

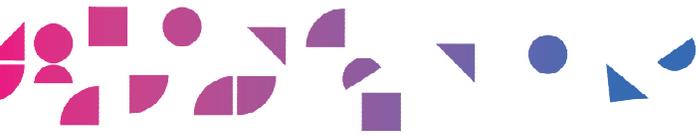
# **Women and Gender Equality Canada**

## **Written Submission to the Neha Review Panel**

**Submitted by Women and Gender Equality Canada**

**June 2025**





## Introduction

Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) thanks the review panel members for their important work and commitment to better understanding the barriers women, Two Spirit, Trans, and gender-diverse people face in accessing safe, adequate, and affordable housing.

WAGE is not explicitly mandated to address housing and homelessness challenges, nor are its programs focused on these issues. Housing insecurity, however, is strongly linked to gender equality, as it disproportionately affects at-risk populations, including women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals. Lack of access to safe, adequate, and affordable housing continues to be a barrier to their full participation in Canada's economic, social, democratic, and political life.

In its submission, WAGE provides information relevant to the Neha Review Panel where possible. Only questions that fall within WAGE's scope of work and expertise have been answered.

## Responses to Questions Guiding the Submission

### Conduct meaningful engagement & respect Indigenous rights

- 1. Neha is examining the right to safe, adequate, and affordable housing for women, Two Spirit, Trans, and gender-diverse people. In what ways have individuals and communities directly affected by this issue been engaged in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of WAGE action plans, policies and programs?**

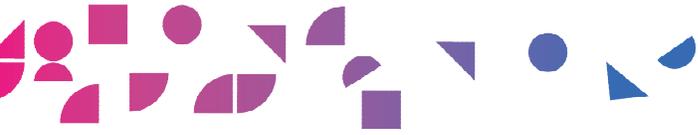
Two key initiatives will be highlighted in response to this question: a) the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan and b) the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (NAP to End GBV).

#### **a) The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**

##### Background

Launched in August 2022, the Government of Canada's first [\*Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan... Building our Future, Building our Pride\*](#) (the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan) is advancing the rights and equality for 2SLGBTQI+ in Canada. This five-year plan takes a holistic approach to address the substantial and persisting inequities faced by 2SLGBTQI+ individuals and communities. It focuses on the following priority areas:

1. Prioritize and sustain 2SLGBTQI+ community action;
2. Continue to advance and strengthen 2SLGBTQI+ rights at home and abroad;
3. Support Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ resilience and resurgence;
4. Engage everyone in Canada in fostering a 2SLGBTQI+ inclusive future;



5. Strengthen 2SLGBTQI+ data and evidence-based policy making; and
6. Embed 2SLGBTQI+ issues in the work of the Government of Canada.

### Engagement

Between fall 2020 and summer 2021, the Government of Canada's LGBTQ2 Secretariat (since that time, moved to WAGE and renamed 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat) conducted public engagement to better understand the daily realities and experiences of 2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada in various areas, including access to safe, adequate and affordable housing, and homelessness. This engagement approach consisted of three separate mechanisms:

1. A national, online survey focused on the experiences of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals;
2. Written, formal input from 2SLGBTQI+ community organizations; and
3. Virtual roundtables with diverse 2SLGBTQI+ community representatives, experts, and leaders.

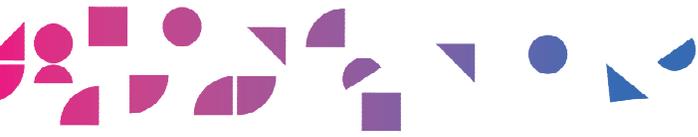
The Government of Canada received input from 25,636 survey respondents, 102 written submissions, and over 100 participants across seven roundtable discussions, who generously shared their lived experiences, knowledge and expertise.

The Government of Canada heard from 2SLGBTQI+ people, 2SLGBTQI+ community organizations, academics and researchers, who actively engage with and advocate on behalf of vulnerable 2SLGBTQI+ community populations, and those most vulnerable to hidden homelessness and homelessness (i.e., 2SLGBTQI+ youth).

In addition to a specific roundtable session on housing and homelessness that took place in spring 2021 with diverse 2SLGBTQI+ communities, the Government of Canada received several written submissions from 2SLGBTQI+ community organizations where the issues of access to adequate housing, housing precarity, and 2SLGBTQI+-inclusive shelter spaces were raised.

### Development and Implementation of the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan

Now in its second year of implementation (as of April 2025), the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan is focused on embedding 2SLGBTQI+ considerations across government. Through a variety of mechanisms, such as the Community-Government of Canada Partnership Committees, WAGE is engaging 2SLGBTQI+ community organizations and connecting with federal government officials on issues of concern for 2SLGBTQI+ communities, including housing and homelessness. WAGE will continue to leverage existing relationships, and building others as needed, to be part of bringing together key federal players to discuss areas of importance for 2SLGBTQI+ communities in the areas of their mandate, including safe, adequate, and affordable housing.



