Were GBV survivors with lived experience as well as community experts who serve GBV clients consulted in creating these policies?
- Are the policies easily accessible to GBV survivors? (Consider: physical or online location, languages and formats)?
- Are they written in plain language?
- Is there a requirement for training of staff, board and management on trauma and violence informed approach in the policies? Do the policies include training on how to deal with clients who are facing trauma when applying the trauma and violence approach? (i.e., active listening, trigger words, responding with empathy)
- Do the policies include hiring staff, board and management who have expertise on trauma and violence or lived experience?
- Do the policies outline the obligations of staff and management in applying a trauma informed approach?
- Do they outline the steps involved in applying this approach consistently?
- Do they include a mechanism to investigate breaches of the policies?
- Do the Human Resources (HR) policies emphasize hiring board, staff and management that understand violence and trauma?

Programs:

Programs Reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

- Is the program designed in a way that can increase harm for victims/survivors?
- Who delivers the program? What type of training do they have?
- Does it have the effect of excluding or alienating certain groups of victims/survivors or discouraging them from accessing the program?
- Were diverse groups of victims/survivors consulted when developing the program?
- Is there an accessible mechanism for feedback from service users?
- Is there support for clients regarding referrals? (as one program does not have capacity to address the range of issues clients come with)

ANTI-RACISM AND ANTI-OPPRESSION (ARAO):

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

- ● Does my organization contain a policy on Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression?
- ● Are ARAO principles embedded in all policies?
- ● Did my organization consult or learn from the lived experience of GBV victims/survivors to create the ARAO policy or the policies that have the ARAO principles embedded in them?
- ● In addition to GBV victims/survivors, were perspectives of vulnerable, isolated and at risk women, girls, trans, two-spirit and non-binary individuals considered? Were they consulted?
- ● Do the policies specifically acknowledge the historical systems of power and oppression, the colonial legacy of Canada as well as the current existence of racism in our society?
- ● Do the policies have the effect of perpetuating systemic racism against vulnerable groups, including Muslim women and girls?
- ● Do the policies contain requirements of ARAO training for management, staff and board?
- ● Are accountability measures built into the policies to measure compliance with ARAO principles? Do they lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?
- ● Do the Human Resources (HR) policies emphasize the hiring of diverse board, staff and management to ensure representation of the client group?
- ● Are the policies readily available and accessible for all? (in various languages and formats including ASL and braille)?
- ● Are they written in plain, easy language?
- ● Are they placed in a location that people can easily access?
- ● Do the process of creating policies and the decision-making provisions outlined in them centre the lived realities of diverse groups of GBV victims/survivors, including those who identify as Muslim?
- ● Who creates the policies?
- ● Is there an opportunity and a safe space for feedback on policies by management, staff and service users?

Programs

Programs reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

- Is the program design informed by lived experiences of service users, ie. diverse groups of GBV victims/survivors?
- Is the program designed in a way that could alienate any group or discourage them from using the program? In our case, we would be looking at whether it excludes Muslim women, girls, trans and non- binary people in any way. (consider content, process and framework of the program)
- Is the program implemented in a way that has the effect of alienating any group or discourages them from using the program?
- Is there a mechanism for regular feedback from clients on whether the program addresses their needs? Describe the mechanism
- Were GBV victims/survivors consulted in designing the programs, and is there a consultation mechanism in place? What is the consultation process?
- Are there resources for staff training for serving diverse clients?
- Are trainings being completed by staff?
- Are there resources for staff wellness to maximize services for diverse clients
- Are staff wellness resources being used?

CULTURAL SAFETY

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

- Does my organization have a policy on cultural safety?
- Are principles of cultural safety embedded in other policies across the organization that are relevant to specific groups, such as GBV survivors/victims who identify as Muslim?

