


# Mid-term evaluation

---

 [canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/transparency/evaluation-reports/mid-term-evaluation/mid-term-evaluation-full-report.html](https://canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/transparency/evaluation-reports/mid-term-evaluation/mid-term-evaluation-full-report.html)

Women and Gender Equality Canada

[/ Gouvernement du Canada](#)

[Français](#)

## Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence

### Introduction

---

This report presents the findings of the mid-term horizontal evaluation of It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence (the GBV Strategy). Through the GBV Strategy, federal partners deliver a range of programs and initiatives intended to prevent and address gender-based violence (GBV). [Footnote 1](#) Core federal partners include Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), Public Safety Canada (PS), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the Department of National Defence (DND), and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The evaluation covers the period from fiscal year 2017-18, when the GBV Strategy was first funded, until fiscal year 2020-21. This introductory section of the report provides an overview of the GBV Strategy and the evaluation.

While the evaluation is primarily concerned with a retroactive look at the GBV Strategy, it is also intended to inform the implementation of the 10-year National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (the NAP). As the NAP will build on the GBV Strategy, the findings of this evaluation will assist WAGE and its federal partners in implementing the NAP by documenting best practices, challenges, and lessons learned, and by outlining clear recommendations.

### GBV strategy profile

---

The GBV Strategy is a collection of 18 initiatives organized into three pillars. Though the GBV Strategy includes all federal initiatives to prevent and address GBV, six federal departments and agencies received funding for specific initiatives. Budgets 2017 and 2018 [Footnote 2](#) provided nearly \$220 million starting in 2017-2018 until 2022-2023 and \$42.7 million of ongoing annual funding to establish, launch, and expand the GBV Strategy. The pillars are as follows:

- **Pillar 1: Preventing GBV.** Research has shown that the most efficient and effective way to end GBV and its impacts is through prevention. This includes understanding the roots of GBV in gender inequality, the influence of forms of oppression on GBV (e.g., racism, classism, ableism, colonialism, and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, sex characteristics, gender identity and expression), as well as the effects of social and economic power imbalances and outdated societal gender roles and norms. Consequently, preventing GBV is a central part of the GBV Strategy. Initiatives under this pillar seek to change the values and attitudes that underpin GBV (i.e., through raising awareness, and engaging men and boys), as well as to develop knowledge of effective interventions in different settings and populations.
- **Pillar 2: Supporting survivors and their families.** Events of recent years, including the start of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, as well as the Truth Gathering Process of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People, have seen countless survivors, victims, and their families come forward to speak about their realities and experiences with GBV. Through the GBV Strategy, federal partners are working with key stakeholders to better respond to and support the unique needs of survivors, victims and their families using victim- and survivor-centred, trauma- and violence-informed approaches. The GBV Strategy seeks to fill the gaps in the current approach by enhancing supports for at-risk populations, as well as by providing information and training on best practices for stakeholders working with people who have experienced GBV.
- **Pillar 3: Promoting responsive legal and justice systems.** Legal and justice systems are critical components in preventing and addressing GBV. These systems can help to increase the proportion of GBV incidents that get reported to the police, prevent re-victimization, hold offenders accountable and, ultimately, contribute to reducing rates of GBV. The GBV Strategy identified improvements that could be made in how these systems respond to GBV and interact with people who have experienced GBV, including the need for legal and justice systems to be trauma-informed and violence-informed, gender sensitive, and culturally relevant. To address this need, initiatives under this pillar will provide access to information, training, and supports to victims and those working within the justice system. It further sought amendments to laws to better respond to various forms of GBV.

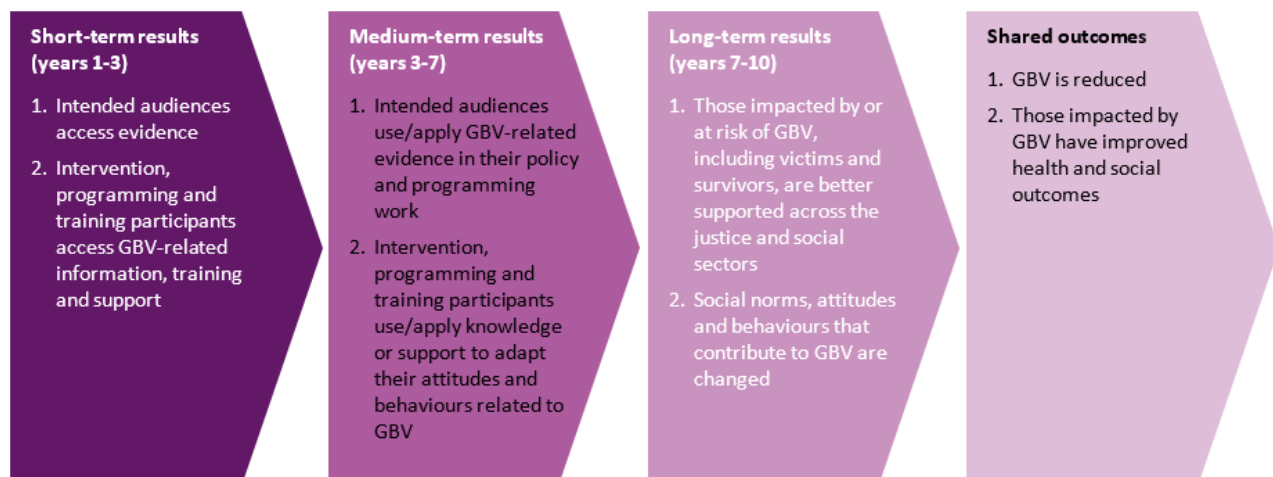
- **Overarching initiatives.** WAGE delivers two initiatives that cut across all three pillars. These are the GBV Knowledge Centre, as well as the Enhanced Data Collection and Research on GBV. Housed within WAGE, the GBV Knowledge Centre is the GBV Strategy's focal point responsible for developing multifaceted approaches to knowledge mobilization, coordination, research, and reporting on progress, as well as for creating and managing the GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform. The GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform was launched in December 2018 and compiles resources, research, and program evidence into a single searchable platform to provide information on federal funding opportunities related to GBV, includes information on initiatives in provinces and territories, and also catalogues resources available for those affected by GBV.

Concerning the Enhanced Data Collection and Research on GBV, WAGE worked with Statistics Canada on three national surveys to address knowledge gaps related to GBV in Canada and to determine baselines of the occurrence of different forms of GBV within various populations. WAGE also issued a Call for Proposals in 2019 to procure research and studies that address gender equality and GBV. Twenty-four research projects received a combined \$7.8 million in funding. Finally, WAGE provided over \$2 million in funding for Indigenous-focused and Indigenous-led research projects.

**Annex A** provides a list of GBV Strategy pillars and initiatives.

The 18 initiatives are intended to support concerted action to achieve the ultimate shared outcomes of reducing GBV in Canada, and improving the health and social outcomes of those impacted by GBV. Figure 1 presents the shared outcomes and expected results of the GBV Strategy. As a mid-term evaluation, the present report is primarily concerned with documenting progress toward the short-term results.

**Figure 1: Expected results and shared outcomes of the GBV Strategy**



► Description: Expected results and shared outcomes of the GBV Strategy  
**Justice Canada**

While JUS participates in the GBV Strategy, this department was not a funded federal partner until 2021-22. Prior to this, JUS undertook initiatives in support of the GBV Strategy, such as: earmarking existing resources through the **Victims Fund** for projects that enhance the criminal justice system's response to victims of GBV; supporting the implementation of *Divorce Act* amendments in former Bill C-78 that require courts to consider family violence while deciding parenting arrangements (2019);[Footnote 3](#) and creating resources for family legal advisors such as the new online training course on family violence and the HELP toolkit: Identifying and Responding to Family Violence for family law legal advisors.

In 2021-22, JUS received \$98.6 million in funding over five years[Footnote 4](#) to ensure access to free legal advice and legal representation for victims and survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence (IPV), as well as to provide additional supports for victims and survivors of IPV to navigate the family justice system. In addition, JUS received funding to support supervision services for parenting time, in cases of separation and divorce, to protect the safety and well-being of children and families.

These initiatives fall under Pillar 3 of the GBV Strategy, and are expected to contribute to shared outcomes at the short-term, medium-term, long-term, and ultimate levels.

As this mid-term evaluation focused on the period from fiscal years 2017-18 to 2020-21, JUS is not named among core GBV funded federal partners in this report, nor are JUS initiatives scoped into this evaluation.

## About the evaluation

---

This mid-term evaluation focused on the period from fiscal years 2017-18 to 2020-21. As the GBV Strategy is reaching its five-year mark in March 2023, various GBV Strategy developments are expected to be completed after the submission of this report.

The evaluation focused on the initiatives of the core GBV Strategy federal partners during this period: WAGE, PS, RCMP, PHAC, IRCC, and DND. The scope of the evaluation included all initiatives planned or implemented under the GBV Strategy. The objectives of the evaluation were to examine issues of program design (specifically governance), delivery, and progress toward short-term outcomes, and to identify recommendations for possible improvements.

The evaluation was guided by six primary questions:

1. Is there effective horizontal governance among GBV partners? What are the opportunities for improvement?

2. Is there effective collaboration among GBV partners and other government departments and agencies? What are the opportunities for improvement?
3. How does the Strategy's governance compare to established best practices for horizontal initiatives? What are the opportunities for improvements?
4. How and to what degree has the Strategy been implemented? What factors — barriers or facilitators — influenced the implementation?
5. To what extent has the Strategy progressed towards short-term outcomes?
6. How and to what extent has the pandemic (COVID-19) influenced the progress of the GBV Strategy?

Multiple lines of evidence were used, including:

- A review and analysis of publicly available and internal literature, data, and documents. The documents reviewed included key policy-setting documents, program planning and operational documents, performance measurement data, financial information, internal communications, meeting agendas and minutes, and other materials.
- A literature review and comparative analysis, which examined other countries' approaches to addressing GBV, as well as other horizontal initiatives in Canada. The primary objective was to gather information on best practices for horizontal initiatives (especially as concerns governance) that WAGE may wish to consider.
- In-depth interviews with 91 key informants, consisting of:
  - GBV Strategy representatives (48 individuals), including senior managers and staff from the federal partners;
  - Community and national organizations that received funding through the GBV Strategy (32 individuals);
  - Members of the Minister's Advisory Council on GBV (7 individuals); and
  - Experts in GBV (4 individuals).
- Focus groups with eight key informants, consisting of representatives from each of the GBV Strategy's federal partners.

## Limitations

There were a number of limitations which impacted the evaluation, as presented below.

- The COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 federal election period, and staff turnover within all federal partners affected the availability of key stakeholders to participate in interviews and focus groups. The data collection period was extended in order to accommodate as many stakeholders as possible.
- There was incomplete data for several indicators related to the progression toward short-term outcomes, owing primarily to delays in initiative implementation as a result of funding being allocated late as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. A lack of quantitative data was supplemented with findings from the key informant interviews where possible.

- The turnover of staff within WAGE's Research, Results and Delivery Branch, including a change in the Minister responsible for WAGE following the 2021 federal election, created a number of delays for the evaluation.