## **b) The NAP to End GBV**

### Background

Building on the foundation of [\*It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence\*](#) (the Federal GBV Strategy), WAGE worked with provinces and territories beginning in spring 2020 towards the development of the [NAP to End GBV](#). Partnership with the provinces and territories was recognized as an essential next step as they are responsible for many of the key levers required in multisectoral efforts to prevent, address, and end gender-based violence. With regards to housing, federal, provincial and territorial governments are primary partners and have a shared responsibility as well as complementary roles.

### Engagement

At the national level, WAGE undertook extensive engagements to support the development of the NAP to End GBV. In addition, in 2021, WAGE provided \$5 million to two national women's organizations – Women's Shelters Canada and the YWCA – to carry out community-level engagement to inform the development of the NAP to End GBV. As a result, between March 2020 and the launch of the NAP to End GBV in November 2022, over 1,500 individuals representing organizations across the country were engaged to discuss actions to address GBV.

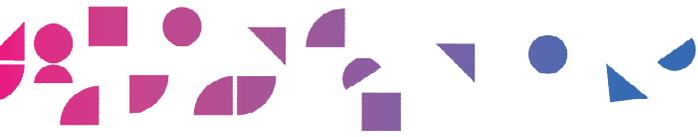
WAGE held over 30 engagements and roundtables, including bilateral discussions with other federal ministers and conversations with victims and survivors, GBV service providers, representatives from community organizations, and experts on thematic areas and diverse population groups – including Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, rural and remote communities, individual living with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ communities, men and boys, and youth. In addition, WAGE held 22 engagements and discussions with provinces and territories.

At these engagements, housing was consistently raised as an area that required attention under a national action plan. These discussions highlighted the importance of addressing the unique needs and housing challenges of certain communities (including immigrant and racialized women, women living with disabilities, and Indigenous women). There was also reference on how preventing them from accessing safe, adequate and affordable shelter or housing could in turn affect their GBV experiences, including the likelihood to enter or return to unsafe shelter.

### Development and Implementation of the NAP to End GBV

The NAP to End GBV was informed by the policy research, analysis, and engagement referenced above. It is structured along five pillars:

- 1- Support to Survivors and their Families;
- 2- Prevention;
- 3- A Responsive Justice System;



- 4- Indigenous-led Approaches; and
- 5- Social infrastructure and Enabling Environment.

Notably, the inclusion of Pillar 5 “*Social infrastructure and enabling environment*” demonstrates federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) governments’ recognition that broader socioeconomic factors – like housing, telecommunications, and economic security – must be included in a robust response to gender-based violence that seeks to address the root causes of violence and improve broader environments to support victims and survivors.

**2. Please explain what components of relevant action plans, policies and programs affect First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals and communities.**

Supporting Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ resilience and resurgence is a priority in the Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan, aligning the Government’s commitment to reconciliation with efforts to advance 2SLGBTQI+ equality. Within this priority area, WAGE has focused on funding community organizations serving Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ people through both the Community Capacity Fund and the Projects Fund.

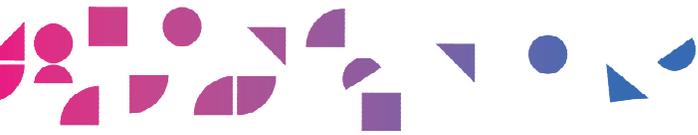
The National Action Plan to End GBV, while broad in scope, explicitly includes addressing the needs of at-risk and underserved populations, no matter where they live. Pillar 4 of the NAP to End GBV focuses on preventing and addressing GBV experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, emphasizing the importance of Indigenous-led approaches.

The NAP to End GBV recognizes that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have distinct identities, cultures, traditions, languages, as well as unique lived experiences shaped by intersectional factors (for example, being Indigenous and 2SLGBTQQIA+, or Indigenous and living with a disability), and are disproportionately affected by GBV. It reinforces the federal, provincial, and territorial commitments to create and promote safe and transformative systemic change with Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

**3. Please describe measures undertaken by WAGE to engage with Indigenous governing entities and organizations in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of relevant action plans, policies and programs, and where appropriate, to transfer control of these action plans, policies and programs to Indigenous governing entities.**

Engagement Activities and Development of the Plans

As part of the development of the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan and the NAP to End GBV, the Department engaged with members of the [Indigenous Women’s Circle](#) (IWC), a departmental advisory forum that brings together Indigenous women leaders and subject matter experts from the public and private sectors to provide perspectives to the



department. Members discuss and share with WAGE the challenges they face and their priorities for the advancement of gender equality in Canada.

The inclusion of Pillar 4 in the NAP to End GBV - *Implementing Indigenous-led Approaches* - recognizes that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people are disproportionately affected by GBV and that Indigenous peoples will determine, develop, and implement initiatives, programming, and services for themselves, their families, and their communities, inclusive of urban, on reserve, rural, remote, and Northern communities.

In support of the development of the NAP to End GBV, and Pillar 4, WAGE held 11 engagements with Indigenous partners and community leaders and engaged the Indigenous Women's Circle advisory forum to inform priorities. In parallel, provinces and territories undertook engagements with networks of Indigenous partners and organizations. Additionally, community-level engagements led by Women's Shelters Canada and the YWCA in 2021 included discussions with Indigenous organizations and those serving Indigenous peoples.

