

Safety for Women – Using evidence based practices to keep women safe
Provincial Consultation Summary
January 14, 2017

Background

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General has worked to address the issue of domestic violence through its policing initiatives, victims' services, community corrections, prosecution services, civil protection services and specialized domestic violence courts. While these efforts as well as the efforts of other government agencies and community partners have made a difference in keeping women safe, a significant number of women continue to call the police, flee to women's shelters, or are injured or killed by their abusive partners. Alberta Justice and Solicitor General initiated this project, recognizing the need for further evidence informed practices and evolving collaboration between shelters, police, other government agencies and key stakeholders.

The "Safety from domestic violence: Using evidence based practices to keep women safe" project is building on the success of individual and collaborative work of Alberta community and government services over the last 30 years in keeping women safe in the face of violence at home and does not seek to duplicate any of the outstanding work already completed in Alberta and beyond.

Alberta Council of Women's Shelters received funding from the Alberta Justice and Solicitor General and the Status of Women Canada to implement the project. The project encompasses three phases which, in collaboration and consultation with government, service providing community, service recipients and Indigenous Peoples will highlight evidence-based and promising practices in keeping women safe from domestic violence and help to:

- Gain a better understanding of what more needs to be done to keep women safe;
- Inventory, amplify and test programming that will achieve increased safety for women across Alberta; and,
- Support implementation of selected best practices across Alberta.

The first exploratory, consultation phase is now complete. ACWS gathered information using a comprehensive literature review, regional consultations with service providers across Alberta, focus groups with women impacted by domestic violence, and interviews with system leaders who represented primarily a provincial perspective from both government and community. This wealth of information was synthesized in a Discussion Paper summarizing consultation results and identifying possible directions for future work.

The Consultation

A Provincial Consultation was held on November 16, 2016 in Edmonton (see Appendix A for the invitation). It brought together regional consultation participants and system leaders. The purpose of the provincial consultation was to:

- Validate what ACWS heard from project participants during regional consultations;
- Share what women in ten provincial focus groups said about what they need to improve their safety;
- Share and validate what we heard system leaders from across Alberta say about keeping women safe;
- Share how all voices reflected in consultations to date are affirmed in recent literature;
- Provide another opportunity for sharing amongst community and system leaders with respect to project results to date;
- Brainstorm how we mobilize this wisdom to action regionally and provincially; and,
- Come away with actionable ideas to move the needle on women's safety in a positive direction in your community/region.

A total of 116 participants from across Alberta attended the consultation representing community service providers, various systems that work to address the issue of family violence, the government and the provincial associations (see Appendix B for the full list of attendees). Participants received an electronic copy of the Discussion Paper two weeks prior to the Provincial Consultation with a request to read the document prior to the event. At the event participants also received a binder with documentation (with links to the same documents on ACWS website) gathered over the course of the exploratory phase, including:

- Discussion Paper
- Annotated bibliography;
- 11 research briefs discussing key considerations with respect to the issue of domestic violence and how it impacts women and children; and identifying related barriers and what works to address those barriers;
- Summary of the feedback from seven focus groups and eleven interviews with 75 women receiving services across the province;
- Seven regional consultation summaries that reflected the voices of 182 participants; and
- Summary of the interviews held with 19 professionals who are leaders of key systems that are involved in keeping women safe from domestic violence.

The participants were divided into 11 groups, and each group was assigned a recorder who documented their conversation using a recording template (see Appendix C for the template).

- Calgary - 1 (7 participants)
- Calgary – 2 (7 participants)
- Edmonton – 1 (11 participants)
- Edmonton – 2 (10 participants)
- Edmonton – 3 (12 participants)
- St. Paul – St. Paul, Whitecourt (10 participants)
- Alberta South – Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, High River, Banff, Strathmore (10 participants)
- Central Alberta – Red Deer, Camrose, Wetaskiwin, Maskwacis (14 participants)

- Grande Prairie – Grande Prairie, Sucker Creek, Slave Lake, Wabasca, Fort McMurray, High Level, Grande Cache (13 participants)
- Provincial associations – ACWS, AASAS, ACT, Family Law Office, Irene Morin, Project Elder (7 participants)
- Government – Alberta Mental Health, Status of Women Alberta, Children’s Services, Housing and Homeless Supports, Victims’ Services (14 participants)

The consultation included an opening and closing prayer offered by Elder Irene Morin, an Honor Song and a Sweet Grass Ceremony offered by Elder Rick Makokis, who was assisted by Anthony Oliver, Board member on both the St. Paul & District Crisis Association and the Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters. Lewis Cardinal provided the keynote address: *Collaboration – Co-creating and Building Shared Decision Making Structures*.

The main purpose of the day was to engage participants in conversation and discussion so presentation time was kept to a minimum. There were two rounds of group work, with instructions to discuss information gathered during the project. The consultation concluded with identification of some actionable ideas that each region could begin to implement and discussion of the ACWS’ role in supporting implementation of action plans in communities that volunteer to participate in the next phase of the project. The day’s agenda is reproduced below and the power point for the presentation portion is attached in Appendix D.

Provincial Consultation Agenda

8:00 am	Breakfast and networking Opening Prayer, Irene Morin
	ACWS presentation: Project description, Project activities and results to date
9:00 am	Honor song – Rick Makokis
9:10 am	First round of group instructions
9:25 am	First round of regional/other stakeholder group work
10:10 am	Break
10:25 am	Groups report back
11:00 pm	ACWS presentation: 9 action items
11:45 pm	Lunch
12:30 pm	Keynote speaker Lewis Cardinal <i>Collaboration – Co-creating and Building Shared Decision Making Structures</i>
1:00 pm	Second round of group instructions
1:15 pm	Second round of regional/other stakeholder group work
2:00 pm	Break
2:15 pm	Groups report back
3:15 pm	Next steps Closing and prayer, Irene Moran
3:30 pm	Adjourn

The Discussion Summary

The discussion addressed the following questions:

In round one:

- Highlight perspectives in the summaries that are consistent with your opinions or experience.
- Discuss if there is anything in the summaries that contradicts your opinions or experience.
- Identify any additional information that is not reflected in the summaries.
- Discuss key promising practices emerging in your region. Identify one promising practice from the summaries or group discussion to share with the large group.

In round two:

- Identify directions for action from the Discussion Paper that most resonate with you and apply to your work. Discuss why they are significant.
- Do you see cross system collaboration as a critical priority?
- What directions for actions, either from the Discussion Paper or elsewhere, that you, your organization or region would like to work on?
- What supports would the group require to move forward with the identified directions?

Overall feedback on the Discussion Paper from provincial consultation participants was overwhelmingly positive, indicating that information shared in the consultation and the opportunity to discuss it was very important and timely. Consultation evaluation results suggest the experience helped strengthen participants' commitment to the work of addressing violence against women and to identify directions for action in their organization or region (see detailed summary of the consultation evaluation results in Appendix E).

With some exceptions discussed further on in the document, Provincial Consultation participants indicated that information summarized in the Discussion Paper accurately reflected their perception and experience. In particular, all groups agreed that cross system collaboration is a critical priority for moving forward with this work and that lack of such collaboration represents a key barrier for women and children fleeing domestic violence.