## Context

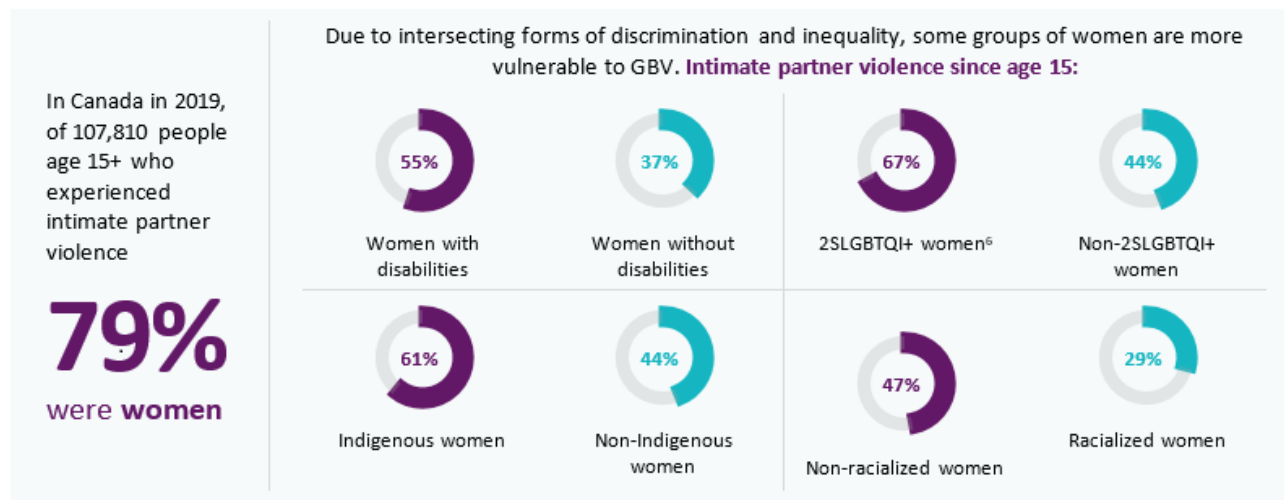
---

GBV is a serious and ongoing issue in Canada. In addition to the significant physical, emotional, and mental health impacts on people who have experienced GBV, their families, and on society, GBV also has important economic repercussions. These impacts can carry over generations, and can lead to cycles of violence and abuse within families and sometimes whole communities. [Footnote 5](#)

Though GBV affects people of all genders, ages, religions, cultures, ethnicities, geographic locations, and socio-economic backgrounds, the data indicates that some populations are at increased risk of GBV or are underserved when experiencing GBV including: Indigenous women and girls; Black and racialized women; immigrant and refugee women; Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and additional sexually and gender diverse people (2SLGBTQI+); women living in Northern, rural, and remote communities; and people living with disabilities. These disparities do not exist as a result of one's identity but are rather the result of the interconnected nature of various forms of oppression, such as racism, colonialism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism, as well as various risk factors including precarious housing or homelessness.

In light of this issue, the then-Minister of Status of Women was tasked in 2015 with working "with experts and advocates to develop and implement a comprehensive federal gender violence strategy and action plan." [Footnote 6](#) This led to an extensive consultation process in the summer and fall of 2016, wherein survivors and victims, front-line workers, researchers, and advocates were able to share their insights, experiences, and advice on the development of the GBV Strategy. [Footnote 7](#) The GBV Strategy was announced in June 2017 and was guided by the principle that everyone in Canada has the right to live free from violence.

### Figure 2: Facts and Figures: Intimate Partner Violence



#### ► Description: Facts and Figures: Intimate Partner Violence

The GBV Strategy is fundamentally a federal strategy in that it is largely concerned with the initiatives of federal departments and agencies. In so doing, the GBV Strategy sought to get the federal government in a solid position and to lay a strong foundation for future and sustained work in this area. However, since GBV is a complex and pervasive issue, and because of jurisdictional considerations, successfully addressing it will require concerted, prolonged, and sustained efforts on the parts of a wide range of stakeholders, including provinces and territories, law enforcement agencies, not for profit organizations, industry, advocacy groups, and other relevant federal departments and agencies. The GBV Strategy is thus a critical steppingstone in an ongoing journey to address and prevent GBV in Canada.

Recognizing this need and as already noted in this report, in November 2022, the federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada announced the launch of a 10-year National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. Budget 2022 will provide \$539.3 million over five years, starting in 2022-23, to enable provinces and territories to supplement and enhance services and supports within their jurisdictions to prevent GBV and support those who have experienced GBV. This investment will support provinces and territories in their efforts to implement the NAP. As the federal government is expanding its efforts, including through collaboration with provinces and territories in this area moving forward, the lessons learned from the evaluation of the GBV Strategy will be critical in informing the implementation of the NAP.

#### **The impact of COVID-19**

It is critical to appreciate the ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic considerably shifted the context in which the GBV Strategy has been implemented.

First, it is important to understand the various ways in which the pandemic created conditions for increased risk factors and rates for some types of GBV among the Canadian population (e.g., intimate partner violence (IPV) and child sexual exploitation). These include: the stress of job interruptions or loss, financial pressures, social and psychological isolation measures, as well as an inability, uncertainty, or added barriers to accessing health care, social services, and emergency services.<sup>[Footnote 8](#)</sup> While precise data on the extent of the impact of the pandemic on rates of GBV is difficult to measure, and though the full effects may not be known in the short-term, many organizations providing supports and services for those experiencing IPV “have reported a significant increase in demand since the beginning of the pandemic [while] others have seen a decrease in demand for their services, raising concerns that those experiencing IPV cannot or are not reaching out for help.”<sup>[Footnote 9](#)</sup>

In light of this crisis, the federal government announced a number of initiatives and policies. Of those that directly affected WAGE, the federal government committed \$300 million in emergency and response and recovery funding to front-line organizations that support those who experience GBV, including women’s shelters and sexual assault centres. While such funding undoubtedly helped these organizations navigate the pandemic, the response to the pandemic meant that the long-term implementation of the GBV Strategy was not the foremost issue for WAGE during that period. While the present evaluation makes no attempt to qualify or quantify the merits of that emergency funding or what it was able to achieve, it does acknowledge that the diversion of resources and attention away from the direct implementation of the GBV Strategy had negative impacts on its governance and implementation.

Moving forward, the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will need to inform the implementation of the GBV Strategy and the NAP.

## Findings

---

The evaluation assessed the appropriateness of the GBV Strategy’s design in terms of the federal partners involved, the scope of initiatives delivered, the suitability of allocated funding, and the extent to which Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) was integrated into the design and implementation of the GBV Strategy.



## GBA PLUS

A GBA Plus lens was applied in the design and implementation of the GBV Strategy in a number of ways that were similar between WAGE and federal partners. These included:

- The Treasury Board submission
- The calls for proposals and/or selection process for funding recipients
- Using gender- and population-based data to inform initiatives
- Gathering relevant gender-based data from funded initiatives, as appropriate and feasible, and sharing this data with the department that provided funding
- Ensuring diversity among funding organizations' staff and advisory committees
- Consulting specific populations in the design and delivery of initiatives
- Ensuring that initiatives were as accessible as possible
- Most partners have undergone GBA Plus training and apply this lens to all of their work

Continued focus on GBA Plus will be important going forward, as both GBV and funded activities have different impacts on certain population groups.

The evaluation found the design of the GBV Strategy to be appropriate. More precisely, those federal partners that received funding were all found to play a significant role in addressing GBV, and the three-pillar approach was found to be effective for structuring and communicating GBV Strategy initiatives. Funded initiatives were largely found to complement one another and no specific examples of duplication were identified. However, the risk of duplication is likely to increase as a larger number of stakeholders will undertake initiatives through the NAP. As such, care must be taken to ensure that future initiatives do not duplicate one another. An ecosystem mapping could reduce duplication, as could greater coordination and collaboration between funded and unfunded federal partners (e.g., through the creation of subcommittees for all grants and contribution programs).

The overall funding allocated to the GBV Strategy was suitable given its nature and scope, as was the amount of funding allocated to specific federal funded partners and initiatives. They were largely able to spend all the funds issued to them and the flexibility to use different financial instruments (e.g., contracts, grants and contributions) supported implementation. In several instances, however, funding was received late and required federal partners to adjust their initiatives or re-profile the funding. The pandemic created additional pressures as it decreased the window in which planned initiatives could take place. While the current funding is significant, there is also a recognition that ongoing and incremental investments will be required to continue tackling the problem.

Although the overall design of the GBV Strategy was found to be comprehensive, a need was identified for additional partners. These include, most notably, the provinces and territories given their jurisdiction over such things as health, education, the administration of justice, and social services. Additional federal partners to consider for inclusion, as suggested by key informants, include the Canada Border Services Agency, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, the Correctional Service of Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, Global Affairs Canada, Health Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Justice Canada, [Footnote 10](#) Natural Resources Canada, and the tri-council research and granting agencies. In particular, additional partners were identified as needed to bolster Pillar 3 (promoting responsive legal and justice systems), including Justice Canada, provincial and municipal police services, courts, and tribunals. The NAP is a federal, provincial and territorial framework and was developed in collaboration with provinces and territories, and so is expected to begin addressing this gap. The breadth of initiatives funded could also be expanded to create an even larger impact.

## **Governance**

---

In order to address complex social problems, the federal government increasingly pulls together expertise, resources, and capacity from several departments or agencies into a horizontal initiative. As such, it is important to have a successfully coordinated interdepartmental federal response. For any response to GBV to be effective, it must be viewed as a marathon rather than a sprint. It is therefore critical that future national action to address GBV be based on as strong a governance structure as possible. Coupled with the inherent challenges related to such long-term endeavours, including the turnover of leadership and staff among federal partners, as well as the difficulty in maintaining momentum, an effective governance structure cannot be taken for granted but rather must be continuously nurtured.

The section below presents the evaluation findings related to governance. The objective is to identify areas for improvement, best practices, and lessons learned moving forward in order to best advance efforts and address this complex social problem. Relevant findings from the review of best practices in horizontal initiatives are included below as appropriate. In particular, a spotlight on the federal contribution to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Vancouver is included.

## **Findings**

Given the scope and nature of GBV in Canada, the evaluation found that it is appropriate for the federal government to coordinate its response through a horizontal initiative. WAGE remains best placed to lead as the department responsible for coordinating the GBV Strategy.

A formal governance structure for the GBV Strategy is in place. Four interdepartmental committees at the Deputy Minister, the Assistant Deputy Minister, the Director General, and the working level were created to provide strategic oversight and direction for implementation of initiatives, and support federal partners in reporting GBV Strategy progress to Cabinet.<sup>[Footnote 11](#)</sup> Each of these committees includes representatives from the six core federal partners, as well as representation from other federal departments and agencies that are also undertaking activities related to GBV.<sup>[Footnote 12](#)</sup>

GBV Strategy representatives were generally aware of the formal governance structure, and agreed that it was appropriate to have committees at a variety of levels. Though the roles of each committee were specified in their respective terms of reference, these were not consistently operationalized. For example, senior management meetings were intended to have higher level discussions about strategic planning; evaluation findings indicate that many of these meetings were instead used as fora to provide initiative- or department-specific progress updates. As a result of terms of reference not consistently being respected, there was duplication between committees and thus greater inefficiencies.

While federal partners report having a good understanding of their own roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the GBV Strategy, federal partners generally have a weaker understanding of what other departments and agencies are doing, or how each of them is expected to feed into the GBV Strategy as a whole. Similarly, the evaluation found minimal evidence of collaboration between federal partners on GBV Strategy initiatives.

