



PROTECTING



women

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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Southern Chiefs' Organization Mandate

Established in 1998, the Mandate of the Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO) is to protect, preserve, promote and enhance First Nation peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process

Southern Chiefs' Organization Member First Nations

Berens River First Nation	Keeseekoowenin Ojibway Nation	Pine Creek Anishinabe Nation
Birdtail Sioux First Nation	Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation (Jackhead)	Poplar River First Nation
Black River First Nation	Lake Manitoba First Nation	Rolling River Anishinabe Nation
Bloodvein First Nation	Lake St. Martin First Nation	Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation	Little Grand Rapids First Nation	Sagkeeng First Nation
Canupawakpa	Little Saskatchewan First Nation	Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation
Dakota Tipi First Nation	Long Plain First Nation	Skownan First Nation (Waterhen)
Dauphin River First Nation	O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation	Swan Lake First Nation
Ebb And Flow First Nation	Pauingassi First Nation	Tootinaowaziibeeng Treaty Reserve (Valley River)
Gamblers First Nation	Peguis First Nation	Waywayseecappo First Nation
Hollow Water First Nation	Pinaymootang First Nation (Fairford)	



Summary

Violence against Indigenous women and girls is a major issue that the Southern Chiefs' Organization is committed to ending. Through our previous project funded under Status of Women Canada and other community engagement, we recognized a need for a safety plan and toolkit for women and girls traveling or relocating to Winnipeg as well as transitioning out of incarceration. Protecting Our Women is a project funded under Status of Women Canada and responds to the later community identified need. The project involves creating a Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit to enhance the safety of Indigenous women and girls in Winnipeg. The goal of this needs assessment is to better understand how SCO can enhance the safety of all Indigenous women in Winnipeg through the development and implementation of a Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit and by developing and strengthening relationships with First Nations communities and Winnipeg inner-city service providers.

We reviewed academic and grey literature as well as conducted in depth consultation with First Nations communities, the Winnipeg inner-city Indigenous community and inner-city service providers. All parties agreed that a Safety Plan and Toolkit is needed and many First Nations communities and service providers have partnered with us to develop and implement the Safety Plan and Toolkit. Our key findings include: 1) the importance of safety education and awareness of inner-city services and resources before women or youth travel or relocate to Winnipeg; 2) the importance of accessing support systems when relocating to Winnipeg; 3) the need to cater to the specific needs of different groups of Indigenous women and girls as well as partnering service providers; 4) the existing networks of information sharing and service provision and; 5) the complexity of violence against Indigenous women and girls as a deeply rooted systemic issue of which the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit is only a part of the solution. We will honour the voices and experiences of those who shared with us and who continue to share with us as we develop and implement the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit and also in our future work.

Acknowledgements

Several Groups and Individuals have been instrumental in the development of the Protecting Our Women Project. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of:

- Agape House
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba
- Evident IT
- The following First Nations:
 - Birdtail Sioux First Nation
 - Bloodvein First Nation
 - Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
 - Dakota Tipi First Nation
 - Ebb & Flow First Nation
 - Hollow Water First Nation
 - Long Plain First Nation
 - O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation
 - Peguis First Nation
 - Rolling River First Nation
 - Roseau River First Nation
 - Sandy Bay Ojibway Nation
 - Skownan First Nation
 - Little Black River First Nation
 - Swan Lake First Nation
- First Nation Justice Strategy
- Ikwe Safe Ride
- Jordan Stranger
- Ka Ni Kani Chichk's Restoring the Sacred Program
- Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre
- Manitoba Moon Voices Inc.
- Native Women's Transition Centre
- Protecting Our Women Oversight Committee
- SCO's Health Research and Engagement Program
- SCO's Health Services Integration Fund Program
- SCO's Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator Program
- Southeast Collegiate
- Southeast Resource Development Council
- Status of Women Canada
- Tessa Jourdain, Masters of Public Health (Health Promotion) Candidate, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto
- University of Winnipeg Aboriginal Student Services Centre
- West Central Women's Resource Centre
- Winnipeg Police Services Indigenous Partnership Section
- Women's Correctional Centre of Manitoba

Background

Indigenous women and girls in Canada are extremely vulnerable to violence. From 1980 to 2014, Statistics Canada reported that 1,073 Indigenous women were murdered and that from 2001 to 2014, Indigenous women were six times more likely to be murdered than non-Indigenous women (Statistics Canada, 2015). However, these numbers are likely much higher and have been criticised by Amnesty International as they do not include missing persons, do not include unresolved suspicious deaths and because Aboriginal identity has been inadequately recorded (Amnesty International, 2015). The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) has conducted their own research to more adequately and appropriately represent the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) in Canada in which Manitoba has the third highest number of cases where 64% of known cases occurred in urban areas, particularly in Winnipeg (NWAC, 2010).

Through a previous project funded under Status of Women Canada called, the *Family Violence and Resource Project*, Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) has become increasingly aware of the vulnerability to violence that Indigenous women and girls experience who reside in Winnipeg or who travel or relocate to Winnipeg as well as those transitioning out of incarceration into city living. We have consistently heard throughout our work involving, community safety planning for eight First Nation communities, communication with urban stakeholders and involvement with family members of MMIWG as well as through our participation at the National Roundtable on MMIWG held in February, 2015, that there is an immediate need to develop and implement a safety plan and toolkit for Indigenous women and girls to support their safety in Winnipeg. This safety plan and toolkit would increase Indigenous women and girls' knowledge of how to stay safe in Winnipeg and would also include the services and resources in Winnipeg that support the safety and well being of Indigenous women and girls.

SCO's mission is to protect, preserve, promote, and enhance First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process. In that, SCO is committed to ending violence against women and has responded to the above community need through the *Protecting Our Women* initiative. Protecting Our Women is a three year project funded under Status of Women Canada. The project involves working in partnership with member First Nations and community stakeholders to develop a community based safety plan and tool kit for Indigenous women and girls moving to or residing in Winnipeg as well as transitioning out of incarceration. Over the last year, we have engaged with member First Nations, the Winnipeg inner-city community and Winnipeg inner-city service providers to better understand how the tool should be developed and implemented to best meet the needs of Indigenous women and girls. The following needs assessment report outlines and discusses our findings.

Needs Assessment Goal & Objectives

Goal

To better understand how SCO can enhance the safety of all Indigenous women in Winnipeg through the development and implementation of a Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit and by developing and strengthening relationships with First Nations communities and Winnipeg inner-city service providers.

Objectives

1. To gather information from a variety of stakeholders including, First Nations communities, Winnipeg inner-city service providers and the inner-city Indigenous community on what should be included in the Safety Plan and Toolkit, how it should be delivered and in what formats.
2. To assess how and if the needs of subgroups of Indigenous women and girls differ and how to best support their safety.
3. To better understand the challenges and successes that Indigenous women and girls experience from the perspective of the above stakeholders and how this project can assist with mitigating challenges and supporting successes.
4. To investigate existing initiatives that support the safety of Indigenous women both in First Nation communities and in Winnipeg as well as academic and grey literature on primary violence prevention more generally.
5. To develop and strengthen relationships and secure partnerships with First Nations communities and Winnipeg inner-city service providers for the development, implementation and evaluation of the Safety Plan and Toolkit as well as to foster knowledge sharing.
6. In developing and strengthening relationships with First Nations communities and Winnipeg inner-city service providers, assess the capacity for the implementation of the Safety Plan and Toolkit.

A Socio-Ecological Approach To Violence Prevention

In 1996, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared violence a major public health issue and in 2002 they released a *World Report on Violence and Health* which highlighted the different kinds of violence (Figure 1) as well as the need to address violence prevention using a socio-ecological model (SEM) (Figure 2) (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg, & Zwi, 2002) of which this needs assessment will adopt as a conceptual framework.

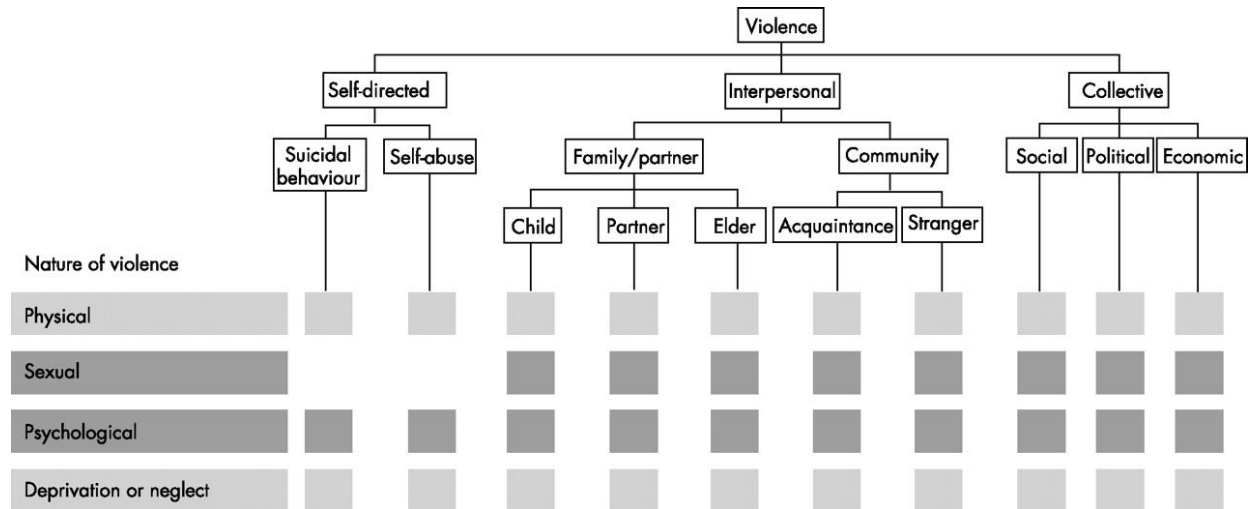


Figure 1: Typology of Violence (WHO, 2002, p. 7)

WHO defined violence generally as,

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. (WHO, 2004, p. 1)

Within the general definition, violence is further divided into three sub-types according to the context of which it is committed.

- **Self-directed violence** refers to violence in which the perpetrator and the victim are the same individual and is subdivided into self-abuse and suicide
- **Interpersonal violence** refers to violence between individuals, and is subdivided into “family and intimate partner violence” and “community violence”. The former category includes child maltreatment; intimate partner violence; and elder abuse, while community violence is broken down into acquaintance and stranger violence and includes youth violence; assault by strangers; violence related to property crimes; and violence in workplaces and other institutions.

- **Collective violence** refers to violence committed by larger groups of individuals and can be subdivided into social, political and economic violence. (WHO, 2004, p.1)

Then, cross-cutting of each of these categories are four modes of which violence can be inflicted including, physical, sexual, psychological and deprivation (WHO, 2004).

