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THE PROJECT TO END
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**GUIDING THE DESIGN OF THE
ALBERTA PRIMARY
PREVENTION FRAMEWORK:
A SYNTHESIS OF SHIFT'S
RESEARCH TO DATE FROM
SUMMER 2020-SPRING 2022**

2023



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Shift wants to acknowledge that our team members live across Turtle Island in what is today known as Canada. We acknowledge that the places we call home have deep ties to the Indigenous Peoples that have stewarded this land since time immemorial. We also acknowledge that colonial actors and institutions perpetually deny Indigenous Peoples their rights to self-determination and sovereignty and these institutions must be challenged and changed. Shift is committed to the advancement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

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Purpose of this document

This paper provides a synthesis of research to date that will inform the design and writing of the Alberta Primary Prevention Framework (APPF).

This report:

1. Articulates the principles and theories that have guided the design of the APPF.
2. Provides an overview of how we understand the problem of domestic and sexual violence, including risk/protective factors, root causes, and drivers.
3. Outlines three primary prevention pathways to stop domestic and sexual violence before they start in Alberta.
4. Describes constraints and enablers that may impede and advance primary prevention in Alberta, respectively.

This report is based on findings from 38 research projects that took place between August 2020 to May 2022. During this timeframe, Shift completed:

- Over 40 consultations with IMPACT members and other community-based organizations and experts. Specifically:
 - 18 community consultations co-led by IMPACT and Shift to understand the root causes of violence in Alberta.
 - 12 presentations to IMPACT Mobilizers and the Government of Alberta (GoA) on key concepts, research findings, and recommendations for the APPF, which included consultation questions.
 - Written feedback from IMPACT, the GoA, and other content experts on our research, reports on legislation, and policy recommendations in priority primary prevention areas.
 - Meetings with community-based organizations and other experts to gather feedback on specific areas (e.g., framing sexual violence within the APPF).
- Direction and feedback from a research committee comprising six academic and community-based researchers (see list below).
- Notes taken during bi-weekly IMPACT Mobilizer meetings and recurring strategic planning meetings among the project partners (Shift, IMPACT, and the GoA).

It is important to note that this is a *living document* synthesizing all research, feedback, decisions, and lessons learned to date (Summer 2020-Spring 2022).

This report is based on the best evidence to date and will change as we conduct more research and continue to gather feedback from partners and key stakeholders. Writing the APPF will occur between October and December 2022, and a draft will be finalized in mid-December 2022.

1.0 Landing on definitions

1.1 Defining domestic and sexual violence

Early in the project, two of the partners (IMPACT and Shift) agreed to prioritize domestic and sexual violence within the Alberta primary prevention framework (APPF) because they are **distinct yet interrelated forms** of violence that must be addressed together at the level of **upstream** primary prevention. When the Government of Alberta (GoA) joined the partnership in November 2021, we recognized the need to focus also on family violence, as this is the term used by the provincial government. One challenge around selecting terms and definitions for the APPF is that our partners and the broader anti-violence field use many terms to describe violence. Some of these terms include:

- Child maltreatment
- Coercive control
- Collective/institutional violence
- Elder abuse
- Family violence
- Gender-based violence
- Interpersonal violence
- Intimate partner violence
- Male violence against women
- Personal violence
- Relational violence
- Sexual assault
- State violence
- Teen dating violence
- Violence against women
- Abuse

We know each term reflects certain theoretical and political claims¹ and may exclude some forms of violence, resulting in shifting meanings and tensions around the definition. IMPACT and Shift, for example, predominantly use the terms *domestic and sexual violence* while the GoA predominantly uses the term *family violence* to describe an abuse of power in a family or other trusting relationship where people rely on each other, including domestic and sexual violence.² At the national level, the Government of Canada uses the term *gender-based violence*. At the same time, IMPACT is also using the term coercive control to discuss violence.

After many meetings and consultations, all three partners agreed that the difference in definitions does not influence how we advance primary prevention because various forms of violence stem from the same root causes. (For a discussion of the root causes, see Section 3.) Furthermore, the classifications of expressions of violence used by the GoA and IMPACT overlap more than they differ when mapped against the evidence-based World Health Organization’s Typology of Violence.³ Therefore, each partner may choose to use the definitions and classifications of domestic, sexual, and family violence that reflect their own goals and priorities.

For the purpose of this report, Shift uses the terms **domestic violence** and **sexual violence** throughout this document, recognizing that other terms may be used interchangeably to describe the same forms of violence, such as coercive control, abuse, and family violence. **Domestic violence** is an attempt, act, or intent to endanger the survival, security, rights, or well-being of a person within relationships of family, intimacy, trust, or dependency through any words, actions, or attempts to coerce or control a person. Domestic violence can take many forms including cyber, verbal, physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and economic abuse. This includes any words, actions, or attempts to coerce or control

a person. Coercive behaviours include a pattern of physical assault, threats, humiliation, and intimidation while controlling behaviours include deprivation, exploitation, isolation, and micro-managing a person's everyday behaviour.^{4, 5} **Sexual violence** is defined as “unwanted sexual comments or advances, any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting including but not limited to home and work. In this document, the term sexual violence is intended to be inclusive of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual assault.”⁶

1.2 Defining primary prevention

In late 2020, Shift conducted research to develop a comprehensive definition of primary prevention. We shared this with IMPACT and the GoA in Spring 2021 through a discussion paper and a presentation that included consultation questions. IMPACT and the GoA supported the proposed definition. However, based on evolving research findings and thinking, Shift has modified the definition of primary prevention in the following way:

Initial definition of primary prevention: Primary prevention means focusing on preventing initial perpetration and victimization of family and sexual violence by scaling up interventions that target the structural and cultural conditions that produce and reinforce violence.⁷

Current definition of primary prevention: Primary prevention means preventing initial perpetration and victimization of domestic and sexual violence by 1) implementing approaches that work to promote healing, resilience, repair, and skills in individuals, families, and networks, 2) changing cultures and structures to support and reinforce pro-social norms, equity, safety, dignity, justice, and belonging, and 3) re-imagining and building worldviews that promote non-violence and peace.

1.3 Defining and centering equity-deserving groups in the APPF

Through Shift's research and consultations with IMPACT members, including the GoA representatives, the partners agreed to **centre equity-deserving groups within the APPF**.

Various terms in the literature and in organizations throughout Alberta are used to describe systemically oppressed populations (e.g., priority populations, vulnerable people, minority or marginalized populations, equity seeking groups), and each has their strengths and weaknesses.⁸ After consulting with IMPACT and the research committee, Shift settled on the term “equity-deserving groups” because we believe the words we choose shape our understanding of the problem. Since we do not want to reify these groups' vulnerability and marginalization and since we believe that historically oppressed groups deserve equity without having to make an effort to seek it, “equity-deserving” seems to be the best term at this time.

Equity-deserving groups are people who have historically, persistently, and systematically experienced barriers to participating in society based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, racialized group, sexual orientation, or transgender status, etc.⁹ These groups

include women, racialized populations, 2SLGBTQIA+ populations, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, seniors/older adults, people living in rural and remote areas. Indigenous Peoples are distinct from equity-deserving groups (described in the next section).

As agreed by all the partners, we centre equity deserving groups within the APPF because they experience higher rates, more severe forms, and more severe impacts of violence due to relentless systemic discrimination, marginalization, and often exploitation at every level of our society.¹⁰ These experiences of social exclusion within economic, political, social, and cultural systems and at individual, household, group, community, and societal levels¹¹ affect both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole,¹² creating conditions that increase the likelihood of violence. To effectively prevent domestic and sexual violence, everyone in society needs to experience social inclusion. Therefore, we focused on equity-deserving groups from the outset of our research to ensure that our research protocol and recommendations centre the often-forgotten vulnerabilities and experiences of those most affected by violence.

With this term and definition in mind, Shift conducted four rapid reviews (a form of evidence synthesis that provides more timely decision making compared to standard systematic reviews) in early 2021. Aiming to understand specific vulnerabilities to and experiences of violence, these reviews focused on racialized populations, 2SLGBTQIA+ populations, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness. At the time of this research, the research committee and IMPACT members agreed that Indigenous Peoples are distinct from equity-deserving populations and created a separate research project to support our commitment to Indigenous sovereignty (described below). Shift's research team also undertook several additional research projects to identify policy and legislation recommendations that help prevent violence against many equity-deserving groups including:

- 2SLGBTQIA+ populations
- racialized populations
- people with disabilities
- people who are at risk of or affected by homelessness
- seniors/older adults
- residents of rural and remote communities
- people living in poverty
- children and youth

We focused on large social groups whose vulnerability to violence is well supported by research and has a pronounced effect on Canadian society. However, there are additional groups whose circumstances expose them to increased risks and who should be centred in future research. Some examples of such groups include sex workers, inmates in correctional facilities, temporary foreign workers, families of law enforcement and military, etc.

1.4 Centering Indigenous Peoples through parallel Indigenous research

Throughout this report, we use the term ‘Indigenous Peoples’ to stand for First Nations and Métis Nations/and urban Indigenous communities across Alberta. We acknowledge the diversity of First Nations, Métis Nations, Inuit people, and urban Indigenous Nations/communities across Alberta and advocate for distinctions-based policy development and implementation.