Overall, evaluation findings indicate that the effectiveness of management and decision-making processes appears to have decreased over time. Governance was most effective at the start of the GBV Strategy as committees met regularly, information was shared in advance of meetings, and meetings gathered relevant federal partners. However, as the GBV Strategy has evolved, and in light of various external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, committee meetings have occurred less frequently and there has been less continuity with information sharing.

Similarly, reporting and monitoring structures were generally found to be too restrictive and not reflective of federal partners' reality. For example, many of the key performance indicators were quantitative metrics that were difficult to measure accurately, and there was little room to report on qualitative findings or create a narrative of results. Other challenges related to reporting and monitoring structures include insufficient communication between WAGE and federal partners about what reporting or feedback was required to support the GBV Strategy, and short timelines to respond to requests or provide documentation. Further, there was a lack of clarity about the appropriate points of contact within all federal partners, which slowed down communication and the transfer of documents. This was aggravated by high levels of turnover within WAGE as the points of contact changed frequently.

## The Minister's Advisory Council on GBV

The Minister's Advisory Council on GBV is formed of victims and survivors, community leaders, academics, youth, and representatives of organizations that work to combat GBV. This Council advises the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth on promising practices, lessons learned, opportunities, challenges, and specific barriers facing those with intersecting identities.

The evaluation found strong support for the creation of the Advisory Council as this allowed for a direct link between WAGE, the Minister, community organizations, and experts. Key informants stressed the value of having a similar body moving forward, and indicated that its existence should be viewed as a best practice.

However, there were several factors that hindered the effectiveness of the Advisory Council:

- A lack of clarity on the specific roles and responsibilities of individual members (e.g., what balance they were expected to strike between advocating for the populations with whom they work and collaborating with other Council members to achieve consensus).
- A lack of remuneration for members, which was found to present barriers specifically to members from smaller organizations that had fewer resources.
- Insufficient technical and administrative support, which led to meetings being organized with little notice and meeting documents (e.g., agendas, minutes) being sent late.
- Many key informants indicated that the Advisory Council grew to have too many members and its size became unwieldy. However, this must be balanced against evaluation findings that suggest that, while the Advisory Council became increasingly diverse over time, there was unequal representation of the provinces and territories and certain groups of women were not sufficiently represented (e.g., Black women, Indigenous women).
- The presence of power imbalances between members, whereby members representing large, national organizations were perceived to wield more power than members representing smaller organizations or specific subpopulations.
- The COVID-19 pandemic presented additional barriers to coordination and collaboration, including logistical and technical challenges related to holding virtual meetings.

A number of opportunities for improving future external advisory bodies<sup>[Footnote 13](#)</sup> were identified:

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities of all members, especially those also receiving funding.
- Reducing membership while also ensuring more equal and diverse representation. Suggestions were made to consider a rotating membership.

- Adopting a more collaborative approach to decision-making so that members have a greater role in determining agenda items and topics for discussion.
- Providing more administrative and technical support.
- Remunerating members for their engagement.

A number of factors hampered the effectiveness of governance structures. Some of these were more systemic and structural, whereas others were external. These factors include:

- The transition from Status of Women Canada to WAGE in December 2018, which created significant work and led to some instability.
- The fact that this is a large strategy for a young and small department.
- The fact that WAGE has limited A-base funding, which results in less departmental stability for long-term initiatives.
- Relatively high levels of turnover within WAGE which leads to a loss of institutionalized knowledge, and challenges to maintaining working relationships with contacts among federal partners.
- The effect of the pandemic on WAGE personnel as well as on WAGE undertaking urgent priorities (discussed above under “the impact of the pandemic”).

Over time, WAGE has become more stable and the effect of some of the more systemic issues (e.g., the transition from Status of Women to WAGE) is expected to decrease.

In light of these findings, the following opportunities for improving GBV Strategy governance were identified:

- **Increase opportunities for formal coordination and communication between funded and unfunded federal departments and agencies.** GBV Strategy representatives were not all aware that unfunded federal departments and agencies were part of the GBV Strategy’s governance structure. Greater coordination, especially with respect to similar initiatives (e.g., through the creation of subcommittees or working groups for all those initiatives related to grants and contribution programs), would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the GBV Strategy, and reduce possible duplications (e.g., in organizations receiving funding). Greater coordination would also allow the GBV Strategy to become larger than the sum of its parts, particularly through the development of new knowledge or expertise, and the creation of a fully integrated action plan.
- **Share meeting materials well enough in advance of meetings to allow participants sufficient time to prepare.** Representatives from federal partners reported that, at times, meeting materials were often shared with participants quite late, which did not leave working-level staff sufficient time to adequately brief senior management.

- **Reduce duplication between committees and seek to increase the efficiency of those meetings.** The governance structure would benefit from committees that respected their roles and responsibilities, as outlined in their respective terms of reference. This would avoid duplication between committees. Similarly, it was suggested that the specific attendance list for committees be clarified and streamlined (especially at the working level) to avoid having too many individuals in a meeting.
- **Increase opportunities and support for working-level staff within each federal partner.** Although there is an interdepartmental working-level committee, some representatives of federal partners perceive the governance structure to be top-heavy, with limited opportunities for working-level staff to be effectively engaged. It was suggested that greater support for working-level staff, including opportunities to gather in smaller groups around thematic or programmatic areas (e.g., awareness campaigns, grants and contribution programs) would be beneficial.

### **Best practices in horizontal initiatives**

The evaluation considered the extent to which the GBV Strategy's governance compares to established best practices for horizontal initiatives. Five horizontal initiatives or federal coalitions in Canada were considered and included:

- Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019–2022 (led by Canadian Heritage [PCH])
- the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (led by Employment and Social Development Canada [ESDC])
- the Government of Canada's Investment in the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games (led by PCH)
- the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (led by Environment and Climate Change Canada [ECCC])
- the Family Violence Initiative (led by the Public Health Agency of Canada [PHAC]) [Footnote 14](#)

A number of best practices were identified, which can largely be grouped as follows: having a balance of formal and informal structures and agreements; the clarity of roles and responsibilities; the coordination between stakeholders (including federal partners); performance measurement and reporting regimes; and funding and investment in the initiative. It is important to remember that not all best practices may be relevant or appropriate for certain types of initiatives.

The following section identifies practices that most horizontal initiatives appear to have successfully implemented as well as those that have presented more consistent challenges.

- **Balance of formal and informal structures and agreements.** Most Canadian horizontal initiatives, including the GBV Strategy, implemented several of these best practices. For example, all Canadian horizontal initiatives designated a lead department or agency to coordinate the initiative, and most ensured that coordination and collaboration are present at multiple levels. In the case of the GBV Strategy, the Treasury Board submission was signed by the ministers of all federal partners. Further, the Treasury Board submission included deliverables and performance metrics for each federal partner, which served to formalize partnerships and commitments to a set of deliverables. Various governance bodies were established at a number of levels to provide oversight and accountability. The GBV Strategy made use of instruments such as Memoranda of Understanding to formalize partnerships and also developed terms of reference to outline the roles and responsibilities of participating federal partners. Evaluation findings indicate that there was a lack of shared understanding of everyone's roles and responsibilities, as well as inconsistent adherence to the terms of reference.
- **Clarity of roles and responsibilities.** Canadian horizontal initiatives generally appear to have provided clarity on how the involvement of each partner will contribute to the goals and objectives of the initiative through such documents as terms of reference. While the GBV Strategy did have such documents, given the aforementioned challenges, the roles and responsibilities of the various governance committees was not consistently well understood by all federal partners.
- **Collaboration between federal partners.** Though a number of fora to support collaboration between federal partners were established, the evaluation found inconsistent awareness of how federal partners, as well as federal departments and agencies that did not receive funding under the GBV Strategy, were part of the GBV Strategy's overall governance structure. There was also minimal evidence of collaboration between federal partners on initiatives, including on similar initiatives such as grants and contribution programs or awareness campaigns.
- **Performance measurement and reporting regimes.** Most Canadian horizontal initiatives developed a performance measurement and reporting strategy with their partners, and ensured that their partners were involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluation. In several cases, however, it was unclear how performance data would be used and shared. In the case of the GBV Strategy, a logic model and a performance measurement framework have been developed. However, as discussed in Section 3.4 of the report, a number of factors present challenges to supporting effective performance reporting.
- **Funding and investment in the initiative.** In nearly all cases, while information on the financial resources allocated to these various initiatives is available, there is no information available on the extent to which this funding was perceived as adequate by stakeholders. As noted, the evaluation found that the funding allocated to the GBV Strategy was appropriate given its current scope.

## **Spotlight: the 2010 vancouver olympic and paralympic games**

The federal investment in the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games (the Games) emerges as a success story in the design and implementation of a horizontal initiative. The Olympics, by their very nature, are a precise series of events that happen at a single, fixed point in time, and have a very clear end date. This undoubtedly helps anchor and guide the various governance structures. Comparatively, an initiative such as preventing and addressing GBV operates on a much more opaque and longer time horizon, thus making the maintenance of momentum and the buy-in of all stakeholders significantly more challenging. Nonetheless, the Games should be carefully considered by WAGE and its federal partners despite its differences with the GBV Strategy.

Canada's investment into the Games was guided by two documents: The Federal Policy for Hosting International Sport Events (Hosting Policy) and The Multiparty Agreement (MPA). The MPA outlined party responsibilities and contributions for each level of government involved with the Games. This included a commitment between the federal government and the Government of British Columbia (BC) to invest equal amounts into the Games, as well as commitments from local city and municipal governments. Numerous governance bodies and committees were established at various levels and were overseen by the Federal Secretariat. The Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) was the clear departmental lead for this initiative. An evaluation found that the creation of the MPA allowed for effective early planning, and that the horizontal federal governance structure was effective. The MPA also established the Four Host First Nations Society to recognize and integrate Indigenous leadership as part of the governance structure.

Representatives from participating federal partners sat on the Results-based Management and Accountability Framework/Risk-based Audit Framework (RMAF/RBAF) Implementation Team. This team was tasked with the development, and later implementation, of the interdepartmental RMAF/RBAF which ensured that federal partners were not only involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluation, but were also aware of how performance data would be used and shared.

There are, however, lessons to be learned from some of the challenges faced by this initiative. For example, this governance structure was found to have imposed redundant reporting requirements for certain federal partners, increasing their workloads unnecessarily. One example included redundant risk identification and mitigation efforts conducted by the Essential Federal Services and the Vancouver Olympic Committee. The evaluation suggested that streamlined reporting structures be implemented in future projects.

## **Implementation**

---



Despite the aforementioned challenges related both to governance and the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical to stress that 17 of the GBV Strategy's 18 planned initiatives are on track to being successfully implemented. Though some initiatives were modified or delayed due to a variety of factors, others are being implemented as planned and some even exceeded their performance targets or were completed under budget. This section presents an overview of the work accomplished by pillar under the GBV Strategy, highlights some promising practices and success stories, and documents lessons learned.

## **Pillar 1 – preventing GBV**

The seven initiatives under this pillar sought to change the values and attitudes that underpin GBV (e.g., through awareness campaigns), and to bolster the state of research on effective interventions in different settings and populations. While both PS and PHAC have made good progress in their respective initiatives, the launch of WAGE's GBV Youth Awareness Campaign did not take place in the time period covered by this evaluation.