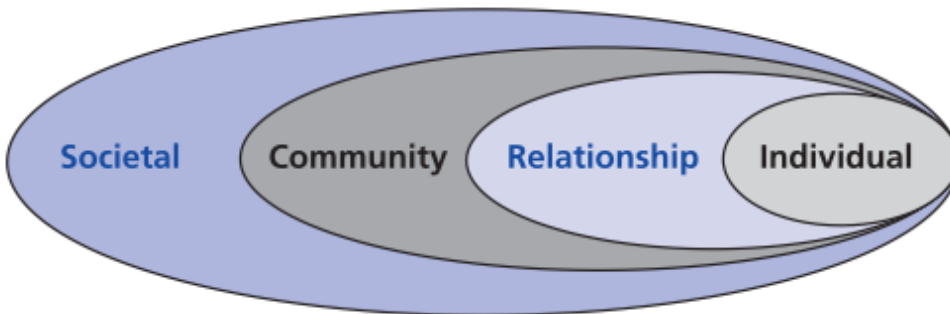


Figure 2: Socio-Ecological Model

WHO then further described that violence can be conceptualized using the SEM. The perpetration and causes of violence can be mapped onto the four levels as illustrated above, however, it is important to understand that the levels are constantly interacting with each other in which violence does not occur in isolation, but rather in a complex system. Violence prevention interventions can also be mapped onto the SEM in which due to the complexity of violence, multiple levels must be targeted for interventions to be effective (Krug, et al., 2002). The chart below describes what each level encompasses as summarized by WHO (2004) and Krug, et al., (2002).

Level	Description
Individual	Biological and personal factors that influence how individuals behave and increase their likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence: demographic characteristics (age, education, income), personality disorders, substance abuse, and a history of experiencing, witnessing, or engaging in violent behavior.
Relationship	Personal relationships such as those with family, friends, intimate partners and peers may also influence the risks of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. For example, a poor relationship with a parent and having violent friends may influence whether a young person engages in or becomes a victim of violence.
Community	Community contexts in which social relationships occur (such as schools, neighbourhoods and workplaces) also influence the

likelihood of violence. Risk factors here may include the level of unemployment, population density and mobility, and the existence of a local drug or gun trade.

Societal

Societal factors influence whether violence is encouraged or inhibited. These include economic and social policies that maintain socioeconomic inequalities between people, the availability of weapons, and social and cultural norms such as those relating to male dominance over women, parental dominance over children, and cultural norms that endorse violence as an acceptable method to resolve conflicts.

Figure 3: Description of levels

A Brief Socio-Ecological Analysis of Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls

Although the purpose of this needs assessment is not to provide an in depth socio-ecological analysis of the issue of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Winnipeg, it is important to situate the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit within the SEM to better understand where we are intervening and what the potential benefits and downfalls of the intervention are. The Safety Plan and Toolkit intervenes at the individual level by increasing knowledge of how to stay safe in the city and about the available resources and services to support the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous women and girls. We are also intervening at the community level as we will accomplish the above via community mobilization as the project was initiated by community, will be developed in a community-driven way and connects women and girls and their communities to inner-city Winnipeg service providers. In doing so, the Safety Plan and Toolkit primarily targets interpersonal violence. However, the solution to end violence against Indigenous women and girls extends past the individual as well as mobilizing First Nations communities and inner-city Winnipeg service providers. If we fail to acknowledge this, we risk further victimizing Indigenous women and girls and their communities.

The relationship between individuals and the larger social context is complex and shaped by social, cultural, economic, political, legal, historical and structural forces, (Burke, Joseph, Pasick & Barker, 2009; Richard, Gauvin & Raine, 2011) as exemplified in the SEM described above. This is particularly relevant to the issue of violence against Indigenous women due to their colonial subjugation (Bourassa, McKay-McNabb & Hampton, 2004; Kubik, Bourassa & Hampton, 2009) and the ways in which colonialism has shaped the political, economic and social climate that affects the health and lived experience of Indigenous peoples (Loppie Reading & Wien, 2009)¹. Colonialism plays a unique role as a distal primary Social Determinant of Health (SDoH) for Indigenous peoples by 1) providing a mechanism for the convergence of additional SDoH that come to bear on Indigenous peoples, including but not limited to restricted access to employment, income and education, and 2) acknowledging the transgenerational health effects of past and present colonial acts including cultural genocide, legislated segregation, appropriated land, the residential school system, and legal violence (e.g. the Indian Act) (Allan & Smylie, 2015; Czyzewski, 2011).

Violence against Indigenous peoples is linked to myriad forms of historic and ongoing racism in Canada including interpersonal, institutional, and internalized racism which positions Indigenous peoples as inferior and serve to deny Indigenous peoples of

¹ Refer to this report for an in depth description of the root causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls. Native Women's Association of Canada. (2009). *Voices of Our Sisters in Spirit: A Report to Families and Communities*.

basic human rights (Allan & Smylie, 2015). Addressing violence against Indigenous peoples requires recognizing that this violence is enacted at multiple levels of the SEM that reflect and reinforce nested levels of racism; it includes overt forms of interpersonal violence as well as symbolic violence manifested in legislation and institutions of power at the societal level in Canada (McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, and Glanz, 1988; Bourassa, McKay-McNabb & Hampton, 2004). Furthermore, a recent systematic review and meta-analysis proved racism to be a distinct SDoH in which those who experience racism are more likely than those who do not experience racism to have poor mental, physical and overall health (Paradies, et al., 2015).

Within the context of colonialism and racism as SDoH, Indigenous women and girls are further marginalized due to their gender (Amnesty International, 2004; Bourassa, McKay-McNabb & Hampton, 2004; Kubik, Bourassa & Hampton, 2009). The intersectional identities of Indigenous women further impact experiences of violence through misogyny, sexism and also transphobia affecting two spirit peoples - which compounds epistemic racism through colonial norms regarding gender and gender-based social hierarchy (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Balestrery, 2012).

Therefore, it becomes clear that the disproportionate interpersonal violence that Indigenous women and girls experience is nested within deeply rooted collective violence in which the issue extends much further than the individual and community mobilization efforts.

In illustrating the issue in this way, the common struggle in public health to balance immediate need with societal or systemic change is exemplified. For instance, creating societal or systemic change by changing policy and targeting colonialism, gender and racism as SDoH is a slow process and is also subject to the current political climate. An example is how the Indigenous community demanded and advocated for an Inquiry into MMIWG for years while the Harper government denied the reality that MMIWG is a sociological issue. Due to the slow process of societal change, immediate interventions are needed to help mitigate the challenges and violence that Indigenous women and girls experience on all levels of the SEM. This approach also supports the MMIWG Pre-Inquiry findings which stated that stakeholders should take immediate action and not wait for the release of the report (Government of Canada, 2016).

The development of the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit is an example of responding to the immediate need in a community-driven way to support the safety of Indigenous women and girls. In doing so, the scope of the project is to target interpersonal violence at the individual and community levels through community mobilization.

Literature Review

Pre-processed evidence

In conceptualizing violence against Indigenous women and girls as a public health issue it is important to take an evidence-informed approach where the best available evidence is combined with contextual need and circumstances to develop an effective intervention (Tannahill, 2008). A review of the literature was conducted, although not exhaustive. Multiple public health related pre-processed evidence databases were searched for any evidence pertaining to violence prevention including, *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, *Health Evidence*, *Public Health Agency of Canada: Canadian Best Practices Portal*, *Public Health Plus*, *The Canadian Taskforce on Preventive Healthcare* and *The Guide to Community Preventative Services*. The WHO (2004) report on *Preventing Violence: a guide to implementing the recommendations of the world report on violence and health* was also reviewed as pre-processed evidence. The following summarizes relevant research pertaining to the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit.

Youth violence prevention

Much of the literature on violence prevention is focused on youth. Mentorship and support either from a parent or another caring adult has been proven to be a protective factor to both victimization and perpetration of violence (WHO, 2004). Thus when families become broken (WHO, 2004) or youth experience residential mobility (Dahlberg, 2002) they become more susceptible to being victims or perpetrators of violence.

Social development training is widely accepted and supported to be an effective violence prevention strategy among youth aged 12 to 19 (WHO, 2004). Social development training aims to develop "social skills and competencies including: anger management, problem solving, conflict resolution, assertiveness, active listening, knowledge about healthy relationships and empathy" (Sethi, 2010, p. 53). These interventions aim to increase protective factors that reduce the risk of involvement in violence (Mercy, Butchart, Farrington, & Cerda, 2002). Social development programs are important as upstream risk factors to violence such as, poverty are difficult to target and so downstream approaches that target health behavior, attitudes and knowledge (Smedley & Smye, 2000) become important for youth to manage such risk factors and develop resilience (Dahlberg & Potter, 2001). The majority of social development interventions have occurred in school-based setting with success (Hahn, et al., 2007). Social development interventions also take place in community-based settings, for example, community centres and youth centres. A systematic review of social development programs in community-based settings is currently on going with preliminary evidence supporting their effectiveness and importance (Gavine, MacGillivray, & Williams, 2014).

Advocacy

There is some evidence to suggest that advocacy as an intervention may contribute to reducing abuse, empowering women to improve their situation by providing informal counselling and support for safety planning and increasing access to different services. Advocacy can take the form of a stand-alone service, accepting referrals from healthcare providers, or part of a multi-component (and possibly multi-agency) intervention provided by service staff or others. Advocacy may increase mental health and quality of life and reduce abuse (Rivas, et al., 2015; Wathen & MacMillan, 2005; Jonker, Sijbrandij, van Luijtelaar, Cuijpers, & Wolf, 2015). It is common practice for advocates and women who have experienced or are currently experiencing intimate partner violence to develop safety plans that include strategies to stay safe. Although common practice, there is little evidence supporting the effectiveness of safety plans (Parker & Gielen, 2014). However, the limited evidence should not be mistaken for unsuccessful intervention due to the heterogeneity of included studies (Rivas, et al., 2015) and subjective measurement (Parker & Gielen, 2014).

Community engagement

The evidence found pertaining to community engagement was not specific to violence prevention, but rather public health more generally. Considering that violence prevention is a public health issue, the evidence is applicable. There is strong evidence supporting that community engagement interventions have a positive impact on range of health outcomes across various conditions. Thus in line with the understanding that engaging marginalized communities in public health initiatives is a means to reduce health inequities (O'Mara-Eves, Brunton, Oliver, Kavanagh, Jamal, & Thomas, 2015). Shifting from colonial public health policies and initiatives to those driven by community as we move forward with reconciliation is essential to the development of respectful, ethical and effective public health interventions (Smylie, 2015). Specific to violence prevention, a challenge to developing and implementing successful interventions is the creation of a sense of ownership and responsibility for addressing violence at the community level. Community empowerment is imperative as many of the most important solutions must be implemented locally (Krug, et al., 2002).

Changing cultural norms

Changing cultural norms that perpetuate violence is essential to violence prevention (WHO, 2004). In the case of violence against Indigenous women and girls sexist and racist norms must be shifted, however, another norm that must be shifted is the normalization of violence and abuse among Indigenous peoples. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation (2003) acknowledged family violence and abuse as the norm in Indigenous communities in which it is an intergeneration issue and a product of historical and current colonial trauma that Indigenous communities endure. For instance, intergenerational

trauma from the residential school system and the upheaval of gender roles. The cycle of violence must be broken as those who have been victims of violence or who have witness violence are at risk of reoccurring violence.

Marginalized women

One systematic review was found that analyzed the effectiveness of sexual violence prevention training to increase the capacity of marginalized at-risk women. Learning objectives included increasing knowledge around issues of sexual violence and/or gender and human rights, prevention and response strategies. Interventions that empower women via a train the trainer model within a community setting are imperative to protecting women from sexual violence (Kouta, et. al., 2015).