#### Alignment with Other Federal Initiatives

The NAP to End GBV is complementary to, and aligned with, other plans and strategies, including the *2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan (MMIWG2S+ NAP)*. While the MMIWG2S+ NAP details common goals, priorities, and next steps to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people, the NAP to End GBV applies more broadly to all people in Canada. The NAP to End GBV was co-developed with provinces and territories, and Budget 2022 provided \$539.3 million over five years, including \$525 million over four years to enable provinces and territories to implement the NAP to End GBV within their jurisdictions. Therefore, it is not a co-developed framework with Indigenous partners/governments to include direct partnerships or funding.

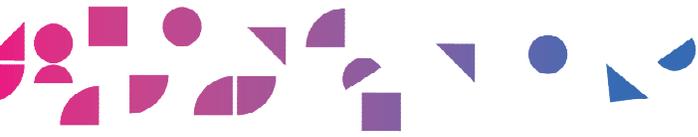
The NAP to End GBV, as well as the federal approach to ending GBV, are evergreen. Indigenous partners will continue to be engaged to ensure that they can best serve Indigenous communities.

#### [Incorporate Evidence-Based Targets, Timelines, and Milestones](#)

- 4. Please provide a brief overview of any research, data analysis, or other evidence of relevance to this issue consulted by WAGE in the formulation of action plans, policies and programs. What relevant findings can you share?**

##### Overview of Research and Data on Housing

As part of its regular mandate, the Department analyzes and disseminates intersectional data in collaboration with Government of Canada partners, civil society, and academia. WAGE also oversees research funding and reports on gender and 2SLGBTQI+ equality, aligned with the Gender Results Framework (GRF). The GRF represents the Government of Canada's vision for equality, focusing on key issues including housing and homelessness.



Additionally, WAGE consults a broad range of external sources and collaborates with numerous partners, including

- Statistics Canada, including their research on housing and related topics, such as WAGE-funded research and the 2021 Census data on housing;
- The Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Federal Housing Advocate;
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; and
- Organizations such as the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, Women's Shelters Canada, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and Mental Health Research Canada.

### Data on Housing and Homelessness

As we do with all data areas relevant to our mandate, WAGE's assessment of housing and homelessness data incorporates a gendered and intersectional perspective. The following is an extract of the data on housing and homelessness currently held by the department:

#### **The Disproportionate Impact of Housing Affordability**

- Rising housing prices disproportionately affect lower-income individuals, including Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQI+ populations, and women.<sup>1</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 6 Indigenous Peoples live below the poverty line—almost twice the rate of the non-Indigenous population.<sup>2</sup>
- Transgender individuals and non-binary people experience significantly higher poverty rates when compared to the national average. More than one in five non-binary people live in poverty.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Children in female-led lone-parent families are nearly four times more likely to live below the poverty line than children in couple families.<sup>5</sup>
- Women renters face a higher likelihood of living in unaffordable housing.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Housing Hardship Among Renters**

- Renters are about three times more likely to experience housing hardship than homeowners.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada (2024). [Nearly half of Canadians report that rising prices are greatly impacting their ability to meet day-to-day expenses.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada (2025). Table: 11-10-0093-01. [Poverty and low-income statistics by selected demographic characteristics.](#)

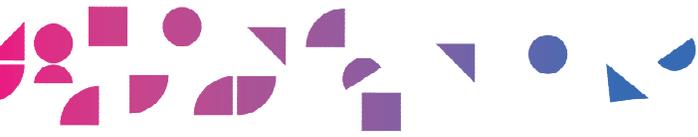
<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). [Study: Disaggregated trends in poverty from the 2021 Census of Population.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). [Census in Brief: Disaggregated trends in poverty from the 2021 Census of Population.](#)

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada (2025). Table: 11-10-0135-01. [Low-income statistics by age, sex and economic family type.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). [Housing indicators, 2021 Census.](#)

<sup>7</sup> Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2024). [Housing Hardship: Updated methodology and 2021 Census findings.](#)



- Renters tend to be younger and single, with nearly two thirds of young Canadians renting and spending a higher percentage of their income on shelter.<sup>89</sup>
- Indigenous Peoples, especially First Nations, are more likely to rent their homes.<sup>10</sup>
- Women are more likely than men to rent, and less likely to own homes with or without mortgages.<sup>11</sup>

### **Housing Challenges Faced by Indigenous Peoples**

- Indigenous Peoples are three times more likely to live in homes needing major repairs and twice as likely to experience overcrowded housing.<sup>12</sup>
- Indigenous women and girls, especially in remote areas, are more likely to live in homes requiring major repairs or in overcrowded conditions.<sup>13</sup>

### **Homelessness Among Marginalized Groups**

- Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQI+ populations (particularly sexual minority women), and Black youth are disproportionately affected by homelessness.<sup>14</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 4 2SLGBTQI+ households experience homelessness in their lifetime—twice the rate of the general population.<sup>15</sup>
- Sexual minority women and Black women are particularly at risk of experiencing unsheltered homelessness.<sup>16</sup>