Based on feedback from Indigenous IMPACT members and Shift’s research committee, Shift adopted the perspective that Indigenous Peoples are distinct from equity-deserving groups because advancing Indigenous sovereignty and reclamation of land, identity, language, and culture differs from addressing the challenges and inequities experienced by equity-deserving groups. As a result, through funding from the Government of Alberta, Shift supported a parallel research process in partnership with three independent Indigenous researchers/leaders and eight Elders and Knowledge Keepers to better understand the root causes of violence against Indigenous Peoples and to identify Indigenous-specific policy and legislation recommendations that will help prevent domestic and sexual violence against Indigenous Peoples.¹³ The parallel process involved the following steps:

- In Winter 2020, Shift and IMPACT partnered with two independent Indigenous researchers/leaders who conducted a literature review to understand the root causes of domestic and sexual violence for Indigenous populations.¹⁴ Twenty-one articles (academic and grey literature) were included in the research. The review states that the “most damaging root cause is the colonial legacy of Canadian policies which continue to inflict suffering on many Indigenous Peoples, families and communities in the guise of historical or intergenerational trauma.”¹⁵ Directional recommendations within the review focus on “the need for self-determination, distinctive, and needs-based solutions that combat violence by addressing healing.”¹⁶
- Between Winter 2020 and Spring 2021, the same two Indigenous researchers/leaders participated in Shift’s research committee to provide strategic research direction for the APPF. They also took part in meetings with the GoA and IMPACT.
- In August 2021, IMPACT consulted with Indigenous social service leaders to understand the best way to move forward with a parallel community-led Indigenous process to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of the APPF. Consulted leaders advised that an Indigenous process to prevent domestic and sexual violence should not be led by IMPACT but by Indigenous communities.¹⁷ Further, IMPACT was asked to refrain from applying for and accepting funding to engage in Indigenous work, and focus on minimizing their contribution to ongoing colonization and committing to the recommendations outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions’ final report.¹⁸ As a result, IMPACT did not proceed with a parallel community-led Indigenous process for the APPF project.
- Although a community-based process did not happen, Shift recognizes it is essential to ensure the APPF includes Indigenous-specific written and oral policy and legislation recommendations. As a result, starting in late 2021, Shift partnered with Indigenous researchers/leaders to bring together the two systems—Indigenous and Western—to set a prevention path forward by combining the contributions of each system for collecting information and conducting research. The process included a comprehensive literature,

statistical, and document review, and advice and support from three independent Indigenous researchers and two researchers at Shift. The research was guided by eight Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers from Alberta and included seven online Circles that focused on systems change prevention efforts. The report and all research participants attended the Thunder Pipe Bundle Opening ceremony with Elder Dr. Reg Crowshoe and Rose Crowshoe in May 2022 where the group received a blessing and made a vow to support the implementation of the findings.

The report argues that to eliminate violence against Indigenous Peoples it is essential to dismantle colonialism through five transformative changes:

1. Providing Indigenous Peoples with space and time for the reclamation of core knowledges within their communities through prayer, ceremony, language, and culture.
2. Ensuring that reconstruction is based on Natural Laws, deep involvement of Indigenous communities, and ethical space, which represents a dialogue between the Indigenous and Western worldviews coming together to co-create sustainable solutions to complex social problems through cultural safety and parallel processes.
3. Supporting Indigenous sovereignty.
4. Devolving sovereignty of services for Indigenous Peoples.
5. Devolving sovereignty over resources to ensure economic sovereignty.¹⁹

To achieve these transformative changes, it is necessary to start with systems' reforms that can minimize the suffering of Indigenous Peoples inflicted due to their socio-economic marginalization. The reforms must focus on six areas where most harm is inflicted and aim for realizing Indigenous Peoples' human rights, which will help heal the intergenerational trauma, improve Indigenous Peoples' outcomes, and stop the cycle of violence. The areas include justice and policing; child welfare; health and wellness; education; land, resources, and housing; and transportation. The recommendations centre on increasing the representation of Indigenous Peoples in jobs of all levels in all the areas; amending the laws and policies to integrate an Indigenous lens, Indigenous worldviews, and methodologies; eliminating anti-Indigenous bias and discrimination and providing accessible, adequate, and culturally appropriate services to Indigenous Peoples; building the capacity of all professionals to work with Indigenous Peoples respectfully; and monitoring and evaluating Indigenous Peoples' outcomes in all systems and institutions.

For the Government of Alberta to initiate the change, it needs to take the following next steps:

- Establish an Elder committee for each government ministry to guide the implementation of this report.
- Create a range of 10-year implementation plans to work with individual First Nations and Métis Nations/and urban communities across the province towards decolonization and reconciliation.
- Develop ethical space to start and maintain a dialogue between Indigenous and Western systems and to co-develop culturally appropriate sustainable solutions for stopping violence before it starts.

- Allow for reconstruction to occur in different ways and timeframes across Alberta based on each First Nation's and Métis Nation's/and urban community's capacity.

The Indigenous researchers and Elders will be sharing the [report](#)²⁰ and findings with the GoA and IMPACT in Fall 2022 and early 2023.

2.0 Theories, approaches, and models that inform our current understanding of domestic and sexual violence and primary prevention

A description of the theories, approaches, and models that guide our framework is important because they illustrate how we understand the causes of violence and solutions to prevent it. In this section, we outline:

1. **Theories that guide our understanding of the root causes of violence.** These theories explain the root causes and drivers, contributing risk and protective factors, prevalence, and persistence of domestic and sexual violence, and the reasons why domestic and sexual violence disproportionately impact certain populations.
2. **Approaches and models that guide how we organize our primary prevention efforts.** We draw on a range of approaches and models to organize how the government and the anti-violence sector can effectively and appropriately target root causes and drivers of domestic and sexual violence.
3. **Theories, approaches, and models that help maximize the impact of primary prevention initiatives, programs, and interventions.** Through emerging science, we have learned that conventional theories on preventing violence are inadequate. Our practices need to draw on multiple emerging theories, approaches, and models to maximize the impact of primary prevention initiatives, programs, and interventions.

Each layer of our theoretical framework is outlined below.

1. **Theories that guide our understanding of the root causes of domestic and sexual violence.**
 - **Critical theory explains the root causes, prevalence, and persistence of domestic and sexual violence.** Critical theory argues that violence is prevalent because it stems from the interrelated impact of systems of oppression (i.e., heteronormative patriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism), which create and are reinforced by gender and socio-economic inequalities.²¹ Inequalities are embedded in the ways we organize our society (e.g., our systems, institutions, laws, policies, practices, and norms), and become normalized so that they are often invisible, and society takes them for granted. These inequalities increase the vulnerability of some social groups to social issues such as poverty, homelessness, and/or unemployment.²² Social groups that experience these social issues face extreme and chronic stresses that increase the risk for violence.
 - **Colonization theory explains that the high risk of family violence in Indigenous communities stems from the lingering effects of historical trauma, many elements of which are passed down intergenerationally.**²³ Therefore, efforts to prevent violence against Indigenous Peoples need to focus on decolonization and reconciliation, which will

- transform all the systems and institutions so that Indigenous Peoples have sovereignty over their lives.
- **Intersectional feminist theory explains why domestic and sexual violence, which can affect anyone, disproportionately affect women, Indigenous Peoples, and equity-deserving groups, especially racialized groups, 2SLGBTQIA+ populations, people with disabilities, and people living in poverty.** In societies based on patriarchy, capitalism, white supremacy, and colonialism, White, upper-class, heterosexual men dominate and, on average, have more institutional power and resources.²⁴ Indigenous Peoples and equity-deserving groups have limited access to power, resources, and decision-making, which makes them more vulnerable to victimization. Socio-cultural norms and practices that devalue skills, abilities, occupations, and contributions to society associated with Indigenous Peoples and equity-deserving groups justify and reinforce their inferior position in systems, institutions, laws, policies, and interactions. As Caroline Perez argues in her book *Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*, our world is largely built by and for men, with everything from government policy and medical research to urban planning and technology being designed in ways that benefit men more than women.²⁵ Based on intersectional feminism, efforts to prevent domestic and sexual violence must recognize the experiences and ignored needs of Indigenous Peoples and equity-deserving groups, including those with intersectional identities, and ensure that the systems of oppression that disadvantage them are eliminated.
 - **Collective trauma theory explains how past and ongoing violence are linked to the re-enactment of trauma, including the use of violence, many years later.** Collective trauma theory arose from Black, postcolonial, and Indigenous analyses, explaining the after-effects of shared experiences of systemic oppression and structural violence (e.g., genocide, slavery, and warfare) and how they endure and transfer across time, space, and generations.²⁶ This perspective adds to the intersectional feminist theory by explaining the cycle of violence that Indigenous Peoples and many equity-deserving groups are exposed to and advocates for healing, repair, and reconciliation from trauma at the individual and collective levels.
2. **Approaches and models that guide how we organize primary prevention efforts.**
- **A public health approach²⁷ focuses on preventing violence from occurring in the first place** by going upstream and changing the underlying causes of violence through policy and strategy reforms. It is a multidisciplinary scientific approach that integrates input from various sectors, including health, education, social services, justice, policy, and the private sector, for identifying effective prevention strategies and maximizing the benefits of prevention for entire populations, rather than a limited number of individuals.²⁸ It is a four-step process rooted in the scientific method that presupposes 1) defining and monitoring the problem, 2) identifying risk and protective factors, 3) developing and testing prevention strategies, and 4) assuring widespread adoption.²⁹ From this perspective, primary prevention policies and strategies should address the multiple factors that contribute to violence, as opposed to focusing on any single factor.