Single studies

No pre-processed evidence was found specific to violence prevention involving Indigenous women and girls, women transitioning out of incarceration or those experiencing residential mobility. There was also no pre-processed evidence found on the use of community safety plans or toolkits as a violence prevention intervention strategy. There is a large gap in the violence prevention research, especially for Indigenous women and girls and their distinct experiences. The following studies are described to best fill these gaps.

The use of toolkits and safety plans seem to be common practice for violence prevention among Indigenous organizations. For instance NWAC has developed many toolkits/safety plans/resource guides including, *NWAC Youth Council Violence Prevention Toolkit*, *Community Resource Guide: what can I do to help the families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls?*, *You Are Not Alone: a toolkit for Aboriginal women escaping domestic violence*, *Who's Who?: a resource guide for Aboriginal women escaping domestic violence* and *You Are Not Alone: safety plan for Aboriginal women escaping domestic violence*. NWAC has also developed several fact sheets pertaining to violence and violence prevention. Specific to Winnipeg, Ka Ni Kanichihk worked with family members of MMIWG to develop a *Toolkit to Assist Families of Missing Persons & Persons at Risk*. This toolkit was created for families by families to support others searching for their loved ones. These resources will help inform the development of the Safety Plan and Toolkit.

We contacted NWAC to see if they would share evaluations of their toolkits/safety plans/resource guides to assist us in developing and delivering our Safety Plan and Toolkit. They shared their *Evidence to Action II* (2014) project evaluation which included both a formative and summative evaluation. The project goal was to, "reduce the levels of violence experienced by Aboriginal women and girls by increasing support networks and access to resources for women, families, communities, governments, educators and service providers." (p. 6) in which all of the activities involved were community-based.

The relevant activity of the *Evidence to Action II* project to the development and implementation of the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit is the Community Resource Guide (CRG).

This resource guide consisted of multiple elements including a *Toolkit: Safety Measures For Aboriginal Women*. Unfortunately, the CRG was evaluated generally and the effectiveness of the *Toolkit: Safety Measures For Aboriginal Women* cannot be isolated, however, the evaluation results are still useful. The CRG was disseminated in print and electronic forms as well as through community engagement workshops. Users explained that a hard copy of the CRG was most useful to them and it was suggested that partnerships with printers are established so as many print copies are made available as possible. The CRG was widely adopted in which NWAC directly targeted organizations (ie. Aboriginal Policing Branches, Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses and Friendship Centres), however, many groups and people found out about it through their networks and accessed it online. Thus illustrating the importance of an online presence and also accessing networks. Users also reported an increase in knowledge regarding MMIWG. The success of the CRG illustrates the usefulness of toolkits when responding to community need and also demonstrates the effectiveness of translating knowledge into tools and resources that benefit individuals who need it.

The formative evaluation identified the importance of sustainability and how to achieve it. It was recommended that NWAC seek input from service providers to develop a formal process regarding toolkit delivery. Also, identifying project champions was explained to be important for program success and sustainability. Overall, the project resulted in increased knowledge of violence prevention strategies among students, Indigenous women experiencing violence, service providers and Indigenous women involved with the justice system. NWAC acknowledged the importance of continuing violence prevention efforts and the demand for tool development regarding violence prevention.

Also important to highlight is breaking the cycle between incarceration, homelessness and violence that Indigenous women who are either incarcerated or transitioning out of incarceration experience. Walsh, Krieg, Rutherford, and Bell (2013) explained multiple strategies on how to support women transitioning out of incarceration. Housing, employment and treatment for variables that brought them into contact with the incarceration system are key factors determining success after incarceration. Peer support and positive social relations are also imperative to success in which mentorship and peer support programs that are non-judgemental will be beneficial in supporting reintegration. Although most importantly, poverty is the main root cause of experiences of violence (Daoud, et al., 2013) and incarceration in which Indigenous women are criminalized for being poor. The correlation between crime and survival must be adopted

by policymakers and primary intervention strategies must be developed to keep women out of poverty and in a position of autonomy and agency (Walsh, et al., 2013).

No studies pertaining to residential mobility and violence prevention among Indigenous populations were found.

Methods

Data was collected from a variety of stakeholders to best inform the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit in order to enhance its usefulness and respond to the needs of all Indigenous women and girls as well as service providers and communities who will be delivering the Safety Plan and Toolkit. Thus illustrating the gathering of contextual information and circumstances to complement the above described evidence to form an evidence-informed approach to the Safety Plan and Toolkit development and implementation (Tannahill, 2008). A community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) methodology (Maiter, Simwas, Simich, Jacobson, & Wise, 2008) was utilized as responding to and acting on the needs of community was of central importance and purpose for this project and is also essential to ethical research practice with Indigenous communities (Schnarch, 2004). Also, CBPAR complements the strong evidence supporting that community engagement interventions have a positive impact on range of health outcomes across various conditions to reduce health inequities (O'Mara-Eves, Brunton, Oliver, Kavanagh, Jamal, & Thomas, 2015). The collected data is representative of three general groups of which the delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit will impact including, First Nations communities, the Winnipeg inner-city community and Winnipeg inner-city service providers. In this way, First Nations communities and the inner-city community contributed perspectives on challenges Indigenous women and girls experience when moving to and living in Winnipeg as well as strategies to promote their safety and wellbeing. Inner-city service providers who service multiple groups within the population (ie. youth and women transitioning out of incarceration) provided insight into the above as well as what format and method of delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit would be most effective for different groups of the population. The combination of these perspectives will holistically and jointly inform the development of the Safety Plan and Toolkit. The following outlines our data collection methods.

First Nations Communities

The Protecting Our Women project engaged with all of SCO's 32 southern member First Nations in varying capacities. Initial community consultations in the form of round-table discussions, individual meetings and phone calls were conducted from August 2015 to March 2016 to gain information on community need and input regarding the Safety Plan and Toolkit, current violence prevention efforts and the networks of service provision in the community. These consultations were guided by qualitative questions developed by SCO (See Appendix A) and the data collected was summarized. Communities involved with these initial consultations included, Birdtail Sioux First Nation, Dakota Tipi First Nation, Ebb and Flow First Nation, Keeseekoowenin First Nation, Long Plain First Nation, O-Ch-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation, Rolling River First Nation, Roseau River First Nation, Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation, Skownan First Nation, Swan Lake First Nation and Tootinaowaziibeng First Nation. These communities were selected due previously established relationships

with SCO regarding violence prevention. In June 2016, due to timing joint community visits with other SCO programs, other communities were consulted with including, Little Black River First Nation, Bloodvein First Nation, Hollow Water First Nation and Brokenhead First Nation.

To ensure that all the communities were consulted with, a meeting was held on January 27 and 28 2016 with the Health Directors from all of the 32 communities. Chiefs and Council members also participated. Data was collected via sharing circles and engagement sessions (shared input on posters) which were also guided by qualitative questions developed by SCO (See Appendix A); however, less comprehensive questions were used than in the initial consultations. To gain further community input and information on individual community members' experiences of moving to Winnipeg and staying safe as well as what should be included in the safety plan/toolkit, a survey was distributed to the above listed communities. Unfortunately the survey had a very low response rate in which only community members (n=13) from two communities (Swan Lake First Nation and Birdtail Sioux First Nation) completed the survey. The survey primarily consisted of qualitative questions (See Appendix A).

Although data collection among the communities encompassed of the above methods, community consultation occurs continuously. SCO visits communities to discuss issues experienced in the communities, how SCO can advocate on their behalf as well as to discuss current SCO initiatives. In these community visits, SCO gains further community contribution to the Protecting Our Women project and strengthens relationships with community service providers to ensure the delivery and meaningfulness of the Safety Plan and Toolkit to the communities.

Winnipeg Inner-City Community

Three sharing circles were conducted at the West Central Women's Resource Centre with women at the centre regarding their experiences living in Winnipeg, violence prevention and strategies to promote safety. Women from across the city access this centre and are often marginalized. Sharing circles were inclusive to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous women to match the mandate of the centre. To increase accessibility, food and bus tickets were provided. Approximately 8 women attended each sharing circle. Notes were taken when appropriate as sensitive stories were shared and the notes were summarized. Additionally, an online survey via Survey Monkey, a shortened version of the one distributed to communities and also mainly consisting of qualitative questions, was advertised on the SCO website and Facebook page (See Appendix A). This survey aimed to gain information on experiences of transitioning into Winnipeg. The response rate was also low (n=35).

Taxicab safety in Winnipeg for the Indigenous community in which women are most vulnerable, emerged as a major issue and concern during the first phase of the Protecting Our Women project. In response to this concern, SCO partnered with Ma Mawi

Wi Chi Itata Centre and Ikwe Safe Rides to host an Open Forum on Taxicab Concerns and Safety on April 4, 2016 to provide a space for community members to share their concerns, provide insight on root causes of the concerns and discuss strategies to ensure passenger safety. Multiple stakeholders participated including, community members, service providers, Political Tribal Organizations, safety planning stakeholders, the Chair of the Taxicab Board and Elders. At the forum a roundtable discussion was held and a survey was distributed consisting of both qualitative and quantitative questions (n=32). A shortened version of the survey was conducted via Survey Monkey to gain input from the greater community (n=50) and was advertised on the SCO's Facebook, Twitter and website as well as on the Ikwe Women Safe Ride, Aboriginal Youth Opportunities, and Aboriginal Job Postings Facebook pages.

Winnipeg Inner-City Service Providers

6 one hour semi-structured key-informant phone/in-person interviews were conducted with service providers across the city who service different groups of Indigenous women and girls (ie. newcomer youth, women transitioning out of incarceration and victims of violence). Interviews were guided by qualitative questions developed by SCO (See Appendix A) to gain information on the challenges Indigenous women and girls experience, available services, safety strategies, what should be included in the Safety Plan and Toolkit, what format and method of delivery would be most effective and if/how they would be interested in partnering. Notes were taken during the interviews and were summarized. Interviewees included:

Denise Pelland – Interim Executive Director at Kihiw Iskewock (Eagle Women) Lodge of Native Women's Transition Centre, Teen mom Program Director at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre

Lorraine Tulk – Addictions Case Manager at Kihiw Iskewock (Eagle Women) Lodge of Native Women's Transition Centre

Tracey Booth – Executive Director at Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba

Lilian Bonito– Restoring the Sacred Director at Ka Ni Kanichihk

Sheryl McCorrister – Principle at Southeast Collegiate

Rena Shorting – Drop-in Coordinator at West Central Women's Resource Centre

Angela Lavalee – Spirit of the Peace Coordinator at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre

Using the same questions and for the same purpose, a sharing circle was conducted with the Protecting Our Women Oversight Committee of which its members mainly consist of service providers in addition to an Elder and youth. Thus ensuring accountability to the committee and allowing an opportunity for them to inform the needs assessment and subsequent Safety Plan and Toolkit development. Notes were

taken during the sharing circle and were summarized. Members of the Oversight Committee include:

Ben Dubois – Spirit of the Peace Men's Program Coordinator at Ma Mawi Wi Chi itata Centre

Diana Beaulieu – Elder and Project Partner Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation's Health Centre staff

Mark Cardy – Youth and Child and Family Services Transition for Youth

Jessica Gobiell – Student

Pat Cook – Dakota Child and Family Services

Data Analysis

Each grouping of data was analyzed individually to examine the different perspectives and similarities. The summaries of the notes taken from the sharing circles, engagement sessions, roundtable discussions and interviews as well as the answers to the qualitative survey questions were analyzed thematically (Clarke and Braun, 2006). The quantitative descriptive data collected via the surveys is indicated in the results section. However, due to the low response rates, the descriptive data can only be extended to those who completed the survey and not to the population of which the survey was made available.