### **Promising practice**

[The Community of Practice: Addressing Youth Dating Violence](#) facilitates knowledge sharing and mobilization between the PHAC-funded intervention research projects through webinars, working groups, and research summaries, among others. The evaluation found strong support for this community of practice as a valuable forum for sharing information, resources, and expertise, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **PS** – PS' four initiatives were delivered as planned, though some were delayed or modified due to the pandemic. For example, PS' awareness campaign against child sexual exploitation exceeded expectations. More precisely, PLEA Community Services Society of BC delivered more workshops to youth in BC than planned (394 workshops to over 19,000 youth). Further, White Ribbon was able to far exceed their targets, reaching 116,969 students, 98,843 parents, and 112,752 educators through their live and recorded programming by the end of the funding period. Moreover, based on lessons learned from interacting with the community, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) decided to develop some unanticipated awareness and educational resources, such as documents for lawyers to outline how victims are found online and ways for people who have experienced GBV to protect themselves.

- **PHAC** – Through the administration of open, targeted and directed solicitations, PHAC supported 24 projects, via grants and contribution agreements. Aiming to promote consent and respect, to break down harmful gender norms, and to equip youth and teens with skills for healthy relationships. PHAC also supported three parenting support programs to equip parents and caregivers with the skills necessary to form positive attachments and to develop alternatives to harsh discipline, in order to prevent child maltreatment. Furthermore, PHAC also supports Promoting Relationships & Eliminating Violence Network (PREVNet) at Queen’s University to lead a Community of Practice on Teen Dating Violence. Funded projects are largely being delivered as planned, though some projects had to pivot their activities or experienced delays as a result of various external factors, including the pandemic.
- **WAGE** – While campaign development began in 2019, and several iterations were considered and partially developed, [Footnote 15](#) work on the youth-focused campaign did not begin until March 2021. This campaign targets youth 14 to 24 years old, including Indigenous, 2SLGBTQI+, rural youth, youth with disabilities, and other equity-seeking groups across Canada. It aims to build awareness of GBV-related issues, and to promote changes in attitudes and behaviours that contribute to facilitated violence among young people. The campaign was officially launched in August 2022. Key informants observed that delays were largely a result of shifting priorities during the pandemic; the evaluation was unable to determine whether the funding that had been allocated for the initiative was re-profiled.

## **Pillar 2 - supporting survivors and their families**

Initiatives under this pillar sought to enhance supports for at-risk populations, as well as to provide information and training on best practices for stakeholders working with survivors and victims, and their families. Nearly all GBV Strategy federal partners had at least one initiative under this pillar, and good progress has been made on all initiatives.

**WAGE** – WAGE designed and launched a GBV Funding program in 2018. The funding program seeks to develop promising practices that address gaps in the GBV sector and which provide supports for specific groups of GBV victims and survivors, and to create strong communities of practice. In 2019-2020, WAGE had invested \$50 million in 60 projects. However, several funded organizations could not implement their initiatives as planned owing to the pandemic, and so adjusted their activities accordingly (e.g., using virtual technology). It has also been challenging for the funding program to establish strong communities of practice that would gather funding recipients in person to share ideas. For example, the first planned gathering was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While online webinars have been organized, these vehicles are not as rich for cross-organization sharing as in-person events.

## Promising practice

Recognizing that the grant application process requires significant capacity, resources, and time from community organizations, WAGE created a two-step funding application process whereby organizations could submit a brief project concept document that was accepted through a call for concept mechanism. If the concept was selected, they could receive funding from WAGE to develop full project proposals, during which organizations could engage experts or undertake consultations with communities. This approach thus reduced the administrative burden associated with submitting an initial application, and the provision of pre-operational funding allowed for more evidence-based projects. Further, the use of External Review Committees enhanced the selection process by bringing a diversity of perspectives and expertise. While the increased stakeholder and survivor engagement took more time, an internal reflection exercise found the process to be valuable.

- **PHAC** – PHAC supported a number of organizations to develop training curricula and resources on GBV, trauma-informed care, and safety planning. Interviews with a selection of five funding recipients indicate that all projects are making progress in implementing their planned activities. While two projects are largely on track, three projects are moving ahead more slowly due to staffing issues, adapting projects to better respond to the needs of target populations, and in one case, a six-month delay in getting a funding agreement in place with PHAC.
- **PS** – The enhanced support provided by PS to the C3P to respond to child sexual exploitation exceeded GBV Strategy expectations. For example, due to increased need during the pandemic, there was a significant rise in the number of youth supported through C3P's Victim Support Strategy (3,000 in 2021), and there has also been an increase in the use of C3P's cybertip.ca (more than 18,000 incidents reported in 2021). [Footnote 16](#) Across its services, C3P dealt with more than 371,000 reports of online child sexual exploitation in 2021. [Footnote 17](#) It is worth noting that the pandemic brought about a notable increase in the need for C3P's cybertip.ca, Project Arachnid, and Victim Support Strategy, and that C3P stepped up its activities to meet this need. However, due to these activities being similar to the activities funded through the GBV Strategy, we are not able to determine if these activities used PS funding or WAGE funding.

- **DND** – DND awarded contribution funding to nine sexual assault centres across Canada to provide direct counselling services to Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members, bystander intervention and training, as well as training to healthcare service providers on local CAF bases to help them work with affected CAF members and to ensure appropriate referrals are made. DND has also reviewed the existing CAF family violence crisis teams' capacity, and then developed and implemented initiatives to enhance the capacity of these teams (e.g., creating communities of practice that gather CAF health services, military policy, chaplains, health promotion, Military Family Services, and Military Family Resource Centres). In addition, DND launched an annual healthy relationships campaign in October 2019 which was rolled out to 32 bases and wings across Canada, Europe, and the United States.
- **IRCC** – IRCC sought to build capacity for front-line settlement workers and enhanced place-based services for newcomers and refugees through funding opportunities delivered to three community organizations during the 2017 to 2020 period. The initiative was delivered as planned and proved successful. For example, one funding recipient provided workshops on IPV and related topics and sought to promote overall wellness to newcomers in rural areas of Manitoba. IRCC also supported several community organizations in 2019 to 2022 to develop and implement a National Settlement Sector GBV Strategy. The project includes a partnership of settlement and anti-violence sector organizations to provide GBV-related capacity building for front-line settlement workers through training (webinars and online courses). The objective of this settlement sector strategy and training [Footnote 18](#) is to build the capacity of front-line workers to identify GBV and make appropriate referrals for immigrant and refugee women and girls. The Strategy is proceeding as planned.

### **Promising practice**

Key informants noted that taking a sector-wide approach worked well as it necessitated collaborations and partnerships that might not have occurred if each organization had been funded separately. The stakeholders involved developed strong partnerships and relationships that contributed to the Strategy's success.

### **Pillar 3: promoting responsive legal and justice systems**

The GBV Strategy identified improvements that could be made in how legal and justice systems respond to GBV and interact with victims and survivors, including the need for these systems to be violence and trauma-informed, gender sensitive, and culturally relevant. The RCMP undertook three initiatives under this pillar that are all underway or completed.

- A notable success story concerns the RCMP's Vulnerable Persons Unit's design and delivery of an online training course on Cultural Awareness and Humility. The course has been made mandatory since November 2020. As of September 2021, over 27,000 RCMP employees (over 93% of all employees), including police officers, civilian employees, and Public Service employees, have completed the course, which was ahead of the projected start date.
- Funding was allocated to hire new full-time equivalents to enhance the RCMP's capacity to combat online sexual exploitation of children and transnational child sex offenders. The additional resources allocated through the GBV Strategy have helped to increase the RCMP's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre's (NCECC) capacity to send investigative packages to law enforcement agencies. For example, in calendar year 2017, 3,420 investigative packages were disseminated to police of jurisdiction (domestically and internationally); in fiscal year 2020-2021, 16,026 investigative packages were disseminated. This results in an approximately 369% increase in the number of packages disseminated per year. Further, additional resources were dedicated to create critical program-specific health and wellness initiatives to safeguard employees working within the area of online child sexual exploitation, and to provide strategic and operational research support. Research and analysis also informed RCMP decision-making to post an RCMP liaison officer in the Philippines. [Footnote 19](#)
- Through the funding provided to the RCMP's Sexual Assault Review Team to enhance and expand sexual assault training and oversight, Sexual Assault Review Committees (SAIRCS) have been implemented / set up in every division where the RCMP is police of jurisdiction. These committees have been reviewing unfounded sexual assaults since 2019. Further, the Sexual Assault Review Team reviewed files dating from 2015 in order to determine if there were any investigational deficiencies with these cases. One federal partner described the file reviews as an early win for the GBV Strategy that helped lend it credibility by underscoring the RCMP's commitment to the issue of GBV. The Sexual Assault Review Team also led the design and development of a "Using a Trauma-Informed Approach" course which seeks to enhance awareness and understanding of trauma and trauma responses when interacting with clients, as well as to provide practical guidelines for implementing a trauma-informed and victim-centred approach to investigations. The training has been made mandatory for all RCMP employees who deal with the public, and feedback from participants has been very positive to date. The course has also been shared more broadly, including with Prince Edward Island Corrections and the Ontario Provincial Police.

However, many external key informants were not aware that JUS became a funded federal partner of the GBV Strategy in 2021-2022. As a result, many indicated that, by failing to include courts, judges, tribunals, and other police forces in the GBV Strategy, the legal and justice systems on the whole have not been made more responsive. It is expected more progress will be made given the recent inclusion of JUS.

## Success story

The RCMP was also able to provide support for several events and initiatives that align with the GBV Strategy. These events and initiatives were held at National Headquarters (NHQ), the training academy (Depot), and across the divisions, advancing cultural awareness on GBV issues such as human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and diversity. For example:

- Since 2019-2020, the Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU) has supported multiple sessions of the African Canadian Experience workshop in H Division (Nova Scotia). This included a session attended by representatives from most divisions and various NHQ units, other government departments, and other local police forces.
- Funding was provided to Clan Mothers Healing Village in fiscal year 2019-2020 for the Experiential Voices National Gathering Initiative on Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking.
- Since 2018-2019, the RCMP has supported the delivery of the KAIROS Blanket Exercises which have taken place at NHQ, at Depot, and across the divisions.

## Initiatives that cut across all pillars

WAGE delivered two initiatives that cut across all three pillars, including the GBV Knowledge Centre, as well as the Enhanced Data Collection and Research on GBV. WAGE worked with Statistics Canada on three national surveys<sup>[Footnote 20](#)</sup> to address knowledge gaps related to GBV in Canada and to determine baselines for the occurrence of different forms of GBV within various populations. The surveys also aimed at measuring concrete progress toward preventing and addressing GBV over time.

### The GBV Knowledge Centre

The GBV Knowledge Centre is the GBV Strategy's focal point responsible for coordination, research, reporting on progress, and knowledge mobilization. In other words, the GBV Knowledge Centre serves both a governance and mobilization function, as well as a data collection and research function. It brings together the experience and expertise from across WAGE as it relates to GBV. Though there was limited initial guidance for the GBV Knowledge Centre, and despite the challenges related to the pandemic, WAGE successfully established the GBV Knowledge Centre in 2017 and strived to improve it over the years.

In December 2018, the GBV Knowledge Centre launched an online platform that compiles resources, research, and program evidence into a single searchable platform to provide information on federal funding opportunities related to GBV and to better enable evidence-based actions on GBV. The platform also includes information on initiatives undertaken in the provinces and territories, as well as on resources available for those who are affected by GBV. In addition, the GBV Knowledge Centre has developed and disseminated GBV-related knowledge and information, and has organized knowledge-sharing events for federal public servants and the public at large.