- **A human rights approach aims to support better development outcomes by identifying and eliminating the inequalities, discriminatory practices, and unjust power relations that lead to poor outcomes.**³⁰ This approach is grounded in the belief that all individuals possess civil, cultural, economic, political and social human rights, and that governments, all sectors, and industries have an obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill them. Since this approach recognizes violence as an affront to an individual's essential rights, such as right to life, liberty, autonomy, and security,³¹ governments and all other actors must prevent and eradicate domestic and sexual violence and hold those who commit it accountable for their actions. Since the elimination of all forms of discrimination is at the core of a human rights-based approach,³² we must address gender and socio-economic inequalities as root causes of violence and advance approaches that promote dignity, autonomy, and respect for women, girls, Indigenous Peoples, and equity-deserving groups.
- **Anti-oppressive approaches are critical for preventing domestic and sexual violence and promoting safety, justice, dignity, and belonging for all Albertans by ensuring that practitioners do not reproduce oppression.** Anti-oppressive approaches actively aim to address social injustices and systemic inequalities that stem from the systems of oppression, such as colonialism, white supremacy, and heteronormative patriarchy, to empower the disenfranchised at individual, group, and institutional levels. From this perspective, the design, implementation, and evaluation of primary prevention efforts need to include ongoing self-reflection about our own socialization and positions of power and privilege, as well as the larger structures and systems in which we live so that we can act strategically to dismantle oppression and advance safety, justice, dignity, and belonging for everyone.³³ For example, moving the anti-violence sector away from *carceral feminism* towards anti-oppression and liberation approaches is particularly critical for preventing domestic and sexual violence. Historically, the well-meaning domestic and sexual violence sector has primarily relied on systems like criminal justice and child welfare to resolve violence through policing, prosecution, imprisonment, batterer programs, and family separation.^{34, 35} However, criminal justice and child welfare systems are not preventative, but entirely responsive and often punitive, which harms everyone who comes into contact with them, especially Indigenous and racialized populations. From the perspective of anti-oppressive approaches, primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence should account for power inequalities when considering people's trajectories and vulnerabilities to violence and turn towards healing, empowering, and liberating practices rather than narrow punitive approaches of carceral feminism.³⁶
- **The social-ecological model is useful for ensuring that prevention efforts address the entire spectrum of individual, relational, community, and societal factors that contribute to violence.** Often, primary prevention efforts focus primarily on minimizing the individual and relational level factors that increase the risk of for violence (i.e., risk factors), and to some degree, community-level risk factors. However, few initiatives have effectively addressed the societal-level factors that drive violence, such as social norms that support aggression and violence; weak health, educational, economic, and social policies/laws that lead to poor outcomes; and harmful norms around masculinity and femininity. Although these societal level risk factors are not the root causes of violence, they are the drivers of

- violence, because they stem from gender and socio-economic inequalities and show up in our daily lives to increase the risk for violence. Therefore, the social-ecological model can be useful for maintaining the focus of primary prevention efforts on societal level factors that drive violence.
- **Systems change approaches are critical for targeting root causes of violence and achieving impact at scale.** Since we are immersed within our social, economic, and political systems, they feel natural and, due to their complexity, they seem very difficult, if not impossible, to change in the short-term. To effectively prevent domestic and sexual violence, we need to understand the systems that give rise to violence that we are part of and to maintain an optimistic view that change is possible. This requires working steadily to identify the root causes rather than the symptoms of the problem and their complex connections and mutual impact and to involve a broad range of stakeholders to bring about deep change in policies, practices, power dynamics, social norms and worldviews that underlie domestic and sexual violence.³⁷ A systems change approach can benefit from the **Iceberg Model**,³⁸ a tool that change-makers can use to collectively think, plan, and evaluate their work³⁹ to make sure that the hidden root causes and the risk factors of violence are addressed. This model⁴⁰ deepens our understanding of domestic and sexual violence and where we need to focus primary prevention efforts by showing how our oppressive worldviews underpin our cultures and social structures and create conditions that drive violence at the societal, community, interpersonal, and individual levels. From this perspective, to prevent domestic and sexual violence effectively, primary prevention efforts need to target changes in our mental models/worldviews, cultures and structures, and risk factors that lead to violence in a comprehensive holistic manner.
 - **The social determinants of health approach is critical for preventing domestic and sexual violence because it integrates strategies for addressing the social and economic factors that increase or decrease individuals', communities', and societies' vulnerability to violence.** Social determinants of health represent a broad range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine individual and population health, including early childhood development; education; employment, working conditions, and job security; income; healthcare; housing; food security; social safety networks; and social inclusion and exclusion based on Indigenous status, racialized group, gender, and disability.⁴¹ To effectively prevent domestic and sexual violence, our laws, policies, practices, and norms need to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their individual characteristics and circumstances, have access to the supports and services that improve social determinants of health.

3. **Models and approaches that help maximize the impact and success of primary prevention initiatives.**
- **Pragmatism is critical when designing, implementing, and evaluating primary prevention approaches.** Pragmatism is an applied approach to research and innovation that encourages practitioners to make decisions based on ‘what will work best’ in solving particular social problems, which enables them to conduct research and implement solutions in innovative and dynamic ways.⁴² While eliminating domestic and sexual violence completely requires eradicating the systems of oppression that give rise to it, pragmatic approach allows us to identify reform measures that can minimize the impact of these systems and improve peoples’ outcomes as we are working towards a deep and comprehensive systems’ change. This approach also allows us to collaborate with diverse stakeholders who are in different stages of readiness and adoption of primary prevention despite the difference in their capacity. Therefore, in a pragmatic manner, the APPF adopts the principles of the **Innovation Ambition Continuum**⁴³ to define primary prevention and outline primary prevention measures. The Innovation Ambition Continuum distinguishes between three types of innovations that can promote systems change: 1) incremental innovations that improve the performance of existing systems, 2) reform-oriented innovations that change those aspects of existing systems that cause social problems, and 3) transformative innovations that seek to change existing systems and/or create new ones based on ground-breaking ideas and approaches. As we are hoping to create new systems to replace the systems of oppression, we must start with improving peoples’ safety from violence today by enhancing the effectiveness of the existing policies, programs, and practices. Stakeholders can focus on the type of innovation they can pragmatically implement based on their goals and capacity.
 - **Brain science is essential for ensuring that primary prevention efforts account for and actively build brain architecture**⁴⁴ **that supports resilience and protects from re-traumatization.**⁴⁵ Brain science, or neuroscience, studies brain architecture to examine how learning, aging, diseases, and life experiences change the brain. For example, research on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) shows that stress-inducing experiences during childhood, e.g., growing up with a depressed or alcoholic parent; losing a parent to divorce or other causes; emotional neglect; etc., predispose individuals to a variety of chronic conditions in adulthood.⁴⁶ Over time, such environmental conditions lead to epigenetic shifts, or changes in gene expression, which, among other negative impacts, cause shrinkage of stress-managing brain parts and flood the brain-body pathway with inflammatory chemicals, decreasing resilience and increasing the risk for domestic and sexual violence in adulthood. From this perspective, primary prevention efforts should mitigate the impact of stressors and build brain architecture that supports resilience to prevent domestic and sexual violence. Brain science and ACEs research support **historical trauma theory**,⁴⁷ which argues that populations historically subjected to long-term mass trauma, e.g., through colonialism, slavery, war, or genocide, are more vulnerable to poor health and other social problems, including domestic and sexual violence.⁴⁸ Combined, brain science, ACEs research, and historical trauma theory call for **trauma-informed approaches** to domestic and sexual violence prevention. Trauma-informed approaches

- encourage systems and institutions to create trauma-informed cultures, which integrate policies and procedures that minimize the risks of trauma and re-traumatization; to build the capacity of service providers to work with trauma survivors; and to evaluate systemic and institutional outcomes in the light of trauma prevention and response.⁴⁹ Trauma-informed approaches promote such key principles as safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment, voice, and choice; and cultural, historical, and gender issues.⁵⁰ Thus, trauma-informed approaches to domestic and sexual violence prevention should recognize that people are affected not only by previous direct individual experiences of violence but also by the historical trauma and the current relentless effects of the systems of oppression: colonialism for Indigenous Peoples, white supremacy for racialized groups, heterosexual patriarchy for women and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and capitalism for people living in poverty and homelessness.⁵¹
- ***Behavioural insights and nudge theory are vital for selecting effective strategies for changing human behaviours based on recent research.*** Unlike conventional theories that see human behaviour change as a relatively linear, logical progression from new attitudes and skills to intention and finally to new behaviour, behavioural insights and nudge theory demonstrate that intention translates to actual behaviour change only 27-39% of the time.⁵² Changing people's environments and social conditions—even through small adjustments—can be far more effective. For example, nudge theory shows that small nudges in people's environments can help change their behaviour without rational arguments, threats, or punishments, since people just adjust to their new environments without actively thinking about or exerting their willpower for change.⁵³ From this perspective, domestic and sexual violence prevention efforts need to focus on changing the contexts around people to facilitate a change in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, as contextual changes can address unconscious bias and deeply-entrenched discrimination practices and promote inclusion, equity, and respect.⁵⁴
 - ***Social norms theory shows that primary prevention initiatives need to amplify and promote pro-social behaviours in relationships and social environments⁵⁵ while social learning and social network theories show that initiatives need to leverage family, friends, neighbours, work colleagues, acquaintances, and even strangers to promote pro-social norms and behaviours.***⁵⁶ According to social norms theory, people tend to adhere to peer group and community social norms, or implicit and explicit rules of appropriate behaviour in any given situation,⁵⁷ even if these norms go against their individual attitudes and beliefs. Social norms can either encourage people to behave in ways that promote peace and safety from violence, or normalize violence and encourage people to ignore or even participate in it.⁵⁸ From this perspective, primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence must focus on changing social norms by motivating individuals and groups to adopt and reproduce the norms of peace/non-violence, empathy, mutual support, equality, and cooperation in relationships.⁵⁹ Social norms theory resonates with the ***social learning theory*** and ***developmental theory***, which explain the intergenerational transmission of violence and inform interventions at the interpersonal and family levels. According to social learning theory, young people learn to be violent by observing the behaviours of their primary group, such as family and friends,