Results

The findings are described and organized under the three groupings of which the data was collected including First Nations communities, the Winnipeg inner-city community and inner-city service providers. The results are described in this way to illustrate the similar and different perspectives that each group discussed. In understanding how these perspectives complement and contrast each other, we will be better able to effectively develop and implement the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit. Within each grouping, the results are described according to the emergent themes. All three groupings of stakeholders were asked about strategies that women and girls use to stay safe and what they think should be included in the Safety Plan and Toolkit. These findings are jointly described across the groupings and are also organized thematically.

Understandings of violence

Before describing the findings of each of the data groupings, the First Nations communities' and the inner-city community's understanding of violence will be explained. Their expressed understanding was holistic and fitting to the description of violence as explained previously. Participants described interpersonal and family violence, including emotional, physical, sexual, verbal, mental, financial and spiritual abuse, all involving an abuse of power. Service providers indicated that such violence and abuse has become normalized in the lives of Indigenous women. Extending past the interpersonal and family levels, participants explained violence as resonating on the broader societal level including, sexual exploitation and human trafficking, loss of culture and tradition, gang violence and experiences of racism.

First Nations Communities

The following is a description of the findings from consultations with the 32 Southern First Nations communities that SCO supports. The perspectives and input from First Nations communities is vital in both the development and implementation of the Safety Plan and Toolkit to understand how the tool can meet community needs and best keep women and girls safe when they travel or relocate to Winnipeg.

Challenges

Community members expressed a multitude of challenges that their communities experience as connected to violence against Indigenous women and girls when they travel or relocate to Winnipeg. These challenges were grouped into three themes including, service gaps, vulnerability and lacking knowledge of resources and services.

Service Gaps

It was widely voiced that communities have limited resources causing community members to travel or move to urban centres to access services. Communities reported varying numbers of people traveling or moving to Winnipeg ranging from 50% to five people. It was noted that there is sometimes limited community documentation on relocation and travel to Winnipeg. Insufficient data was collected to accurately estimate how many people move or travel to Winnipeg from communities, however, we know it is a large proportion from discussions with communities. A variety of services are accessed in Winnipeg by community members including, physicians, pharmacies, optometrists, safe housing, women's shelters, high school, post-secondary education, violence prevention and intervention programs, addictions counselling, specialist appointments, hospital care, emergency health care, mental health programs, employment and training. Community members also travel or relocate to Winnipeg for family, social and entertainment reasons. Some of the communities had MBTelehealth services which increased in-community accessibility to programming and medical care. MBTelehealth emerged as a potential way for SCO to connect services in Winnipeg with communities and also as a method to deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit.

It was also strongly expressed that there is a gap in services and resources to prepare community members for the transition into Winnipeg and then to ensure their safety upon arrival. Community members explained that there is a need for a life skills course and an orientation to city living, especially for youth, before they travel and or relocate to Winnipeg. Some communities expressed that they were already delivering or developing safety programming for youth of which they were very interested in the Safety Plan and Toolkit and how it can support their current work. There are some measures to ensure the safety of community members upon arrival including, having community members stay with a relative or someone they know, staying in contact via phone calls, emails and visits and also communication with students through out the year via collaboration between the communities' education departments and funding departments as well as Tribal Councils. However, it was largely shared that systems and resources for the community to remain informed about the safety status of community members and also to ensure their safety are lacking.

Vulnerability

Community members described a variety of ways of which communities as a whole are vulnerable. Violence against women and girls resonates in communities. For instance, the cycle and acceptance of abuse is perpetuated, families become broken, community members experience isolation, depression, anger and trust issues and culture is lost. When community members experience violence in the city, communities experience fear, anger, stress and sadness and misconceptions about city life are generated. Within the context for violence, communities are challenged by,

intergenerational trauma, difficulties parenting, teenage pregnancies, inequitable access to resources and services, poverty and social unrest due to lacking economic prosperity.

Communities also described how community members, including men, boys, women, girls and Elders are vulnerable when moving or traveling to Winnipeg. Communities are concerned that community members will be unsafe, are at risk of gang recruitment, human trafficking and sexual exploitation, will lack financial security, may experience substance abuse, racism, violence, isolation and a diminished sense of belonging and that community members will be overwhelmed by city life. Community members expressed difficulties with the transition into Winnipeg including, dealing with racism, adapting to a faster lifestyle and financial insecurity.

Knowledge of services/resources

Knowledge of services and resources are lacking at both the individual and community level. Community members traveling or moving to Winnipeg often lack knowledge about inner-city support services to help ease the transition and life skills including, how to gain employment, how to use transit and the “street smarts” of how to live in a city. It was also indicated that community members have little connection to organizations that share information and resources and that there is a need to make information more accessible. However, some organizations were listed as providing information including, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, New Directions, Child and Family Services, Aboriginal Family Services, community health centres and community centres. At the community level, there is a general struggle with knowledge on what services and resources are available in Winnipeg coupled with a want to gain knowledge.

Usefulness of the Safety Plan and Toolkit

Community members strongly expressed that the Safety Plan and Toolkit would be very useful for their communities, that it serves the communities' understanding of SCO's role and explained how to foster community uptake of the Safety Plan and Toolkit. None of the communities already had a safety plan or toolkit in place for women and girls traveling or moving to Winnipeg although some were developing or delivering programming. Communities expressed the Safety Plan and Toolkit and its promotion in communities as a means to implement safety measures, ease the transition and prevent isolation for those traveling to Winnipeg, help support community members (including those transitioning out of incarceration) to succeed at life in Winnipeg. They explained that the Safety Plan and Toolkit will begin to fill the violence prevention strategies gap. Communities described the role of SCO as to collaborate with communities to ensure the safety of community members in Winnipeg which involves researching programs, services and resources to share with communities as well as developing an action plan, promoting awareness and providing education. Considering that the above is what the Protecting Our Women project is aiming to achieve, the Safety Plan and Tool Kit will be

useful to community in a way that is meaningful to community. Communities also voiced that for the Safety Plan and Toolkit to be useful to communities, there must be community buy-in and investment. For this reason, continuous community consultation, input and visits are essential to the success of this project.

Although communities expressed that the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be useful, they also expressed that further safety measures are required. For instance, a program to ensure financial security when one moves to the city, a program that involves support liaisons for travel and toll-free numbers through Indigenous organizations such as SCO and Tribal Councils for those who travel to Winnipeg to access. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will contribute to filling the need for safety measures, but there is much more work to be done. It is also important to mention that while there is a gap in violence prevention and safety planning initiatives in community, especially for women and girls traveling or moving to Winnipeg, there are a variety of community efforts underway. For instance, domestic violence workshops, restorative justice programs, cultural ceremonies, youth programming, gatherings, gang violence prevention and intervention and many more. Although communities face a myriad of challenges while battling against current and past systemic racism, First Nations communities remain strong and resilient in which community leaders develop innovative ways to overcome challenges.

Delivery

Community members also explained how the Safety Plan and Toolkit should be delivered in communities. Many communities explained that the Safety Plan and Toolkit should be used to provide an orientation for youth including information on services, resources, life skills and city living before they move or travel to Winnipeg. It was strongly suggested that the Safety Plan and Toolkit be delivered as a safety course in schools starting as early as grade 7 and that it be reviewed over multiple grades as that is when youth become more independent. The delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit within schools will occur on a community-by-community basis as the level of education available in communities varies as does where youth go to attend school. Many communities expressed that they would like SCO to deliver workshops to train staff and community members on the Safety Plan and Toolkit.

The importance of interconnectivity and collaboration was stressed in that its delivery must involve multiple partnerships and community engagement. It was suggested that schools, Child and Family Services, community health services, the RCMP and Tribal Councils all be involved with the implementation and that the Safety Plan and Toolkit be implemented via schools, awareness campaigns, internal networking and meetings and community gatherings/workshops for Elders and youth. It was also widely explained that the Safety Plan and Toolkit be shared with community health centres. Most community health centres are already connected to the schools in their communities and run workshops. These existing partnerships will serve as an asset to the delivery of the

Safety Plan and Toolkit. Also some communities have youth groups which could also be beneficial and assist with delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit.

Inner-City First Nations Community

The following describes the findings from consultation with mostly women in the Winnipeg inner-city community. The perspectives of women already residing in Winnipeg are essential to the development of the Safety Plan and Toolkit as they highlight the challenges women experience in Winnipeg, the experience of relocation and factors that ease the transition into city living. The data collected specific to taxicab safety among the inner-city community is also described below. The findings about taxicab safety provide an example of how the safety of women and girls is compromised in Winnipeg.

Relocation

Two main reasons for relocating to Winnipeg were expressed including, safety and opportunity. Safety reasons involved, alcoholism in community and experiences of family violence in their community. More frequently explained was relocating for opportunity and services due to a lack of in-community services/resources and employment. Community members shared that there is higher quality and better access to health care services in the city and that there are limited housing, employment and education opportunities in their communities. Generalizing statements such as, "No future in the community" and "Winnipeg has better living conditions" were made.

Experiences relocating and transitioning into Winnipeg were predominantly negative. They included encounters with daily racism, difficulties with transitioning into city life, financial insecurity, safety issues, isolation and dependency on drugs and alcohol. It was also shared that past trauma made it difficult to transition and integrate into city life. However, some people expressed positive experiences of transitioning into Winnipeg in which support was an essential factor.

Challenges

Community members expressed a multitude of challenges that they experience as connected to violence against Indigenous women and girls when they relocate to Winnipeg. These challenges were grouped into three themes including, lack of in-community preparation, service gaps, knowledge of resources and services and vulnerability.

Lack of in-community preparation

Community members explained that there is a lack of preparation for community members moving to the city. There is a need for life skills courses in communities and education on where to access resources before leaving their community to assist in decreasing culture shock and easing transition into the city.

Knowledge of services/resources

The role of services and resources to ease transition was described by community members. More specifically, the importance of knowing where to find support systems and safe places where you can share and learn from one another was emphasized. At the same time, many community members explained that they were unaware of services and resources when they relocated to Winnipeg. Also, their suggestions of needed services included existing services thus illustrating their limited knowledge of available services and resources. Some community members listed organizations and people that assisted them or provided them with needed information including, family members, health and career fairs with Eagles Nest, Urban Circle, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Friendship Centres, Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development, Ikwe Crisis Centre, treatment centres, Migizii Agamik and Ka Ni Kanichihk. It is important that SCO access these existing networks for the delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit.

Vulnerability

Women described many ways in which they are vulnerable. They explained experiences of racism including from police, experiences of poverty with little access to employment and education, experiences of being victims of the cycle of violence and abuse, experiences of addictions and experiences of isolation. Women also mentioned that they feel unsafe in multiple areas of the city and while accessing taxicab and Winnipeg Transit services due to fear of abuse and violence. Women explained that they felt that Indigenous women have been broken down as a means of breaking community and that racism is a larger contributor to violence against Indigenous women. Some women expressed that a means to cope with the challenges they experience is to connect with their culture and/or faith.