- Does the cultural safety policy or other policies with cultural safety principles embedded in them articulate principles of cultural safety as a vision and goal of the organization's practices?
- Do the policies lay out the duties of the organization in conducting cultural safety training for staff and management?
- Do service users have access to the policies? Are the policies made available to diverse groups of service users, i.e. in different languages and formats?
- Do they lay out the responsibilities of staff, board and management in practising cultural safety?
- Do they lay out the steps involved in ensuring consistent application of this policy?
- Do they lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?
- Were policies created in consultation with and based on the expertise of diverse marginalized groups, including members of the BIPOC, faith-based, disability and LGBTQ2S+ community?

Programs:

Programs Reviewed: _____

Documents relied on: _____

- Who was involved in developing the program? Do they represent the target groups that the programs are meant to serve? If not, do their knowledge and skills reflect an understanding of the cultures and practices of target group service users, and an ability and willingness to learn from their experiences?
- Are program facilitators trained in cultural safety or do they represent the target groups?
- Where target groups consulted for the design and implementation plan of the program?
- Does any aspect of the design or implementation perpetuate stereotypes about other cultures or the experiences of others

APPENDIX C - Sample Interview Template for Organizational Leaders

Please note that in addition to some of the review questions developed in this guide, this interview contains background and contextual questions to better understand the relevant needs of and barriers faced by Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and gender-diverse people facing GBV.

<u>**INTERVIEW**</u>

Name of Organization:
Date of interview:
Full Name of Interviewee:

<u>**Background and contextual questions:**</u>

- What is your role in the organization?

- What types of supports and services does your organization provide?

- What percentage of your clients identify as Muslim?

- What types of violence are most prevalent amongst your Muslim clients?

- Has anything in the trend changed during the pandemic?

- What are the most common types of support victims/survivors seek out?

- What is the demographic of your staff?

- What do you think are some of the reasons victims/survivors do not reach out? What are the barriers?

- How does your organization address those barriers?

- How has your organization tailored services during the pandemic?

- What are the limitations in your organization in providing effective services to Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and non-binary individuals facing GBV?

Targeted questions to inform review of policies and programs:

Note: Many of these questions can also be answered through the documentary review. Only ask them if you are not able to find the answers in the documentary review.

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

- Does your organization contain policies on anti-discrimination and anti-harassment?
- Has there ever been any feedback on the policies?
- When were they last revised and who created the policies?
- Do your organization's policies articulate the principles of gender equality according to international and domestic law?
- Do those policies clearly acknowledge the disproportionate impact of gender-based violence on women, girls, trans and non-binary people as well as the increased vulnerability and barriers faced due to intersectional factors, such as race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, etc.?
- Do the policies comply with federal or provincial legislation?
  - Do they clearly articulate what discrimination and harassment is?
  - Do they articulate the obligations of management and staff and the rights of service users in the policy?
  - Do they provide for accommodation based on religion, disability, family status, pregnancy, etc, to reduce barriers for individuals facing violence?
  - Do they lay out the process of making an internal complaint about discrimination or harassment as well as filing a human rights compliant under the appropriate legislation?
- Are employees who are newcomers, immigrants, and refugees aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights during orientation when they start employment?
- Are service users/clients aware of the policy documents and are they made aware of their rights when they reach out to your organization?
- Are the policies readily available and accessible for all, including service users (e.g., in various languages, as well as ASL and braille)?

Programs:

Programs Reviewed: _____

- Is the program in compliance with federal or provincial human rights legislation?
- Is it designed in a manner that is accessible to diverse groups of the target population and provides accommodation as needed?
    - Consider: Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g. remote or in person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters or multilingual staff), languages of written material) and formats of delivery, content of the program and processes that participants have to go through, feedback mechanism (present or absent and how is it designed if present)
- Is the program implemented in a manner that is accessible and anti-discriminatory? (i.e. what is actually happening on the ground in terms of how the program is being delivered)
    - Consider: Timing, accessibility of the location, mode of delivery (e.g. remote or in person and barriers posed by each), staff capacity and training requirements, flexibility in availability, languages (interpreters or multilingual staff), languages of written material) and formats of delivery, content of the program and processes that participants have to go through, feedback mechanism (present or absent and how is it designed if present)
- Is an accessible feedback mechanism being used where community members/participants can share their input, reservations, and comments?

TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE-INFORMED APPROACH

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

- Does your organization have a policy on a trauma and violence informed approach? If not, are principles of a trauma and violence-informed approach clearly articulated across the policies that are relevant to serving diverse GBV victims/survivors?
- Are trauma and "trauma-informed" clearly defined in the policies and are the definitions grounded in the experiences of diverse GBV victims/survivors?

- Were GBV victims/survivors with lived experience as well as community experts who serve GBV clients consulted in creating these policies?
- Are the policies easily accessible to GBV survivors? (Consider: physical or online location, languages and formats)?
- Are they written in plain language?
- Is there a requirement for training of staff, board and management on trauma and violence informed approach in the policies? Do the policies include training on how to deal with clients who are facing trauma when applying the trauma and violence approach? (i.e., active listening, trigger words, responding with empathy)
- Do the policies include hiring staff, board and management who have expertise on trauma and violence or lived experience?
- Do the policies outline the obligations of staff and management in applying a trauma informed approach?
- Do they outline the steps involved in applying this approach consistently?
- Do they include a mechanism to investigate breaches of the policy?
- Do the Human Resources (HR) policies emphasize hiring board, staff and management that understand violence and trauma?

Programs:

Programs Reviewed: _____

- Is the program designed in a way that can increase harm for survivors?
- Who delivers the program? What type of training do they have?
- Does it have the effect of excluding or alienating certain groups of survivors or discouraging them from accessing the program?
- Were diverse groups of survivors consulted when developing the program?
- Is there an accessible mechanism for feedback from service users?
- Is there support for clients regarding referrals? (As one program does not have capacity to address the range of issues clients come with)

ANTI-RACISM AND ANTI-OPPRESSION (ARAO)

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

- Does your organization contain a policy on Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression?
- Are ARAO principles embedded in all policies?
- Did your organization consult or learn from the lived experience of GBV survivors to create the ARAO policy or the policies that have the ARAO principles embedded in them?
- In addition to GBV victims/survivors, were perspectives of vulnerable, isolated and at-risk women, girls, trans, two-spirit and non-binary individuals considered? Were they consulted?
- Do the policies specifically acknowledge the historical systems of power and oppression, the colonial legacy of Canada as well as the current existence of racism in our society?
- Do the policies have the effect of perpetuating systemic racism against vulnerable groups, including Muslim women and girls?
- Do the policies contain requirements of ARAO training for management, staff and board?
- Are accountability measures built into the policies to measure compliance with ARAO principles? Does it lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?
- Do the Human Resources (HR) policies emphasize the hiring of diverse board, staff and management to ensure representation of the client group?
- Are the policies readily available and accessible for all? (in various languages and formats, including ASL and braille)?
- Are they written in plain, easy language?
- Are they placed in a location that people can easily access?
- Do the process of creating policies and the decision making provisions outlined in them centre the lived realities of diverse groups of GBV client/survivors, including those who identify as Muslim?
- Who created the policies?
- Is there an opportunity and a safe space for feedback on policies by management, staff and service users?

Programs

Programs reviewed: _____

- Is the program design informed by lived experiences of service users, ie. diverse groups of GBV victims/survivors?
- Is the program designed in a way that could alienate any group or discourage them from using the program? In our case, we would be looking at whether it excludes Muslim women, girls, trans and non- binary people in any way. (consider content, process and framework of the program)
- Is the program implemented in a way that has the effect of alienating any group or discourages them from using the program?

- Is there a mechanism for regular feedback from clients on whether the program addresses their needs? Describe the mechanism
- Were GBV victims/survivors consulted in designing the programs, and is there a consultation mechanism in place? What is the consultation process?
- Are there resources for staff training for serving diverse clients?
- Are trainings being completed by staff?
- Are there resources for staff wellness to maximize services for diverse clients
- Are staff wellness resources being used?