which increases the likelihood of them reproducing these behaviours throughout childhood and into adulthood.⁶⁰ Developmental theory agrees that growing up in a violent environment, which may involve child abuse and exposure to domestic violence, increases the likelihood of victimization in adulthood.⁶¹ Therefore, primary prevention efforts need to focus on building social environments that advance pro-social behaviours, resilience, and support healing and repair. Since social relationships play a critical role in transmitting social norms, channelling influence, and enabling attitudinal and behavioural change,⁶² including improving healthy behaviours,^{63,64} social networks, opinion leaders, role models, and lay health advisors must be leveraged to champion, model, and reinforce healthy relationship behaviours and norms for domestic and sexual violence prevention.⁶⁵

- ***Diffusion of innovation theory* argues that primary prevention efforts must aim at changing the practices and behaviours of 15% of the population to achieve sustainable change.**⁶⁶ Diffusion of innovation refers to the process through which new interventions, services, practices, and products that modify individuals' or groups' attitudes and behaviours are disseminated.⁶⁷ The theory of diffusion of innovation reveals that, when it comes to innovation, any population falls into five groups: 1) 2.5% of the population are innovators, 2) 13.5% are early adopters, 3 and 4) 34% are early and late majority respectively, while , 5) 16% of the population are laggards.⁶⁸ According to this theory, innovations for domestic and sexual violence prevention will lead to sustainable change if they are embraced by innovators and early adopters, or 15% of the population, which means that prevention efforts must identify and actively work with these groups.
- ***Implementation science* is important for ensuring that primary prevention initiatives are incorporated into routine use and yield better results for beneficiaries.** Even effective innovations are often not integrated into routine practice because of contextual factors .⁶⁹ Implementation science helps practitioners ensure the adoption of their initiatives by using research and evidence-based practices to address contextual barriers to uptake and increase their impact on public health.⁷⁰ From the perspective of implementation science, organizations and groups employing primary prevention initiatives need to identify potential barriers to their uptake and design implementation strategies that will increase the likelihood of their uptake.⁷¹

These theories inform our understanding of the problem of domestic and sexual violence and the design of our roadmap to prevent violence.

3.0 How we understand the problem of domestic and sexual violence

Drawing on the theories, models, and approaches outlined in the previous section, the next section describes our understanding of the problem of domestic and sexual violence.

Our society is founded upon at least four main **systems of oppression**: heteronormative patriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism, which are the root causes of violence. Shift recognizes there are other systems, such as ableism, ageism, classism, Judeo-Christian ethics, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, tribalism, and globalization, that are at the root of violence against specific groups. However, because other systems of oppression stem from the four main systems of oppression – e.g., ableism, ageism, and classism stem from capitalism while anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and xenophobia stem from white supremacy – we concentrate on heteronormative patriarchy, white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism as the roots that must be eliminated to prevent sexual and domestic violence.

- **Heteronormative patriarchy** is a social system in which, on average, heterosexual men have most power, privilege, and control in the political, economic, cultural, and social roles.⁷²
- **White supremacy** is a political, economic, and cultural system in which white people overwhelmingly control power and material resources based on conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement, which are embodied and reproduced as relations of white dominance across institutions and social settings.⁷³
- **Capitalism** is a form of economic and social organization focused on wealth accumulation and maximization of profit by normalizing inequalities, competition, valuing relationships for their usefulness and material benefit, and exploitation.⁷⁴
- **Colonialism** is the practice of maintaining political and economic control over a social group deemed inferior within one's nation or over other nations.⁷⁵

These systems of oppression shape our **worldviews**, which are ways of seeing, understanding, speaking about, and acting in the world. Many worldviews reflect and reinforce the systems of oppression and make domestic and sexual violence conceivable and feasible. Below, we provide some illustrative examples of the worldviews stemming and reinforcing each system of oppression in the way that creates favourable conditions for violence. Our worldviews:

- Normalize heterosexual male dominance and superiority over all genders, reinforcing heterosexual patriarchy.
- Normalize aggression and violence over non-violence and peace, reinforcing capitalism and colonialism.
- Normalize the domination of white people, reinforcing white supremacy.
- Normalize exploiting inequalities over advancing equality, reinforcing all the systems of oppression.
- Prioritize wealth, power, control, and status over the well-being of people, specifically their dignity, safety, justice, and belonging, reinforcing capitalism.
- Promote individualism over social cohesion.

In this way, our worldviews justify the use of violence to maintain inequalities and maintain the status of dominant groups, including using domestic and sexual violence against women, Indigenous

Peoples, and equity-deserving groups.

As a result of the systems of oppression and our worldviews that reflect and reinforce them, our society is structured by **gender and socio-economic inequalities**. These gender and socio-economic inequalities represent **three interrelated drivers** of domestic and sexual violence, which manifest themselves as:

- **cultural factors**, such as social norms, values, beliefs, and behaviours that reinforce violence, discrimination, and prejudices based on social identities.
- **structural factors**, such as laws, policies, and practices in our systems and institutions that reinforce violence and treat people differently based on their social identities.
- **internalized oppression and unhealed trauma** or **internalized privilege**, which, if not addressed, increase the likelihood that the intergenerational cycle of violence will continue.

Together, cultural and structural factors, internalized oppression, internalized privilege, and unhealed trauma create risk factors at the **societal, community, interpersonal, and individual levels** that increase the likelihood of domestic and sexual violence.

For example, based on research, **societal level risk factors** include:

- Norms that justify violence,^{76, 77} such as victim-blaming⁷⁸ and acceptance of harsh discipline against children⁷⁹ and people with disabilities.^{80, 81}
- Norms that justify and reinforce inequalities⁸² such as beliefs that women and equity-deserving groups are less valuable⁸³ and should have a lower social status.^{84,85}
- Traditional and rigid gender norms^{86, 87} and roles^{88, 89} in public and private spheres that promote cis-gender, heterosexual men's domination over women and all genders.
- Poverty,^{90, 91, 92, 93} unemployment,^{94, 95, 96} and financial dependence on others.⁹⁷
- Social determinants of health, including housing, income supports, and healthcare are inequitably experienced.⁹⁸
- A punitive justice system⁹⁹ that disproportionately discriminates and incarcerates Indigenous and racialized groups, which perpetuates the cycle of violence.
- A political system that distributes political power and decision-making unequally.¹⁰⁰
- Mass media that promotes and normalizes violence¹⁰¹ and exposes viewers to sexually explicit materials, such as pornography.¹⁰²
- Fragmented community and human services¹⁰³ that do not meet the cultural needs of potential users.¹⁰⁴
- Technology and social media that promotes risky use and facilitates violence.¹⁰⁵
- Unenforced or weak laws and public policies for violence prevention.¹⁰⁶
- Social isolation¹⁰⁷ that results in the lack of social support^{108, 109, 110} and social networks^{111, 112} in times of need.
- Collective internalized privilege¹¹³ or oppression,¹¹⁴ and internalized trauma,¹¹⁵ that show up as inter-generational cycles of oppression and violence.¹¹⁶

Examples of **community and neighbourhood level** risk factors include:

- Cultural and religious norms and practices that support violence, inequality, and harmful gender scripts, (e.g., importance of family honour, and stigma of being single,¹¹⁷ divorced,¹¹⁸ or a single mother).^{119, 120}
- High rates of community or neighbourhood poverty^{121, 122, 123} and neighbourhood disorganization.¹²⁴
- High density of alcohol sales outlets¹²⁵ and high rates of addictions to drugs or alcohol.^{126,127,128, 129,130,131}
- High rates of crime¹³² and violence in the community^{133, 134} and easy access to weapons.^{135, 136}

Examples of **interpersonal and individual level** risk factors include:

- Lack of emotional-regulation and non-violence social skills.¹³⁷
- Peer and intimate relationship conflict and problems.¹³⁸
- Poverty and increased dependence on others for one's basic needs.¹³⁹
- Weak social connections and supports, especially in times of need.¹⁴⁰
- Internalized oppression, trauma, and/or chronic stresses that show up as mental health issues, addictions, family conflict, and anti-social behaviours.^{141, 142, 143}
- History of witnessing violence.¹⁴⁴
- History of multi-generational violence.¹⁴⁵

These risk factors on the societal, community, interpersonal, and individual levels make domestic and sexual violence thinkable and feasible and increase certain groups' vulnerability to violence. Therefore, to prevent domestic and sexual violence effectively, **primary prevention efforts** must build resilience, promote healing, and cultivate skills in individuals, families, and networks, address gender and socio-economic inequalities as the drivers of domestic and sexual violence, and work towards eradicating the systems of oppression, which are the root causes of violence. This can be achieved by following three pathways to violence prevention:

1. Investing in and implementing primary prevention initiatives that promote resilience, healing, and relationships skills in individuals, families, and networks.
2. Changing our cultures and structures to support and reinforce pro-social norms, equity, safety, dignity, justice, and belonging.
3. Re-imagining and building new worldviews to dismantle systems of oppression and promote non-violence and peace.