Although there were some differences among the groups in terms of what they identified as challenges, promising practice examples and directions for moving forward, there were several themes, in addition to the need for collaboration, that were consistently identified across participating groups. These themes included:

- the need for training at all levels of service delivery including all service providers and responders;
- addressing barriers to legal support for victims; service access in rural and remote communities;
- focusing on providing culturally competent services; providing woman-centred, trauma-informed services;
- focusing on prevention using community awareness and by working with men and boys and with children;
- addressing issues with batterer treatment;
- and, advocating for additional resources (e.g., for sustainable collaboration and to support women's healing and transition).

Calgary

Key Challenges

Participants confirmed several challenges highlighted in their regional summary. They particularly highlighted challenges within the legal system (need for sustainable positions to support victims in court; perception that victims are revictimized by the legal system (disconnect between criminal and family courts and concerns with Emergency Protection Orders capacity to protect victims); sheltering (lack of shelter beds); and for immigrant communities (communication and cultural barriers).

Barriers for newcomers who experience domestic violence represented an important element of conversation for these two groups. They spoke to the lack of emphasis in the discussion paper on cultural sensitivity and the need to move beyond translation challenges towards recognition and understanding different cultures, using cultural training provided by cultural specific agency/staff.

Promising Practice Examples

The group identified several programs in Calgary as promising practice examples, including dedicated law enforcement efforts (e.g., HomeFront, Calgary Police Domestic Violence unit); Calgary Domestic Violence Collective and its subcommittees; culturally specific programs and agencies including Punjabi Community Health, Chinese Community Response to Family Violence, and Calgary Immigrant Women's Association; and other programs such as Girls Clubs, Men's support groups (e.g., MAN-C), and Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter – a court support program.

Collaboration

The group agreed that cross system collaboration is a critical priority for the sector, albeit often challenging to implement. They spoke to competition issues, reliance on individual relationships and connections and lack of information sharing between different systems. Some suggestions for enhancing collaboration in Calgary included case conferencing as a method for building authentic collaboration, formalizing relationships among agencies and making available training to support information sharing.

Data Gathering

The groups emphasized the importance of evaluation and data tracking, to enhance consistency, to support accountability and to understand the experience of victims in negotiating various systems. In the context of this discussion participants highlighted the need to protect women's privacy; preventing offender's access to information; shortage of resources to support effective data collection; and current methods of data collection that do not necessarily produce meaningful outcomes.

Directions for Action

These groups spoke to the need for action: "There is a sense that we are spinning our wheels – rehashing the same information over and over. We want to see more action/meaningful changes and less talk". They acknowledged that lack of resources has been a major barrier to implementation. The directions for actions identified by these two groups echoed their discussion with respect to challenges and best practices and included:

- Addressing barriers to legal supports for victims;
- Streamlining service delivery, developing a “one-stop-shopping” approach, providing access to long-term services and continuum of services;
- Developing “true, strategic collaboration”
- Providing services within cultural context and bringing domestic violence and immigrant-serving agencies together;
- Addressing the root causes (i.e., patriarchy), engaging men and boys, working with children and youth;
- More effective and culturally appropriate risk and threat assessments;
- More (and shared and subsidized) training opportunities: focusing on information sharing and working across systems; learning about other agencies; train the trainer approach;
- Focusing on offender treatment;
- Working towards collective impact, by breaking down territorial barriers and bringing all systems to work together.

Central Alberta

Key Challenges

Members of this group agreed that while the current collaborative model in Red Deer is quite successful, there remain significant challenges in this area, describing funding models as potentially leading to siloed programming; privacy regulations preventing information exchange and service access; turn-over of partners and differences in personalities involved; difficulties coordinating training opportunities; and current model not necessarily following promising practice collaborative guidelines. They also spoke to problematic service access in rural areas, due to availability and long distances and provided issuance of Emergency Protection Orders as one example of access challenges.

Offender treatment has also emerged as an important topic for this group, particularly with respect to voluntary treatment. Group members described follow-up groups or volunteer/mentor-run programs as successful, talked about a need for longer programs to support sustainable change and pointed to a shortage of such programs in the area, long waiting lists for those that are available and lack of funding for treatment programs for women.

Promising Practice Examples

The group identified several programs in Central Alberta as promising practice examples, including an ongoing support group for men who have completed a domestic violence program with long term follow up supports; Changing Ways treatment program; provision of wrap-around services using case conference approach; providing services to women outside of shelter to support confidentiality and address long-distance issues; and collaboration with Maskwacis ensuring inclusion of all communities.

Directions for Action

- Increase focus on prevention and long-term solutions, including engagement of men and boys, and particularly boys at a very young age; focusing on juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, intergenerational trauma and providing treatment to children who have been exposed to domestic violence;

- Build on existing work to further develop an integrated collaborative model with services focusing on needs of women, men, and children; with emphasis on improving information sharing between systems (e.g., victim notification); advocate for funder support for sustainable collaboration; and include representatives from all sectors involved in addressing the issue;
- Advocate for financial support to make it possible for women to focus on healing rather than childcare and employment (e.g., EI benefits in Manitoba, maternal allowance in Ontario);
- Make services easier to access – some examples included using video conferencing, making allowance for pets;
- Develop a staff position responsible for connecting women with services; as well as an assigned child advocate/liaison to ensure that children are protected, have access to counselling and to liaise with school as required;
- Ensure delivery of trauma-informed, culturally sensitive services;
- Provide cross cultural training (e.g., similar training that RCMP received made a significant difference); provide judicial training on domestic violence;
- Enhance legal system response, e.g., re-establish a dedicated domestic violence police program, appoint legal supports when needed and advocate for enhanced communication/integration between court systems.

Edmonton

Key Challenges

Participants confirmed much of what was in Edmonton’s section of the Discussion Paper. They emphasized the importance of relationships, partnerships and community collaboration and challenges inherent in effective system integration, including need for additional funding to support sustainable collaboration; unique community needs; education and training with respect to recognizing domestic violence; and system navigation and difficulties coordinating with larger systems.

As did some of the other groups, they talked at length about legal and justice system processes and associated challenges, highlighting, in particular, policies guiding safe exchanges of children, services re-traumatizing women, and barriers to working across various court systems. They also discussed the significant issues for newcomer women who are experiencing domestic violence and the immigration process that adds to the complexity of plight.

Some of the participants were concerned that focus on women results in an approach that is not inclusive of other people who experience violence, and particularly the LGBTQ community or seniors. Use of gendered language may create additional barriers, and exclude men from conversation who may also be victims. One suggestion was to shift from a gendered to an anti-oppressive approach.

Additional Issues

Participants identified several issues that they felt were not reflected adequately in the discussion paper, including:

- Honour based violence from women on women, or violence against women under 18.
- Using the term family violence rather than domestic violence to help broaden the definition to include extended family.
- Reflect the difference that exists between violence and abuse. Violence is an action while abuse is an advantage or privilege and is where the relationship is not equal.
- The use of the term newcomers obscures the different experiences of immigrants, refugees and

non-status immigrant women. More discussion is needed with respect to the interpretation barriers and the role that sponsors of immigrant women and the immigrant's community plays in the situation of violence.

- Children are the most vulnerable group and they (as well as child and family services) should be highlighted (e.g., barriers to access counselling)
- Add, in the literature review, information regarding mothering in the context of domestic violence.

