

What We Heard

KEY MESSAGES FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
SESSIONS ON THE ACTION PLAN TO END GENDER-
BASED VIOLENCE

Spring 2023

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ACTIONS TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

To guide the development of the implementation of The Nova Scotia – Canada Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, we conducted a province-wide research-based community engagement.

These are ten themes that we've heard from you in our online sessions, focus groups, and survey.

What we've done

Online Sessions

3 online facilitated sessions that focused on the opportunities for prevention of GBV

Focus Groups & Interviews

20 combined interviews and focus groups with key partners working to address, prevent, or support survivors of GBV

Survey

18 Individuals and 30 organizations with representation from every county of the province provided input on supports survivors and their families, ways to create a responsive justice system, Indigenous-led approaches, and the characteristics of a supportive environment for organizations addressing or working to prevent GBV

1 Stabilize Core Resources

Financial and human resources need sustained investment

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2 Scale Inclusive Programs

Impactful programs need to be continued, scaled, and modified to serve in culturally appropriate ways

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3 Take Concrete Action

We need to move beyond conversations into actions that address and prevent GBV

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4 Integrate Systems

Design systems of wrap around care for women and children experiencing GBV

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5 Focus on Community

Work toward systems' change with an emphasis on communities that have been marginalized in gender-based work

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6 Use an Intersectional Lens

Understand, address, and prevent GBV through considering multiple factors, experiences and perspectives

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7 Engage Men

Men need to be encouraged and supported to lead work on the GBV prevention continuum

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8 Focus on Prevention

A coordinated GBV prevention strategy is needed

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9 Reform Legal Barriers

Reform laws, policies, and practices that create barriers for women experiencing GBV

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10 Collaborate on Approach

Use a collaborative approach to strengthen the sector's capacity to end GBV

What we heard



A NEW FUNDING MODEL IS URGENTLY NEEDED

There is an urgent need for governments to invest in a strong, sustainable women's serving sector: all organizations need increased, long-term core funding to respond quickly and effectively to the needs of GBV survivors, to attract and fairly compensate qualified staff, and to achieve consistency in programs and services across the province.

OUR GOAL IS A WOMEN AND FAMILY CENTERED SYSTEM

A joint response is required to address the complex barriers faced by GBV survivors and service providers such as:

- laws, policies, and practices that interfere with safe and secure transitions; social and economic challenges in accessing healthcare (including addictions and mental health)
- affordable housing
- supportive justice proceedings
- trusting relationships with policing and child protection services
- siloed services that make wrap-around supports difficult to provide