Together, these pathways create conditions that prevent violence at all levels of society, enabling all Albertans to live a life of dignity, safety, justice, and belonging that is free from violence.

4.0 Three pathways for preventing domestic and sexual violence

4.1 Pathway 1: Investing in and implementing promising practices that work

The goal of this pathway is to build healthy relationship skills and resilience and to promote healing in individuals, families, and networks to support pro-social behaviours, disrupt pathways to violence, and help individuals and communities to heal and repair. Healthy relationship skills and resilience ensure that individuals, families, and networks reinforce non-violence and equity in all their relationships and interactions, which contributes to their ability to influence broader social norms and practices that cultivate a culture of non-violence and equity.

To advance this pathway, the anti-violence sector (including the government, researchers, and funding actors) should invest in and implement practices that work to prevent first time victimization and perpetration while also disrupting risk factors when they start to show. Primary prevention practices that work can be evidence-based, research-informed, promising, and/or emergent approaches (described in Appendix A).

Primary prevention approaches along this pathway are often programmatic and focus on reducing the factors that increase individuals’ and families’ risk of violence (i.e., risk factors) while promoting the factors that protect against violence at the individual and family levels (i.e., protective factors). Common examples include psycho-social educational programs and therapy. However, some emergent primary prevention approaches are non-programmatic and involve multi-pronged practices focused on changing communities and systems.¹⁴⁶ Other primary prevention approaches fall into the realm of early intervention due to their focus on individual and relational risk factors. Importantly, approaches that fall along this pathway are already being implemented in diverse settings, which reduces the risk for unintended consequences and resistance from mainstream stakeholders, while increasing feasibility and viability.¹⁴⁷

To date, the research has identified six broad evidence-based primary prevention promising practices, with specific programs, initiatives, and strategies within each, that can be implemented by the anti-violence sector to prevent first time perpetration and victimization or disrupt the cycle of violence early (See Table 1).

Table 1. Six evidence-based primary prevention promising practices

Primary prevention promising practices that work	Examples of specific programs, initiatives, strategies, and approaches to scale in Alberta
1. Support Albertans’ healing from internalized oppression, internalized privilege, and trauma to restore dignity, trust, and justice and stop the cycle of violence.	- Braiding the Sweetgrass

<p>2. Promote healthy relationships skills and competencies across the lifespan and in settings where people already congregate, to prevent domestic and sexual violence (e.g., schools, sports, faith settings, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fourth R: Uniting our Nations - Safe Dates - Expect Respect - WiseGuyz - PATHS - Healthy Relationships Program for LGBTQ+ Youth - ConnectED Parents - Fathers Moving Forward
<p>3. Build the capacity of informal supporters and natural networks to prevent domestic and sexual violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green Dot Active Bystander - Real Talk - Bringing in the Bystander - Lay health advisors' approach
<p>4. Engage more men and boys as co-beneficiaries and allies in violence prevention and gender equality activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing Contexts - NextGenMen - Men& - Coaching Boys into Men - Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin ("I'm a Kind Man") - Dads for Life Program - Supporting Fatherhood Involvement Program
<p>5. Disrupt the developmental pathway towards domestic and sexual violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home visitation programs - Pre-school enrichment programs - Parenting skill and family relationship programs (i.e., Triple P) - Screening for adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) by nursing staff and related disciplines - "Two-generation" approaches, such as family-based therapy - Treatment for at-risk children, youth, families, and seniors - Trauma-informed child development centres
<p>6. Leverage technology to prevent domestic and sexual violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data2Action project to predict and address trends - Scaling public campaigns that promote non-violence and equality (e.g., #momentmatter) - Educating networks, families, and individuals about healthy relationships in real-time through technology - Using technology to increase advocacy and communication related to violence prevention and increasing accountability and transparency of laws, policies, and practices related to violence prevention

Investing in and implementing programs and initiatives that focus on primary prevention promising practices will help to ensure that all Albertans have the resilience and skills to promote healthy relationships as well as heal and repair from internalized oppression, internalized privilege, and trauma.

4.2 Pathway 2: Changing our cultures and structures so that they promote equity, safety, dignity, justice, and belonging to prevent domestic and sexual violence

To effectively prevent domestic and sexual violence, initiatives need to focus on manifestations of gender and socio-economic inequalities in our society. Therefore, the goal of this pathway is to change the **cultures (social norms, values, beliefs, and behaviours)** and **structures (laws, policies, and practices)** of institutions and systems that normalize and justify domestic and sexual violence and inequity. This is accomplished by promoting cultures and structures that advance equity, dignity, safety, justice, and belonging for all Albertans.

Strategies along this pathway are typically non-programmatic and advance population-level change by mitigating community- and societal-level risk factors and promoting community- and societal-level protective factors. They focus on reforming legislation, policies, systemic organizational and institutional practices, resource flows, and power dynamics.¹⁴⁸ As a result, the impact of this pathway's strategies is potentially significant, but changes are slower to arrive and less predictable.¹⁴⁹ Further, because only some strategies are already being implemented, their feasibility and viability are mixed because they require new capabilities and systems change, which may lead to broader and deeper resistance to them.¹⁵⁰

To move the work along this pathway forward, we recommend focusing on eight “**levers of change**” and implementing a range of strategies within each lever. Levers of change are reform-oriented approaches that aim to change rather than tweak the systems that hold domestic and sexual violence in place. This means they are large areas of work that will accelerate change towards the ultimate goal of all Albertans living a life free from violence.

The levers of change were developed based on the main risk and protective factors at the community and societal levels that have emerged from research. The levers of change include:

1. Promoting norms of non-violence and equity.
2. Ensuring an adequate socio-economic status for individuals and families.
3. Ensuring quality healthcare.
4. Guaranteeing justice.
5. Leveraging technology for safety and equity.
6. Amending laws and policies for better prevention.
7. Leveraging data, research, and evaluation.
8. Supporting stronger families and communities.

Specific recommendations for preventing domestic and sexual violence under each lever of change were formulated based on:

- A review of over 80 primary prevention and response plans for domestic, family, and sexual violence, and gender equality plans by the governments of seven Western countries that have developed concerted programs for gender equality and violence eradication in the past decade.
- A review of over 300 recommendation documents produced by Canadian think tanks and community organizations to advance equity and safety for women and equity-deserving groups in Canada and Alberta.
- A basic scan of academic literature on risk and protective factors for domestic and sexual violence, with the goal of formulating protective factors for the community and societal levels.
- A cross referencing of the levers of change with the outcomes and indicators identified through our research to develop an accountability framework for the APPF.

Advancing these levers of change through simultaneous implementation of diverse recommendations will both reform the cultural and structural factors that increase the risk for violence *and* build the conditions that protect against violence, particularly for those who are most vulnerable to and impacted by violence.

4.3 Pathway 3: Re-imagining and transforming systems through gamechangers that build a new society

Our society is founded upon at least four systems of oppression that normalize violence and inequalities over peace and equality; prioritize wealth, power, and control over people's well-being; and promote individualism over cooperation and social cohesion. These systems of oppression have shaped our worldviews while our worldviews, in their turn, have shaped our public systems, structures, and cultures. As a result, our systems, structures, and cultures are based on and reinforce gender and socio-economic inequalities that create favourable conditions for experiencing, using, and witnessing domestic and sexual violence.

Therefore, to stop domestic and sexual violence before it starts, we need to re-imagine our systems and build new ways of organizing our society that challenge and dismantle the systems of oppression and the worldviews that emerge from them. To do this collectively, we need to see, think, and understand the world in fundamentally different ways so that we can develop alternative ways of being based on non-violence, equity, cooperation, social cohesion, and peace.

For this purpose, we need to design and implement solutions that are **gamechangers**. Gamechangers directly target the systems of oppression rather than the drivers or risk and protective factors of domestic and sexual violence. As a result, gamechangers are currently not being implemented, and will require time, long-term investment, and substantial changes in our worldviews and systems that are at the root of violence. This results in their apparent low feasibility and viability, high resistance from stakeholders, and high risk of failure.¹⁵¹

Examples of gamechangers to prevent domestic and sexual violence include:

- Transformational approaches to healing from collective trauma, oppression, or privilege as a society, and building healthy relationships.
- Integrating restorative/transformational approaches for systems change.
- Ways of eradicating heteronormative patriarchy, white supremacy, and colonialism.
- Alternatives to capitalism, including transforming the workplace and rethinking the labour market and the way we conceptualize work.
- Community planning, including urban design, rural planning, and innovations for community cohesion to address isolation and fragmentation.
- Leveraging technology for equity and non-violence.
- Transforming the education system to help people thrive.
- Promoting social safety nets that help people thrive rather than survive.
- Promoting a care economy and “caremongering” to create a society that cares.
- Reforming the healthcare system to promote health and wellbeing, especially for mental health (i.e., free mental health services).
- Dismantling the systems of sorrow: criminal justice and child welfare.
- Boosting civic engagement for a more equitable, cohesive, and non-violent society.
- Engaging men as co-beneficiaries and agents of change.