Usefulness of the safety plan/toolkit

Community members recognized the need for the Safety Plan and Toolkit in which delivery before transitioning into Winnipeg and accessibility emerged as main points. A strong emphasis was placed on safety planning with youth and families, teaching life skills and providing community members information on city living, resources and services before relocating. It was also explained that the Safety Plan and Toolkit will only be useful if it accessible. Community members explained ways to make it accessible include, availability in both hard and online formats to account for limited internet access and that only the most necessary information is presented in plain and simple language to ensure that those using the Safety Plan and Toolkit are not discouraged by large amounts of information and also for low literacy levels.

Although community members expressed that the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be useful, they also expressed that further safety measures are required. For instance, 24 hour

resource centres and hotlines, a central registry to identify newcomers and Indigenous inner-city police services.

Delivery

In regards to the delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit the empowerment of women was a central factor. Community members explained the importance of learning and sharing with each other which was also emphasized as an element to ease the transition of women into Winnipeg. Also, linked to the empowerment of women via mutual learning and sharing is the reality expressed by community members that women who newly arrive from their First Nations communities are more vulnerable than women who have been in the city longer as they are less aware of how to stay safe in the city. Thus the sharing of information between women as a continuous process is an important aspect of the delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit. As per the initial delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit, community members suggested that a workshop be delivered so that women have the opportunity to share their voice and experiences.

Taxicab Safety

Much of the data collected about the need for taxicab safety is beyond the scope of the Safety Plan and Toolkit as it speaks to the need for policy and structural change, however, the results are still relevant as they illustrates how the safety of Indigenous women is at risk while using a specific public service, how racism manifests on a daily basis and what women should be educated on about their rights as a passenger to enhance their safety. Outside of the Safety Plan and Toolkit development, SCO recognizes the importance of policy and structural change. The Protecting Our Women project is working towards that change through discussions with the Taxicab Board and the Provincial Government on needed policy development as identified through community consultation including but not limited to, mandatory video cameras with audio installed in all taxicabs, mandatory GPS monitoring of taxicabs, increased Indigenous representation, mandatory cultural awareness and education training for drivers, driver identification and screening as well as increased accessibility to and accountability of the Taxi Board's customer feedback process.

Below, only the relevant results to this needs assessment regarding individual level safety are presented. SCO will release a comprehensive report on taxicab safety.

Negative Experiences

Community members expressed a multitude of negative experiences with the taxicab service in Winnipeg that demonstrate when women use the service, they lose their power in which their safety is often compromised. One woman stated, "No one knows where I am or who I am with when I get in a cab." The majority (61%) of survey respondents stated that they had negative experiences while using taxicab services and 88% believe taxicab services could be improved to increase passenger safety. Also, 74%

of respondents noted racism was a contributing factor to their negative experience. Other contributing factors the round table discussions identified were gender discrimination, Taxicab company accountability, driver screening and education on cultural sensitivity as well as costumer knowledge. The negative experiences of passengers are categorized and described below.

Sexual Harassment

One of the most commonly reported negative experiences with taxicab services was sexual harassment in the form of sexual advances through inappropriate questions/comments, action and propositioning for sex. One women reported, "a driver called me sexy and said that he wouldn't mind taking me home." Another woman explained that a driver locked her in the car at her destination while he proceeded to ask her inappropriate questions. Not only are women unsafe in taxicabs as the driver hold the power and often sexually harass women, but they are even more unsafe and vulnerable to sexual violence due to the unpredictability of the driver's actions. For example, after refusing the sexual advances of a driver, one woman was dropped off a 20 minute walk away from her destination after mid-night. Another woman shared that a driver followed her into her building and tried to have sex with her. A commonly reported experience was that women are propositioned for sex by drivers, often in exchange for a free ride.

Other Harassment

Passengers expressed multiple instances of other kinds of harassment, including verbal harassment. Some explained drivers had made racist remarks toward them, for instance, being called a "drunken squaw". Others described that drivers swore and talked down to them. A passenger also reported that a driver persistently called them days after their ride and that another driver dropped off one passenger before their destination who continued on with their female companion and proceeded to threaten her.

Money up front

It was very commonly reported that drivers demand money upfront and they refuse to turn on the meter. One of the findings from the round table discussions was Indigenous peoples feel that drivers have racist misconceptions suggesting Indigenous people cannot pay their fare or that they will skip out on their fare. Many respondents explained if they refuse to pay upfront or if they ask for the driver to turn the meter on that they have gotten kicked out of the taxicab. A passenger explained, "I've run into drivers who ask for money first. If I don't pay they will kick me out. This can be scary when I am not sure where they are leaving me." Another passenger's experience included, "I was asked to pay a flat \$10 fee, but the cab ride only cost \$7. I told him turn meter on and he didn't. He then turned around the cab and took me back and dropped me off

half way back home.” The safety of passengers can be further compromised when dropped off at the wrong destination.

Detours to increase cost

Also commonly reported was that drivers take longer routes to reach the destination and do not take the routes that passengers requests. In this way, it was explained that passengers are exploited as drivers hold the power. One passenger expressed that a driver yelled at them when they requested their route. Another way drivers increase fares is by picking other passengers up. For example, “I had one driver pick up a couple of intoxicated girls while I was in the cab, so I ended up having to pay for their ride along with mine.”

Stealing

Some passengers reported instances of drivers stealing their belongings. One woman explained, “The driver took off with my groceries in the trunk of the car. I reported it to (taxicab company) and the driver never handed anything in. I was a young mother with two young sons. It was one month worth of groceries.” Another passenger described that a “Cab driver demanded to put my bags in the trunk and when we arrived to my destination cab driver took off with my belongings.”

Assault

Some passengers also indicated experiences of physical assault. Examples of reported experiences include, “[A] cab driver was taking me the wrong way home and when I said something, he pepper sprayed me and dragged me out of his cab. I lost my brand new glasses.” and another passenger explained that, a driver hit them with a crow bar.

Customer Knowledge

The data highlighted the reality that passengers are not always aware of the rules and regulations of taxicabs and their passenger rights. There is also a lack of knowledge on procedures to file a complaint. Although customer knowledge is important to passenger safety, their safety exists within the context of other contributing factors to the unsafe reality of the taxicab service that are out of passenger control including, racism, gender discrimination, taxicab company accountability and driver screening and education. For example, 87% of passengers who had a negative experience did not file a complaint with the Taxicab board. Some did not file a complaint because they did not know how or who to file a complaint with, but most people felt no action would be taken regarding their complaint and did not trust the Taxicab board to address issues. The majority of people who did or tried to file a complaint explained that either they were hung up on or that nobody followed up with them. Therefore, the Taxicab board's inaction and unaccountability regarding passenger complaints and passengers'

resulting distrust in the Taxicab board is reflective of a much larger issue than just customer knowledge.

Inner-city Service Providers

Key informant interviews with inner-city service providers to women and girls provided valuable insight into the Safety Plan and Toolkit development, format and delivery. They also informed us about how women find out about their services and the existing network of services and how they interact with each other. The interviews served a relationship building purpose to establish a network of support to deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit. Considering that service providers work innovatively on the front line to best meet the needs of women and girls and are subsequently knowledgeable of the challenges that women and girls experience, their perspectives as complementary to First Nations communities and the inner-city community is essential. Especially regarding service access and importance when women move to Winnipeg from their community or are transitioning from incarceration back into city living.

Challenges

Service providers explained that the safety of Indigenous women and girls is compromised due to multiple challenges that they may experience including, service gaps, vulnerability and knowledge of services and resources. Much of what service providers shared resembled systematic issues, for example, a lack of affordable safe housing and punitive social policies. Illustrating the deeply rooted nature of factors that perpetuate violence against women.

Service Gaps

Service providers expressed many service gaps that compromise the safety of Indigenous women demonstrating that Indigenous women in Winnipeg are under-served. There is a lack of 24 hour immediate and safe housing services. When women are released from incarceration, they often do not have anywhere safe to go, may not have any money and lack support thus making them vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Although there are housing programs in Winnipeg for women transitioning into independent living, for example, The Native Women's Transition Centre. A proportion of the population remains under serviced because women cannot immediately access these services due to safety concerns. There are only two homeless shelters in Winnipeg, both non-government funded, that are not meeting the current immediate housing need. One service provider also explained that not all women feel comfortable accessing the shelters and stressed the need for more immediate housing options. Another service provider expressed that Manitoba under funds services, especially prevention, and that there is a lack of service development of which limited immediate safe housing services is an example. There is a general need for more resources in low income areas. Service providers also unanimously expressed the challenge of securing

safe and affordable permanent housing, especially for single people seeking housing, also making women vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Due to unmet safe housing needs and issues with addictions, women will often couch surf, putting them in vulnerable situations because those who do open their homes also often struggle with addictions and there may be unsafe people around. Service providers expressed that safety is a necessity before the lives of women living on the margins can begin to improve and changes can be made. In this way, safe housing is essential.

Experiences of addictions and limited treatment services are also challenges threatening women's safety and represent a service gap. Service providers expressed that addictions is a large challenge when women transition out of incarceration and that there are limited treatment services in jail, although there is more support in the federal prison system. Furthermore, there is limited access to immediate treatment centres and long wait times for referrals to Addictions Foundation Manitoba which is not conducive to recovery as women may fall back into bad habits or may not want to seek treatment anymore when services become available to them.

Service providers also explained that there is a service gap in policing. Safe places for women to report incidences are needed as women often do not feel comfortable with police. A possible suggested solution involved police advocates and community policing for different groups of the population. Police advocates are important as they develop relationships and trust with community members who then help them access and navigate the justice system.

Many other service gaps were highlighted by service providers. For instance, the justice system in Manitoba does not have full time language interpreters that not only account for language differences, but also gaps in worldview and so women are sometimes wrongfully convicted and not adequately represented. Women in incarceration are underserved, for instance the Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba, only has funding for one Reintegration Worker for approximately 300 women in the justice system leaving many women without support to transition back into city life. Women struggle with transportation costs for traveling to their place of employment. Also, Elders require extra support to use Handi-Transit as they experience barriers when using the service such as planning in advance. Lastly, there is a service gap regarding regular healthy visits for women to see their children in the Child and Family Services system.

Vulnerability

Service providers explained that women and girls transitioning out of incarceration, relocating to the city and those already living in Winnipeg are vulnerable to violence and exploitation due to a multitude of factors. An association between trauma, addictions and incarceration was highlighted. Many women who experience addictions also have experiences of childhood trauma and is an underlying factor to addictions of which abuse has been normalized. Addictions also manifests in a cycle

where children replicate the behaviour and negative coping mechanisms of their parents. A link was drawn between experiences with the Child and Family Services system and abuse and involvement with the justice system of which a service provider described that Indigenous women are victims of a “mass incarceration”. They also explained that the Child and Family Services system in Manitoba is not designed to care for children as children are frequently moved causing difficulties with attachment and life skills development resulting in unsafe situations later in life.

