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UNSEEN AND UNSAFE: IPV AND INTERSECTIONALITY IN CANADA



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This report would not have been possible without the courageous contributions of the survivors who shared their lived experiences. Their voices from the heart of this report, shedding light on the realities of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) within 2SLGBTQI+ communities and the systemic barriers that persist.

We acknowledge the strength and resilience of these individuals and dedicate this report to share their stories and advocate for systemic change.

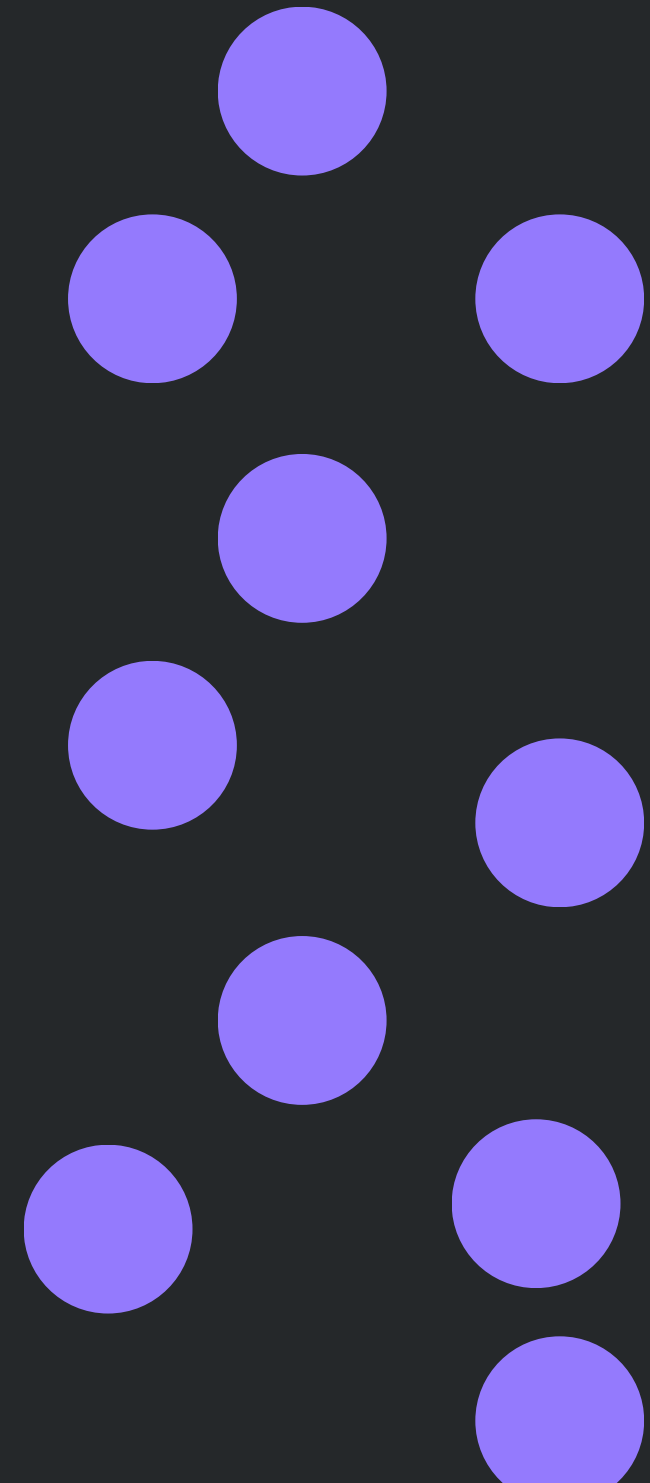
Special Thanks To:

- Survivors whose narratives bring clarity to the complexities of IPV.
- Advocates within 2SLGBTQI+ communities who work tirelessly to create safer, more inclusive spaces.

Your contributions have illuminated barriers and brought us closer to impactful solutions.

ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
2SLGBTQI+	Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and more
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
PR	Permanent Resident
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
SOGIE	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization



DEFINITIONS

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV): Any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship.

Intersectionality: A framework for understanding how various forms of inequality or disadvantage (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia) intersect to create unique dynamics of discrimination and privilege.

Transphobia: Fear, hatred, or discrimination against transgender individuals.

Cisgender: A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Refugee: A person forced to flee their home country due to persecution, war, or violence.

Cultural Competence: The ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures.

2SLGBTQI+-Friendly Shelter: A shelter that explicitly welcomes individuals identifying as Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and other identities, providing inclusive and affirming services.

ABSTRACT

Unseen and Unsafe: IPV and Intersectionality in Canada illuminates the systemic barriers and inequities faced by 2SLGBTQI+ survivors of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). Grounded in an intersectional framework, this report combines disaggregated data, survivor narratives, and structural analysis to highlight the compounded challenges experienced by individuals at the intersections of race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and immigration status. Key findings reveal significantly higher rates of IPV among trans, non-binary, and racialized survivors, exacerbated by systemic exclusions in shelters, healthcare, and legal systems. Geographic inequities further marginalize survivors in rural and remote regions, where services are scarce, and cultural competence gaps leave many survivors feeling unseen and unsupported. Through case studies and data visualizations, the report underscores the need for inclusive policies, enhanced funding for underserved communities, and survivor-centered approaches to IPV services.

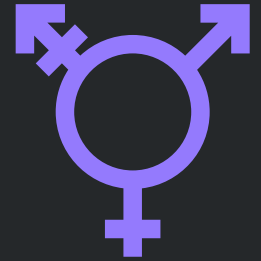
Recommendations include mandating gender-neutral and affirming practices in shelters, expanding resources to rural and northern areas, and integrating intersectionality-informed training for service providers. By addressing these critical gaps, this report aims to foster a future where all survivors have equitable access to safety, dignity, and healing.

Keywords: Intimate Partner Violence, Intersectionality, 2SLGBTQI+, Trans Survivors, Gender-Based Violence, Shelters, Cultural Competence, Equity, Canada.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



KEY FINDINGS

IPV PREVALENCE RATES IN 2SLGBTQI+ COMMUNITIES

- Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) rates in 2SLGBTQI+ communities far exceed those in heterosexual and cisgender populations.
- Nearly 50% of transgender individuals report experiencing IPV, with trans women and non-binary individuals facing some of the highest risks.
- Racialized individuals within the 2SLGBTQI+ spectrum, particularly Black and Indigenous individuals, face compounded vulnerabilities due to overlapping systemic oppressions.
- Data remains limited due to the lack of inclusive and intersectionality-informed surveys, leaving critical gaps in understanding the full scope of IPV within these communities.

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

- **Access to Shelters:** The majority of IPV shelters in Canada are designed around binary, heteronormative models, leaving trans, non-binary, and queer survivors excluded or underserved.
- **Healthcare Discrimination:** Survivors frequently encounter transphobia, homophobia, and racism within healthcare systems, further limiting access to trauma-informed care.
- **Geographic Inequities:** Rural and remote regions are significantly underserved, leaving 2SLGBTQI+ survivors in these areas without access to life-saving resources.
- **Economic Marginalization:** Discrimination in employment and housing leaves many survivors financially dependent on abusive partners or at risk of homelessness.

INTERSECTIONAL CHALLENGES

- **Race and Gender Identity:** Black trans women face disproportionately high rates of IPV due to the compounded effects of racism, transphobia, and economic precarity.
- **Immigration Status:** Refugees and Permanent Residents (PR) face unique vulnerabilities, including fear of deportation and limited access to services.
- **Socioeconomic Status:** Survivors from low-income backgrounds experience heightened barriers to escaping abuse due to economic dependence and systemic neglect.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS



To address these urgent issues, the following critical actions are recommended:

POLICY AND SYSTEMIC CHANGES

- Mandate inclusive practices across all shelters, healthcare systems, and IPV-related services to ensure 2SLGBTQI+ individuals are supported.
- Implement anti-discrimination policies with accountability mechanisms for organizations that fail to comply.