### **The Intersection of Housing Hardship, Gender-Based Violence, and Discrimination**

- Women and gender-diverse individuals are more likely to face abusive situations involving landlords and building managers.<sup>17</sup>
- About 1 in 6 Two-Spirit individuals report discrimination based on gender identity that affects their ability to secure stable housing.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada (2024). [Homeowner-renter dwelling, neighbourhood and life satisfaction gaps.](#)

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada (2024). [Nationally, renters report lower quality of life than homeowners.](#)

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada (2024). [Homeowner-renter dwelling, neighbourhood and life satisfaction gaps.](#)

<sup>11</sup> Statistics Canada (2024). [Homeowner-renter dwelling, neighbourhood and life satisfaction gaps.](#)

<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). [Indigenous population continues to grow and is much younger than the non-Indigenous population, although the pace of growth has slowed.](#)

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). [Indigenous women and girls: Socioeconomic conditions in remote communities compared with more accessible areas.](#)

<sup>14</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). [A portrait of Canadians who have been homeless](#)

<sup>15</sup> Statistics Canada (2025). [Exiting homelessness: An examination of factors contributing to regaining and maintaining housing.](#)

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). [A portrait of Canadians who have been homeless](#)

<sup>17</sup> *Advocating for Change: The Housing Crisis in Canada.* The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate's 2022–2023 Annual Report to the Minister. Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2023. <https://housing.chcreport.ca>

<sup>18</sup> WAGE (2021). [2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan Survey – Quick stats.](#)



- Women, particularly lone mothers, face increased harassment and discrimination in the rental housing market.<sup>19</sup>
- Women are more than twice as likely as men to exit homelessness through subsidized housing.<sup>20</sup>

### Integration of data in WAGE's action plans

Evidence gathered from engagement, national surveys, and research were leveraged as part of the development of both the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan and the NAP to End GBV.

#### **a) The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**

##### Leveraging data as part of the development of the Plan

The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan was informed by the experiences, evidence, and voices of 2SLGBTQI+ communities and stakeholders through the initial engagement process detailed earlier in this document.

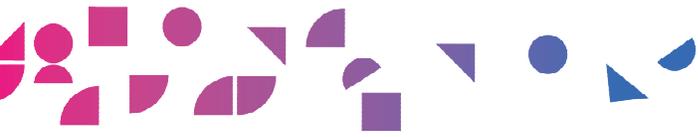
One area where housing and homelessness was raised as a priority for 2SLGBTQI+ people was through the national crowdsourced survey. Between November 2020 and February 2021, 25,636 2SLGBTQI+ people living in Canada responded to the survey, sharing their experiences related to safety, health, housing and homelessness, employment, and discrimination as well as stigma and resilience. Respondents were given the choice to answer questions concerning sexual orientation, gender expression, and/or gender identity. Relevant [findings from this survey](#) include:

- Discrimination based on actual or perceived gender identity was most likely to impact respondents' access to stable housing over the five years preceding the survey. Transgender and Two-Spirit respondents reported the highest incidence of discrimination.
  - 16% of Two-Spirit respondents said that the stability of their housing situation or their ability to access stable housing has been impacted by discrimination based on their gender identity.
  - 19% of trans women, 17% of trans men, 12% of non-binary, and 11% of gender diverse respondents indicated that, in the past five years, the stability of their housing situation or their ability to access stable housing had been impacted by discrimination based on their gender identity.

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<sup>19</sup> Pan-Canadian Women's Housing and Homelessness Survey (2021) [Pan-Canadian Women's Housing & Homelessness Survey](#)

<sup>20</sup> Statistics Canada (2025). [Exiting homelessness: An examination of factors contributing to regaining and maintaining housing.](#)



- Of respondents who had accessed the shelter system at some point in the past, 57% reported that it was difficult to navigate due to their gender identity, and 51% reported that it was difficult to navigate due to their sexual orientation.

In addition to the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan Survey, WAGE leveraged additional sources of data and information from federal, community and academic partners when developing the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan. These additional sources included:

## **b) The NAP to End GBV**

### Leveraging data as part of the development of the Plan

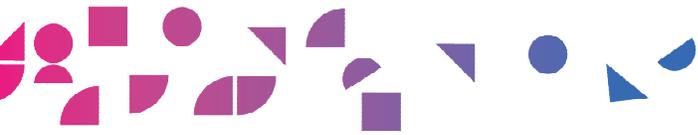
There are two main sources of data on gender-based violence at the national level:

- 1) administrative data (usually from police, but also from coroners, health services, shelters, social services); and
- 2) surveys (or self-reported data), in which people are asked whether they have experienced specific forms of violence.