The evaluation found a high degree of satisfaction among users of the GBV Knowledge Centre's resources (e.g., those on the online platform) and among participants in their webinars and other events. In particular, the knowledge products available online were found to be of high quality, relevant and, by virtue of having been published by a federal department, valid and credible. However, awareness and use of the GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform is inconsistent among federal partners, and this online tool could be better promoted to those outside of government.

A number of factors impede the effectiveness of the GBV Knowledge Centre, including a lack of clarity among federal partners about the online tool's intended audiences (e.g., federal public servants, experts in GBV, the public), a lack of awareness of the GBV Knowledge Centre's governance function, turnover in WAGE personnel which makes it challenging to know who to send information to or ask questions, the need for all resources that will be posted to the online tool to be available in French and English, insufficient information on what type of information and documents federal partners should be sharing with the GBV Knowledge Centre, and a lack of communication about upcoming events and activities, or recently-shared resources.

A number of factors helped the successful implementation of GBV Strategy initiatives, including:

- **Strong relationships and partnerships.** Strong partnerships at all levels of the GBV Strategy were found to be critical to its success. For example, during the design and early stages of the GBV Strategy, close working relationships within WAGE and with the Minister were found to be particularly helpful. Further, some federal partners had prior experiences or agreements with funding recipients which made it easier for them to make funding decisions and trust that the work would be done well. Similarly, the development of relationships between funding recipients and community organizations, including the existence of various communities of practice, have helped to support external stakeholders and to share best practices. Finally, experts and members of the Advisory Council also indicate that, in the past few years, there has been a significant improvement in the relationship between the government and community organizations working in the GBV sector, and this has come about as a result of the former's increased consultations with the latter.



- **Using a variety of funding instruments.** Federal partners were afforded the flexibility to use a variety of funding instruments to deliver their initiatives in the method deemed most appropriate. These included contracts, grants and contributions, as well as using the funds internal to the department or agency. For example, contracts were favoured in cases where subject-matter experts were conducting research as this lent itself well to research ownership and copyrights. Grants, meanwhile, generally have fewer administrative and reporting requirements, are more flexible, and were thus used by some federal partners to facilitate projects targeting youth or for streamlined initiatives. Federal partners also displayed flexibility during the pandemic in allowing their funding recipients to reallocate their budgets (e.g., reallocating travel budgets to other activities or to delivering virtual technical services, carrying forward unspent funds when permitted by agreements, etc.).
- **Increased public, media, and political attention given to GBV issues.** In light of a number of factors, including the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People, as well as the pandemic, there was a greater awareness of GBV issues and risk factors. This had several benefits, including creating a greater willingness among federal partners to address the issue, an increased number of stakeholders willing to learn more about the issue, and it has lent a certain urgency to work conducted under the GBV Strategy.
- **Building on previous programs or using additional funding to support existing programs.** In some cases, the GBV Strategy provided additional funding to programs and initiatives already being delivered by a federal partner. For example, PS had a prior relationship with and support of C3P. Providing top-up funding to existing programs created efficiencies as the infrastructure needed to deliver, monitor and report on these initiatives was already in place. However, initiatives that received top-up funding do present unique attribution challenges when trying to determine the specific contribution of the GBV Strategy to project outputs and outcomes.
- Other factors, however, hindered the implementation of initiatives, including:
- **Staffing and human resource constraints.** This was a problem for both some GBV Strategy federal partners as well as funding recipients. Many of these initiatives require specific skills and experience, and human resource processes can be lengthy. This was compounded by the pandemic as burnout and added caregiver burdens fell on employees, and as federal partners all sought to respond to the pandemic in addition to their regular workload.
- **Challenges getting participants to share their experiences or be receptive to new information.** Given the sensitivity of the topic, stakeholders involved in training programs indicated that it can be challenging to get participants to open up, share their experiences, and be receptive to this new information. This was mitigated by taking a sensitive approach to the material, incorporating participant feedback (e.g., on length or format of training), and having individuals with lived experience present during sessions.



- **Recruiting participants for training or awareness events.** It can be difficult to recruit participants to training or awareness events, especially when dealing with rural areas, Indigenous communities, or areas where there is not an established relationship with the organization or federal partner. To mitigate against this, funded organizations worked with local organizations that had established relationships in their communities, and some also provided food, transportation, and childcare services alongside their events.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic.** The pandemic hindered the full or timely implementation of several initiatives. Moreover, the risk factors for some forms of GBV also increased. [Footnote 21](#) The effects of the pandemic are discussed in greater detail in Section 2.0.

## Progress toward short-term outcomes

---

### Performance measurement

Though a logic model and a performance measurement framework have been developed for the GBV Strategy, a number of factors present challenges to support effective performance reporting. For example, the GBV Strategy's program logic model and performance measurement framework are unclear to several federal partners as well as to Advisory Council members. Furthermore, it is challenging to collect quantitative data on some of the more quantitative performance metrics (e.g., percentage of those who viewed an awareness campaign who report an increased awareness of key GBV messages). The performance measurement framework also does not provide much opportunity to federal partners to report on qualitative findings or present things in a narrative form.

There are several other challenges to performance measurement:

- **Complexity and scale of initiatives.** Given the large number of initiatives funded by the GBV Strategy and the significant variations between them, it is difficult to present an overall narrative of progress, especially toward outcomes.
- In cases where the GBV Strategy provided top-up funding to existing programs, it can be challenging for federal partners to pinpoint the specific contribution of the GBV Strategy to their initiatives and to specific achievements.
- **It is too early to report on progress.** Many GBV Strategy federal partners and funding recipients indicated that, especially owing to project delays incurred by the pandemic, it is too early for them to provide evidence for short-term outcomes. Rather, they are limited to providing information on outputs.

### Progress toward short-term outcomes

Of the GBV Strategy's 18 initiatives, three were expected to contribute to short-term outcome 1, and eight were expected to contribute to short-term outcome 2. The remaining seven were expected to contribute to the GBV Strategy's medium- or long-term outcomes and, since the

present evaluation is a mid-term evaluation, progress toward these outcomes is not documented in this report. More detailed information on progress for each short-term outcome, by initiative, is included in Annex B.

The first of the GBV Strategy's two short-term shared outcomes is that intended audiences, including those involved in the development and delivery of policies and programs, access GBV-related evidence. Through GBV-supported initiatives, an array of GBV-related evidence was produced. However, the extent to which this was shared with intended audiences varies by initiative. Examples of GBV-related evidence generated and shared include:

- PS's publication of **Cyberbullying Research in Canada: A Systematic Review** as well as **Cyberbullying Programs: An Environmental Scan**. These reports inform PS's policy and program work, and have also been shared with the provinces and territories. In 2020-21, these publications each had over 1,000 visitors and approximately 400 downloads. [Footnote 22](#)
- WAGE worked with Statistics Canada on **three national surveys** to address knowledge gaps related to GBV in Canada and to determine baselines of the occurrence of different forms of GBV within various populations. However, it is unclear whether survey findings have been shared with intended audiences, and the reach of findings is unknown.
- The **GBV Knowledge Centre** has developed and disseminated GBV-related knowledge and information, and has organized knowledge-sharing events for federal and provincial public servants, researchers, funded recipients, and other GBV experts. For example, between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, over 2,000 individuals participated in 13 webinars, 10 knowledge sharing sessions, and seven lunch and learns. Of those who completed post-event surveys, 93% indicated that the content covered was useful or relevant to them or their work, and 92% noted that they were extremely likely or likely to attend similar events hosted by the GBV Knowledge Centre in the future. Moreover, between December 2018 and March 2021, there were nearly 93,000 unique page views of the GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform. Of those who completed a survey after visiting the platform, 88% were "extremely, very or somewhat" satisfied with the relevance of the information, and a similar number were extremely, very, or somewhat likely to recommend the platform to others. Additionally, in 2020-21, there were over 55,000 social media shares and retweets of the GBV Knowledge Centre's evidence products. [Footnote 23](#) However, as noted in the preceding section, more work could be done to ensure that GBV-related evidence and resources are being shared with intended audiences.

The second of the GBV Strategy's two short-term shared outcomes is that intervention, programming, and training participants access information, training, and support. This took place in a number of ways, including:

- The RCMP designed and developed **an online training course on Cultural Awareness and Humility**. The course was made mandatory in November 2020 and, as of September 2021, over 27,000 RCMP employees (over 93% of all employees), including police officers, civilian employees, and Public Service employees, have completed the course. As new employees join the RCMP, they are required to take this mandatory training. A September 2021 review found that the course had increased participants' levels of knowledge.
- IRCC provided funding to three community organizations to **build capacity for front-line settlement workers and to enhance place-based services for newcomers and refugees**. These organizations used the funds to create workshops, webinars, training sessions, and an online course, and there has been significant uptake of individuals accessing the resources developed by these organizations. There is positive feedback that the material is meeting participants' needs, and participants are sharing these resources within their broader networks. Interviewees confirm that funded organizations and settlement sector staff are receiving nationally-consistent training and information to help them respond to GBV-issues, and have increased awareness of GBV-related information, training, and support.
- DND launched an annual **healthy relationships campaign** in October 2019 which was rolled out to 32 bases and wings across Canada, Europe, and the United States. The campaign shares tip sheets, resources, and stories of real military families who have overcome relationship challenges. By November 2021, the campaign's total social media reach was over 85,000 people, with an engagement rate of 3.23% (exceeding the industry average of 0.25%). In 2020-21, 80% of families who had viewed the campaign indicated that it was helpful in deepening their understanding of what healthy relationships are and entail, and 70% noted that it made them reflect on and/or engage with family members on the topic. In addition, DND created **communities of practice** that gather CAF health services, military policy, chaplains, health promotion, Military Family Services, and Military Family Resource Centres. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of professionals engaged in the community of practice increased by 36%. Similarly, the number of learning opportunities (e.g., information emails or training sessions) increased from slightly under 20 in 2019-20 to nearly 50 in 2020-21. Two hundred fifty-nine individuals attended learning opportunities in 2020-21. Engaged professionals report increased confidence, knowledge, and capacity in delivering family violence and GBV services (over 80% of respondents), and over 90% of participants indicated that they were satisfied with the support and resources provided by the community of practice. Professional development opportunities provided to the Family Violence Advisory Teams and to members of the community of practice in 2020-21 included sessions on harm reduction and trauma-informed approaches, as well as a session on men's experiences with IPV and family violence, a Diverse Voices conference, and a train-the-trainer session.

- PS awarded funding to three organizations to develop **awareness and educational resources targeted at youth** about child sexual exploitation. PLEA Community Services BC delivered more workshops to youth in BC than planned (394 workshops to over 19,000 youth and 942 adults).[Footnote 24](#) In 2020-21, PS reported that overall: 91% of children in grade 4/5, 94% of children in grade 6/7, 87% of youth in grades 8 through 12, and 94% of adult respondents reported improved awareness of key messages.[Footnote 25](#) Further, White Ribbon was able to far exceed their targets, reaching 116, 969 students, 98,843 parents, and 112, 752 educators through their live and recorded programming by the end of the funding period.[Footnote 26](#) Moreover, as noted in key informant interviews, in part through GBV Strategy funding, C3P reported having made over two million resources available across Canada in the last two years, as well as having trained 50,000 people through youth-related videos, including 25,000 educators.