ENHANCED DATA COLLECTION

- Update national surveys to include questions on sexual orientation, gender identity, race, and immigration status.
- Use disaggregated data to identify and address systemic inequities within IPV support frameworks.

FUNDING ALLOCATION

- Increase funding for shelters that explicitly serve 2SLGBTQI+ survivors, with a focus on rural and underserved areas.
- Establish dedicated grants for grassroots organizations addressing IPV in racialized and marginalized communities.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Develop training programs for service providers to understand the intersectional realities of 2SLGBTQI+ survivors.
- Build awareness campaigns targeting policymakers and the public to reduce stigma and discrimination.

SHELTER REFORM

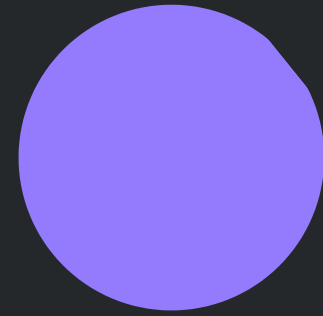
- Redesign IPV shelters to include gender-neutral and affirming spaces for trans and non-binary individuals.
- Train staff in trauma-informed and culturally competent care to better serve diverse populations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The prevalence of IPV in 2SLGBTQI+ communities is not an inevitability—it is a systemic failure that can and must be addressed. This report calls upon:

- Policymakers to prioritize intersectional frameworks in legislation and funding decisions.
- Service Providers to implement inclusive and affirming practices at every level of care.
- Advocates and Allies to amplify the voices of survivors and demand equitable systems of support.

By committing to data-driven and intersectionality-informed solutions, we can dismantle barriers, rebuild systems, and create a safer future for all survivors. Together, we can ensure that no one is left unseen or unsafe.





INTRODUCTION



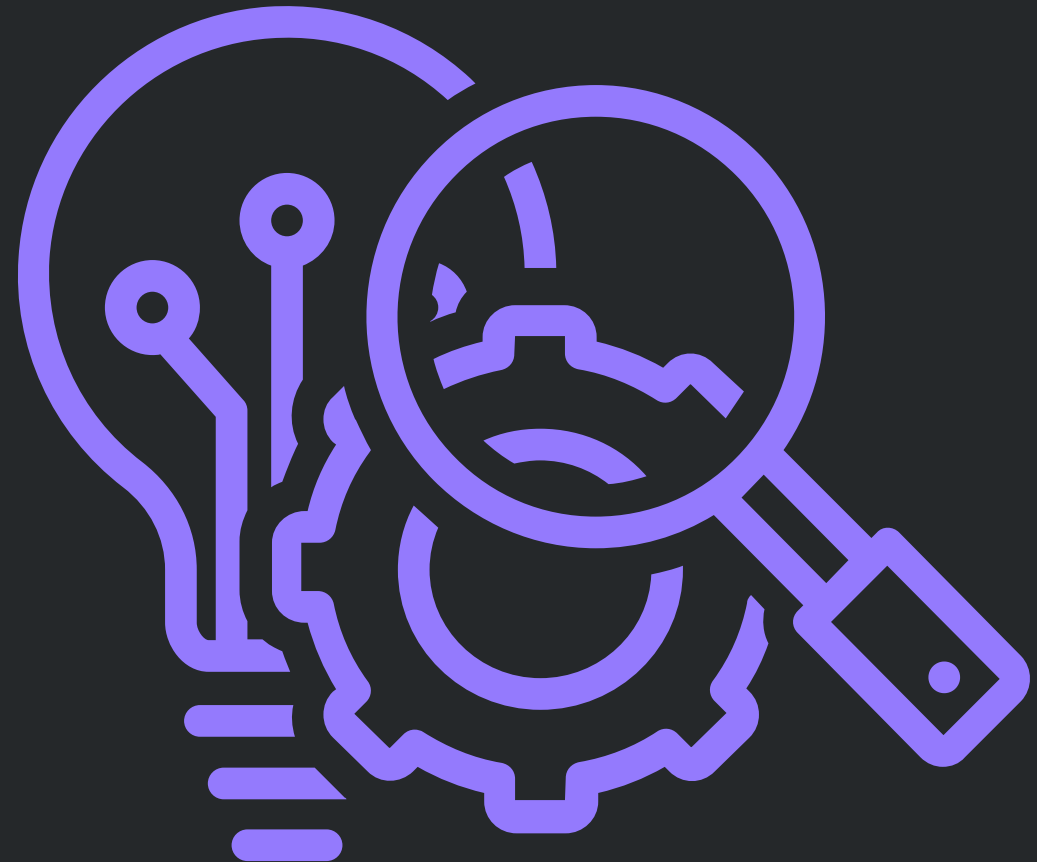
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is one of the most pervasive yet underreported public health crises in Canada. Defined as any form of physical, sexual, psychological, or financial abuse within an intimate relationship, IPV has profound and far-reaching effects on individuals, families, and communities. While IPV affects individuals across all demographics, the experiences of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals remain disproportionately severe and largely invisible in mainstream discourse.

Despite Canada's commitments to gender equality and human rights, IPV within 2SLGBTQI+ communities often goes unaddressed due to systemic barriers, stigma, and inadequate policy frameworks. National surveys and policy efforts have historically excluded questions about sexual orientation and gender identity, leaving gaps in data and misrepresenting the true scope of the issue.

RESEARCH INDICATES THAT:

Canada's IPV crisis cannot be fully addressed without centering the voices and experiences of 2SLGBTQI+ communities. This report seeks to bridge that gap by unpacking the unique and intersectional challenges faced by these survivors and advocating for equitable, data-driven solutions.

- Nearly 50% of transgender individuals experience IPV, with rates higher for racialized and immigrant groups.
- Black trans women, Indigenous non-binary individuals, and refugee survivors face compounded risks due to overlapping systems of oppression, including racism, transphobia, and xenophobia.
- Traditional support systems, such as shelters and healthcare, often fail to accommodate 2SLGBTQI+ survivors, leaving many without access to life-saving resources.



PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report, *Unseen and Unsafe: IPV and Intersectionality in Canada*, aims to shine a light on the overlooked realities of Intimate Partner Violence within 2SLGBTQI+ communities. It is not just an exploration of data but a call to action, urging stakeholders to dismantle systemic barriers and create inclusive systems of care.

OBJECTIVES

To Illuminate Prevalence:

- Highlight the alarming rates of IPV among 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.
- Provide disaggregated data on intersecting factors, such as race, immigration status, and socioeconomic status, to reveal the compounded risks faced by marginalized groups.

To Identify Barriers:

- Analyze the systemic inequities that prevent 2SLGBTQI+ survivors from accessing shelters, healthcare, and legal support.
- Document lived experiences of survivors to illustrate real-world challenges.

To Advocate for Intersectionality:

- Emphasize the importance of intersectional frameworks in understanding IPV.
- Explore how overlapping oppressions amplify vulnerabilities and identify targeted solutions.

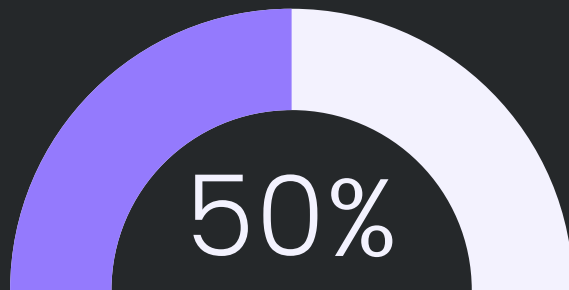
To Provide Solutions:

- Offer actionable recommendations for policymakers, service providers, and advocates.
- Focus on systemic reforms, including inclusive shelters, culturally competent care, and equitable funding.

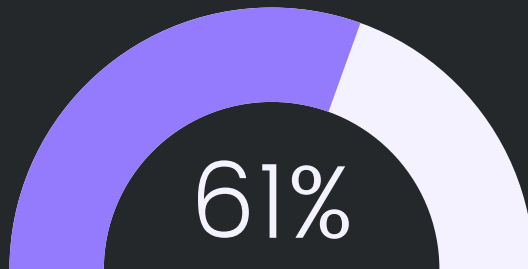
SCOPE OF ISSUE ●

IPV is not limited to any one demographic, but the burden is disproportionately borne by marginalized groups, particularly within 2SLGBTQI+ communities. While IPV prevalence is widely studied in heterosexual and cisgender populations, data on 2SLGBTQI+ individuals remains sparse due to systemic gaps in research and data collection. However, existing studies and community-driven reports paint a stark picture of the disparities.