The NAP to End GBV follows sustained calls from survivors, experts, advocates, as well as domestic and international organizations, for Canada to take stronger action to end gender-based violence. As part of the work to develop the NAP to End GBV, WAGE analyzed close to 1,000 recommendations from a variety of sources, including parliamentary committees, Indigenous partners, stakeholders, international fora, and public inquiries since 2015. Some of the gaps identified included: chronic underfunding in the gender-based violence sector; persisting gaps in systems and services allowing individuals who experience this type of violence to fall through the cracks; lack of coordination among various jurisdictions, as many levers needed to address gender-based violence are within provinces and territories jurisdictions (e.g., health, social services, education, administration of justice); and disproportionate needs of the above-mentioned populations. These factors lead to health, social, legal, and economic harms and ultimately contribute to further gender inequality.

In discussions conducted during the development of the NAP to End GBV, many commented on housing/shelter as a basic human right and the link was made to many factors, including affordability, that can affect one's access to adequate shelter. Input pertaining to Pillar 5 referred to housing, including:

- improving access to safe and affordable housing (including emergency shelters and second stage/transition housing);
- provision of Indigenous-specific supports and services, including shelters and second-stage housing; and
- increasing funding to expand and reduce barriers to accessing emergency shelters/transition housing.



Those involved in engagement consistently stressed the notion that affordable housing – or even the availability or access to emergency shelters and transition homes – is a key factor in individuals' ability to leave and violent situations or relationships. They further pointed out that this is particularly true for certain populations, including women, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and Indigenous women and girls. The link between access to adequate shelter and the safety of gender-based violence victims and survivors was a common thread throughout engagement: while emergency shelters were confirmed as playing an important role in supporting victims and survivors in the short-term, long-term housing solutions were deemed essential to supporting them, in addition to preventing violence and breaking cycles of violence.

**5. In what way has this evidence informed the design, implementation, and monitoring of action plans, policies and programs?**

See response to Question 4.

**6. Please provide an update on progress to date against these targets and timelines. Where there are no targets or timelines, provide an update on results to date of action plans, policies and programs, particularly those of relevance to the issue. How are results monitored?**

Two key initiatives will be highlighted in response to this question: a) the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan and b) the NAP to End GBV.

**a) The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**

Monitoring of Progress

Results to date from the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan, including activities undertaken and investments made, can be accessed on WAGE's website [here](#).

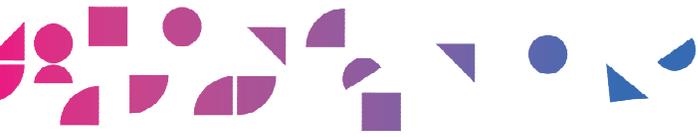
**b) The NAP to End GBV**

Monitoring of Progress

Results from the NAP to End GBV are monitored through an annual reporting mechanism (i.e., provincial and territorial annual reports) and rolled up at a national level through an annual progress report (accessible [here](#)). Collated data is publicly available through annual reporting.

**7. Where it is possible to do so, please comment on factors that have contributed to or impeded progress, and any changes that have been implemented as a result.**

Information on best practices and lessons learned as part of activities conducted to develop these plans are provided in Question 10.



Prioritize those in greatest need & eliminate discrimination

8. **Please provide information on how GBA+ analysis, including intersectional and disaggregated data analysis, has been incorporated into the design, implementation, and monitoring of relevant action plans, policies and programs. Have you encountered any data gaps relevant to this issue, and what would you recommend to address these gaps?**

#### Background

WAGE applies a rigorous GBA Plus approach in the development, implementation, and monitoring of its action plans, policies, and programs. This includes leveraging intersectional and disaggregated data analysis to ensure that initiatives are responsive to the diverse and unique experiences of individuals and communities, particularly those most marginalized.

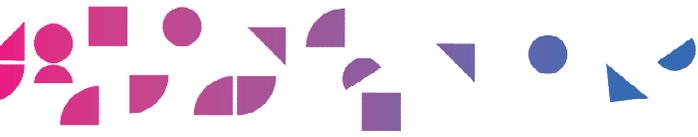
#### Integration of GBA Plus in Program and Policy Design

- **GBA Plus Analysis Across Initiatives:** GBA Plus activities are embedded by lead federal organizations, including WAGE, in key departmental plans and programs, with analysis informing decisions. For WAGE, this includes the development of action plans such as the NAP to End GBV and programs funded under the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan.
- **Leveraging Survey and Administrative Data:** WAGE incorporates findings from its regular GBA Plus Implementation Survey across government, as well as insights from diverse sources to help inform its GBV programming and funding strategies. The Annual Report to End GBV, prepared with provinces and territories, and its supporting narrative have also been instrumental in identifying opportunities to improve data.
- **Collaboration Across Government:** The 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat draws on WAGE's GBA Plus findings to support broader federal commitments, ensuring policies are better tailored to address intersecting forms of discrimination.

#### Identified Data Challenges and Knowledge Gaps

Despite progress, data gaps remain, for example

- **2SLGBTQI+ Communities:** There is a scarcity of reliable and disaggregated data on 2SLGBTQI+ populations, particularly Two-Spirit individuals. This includes data on housing, homelessness, safety, and socioeconomic status. Additionally, little research exists at the intersections of 2SLGBTQI+ identities with indigeneity, disability, age, and geography.
- **Housing and Homelessness:** There is a lack of consistent and comparable information for urban, rural, and northern (URN) communities—particularly Indigenous communities living on reserve. There is also limited data on:
  - Individuals in shelters or transitional housing, including barriers to access.