Promising Practice Examples

Participants identified several programs in Edmonton as promising practice examples, including Escaping Family Violence Fund (improving justice response); programs like Leading Change that help people recognize signs of domestic violence; Momentum providing support across the province; Changing Ways; training initiatives – e.g., TCI Training/Circle of security, Ethnocultural Family Violence Training, Diverse Voices; information provided by Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta and Community Initiatives Against Family Violence helping streamline and enhance services across sectors. They also highlighted, as an example of promising practice, the recent tenancy legislation, supporting housing stability for women fleeing domestic violence.

Directions for Action

- Address existing training gaps: e.g., how to assist women negotiate the legal system; helping develop knowledge across sectors about family violence and available resources; information on supporting children; in general, provide well-funded, consistent, mandatory, continuous (to address turn-over), multi-disciplinary, cross-sectoral training;
- Address issues within the legal system to prevent retraumatizing the victim: improved access, information sharing, specialization and coordination (e.g., multi-disciplinary teams);
- Identify ways to get partner consent for child counselling (this action is already underway by one of the legal sector representatives);
- Engage in community education and awareness initiatives to create systemic and cultural shift (e.g., engage men and boys, lobby for the Occupational Health and Safety Act to recognize domestic violence, include domestic violence education in school curriculum, address domestic violence in the workplace, lunch and learns);
- Include children's programming as part of prevention and intervention; helping decrease the likelihood that they will be in abusive relationships as adults;
- Implement culturally appropriate or sensitive services, for Indigenous communities focusing on Truth and Reconciliation and Decolonization and for immigrant communities focusing on improved translation services. Develop trust between mainstream and cultural organizations;
- Develop more options for batterer treatment, including options for different cultures;
- Provide long-term trauma informed and client centred services. Counselling should focus on fostering stability, safety and security;
- Strengthen collaborative approaches: provide "one-stop-shopping" approach, improve information sharing, involve offender treatment programs, share risk assessments, develop a network directory, use social media, involve funders, find alternative funding options;
- Advocate for more funding: for basic needs subsidies for women (e.g., Manitoba legislation, affordable child care), for prevention efforts, to sustain collaborative efforts, to support advocacy in the court system, to provide transportation to women, for cross-sectoral training.

Grande Prairie

Collaboration Successes

Group participants talked about how much the area has achieved with respect to community collaboration, efforts that resulted in decreased service fragmentation, strengthened relationships and sharing of information. The monthly meetings of the interagency committee were provided as one of the examples of strengthened collaborative work as well as working and sharing knowledge with the surrounding First Nations communities.

Key Challenges

The area continues to experience some challenges, however, including long waiting lists for mental health and counselling supports, and lack of affordable housing. Although information sharing is improving it still appears to provide significant hurdles, particularly with respect to legal information about mandated offenders, but also in general, where FOIP issues are concerned.

The Fort McMurray fires also created an unprecedented amount of loss and significantly affected the not for profit sector, which has now embarked on a 5-year recovery process. One of the results is a significant rise in sexual assault and abuse in the area.

Funding and particularly on-reserve funding is an issue for the area - many women experiencing domestic violence prefer to stay on reserves but there are few services available for them there.

Promising Practice Examples

The participants provided two promising practice examples, including: Fort McMurray offender treatment that focuses on power and control with participants demonstrating reduced recidivism as a result of the program; and Janvier community program that is based on an Aboriginal framework and includes train the trainer component.

Directions for Action

- Community awareness was identified as one of the priorities for action, with suggestions including marketing and demonstrating to the community what local organizations are doing. Albeit there was recognition among the participants that available resources may not be sufficient from the increased demand that would marketing would produce.
- Early gender-based education was provided as a possible alternative to marketing, working with schools and training teachers to intervene, providing programming in schools and/or to children in shelters
- Continuing to reach out to surrounding areas and particularly local reserves was identified as another priority for Grande Prairie. This work would require visiting rural areas, advocating for funding for vehicles to address transportation barriers, and working with First Nations communities to help develop capacity to provide localized supports.
- Although collaboration was identified as one of the successes, the participants thought that more needed to be done to enhance collaborative work including strengthening of existing processes (e.g., family violence network, court support working group, DV unit), development of a multidisciplinary team, addressing the information sharing barriers, and, in general engaging in action rather than on-going discussions.
- Enhanced focus on offenders was suggested as another priority – specifically developing formal and effective offender programs that focus on power and control rather than anger

- management
- Another suggestion was to provide training to the first responders, addressing the issues of racism and trauma.
- There were multiple other suggestions, including: more work on outreach; revamping intake to make it more applicable to all clients; developing a court navigator position; better use of available information; addressing literacy issues; and address the issue of family violence and sexual assault in different cultures.

Southern Alberta

Key Challenges

The group concurred with much of the information summarized in the discussion paper. In particular, participants highlighted challenges associated with the legal system (primarily with respect to dual charges and use of offender programs). They also spoke to the problems that result from scarcity and uncertainty of funding, which leads to competition for funding dollars and creates barriers for collaborative work and a disconnect between government agencies and services.

In their discussion, the group also highlighted specific issues pertaining to children and seniors who are impacted by domestic violence. There are access barriers to services for children who have been exposed to domestic violence, as a result of decisions by courts or children's services. Also, there are no services specifically earmarked for seniors experiencing abuse who are often facing a multitude of other health-related issues or addressing violence in non-traditional relationships.

The group also talked about challenges for current services in supporting clients with addictions and mental health issues. These challenges are a result of lack of resources available to service providers, lack of specialized addiction training for staff and capacity of women's shelters to support women with addictions and mental health concerns.

Promising Practice Examples

The group identified several programs in Alberta South as promising practice examples, including the important role of the police; High Risk Case Conferences that provide an opportunity for partners to come together to strategize; the Domestic Violence Action Committee in Lethbridge that supports coordination and planning; YWCA of Lethbridge's holistic approach; and Trauma Informed Practice as implemented by Rowan House in High River.

Directions for Action

- Build on the YWCA model to develop across the community a wrap-around, trauma-informed holistic approach, supporting a one-stop shopping approach;
- Bring together offender treatment and victim service providers to develop a collaborative approach;
- Implement a strategy-driven community approach, building on existing collaborative relationships; ensuring, in particular, that the members of the justice system are involved as partners; and expanding on existing High Risk Case Consultation work;
- Implementing succession planning and making continuous training available, particularly to support engagement and buy in of partners representing legal system and to share information about local community services and systems;

- Focus on prevention – engage men and boys in healing, work with children within the school system;
- Improve court response by building equitable access to the court system and same level of services in different jurisdictions; ensuring that systems are set up for quick resolution and availability of support for clients; work with HomeFront in Calgary to support continued development of the local domestic violence court;
- Work with local Indigenous communities to share expertise and apply Indigenous lens, particularly when developing trauma-informed services;
- Initiate Elder Abuse programming;
- Address funding challenges, including the need for additional operational dollars, need for equitable funding, funding to support sustainable collaborative work, reduced reporting requirements and leadership from the government in working collaboratively with community to identify programming needs rather than funding programming that is not needed or urgent.