CULTURAL SAFETY

Policies:

Policies reviewed: _____

- Does your organization have a policy on cultural safety?
- Are principles of cultural safety embedded in other policies across the organization that are relevant to specific groups, such as GBV victims/survivors who identify as Muslim?
- Does the cultural safety policy or other policies with cultural safety principles embedded in them articulate principles of cultural safety as a vision and goal of the organization's practices?
- Do the policies lay out the duties of the organization in conducting cultural safety training for staff and management?
- Do service users have access to the policies? Are the policies made available to diverse groups of service users, i.e. in different languages and formats?
- Do they lay out the responsibilities of staff, board and management in practising cultural safety?
- Do they lay out the steps involved in ensuring consistent application of this policy?
- Do they lay out the steps in investigating complaints of breach of this policy?
- Were policies created in consultation with and based on the expertise of diverse marginalized groups, including members of the BIPOC, faith-based, disability and LGBTQ2S+ community?

Programs:

Programs Reviewed: _____

- Who was involved in developing the program? Do they represent the target groups that the programs are meant to serve? If not, do their knowledge and skills reflect an understanding of the cultures and practices of target group service users, and an ability and willingness to learn from their experiences?
- Are program facilitators trained in cultural safety or do they represent the target groups?
- Where target groups consulted for the design and implementation plan of the program?
- Does any aspect of the design or implementation perpetuate stereotypes about other cultures or the experiences of others?

APPENDIX D - Sample Preliminary Questionnaire for Services Users

Note: Organizations conducting their own, independent reviews outside of the CCMW project do not need to include the information about partnership with CCMW in the introductory paragraphs below.

Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)
Gender-Based Violence Project
Preliminary Questionnaire

Thank you for taking part in CCMW's project which will address barriers to supports and services experienced by Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and non-binary people facing violence and abuse.

Our organization is partnering with CCMW and conducting this study to assess whether our policies, programs and service delivery practices are meeting your needs/have met your needs. We want to hear about your experience with our services, what challenges you faced in getting our help, where you think our strengths are and where we can improve.

As part of this study, you will be completing a survey and a focus group interview with us.

Confidentiality disclaimer: Thank you for taking the time to complete this preliminary questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to make sure that you feel comfortable and safe when completing the survey and the focus group interview. Please note that all information you share in the preliminary questionnaire, the survey, and focus group/ interview will remain confidential. Your name, phone number and email will only be used for our organization and CCMW's records.

ID number: _____

Have you heard of our organization before?   Yes   No

**Have you ever reached out to our organization for
support and services?**   Yes   No

If yes, select the most appropriate answer:

I am a current client   I am a former client

Are you comfortable

Speaking English?	Yes	No
Reading English?	Yes	No
Writing English?	Yes	No

If you answered "no" to any of the above:

Which language are you most comfortable speaking in: _____

Are you comfortable reading in that language?	Yes	No
Are you comfortable writing in that language?	Yes	No

Do you have safe access to

A computer?	Yes	No
A phone?	Yes	No
Internet?	Yes	No

Are you comfortable using

A computer?	Yes	No
Internet?	Yes	No
Zoom?	Yes	No

If not, do you have someone to help you?   Yes   No

How would you like to fill out the main survey?

Online form

Filling out the form and emailing it

Phone (so someone can walk me through the form or complete it for me)

Zoom (so someone can walk me through the form or complete it for me)

In-person

How would you like to participate in the focus group?

Phone

Zoom

In-person

If you are attending in person, will you be able to travel without difficulty?	Yes	No
Do you have children?	Yes	No
Will you need childcare arrangements at the location of the interview?	Yes	No
Will you need bus or train ticket support for traveling for you or your children?	Yes	No

Are you comfortable with a group session with other survivors/victims of violence, or would you prefer a one-on-one interview?

Group

One-on-one

The focus group interview will be voice recorded for note taking purposes. The voice recording will be deleted afterwards.

Are you okay with being voice recorded?   Yes   No

Do you have any dietary restrictions?

Halal

Vegan

Vegetarian

Other (please specify)

Allergies (please specify)

Do you have any specific request?