Shifting our worldviews and changing our systems will take time. However, these gamechangers will start to eliminate the root causes of violence and other social problems intersecting with it, which will contribute to a society that is free from violence and rooted in liberation, peace, belonging, and harmony.

5.0 Anticipated outcomes of our primary prevention efforts

Together, the gamechangers, levers of change, and primary prevention promising practices outlined in previous sections will transform our systems, promote cultures and structures that advance safety, dignity, justice, and belonging, and increase the uptake of programs and practices that support resilience, healing, repair, and skills in networks, families, and individuals.

In broad strokes, we expect to see the following outcomes of the combined efforts undertaken under the three pathways:

- Albertans understand the value of non-violence and equity and believe that we can dismantle the systems of oppression (i.e., heteronormative patriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism) and build new systems and worldviews.
- Albertans, including all stakeholders within the anti-violence sector (i.e., government, funding actors, human services organizations including domestic and sexual violence organizations, grassroots organizations, activists, researchers, civil society, and thought-leaders), are committed to promoting non-violence and equity and take action within their spheres of influence.
- Albertans, including all stakeholders within the anti-violence sector, are committed to working through our internalized oppression, internalized privilege, and trauma, and support ourselves

and all Albertans to heal from these harms so that we can move towards a violence-free society.

- The government, funding actors, and private partners provide sustained, adequate, and appropriate funding and resources to implement the APPF.
- All stakeholders are committed to innovations at all levels, specifically to:
 - Transformational innovations that radically transform the dominant worldviews, values, and narratives.¹⁵²
 - Reform-oriented innovations that change, rather than tweak, the existing systems that uphold domestic and sexual violence.¹⁵³
 - Incremental innovations that improve the functioning of the existing systems without disrupting them.¹⁵⁴

These efforts play out at all levels of society to create the conditions that both decrease the risk for violence *and* build a society based on non-violence, equity, and peace, contributing to short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes so that ultimately, all Albertans live a life of equity, dignity, safety, justice, and belonging that is free from violence and rooted in liberation.

6.0 Principles that will guide the implementation of the Alberta Primary Prevention Framework

Over the course of the project, the following **principles** have emerged from all partners to guide the implementation of the APPF.

1. **Everyone plays a role, and the responsibility is shared.** Large-scale social change requires leadership, coordination, and collaboration across governments, sectors, communities, and with civil society. Everyone has a role in creating a society that is equitable and violence-free.
2. **Collaboration across the prevention spectrum** is essential. Although the majority of the APPF focuses on primary prevention, collaboration, collective planning, and implementation across primary prevention, early-intervention, crisis interventions, and rebuilding lives is critical for preventing and eradicating domestic and sexual violence.
3. **A whole-government approach is key to violence prevention.** Primary prevention efforts require the collective efforts of all ministries and departments to ensure that our social, educational, health, justice, economic, and political systems build the conditions that promote non-violence/peace and equality.
4. **Our efforts must focus on the root causes of violence.** While it is important to continue advancing interventions that focus on individual and family circumstances, the primary prevention framework primarily targets the root causes and drivers of violence.
5. **Diverse disciplines and different ways of knowing must be leveraged.** Research that informed the design of this framework drew on multiple disciplines and ways of knowing,

including academic and community scholars, think tanks and foundations, grassroots and advocacy groups, Indigenous scholars and activists, community-based organizations, policy makers and civil servants, the domestic and sexual violence sector, general surveillance data, and expert and lived experience feedback. This approach should be leveraged throughout the implementation of the APPF.

6. **A lifespan approach is important.** The causes, impacts, and prevention of domestic and sexual violence are viewed from a lifespan perspective, which recognizes the need for prevention at all stages of life.
7. **The experiences of equity-deserving groups must be prioritized.** Equity-deserving groups experience more frequent, severe, and life-changing instances of violence due to systemic discrimination.¹⁵⁵ Centering the experiences of equity-deserving groups within primary prevention efforts is critical for ensuring that worldviews, culture, and structures support those most impacted by violence. At the same time, the gains that equity-deserving groups make towards equity and peace will also improve the well-being of all Albertans.
8. **Adaptive, participatory, long-term vision must guide the change.** The APPF is a long-term vision that will take decades to implement, with many adaptations as we learn more, engage with broader audiences and new stakeholders, and continue to live with the uncertainties of Covid-19 and other large-scale societal issues. However, the framework is a good first step towards implementing concerted primary prevention efforts.
9. **Critical hope must guide our action.** Critical hope is the ability and willingness to examine society and social problems through a lens of equity and justice and strive for a better future, despite the complexity and discomfort of transformation processes and uncomfortable conversations that are vital for change to take place.^{156, 157}

7.0 Tensions and constraints identified that may impact the implementation of the APPF

All movements that aim to create social change include tensions, constraints, or bottlenecks that may impact processes and outcomes. These are magnified given current **global context and trends**. The design and implementation of the APPF is happening within this broader global context where we are collectively experiencing and coping with cascading collective traumas, or multiple disasters happening in rapid succession and affecting our society.¹⁵⁸ For example:

1. **Rates of violence are on the rise and will continue to increase due to environmental factors.**
 - **Covid-19** has kept people at home due to quarantines, lockdowns, and physical distancing, which has increased stress and resulted in the surge in domestic and sexual violence that many call the “shadow pandemic.”¹⁵⁹
 - **Climate change** causes displacement and stress, which increases people’s vulnerability to domestic and sexual violence from strangers.¹⁶⁰

2. **The anti-violence sector is experiencing burnout and high vacancy rates.**
 - Canada is experiencing a “**great resignation**” where people are no longer satisfied with poor jobs and as a result, companies are competing for people.¹⁶¹
 - In Alberta, **more youth are leaving the province than moving in** for the first time in generations because they no longer believe that Alberta offers a breadth of career choices, vibrancy, inclusion and diversity.¹⁶² This creates a smaller, myopic workforce that impacts the re-imagining of a future without violence.
3. **Our political environment is divisive, and we are seeing unprecedented hate crimes and hate speech,¹⁶³ a rise in white supremacy and misogyny.**
 - We live in a **divisive political environment** that reinforces “othering” or an “us versus them” mentality that contributes to hostility, discrimination, and violence.
 - The activation of the far-right in the US is fomenting radical action in Canada, as can be seen from the Freedom Convoy, many of whose participants admired the January 6th storming of the Capitol in Washington and hoped to recreate it in Ottawa.¹⁶⁴
4. **Wars are normalizing violence on the global scale, driving global anxiety and stress over the nuclear threat,¹⁶⁵ and increasing the rates of sexual violence in the countries affected.^{166,}**
¹⁶⁷ The war in Ukraine has affected Canada particularly strongly, since the Ukrainian diaspora here is numerous and many volunteers are travelling to fight in Ukraine.¹⁶⁸ Additionally, Canada is bringing Ukrainians affected by the war.¹⁶⁹ The stress and exposure to violence of fighters and people fleeing the country worsen their mental health and increase the likelihood of violence.
5. **Technology has a serious negative impact on people of all ages.**
 - Technology steals our focus, creates divisiveness, contributes to social polarization, and increases depression, anxiety, addiction, and disconnection.¹⁷⁰
 - Emerging forms of technology facilitated violence appear regularly, as a result of technological advances or in response to global events. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic ushered in zoom bombing, the disruption of conference calls using Zoom by trolls, who often target feminists and 2SLGBTQIA+ activists with sexually explicit images and videos to intimidate and offend them.¹⁷¹
6. **Systemic racism,¹⁷² over-policing of Indigenous¹⁷³ and racialized communities,¹⁷⁴ and an over reliance on punitive approaches creates chronic and acute stressors, that overwhelmingly impact equity-deserving groups that are already more vulnerable to violence.**
 - Policing, prosecution, and imprisonment to resolve violence are ineffective at addressing the underlying economic, political, and social conditions that lead to gendered violence.
7. **The progress towards reconciliation and prevention of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people is slow.¹⁷⁵**

- As of 2022, Indigenous organizations and the federal government believe that between 5 and 13% of all the Calls from the Truth and Reconciliation Report have been completely implemented.¹⁷⁶

The APPF project partners also identified tensions and constraints specifically within the anti-violence sector and the GoA that may impact the design and implementation of the APPF.

1. Current social, economic, and political context:

- **Funding structures often focus on short-term outcomes.** Primary prevention focuses on advancing transformational and reform-oriented approaches that require time and long-term investment. Yet funding structures, and therefore service-delivery structures within the anti-violence sector, are still largely focused on responding to violence after it happens and offer traditional programming that targets individuals and families. These conditions can limit the anti-violence sector's ability to implement the primary prevention framework effectively.
- **The current government of Alberta promotes neo-liberal ethos.** The GoA is promoting smaller government, reduced social spending and taxes, balanced budgets, and deregulation and privatization. These strategies are based on and reinforce the worldviews that emphasize individual freedoms, privacy, and meritocracy over social wellbeing, equity, cooperation, which reduces our ability to promote protective factors for domestic and sexual violence.
- **The not-for-profit and anti-violence sectors are financially stretched thin.** Not-for-profit organizations across Canada are facing unprecedented strain due to declines in donations and unexpected growth in demand due to the Covid-19 pandemic.¹⁷⁷ Many organizations within the anti-violence sector already do more with less, which makes it difficult to prioritize primary prevention efforts. Further, the GoA staff face the challenge of prioritizing a multitude of social, environmental, economic, educational, and health-related issues within a government focused on reduced spending on social welfare.