When women are released from incarceration they are vulnerable in many ways. Women are often not prepared when released from incarceration, for example, they may not have somewhere safe to stay and they may not have any money. Sometimes women are also released on short notice and do not have time to prepare. Another concern is that predators may prey on newly released inmates as they recognize the vulnerability these women are placed in. These women also experience more isolation upon their release. In Manitoba, women who have been incarcerated are solely viewed as perpetrators rather than as both victim and perpetrator in which punitive social policies limit their service access, putting women in vulnerable situations. Such punitive policies compounded by limited funding, lacking service development to support women transitioning out of incarceration result in MMIWG of which it was strongly expressed that the reality of women going missing or murdered after being released from prison is missing from the MMIWG discourse.

Service providers explained that youth who relocate to Winnipeg for secondary education also experience a specific set of vulnerabilities. When youth relocate, they are often unaware of how to stay safe in the city and city living in general, for example, how to use the transit system. They may also not have a support system or know where to access support systems. Predators are able to identify youth that are new to the city and will take advantage of their vulnerability, making youth at risk of exploitation and violence. Youth are also at risk of sexual exploitation and getting involved with gangs. Due to youth being separated from their families, communities and sometimes their own children, they often experience loneliness and isolation in which many youth already experience difficulties with mental health and general wellness. Youth also often struggle with increased academic expectation in comparison to school on their reserve. For the above reasons, it is essential that youth have the necessary supports to stay safe and healthy as well as to succeed in the city.

Other vulnerabilities that were not specified to a subset of the population were expressed by service providers. Racism and gender discrimination intersect to impact Indigenous women in their everyday lives. When women relocate to Winnipeg they often lose their sense of belonging, connection to community and culture. In this way, women experience loneliness, isolation, low self-esteem which may contribute to substance abuse. Women may also have difficulties learning how to live independently after

previously relying on Chief and Council for support and may not have an education or access to education.

Knowledge of services/resources

Service providers explained that another challenge women experience when relocating to Winnipeg is knowing where and how to access services and resources to ease their transition, stay connected to culture and receive the necessary supports. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will assist in mitigating this challenge by informing women about the available services and how to access them.

Policy change

Considering that violence against Indigenous women is a systemic issue of which the Safety Plan and Toolkit is only a mitigating tool to protect women in an immediate manner as explained by service providers, systemic change via policy development and change is needed. Service providers described multiple areas for policy change. Everyone should be responsible for the safety of women, including landlords who often witness violence. Landlords should be mandated to report violence and share appropriate resources with women in a violent situation. Women sometimes experience financial insecurity when they leave an abusive relationship, leading them into poverty. One service provider explained that a guaranteed basic income policy would empower women to leave their partner without falling into poverty as it could alleviate multiple barriers that women experience when accessing Employment and Income Assistance (social assistance). For instance, government issued identification is required to access social assistance in which women fleeing a relationship may not have taken these with them. If there are children involved, it is required by law to seek child support. This could aggravate an abusive partner and hinders the victim's opportunity to receive aid. Another service provider expressed that the Manitoba government needs to compare their policies to other provinces to understand why Manitoba has such high numbers of Indigenous children in care and Indigenous peoples in the prison system. More specifically, Manitoba's punitive social policies that perpetuate vulnerability and inequity where women are understood in a victim/perpetrator binary within the incarceration system needs to be shifted to a cyclical understanding where women are understood as both victims and perpetrators. For example, often women are not provided with a phone call when released from incarceration to make proper arrangements with family, putting them at risk. Whereas in other regions, women are provided with these important mitigating measures.

How women find out about services/programs

Women find out about services in a variety of ways including, word of mouth, social media, sister agencies, via recruitment and through mandatory attendance due to involvement with the CFS or justice system. All service providers reported that women

find out about their services through word of mouth and most through sister agencies. An important role of the Safety Plan and Toolkit may be to enhance awareness of available services among women to harness the sharing of information through word of mouth. The Safety Plan and Toolkit may also strengthen the knowledge of service providers to best refer women to needed services.

Usefulness of the Safety Plan and Toolkit

All service providers supported the need for the Safety Plan and Toolkit with the desire to partner in the delivery and/or development of the Safety Plan and Toolkit as well as be included in it. It became apparent that the Safety Plan and Toolkit could be used in a multi-faceted manner in which organizations could use to meet their unique needs and the needs of the people they service. For example, Southeast Collegiate, a high school in Winnipeg for students from First Nation communities across Manitoba, already has an orientation for students on how to stay safe in the city; however, the Safety Plan and Toolkit would support the school in delivering the orientation. It was also expressed that the Safety Plan and Toolkit could be used by the life skills counsellors at the school as a tool to delivery year round workshops as repetitive review of information is important for effective delivery. Similarly, the University of Winnipeg's Aboriginal Student Centre has supported the need for the Safety Plan and Toolkit and has requested that SCO deliver a workshop during their student orientation each year. Ka Ni Kanichihk recruits students for their newcomer youth program in high schools, although, not all students want to be involved with the program and so the Safety Plan and Toolkit could be distributed to all students so information is still received. Angela Lavalee, the Spirit of the Peace Coordinator at the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre also explained the importance of a community safety plan in which everyone takes responsibility to keep someone safe. In this way she expressed the usefulness of the toolkit to also inform service providers on the available services/resources to best meet the needs of women in Winnipeg. Furthermore, when experiencing the chaos of violence, it is helpful to have everything you need in one place. Saving victims from conducting their own research. Service providers explained many other ways that the Safety Plan and Toolkit would be useful for their organizations and the people they serve (see Appendix B) The usefulness of the Safety Plan and Toolkit as explained by service providers was also tied to its format and delivery as explained below.

Format

Different formats should be developed and used for different portions of the population that foster safety of use and accessibility. For instance, for women with stable housing, a book would be a useful and safe format, but for women without stable housing a book would be inconvenient in size and may put women in further danger if they are seen with it on the street. It was suggested that for women in dangerous situations or with unstable housing, it would be best to disguise the most immediately needed information

into everyday small and convenient objects such as a lipstick tube or a tampon. Something that is easy to grab and does not take up a lot of space. MAC Cosmetics was suggested as a potential company to partner with for donation and it was explained that such a tool has already been developed that we can work off of. Tracy Booth noted that the tool was delivered at Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba. A basket of lipstick containers with the information in it was placed in the bathroom where women were free to take one. The initiative was not evaluated, but Tracy Booth explained that all of the lipstick tubes were taken. Women would not have taken them if the information was not useful to them. Although most service providers supported the idea of a lipstick tube as a format that would not trigger further violence, Angela Lavalee explained that partners in violent relationships often throw out their partner's makeup and that the delivery of information in the plastic of a tampon would be a safer format for delivery. She also explained that they are currently working on developing such a tool and that she would like to partner with SCO in its development and delivery.

It was suggested that the Safety Plan and Toolkit include specific sections for women transitioning out of incarceration and also for youth to meet their specific needs. Tracey Booth from the Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba has agreed to partner in the development of the section for women transitioning out of incarceration and Lillian Bonito, the Director of Restoring the Scared from Ka Ni Kanichihk has agreed to partner in the development of the section for youth. Considering that these service providers have extensive experience with the needs of the groups that they work with, their partnership in the development of the Safety Plan and Toolkit is invaluable to its use and success. For youth, it was suggested that information be presented in comic book style/magazine format and that a booklet for youth to create their own safety plan (ie. who to call in an emergency, where to go in an emergency) is included. Southeast Collegiate has had students develop their own safety plans in the past and the inclusion of such a booklet would support their efforts in keeping their students safe. It was also suggested a booklet for women transitioning out of incarceration would also be useful.

Overall, accessibility of the information within the Safety Plan and Toolkit itself was essential to successful uptake. The presentation of information in manageable chunks is important and the use of individual sheets, tear out sheets or cards was suggested as they are easier to use than a book and also provide a way for service providers to check back with their clients. Large font, simplified language and descriptions through pictures should be used so that the information remains accessible to those with low literacy levels. The Safety Plan and Toolkit should also be provided in Indigenous languages so that it is accessible to language speakers and also acknowledge that language is culture.

Considering that once developed, the Safety Plan and Toolkit would remain static, Rena Shorting, the Drop-in Coordinator at West Central Women's Resource Centre as well as the Oversight Committee suggested that a Facebook page be created to provide current information and resources to keep women safe. Women could

confidentially send in tips on what to look out for in the community to keep other women safe.

Delivery

Similarly to how different formats are needed for different groups within the population, so are different means of delivery. Service providers were divided on whether the Safety Plan and Toolkit should be delivered formally or informally. Formal workshops were expressed by some service providers to be beneficial as they provide an opportunity to share information and for women to ask questions and share their experiences, however, they also noted the challenge of getting women to attend the workshops. Ways to increase participation include providing incentives such as monetary compensation, food, give aways or door prizes. Childminding services would allow for more participation and West Central Women's Resource Centre could offer this service. The creation of a safe and comfortable environment is essential to successful workshop facilitation so women feel comfortable to share and ask questions. Other service providers explained that the Safety Plan and Toolkit delivery should be informally delivered and embedded throughout existing programming allowing for consistent delivery to a larger group of people while some service providers noted that a combination of formal and informal delivery would be best. Rena Shorting and Angela Lavalee explained that the delivery should be empowerment focused in which women act as ambassadors to share information with other women. Women supporting women is an effective model to promote safety. Furthermore, the delivery should not be prescriptive and support the empowerment of women through the provision of options.

Service providers were also divided on whether the organization would deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit or SCO or a combination of the two. For instance, Lillian Bonito explained that the Restoring the Sacred would deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit because telling youth about resources is not sufficient for youth to access those resources as they need support to do so which Restoring the Sacred provides. It is clear that the delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be unique to the needs of each stakeholder and those they service. SCO will support organizations in these capacities. (see Appendix B)

Interconnectivity

Interconnectivity between services and women and girls was unanimously stressed. It is important for services not to operate in silos and to be well versed on other services/resources available in the city to create a network of service provision. This will best ensure the needs of women and girls are being met. For instance, if a woman accesses a service that is not able to meet her needs then those service providers can refer her to a service that can. All service providers stressed referrals to their services to either meet women and girls' needs or to help them find the required supports. On the other hand, service providers also highlighted the importance of knowledge of services

among women and girls so that they know where to receive supports. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be able to support and enhance interconnectivity in both ways.