IT'S TIME TO MOVE FROM PLANNING TO ACTION

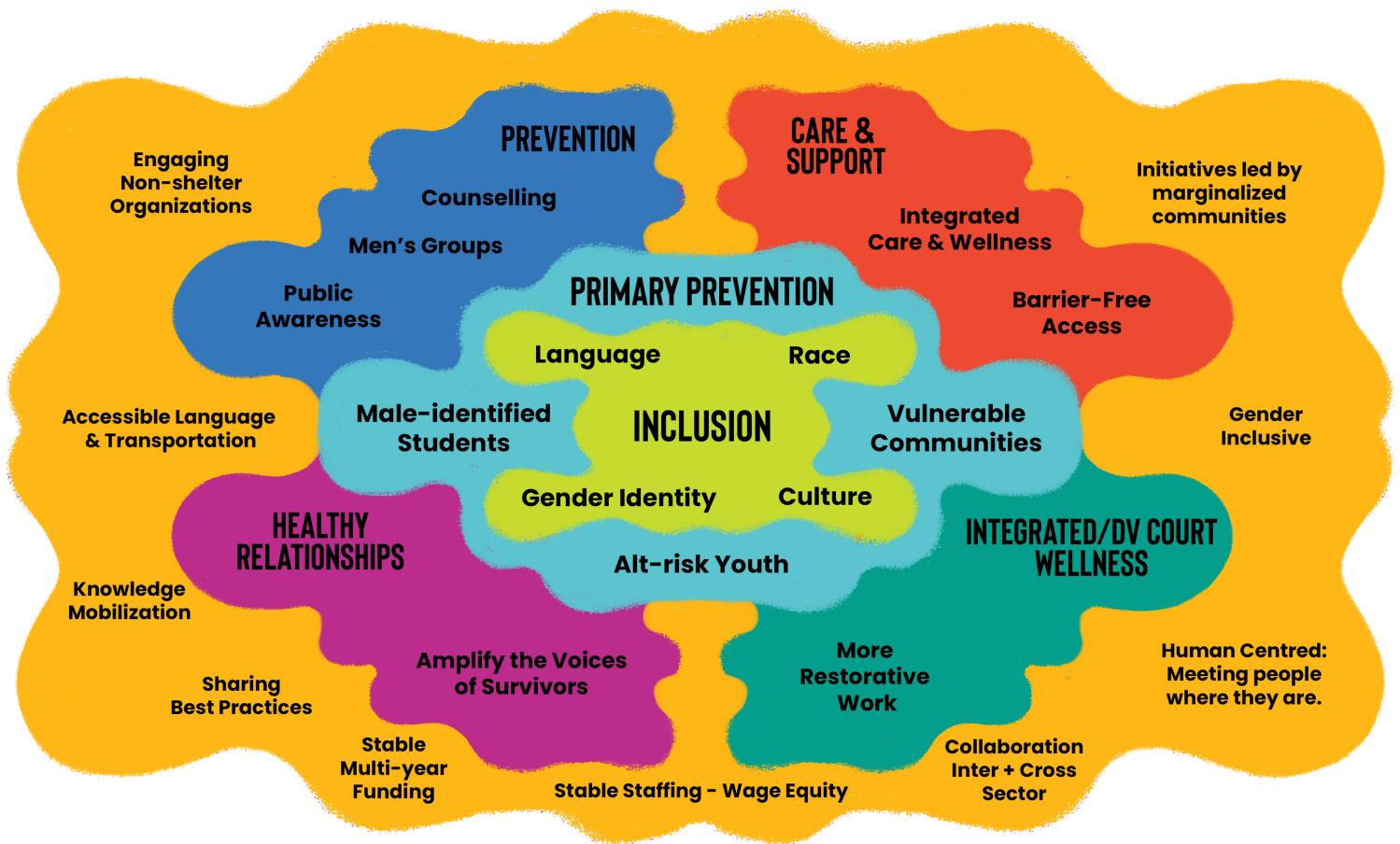
Many of the Status of Women Office's partners said that it is time to move from consultation to action. The sector knows what needs to be done to address and prevent GBV, what's left is providing community-based organizations with the resources needed to act.

MANY PARTS OF THE SYSTEM ARE NOT WORKING FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

A systems focus is needed to shift current ways of working that are not serving women and families well, especially for those who are at greater risk of experiencing GBV. Specifically, we need to:

- Support a shift to relational, wellness-based, and harm reduction-oriented programs and services for survivors of GBV
- work to remove systemic barriers experienced by marginalized, at-risk communities (e.g., African Nova Scotian, Mi'kmaq, criminalized, LGBTQ2+, newcomers, and Nova Scotians with disabilities)
- bring survivors of GBV and experts from the women's serving sector to the table when decisions are being made
- create inclusive and culturally appropriate approaches to prevent and address GBV

Inclusion at the Center



This image summarizes input collected during three online focus groups with partners and advocates from the women's serving sector. Participants emphasized that inclusion and primary prevention must be at the center of the Canada-NS Action Plan.

Working outward, priorities were grouped around four main areas:

- prevention
- care and support for victims
- healthy relationships
- changes to the justice system

The content in the dark yellow section highlights the need to effectively intervene and care for victims of GBV in a system that has the appropriate conditions for success.



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