Who would you prefer as your interviewer both for the survey and the focus group? (Check all that apply)

Female

Muslim

Another gender (please specify)_____

Non-Muslim

I don't have a preference

I have a specific request (please specify)_____

Will you be available weekdays or weekends?   Weekdays   Weekends

Which days are you available on?   _____

What time of the day are you available?   _____

APPENDIX E - Sample Survey Questions for Service Users

Note: Organizations conducting their own, independent reviews outside of the CCMW project do not need to include the information about partnership with CCMW in the introductory paragraphs below.

<p align="center">***Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)***
Gender-Based Violence Project
Survey</p>

Thank you for taking part in CCMW's project which will address barriers to supports and services experienced by Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and non-binary people facing violence and abuse.

Our organization is partnering with CCMW and conducting this study to assess whether our policies, programs and service delivery practices are meeting your needs/have met your needs. We want to hear about your experience with our services, what challenges you faced in getting our help, where you think our strengths are and where we can improve.

As part of this study, you will be completing a written survey and a focus group interview.

Confidentiality disclaimer: Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please note that all information you share will remain confidential. It will only be used for CCMW's Gender-based Violence project, and your identity will remain confidential under all circumstances.

ID Number: _____

How old are you?

12-17

18-26

26-35

36-45

46-55

56-64

65 and over

Which country were you born in? _____

If you were not born in Canada, when did you arrive in Canada? _____

What is your ethnic background? _____

Are you comfortable telling us about your immigration status?   Yes   No

If yes, what is your immigration status?

Citizen

Permanent Resident

Study Permit

Work Permit

Convention Refugee

Refugee Claimant

No status

Other (please specify) _____

I don't know

What is your highest education level?

Less than high school

Completed High school

Completed College/diploma

Completed undergraduate (Bachelor's)

Master's Degree

PhD

Postdoctoral

Professional Degree

What is your first language? _____

What are you most comfortable with in your first language?

Speaking

Reading

Writing

None

What are you most comfortable with in English?

Speaking

Reading

Writing

None

Do you identify with a specific sect of Islam?

No

Yes, please specify_____

Who do you currently live with? Please select all that apply

Alone

Husband

Wife

Partner

My children

Parents

In-laws

Other extended family

Friends

Other _____

What is your relationship status?

Single

Married

In a relationship

Separated

Divorced

Widowed

Do you identify as

Woman

Girl

Trans Woman

Trans Man

Two-spirited

Gender non-binary/Gender queer

What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual

Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Pansexual

Asexual

Other

Don't want to share

Are you currently working?

Yes, full-time

Yes, part-time

No

If you are working, Is your job

Permanent

Temporary (contract)

At any point during the pandemic, did you work from home?

Yes

No

Did you start working from home because of the pandemic?

Yes

No

Are you still working from home?

Yes

No

Did you live with anyone during the pandemic who started working from home because of the pandemic?

Yes

No

Who is that person?

Husband

Wife

Partner

Friend

Roommate

Parent

Child

Other (please specify)_____

What is your annual income?

I have no income

Less than $5000

$5000-20,000

$21,000-$30,000

$31,000 - $40,000

$41,000-$50,000

$51,000-$60,000

$61,000-$70,000

$71,000-$80,000

$81,000-$90,000

$91,000-$99,000

$100,000 and above

Did you lose your job or start working less hours at any point during the last two-three years because of the pandemic?

Yes

No

Did your partner/husband/wife or someone else you lived with also lose their job or start working less hours during the pandemic?

Yes

No

What is your source of income? (Select all that apply)

My job

My business

My partner/husband

My children

My parents

My in-laws

Government assistance

Other (please specify) _____

Do you have your own bank account?

Yes

No

Do you have your own savings?

Yes

No

Are you able to access your savings?

Yes

No

Do you have any children?

Yes

No

If you do have children, how many?

1-2

3-4

5 and above

If you do have children, what are their ages? _____

Do they have any special needs? _____

Do you have any special needs? _____

Do you have a (select all that apply)

Cell phone

Computer

Internet

Your own Email address

Your own phone number

What are you comfortable using? (select all that apply)

Cell phone

Computer

Internet

Email

Do you have safe access to (select all that apply)

Cell phone

Computer

Internet

Email

Were you able to get help and support to deal with your experience of violence?