2. Conditions within the anti-violence sector and the GoA:

- **Because much of non-physical violence is normalized and because only the most severe cases of domestic and physical violence prompt survivors to seek services,¹⁷⁸ the anti-violence sector focuses on the most extreme part of the problem.** All the laws, policies (including funding structures), and practices that guide the anti-violence sector are structured around homicide, the most extreme expression of violence. Although homicide is a critical part of the problem of domestic and sexual violence, most violent instances do not fall within this category. To effectively prevent domestic and sexual violence, laws, policies, and practices must strongly problematize the less severe forms of violence and advance the society that we all wish to live in.
- **The anti-violence sector prioritizes supporting individuals and families while the APPF focuses on the root causes of violence.** Substantial investment and commitment to building the capacity of the anti-violence sector is needed to advance primary prevention efforts, which is a challenge when the sector feels there are not enough resources for intervention services. Another challenge is the complex long-term transformation required to eradicate the

root causes of violence, which makes the work more daunting than providing services that show immediate results.

- **Practices are not keeping up with emergent science and different ways of knowing.** Through emerging science on behavioural insights, neuroscience, implementation science, and human development, we understand that human behaviour is far more complex than we once believed. Traditional linear behaviour-change models are no longer adequate and have, perhaps unintentionally, contributed to the design and implementation of interventions that are inappropriate or even cause harm. For example, approaches and programs are often designed for the traditional nuclear family rather than the changing family unit, which fails to meet the needs of a significant portion of our population. Further, most approaches and programs focus on white individual and families, which has resulted in systems, services, and programs, including child welfare, legal, and policing systems, that have severely harmed Indigenous Peoples and equity-deserving groups. Also, implementation science shows that evidence-based practices take, on average, 17 years to be incorporated into routine practice;¹⁷⁹ yet many current approaches and funding structures are short term and largely focused on outputs rather than behaviour change. We must fundamentally change how we understand the problem of domestic and sexual violence in different contexts and for different populations to ensure that primary prevention efforts are appropriate and do not cause harm. This requires the commitment and long-term investment of the entire anti-violence sector.
- **The anti-violence sector is risk averse *and* needs capacity to innovate.** The anti-violence sector is rightfully risk averse, as it is literally dealing with human lives within the context of extreme financial and resource constraints. At the same time, to go upstream to prevent violence before it starts, the anti-violence sector needs to embrace innovation—especially those innovations that focus on transforming and reforming systems, cultures, and structures.
- **People with lived experiences are not always engaged in prevention appropriately, despite their invaluable insights.** While we appreciate the contributions of people who have experienced violence to developing primary prevention initiatives, we do not want the research and implementation of the framework to be a burden for them. Limited engagement from people with lived experience within the project to date illuminates the difficulty in striking a respectful and productive balance.
- **Government constraints include:**
 - limits of the electoral cycles and annual budgets
 - limitations imposed by the federal budget allocations
 - in some areas, limited purview is shared with the municipal and federal governments
 - working within the established legislation and systems takes time to change
 - pressure to deliver quick and clear results, and risk avoidance to increase chances of re-election
 - hierarchical structure can stifle innovation
 - inadequate use of data to inform data-driven policy making
 - limited culture of lessons learned to, instead, focus on tried-and-true methods
 - threat of service disruption brought about by radical reforms
 - lack of diversity in senior positions that could drive reforms and innovation

- public skepticism about primary prevention and the harms of systems of oppression in Alberta
- Difficulty coordinating systems change without proper resources

8.0 Enablers to support the APPF

Although there are many tensions and constraints that can impact the ability of the government and the anti-violence sector to implement the primary prevention roadmap, there are also many factors that enable us to advance the framework effectively. It is important to build on these enablers, which include:

1. Investments and evaluation methods to promote equity, non-violence, and well-being.

- **The Government of Canada's 2022 budget** demonstrates it is committed to some core areas that align with the levers of change identified in the APPF. For example, there are some investments for changing the norms and practices around violence and inequality, improving people's socio-economic status, healthcare measures, and criminal justice reforms.¹⁸⁰ These should be strategically leveraged. (For an overview of the Federal Budget 2022, please see Appendix B.)
- **More funding opportunities to support equity, diversity, inclusion** by all orders of government. This helps ensure that research, policies, programs, and services support the dignity, safety, justice, and belonging of equity-deserving groups, which prevents domestic and sexual violence. Examples include [EDI institutional capacity-building grants](#) offered by the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC; the largest national funding bodies for research), continuation of the GoA's Multiculturalism, Indigenous, and Inclusion grant, and Family & Community Support Services's (FCSS) continued focus on Indigenous healing.
- Covid-19 has contributed to more investments that raise **awareness of the impact of human-made and natural disasters**, including the Government of Canada's public campaign on emergency preparedness.¹⁸¹ The link between natural disasters, the climate crisis, and sexual and gender-based violence has been well-documented.^{182, 183} Therefore, more investments in this area will help to ensure that laws, policies, initiatives, and programs for mitigating disasters include specific measures to prevent domestic and sexual violence.
- Countries around the world are increasingly adopting **new indices of well-being** that measure not only economic income but also environment, culture, safety, leisure time, health, and education indicators.¹⁸⁴ Using GDP-alternative measures for well-being can help ensure that our laws, policies, systems, practices, and programs promote a more holistic view of well-being that includes the dignity, safety, justice, and belonging of all people.

2. New approaches to accessing services and support that promote social cohesion, work-life balance, and mutuality.

- Covid-19 has created pockets of "**caremongering**" where people ensured others were safe and well-provided during lockdown.¹⁸⁵ This culture of care can be leveraged and sustained to

promote social inclusion and social norms that reinforce mutuality, empathy, cooperation, and social cohesion, which contributes to non-violence and equity.

- More employers are offering **permanent remote and hybrid work and other workplace accommodations**, which can support employment for caregivers, greater work-life balance, and stronger family and social connections that protect against violence.^{186, 187}
- Covid-19 has increased the use of **technology for work productivity and safety** (e.g., workflow management, safety trackers, lone-worker apps),^{188, 189} and telehealth and telemedicine,¹⁹⁰ which enable patients to continue using healthcare services despite the pandemic.¹⁹¹ These types of safety and health-related supports are critical for increasing security, buffering individual and family stress, and improving overall well-being, which protects against violence.

3. Emergence of new systems that promote cooperation and prosperity for all.

- The pandemic-related supply chain disruptions have accelerated the emergence of **alternative economic systems** fostering degrowth that promotes lower material production and consumption, sharing cities where unwanted or underused goods are redistributed, collaborative lifestyles that encourage innovative exchange of non-product assets and systems for renting rather than buying goods.¹⁹² These types of economic systems foster a culture of sharing, mutuality, cooperation, and cohesion that reinforce equity and non-violence while strengthening more sustainable lifestyles that contribute to addressing the impact of climate change.

4. Structural and cultural shifts within IMPACT and the Government of Alberta

- **The GoA has shifted to prioritize primary prevention efforts.**
 - A large proportion of the GoA's Civil Society Fund has been invested in addressing the effects and root causes of domestic and sexual violence in Alberta.
 - The Prevention of Family Violence and Sexual Abuse department within the GoA is a key partner within the APPF project and they have developed funding criteria to encourage investment in prevention activities by the human services sector.
- Although the government's neoliberal ethos has many drawbacks, an **"efficiency lens" can also be leveraged to accelerate the investment in and the prioritization of primary prevention efforts**, as addressing the root causes of violence can help the GoA solve multiple intersecting social problems.
- **IMPACT has hundreds of member organizations all rowing together to advance primary prevention:**
 - 73% of IMPACT members (n=72) believe community organizations and researchers are working together to identify the underlying causes and drivers of domestic and sexual violence in Alberta.
 - 100% of IMPACT members (n=37) understand that primary prevention can influence widespread and lasting change in the current landscape of domestic and sexual violence.
 - 97% of respondents (n=96) who participated in "Made-in-Alberta Primary Prevention Initiatives" capacity-building sessions believed the sessions enhanced their

understanding of local efforts and initiatives to engage in the prevention of domestic violence.

9.0 Conclusion

Shift will continue updating the summary of research to date to reflect the changing understanding of the problem and integrate the description of new projects to support the development of the APPF by the end of December 2023.

Appendix A

Description of evidence-based, research-informed, promising, and emergent/innovative approaches.

Classification of approach	Description
Emergent/innovative approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapted from evidence-based or research-informed approaches that does not yet have positive evaluation data - Underlying theory of change is evidence-informed
Promising approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapted from evidence-based or research-informed approaches that has some positive evaluation data (e.g., report) - Underlying theory of change is evidence-informed
Research-informed approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Had only one outcome study or several studies/reports with encouraging findings
Evidence-based approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has more than one rigorous evaluation with a control group (or another strong research design) - Looks at outcomes beyond knowledge and attitude change (i.e., include behaviour change) - Has at least one study with a follow-up beyond the immediate end of the intervention

This table is adapted from:

Crooks, C., Jaffe, P., Dunlop, C., Kerry, A., Houston, B., Exner-Cortens, D., & Wells, L. (2019). *Primary prevention of violence against women and girls: Current knowledge about program effectiveness*.