- Persons with disabilities, immigrant-led households, and lone parents.
- Longitudinal housing and affordability trends for underrepresented groups.
- **Geographic and Income Linkages:** More detailed data linking housing status to income, particularly in the North and among rural Indigenous communities, would support better understanding of affordability and access barriers.

Through continued investment in intersectional research and improved data infrastructure, WAGE aims to better identify and respond to the needs of those most affected by systemic barriers, ensuring a more inclusive and equitable Canada for all.

### **a) Integration of GBA Plus as part of the development of the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**

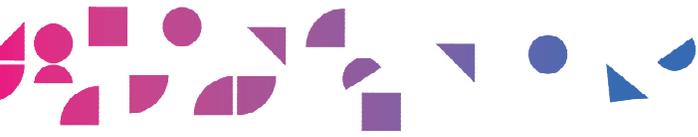
The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan was developed using an intersectional GBA Plus approach, which informed the community engagement process, the analysis of the results, and the development of the Plan.

The intersectional GBA Plus approach taken to develop the Action Plan considered the disproportionate health, social and economic inequities faced by some 2SLGBTQI+ communities, which are exacerbated by colonialism, systemic racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, classism, as well as other interconnected factors that inhibit the inclusion of 2SLGBTQI+ communities in Canadian society. These intersecting systems also compound barriers to accessing the support needed to respond to impacts on health, economic and social outcomes at individual and community levels. It also considered the multiple identities and contextual factors of the lived experiences of 2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada.

This systemic and integrated consideration of the multiple identities and contextual factors that influence the lived experiences of 2SLGBTQI+ Canadians set the foundation for the engagement process and resulting interventions. To this end:

- WAGE made a concerted effort to ensure that invited participants for the engagement process considered the diverse lived experiences presented in 2SLGBTQI+ communities – including those related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Along with relevant experience, reach, social innovation and regional representation, intersectionality was a core component in the selection criteria used to identify and invite roundtable participants. By including diverse 2SLGBTQI+ communities, WAGE prioritized the integration of issues specific to diverse communities across the thematic roundtables, which in turn informed the development of the Action Plan.
- Additionally, the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan's survey data was disaggregated, to the greatest extent possible, to present results that allowed for the fulsome consideration of the intersections between respondents' gender expression and identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, educational attainment, racialization and ethnicity, language and region – among other factors.

Additionally, WAGE committed to incorporating GBA Plus in the implementation and monitoring of the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan. This also includes leaving sufficient flexibility



to fill future gaps and barriers and respond to new and emerging issues facing 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

#### **b) Integration of GBA Plus as part of the development of the NAP to End GBV**

As part of the development of the NAP to End GBV, a GBA Plus analysis was conducted using available data, academic and other secondary and community research.

Existing data permit some limited, intersectional analysis of gender-based violence as available data shed light on specific forms of gender-based violence on individual populations such as Indigenous Peoples or people with disabilities, for example, but not the experience of Indigenous Peoples with disabilities. More disaggregated data and evidence would help better understand the magnitude of the problem, to create effective policy and programs and to further institutional change. There are known challenges and gaps in collecting consistent and detailed data, particularly in rural and remote contexts and among marginalized populations.

Certain populations with intersecting identities experience high levels of violence and/or face increased barriers in accessing supports and services. Many Indigenous women, girls and Two-spirit people experience higher rates of gender-based violence. Legacies of colonialism, historical trauma, intergenerational violence, and racism are linked to violence towards Indigenous Peoples. In addition to being at a higher risk of experiencing gender-based violence, data indicate that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people also face barriers when seeking supports. Examples include the absence of accessible, safe, and secure shelters and transition homes close to communities, experiences of racism when attempting to access supports, and a lack of culturally appropriate services.

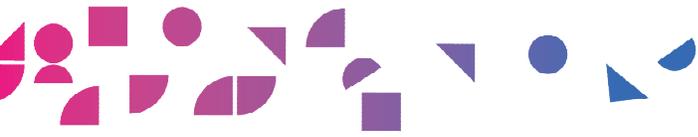
There are limited data on the experiences of racialized people, including Black and newcomer women and girls, with gender-based violence, meaning there are fewer opportunities to take them into consideration in gender-based violence policies and initiatives. Additionally, as noted above, there is little data on how Black and racialized people who have intersecting identity factors, including living with disabilities or being part of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, are experiencing gender-based violence.

For immigrant racialized women without citizenship status, reporting violence through government-led surveys or accessing services for fear of deportation for themselves or their abuser, who may be the sole source of income in their household, may be even less likely.