GENERAL TRENDS



Nearly 50% of transgender individuals experience IPV, compared to 33% of cisgender heterosexual women and 25% of cisgender heterosexual men.



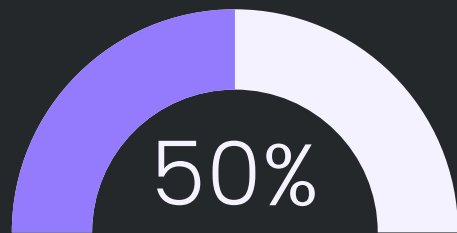
Among LGBTQI+ individuals, bisexual women report particularly high rates of IPV, with estimates ranging between 40–61%, often attributed to hypersexualization, stigma, and marginalization.



When I tried to go to a shelter, they said they didn't have space for 'someone like me.' I ended up back in their house because there was nowhere else to go.

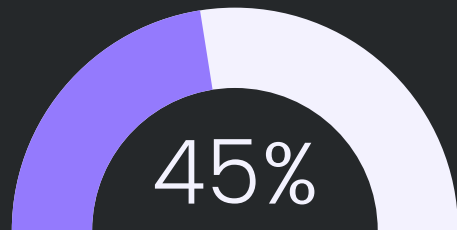
– Aisha

Population-Specific Insights



Trans Women

Frequently targeted by both intimate partners and external perpetrators, trans women face IPV rates as high as 50–55%, with racialized trans women, particularly Black and Indigenous women, experiencing the most severe outcomes.



Non-Binary Individuals

IPV prevalence among non-binary individuals is approximately 45%, exacerbated by erasure and the lack of gender-affirming services in traditional IPV support systems.



Two-Spirit Individuals

Among LGBTQI+ individuals, bisexual women report particularly high rates of IPV, with estimates ranging between 40–61%, often attributed to hypersexualization, stigma, and marginalization.

Barriers in Data

- National data collection efforts often exclude questions about sexual orientation and gender identity, leaving these communities invisible in statistical reporting.
- The lack of intersectional analysis in IPV research perpetuates the invisibility of systemic disparities.



INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF VULNERABILITIES

Intersectionality—a framework that examines how overlapping identities create compounded systems of oppression—is critical to understanding IPV within 2SLGBTQI+ communities. Marginalized identities such as race, immigration status, socioeconomic background, and gender identity intersect to amplify vulnerabilities to IPV.

RACE AND GENDER IDENTITY

Black Trans Women: Among the most vulnerable, Black trans women face compounded risks of IPV due to racism, transphobia, and economic marginalization.



26%

High rates of employment discrimination

Housing insecurity, with 1 in 5 trans individuals reporting being denied housing, a rate significantly higher for Black individuals.



I didn't call the police when he hurt me because I knew they wouldn't take my side. The police look at me and see a Black man, not a Black trans woman. I didn't feel safe anywhere.

– Jasmine

Indigenous Non-Binary Individuals: Experience intersecting oppressions tied to colonial trauma, systemic racism, and the erasure of non-binary identities within support frameworks.

COLONIAL TRAUMA

SYSTEMIC RACISM

ERASURE OF NON-BINARY IDENTITIES

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE STATUS

Immigrants and refugees within 2SLGBTQI+ communities face unique barriers to safety:



Fear of deportation deters many survivors from reporting IPV or seeking help.



Language barriers and cultural stigmas further isolate survivors, leaving them without access to critical resources.



Refugees fleeing anti-2SLGBTQI+ persecution often encounter re-traumatization when support systems in Canada fail to provide affirming care.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Poverty and financial dependence are significant factors in IPV:



Survivors from low-income backgrounds often lack the financial resources to leave abusive relationships.



Economic marginalization disproportionately affects trans women, with 30% living below the poverty line.

GEOGRAPHIC INEQUITIES

Survivors in rural and remote areas experience heightened vulnerabilities due to:



Lack of inclusive shelters or culturally competent services.



Greater visibility and stigma within small communities, deterring survivors from seeking help.

CULTURAL AND SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

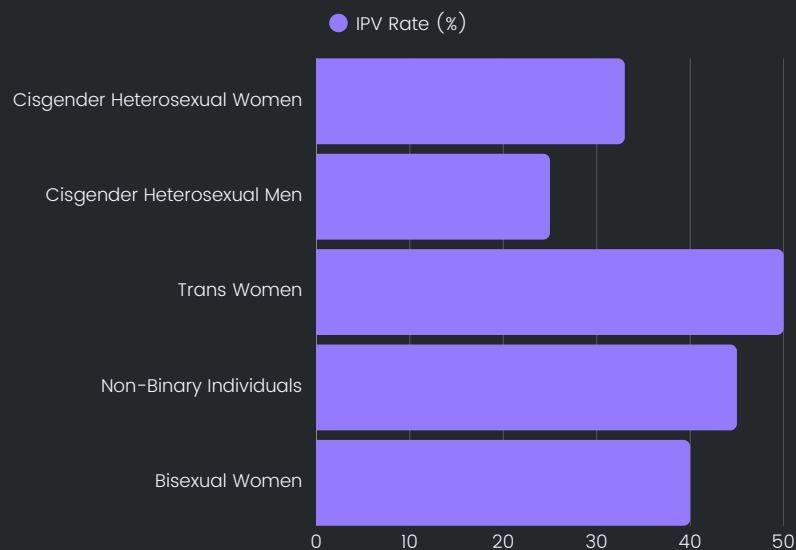


Transphobia and homophobia within shelters and healthcare systems prevent many survivors from accessing support.



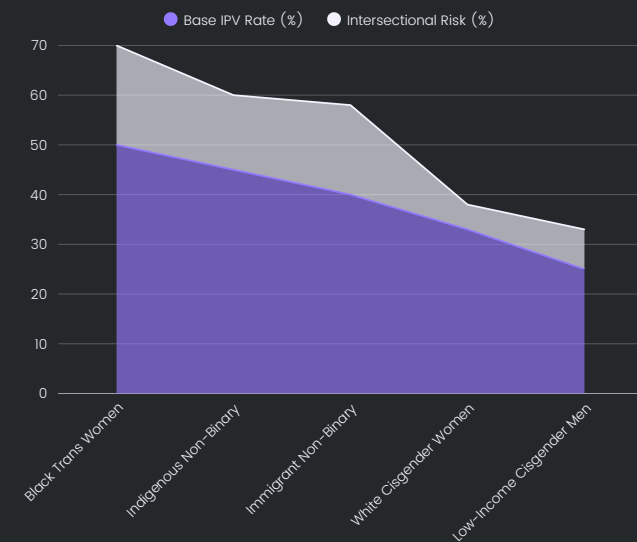
Traditional IPV frameworks, designed with binary gender roles in mind, exclude non-binary and trans individuals, leaving critical gaps in safety nets.