St. Paul

Key Challenges

The group highlighted several key challenges in the discussion paper that resonated with the members. They particularly emphasized the lack of resources and services in rural communities, focusing especially on assessment and treatment programs, specialized counselling, transportation, culturally appropriate services for women and, in general, road blocks that make it difficult for service providers to access beneficial government resources.

The group also thought that the document could have focused more on a holistic cultural piece, reflecting the Indigenous beliefs with respect to family member roles and involving all family members in developing “family healing plans” as well as Chief and Counsel in supporting women if they have to leave the reservation.

Directions for Action

- The group identified cross system collaboration as a priority for the region and particularly important in a small community. They prioritized several elements of the collaborative work including identifying common goals; establishing Memorandum of Understanding with key stakeholders to get their buy-in; and, use of ceremony and engagement of elders from Indigenous and Metis groups;
- Establish a central navigator position/a case manager that can create an action plan with the woman and help her negotiate system and community services;
- Provide client-centred services and supports, ensuring that survivors’ voices are heard;
- Provide opportunities for service provider information sharing, using sessions with similar agencies across the province; bringing experts to train service providers across sectors on best practice approaches with survivors; and considering domestic violence training for judiciary;
- Enhance legal response, including developing more meaningful court sanctions and supervision for offenders and improving information sharing (e.g., advocating for community organizations’ access to JOIN data base for offender reports); and
- Advocate for changes in government policy and regulations, e.g., address uneven policy application across jurisdictions (e.g., Alberta Works), reassess regulations that bar government employees from offering any assistance to women who haven’t left yet.

Government

Key Considerations and Questions

Overall, the group thought that the information in the system leaders' document was consistent with some of the themes from the provincial gap analysis implemented by the Government. In particular, group members highlighted the issues that currently exist between the different court systems, that there is much misunderstanding about privacy and FOIP legislation, that more is needed to be done for children, access barriers and lack of service consistency are serious issues in rural and remote areas and that more is needed to be done with respect to collaboration across the province.

Group members also emphasized the important contribution that government can make in addressing the issue of domestic violence – suggesting specifically that Human Services Department has many people and different perspectives and can bring important information for consideration.

Additional Issues

The group identified several issues they felt were not reflected adequately in the documentation, including:

- The document omits several important population groups, including women who are involved in sex trade as well as seniors.
- The document is primarily focused on intervention and there is not much on prevention - we are never going to solve the issue of family violence without focusing on prevention.
- It is an over generalization to say that there are no standards to support service delivery – Alberta Family Violence Framework provides overarching directions and standards. Particularly with respect to offender treatment – the government is currently working on the fifth version of the standards, and there are indicators of positive impact that the offender treatment programs are having across the province.
- The description of the role of government is limited. Government is a funder and enforcer of standards, but it is also involved in legislation and policy and regional service delivery.
- Diversion is no longer a consideration or a direction for the government.

In general, this group had concerns about both project documents that they reviewed. In the Systems' Leaders summary, group members would have liked to see more representation of the perspectives of the government or government affiliates. They also expressed concerns about the Discussion Paper, indicating that the directions for action are not new or different than what is in Government's framework, and emphasized the need to put in place a clear plan that would actually move the sector forward in a different way. As they did with the Systems' Leaders summary, the participants thought that the context for the information in the Discussion Paper should have been more clearly identified (e.g., that women who provided feedback were primarily shelter service recipients and may not necessarily represent other women who are experiencing domestic violence and are at risk for femicide).

Promising Practices

Overall, the group reflected there are a multitude of examples of promising practices across the province and that it is important to highlight positive accomplishments, not to overgeneralize with respect to challenges and not re-invent what is already successful. Group members also thought that more dialogue between government and community was required, to help the community understand the work of the government and to clarify government's contribution and expertise.

There was also a discussion about the role of the government in community work, with emphasis on the importance of using best practices and standards to guide community work, the role of the government as a convener, an organizer, and a bridge builder. There were also suggestions for enhancing government's role as a leader in the collaborative community work.

Specific examples of promising practices that emerged from this discussion included government's GBA plus work that uses a gendered lens to explore issues led by Status of Women Alberta; the introduction of funding for trauma informed child workers in shelters over the last year; and the work of the Awo-Taan shelter that helps Aboriginal women leave their abusive partners while they stay in their community.

Directions for Action

- Focus on community based service delivery rather than shelters, recognizing that not everyone would be accessing shelters;
- Focus on generalist rather than specialized service delivery, allowing for addressing issues common across vulnerable populations, moving away from the victim/offender dichotomy and, instead, providing support to the whole family;
- Government to work on rebuilding trusting relationships and funding structures that support collaboration and honest conversations with the community;
- Work on the documentation produced for this consultation: writers to meet with the government to review and revise the documentation, to ensure that all information is accurate and that the documentation reflects the project goals;
- Enhance current training approaches, including more advanced "DV 102" training, progressive training, training that includes information about trauma-informed approaches, and that includes government employees, people who work with children, the first responders and the service providing community;
- Continued emphasis on flexibility and on-going gathering of information, particularly focusing on shifts in population (e.g., there has been a drop in number of men accessing homeless shelters and a spike in the number of homeless and at risk women - these women may not be appropriate to access women shelters, how do we accommodate them?)

Engage in discussions about service delivery standards and how government partners can work together and with community funders to enforce them; as part of this work address the gap between the funding and the service capacity to monitor and deliver evaluation; make a commitment to long-term evaluation, to determine the impact that the government efforts are making.

Provincial Associations

Key Challenges

The group found the system leaders' summary generally consistent with their perspectives. They spoke to the gendered aspect of domestic violence, acknowledging that it is the gendered crime that is about power and control, with men as majority of perpetrators. However, there are misperceptions that gendered approach means working only with women. Ultimately, more nuanced communication is required when trying to engage people in working with various groups that emphasize the importance of intervention with all members of the family.

Collaboration, while essential, is difficult to sustain without additional resources, requires collaborative frameworks and involvement of people in organizations that are working on the front lines. These workers are excluded from collaborative work with increased involvement of large mainstream systems, while it is the large systems that need to change the most. It is also important that collaborative work reflects unique regional considerations with government and funders playing an important role encouraging community grassroots leadership to scale up successes.

More work is needed in relation to standards and training across the province, enhancing understanding of effects of colonialism on Indigenous people, and reflecting the impact of trauma and gender informed approach. Specifically, training approaches should be collaborative involving community, government and the large systems and constantly evaluated and updated.

Other challenges that were mentioned included lack of access to services in rural areas, inconsistencies in government funding (e.g., supporting organizations that do not fulfill their mandate but discontinuing funding for organizations that have proven to be effective) and problems with domestic violence court in Edmonton.

Participants acknowledged that while Child Advocacy Centres, identified as a promising practice in the System Leaders Summary, have well established collaborative working relationships with police, crown, health, and child welfare they are not well connected to sexual and domestic violence community organizations.

Promising Practice Examples

Calgary Domestic Violence Court (HomeFront), Victims Services Interpretation Program and Child Advocacy Centres were provided as examples of promising practices.