Yes

No

Somewhat

Who did you contact for support? (select all that apply)

Family members

Friends

Police

Community Organization/Agency

Shelter

Other _____

Nobody

Do you have a support system?

Yes

No

Who makes up your support system?

Parents

In-laws

husband

wife

partner

Other family members

Friends

Colleagues

Neighbours

Other (please specify)_____

Can you easily contact them at times of need?

Yes

No

APPENDIX F - Sample Focus Group/Interview Questionnaire for Services Users

Focus group questions include background and contextual questions in addition to the review questions discussed above to better understand the relevant needs of and barriers faced by Muslim women, girls and gender-diverse people. Once the focus group data is collected, a qualitative analysis should be done and the service delivery questions in the Master document should be recorded accordingly.

Note: Organizations conducting their own, independent reviews outside of the CCMW project do not need to include the information about partnership with CCMW in the introductory paragraphs below.

Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)
Gender-Based Violence Project
Focus Group Questions

Thank you for taking part in CCMW's project which will address barriers to supports and services by Muslim women, girls, trans, two-spirit and non-binary people facing violence and abuse.

Our organization is partnering with CCMW and conducting this study to assess whether our policies, programs and service delivery practices are meeting your needs/have met your needs. We want to hear about your experience with our services, what challenges you faced in getting our help, where you think our strengths are and where we can improve.

As part of this study, you will be completing a survey and a focus group discussion/ interview with us.

Confidentiality disclaimer: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview/discussion. Please note that all information you share will remain confidential. It will only be used for CCMW's Gender-based Violence project, and your identity will remain confidential under all circumstances.

Part 1: Questions about the violence/abuse you experienced or are experiencing:

1. *What type of violence or abuse have you faced? (Select all that apply)*

    ● Intimate partner violence (violence from your partner/husband/wife)

- Family violence/domestic violence (includes violence from other members of the family, such as in-laws, parents, children, etc)

- Human trafficking (A crime where someone exploits or takes advantage of another person by tricking them or forcing them to do things for the other person's profit, such as working or engaging in sexual acts)

- Forced marriage (When someone is forced to get married against their will)

- Stalking (unwanted, continuous contact from someone that can make a person feel afraid for their personal safety – for example, following the person, contacting them or their family to get information, watching the person, threatening the person)

- Cyber harassment (when someone harasses you through the internet, eg. Email, online chat, websites, social media, etc)

- Violence or harassment in your workplace

*Please tell us anything else you would like to share

_____

2. *Who did you face the violence from?*

3. *When did it happen? Is it still going on?*

4. *Was the violence you faced/Is the violence you are facing (Select all that apply)*

- Physical (for example, hitting, beating, punching, kicking, choking, burning, pushing, shoving, isolating from friends and family, keeping them trapped in a place, forcing them to use drugs or alcohol, etc)

- Psychological/emotional: humiliating you, calling you names, threatening, blaming, shaming, belittling, controlling you

- Financial (controlling, stealing, taking money or credit cards, spending your money without your consent, destroying someone's property, not allowing you to work or make money)

- Spiritual (using religious or spiritual beliefs to hurt, scare or control you)

- Sexual (sexual assault: sexual contact or behaviour that happens without your consent, such as rape, attempted rape, unwanted sexual touching, forcing you to do sexual acts and sexual harassment: inappropriate sexual comments or sexual advances)

- Neglect (doesn't provide for back needs, e.g., food, shelter, clothing, medication, etc.)