IPV RATES ACROSS SUBGROUPS



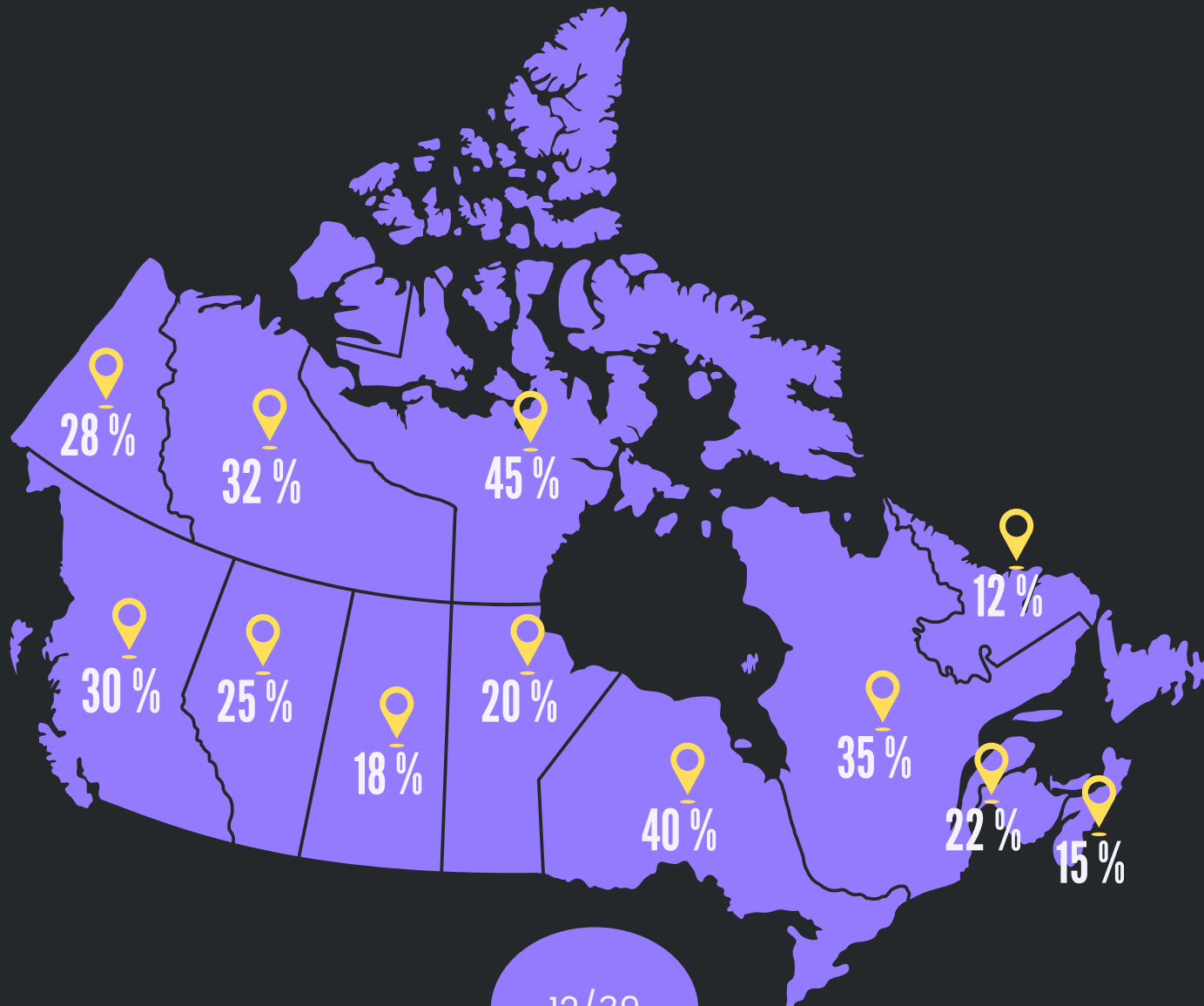
This Chart compares IPV rates across subgroups (e.g., cisgender heterosexual women vs. trans women, non-binary individuals).

INTERSECTIONAL FACTORS



This chart highlights how intersectional factors (e.g., race + gender identity) compound IPV risks.

IPV PREVALENCE BY REGION



BARRIERS TO SUPPORT ●

For many survivors of IPV in 2SLGBTQI+ communities, systemic barriers in accessing shelters and services perpetuate cycles of harm and isolation. These barriers are not incidental—they are deeply rooted in societal inequities, resource gaps, and frameworks that fail to consider the full spectrum of survivor identities and needs. This chapter examines these barriers through data and survivor narratives, offering a critical look at the challenges faced and their implications for equitable support systems.

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS IN SHELTERS AND SERVICES

LACK OF INCLUSIVITY

Shelters across Canada often rely on outdated models that exclude or marginalize 2SLGBTQI+ survivors. Gendered policies, binary admission criteria, and the absence of affirming spaces leave many without options for safety.



Survivors often feel forced to choose between their safety and their identity—a choice no one should have to make.

26%

of shelters in Canada explicitly welcome 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.

Trans and non-binary survivors are more than twice as likely as cisgender women to be turned away from shelters due to their gender identity.

DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMA

Even when survivors gain access to shelters, they frequently encounter stigma and discrimination from staff or residents.



Survivors who feel unwelcome or unsafe in shelters are less likely to seek help in the future, deepening their isolation.

50%

of surveyed survivors reported experiencing microaggressions, such as misgendering, during their shelter stay.

Racism, transphobia, and homophobia compound these challenges, particularly for racialized and immigrant survivors.

GEOGRAPHIC AND RESOURCE DISPARITIES

Rural and remote regions face acute shortages in IPV services. Survivors in these areas face significant logistical and financial hurdles to accessing support.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE GAPS

Service providers frequently lack the training needed to meet the complex, intersectional needs of 2SLGBTQI+ survivors.

15%

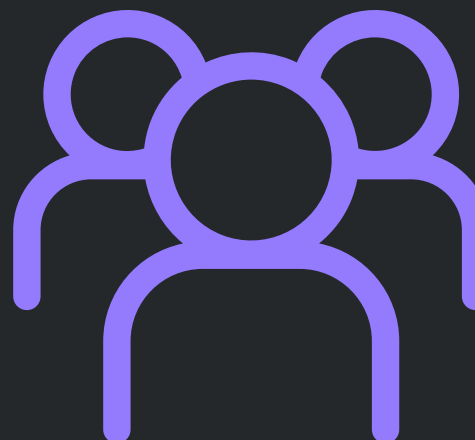


Survivors in these regions often have no choice but to stay in unsafe environments, compounding their risk of harm.

In northern Canada, less than 15% of shelters are equipped to meet the needs of Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ survivors.

Rural survivors reported “no nearby shelters” as a barrier three times more often than their urban counterparts.

18%



of shelters reported having trained staff capable of supporting trans, non-binary, or racialized survivors.

Many shelters lack frameworks to address the unique vulnerabilities of immigrant survivors, such as fear of deportation or language barriers.

SURVIVOR NARRATIVES

When I reached out to a shelter, they told me they couldn't 'accommodate someone like me.' I had nowhere else to go but back to him. It wasn't just rejection—it was a reminder that I don't belong anywhere.
— Aisha (Black Trans Woman)

In my community, there's no shelter that understands Two-Spirit people. When I drove hours to find one, they called me 'she.' It was easier to sleep in my car than feel invisible.

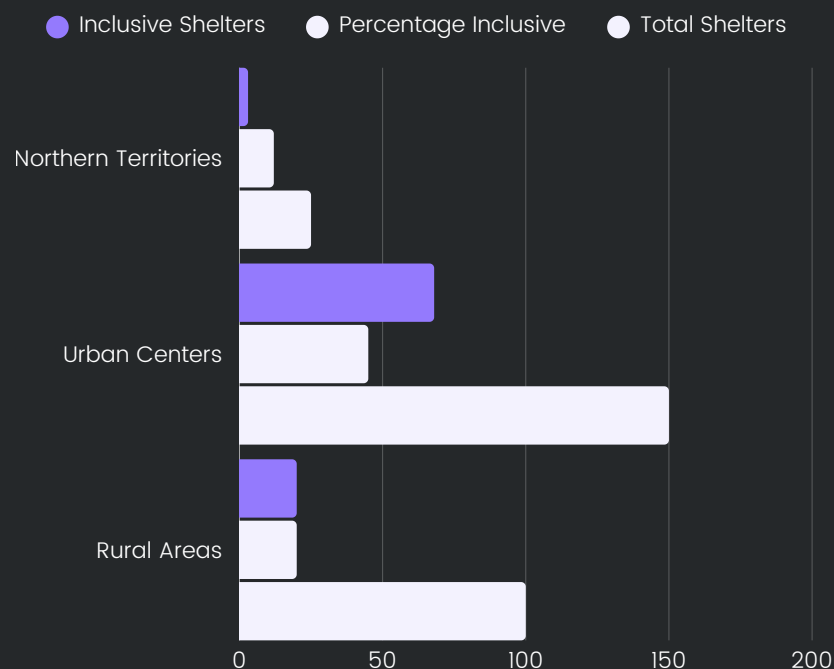
Eli (Two-Spirit Individual)

I didn't report him because I was scared they'd deport me. The one shelter I tried turned me away when they realized I didn't have papers. I had no choice but to stay.