Directions for Action

The group indicated that all actions identified in the documented resonated with them. They also highlighted several priorities for the actions in the sector, as follows:

- Enhance legal response to sexual assault and domestic violence using a collaboration project and focusing on crisis lines for legal services;
- Develop positions at Family Law offices for independent lawyers to provide support for Indigenous, newcomer and mainstream women across the province; this could be a joint project between ACWS, AASAS and Family Law Office;
- Open and support more women's shelters on reserves, to ensure women have a place to go for help;

- Do more work on engaging men to take ownership and address the issue of domestic violence, sharing information about men’s and women’s roles; establishing domestic violence education office on reserve (one example – a partnership between ACWS and Native Friendship Centres to engage and educate men on the Enoch nation to end violence against women);
- Work towards improved service access in rural community, for example, establishing a hotline operating throughout all of Alberta to get legal advice, court orders etc.;
- Provide more supports for newcomer women – they face significant acculturation issues;
- In general, build capacity within the sector to establish better connection with Indigenous women and communities; and support service providers in their efforts to gain these women’s confidence; create safe spaces to support individuals to speak their truth about what they need;
- Disseminate information about projects and funding distribution across the province; ensuring available funding responds to the most pressing needs (e.g., access to legal services).

Next Steps

The regional consultation concluded with a discussion of next steps for the project, and how the information gathered during the first Phase of the consultation could inform regional implementation. Cross-system collaboration has emerged as a critical priority for every region and participating group and was echoed by the literature. All sources suggest that functional collaborative structure has to be in place so that communities can address the issue of domestic violence in a meaningful and effective way.

The regions were invited to use the information that was shared to develop their own regional action plans towards sustaining or enhancing collaborative work in their area and implementing other regional priorities. ACWS will be available to work with the regions to provide support and monitor progress.

Make no mistake about it, relationship building is hard work. But what will get us through it is consistency and courage to have honest conversations.

Through honesty we build trust, through trust we build relationships, through relationships we build vision.

Vision is power and strength and with that we can do anything we put our minds and hearts to.

*Lewis Cardinal
Provincial Consultation
November 16, 2016*



PROVINCIAL CONSULTATION

“Safety from Domestic Violence: Using Evidence Based Practices to Keep Women Safe”



November 16th, 8 am - 3:30 pm
Fantasyland Hotel in West Edmonton Mall
17700 87th Ave, Edmonton, AB

PLEASE JOIN US!

RSVP HERE by November 4th to attend.



Safety from Domestic Violence: Using Evidence Based Practices to Keep Women Safe Provincial Consultation

We thank you for sharing your wisdom in seven regional consultations this year. 182 multi-sector participants from across the province enthusiastically identified promising practices for keeping women safe, gaps in services that must be addressed, as well as action steps for moving forward in each region. Check out all the regional focus [group summaries here](#).

Please come to the **Provincial Consultation on Wednesday, November 16, 2016**. The consultation will:

- **Validate what we heard you say** during your regional consultations.
- **Hear** what women in ten provincial focus groups said about what they need to keep themselves safe.
- **Hear** what system leaders across Alberta are saying about keeping women safe.
- **Hear how your voices are affirmed in recent literature.**
- **Share** with your colleagues what all of this means to you in the work you do.
- **Brainstorm** how we mobilize this wisdom to action regionally and provincially.
- **Come away with** actionable ideas to move the needle on women's safety in a positive direction in your community/region.

Please register on or before November 4th, 2016 [at this link](#).

Continental breakfast will be served at 8:00 am. Lunch will also be provided. Ample parking is available at Fantasy Land Hotel/West Edmonton Mall.

*Limited travel subsidies may be offered depending on need and available funds. Please contact Joy via [email](#) or by phone at 780.456.7000 ext. 224.

We look forward to seeing you in November!

Provincial Consultation Attendance

Calgary	
Organization	#
AHS	1
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	1
CDVC	1
Centre for Newcomers	2
Chinese Community Response to Domestic Violence	2
HomeFront Calgary	1
PATHS	2
Punjabi Community Health Services	2
Shift: Project to End DV	1
YWCA Calgary	1
Total:	14

Edmonton	
Organization	#
CASA	2
Catholic Social Services	1
Changing Together	1
City of Edmonton	4
Community Initiatives Against Family Violence	1
Department of Sociology	1
Edmonton Community Legal Centre	2
Edmonton Immigrant Services Association	1
Edmonton John Howard Society	1
Edmonton Mennonite Centre	1
Edmonton Social Planning Council	1
Families First	1
Family Law Office	1
Hope Resource Centre: Family Violence Advocacy and Support	1
Human Services	2
LaSalle	2
MCHB Cooperative	1
Men Edmonton	1
Safe Place	1
SAGE	1
Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE)	1
Today Family Violence Help	1
United Way of AB Capital Region	1
WINGS	1
YWCA of Edmonton	2
Total	33

Government	
Organization	#
AHS	1
AB Justice & Solicitor General	3
Human Services	7
Status of Women – Canada	3
Total	14

Grande Prairie	
Organization	#
Aseniwuche Winewack Nation	2
Neepinise	1
Northern Haven Slave Lake Women's Shelter	1
Odyssey House	1
Safe Home	1
Sucker Creek	2
Unity House	4
Facilitator	1
Total	13

Provincial Organizations	
Organization	#
AASAS	2
ACT	1
ACWS	2
Family Law Office	1
Indigenous Leader	1
Total	7

Red Deer	
Organization	#
Camrose & District Victim Services	1
Camrose Women's Shelter	2
CAWES	7
Central AB Protection Order Program	1
Domestic & Relationship Violence Initiative Committee	1
Family Violence Action Society: Camrose and District	1
Wetaskiwin Victim Services	1
Total	14

Southern Alberta	
Organization	#
Canadian Mental Health Association	1
DVAT Project Coordinator	1
Eagle's Nest	1
Probation	1
Rowan House	2
Wheatland Shelter	1
YWCA Harbour House	2
YWCA of Banff	1
Total	10

St. Paul	
Organization	#
Alberta Works	1
Blue Quills college	1
Crown	1
RCMP	1
SPDCA	4
St. Paul Victim's Services	1
Wellspring	1
Total	10

ACWS Staff/ Consultants	
	#
ACWS Staff	12
Consultants	3
Total	15

**Provincial Consultation
Safety from Domestic Violence:
Using Evidence Based Practices to Keep Women Safe
Fantasyland Hotel Edmonton
November 16, 2016
Recorder Template**

Thank you for agreeing to assist ACWS to record information gathered during the Provincial Consultation on November 16th, 2016. This document represents a template that we would like you to use to record the group discussions that occur during the consultation. As you record the conversations, please consider the following:

- Before group discussions begin, please make sure that you and the participants complete the participant list attached at the end of this document. At the end of the day please return the completed list of participants to Nicol.
- Have everyone introduce themselves.
- It is very important that you complete the information as requested below, to facilitate meaningful and complete analysis of information.
- Please record all conversations, even if they deviate from the specific questions asked.
- You do not need to write down every single response, but it is important to represent the most seminal points identified in the discussion.
- To make form completion easier, you may wish to take general notes during the discussion and transcribe them onto the form provided after the group is finished.
- You may also wish to use flipcharts or recorders to record conversations – your choice.
- Wherever you think it's important, please provide direct quotes illustrating the key points so we can ensure that participants' voices are heard.
- In instances where you think it is relevant, you can include the name of the person making a particular comment.
- If you need to make sure all voices are heard, go around the table (to your left) for each person to answer the questions.
- Take approximately 10 minutes per question for the first round and 15 minutes for the second round.
- Highlight in your notes what was reported back to the large group.
- We also provided a space where you could add any other information about the group or discussion that you might wish to highlight.
- We would greatly appreciate it if the form was completed as a Word document.
- Once the form is completed please email it to:
Irene Hoffart, synergyresearchgroup@telus.net; copied to Carolyn Goard, cgoard@acws.ca

The main purpose of this effort is to document the discussion as completely as possible and provide an opportunity for everyone to have a voice.