Stakeholders have emphasized that gender-based violence is both a challenge for women and girls with existing disabilities and can contribute to the onset of long-term illness and disability. In 2018, less than half (47%) of shelters reported that their services were “generally accessible” for women who use a wheelchair or other mobility device.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> [A National Profile of VAW Shelters and Transition Houses](#)



A 2009 report by the DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN) revealed that accessibility was often equated with wheelchair access, which oversimplifies the complexity of disabilities.<sup>22</sup>

Intersectional data on gender-based violence in rural in remote areas, as well as GBV for 2SLGBTQI+ populations, can also be limited, due to limited access to reporting (e.g., lack of infrastructure in rural communities) and systemic discrimination, stigma and marginalization that can lead to a fear of reporting (e.g., for 2SLGBTQI+ communities). By collating data at the provincial/territorial level rather than solely at the federal level through the expected results framework, as well as requiring the collection of intersectional data, the NAP to End GBV is designed to support the filling of these data gaps.

**9. List any priority groups identified in action plans, policies and programs, and on what basis these priority groups were identified.**

Two key initiatives will be highlighted in response to this question: a) the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan and b) the NAP to End GBV.

**a) The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**

Prioritization of Groups

Based on feedback received from 2SLGBTQI+ communities during the engagement phase – and supported by data - the following priority groups have been identified: Black 2SLGBTQI+; racialized 2SLGBTQI+; Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+; 2SLGBTQI+ individuals living with disabilities; senior 2SLGBTQI+; youth 2SLGBTQI+; 2SLGBTQI+ individuals living in official language minority communities; and those living in rural communities. This prioritization has been transposed to various calls for proposals that fall under the umbrella of the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan.

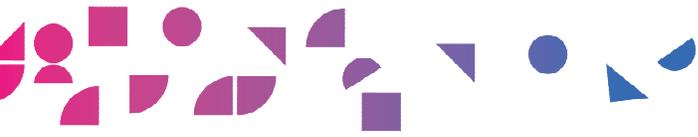
[2024 2SLGBTQI+ Projects Fund Call for Proposals](#)

As part of the 2024 2SLGBTQI+ Projects Fund Call for Proposals, the specific subpopulations were targeted including:

- Intersex
- Trans
- Two-Spirit
- Non-binary 2SLGBTQI+ people
- 2SLGBTQI+ populations that intersect with other marginalized communities (e.g., racialized 2SLGBTQI+, Immigrant 2SLGBTQI+, Senior 2SLGBTQI+, Black 2SLGBTQI+)

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<sup>22</sup> [More Than A Footnote: A Research Report on Women and Girls with Disabilities in Canada - Dawn Canada](#)



## 2023 2SLGBTQI+ Community Capacity Fund Call for Proposals

In 2023, this same prioritization approach was employed for the Community Capacity Fund. WAGE funded the Enchanté Network to conduct a feasibility study on establishing Canada's first national Black 2SLGBTQI+ organization. Community reception to this idea was positive, and WAGE is currently funding the Enchanté Network to establish this organization.

### **b) The NAP to End GBV**

#### Prioritization of Groups

The NAP to End GBV stipulates that programs, services, and actions supported with Government of Canada funding must support the needs of the key population groups, including women and girls; Indigenous women and girls; Black and racialized women; immigrant and refugee women; 2SLGBTQI+ people; women with disabilities, and women living in Northern, rural, and remote communities.

Provinces and territories have identified additional population groups that are also supported such as (but not limited to): linguistic minority women, senior women, post-secondary students, men and boys, youth, all residents (for awareness campaigns), and other groups (e.g., frontline workers). For WAGE's work, priority groups are determined through engagement and analysis, literature reviews and GBA Plus analysis, to reflect both the data and the experiences on the ground.

### Promising Examples

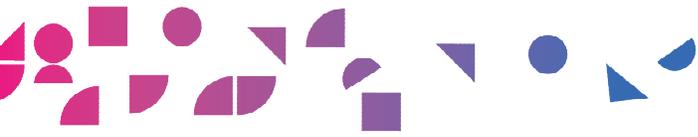
#### **10. Please share any lessons learned or promising practices from engagement with individuals and communities directly affected by this issue. What approaches would you recommend to other departments seeking to advance meaningful participation?**

##### **a) The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**

#### Best Practices and Recommended Approaches

Following various engagement activities with 2SLGBTQI+ communities, including Indigenous organizations, the following best practices have been identified:

- Defining the objective of the engagement session/activity, including expected outcomes and deliverables following the session
- Ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, so that all parties can envision how the systems and processes will work
- Ensuring that multiple aspects of a policy issue are being discussed (e.g., social, economic, cultural component)



- Having early, frequent, efficient, and culturally appropriate engagement with stakeholders at all phases of the policy and/or program spectrum (i.e., development, implementation, monitoring, reporting)
- Maintaining ongoing engagement with partners
- Prioritizing voices of the most marginalized and the most underrepresented
- Ensuring accessibility<sup>23</sup> criteria are met
- Using existing information and reports to avoid over-surveying underrepresented and underserved communities
- Recognizing the value of individuals' knowledge and experience by offering compensation or accommodations

## **b) The NAP to End GBV**

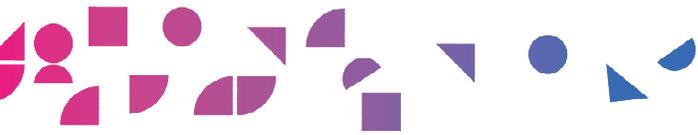
### Lessons Learned

The following lessons learned from the first year of implementation of the NAP to End GBV (2023-24) has been applied to the continued implementation in 2024-2025:

- Consider more actions for underserved and at-risk populations, including women, girls, and gender diverse people with disabilities, immigrant and refugee women, and women and girls in rural, remote and Northern Canada.
- Consider initiatives for victims and survivors navigating the justice system under Pillar 3 (Responsive justice system). Planned actions by provinces and territories for Year 2 show an increase in initiatives in this area.
- Consider the use of data and the data collection capabilities within jurisdictions and third-party organizations. Together with information collected through the [Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#), the increased availability of provincial and territorial disaggregated data will allow for more detailed analysis of gaps in some intersectional populations.
- Consider progress and outcomes against the expected results framework now that baseline data measures are established.

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<sup>23</sup> Accessibility includes ensuring collaborators have adequate resources and capacity to participate and that all meetings and activities are designed to enable full participation of invitees (e.g., accessible materials, bilingual documentation, offering alternative to virtual participation, ensuring remote locations have resources to participate, etc.)



**11. Please share any programs highlights or funded projects that have been successful in advancing safe, adequate, and affordable housing for women, Two Spirit, Trans, and gender-diverse people. What models would you recommend for replication, and what factors have contributed to their success?**

In response to this question, the following is a snapshot illustration of three WAGE-funded projects—one each at the national, territorial, and provincial levels—to advance the provision of safe, adequate, and affordable housing for women, Two-Spirit, trans, and gender-diverse people.

**Project Title:** [Pan-Canadian Voice for Women's Housing \(PCVWH\)](#)

**Recipient Organization:** Atira Women's Resource Society

**Scope:** National

Through its *Pan-Canadian Voice for Women's Housing (PCVWH)* project, the Atira Women's Resource Society led institutional change in housing policies and practices at local, provincial, territorial, and federal levels, by ensuring that they are informed by a holistic, inclusive, and intersectional feminist voice and reflect the housing needs of women and children across Canada.

The project facilitated research on women's housing across Canada. It organized yearly symposia, creating a space for women and women-serving organizations from across Canada to come together to better understand the barriers to safe, affordable, and appropriate housing. Calls to action were presented to government bodies and their progress was monitored in subsequent government commitments, ensuring that they were captured in the National housing strategy and that women's centred policies were developed at federal, provincial, and territorial levels. The project enhanced the leadership ability of women and gender diverse individuals through capacity building trainings, speaking engagements, and networking opportunities with decision makers. Resources developed are available for public use.

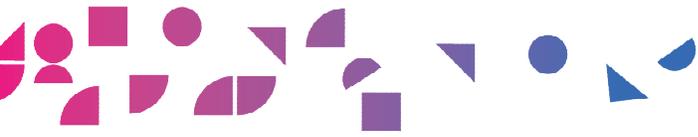
With regards to specific activities, PCVWH identified barriers facing women and children with respect to housing, has facilitated research on women's housing across Canada and has developed and promoted advocacy and calls to action. PCVWH has enabled women and women-serving organizations participating in policy development, created opportunities for education and knowledge sharing and raising awareness.

**Project Title:** [Redefining Shelter Operations for Inuit Women Escaping Violence](#)

**Recipient Organization:** Tahiuqtiit Women's Society

**Localization/scope:** Ulukhaktok, NT

Through its *Redefining Shelter Operations for Inuit Women Escaping Violence* project, Tahiuqtiit Women's Society engaged the Inuk community in the development of Inuk-centred policies and practices to better support Indigenous women, girls, and/or 2SLGBTQIA+ people who will access its women's shelter in Ulukhaktok, NT. These policies and practices are foundational for the success of the shelter, and through the



dissemination of information through shelter networks, other programs will be better positioned to serve their shelter clients, particularly those of Inuk background.

**Recipient Organization:** [Mission Services of Hamilton](#)

**Localization/scope:** Hamilton, ON

**Project Title:** Safe at Home

Through its *Safe at Home* project, the multi-sector Safe at Home Hamilton Steering Committee of Mission Services of Hamilton Inc., put in place a Safe at Home (SAH) program to strengthen the GBV sector in Hamilton, Ontario. The project developed multiple memoranda of understandings with agencies within its networks who will be part of this multi-sector intervention. It addresses survivors' right to affordable and quality housing; the need for a new housing option for survivors fleeing violence; and creates a comprehensive set of wraparound supports and services for survivors of partner violence. It also addresses the need for a gender transformative approach to the design and delivery of GBV and related services, and lack of availability of a Canada-specific SAH Policies and Practice document. This initiative includes a network of cross-sector service providers in Hamilton so women (and children) will be diverted from VAW shelters and stay "Safe at Home" guided by a plethora of supports. Safe at Home Hamilton presented on "Sharing Information Safely" at the National Conference on Ending Homelessness (CAEH) in October 2024. Ongoing overview presentations remain available to community agencies upon request, furthering engagement and awareness of the program.

**End of Submission**