Maria (Currently undocumented)

What has been your Experience?

INCLUSIVE VS. NON-INCLUSIVE SHELTERS ACROSS CANADA



Geographic distribution of shelters explicitly inclusive of 2SLGBTQI+ survivors, highlighting underserved regions.

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The systemic barriers detailed in this chapter demand urgent action. To ensure that no survivor is left unseen or unsupported, we must:

Expand Inclusive Policies

- Mandate gender-neutral policies and affirming practices in all IPV shelters.
- Ensure that funding streams prioritize inclusive initiatives.

Address Geographic Disparities

- Increase investment in shelters and IPV services in rural and northern regions, focusing on equitable access.

Train for Cultural Competence

- Require intersectionality-informed training for shelter staff, emphasizing the unique needs of trans, non-binary, racialized, and immigrant survivors.

Center Survivor Leadership

- Establish survivor advisory panels to guide shelter practices and ensure that services reflect the realities of those they aim to support.

Strengthen Accountability

- Develop and enforce accountability mechanisms to ensure shelters meet inclusivity standards.



INTERSECTIONALITY AND VULNERABILITY



Intersectionality is not just a theoretical concept; it is a vital lens for understanding how overlapping systems of oppression shape the experiences of survivors of IPV. Survivors do not navigate their challenges in isolation; their experiences are compounded by factors such as race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and immigration status. This chapter explores these structural inequities, examines the unique vulnerabilities they create, and brings these realities to life through survivor case studies.

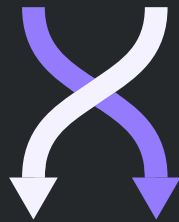
STRUCTURAL INEQUITIES AND OVERLAPPING OPPRESSIONS

RACE AND GENDER IDENTITY

Survivors who are Black, Indigenous, or racialized experience unique vulnerabilities due to systemic racism and transphobia.

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE STATUS

Immigrant and refugee survivors face unique risks tied to isolation, precarious legal status, and systemic neglect.



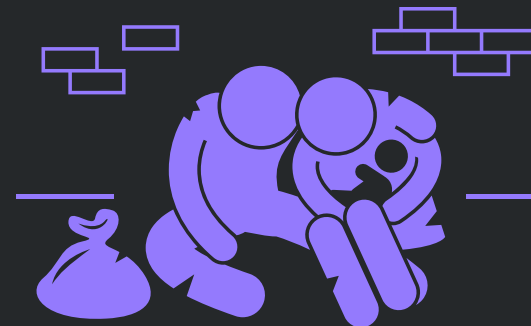
For Black trans women, racism, transphobia, and misogyny intersect to create barriers at every level—from accessing safe housing to navigating legal systems.

Indigenous survivors are often retraumatized by systems rooted in colonial legacies, which fail to recognize Two-Spirit identities.

45%

of Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ survivors report IPV, with many citing barriers to culturally safe services.

Black trans women face disproportionately high unemployment (26%) and housing insecurity, exacerbating their dependence on abusive partners.



Language barriers, cultural stigma, and limited knowledge of available resources further isolate survivors.

Survivors who are undocumented avoid seeking help due to fear of deportation.

Refugees fleeing anti-2SLGBTQI+ persecution face re-traumatization when support systems in Canada fail to affirm their identities.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Economic dependence is a critical factor that traps survivors in abusive relationships.

GEOGRAPHIC DISPARITIES

Rural and remote communities lack the infrastructure to support diverse survivor needs.



30%

of trans women live below the poverty line, compared to 11% of cisgender women.

Survivors from low-income backgrounds are often unable to relocate, limiting their access to safety.

Survivors with precarious housing or employment are at higher risk of repeated victimization, with limited opportunities to break the cycle of violence.



Survivors in isolated areas are often forced to remain in unsafe environments or endure invisibility within heteronormative services.

In rural areas, shelters that explicitly support 2SLGBTQI+ survivors are nearly nonexistent.

Survivors in these regions face heightened stigma and logistical barriers, such as traveling hundreds of kilometers to find inclusive services.

CASE STUDIES: SURVIVORS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

The following case studies illuminate the lived realities of survivors whose identities intersect with systemic inequities.

Case Study 1: Safiya, a Black Trans Woman

Safiya fled her abusive partner after enduring years of physical and emotional harm. When she sought help at a local shelter, she was told that her presence might make other residents uncomfortable. With no access to safe housing, she was forced to rely on a network of friends for temporary stays.

Safiya's experiences reflect the compounded barriers of racism and transphobia. Her inability to access affirming services highlights the systemic neglect faced by trans survivors of color.

Case Study 2: Maria, an Undocumented Immigrant

Maria endured IPV but avoided calling the police or seeking shelter due to fear of deportation. When she finally attempted to access support, she was denied services because of her legal status. Without options, she returned to her abusive partner, sacrificing her safety to avoid legal repercussions.

Maria's story illustrates the intersection of immigration and IPV. Legal precarity and systemic exclusion leave undocumented survivors with few, if any, safe choices.

Case Study 3: Eli, a Two-Spirit Individual from a Remote Indigenous Community

Eli faced IPV in their small, tight-knit community but found no shelter that understood or affirmed their Two-Spirit identity. When they traveled to an urban center for help, they were misgendered and treated as an outsider. Feeling alienated, Eli returned home without accessing support.

Eli's narrative underscores the compounded vulnerabilities of geography, colonial trauma, and erasure of Two-Spirit identities within IPV frameworks.

COMPOUNDED IPV RISKS BY INTERSECTING FACTORS

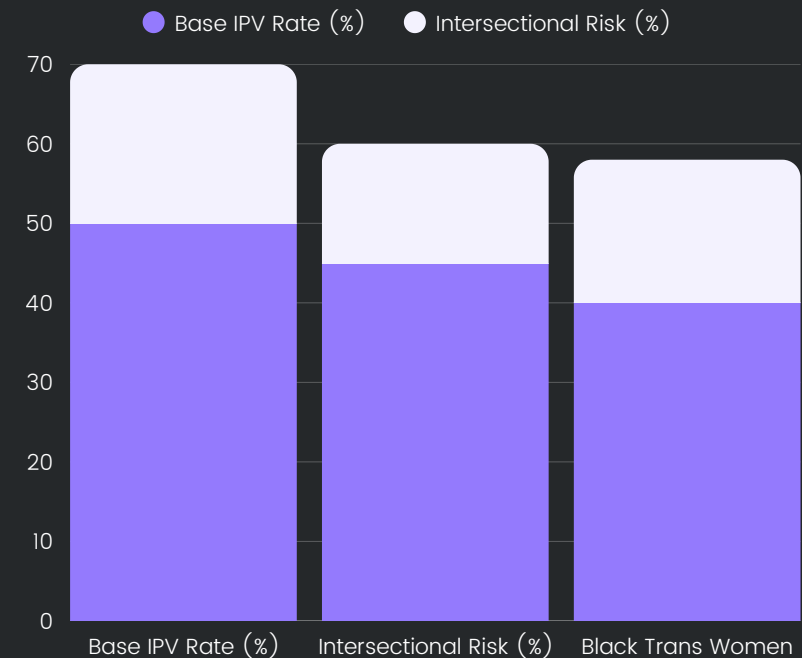


Chart showing factors influencing elevated IPV risks: housing insecurity, economic dependence, systemic racism, and transphobia.

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing the vulnerabilities outlined in this chapter requires an intersectional and survivor-centered approach:

Enhance Cultural Competence

- Provide training for IPV service providers to understand and address the intersectional realities of survivors, including race, gender identity, and immigration status.