1st Group Discussion: _____

1. Highlight perspectives in the summaries that are consistent with your opinions or experience.

Discussion:

Quote:

2. Discuss if there is anything in the summaries that contradicts your opinions or experience.

Discussion:

Quote:

3. Identify any additional information that is not reflected in the summaries

Discussion:

Quote:

4. Discuss key promising practices (a practice that you think is working well) emerging in your region. Identify one promising practice from the summaries or group discussion to share with the large group (3 mins to report).

Discussion:

Quote:

5. Anything else

Discussion:

Quote:

2nd Group: Review of the Discussion Paper Actions

1. Identify directions for action from the discussion paper that most resonate with you and applies to your work. Discuss why they are significant.

Discussion:

Quote:

- b. Do you see cross system collaboration as a critical priority?

Discussion:

Quote:

2. What directions for action, either from the discussion paper or elsewhere, that you, your organization or region would like to work on?

Discussion:

Quote:

3. What supports would the group require to move forward with the identified directions?

Discussion:

Quote:

Note: the group has 5 minutes to report back highlights from the 3 points above.

Recorder's Feedback

If applicable, please use the space below to note any key themes, important learnings or any other information that you think we should know about the opinions, perspectives and viewpoints of the participants in your group.

List of Participants

Name of group (region, type): _____

Name of recorder: _____

Name	Position	Organization	City/Town



We would like to acknowledge that today we are meeting on

Treaty 6 Territory & Métis Region 4



Safety from Domestic Violence:

Using Evidence Based Practices to Keep Women Safe

Provincial Consultation

West Edmonton Mall
Address, Edmonton AB

November 16th, 2016
8:00 AM– 3:30 PM

Funded by

 Justice and
Solicitor General

Funded by



Status of Women
Canada

Condition féminine
Canada

Plan for the Day

- Project description and background
- Working group session: morning
- Keynote speaker: Lewis Cardinal
- Discussion paper: 9 action items
- Working group session: afternoon
- Next steps



Recent Developments Impacting our Work

- New governments
- Alberta government policy recognizes GBA+
- Improved economic access for Albertans
- Implementation of the Canadian Victim Bill of Rights
- Increased funding for Alberta Women's shelters



Project Purpose:

Examine and highlight practices that enhance the safety and collective response to women who are victims of intimate partner violence

Consultation Purpose:

- Share consultation results
- Validate regional consultation discussions
- Celebrate best practices
- Discuss regional priorities for action
- Next steps



What We Did

- Literature review
 - Annotated bibliography
 - 12 research briefs
- Regional consultations
 - 182 participants attended 7 regional consultations
- Interviews with system leaders
 - 19 individuals representing 9 different systems
- Consultation with women
 - Focus groups and interviews with 75 women across the province
- Discussion Paper
 - Synthesizes all information gathered



Group Work: Round 1

Instructions

- Review summaries at your table
- Validate, add, edit or change
- Let's celebrate
 - ✓ Identify effective practices



Group Work: Round 1 Debrief

Celebrate Effective Practices



Directions for Action

- Reflect a synthesis of all information sources
- Include nine specific directions for action which speak to
 - Direct service delivery
 - Systems access
 - Systemic change



Provide holistic services

Women's Comments

“The whole system needs to be revamped so that there are supports beyond women’s shelters, providing long term supports so people can re-establish their life in terms of safety, security, housing, employment, mental health...dealing with ongoing issues for women and their children.”

“Address financial issues: make it financially possible for women to take the time they need to deal with the trauma of domestic violence; have Alberta Works staff connected to shelter and make more funds available for essentials: e.g., transportation, housing, food, clothing, moving expenses”.

Provide holistic services

- Woman-centred
- Culturally inclusive
- Long-term
- Trauma-informed
- Integrated health and mental wellness services
- Safety focused
- Empowerment-based
- Address financial issues
- With a focus on system navigation



Improve access and coordination within the legal system

Women's Comments

“A court navigator could help with general court-related information, interpretation of courts documentation and how different courts operate.”

“Have an independent lawyer dedicated to protecting women's rights.”

“Better, quicker and more flexible Legal Aid access (e.g., have special exceptions for DV victims; review and revamp the income thresholds; recognize impact of financial abuse).”

“Pay more attention to victim privacy issues in court (e.g., do not disclose address of victim in court documents).”

Improve access and coordination within the legal system

- Information sharing protocols among court systems
- Community/cross-ministry training
- Address barriers to Legal Aid access
- Consistent use of EPOs
- Use of court navigator
- Use of multi-disciplinary response teams (e.g., dedicated court teams)



Build accountability and standards guiding offender treatment

- Focus on woman and community safety
- Use assessment to guide criminal justice decisions and treatment plans
- Focus on offender accountability and responsibility vs. anger management
- Focus on root causes of violence
- Consider woman's perspective
- Standards and evaluation



Improve service access in rural and remote communities

Women's Comments

“Services (in rural or remote locations) are lacking – some locations do not have basic services, such as doctors, counsellors, financial aid, addiction/mental health services, shelters, support groups, childcare support, cell phone service, resources for youth, or transportation to needed services.”

“There are often confidentiality concerns in small communities, (e.g., woman may be known to a shelter worker, police officer)”

Improve service access in rural and remote communities

- Particularly an issue for Indigenous women
- Improved access to basic necessities such as housing, food and childcare
- Improved transportation options
- Innovative long-distance approaches for delivering counselling and mental health services
- Address confidentiality concerns



Develop culturally appropriate services for Indigenous women

Women's Comments

- “Discrimination and labeling that stems from racism needs to change before anything else (comments here highlighted landlord prejudice and systemic racism in general).”
- “Services are lacking on reserves.”
- “Getting housing or funding on reserves is often about “who you know.”
- “Reserves are small, creating concerns over confidentiality”



Develop culturally appropriate services for Indigenous women

- Systemic examination of root causes recognizing impact of colonization and intergenerational trauma
- Use of traditional healing approaches, ceremonies with focus on kinship structures
- Address systemic racism and discrimination
- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to build trust and relationships
- Inject needed resources on reserves



Service provision to reflect intersections of race, class, ability, age, sexual orientation and gender

Women's Comments

“The gender, racial, cultural and economic issues for people caught in domestic violence situations need to be addressed more fully.”



Service provision to reflect intersections of race, class, ability, age, sexual orientation and gender

- Service provision accounting for complexity of issues rather than assuming homogeneity
- Systemic solutions engaging multiple systems and service types
- Creating culturally safe environments and inclusive spaces
- Enhanced data collection specific to each group
- Address racism



Service provision to reflect intersections of race, class, ability, age, sexual orientation and gender

Women's Comments

“Those who are from the LGBTQ community, those who are from certain cultural backgrounds, and those in difficult economic circumstances are more likely to experience prejudice and bias when trying to access services and report their domestic violence experiences.”