## Conclusions

---

### Design

The design of the GBV Strategy is appropriate. Those federal partners that received funding were all found to play a significant role in addressing GBV, the three-pillar approach was found to be effective for structuring and communicating GBV Strategy initiatives, and funded initiatives were largely found to complement one another. The overall funding allocated to the GBV Strategy was appropriate given its nature and scope, as was the amount of funding allocated to specific federal partners and initiatives. Further, a GBA Plus lens was applied throughout the design and implementation of the GBV Strategy in a number of ways. Nonetheless, a need to expand beyond the current set of funded federal partners, and beyond the federal scope was identified. In particular, the need for additional partners to bolster Pillar 3 was stressed.

### Governance

It is appropriate for the federal government to coordinate its response to GBV through a horizontal initiative, and WAGE is a logical choice to be the lead department. A formal governance structure was established at multiple levels throughout the federal government, and the structure also included a Minister's Advisory Council on GBV. While the roles, responsibilities, and composition of each of these committees were outlined in their respective terms of reference, these were not consistently operationalized, which led to duplication between committees and a loss of efficiency. There was minimal evidence of collaboration between funded federal partners on GBV Strategy initiatives.

The effectiveness of management and decision-making processes decreased over time in light of various external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift from Status of Women to WAGE. Similarly, reporting and monitoring structures were generally found to be

too restrictive and not reflective of federal partners' realities. Other factors that hampered the effectiveness of governance included insufficient coordination between WAGE and federal partners, a lack of clarity about the appropriate points of contact within all federal partners, and high levels of turnover within WAGE, among others.

There are several opportunities for improving the GBV Strategy's governance, including increasing opportunities for formal coordination and communication between funded and unfunded federal partners, sharing meeting materials well enough in advance of meetings to allow participants sufficient time to prepare, reducing duplication between committees and seek to increase the efficiency of those meetings, and increasing opportunities and support for working-level staff within each federal partner.

A review of the literature reveals a number of best practices in the design and implementation of horizontal initiatives. These include having a balance of formal and informal structures and agreements, ensuring clarity of roles and responsibilities, supporting coordination between stakeholders, putting in place performance measurement and reporting regimes, and allocating funding and investment in the initiative. It is important to remember that not all best practices may be relevant or appropriate for certain types of initiatives, and that one cannot objectively place these practices in any sort of a hierarchy. Overall, the GBV Strategy has partially implemented many of the best practices identified in the literature, though a number of challenges have prevented the full or successful implementation of all best practices, especially those related to the clarity of roles and responsibilities, and the coordination between stakeholders. The federal investment in the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games emerges as a success story in the design and implementation of a horizontal initiative and, as such, should be carefully considered by WAGE and its federal partners despite its differences with the GBV Strategy.

### **Implementation and achievement of outcomes**

The pandemic considerably shifted the context in which the GBV Strategy has been implemented. For instance, it created conditions for increased rates of GBV. Moreover, WAGE was tasked with providing \$290 million of emergency response and recovery funding to front-line organizations (e.g., women's shelters, sexual assault centres, as well as other organizations providing supports to those experiencing GBV) which had the consequence that the long-term implementation of the GBV Strategy was not the foremost issue for WAGE during that period. The pandemic also had a number of impacts on the implementation of GBV initiatives as several projects were modified or delayed.

However, despite the challenges related both to governance and the COVID-19 pandemic, 17 of the GBV Strategy's 18 planned initiatives are on track to being successfully implemented. Under Pillar I (Preventing GBV), both PS and PHAC have made good progress in their respective initiatives. However, WAGE's GBV Youth Awareness Campaign was not launched until August 2022. Similarly, good progress has been made on all of the

initiatives delivered by WAGE, PHAC, PS, DND, and IRCC under Pillar II (Supporting survivors and their families). All of the RCMP's initiatives under Pillar 3 (Promoting responsive legal and justice systems) are underway or are completed. The addition of JUS as a funded federal partner in 2021-2022 is expected to further contribute to making legal and justice systems more responsive.

WAGE has delivered two initiatives that cut across all three pillars, including the GBV Knowledge Centre, as well as the Enhanced Data Collection and Research on GBV. While there is a high degree of satisfaction among users of the GBV Knowledge Centre's online tool or participants in their webinars and other knowledge mobilization events, awareness and use of the GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform is inconsistent among federal partners, and this online platform could be better promoted to those outside of government. The GBV Knowledge Centre holds the potential to play a critical role in ensuring the future success of the GBV Strategy and, as such, efforts should be made to address some of the factors that impede its effectiveness, including a lack of clarity among federal partners about its role and responsibilities, turnover in WAGE personnel, and a lack of promotion about upcoming knowledge mobilization events and activities, or recently shared resources on the online platform.

Some of the promising practices to emerge from these initiatives include the establishment of communities of practice, the implementation of a two-step funding application process, the taking of a sector-wide approach to tackling an issue and supporting additional events and initiatives that align with the GBV Strategy, even though these were not identified by the GBV Strategy.

Factors that helped the successful implementation of GBV Strategy initiatives include strong relationships and partnerships, using a variety of funding instruments, the increased attention given to GBV issues, and building on previous programs or using additional funding to support existing programs. Factors that hindered the implementation of initiatives included staffing and human resource constraints, challenges getting participants to share their experiences or be receptive to new information, recruiting participants for training or awareness events, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Progress toward short-term outcomes**

Though a logic model and a performance measurement framework have been developed for the GBV Strategy, a number of factors present challenges to support effective performance reporting, including the complexity and scale of initiatives, the limitations presented by quantitative performance metrics, attribution challenges in the case of top-up funding, and the fact that, in some cases, it is too early to report on progress.

Of the GBV Strategy's 18 initiatives, three were expected to contribute to short-term outcome 1, and eight were expected to contribute to short-term outcome 2. Initiatives under short-term outcome 1 produced an array of GBV-related evidence. This included: three national surveys to determine baselines of the occurrence of different forms of GBV within various populations; research on cyberbullying conducted by PS which has informed the work of PS' policy and program branches, and have also been shared with the provinces and territories; and the knowledge mobilization work undertaken by the GBV Knowledge Centre which has seen high levels of satisfaction by users of the online tool and by participants in the knowledge-sharing events. However, the extent to which this was shared with intended audiences varies by activity and, in some cases, is unknown.

The second of the GBV's Strategy's two short-term shared outcomes is that intervention, programming, and training participants access information, training, and support. This took place in a number of ways, including through: an RCMP training course on Cultural Awareness and Humility which was found to increase the knowledge of participants; support from IRCC to help community organizations build capacity for front-line settlement workers and enhance place-based services for newcomers and refugees which increased awareness among those in the settlement sector of GBV-related information, training, and support; a DND-supported healthy relationships campaign which improved the understanding of military families as to what healthy relationships are and entail; communities of practices within the military helping professional community, which saw over 90% of participants indicate their satisfaction with the resources and support provided; and a variety of awareness and educational resources targeted at youth to address child sexual exploitation which reached a far greater number of youth, students, adults, educators, and parents than originally envisioned.

## Recommendations

---

The following recommendations are directed to WAGE, in collaboration with applicable federal partners. While some of the recommendations will require consultation and coordination with WAGE on the part of federal partners, WAGE is the lead department for all recommendations and is the only one that will need to develop a management response and action plan.

### **Recommendation 1 - Improve and strengthen the current federal vision for preventing and addressing GBV through the creation and strengthening of governance structures.**

Given the GBV NAP, it is critical to achieve a coordinated federal vision for preventing and addressing GBV and, given the inclusion of the provinces and territories, to pursue current efforts to have a consistent federal approach. More specifically, this will require: strong leadership from senior management at each federal partner; clear parameters for each of the governance committees and adherence to them; clarifying the roles and composition of any

external advisory bodies; and ensuring that there are formal collaboration mechanisms with and between federal partners receiving funding, federal departments and agencies not receiving any such direct funding, and the provinces and territories. This will require concerted and sustained engagement from federal partners and could include such things as co-developing the terms of reference for some of the governance committees.

**Recommendation 2 - Review and improve the existing logic model and performance measurement framework, including streamlining and adapting tools for data collection to the context of each partner department and agency.**

GBV is an ongoing issue in Canada that will need to be addressed over many years. It will require concerted efforts by many stakeholders over a long time period. Consequently, having a clear and shared vision for what success looks like will be critical for measuring progress, communicating success, and keeping momentum and buy-in. This will include: working with current and future federal and provincial partners to review and improve the existing performance measurement framework; setting realistic targets in the short, medium, and long term; developing a theory of change to identify the factors that will affect the prevalence of GBV in Canada and thus identifying what the GBV Strategy actually has control over; and clarifying how progress will be measured and communicated to all stakeholders involved, including the public. A clear theory of change, a streamlined logic model, and a refined approach to performance measurement could facilitate reporting to the public on key accomplishments and outcomes achieved.

**Recommendation 3 - Better define the scope and role of the GBV Knowledge Centre with a view to maximizing its efficiency and the extent to which it can amplify the work undertaken through the GBV Strategy.**

The clear communication of progress and results is an important part of success for any government initiative. However, while the GBV Strategy has produced valuable outputs in the form of research, training resources, and other outputs, these have not been routinely and widely distributed among GBV Strategy federal partners, GBV experts, community organizations, academics, provinces and territories, the public, and other relevant stakeholders. The sharing of these resources would significantly amplify the impact of the GBV Strategy by ensuring its outputs reach as broad an audience as possible. Further, GBV Strategy progress has not been clearly communicated to the broader community of stakeholders and to the public. As a result, there are a number of enhancements to be made to the GBV Knowledge Centre so as to position it to best support the GBV Strategy and its aims. Most immediately, this includes clarifying to federal partners the various roles, functions, teams, purposes, and responsibilities of the GBV Knowledge Centre. Other enhancements include: clarifying the intended audiences of the online platform; developing a standardized approach for the sharing and cataloguing of resources with the GBV Knowledge Centre's Knowledge Mobilization Team (including developing communication protocols between federal partners and WAGE, as well as clarifying expectations and the



division of roles with respect to the translation of documents and resources); undertaking efforts to increase awareness of the GBV Knowledge Centre, including its online platform, among internal and external partners and stakeholders; and better promoting and amplifying the work of federal partners through the creation of a performance measurement strategy. For example, the GBV Knowledge Centre could produce an annual “year in review” of the GBV Strategy on its online platform, which could clearly articulate relevant performance measurement information and key successes achieved that year while providing the link to the annual progress report for more detail

Pillar	Initiative and federal organization	Funding and budget year
<b>Pillar 1:</b> <b>Preventing gender-based violence</b>	National Youth Awareness Strategy on Gender-Based Violence (WAGE)	\$5.7 million for five (5) years; \$1.3 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)
	Awareness of online child sexual exploitation (PS)	\$1 million for five (5) years; \$0.3 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)
	Developing and testing innovative practices in parenting support programs to prevent child maltreatment (PHAC)	\$6 million for five (5) years; \$1.3 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)
	Developing and testing innovative practices in youth/teen dating violence prevention (PHAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$3.5 million for five (5) years; \$0.7 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)</li> <li>• \$26.7 million for five (5) years; \$6.2 million per year ongoing (Budget 2018)</li> </ul>