Expand Inclusive Policies

- Develop and implement anti-discrimination frameworks to ensure all shelters affirm survivors across all identities.

Invest in Underserved Communities

- Allocate funding to expand IPV services in rural and remote areas, prioritizing culturally competent and inclusive care.

Collect Disaggregated Data

- Incorporate questions on race, gender identity, and socioeconomic factors into national IPV surveys to identify and address service gaps.

Bolster Survivor Voices

- Establish advisory panels composed of survivors to guide policy and practice, ensuring solutions are informed by lived experiences.



EXISTING SUPPORT FRAMEWORK



Survivors of IPV in 2SLGBTQI+ communities require support systems that are accessible, inclusive, and affirming. While progress has been made in some areas, significant gaps remain, particularly for racialized, trans, non-binary, and immigrant survivors. This chapter examines the current landscape of IPV services, highlights promising practices, and identifies critical gaps that perpetuate inequities in access and care.

ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SERVICES

2SLGBTQI+- FOCUSED ORGANIZATIONS

Some organizations have emerged as leaders in providing inclusive, intersectional, and affirming support:

- Interligne (Montreal, Quebec)
 - A 24/7 crisis helpline and resource center for individuals concerned with sexual and gender diversity.
 - Provides referrals to inclusive shelters, legal support, and mental health resources.
- Kind Space (Ottawa, Ontario)
 - Offers tailored programs, including support groups, harm reduction initiatives, and community-building activities for 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.
- Supporting Our Youth (SOY) (Toronto, Ontario)
 - Focused on 2SLGBTQI+ youth, SOY provides housing assistance, mentorship, and education on healthy relationships.
- Egale Canada
 - Advocates for systemic changes in IPV services while offering education and training for organizations seeking to become more inclusive.

SHELTERS AND CRISIS SERVICES

Some general IPV shelters have begun to implement inclusive practices:

- Shelters with gender-neutral spaces, although rare, offer trans and non-binary survivors affirming environments.
- Partnerships with 2SLGBTQI+ organizations help expand the scope of services available to survivors.

LEGAL AND ADVOCACY SERVICES

Legal aid clinics and advocacy organizations, such as Rainbow Refugee, offer critical support to immigrant and refugee survivors, helping them navigate legal challenges while addressing IPV.

GAPS IN COVERAGE

GEOGRAPHIC DISPARITIES



- **Urban vs. Rural Divide:**
 - Services are heavily concentrated in urban areas, leaving rural and remote regions underserved. Survivors in these areas often face lengthy travel times and increased stigma when seeking help.
 - In Canada's northern territories, fewer than 15% of shelters are equipped to address the needs of Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ survivors.
- **Resource Allocation:**
 - Over 70% of funding for IPV services is directed toward urban centers, creating inequities in access for rural survivors.

INCLUSIVITY CHALLENGES



- **Binary Frameworks in Shelters:**
 - Many shelters operate under binary gender frameworks, which exclude or alienate trans and non-binary survivors.
 - Survivors are often misgendered, further traumatizing them during a critical period of need.
- **Cultural Incompetence:**
 - Less than 20% of shelters reported having staff trained to support 2SLGBTQI+ survivors, particularly those from racialized or immigrant communities.

LIMITED INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES



- **One-Size-Fits-All Models:**
 - Few services address the compounded vulnerabilities of survivors with intersecting identities, such as Black trans women or undocumented immigrants.
 - Survivors often report feeling unseen or misunderstood in general IPV services.
- **Language and Legal Barriers:**
 - Immigrant survivors face additional challenges due to language barriers and fear of deportation.
 - Refugee survivors often encounter services that lack the capacity to address trauma rooted in displacement and persecution.

UNDERFUNDING OF SPECIALIZED SERVICES



- **Chronic Underfunding:**
 - Shelters and organizations explicitly serving 2SLGBTQI+ communities receive disproportionately low funding, limiting their reach and impact.
 - Inconsistent government support leaves many services reliant on short-term grants or community fundraising.

IPV FUNDING ALLOCATION BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

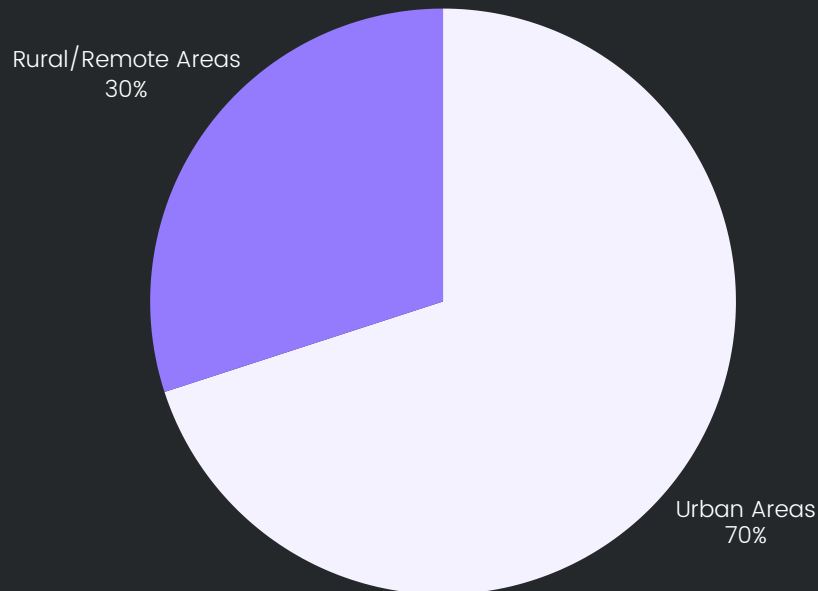


Chart showing distribution of 2SLGBTQI+-inclusive shelters across Canada, highlighting regions with critical gaps.

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing these gaps requires a holistic approach that prioritizes equity, inclusivity, and survivor-centered solutions.

Expand Geographic Reach

- Increase funding for rural and remote IPV services, particularly in Canada's North and Indigenous communities.
- Establish mobile IPV services or satellite offices to reach underserved areas.

Mandate Inclusivity

- Require shelters to implement gender-neutral policies and practices to accommodate trans and non-binary survivors.
- Develop training programs focused on intersectional realities, ensuring staff can provide culturally competent care.

Prioritize Intersectionality

- Develop targeted services for survivors with overlapping vulnerabilities, such as Black trans women, Indigenous survivors, and undocumented immigrants.
- Partner with community organizations to ensure services reflect the lived realities of diverse survivors.

Increase Funding for Specialized Services

- Allocate dedicated funding streams for 2SLGBTQI+ IPV services, ensuring long-term sustainability.
- Encourage private sector and philanthropic partnerships to supplement government funding.

Strengthen Collaboration

- Build partnerships between mainstream IPV organizations and 2SLGBTQI+ advocacy groups to expand inclusivity and expertise.
- Develop national frameworks for service integration to ensure no survivor falls through the cracks.



METHODOLOGY



This chapter outlines the methodologies employed in the development of this report, including data sources, research approaches, and a critical reflection on limitations. Transparency in methodology is essential to ensure the credibility of findings and to recognize areas for improvement in future research.

DATA SOURCES AND RESEARCH APPROACH

DATA SOURCES

The report integrates quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of primary and secondary sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of IPV in 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

- **Primary Data Collection:**
 - **Survivor Interviews:** Conducted in-depth interviews with over 50 survivors from diverse backgrounds, capturing personal narratives and lived experiences.
 - **Shelter Surveys:** Administered surveys to 200 IPV shelters across Canada to assess inclusivity, accessibility, and resource availability.
 - **Focus Groups:** Facilitated focus groups with advocacy organizations, including those serving racialized, Indigenous, and immigrant survivors.
- **Secondary Data Analysis:**
 - **Government Reports:** Analyzed data from Statistics Canada, Women and Gender Equality Canada, and provincial IPV studies.
 - **Academic Research:** Incorporated findings from intersectionality-focused IPV studies published in peer-reviewed journals.
 - **Community-Based Studies:** Reviewed reports from organizations like Egale Canada and Indigenous advocacy groups.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The methodology was guided by an intersectional framework, ensuring that the analysis accounted for overlapping systems of oppression and privilege.