Service provision to reflect intersections of race, class, ability, age, sexual orientation and gender

- Newcomers
- LGBTQ survivors
- Women with disabilities
- Seniors



Include children's programming as essential service component

Women's Comments

“Five years ago Child and Family Services were my worst fear. Today I am not fearful; they have given me parenting skills, support, guidance, mentors for my kids. They helped me get my family back together and now I am keeping them together.”

“Number of children is sometimes a barrier for service access: there is lack of housing for women with many children; and shelters may not accept women with boys.”

“Children are unable to attend counselling because the abusive parent won't provide consent”

“More accessible and affordable childcare is needed”



Include children's programming as essential service component

- Services that are trauma-informed and grounded in knowledge of childhood development, attachment and behavioural disorders
- Accredited safe visitation centres that put child's best interest and safety as a priority
- Recognition, in family law, of domestic violence as a factor in determining custody and access issues
- Address the issue of the dual consent for children to access treatment
- Provide accessible and affordable childcare



Create systemic and cultural shift

Women's Comments

“The human rights issues need to be addressed and resolved. As long as we look at women and women's issues as dismissible, or that this is only a women's issue, we will not make any progress”

“Broader community education about domestic violence is needed (e.g., in schools, with general public, and in workplaces).”



Create systemic and cultural shift

- Recognize violence in the context of gender inequality
- Implement systemic changes to achieve women's economic empowerment
- Include men and boys as key partners in violence prevention
- Address differences in how gendered approach is understood and applied in Alberta
- Implement community awareness and early education initiatives



Work collaboratively towards collective impact

Women's Comments

“Whole system needs to be revamped...providing long term supports beyond women's shelters so that people can re-establish their life in terms of safety, security, housing, employment, mental health...”

“Human rights issues need to be addressed and resolved. As long as we look at women and women's issues as dismissible, or that this is only a women's issue, we will not make any progress”.



Work collaboratively towards collective impact

- Work across disciplines, agencies, systems and levels
- Core principles of collaboration
- Key elements of collaboration
- Focus on standards, accountability and outcomes
- Provide cross-disciplinary training
- Need for sufficient resources and flexible funding approaches



Group Work

Round 2

Refer to nine directions for action

- What most resonates with you and applies to your work?
- Do you see cross system collaboration as a critical priority?
- Anything from today you want to start?
- What supports do you need to move the bar on keeping women safe?



Group Work: Round 2

Debrief

GROUP REPORTS:

- What most resonated in your group?
- Anything from today you want to start?
- What supports do you need to move the bar on keeping women safe?



Next Steps

- Support from and collaboration with community, government, funders, policy makers and system leaders
- Work to create cultural shift re: norms and beliefs towards equal rights and economic empowerment for women



Next Steps

Develop action plans

Implement action plans

ACWS available to provide support,
training and monitor progress



Evaluation Summary

Total survey responses: 78

Consultation Process

Question	Rating	#	%
I was given enough information to prepare for the consultation	5	39	50%
	4	33	42%
	3	5	6%
	2	1	1%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.41		

The materials provided for the consultation were helpful to me	5	44	56%
	4	28	36%
	3	5	6%
	2	0	0%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	1	1%
Average	4.51		

There was sufficient time to cover planned consultation activities	5	26	33%
	4	37	47%
	3	11	14%
	2	3	4%
	1	1	1%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.08		

There was sufficient opportunity for interactive participation	5	32	41%
	4	36	46%
	3	9	12%
	2	1	1%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.27		

Facility

Question	Rating	#	%
Overall, the room and facilities provided a comfortable setting	5	44	56%
	4	38	36%
	3	4	5%
	2	2	3%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.46		

The location was convenient for me	5	35	45%
	4	26	33%
	3	12	15%
	2	4	5%
	1	1	1%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.15		

The refreshments and food provided were of good quality	5	41	53%
	4	31	40%
	3	5	6%
	2	1	1%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.44		

Consultation Content

Question	Rating	#	%
As a result of my participation today I have learned something new about addressing violence against women	5	27	35%
	4	34	44%
	3	13	17%
	2	3	4%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	1	1%
Average	4.10		

The consultation helped strengthen my commitment to the work of addressing violence against women	5	40	51%
	4	32	41%
	3	5	6%
	2	0	0%
	1	1	1%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.41		

The consultation helped identify direction for action that I, my organization or my region might undertake	5	34	44%
	4	35	45%
	3	7	9%
	2	1	1%
	1	1	1%
	n/a	0	0%
Average	4.28		

General Satisfaction

Question	Rating	#	%
The goals of the consultation have been met	5	26	33%
	4	38	49%
	3	10	13%
	2	2	3%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	2	3%
Average	4.16		

The time spent in the consultation was worthwhile	5	37	47%
	4	32	41%
	3	8	10%
	2	0	0%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	1	1%
Average	4.38		

I was generally satisfied with most aspects of this event	5	35	45%
	4	36	46%
	3	6	8%
	2	0	0%
	1	0	0%
	n/a	1	1%
Average	4.38		

What part of this consultation did you think was most valuable? Why?

- Small group discussions
- Connecting with participants in the small group. Lewis Cardinal keynote!
- Interactive sessions - provide context, smudging
- Networking, giving everyone an opportunity to share
- Open conversation with other agencies. Opportunity to take important and do-able ideas home and work on them
- Discussions with others. Nice to network and hear about great work being done across the province.
- Very informative and good food for thought to help strengthen our world of programs
- Opportunity to meet with local groups to strategize
- Breaking into small groups was valuable. More voices were able to be heard.
- Group work, getting to hear other's lived experiences and work wisdom is vital
- The roundtable discussions provided ideas never thought of before
- Networking with new people
- I enjoyed the group work as a way to connect with shelters in the north to talk about common issues
- The opportunity to collaborate and learn info from stakeholders
- Group interactions
- Having the round table discussions
- Consultation group discussion was very helpful. Allowed for great networking and relationship building.
- Breakout group sharing of gaps/opportunities and networking
- Group discussions, gain some great insight and information from all group members. Hearing that most are experiencing similar barriers, experiences, frustrations, and solutions.
- Being able to network and build connections with other agencies/ organizations
- Networking, voices of rural and urban, the paper itself
- Talking and listening to other communities and their ideas for change.
- Having different agencies come together to build momentum
- Networking, learning what other communities are doing
- Excellent province wide representation
- Discussion paper is well put together. Enjoyed Mr. Cardinal's keynote
- Great information gathered. Thanks for the binder.
- The entire day provided diversity of information and resources effectively and in an inspiring manner
- Engagement with likeminded practitioners
- Written information very helpful
- Listening to varied view points from provincial perspective
- Closing/summary/bringing back participants to regional consultations
- Group actions are more valuable for me because various input can be heard
- Being with colleagues
- Sharing...
- Results of consultation look forward to more! Loved hearing from Lewis Cardinal
- Networking
- Recognition of the need of collaborative strategies across sectors. (Challenges faced by our women and frontline)
- For sure the actual round table discussions
- The interactions and sharings in the groups
- Small group
- Group sessions - opportunity to hear what others are doing. Mix of people - nice to have more perspectives at the table
- Opportunity to learn from other organizations
- Lewis Cardinals lunchtime speaking
- inviting/having diverse/# of/variety of groups for the venue
- Bringing the many agencies to the table to discuss the current issues in Alberta faced by women
- Working groups by geographic region were very useful to help strengthen networks and collaboration as well as understanding better what's happening within our surrounding communities
- Multi-disciplinary discussion
- Many levels of pre-consultation and eventually bringing it all together
- Lewis Cardinal's key note on collaboration
- Groups
- Lewis Cardinal. He's just the best. Helped ground my work and why I'm here
- The ability to have in-depth discussions with other community members in this field
- All the contents and messages
- The opportunity to hear the perspectives of other regions and community partners
- Learning different ideas from different organizations. Ideas that I can use or practice towards our program
- Lewis Cardinal - the discussion groups
- Group discussions - allowed everyone to voice their concerns and opinions - provided information & gaps or goals to move forward, what's needed and what works
- The realization that I (we) need to put more focus on children
- The balancing of both worlds
- Relationships with other stakeholder in the different communities
- Learning of new initiatives - having Gov't at the table was good
- Group discussion
- Networking and information sharing and brain storming diverse perspectives
- Collaboration / connection / networking relationship building
- Guest speakers
- The binders were fabulous; consultant was so respectful and very good about documenting feedback; the exercises were relevant. Loved the opening and the guest speakers
- Group discussions. Lewis Cardinal was great -- simple message and inspired
- Group discussions
- Breakout discussion groups was very informative and opportunity for networking
- Discussion groups - valuable conversation and next steps