Western University, Centre for School Mental Health.

https://www.learningtoendabuse.ca/resources-events/pdfs/Report-Crooks_Jaffe-Primary_Prevention_VAW_Update.pdf

Appendix B

Summary of the Federal Budget 2022 and its Implications for Primary Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence

This section is based on “Overview of the Federal Budget 2022: Implications for Primary Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence” completed by Anya Litviniuc in April 2022.

Overall, the federal budget for 2022 is less ambitious and equity-focused than the previous budget. One of the big gaps is the fact that the budget no longer breaks down investments based on the GBA+ analysis, but it is clear that equity-deserving groups are no longer prioritized as much as in the previous budget. For example, gender is only mentioned 18 times compared to over 200 times in 2021. While there are certain targeted investments, such as the allocation of funds for gender-based violence prevention, and some important investments for specific equity-deserving groups, such as continued funding for the implementation of the upcoming 2SLGBTQIA+ National Plan, there are also significant gaps.

- 1) There are some investments for **changing the norms** and practices around violence and inequality:
 - increasing the safety of sports to prevent violence, discrimination, and abuse. This will contribute to changing norms and behaviours among athletes who often show problematic masculine norms and behaviors.
 - improving the representation of racialized and religious minority groups in mass media and arts. This will contribute to their positive portrayal, highlight the issues they face, and increase their participation in the labour market.
 - The most important investment is the direct funding for gender-based violence prevention, but there are no details what exactly is to be funded, and some funding is specifically allocated for helping survivors.

What’s missing from norms change: In the defence budget, instead of lethal military aid to Ukraine, the budget could have invested in measures that promote peace and healing, such as:

- conflict prevention measures
- women’s participation in peace talks
- support for women and LGBTQIA+ communities affected by war, e.g., financial support and mental health care
- prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence.

- 2) Important investments in **neighbourhood infrastructure** include:

- increasing seniors’ participation in their communities, which will counter their isolation and vulnerability to violence.
- taking assault-style weapons off the streets, which will make communities safer and possibly reduce extreme gang violence.

What's missing from neighbourhood infrastructure: meaningful investment into community cohesion, infrastructure, and services, especially through non-profits, grassroots organizations, and civil society as opposed to the private sector.

3) Positive changes for improving people's socio-economic status by ensuring employment, income supports, and housing include:

- Employment measures:
 - reviews of employment legislation to address labour market inequities, which will help equity-deserving groups, such as racialized groups, people with disabilities, seniors, etc., achieve better outcomes in the labour market.
 - investments to prevent unemployment and to ensure people in at-risk jobs and trades can become/stay employed. Men from low socio-economic backgrounds are overrepresented in at-risk jobs and trades, so supporting their employment and income can reduce the likelihood of them perpetrating domestic violence because of economic stress.
 - the development of an employment strategy for people with disabilities and making workplaces more accessible, which is a vital step for reducing the vulnerability of people with disabilities and seniors to unemployment, poverty, and violence.
- Income supports measures:
 - increase in maximum GIS benefit for single seniors and the reversal of the eligibility for OAS and GIS back to age 65 from 67 will reduce seniors' vulnerability to poverty and violence.
 - There is also a move towards more economic redistribution as the government is planning consultations on increasing taxes for the wealthiest Canadians. Tax revenues could be invested in policies and programs for women and EDGs.
- Housing measures:
 - financial supports for increasing housing accessibility and building multigenerational housing, which will increase the safety and security of people with disabilities and seniors.
 - financial supports for housing repairs, which will improve the living conditions among low-income Canadians and reduce their vulnerability to violence.
 - investments into new affordable housing, which will provide women and low-income Canadians with adequate housing and protect them from homelessness and violence.
 - Another positive move is the controls against the financialization of housing that try to limit the use of housing for profit by individuals and corporations.
 - Overall, however, the measures are modest, with the amount of affordable housing not meeting the increasing demand for it. Additionally, most support goes to first time home buyers and owners, with no measures to support renters.

What's missing from employment and income supports:

- Measures for creating high-quality jobs, including in rural areas, especially in the light of the pandemic recovery.
- Better wages, benefits, and protections for care workers.

- A workforce strategy to ensure there are enough child educators for the proposed federally funded countrywide childcare system.
- Better protections from unemployment.
- The promised EI reforms, including EI coverage for the self-employed.
- Better federal disability benefits.
- Better benefits for low-income Canadians.

What's missing from taxation:

- Increasing overall corporate tax rates.
- Restoring capital gains inclusion rates.
- A new wealth tax.

What's missing from housing:

- Adequate amount of affordable housing.
- National standards for residential tenancies, renters' protections, and measures for improving renters' financial wellbeing.
- Housing advocacy.
- Legal aid for housing.
- Long-term care.
- Stronger measures against housing financialization, i.e., buying housing for profit.
- Funding for non-profits and communities instead of private initiatives and for-profit developers.

4) An important short-term investment into **healthcare** is the funding for 700,000 medical procedures cancelled or delayed due to the pandemic, as medical issues cause stress that can increase the risk of violence and prevent people from working, which leads to poverty and violence. Other measures include:

- funding for the Wellness Together Canada portal that helps people with mental health challenges and for Substance Use and Addictions Program, both of which can contribute to preventing violence. However, a more ambitious investment into mental health care and counselling is missing.
- investment into some sexual and reproductive health measures, such as the Menstrual Equity Fund, which can help poor and homeless women live in dignity, and covering medical expenses for fertility, which can prevent conflicts around reproduction in some families and help them avoid violence and abuse.
- investment into brain and ageing research and the Centre for Aging and Brain Health Innovation, which will contribute to the safety and wellbeing of seniors and people with mental and cognitive disabilities.
- increasing the number of doctors, including in rural areas, through better credential recognition and incentives for rural doctors.

What's missing from healthcare:

- Pharmacare.

- Healthcare investment to improve COVID-19 recovery.
- Community mental health.
- Supportive and transitional housing for people with mental health issues.
- Support for mental health and substance use workers serving Indigenous communities.
- Long-term stable federal funding for mental health.
- Bolder measures for food security.

Criminal justice system reforms include funding for criminal legal aid for low-income Canadians and amending legislation to add 24 new superior court positions and create more opportunities to appoint diverse candidates who can better represent the communities they serve. However, the budget does not outline the specific measures for increasing diversity.

What's missing from the criminal justice system: Any meaningful investment in systems change. In terms of **technology inclusion**, most measures focus on cybersecurity of the government and the business sector. A positive measure is the proposed amendment of the *Citizenship Act* to enable automated and machine-assisted processing and safe and secure collection and use of biometric information for immigration purposes. Simplifying the immigration process can protect applicants, especially dependents, from exploitation and abuse.

What's missing from technology inclusion:

- Free or subsidized access to the Internet for vulnerable Canadians.
- Caps on Internet and mobile phone plan costs.
- Investment in vital technology for equity-deserving groups.
- Regulation of the tech sector and digital service providers.

In terms of **women and EDGs**, this budget does not apply GBA+ analysis or an explicit equity lens. Measures recommended by EDGs organizations but missing from the budget include:

What's missing for women:

- Employment, housing, representation, leadership measures for women.
- Details for the funding for gender-based violence prevention.
- Comprehensive contraception care.
- Comprehensive sexuality education to prevent violence.

What's missing for racialized groups:

- Anti-racism legislation.
- Governance bodies to implement the *National Anti-racism Action Plan*.
- Measures to close the racial wage gap and housing inequities.
- Criminal justice reforms to prevent criminalization of racialized groups.

What's missing for immigrants:

- Better measures for family reunification of immigrants and refugees to reduce isolation and increase family cohesion.

- Measures to reduce dependence of sponsors.

What's missing for Indigenous peoples:

- Distinctions-based funding.
- Measures for Indigenous women.
- Urban Indigenous housing strategy.
- Direct funding for Indigenous organizations and nations rather than federal government branches.
- \$40 billion child welfare settlement agreement.
- \$8 billion payout for on-reserve boil water advisories.
- Redistribution of wealth from natural resources industries and land.
- Indigenous governance and sovereignty investments.
- MMIWG investments.
- Investments into non-water related infrastructure.

What's missing for 2SLGBTQIA+ people:

- Funding pledged to rural, two-spirit, trans and intersex organizations and organizations serving black and racialized 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

What's missing for homeless people:

- Permanent funding for rapid housing.
- Gender-responsive measures for ensuring housing for women and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.
- Urban Indigenous housing strategy.

What's missing for people with disabilities:

- Canada Disability Benefit that would provide a guaranteed minimum income supplement for all Canadians with disabilities.
- Investment in technology for people with disabilities.

What's missing for seniors:

- Measures against seniors' abuse.
- National seniors' and dementia strategies.
- Investment in technology for seniors.
- Investment into seniors' mental health.
- Improvement of seniors' vaccination.
- Long-term care.
- Better benefits for seniors.
- Investments into age-friendly infrastructure.

What's missing for rural populations:

- Job creation in rural Canada.

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