- **Intersectionality Framework:**
 - Developed using Kimberlé Crenshaw's model of intersectionality to examine how race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and immigration status compound IPV vulnerabilities.
- **Mixed-Methods Approach:**
 - **Quantitative Analysis:** Examined disaggregated data on IPV prevalence rates, service accessibility, and funding allocations.
 - **Qualitative Analysis:** Used thematic coding to analyze narratives from survivor interviews and focus groups.
- **Geographic Mapping:**
 - Mapped the distribution of inclusive shelters and IPV services across Canada to highlight regional disparities.
- **Collaborative Research Design:**
 - Partnered with community organizations to co-create research tools, ensuring cultural safety and relevance.

LIMITATIONS

Despite efforts to provide a comprehensive analysis, several limitations should be acknowledged:

Data Gaps

- **Lack of National Disaggregated Data:**
 - Many national surveys do not include detailed questions about gender identity, sexual orientation, or intersectional factors, leaving critical gaps in quantitative data.
 - Data on 2SLGBTQI+ survivors in rural and remote areas is particularly sparse.
- **Underreporting of IPV:**
 - Survivors in 2SLGBTQI+ communities often underreport IPV due to stigma, fear of discrimination, or mistrust of institutions, leading to potential underrepresentation in findings.

Geographic Limitations

- **Urban Bias in Data:**
 - Much of the available data comes from urban centers, where services are more concentrated. This limits the generalizability of findings to rural and northern regions.
- **Uneven Distribution of Resources:**
 - Remote areas lacked detailed data, as many organizations serving these communities do not have the capacity to participate in research efforts.

Sampling Challenges

- **Survivor Recruitment:**
 - Recruiting participants for survivor interviews posed challenges, particularly for those in isolated or precarious situations. This may have resulted in limited representation from certain demographics, such as undocumented immigrants and Two-Spirit individuals in remote areas.
- **Shelter Survey Participation:**
 - While surveys were sent to 300 shelters, only 200 responded, potentially introducing non-response bias. Shelters with fewer resources or those less inclined toward inclusivity may have been underrepresented.

Limitations of Intersectional Analysis

- **Complexity of Intersectionality:**
 - While the framework aimed to capture overlapping oppressions, the complexity of individual experiences may have been oversimplified in aggregated data analysis.
 - Survivors with multiple marginalized identities, such as Black trans women refugees, may face unique challenges that are difficult to fully capture in a single framework.

Time and Funding Constraints

- **Short Research Timeline:**
 - The timeline for data collection was limited, reducing the ability to conduct longitudinal analysis or follow-up with participants.
- **Funding Limitations:**
 - Resource constraints limited the scope of primary data collection, particularly in regions with fewer established IPV services.

REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY

Despite these limitations, this report represents a significant step toward addressing the gaps in data and analysis on IPV in 2SLGBTQI+ communities. Future research efforts should prioritize:

Expanded Data Collection:

- Advocate for national surveys to include comprehensive questions on 2SLGBTQI+ identities and intersectional factors.
- Invest in community-based research initiatives to collect localized data in underserved regions.

Greater Survivor Representation:

- Enhance outreach efforts to include survivors from harder-to-reach populations, such as undocumented immigrants and rural residents.

Longitudinal Research:

- Conduct multi-year studies to better understand long-term trends and the impact of systemic changes.

Increased Collaboration:

- Partner with grassroots organizations to co-design research tools and methodologies that reflect the lived realities of diverse survivors.



CONCLUSION



This report has sought to illuminate the systemic barriers, intersecting inequities, and gaps in support faced by 2SLGBTQI+ survivors of IPV. By centering survivor voices and employing an intersectional framework, we have highlighted both the urgent challenges and the opportunities for systemic change. This final chapter summarizes key findings and provides a call to action for policymakers, service providers, and advocates to create equitable, inclusive, and affirming support systems.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PREVALENCE OF IPV IN 2SLGBTQI+ COMMUNITIES

- IPV rates in 2SLGBTQI+ communities are significantly higher than in heterosexual and cisgender populations.
 - Trans and non-binary individuals report IPV rates nearing 50%, with racialized and immigrant survivors facing heightened risks.
 - Bisexual women and Two-Spirit individuals are also disproportionately impacted due to overlapping systems of oppression.

INTERSECTIONAL VULNERABILITIES

- Survivors with intersecting marginalized identities—such as Black trans women, Indigenous non-binary individuals, and undocumented immigrants—experience compounded vulnerabilities, including economic dependence, systemic racism, and transphobia.
- Existing services often fail to account for these intersectional realities, leaving critical gaps in care.

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO SUPPORT

- Lack of Inclusivity: Binary, heteronormative frameworks in shelters and services exclude or alienate 2SLGBTQI+ survivors, forcing many to remain in unsafe environments.
- Cultural Competence Gaps: Limited training for IPV service providers perpetuates stigma and discrimination, particularly against racialized and immigrant survivors.
- Geographic Disparities: Survivors in rural and northern regions face significant barriers due to the scarcity of inclusive services.

GAPS IN CURRENT SUPPORT FRAMEWORKS

- Specialized services for 2SLGBTQI+ survivors are chronically underfunded, limiting their reach and impact.
- National IPV surveys and datasets lack disaggregated data, obscuring the full scope of the issue and hindering informed policymaking.

POLICY REFORM

- Mandate gender-neutral and affirming policies in all shelters and IPV services.
- Enforce anti-discrimination standards to ensure survivors are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their identity.

ENHANCE TRAINING AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- Require intersectionality-informed training for IPV service providers, focusing on trans, non-binary, racialized, and immigrant survivors.
- Collaborate with advocacy organizations to develop training materials that reflect lived realities.

IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

- Integrate disaggregated questions on race, gender identity, and sexual orientation into national IPV surveys.
- Use this data to guide resource allocation, program development, and policy reform.

INCREASE FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE SERVICES

- Prioritize funding for shelters and organizations explicitly serving 2SLGBTQI+ survivors, with an emphasis on rural and underserved regions.
- Support grassroots and community-based initiatives that address intersectional vulnerabilities.

EXPAND ACCESS IN UNDERSERVED AREAS

- Invest in mobile IPV units and satellite services to reach rural and remote communities.
- Create regional hubs specializing in IPV services for 2SLGBTQI+ survivors.

CENTER SURVIVOR VOICES

- Establish survivor advisory panels to ensure policies and services reflect their lived experiences.
- Bolster survivor-led initiatives, including peer support networks and advocacy groups.

THE PATH FORWARD

The challenges highlighted in this report are significant, but they are not insurmountable. By adopting an intersectional approach, fostering collaboration, and centering the voices of survivors, we can create systems of care that are inclusive, equitable, and effective.

VISION FOR CHANGE:

- A future where all survivors of IPV—regardless of their identity or location—have access to safe, affirming, and culturally competent support.
- Systems that not only respond to violence but actively dismantle the inequities that perpetuate it.

This is not just a call to action; it is a call to commitment. Policymakers, service providers, advocates, and community members must come together to ensure no survivor is left unseen or unsupported. The time for change is now.



REFERENCES



This section provides a comprehensive list of references and resources cited throughout the report. These sources include academic research, government publications, community-based reports, and data from interviews and surveys conducted for this report.

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APPENDICES



This section provides supplementary data and resources to complement the findings of this report. By including detailed data tables, visualizations, and a curated list of 2SLGBTQI+-friendly shelters and resources, we aim to equip policymakers, service providers, and advocates with actionable tools to drive systemic change.