Safety Strategies

First Nations communities, women already living in the city and service providers were all asked about strategies they know of or use to stay safe. It was important to ask this question to gather information about how women and girls are already staying safe in the city and how service providers who observe the challenges women and girls experience support them on how to stay safe. Safety strategies included the following and will be included in the safety plan/toolkit:

- be aware of your surroundings
- have a fully charged cellphone with you and text or call someone you trust to let them know where you are going and when you get there – provide the exact address or location
- walk in pairs or in a group and stay with friends at all times, especially at night
- be connected to your cultural teachings and sense of identity – seek safe spaces for cultural supports
- know your rights as a citizen when dealing with the police or taxicab services
- do not accept rides from strangers and never hitch hike
- if you have an encounter with the police, take down their badge number of the police officer you are dealing with
- have and be knowledgeable of emergency numbers
- do not assume strangers are just being friendly
- avoid dangerous areas of the city (ie. North end and Portage Place Mall)
- avoid carrying a bag or purse as it makes you more vulnerable
- having and accessing a support system and places to be safe either through family and/or available services and resources – services assist women transitioning out of incarceration with this
- refer women who are released from incarceration to the Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba as they can help meet their basic needs and help with reintegration
- services ensure that women who have left their services are safe and are having their needs met
- using a personal alarm
- being aware of what sexual exploitation means and what it looks like as well as other kinds of violence
- do not make friends in the mall
- knowing about and going to safe places to have fun
- having self-defence knowledge
- never leave anyone alone while they are intoxicated
- be familiar with the by-laws of the city
- increase awareness about services/resources, especially non-judgemental and supportive spaces, advocacy services, 24/7 safe spaces
- access harm reduction facilities and do not be on the street while intoxicated
- if you have to couch surf, know how to couch surf in the safest way possible

- if you are in an abusive relationship, have multiple escape routes planned, hide any information about leaving from your kids and tell the least number of people possible and keep a bag of important items (ie. pay as you go phone and IDs)
- Never leave a drink unattended

Multiple ways to stay safe regarding taxicab services were also included:

- record your ride with your cellphone
- always note the taxicab number of the taxicab you hire, date and time of ride and the taxicab company
- do not engage in conversation with the driver
- always stay aware of your surroundings while in a taxicab and stay off your phone
- always sit in the back of your taxicab
- do not assume the driver is just being friendly
- take the bus or carpool instead of taking taxicab services
- know your rights as a passenger and how to make a complaint with the Taxicab Board
- if a driver gives you their number for future service, do not call them, always call the taxicab company
- walk away from a taxicab if a driver asks for a flat rate or if they will not turn on the meter
- take a taxicab in pairs or in a group if you can
- be mindful of the situation if the driver engages in conversation with you and read between the lines of what they may be saying to you
- always stay calm as you do not know what the driver is capable of

What the Safety Plan and Toolkit should include

First Nation communities, women already living in the city and service providers were also all asked about what should be included in the Safety Plan and Toolkit to enhance its usefulness and relevance in supporting the safety of women and girls. As previously indicated, separate sections for youth and women transitioning out of incarceration will be developed due to the need expressed by service providers. Should project resources permit, the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be published in Indigenous languages to support the revitalization of language as part of supporting Indigenous cultures. Considering that multiple First Nations communities have decreasing numbers of language speakers and community efforts (ie. school language immersion programs) to strengthen language in their communities, publishing the Safety Plan and Toolkit in Indigenous languages is important to support communities in revitalizing language. Also, one service provider stressed that the Safety Plan and Toolkit should empower women and give women hope through the inclusion of positive images, simple quotes and positive personal narratives.

In addition to the safety strategies listed above, consultation revealed many elements that should be included in the Safety Plan and Toolkit which can be grouped into the below categories including, city skills, safety precautions and services/resources.

All elements listed below will be included and expanded upon in the Safety Plan and Toolkit.

City Skills

When girls or women travel or relocate to Winnipeg from their communities or transition out of incarceration, they often do not have the skills to live in the city, making them vulnerable to violence. Community members and service providers explained that the following skills should be included:

- how the transit system works, how to navigate it and how to use it safely
- how to get your Social Insurance Number and health card
- how to navigate the city – a city map should be included that highlights services/resources and unsafe areas of the city
- how to use a crosswalk
- how to access handi-transit
- information about taxes
- information about tenant rights and how to rent an apartment/housing
- how to open your bank account
- how to file a complaint against the police
- information about your rights as a citizen

Safety Precautions

When girls or women travel or relocate to Winnipeg from their communities or if they are transitioning out of incarceration, they sometimes believe they are invincible and will not be victim to violence. This belief may put them in vulnerable situations. Safety precautions in the city differ from the safety measures in First Nation communities. Thus, it is important for women and girls to be aware of potential risks when traveling or moving to Winnipeg. Further precautions to include are:

- how to interact with the police
- how to stay safe in social situations and nightlife
- the importance of making lifestyle changes in which you let go of people who may cause you harm or trigger you to return to unhealthy habits
- the importance of surrounding yourself with people that you can be safe around and in a safe environment
- information on the importance of accessing support systems when transitioning into city life
- how to deal with coming into contact with negative people from your past
- the importance of constant communication in letting people you trust know about your whereabouts and if you are safe
- how to take transit safely
- how predators lure and groom young women
- information on the effects of alcohol
- how to use social media safely and information on cyber bullying
- information on the danger zones in the city (include on city map) and the dangers of living in the city

- information on what escape plans are and how to make one
- information on healthy relationships
- information on affordable housing in all areas of Winnipeg
- information about gangs and drugs
- information on self-care

Services/Resources

Community members and service providers listed a variety of services and resources that would be of use to and support the safety of women and girls traveling or relocating to Winnipeg as well as women transitioning out of incarceration. All of the service providers interviewed stressed that women and girls should be referred to their services to either meet their needs or refer them to where their needs can be met. It was also suggested that resources/services should be listed according to the area of the city that they are in. One service provider explained that services and resources for Ontario and Saskatchewan should be listed as well because women may need to leave the province to escape a violent situation. However, an in depth exploration of services and resource within the neighbouring provinces is out of the scope of this initiative specifically focused on Winnipeg. Although, NWAC developed a resource guide for Indigenous women escaping violence that lists resources and services in each province (*Who's Who?: a resource guide for Aboriginal women escaping domestic violence*). This Safety Plan and Toolkit will include NWAC's research on Ontario and Saskatchewan. The following services/resources will be included in the Safety Plan and Toolkit:

- housing services to help locate affordable housing in safe neighbourhoods
- employment and job training services to assist with gaining employment
- childcare services
- healthcare services
- services that assist with transitioning into city living – including life skills training
- information on financial assistance
- information on upgrading high school credits and how to enrol in schools
- services that offer cultural support and opportunities to connect with Elders
- counselling resources
- places to find inexpensive furniture
- food banks
- education services (college, university, training, adult education) and supports on how to enrol
- sport and recreation services
- funding opportunities for school
- advocacy services for Indigenous peoples
- Indigenous agencies
- support group services/resources where women can be supporting, have the opportunity to share and develop friendship
- youth programming
- places to access computers
- resources/services for men

- shelters and 24/7 safe spaces
- self-defence services
- Red Rising Magazine, SAY Magazine and SOS Magazine
- “Meet me at the bell tower” violence prevention program
- addictions services
- faith based supports
- life skills training services
- emergency services
- community centres
- Tribal Councils
- services/resources for single parents
- services/resources specifically for Indigenous women and girls
- places that women can go to be safe with the children
- places to warm food
- services that distribute harm reduction supplies
- pregnancy and family support services
- places/services where women can get clothes, shower and get toiletries

The expressed need for what should be included in the Safety Plan and Toolkit demonstrated that it will mostly likely be developed into two main parts. The first part will pertain to *city skills*, *safety precautions* and will also include a safety planning booklet. The second part will consist of listing, organizing and explaining the services/resources available in Winnipeg. Within these two main parts, sections specific to youth and women transitioning out of incarceration will be developed. Also, the Safety Plan and Toolkit will not be limited to the above safety strategies and expressed elements for inclusion due to the importance of emergence during the Safety Plan and Toolkit development. Especially, considering that it will be developed in partnership with service providers and that it will be reviewed by stakeholders before it is finalized.

Discussion

The following section will discuss the results in combination as well as connect our findings to the literature. The findings illustrate that women and girls relocate to Winnipeg for a multitude of reasons mostly pertaining to lacking opportunity and either unsafe or unhealthy conditions within their communities. Women and girls who travel or relocate to Winnipeg are not only vulnerable due to racism and gender discrimination within the city, but also because past or current experiences of poverty and violence makes them susceptible to reoccurring violence (Ministry of Woman's Affairs, 2012; Daoud, et al., 2013; Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2003). Women transitioning from incarceration are also highly vulnerable due to the cycle of incarceration, poverty and violence where women are subject to punitive social policies which must be changed to keep women out of poverty (Walsh, et al., 2013) and also to understand women who have been incarcerated as being both the victim and the perpetrator simultaneously. Unfortunately these systemic issues as well as others listed in the results section including, but not limited to, an inadequate CFS system, lacking affordable housing, the over representation of Indigenous women in the prison system, inadequate service provision in communities, inadequate funding for services and resources to support Indigenous women and girls in Winnipeg and lacking service development are out of the scope of the Safety Plan and Toolkit. However, they are important to acknowledge as we continue to work towards diminishing the deeply rooted problem of violence against Indigenous women and girls and should inform future interventions.

The scope of the Safety Plan and Toolkit is to best support Indigenous women and girls and their safety of which the results and the reviewed literature provide valuable insight. First Nations communities, the inner-city community and inner-city service providers jointly stressed that knowledge of resources and services within the city is very important to ease the transition of women and girls into city life. Our research consistently illustrated the importance of having a support system for a healthy and successful transition into city living of which it was found that services in the city currently provide. Thus, an essential role of the Safety Plan and Toolkit and its delivery is to connect women and girls to resources and services that provide support and that facilitate a peer support system. In this way, the goal would be to ensure that women and girls are not experiencing any gaps in the support that they need. The importance of support was also reflected in the literature for women transitioning out of incarceration (Walsh, et al., 2013), for youth (WHO, 2004) and through the success of advocacy services to reduce abuse and improve mental health and wellbeing (Rivas, et al., 2015; Wathen & MacMillan, 2005; Jonker, Sijbrandij, van Luijtelaar, Cuijpers, & Wolf, 2015). All of the services we consulted with advocate with or on behalf of Indigenous women and girls. The significance of support was further exemplified through the demonstrated importance of the empowerment of women via peer-to-peer sharing of information and

experiences. Also reflected in the literature in which information sharing between marginalized women decreased experiences of violence (Kouta, et. al., 2015).

First Nations communities and the inner-city community strongly expressed the need for women and girls, especially youth, to receive life skills training, information on how to stay safe in the city and information about services and resources before they travel or relocate to Winnipeg. Communities explained that the Safety Plan and Toolkit should be delivered from grade 7 onwards. Due to the strong evidence supporting social development training among that age group in increasing the protective factors to violence and reducing the risk of victimization (WHO, 2004), social-development training will be integrated into the section of the Safety Plan and Toolkit catered to youth. The *NWAC Youth Council Violence Prevention Toolkit* will also be used as a resource in its development and Lillian Bonito, as previously mentioned will guide its development. More generally, the Safety Plan and Toolkit will also target cultural norms in regards to the cycle and normalization of abuse and violence in Indigenous communities as a product of intergenerational trauma and colonial oppression (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2003).

Our research also made clear the importance of networks in regards to the delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit, cohesive service delivery and uptake of services that can assist Indigenous women and girls in transitioning into city life. For instance, women who relocated to Winnipeg listed where or from whom they found out about services and communities explained the existing connections between community services. The delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit should harness these existing networks for effective delivery. The Safety Plan and Toolkit may also strengthen the network of service provision within Winnipeg, as it will contain information about all relevant services/resources of which service providers can refer women and girls to. A strength of Indigenous communities is their tightknit nature that can facilitate the spread of information (Firestone, et al., 2014). Considering that the majority of women and girls find out about services via word of mouth, increasing women, girls and their communities' knowledge of resources and services may increase service uptake and the number of women and girls receiving needed support.