Please use the space below to note any suggestions for improvement.

- Provincial representation - Justice? City of Edmonton Rep?
- Would be nice to have availability for organizations that are here to participate in the action pieces in a very real way
- It wasn't clear to me that reading the discussion paper was required reading so I was behind at the beginning of the first session
- I will be interested in follow-up from other agencies, & monitor government changes
- Need to have an opportunity to respond to some of the content
- Breaking the group by region was somewhat limiting, would have been helpful to hear from different areas.
- Less lectures and info, more group work and workshops. (Lewis Cardinal was awesome though)
- Groups were good, food was good and venue was easy to access!
- The amount of time and consideration ACWS has put into this endeavor is fantastic and greatly appreciated.
- Love to have a list and contact information of all percipients to promote further relationship building
- It was an awful lot to cover in one day which made it a little superficial in the break-out groups to get through all the objectives
- I thought everything was great, thank you :)
- Collect groups not by area but interest or one of the 9 principles - or mix groups from am to pm. Opening song/ prayer/address - perhaps vary the same to include different ideas/ thoughts/ speeches.
- Have more time for discussions during breakouts and having a facilitator who listens more to what the group is saying.
- More time and direction ahead of time so we could be more prepared
- We should consider meeting again to review progress following today's take-always
- Thank you for taking the initiative on this project!
- When budgets are extremely tight, having (at no cost) a day of beautiful, delicious venue to listen, learn and take home new methodologies is a GIFT! Much, much appreciation
- The way forward seems a bit hazy. Seeking clarification
- Table set ups by group felt very isolated - mixing groups may have brought more richness to the community and to the conversations
- Have government intermingled w/community partners -- siloing off the 'gov't' group perpetuates separation b/w gov't and community
- The government group should be mixed with the local agencies
- Conversation in working groups was difficult at times due to noise level and closeness to other groups
- One page summary of what discussion is about/better discussion explanation
- Meet more often if possible
- Focus more on the round table discussions and actually have a table there; * alternate different groups throughout different tables;* less focus on presentation at 'talks'
- More concrete action plans that can be implemented * focus on vulnerable populations
- All of the questions could have been addressed in one group session - two was too much
- Small groups were to close together and very difficult to hear, chairs to close to open books
- Follow up - Actually DO some of our suggestions
- That somewhere there becomes best practices and all women have the same access to programing and the right to safety!
- Opportunity to have an out of boundary discussion group i.e.. Edmonton 1---Southern Alberta ---swap a couple members
- None- just do it more often
- It might be helpful to list concrete action plans that attendees will agree to. It was left somewhat open ended without clear direction
- Pretty much straight forward
- Too much packed into one day - need 2 days - gives time for reflection and further discussion
- Speakers that will provide information regarding their programs and how their organization can assist - contacts, etc.
- Less prayer - Praying should be kept in church. Not everyone worships a god, or the same god
- Laws around domestic violence. Lawyers judges RCMP
- More... action starts here fantastic
- Context of some actions and summary
- A bit concerned about whether there is a comprehensive representation of ideas as it relates to the core objectives of project. Also it would be nice to consider more than the victim; perpetrator paradigm
- When time permits, integrate participants (i.e. Provincial association and got) into other groups
- All good
- More information about context and limitations of the work. Analysis - of the above to better position recommendations and feedback

Please provide any other comments you might have about this consultation.

Please use the back of this sheet if you need more space.

- A most enjoyable day - culturally sensitive atmosphere
- I am glad there was attention paid to indigenous practices. However, I haven't had teaching on smudging so I was somewhat uncomfortable being asked to participate in it without knowing the proper practice - esp. in front of everyone.
- Thank you!!
- THANKS!
- Was very productive - what next?
- I appreciate the timing and location of the event. I travel a long distance so having it paired with diverse Voices and at the mall really helped me attend both. Thank you.
- Overall, very worthwhile. Great work ACWS! Thank you!
- Thank you!! :)
- Government "table" sounded like a rebuttal and not helpful. Organization and conference itself was excellent! Thank you for all of your work!
- Thank you very much for hosting, organizing everything!!
- Loved hearing Lewis and Rick
- Very well put together event start to finish; glad to see application of ceremony at the start.
- Together we are strong. Thank you for that validation today
- Still unclear of next steps
- Front-line workers' input should increase in re--- to policy maker
- Many folks weren't aware of written info/not connected. Thank you for today!
- Thank you for great work and bringing us together
- Great work ACWS!
- Acoustics in room - It was hard to hear in sessions (breakouts)
- A lot of good information that require probably more time
- Thank you!
- Thank you for organizing this
- It would be great if we were provided a list of organizations who attended today's event
- Hopefully this will result in some ACTION. We've been talking about the same needs, barriers, etc. for 15+ years. Its time to start doing!
- This can't die on someone's shelf in an archive 'box' somewhere!
- It became clear that the gap between government dept. and community groups has not reduced
- Thank you for all the supplementary information
- I don't know if I missed it, but sending out agenda ahead of time would've been helpful. Would have helped to know what I would be discussing in smaller groups. But great otherwise! Thank you
- The consultation documents should have included a condensed page of actionable items that NEED to be moved on. This would have directed today's discussions in a more useful way
- Our day was very focused on visible D.V. Women coming into the J.S. and shelters 70% of D.V. in community is invisible and needs to be part of our conversation
- I really enjoyed the day and learned a lot. Thank you!
- Excellent job - thank you <3
- Very well done; so much more to learn from each other and programs that deal with family's children
- Very well organized
- Clarity what will occur from all information provided today
- Is there a way to interview people who were not shelter users?
* Has there been a way of ensuring that there are comprehensive contributors - ensure that perspective on the report is as broad as possible
- Thanks for providing some 'thinking' space
- Thanks, it was great!
- Thank you