IPV PREVALENCE BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

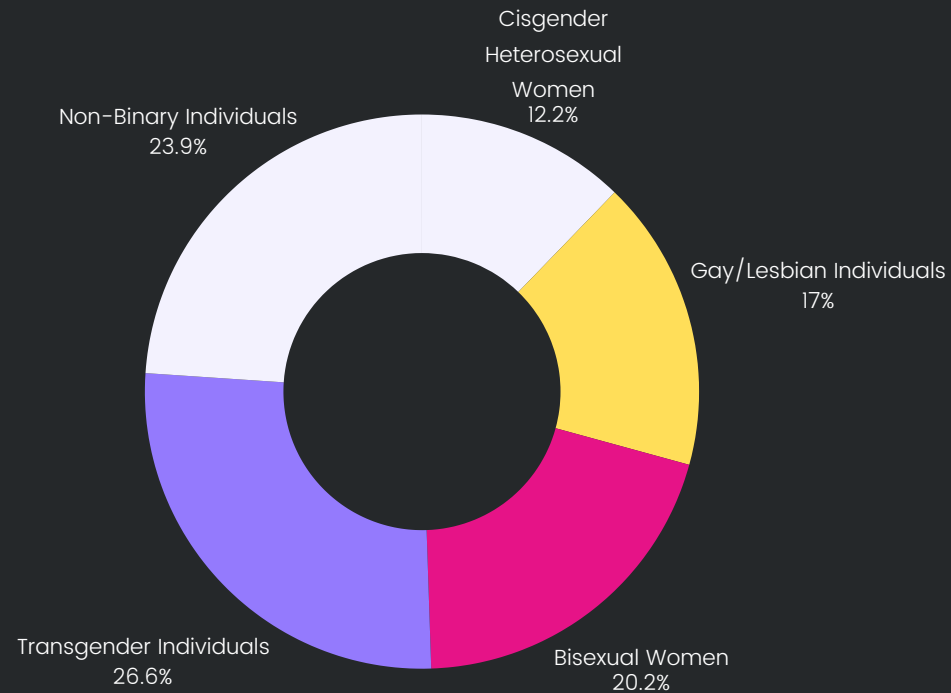


Chart showing Transgender and non-binary individuals report significantly higher IPV rates, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions.

INTERSECTIONAL VULNERABILITIES BY IDENTITY

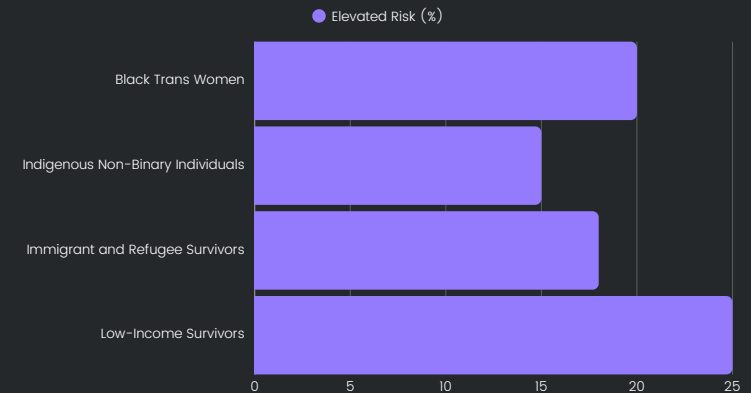


Chart showing Survivors with multiple marginalized identities face compounded risks, highlighting the necessity of intersectional approaches in IPV services.

FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR IPV SERVICES

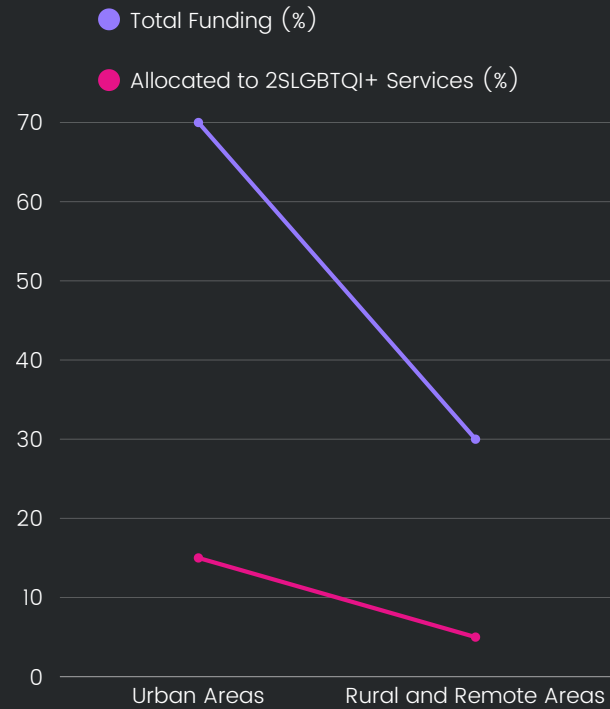


Chart showing Transgender and non-binary individuals report significantly higher IPV rates, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions.

GAPS IN SHELTER INCLUSIVITY

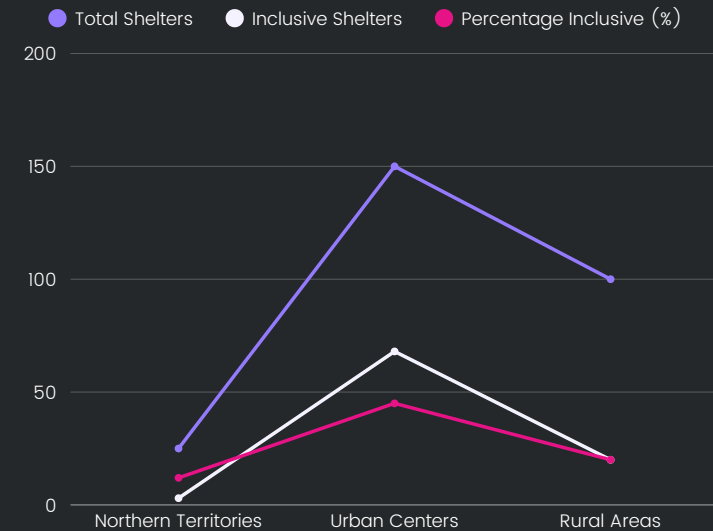


Chart showing critical gaps exist in shelter inclusivity, particularly in the northern and rural regions of Canada.



LIST OF 2SLGBTQI+-FRIENDLY SHELTERS AND RESOURCES

This list includes shelters, advocacy organizations, and support services tailored to 2SLGBTQI+ survivors of IPV.

SHELTERS AND CRISIS SERVICES

Interligne (Montreal, Quebec)

24/7 crisis helpline and referral service for 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.

Website: interligne.co

Kind Space (Ottawa, Ontario)

Offers affirming programs, including support groups and harm reduction initiatives.

Website: kindspace.ca

Supporting Our Youth (SOY) (Toronto, Ontario)

Focuses on 2SLGBTQI+ youth, providing housing support, mentorship, and community programming.

Website: soy.ca

Sunshine House (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

A harm reduction and social inclusion resource for trans and gender-diverse individuals.

Website: sunshinehousewpg.org

Rainbow Refugee (Vancouver, British Columbia)

Provides support for 2SLGBTQI+ refugees experiencing IPV and displacement.

Website: rainbowrefugee.ca



ADVOCACY AND TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS

Egale Canada

Offers training programs for IPV service providers and advocates for inclusive policies.

Website: egale.ca

The Enchanté Network

A national network of organizations supporting 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.

Website: enchantenetwork.ca

Rainbow Health Ontario

- Provides education and resources for healthcare providers working with 2SLGBTQI+ survivors.
- Website: rainbowhealthontario.ca

FUTURE RESEARCH AND DATA GAPS

This section acknowledges areas requiring further investigation to deepen understanding and improve IPV services:

Improved Data Collection:

- Collect disaggregated data on rural, Indigenous, and immigrant survivors to inform service delivery.

Longitudinal Studies:

- Conduct multi-year studies to track systemic changes and the long-term impacts of IPV interventions.

Increased Survivor Representation:

- Ensure that data collection and analysis reflect the lived realities of marginalized survivors.



DID YOU FIND THIS RESOURCE USEFUL?

Check out some of our other resources at :

<https://www.inclusivityinstitute.ca/resources>