Pillar	Initiative and federal organization	Funding and budget year
	Preventing bullying and cyberbullying (PS)	\$4 million for five (5) years; \$1 million per year ongoing (Budget 2018)
	Developing a Framework to address gender-based violence in post-secondary institutions (WAGE)	\$5.4 million for five (5) years (Budget 2018)
<b>Pillar 2: Supporting survivors and their families</b>	GBV Program supports organizations working in the GBV sector in developing and implementing promising practices to address gaps in supports for Indigenous and underserved groups of survivors in Canada (WAGE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$29.4 million for five (5) years; \$6.2 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)</li> <li>• \$25.6 million for five (5) years; \$6 million per year ongoing (Budget 2018)</li> </ul>
	Support for the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (PS)	\$5 million for five (5) years; \$1 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)
	Enhance Family Violence Teams (DND)	\$4 million for five (5) years; \$0.8 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)

Pillar	Initiative and federal organization	Funding and budget year
	Enhance Settlement Program (IRCC)	\$1.5 million for five (5) years (Budget 2017)
	Training health and allied professions (PHAC)	\$4.5 million for five (5) years; \$1 million per year ongoing (Budget 2018)
	Support to Sexual Assault Centres near Canadian Armed Forces Bases & Wings (DND)	\$2 million for five (5) years (Budget 2018)
<b>Pillar 3: Promoting Responsive Legal and Justice Systems</b>	Cultural Competency Training for RCMP employees (RCMP)	\$2.4 million for five (5) years; \$0.6 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)
	Enhance capacity to combat online child sexual exploitation and transnational child sex offenders (RCMP)	\$19.3 million for five (5) years; \$5.8 million per year ongoing (Budget 2018)
	Support for the Sexual Assault Review Team and Victim Support Action Plan (RCMP)	\$10 million for five (5) years; \$2.0 million per year ongoing (Budget 2018)

Pillar	Initiative and federal organization	Funding and budget year
<b>Gender-Based Violence Knowledge Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead and coordinate the Strategy</li> <li>• Develop multifaceted approaches to knowledge mobilization</li> <li>• Report on the Strategy's progress and results</li> <li>• Create and manage the GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform</li> </ul>	\$12.3 million for five (5) years; \$2.5 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)
	Undertake data collection and research in priority areas	\$30.1 million for five (5) years; \$6 million per year ongoing (Budget 2017)

Table 1: GBV Strategy initiatives, by pillar and federal partner, with funding amounts [Footnote 27](#)

## Annex B: simplified logic model and progress towards outcomes

### Outcome

**Short-term outcome 1:** Intended audiences, including those involved in the development and delivery of policies and programs, access GBV-related evidence

**Short-term outcome 2:** Intervention, programming and training participants [Footnote 28](#) access information, training, support

**Medium-term outcome 1:** Intended audiences, including those involved in the development and delivery of policies and programs, use/apply GBV-related evidence in their policy and programming work

**Medium-term outcome 2:** Intervention participants, including service providers, survivors and those at risk of experiencing or perpetrating GBV, use/apply knowledge or support to adapt their attitudes and behaviours related to GBV

**Long-term outcome 1:** Social norms, attitudes and behaviours that contribute to GBV are changed

**Long-term outcome 2:** Those impacted by or at risk of GBV, [Footnote 29](#) including survivors, are better supported across the justice and social sectors

<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Intended to contribute to:</b>
<b>WAGE</b>	GBV Knowledge Centre	ST1, MT1, LT2
	Enhance data collection and research on GBV	ST1, MT1, LT2
	GBV Youth Awareness Campaign	ST2, MT2, LT2
	GBV Funding Program	MT2
<b>PS</b>	Conduct research to increase knowledge of what works to prevent bullying and cyberbullying among identified vulnerable populations (i.e., girls, 2SLGBTQI+)	ST1
	Implement and evaluate interventions to prevent bullying/cyberbullying behaviours	ST2, MT2
	Awareness campaign to prevent bullying/cyberbullying	ST2
	Awareness campaign against child sexual exploitation	ST2, MT2
	Enhanced Support of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) to Respond to Child Sexual Exploitation	LT2
<b>PHAC</b>	Delivery of interventions to prevent child maltreatment	MT2
	Delivery of interventions to prevent teen dating violence	MT1
	Development of training curricula and resources of GBV, trauma-informed care, and safety planning	MT2
<b>DND</b>	Enhanced Family Violence Crisis Teams	ST2, MT2, LT2

<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Intended to contribute to:</b>
	Contributions in support of various Sexual Assault Centres in Canada Program	LT2
<b>IRCC</b>	Capacity building for front-line settlement workers and enhanced place-based services for newcomers and refugees	ST2, MT2
<b>RCMP</b>	National Cultural Awareness Training	ST2, MT2, LT2
	Enhanced capacity to combat online sexual exploitation of children and transnational child sex offenders	ST2, LT2
	Enhanced and expanded sexual assault training and oversight	MT1, LT2

Table 2: GBV Strategy Initiatives, by intended outcome and lead federal partner

<b>Short-term outcome 1: Intended audiences, including those involved in the development and delivery of policies and programs, access GBV-related evidence</b>		
<b>Federal partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>

**Short-term outcome 1: Intended audiences, including those involved in the development and delivery of policies and programs, access GBV-related evidence**

Federal partner	Initiative	Progress towards outcome
<b>WAGE</b>	GBV Knowledge Centre	<p>The GBV Knowledge Centre has developed and disseminated GBV-related knowledge and information, and has organized knowledge-sharing events for a wide range of audiences, including federal and provincial public servants, funding recipients, GBV stakeholders, researchers and other GBV experts. Between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, over 2,000 individuals participated in 13 webinars, 10 knowledge sharing sessions, and 7 lunch and learns. Individuals who have used the GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform or attended their events have been satisfied with their quality (as confirmed by post-event surveys, KIs and FGs).</p> <p>Between December 2018 and March 2021, there were 92,999 unique page views of the GBV Knowledge Centre's online platform. Monthly unique page views range from 880 (February 2019) to 10,284 (March 2021). Views have increased year-on-year.</p> <p>However, awareness and use of the GBV Knowledge Centre is inconsistent among GBV Strategy federal partners, and it could be better promoted to those outside of government. A number of factors impede more successful interactions between the GBV Knowledge Centre and GBV Strategy federal partners, including the high levels of turnover at WAGE, and a lack of clarity on who the GBV Knowledge Centre is for and what information they require of federal partners, and a lack of communication about upcoming events and activities, or recently-shared resources.</p>

<b>Short-term outcome 1: Intended audiences, including those involved in the development and delivery of policies and programs, access GBV-related evidence</b>		
<b>Federal partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>
	Enhance data collection and research on GBV	<p>This initiative was implemented in a number of ways. WAGE worked with Statistics Canada on three national surveys to address knowledge gaps related to GBV in Canada and to determine baselines of the occurrence of different forms of GBV within various populations.</p> <p>WAGE also issued a Call for Proposals in 2019 to procure research and studies that address gender equality and GBV. 24 research projects received a combined \$7.8 million in funding. Finally, WAGE provided over \$2 million in funding for Indigenous-focused and Indigenous-led research projects.</p> <p>However, as very few key informants could speak to this initiative, it is challenging to determine the extent to which implementation has been successful.</p>



**Short-term outcome 1: Intended audiences, including those involved in the development and delivery of policies and programs, access GBV-related evidence**

Federal partner	Initiative	Progress towards outcome
PS	Conduct research to increase knowledge of what works to prevent bullying and cyberbullying among identified vulnerable populations (i.e., girls, 2SLGBTQI+)	<p>In October 2020, PS published <a href="#">Cyberbullying Research in Canada: A Systematic Review</a> as well as <a href="#">Cyberbullying Programs: An Environmental Scan</a>. The first report was a systematic review of 100 Canadian cyberbullying research reports involving adolescents and young adults. It identified cyberbullying prevalence rates, gaps in the current research, risk factors for victim and perpetrator involvement in cyberbullying, and impacts of cybervictimization. From a GBA Plus perspective, groups most likely to be victimized (i.e., girls, visible minorities, other at-risk groups) and gender differences in the likelihood of being cyber-perpetrators were examined. The environmental scan gathered information about 35 existing programs designed to address cyberbullying and cybervictimization among children, youth, and young adults in Canada or abroad. A distinction was made between traditional bullying and cyberbullying; categories of cyberbullying programs were identified; effectiveness of the programs in reducing cyberbullying was examined; and lessons that could prove useful in selecting or designing programs to address cyberbullying were identified.</p> <p>The knowledge produced through these research products supports PS' policy development work and future strategic planning, and also supports its Program areas by offering evidence on available cyberbullying programming and best practices. These reports have also been shared with provinces and territories.</p>

Table 3: Progress towards outcomes, short-term outcome 1

**Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants [Footnote 30](#)  
access information, training, support**

Federal Partner	Initiative	Progress towards outcome
-----------------	------------	--------------------------

**Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants** [Footnote 30](#)  
**access information, training, support**

Federal Partner	Initiative	Progress towards outcome
<b>WAGE</b>	GBV Youth Awareness Campaign	<p>While campaign development began in 2019, and several iterations were considered and partially developed, work on the youth-focused campaign did not begin until March 2021. This campaign targets youth 14 to 24 years old, including Indigenous, 2SLGBTQI+, rural youth, youth with disabilities, and other equity-seeking groups across Canada. It aims to build awareness of GBV-related issues, and to promote changes in attitudes and behaviours that contribute to violence among young people. The campaign officially launched in August 2022, which falls outside of the scope of time covered by this evaluation. WAGE interviewees observed that delays were largely a result of shifting priorities during the pandemic, but were unsure as to how the funding that had been allocated for that initiative was re-profiled.</p>
<b>PS</b>	Implement and evaluate interventions to prevent bullying/cyberbullying behaviours	<p>In 2018, five school- and community-based projects were awarded funding to address and reduce issues related to youth bullying and cyberbullying in Canada. Funded projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Services Saskatoon was awarded a contribution of \$2.46 million over a five-year period (December 2019 to September 2024) for the Preventing Youth Violence project which aims to prevent youth violence, including dating violence, bullying, and cyberbullying, through a wrap-around case management model that offers public awareness, group therapy, targeted outreach, individual counselling, and coordinated family support.</li> </ul>

<b>Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants</b> <a href="#">Footnote 30</a> access information, training, support		
<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The YWCA of Halifax was awarded a contribution of \$1.87 million over a five-year period (September 2019 to August 2024) for “Open New Tab: A Comprehensive Initiative to Address Cyberviolence in the Lives of Nova Scotia’s Young People.” The project provides customized and direct anti-cyberviolence interventions to youth, while offering supports to schools and communities, building alternative and health-promoting online spaces that are youth-driven, and informing policies and priorities on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit was awarded a grant of \$28,941 over a 12-month period (August 2019 to August 2020) for its Community Assessment and Cyber Bullying Workshop &amp; Evaluation project. The project sought to have the community take an active role in putting together an effective plan to prevent cyberbullying and bullying in the community, with the Chief and Delaware Nation Council taking the lead.</li> <li>• The Centre d’expertise en agression sexuelle Marie-Vincent was awarded a grant of \$343,048 for its “Approche de prévention par les pairs contre la cyberviolence sexuelle.” This initiative aims to prevent sexual cyberbullying among secondary 1 and 2 students in the greater Montréal region.</li> <li>• The Community Legal Information Association of PEI was awarded \$200,000 for a period of 24 months (November 2019 to October 2021) for its Sexting, Cyberbullying, and the Criminal Code of Canada project, which raises awareness of the legal consequences of sexualized cyberviolence for the perpetrator, the bystander, and the victim.</li> </ul> <p>These projects have largely been delivered as planned, though there were some modifications and delays due to the pandemic. Key informants indicated that it is too early to tell whether participants are accessing GBV-related information and support. Project evaluations are being conducted for two of the cyberbullying initiatives and will be available after the projects come to a close in 2024-25. The evaluations will indicate if youth are</p>