5. *If it is violence that happened before the pandemic, did it increase during the pandemic?*

6. *Did you face any new kind of violence during and after the pandemic? If yes, what kind of violence did you face?*

7. *Did you talk to anybody in your social circle about your experience of violence? Who did you talk to? If you did not, why not?*

8. *What happened when you shared your experience?*

9. *What kind of support (if any) did you receive from your family or community (friends, local mosque, neighbours, etc.) for your situation of violence?*

10. *Where do you currently live?*

- Home
- Shelter
- With a friend
- With a family member
- Other (please specify) _____

Part 2: Questions about your experience trying to get help:

1. *What types of services did you look for?*

2. *Which agencies did you reach out to?*

3. *What kinds of support did you receive?*

4. *Did you know about the agencies and services that are available for victims/survivors of violence before you needed help?*

5. *When did you learn about the services and agencies?*

6. *How did you learn about them?*

Part 3: Questions about your overall experience with our organization:

1. *When did you reach out to our organization?*

2. *How did you learn about us?*

3. *What was your overall experience with our organization? Did the services from our organization meet your needs?*

4. *Were you able to access the service easily? What challenges did you face?*

5. *How long did you stay in touch with our organization?*

Part 4: Your experience with policies of our organization:

1. *Do you know what discrimination is?*

2. *Do you know what harassment is?*

3. *Did you know about your rights to be free from discrimination and harassment when getting help from our organization?*

4. *Did you read or did anyone tell you about any policy regarding discrimination or harassment after you came to our organization?*

5. *What other policies did you read or did staff tell you about when you contacted our organization?*

6. *Were you able to get access to these policies easily? If not, what was the reason?*

7. *Which language were the policies in?*

8. *Did you have trouble understanding the policies? If yes, what made it difficult to understand the policies?*

Part 5: Your experience with our programs and services:

1. *Which programs did you use at our organization?*

2. *Did you face any difficulty when accessing the programs? What kind?*

3. *What was good about the programs? What were the gaps?*

4. *Did you have an opportunity to provide any feedback on the programs? Was it easy to give feedback?*

5. *Who did you talk to when you were getting help from our organization ? What was their behaviour like?*

6. *Did they ask you what you needed and provide you with what you needed?   Did they give you space to talk about your needs freely and openly?*

7. *Did anyone in the organization behave in a way that made you feel judged?*

8. *Did they ever make any assumptions about your identity, faith, culture or experience?*

9. *Did you face any kind of unfair treatment when receiving services?*

10. *If you felt that you were treated unfairly, did you know who to ask for help or how to deal with the unfair treatment?*

11. *Did you ask for any kind of accommodation? What kind of accommodation did you ask for?*

12. *Did our team members accommodate you?*

13. *Did you feel respected when you were receiving services? In what way? If not, in what way?*

14. *At any point, did you feel that our team members did not understand your situation?*

15. *As you were working with members of our team, did you ever feel like you did not have the power to make your own decisions or express your opinions?*

16. *If you ever feel triggered while working with our organization, how did members of our team react?*

17. *Did you feel physically and emotionally safe at our organization?*

18. *Did you feel that your experiences were validated, and you were respected?*

19. *Did anyone in our team ever put pressure on you to share information even when you were not ready?*

20. *Did they listen to you and pay attention to you when you were speaking, and did they ask questions if they didn't understand something?*

21. *Did they ask you if you needed breaks?*

22. *Did members of our team respond to you in a timely manner, and follow up with you regularly?*

23. *Did you need services in a language other than English? If yes, what kind of support did our organization give you?*

24. How can our organization improve in helping victims/survivors of violence?

25. How did your organization succeed in meeting your needs?

Part 5: Pandemic-related questions about services:

1. *Did the pandemic make it harder for you to receive services from our organization? In what way?*

2. *What could our organization do differently to make it easier for you to get help?*

Part 6: Questions about legal rights:

1. *Do you know about your legal rights?*

2. *Where did you learn about them?*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Silmy Abdullah is a lawyer and an award-nominated writer based in Toronto, Canada. She practiced immigration law for a number of years at the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario, focusing on the intersection of immigration, poverty and gender-based violence. Most recently, Silmy started her consulting practice, working with organizations on various gender equality, anti-racism and access to justice initiatives. Her debut collection of short stories, "Home of the Floating Lily," was a finalist for the 2021 Danuta Gleed Literary Award and long-listed for the 2022 Toronto Book Awards.

Direct questions about this guide to:

Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)
Le conseil canadien des femmes musulmanes (CCFM)