The format and delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit itself was another key aspect highlighted by our research. The formats in which service providers suggested to meet the needs of different groups of Indigenous women and girls included, immediate information in a tampon, a safety planning booklet, separate sections specific to youth and women transitioning out of incarceration and tear out sheets or single sheets of paper. All of which must be accessibly presented in simple language and with pictures. NWAC's *Evidence to Action II* (2014) evaluation found that users preferred to use hard copies of the CRG and that partnerships with printers should be made so that as many hard copies can be produced as possible. NWAC found that making the CRG accessible online allowed for those who were not directly targeted and heard about the CRG via word of mouth to access the CRG. In result, the CRG was highly accessed online. SCO

will take these leanings into account as we move forward with the Safety Plan and Toolkit. NWAC also found that important to the sustainability of their projects, was receiving input from service providers on delivery. Not only has SCO received service provider input on the delivery of the Safety Plan and Toolkit, but we have secured partnerships with service providers to actually deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit and some have agreed to assist with its development. In speaking with service providers and First Nations communities, it became clear that communities and organizations require that the Safety Plan and Toolkit be delivered in a way that meets their specific needs. SCO will work with communities and service providers to deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit in manner that makes sense for them.

Conclusion

Overall this needs assessment reconfirmed the previously voiced need for a safety plan and toolkit to enhance the safety of Indigenous women and girls when traveling or relocating to Winnipeg as well as transitioning out of incarceration. We gained valuable insight from a variety of stakeholders about how it should be developed and implemented. We also strengthened and developed relationships with First Nations communities, the inner-city community and inner-city service providers to ensure the relevance of the Protecting Our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit as well as the sustainability of the project once the three year mandate is complete. We will honour the voices and experiences of those who shared with us and who continue to share with us as we develop the Safety Plan and Toolkit and also in our future work.

This needs assessment made clear that although the Protecting our Women Safety Plan and Toolkit is important to keeping Indigenous women and girls safe, it is only part of the solution. We must begin and continue to tackle the systemic and structural issues that Indigenous communities and Indigenous women and girls experience that make them susceptible to violence. Future steps and work to be done was highlighted in this report and should guide future work. Violence against women and girls is a complex issue and requires a multi-faceted response. SCO is committed to ending violence against Indigenous women and girls.

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Appendix A: Data Collection Tools

**Safety of Women and Girls moving to Winnipeg
Community Initial Contact Questionnaire 2015**

Date	
First Nation	
Name	
Position	
Program Title	
Email	
Phone	
Fax	
Mailing Address	

Others in Attendance -

1. What is violence?

2. Tell me about violence prevention strategies within the community.

3. How does violence against women and girls affect your community?

4. What resources must be accessed outside of the community?

5. What resources are obtained from Winnipeg? How is the community aware of these resources?

6. What resources does the community need more information on?

7. How many community members travel to the City of Winnipeg per year?

Women _____
Men _____
Elders _____
Children _____ Boys _____ Girls _____

8. Under what circumstances would they travel?

9. How many are moving to Winnipeg?

10. How does the community stay in contact with these members?

11. How does violence inflicted on your community members in Winnipeg affect the community here?

12. What resources does the community have to ensure the safety of their community members once in Winnipeg?

13. How does the education department keep in contact with students in Winnipeg?

14. What are the concerns, if any, for women and girls travelling to Winnipeg?

15. What are the concerns, if any, for Men and Boys travelling to Winnipeg?

16. What are the concerns, if any, for Elders travelling to Winnipeg?

17. How would you like to see safety measures implemented for community members traveling to Winnipeg?

Women and Girls?

Men and Boys?

18. Does the community want to be involved with the development of toolkit?

19. Does the community want to be engaged in Oversight Committee?

20. How can SCO and Community work together to ensure the safety of community members when in Winnipeg?

Sharing Circle Questionnaire

Date	
-------------	--

Organization	
Program	
Number of Participants	

21. Where are you from? How many grew up in home community? How many grew up in Winnipeg?

22. Did you live in the City of Winnipeg? And if so when did you move to Winnipeg?

23. For those that moved to Winnipeg, how was the transition to the City of Winnipeg as an Indigenous Woman?

24. What would have made the transition easier?

25. What resources would be the most important for you to access when moving to the city?

26. Did your community stay in contact with you when you moved? If so, how?

27. Where there places (organizations) that helped you and gave useful information that you needed? What were they?

28. What was it like growing up in Winnipeg as an Indigenous Woman?

29. What was your experience accessing employment or education in Winnipeg?

30. Are there areas of the city where you feel unsafe?

31. Why do you think that is?

32. What is violence?

33. Are you aware of places women can turn to if they experienced violence?

34. Do you feel racism contributes to violence against Indigenous women?

35. How can we change attitudes of racism?

36. What safety measures could be put in place for Indigenous women living or moving to Winnipeg?

37. What would you find useful in a toolkit for women moving to Winnipeg?

38. Would a toolkit be useful in transitioning from custody to residing in Winnipeg?

39. Does culture play a role in safety?

1. Please specify your gender.
 Male Female

2. Please specify your age group
 Under 18
 18-29
 30-44
 45-59
 60 +

3. Have you used a Taxicab in the
 Past 24 hours
 Past 7 days
 Past month
 Past 6 months
 Past 12 months

4. On average how often do you require the public transportation via Taxicabs in a one month span?
 0
 1-2
 3-5
 5-10
 11 +

5. In general, why are you accessing Taxicab services?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

6. Which of the following best describes your experiences utilizing cabs.
 I have had pleasant experiences in taxicabs
 I have had negative experiences in taxicabs
 I have had a pleasant experience in taxicabs, but have heard from others that they have had negative experience.

7. If you have had a negative experience, please describe the event.
[Click here to enter text.](#)

8. Do you feel Racism contributed to your negative experience?
 Yes No

9. Did you file a complaint with the Taxicab Board?
 Yes No

10. If you did file what was the response from the Taxicab Board?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

11. If you did not file a complaint, please explain why.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

12. Did you file a complaint with the Winnipeg Police Services?

Yes No

13. Please explain outcomes if filed with Police.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

14. Do you feel the Taxicab Services could be improved for the safety of passengers?

Yes No

15. What recommendations would you make to improve the safety of passengers?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

16. Have you utilized the Ikwe Women Safe Ride Service or Neechi Rides?

Yes No

17. How many times have you utilized these services?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

18. Any other comments.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What are common challenges you see Indigenous women experiencing who are either already residing in, moving to/new to Winnipeg or who are transitioning back into Winnipeg from incarceration?

What services exist for Indigenous women to assist them with these challenges?

What are strategies that women can use to stay safe?

How would a safety plan/tool kit for women be useful for the women coming to Winnipeg?

What should be included in a safety plan/toolkit for women already residing in, moving to/new to Winnipeg or who are transitioning back into Winnipeg from incarceration?

In what format would the safety plan/tool kit be most useful for women?

How can the safety plan/toolkit be effectively delivered to Indigenous women by the SCO and service providers?

Key Informant (Service Provider) Interview Questions

What services do you provide and for what target populations (ie. newcomer Indigenous women, women already residing in Winnipeg, women transitioning from incarceration)?

How many people do you service?

How do women find out about your services?

What are common challenges you see Indigenous women experiencing who are either already residing in, moving to/new to Winnipeg or who are transitioning back into Winnipeg from incarceration?

What services exist for Indigenous women to assist them with these challenges?

What are strategies that women can use to stay safe?

How would a safety plan/tool kit for women be useful for the women you serve?

What should be included in a safety plan/toolkit for women already residing in, moving to/new to Winnipeg or who are transitioning back into Winnipeg from incarceration?

In what format would the safety plan/tool kit be most useful for women?

How can the safety plan/toolkit be effectively delivered to Indigenous women by the SCO and service providers?

Would you like to have the safety plan/tool kit after it is developed?

Key Informant (Service Provider) Interview Questions – South East Colligate

Where are students who attend your school from (ie. Winnipeg, Southern communities)?

How many Indigenous students attend your school?

How do students stay connected to their communities when they attend school?

What are common challenges that Indigenous students experience? Do these challenges differ by gender? If so, how?

What programming/supports do you offer for Indigenous students at your school to transition into Winnipeg and stay safe? Do programming/supports differ by gender? If so, how?

What are strategies that students can use to stay safe?

How would a safety plan/tool kit be useful for students?

What should be included in a safety plan/toolkit for students at your school?

In what format would the safety plan/tool kit be most useful for students?

How can the safety plan/toolkit be effectively delivered to students?

Would you like to have the safety plan/tool kit delivered at your school after it is developed?

Appendix B: Partnerships

The following chart describes our partners, how they would like the Safety Plan and Toolkit delivered and if they will be involved with the development.

Partner	Delivery	Development
Ka Ni Kani Chichk's Restoring the Sacred Program (Lilian Bonito)	The Restoring the Sacred Program will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit throughout the program. They will also use it when they recruit students from high schools. They will leave the Safety Plan and Toolkit with all students so that everyone receives the information.	Lillian Bonito will assist with the development of the youth section
Southeast Collegiate (Sheryl McCorrister)	Will use the Safety Plan and Toolkit during their student orientation and their life skills counsellors will deliver it throughout the year. They have also asked for SCO to deliver a workshop on the Safety Plan and Toolkit during the orientation.	
West Central Women's Resource Centre (Rena Shorting)	Will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit throughout their programming and are also open to having a formal workshop. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be made available to all women at the centre and a women-supporting-women model will be fostered.	
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre (Angela Lavalee)	Will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit throughout their programming. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be made available to all women accessing their services.	May work with Ma Mawi on developing the tampon tool as they were already planning its development and have shown interest in partnering
Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba (Tracey Booth)	SCO will deliver a formal workshop. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be made available to all women accessing their services.	Tracy Booth Will assist with the development of the section for women transitioning out of incarceration
Native Women's Transition Centre	SCO will deliver a formal workshop. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be made	

(Denise Pelland & Lorraine Tulk)	available to all women accessing their services.	
Agape House (Pam Hader)	SCO will deliver a formal workshop. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be made available to all women accessing their services.	
University of Winnipeg Aboriginal Student Services Centre	Will use the Safety Plan and Toolkit during their student orientation for first year students via a presentation. The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be made available to all students for on-going use.	
Winnipeg Police Services Indigenous Partnership Section		Will share information to include in the Safety Plan and Toolkit
Protecting Our Women Oversight Committee		Will review the Safety Plan and Toolkit once completed
Birdtail Sioux First Nation	Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.	
Bloodvein First Nation	Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.	

<p>Brokenhead Ojibway Nation</p>	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
<p>Dakota Tipi First Nation</p>	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
<p>Ebb & Flow First Nation</p>	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
<p>Hollow Water First Nation</p>	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth</p>	

	will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.	
Long Plain First Nation	<p>The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be included in a package for post-secondary students by the Education department</p> <p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
Peguis First Nation	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
Rolling River First Nation	The Safety Plan and Toolkit will be included in a package for post-	

	<p>secondary students by the Education department</p> <p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
Roseau River First Nation	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
Sandy Bay Ojibway Nation	<p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.</p>	
Skownan First Nation	<p>SCO will deliver a workshop on the Safety Plan and Toolkit to the youth in the community</p> <p>Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information</p>	

	before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.	
Little Black River First Nation	Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.	
Swan Lake First Nation	Health staff already work in the school and will deliver the Safety Plan and Toolkit to students from grade 7 and up so that they receive the information before potentially relocating or traveling to Winnipeg. SCO will deliver a workshop to health staff on the Safety Plan and Toolkit. If students do not attend school in the community, youth will be gathered and the Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered.	