<b>Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants</b> <a href="#">Footnote 30</a> <b>access information, training, support</b>		
<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>
		able to access the activities and if parents and educators have access to the information they need to support youth. Given that the document review component of the evaluation was completed in October 2021 and that interviews with funded organizations were not conducted, more tangible findings on progress toward outcomes are limited in this report.
	Awareness campaign to prevent bullying/cyberbullying	<p>PS' campaign seeks to raise awareness about where and how to get help if a youth is experiencing cyberbullying. PS has produced materials and messaging for Canadian youth aged 10 to 24, as well as for secondary target audiences who have access to this primary audience and can help to spread the message, such as parents/caregivers and teachers.</p> <p>The campaign builds on public opinion research conducted in 2019 to obtain a baseline measurement of Canadian youth and parents'/caregivers' knowledge, experience, awareness, attitudes, and behaviours with respect to cyberbullying. As a result of the findings of this research, in 2020-21 PS launched a new cyberbullying website (Canada.ca/cyberbullying), which contains information for parents, caregivers, educators, and youth. The website includes targeted age-appropriate booklets and factsheets for three age groups that can be used in various ways, such as shared in schools or printed at home. Social media posts are also posted on PS Twitter and shared with stakeholders, like Kids Help Phone, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) and the Canadian Teachers Federation. Between March 2021 and July 2021, PS's campaign website had 6,736 visitors. A quantitative survey will be conducted with the targeted audience in 2022-23 to determine if there are any changes in knowledge, experience, awareness, attitudes and behaviours.</p> <p>For 2021-22, PS is planning a virtual panel of experts that will include representatives from RCMP, Kids Help Phone, and C3P, to be held on February 8, 2022, Safer Internet Day. The panel will tackle the topics of cyberbullying and Online Child Sexual Exploitation (OCSE), and will aim to empower parents and</p>

<b>Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants</b> <a href="#">Footnote 30</a> <b>access information, training, support</b>		
<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>
		<p>caregivers to initiate and be prepared for open and supportive conversations with youth. In addition, PS will start developing a travelling roadshow intended for students in grades 7 and 8, to discuss both cyberbullying and OCSE. The roadshow will include an immersive experience with various interactive stations that will help students identify different types of online dangers, and how they can stay safer online, as well as provide them with resources should they be experiencing cyberbullying or OCSE. PS intends to pilot the roadshow in 2022-23, during the fall in the Greater Toronto Area. For efficiency's sake, funds from cyberbullying and OCSE are being combined to develop the virtual panel and school roadshow, as they both delve into the shared theme of online dangers.</p>

**Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants** [Footnote 30](#)  
**access information, training, support**

Federal Partner	Initiative	Progress towards outcome
	Awareness campaign against child sexual exploitation	<p>Funding was awarded to three organizations to develop awareness and educational resources targeted at youth. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLEA Community Services of BC which delivered its “Keeping Kids Safe Online” workshops in schools to raise awareness about OCSE and how to report it.</li> <li>• White Ribbon received top-up funding to innovate and rethink their awareness activities in schools in light of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to better reach their target audiences.</li> <li>• The Canadian Centre for Child Protection received funding for the production of awareness and educational resources for youth about OCSE, online safety, and healthy boundaries.</li> </ul> <p>These activities were largely implemented as planned, though some were delayed or modified due to the pandemic. More precisely, PLEA Community Services BC delivered more workshops to youth in BC than planned (394 workshops to over 19,000 youth and 942 adults). Further, White Ribbon was able to far exceed their targets, reaching 116,969 students, 98,843 parents, and 112,752 educators through their live and recorded programming by the end of the funding period. Moreover, as noted in key informant interviews, in part through GBV Strategy funding, C3P reported having made over two million resources available across Canada in the last two years, as well as having trained 50,000 people through youth-related videos, including 25,000 educators.</p> <p>Apart from the COVID-19 pandemic, the main challenge experienced by some funding recipients in the implementation of their funded activities was the huge increase in demand for their programming, which unfortunately occurred because OCSE has become rampant since the start of the pandemic. As one interviewee stated, <i>“We delivered on our deliverables tied to the funding, but there’s an increase in the things we have to manage.”</i></p>

<b>DND</b> <b>Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants</b> <b>access information, training, support</b>	Enhanced Family Violence Crisis Teams	<a href="#">Footnote 30</a>
<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>
		<p>This initiative included three primary components: a review of existing CAF family violence crisis teams capacity, initiatives to enhance the capacity of these teams, and an awareness campaign on healthy relationships.</p> <p>In 2018, DND conducted an evaluation of existing CAF Family Crisis Team capability to serve the CAF constituency. The evaluation assessed the viability and compatibility of a function within the existing Family Crisis Team nexus that would provide victim and survivor support services, case management and advocacy. The final report proposed a series of recommendations aimed at enhancing team capability as well as changing them to Family Violence Advisory Teams.</p> <p>To enhance these teams, DND provided funding and human resources to augment and deliver a wider range of support services and programs at Military Family Resource Centres, as well as to provide administrative and management support and oversight in the development of policies and programs at the national level. Activities included creating communities of practice that gather CAF health services, military policy, chaplains, health promotion, Military Family Services, and Military Family Resource Centres). Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of professionals engaged in the community of practice increased by 36%. Similarly, the number of learning opportunities (e.g. information emails or training sessions) increased from slightly under 20 in 2019-20 to nearly 50 in 2020-21. 259 individuals attended learning opportunities in 2020-21. Engaged professionals report increased confidence, knowledge, and capacity in delivering family violence and GBV services (over 80% of respondents), and over 90% of participants indicated that they were satisfied with the support and resources provided by the community of practice. Professional development opportunities provided to the Family Violence Advisory Teams and to members of the community of practice in 2020-21 included sessions on harm reduction and trauma-informed approaches, as well as a session on</p>



<b>Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants</b> <a href="#">Footnote 30</a> access information, training, support		
<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>
		<p>men's experiences with IPV and family violence, a diverse voices conference, and a train-the-trainer session.</p> <p>DND also launched an annual healthy relationships campaign in October 2019 which was rolled out to 32 bases and wings across Canada, Europe, and the United States. The campaign shares tip sheets, resources, and stories of real military families who have overcome relationship challenges (<a href="http://www.cafconnection.ca/healthyrelationships">www.cafconnection.ca/healthyrelationships</a>). By November 2021, the campaign's total social media reach was 85,709 people, with an engagement rate of 3.23% (exceeding the industry average of 0.25%). In 2020-21, 80% of families who had viewed the campaign indicated that it was helpful in deepening their understanding of what healthy relationships are and entail, and 70% noted that it made them reflect on and/or engage with family members on the topic. Moreover, 81% of Family Violence Advisory Teams report being satisfied with the support and resources provided for the Healthy Relationships campaign.</p>
<b>IRCC</b>	Capacity building for front-line settlement workers and enhanced place-based services for newcomers and refugees	<p>IRCC sought to build capacity for front-line settlement workers and enhanced place-based services for newcomers and refugees through funding opportunities delivered to three community organizations during the 2017 to 2019 period. <a href="#">Footnote 31</a> This initiative was delivered as planned. For example, one funding recipient provided workshops on domestic violence and related topics and sought to promote overall wellness to newcomers in rural areas of Manitoba.</p> <p>IRCC also supported several community organizations in 2019 to 2022 to develop and implement a National Settlement Sector GBV Strategy. The project includes a partnership of settlement and anti-violence sector organizations to provide GBV-related capacity building for front-line settlement workers through training (webinars and online courses). The objective of this sector strategy <a href="#">Footnote 32</a> and training is to build the capacity of front-line workers to identify GBV and make appropriate referrals for immigrant and refugee women and girls. Key informants noted that taking a sector-</p>



**Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants** [Footnote 30](#)  
**access information, training, support**

Federal Partner	Initiative	Progress towards outcome
		<p>wide approach worked well as it necessitated collaborations and partnerships that might not have occurred if each organization had been funded separately. The organizations developed strong partnerships and relationships that contributed to its success. The National Settlement Sector GBV Strategy is proceeding as planned.</p> <p>While quantitative data on the number of settlement sector workers who have increased their knowledge of GBV is either not gathered by these organizations or is not gathered in such a way to aggregate findings, interviewees confirm that funded organizations and settlement sector staff are receiving nationally-consistent training and information to help them respond to the issues of GBV, and have increased awareness of GBV-related information, training and support. Partners have provided workshops, webinars, training sessions, and an online course. There has been significant uptake of individuals accessing the resources developed by partners (e.g. workshops, webinars, training sessions, online course), and there is positive feedback that the material is meeting participants' needs. Moreover, participants are sharing these resources within their broader networks.</p>

**Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants** [Footnote 30](#)  
**access information, training, support**

Federal Partner	Initiative	Progress towards outcome
<b>RCMP</b>	National Cultural Awareness Training	<p>A notable success story concerns the RCMP's Vulnerable Persons Unit's design and delivery of an online training course on Cultural Awareness and Humility. The course has been made mandatory since November 2020, and, as of September 2021, 27,000 RCMP employees (over 93% of all employees), including police officers, civilian employees, and Public Service employees, had completed the course. The course has also been made available to other law enforcement and security agencies, as well as other government departments and agencies, through an online portal or MOUs. A September 2021 review found that the course had increased participants' levels of knowledge. The majority of participants who completed a pre- and post-course survey indicated they increased their knowledge level from an average to an above average level.</p> <p>As this initiative was also implemented under budget, the RCMP was also able to provide support for several events and initiatives that align with the GBV Strategy including the implementation of the African Canadian Experience Workshop currently offered in H Division (Nova Scotia), training on human trafficking and sexual exploitation at the RCMP's training depot, the production of "Love Bomb" (a play about human trafficking), and two experiential voices gatherings led by Indigenous women on human trafficking and sexual exploitation.</p>

<b>Short-term outcome 2: Intervention, programming and training participants</b> <a href="#">Footnote 30</a> <b>access information, training, support</b>		
<b>Federal Partner</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress towards outcome</b>
	Enhanced capacity to combat online sexual exploitation of children and transnational child sex offenders	Funding was allocated to hire new full-time equivalents to enhance the RCMP's capacity to combat online sexual exploitation of children and transnational child sex offenders. The additional resources allocated through the GBV Strategy have helped to increase the RCMP's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre's (NCECC) capacity to send investigative packages to law enforcement agencies. For example, in calendar year 2017 (fiscal year statistic unavailable), 3,420 investigative packages were disseminated to police of jurisdiction (domestically and internationally); in fiscal year 2020-2021, 16,026 investigative packages were disseminated. This resulted in an approximately 369% increase in the number of packages disseminated per year. Further, additional resources were dedicated to create critical program-specific health and wellness initiatives to safeguard employees working within the area of online child sexual exploitation, and to provide strategic and operational research support.

Table 4: Progress towards outcomes, short-term outcome 2

**Date modified:**

2023-09-01