



**Ending
Violence**
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

Strategic Priorities Update and 2023-2024 Annual Plan

Executive Summary

This document presents EVA Canada's 2023-24 Annual Plan. This includes:

- an update on EVA Canada's decision to focus on sexualized violence and subsequent modifications to our existing 2021-2026 Strategic Plan;
- an explanation of EVA Canada's revised strategic priorities;
- a breakdown of our goals and intended actions for 2023-24;
- a summary of projects, initiatives and funding enabling our work in 2023-24; and
- an overview of the 2023-24 budget

This annual plan was developed collaboratively with the EVA Canada's Board of Directors, and approved February 2023.

Updates to our 2021-2016 Strategic Plan and Priorities

In 2020, EVA Canada came together to develop a 5-year Strategic Plan (2021-26). This Strategic Plan outlined four areas of work:

- 1) EVA Canada is a robust GBV network that applies an intersectional GBV lens.
- 2) EVA Canada is advancing the issue of sexual violence at the national level.
- 3) EVA Canada showcases the use of institutional change as a primary strategic approach for change around GBV.
- 4) EVA Canada is a highly, functional strategic, and healthy organization.

Through the process of implementing our strategic plan and activities since 2020, we found that the majority of our activities fell under the second area of work focused on advancing sexual violence at the national level. Although we strove to find ways to engage on a range of GBV issues, we continued to find ourselves filling a gap in national coordination on sexual violence. We began to explore the possibility of EVA Canada playing a role in facilitating this coordination and centring sexual violence in its efforts. In order to lean in to this role, however, it became clear that we needed to revisit our capacity to maintain what had been our focus on gender-based violence more broadly.

In October 2022, the EVA Canada Board of Directors and staff held a strategic planning session and made a decision to commit to working specifically on sexualized violence, and to exploring how our organization could promote and facilitate national coordination for those committed to ending sexualized violence.

As part of this strategic planning session, the EVA Canada Board of Directors found it was necessary to revisit and revise the priorities outlined in our current 5-Year Strategic Plan to better reflect our shift in focus. While further development and updates to the 5-Year Strategic Plan will occur over the next year, the following chart outlines the (emerging) vision and priorities.

Operationalize and leverage EVA Canada's role as a national SV organization to inspire concrete action toward ending sexualized violence in Canada.

**Strategic Priority 1
Governance**

Shape and solidify governance, membership and internal operational mechanisms to align with scope and mission.

**Strategic Priority 2
Communication**

Communicate and solidify our role externally as the national coordinating body for SV.

**Strategic Priority 3
Relationships**

Leverage the knowledge and expertise of the SV Sector across Canada.

**Strategic Priority 4
Research**

Build a national hub for the SV evidence base.

**Strategic Priority 5
Policy & Advocacy**

Lead advocacy on pressing SV issues at federal / national level.

**Strategy Priority 6
Sector & Survivors**

Increase access to specialized supports for survivors.

EVA CANADA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2023-24 Priorities and Goals

Overview

2023-24 represents year one of our revised Strategic Plan.

This year we plan to lay important groundwork toward our goal of facilitating and leading national coordination to end sexualized violence by building our internal capacity, and our external networks and relationships.

We approach this year as one of transition and experimentation in which we seek to strengthen our commitments to key principles that ensure our work is grounded in and accountable to those we seek to represent.

2023-24 Goals

Through taking concrete action in each of our 6 strategic priority areas, we hope to accomplish the following overarching goals in 2023-24.

Strategic Priority 1: Governance	2023-24: Build our foundation
	Creating strong and responsive governance systems and processes is imperative to EVA Canada’s success and its ability to have impact. In 2023-24, we will review and revise our internal organizational structure and processes to ensure alignment with the sexual violence movement, and to model organizational practices that reflect our principles.

Strategic Priority 2: Communication	2023-24: Communicate our identity
	In 2023-24, we will continue to hold conversations with those in the GBV and SV movement to communicate EVA Canada’s goals and capacity to facilitate national coordination on sexualized violence, and to ensure that our approaches and priorities reflect the needs of the sector. As part of this work, EVA Canada will engage with stakeholders across sectors, governments, and jurisdictions to raise the issue of sexualized violence at the national and federal levels.

Strategic Priority 3: Relationships	2023-24: Strengthen relationships
	2023-24 EVA Canada will use its capacity and resources to expand and deepen existing networks and spaces for those committed to ending sexualized violence to come together to collaborate, strategize, and share resources. We will also use these spaces to explore what it means to promote change to end sexualized violence as a collective national voice.

Strategic Priority 4: Research	2023-24: Build the evidence-base
	Building the sexual violence evidence-base is a long-term and multi-faceted endeavour. In 2023-24, EVA Canada will focus on sharing original research that provides baseline national data about sexual violence organizations in Canada. In addition to providing new evidence about the sexual violence sector, this initiative will assist us in exploring in what ways we can use research and data collection to promote meaningful policy and systems change to end sexualized violence.

Strategic Priority 5: Policy & Advocacy	2023-24: Identify the levers of change
	Strengthening policy and promoting systemic change toward minimizing sexual violence requires a long-term vision and advocacy plan. In 2023-24, EVA Canada will work collaboratively with others to identify policy priorities specific to SV, and set the stage for the development of a theory of change to facilitate a proactive approach to advocacy.

Strategic Priority 6: Sector & Survivors	2023-24: Centre the needs of survivors and those supporting them
	While systemic change is necessary to ending sexualized violence, we also realize that these types of changes can take a long time. Across the country survivors of sexual violence and the organizations that support them continue to struggle to meet demand and care for the workforce providing services. In 2023-24, EVA Canada will work with provincial and territorial networks and organizations representing sexual assault centres across the country to advocate for their needs and bring attention to the vital role these organizations play.

2023-24 Actions & Outcomes

The following tables provide a detailed breakdown of the 2023-24 actions and outcomes for each priority area.

Strategic Priority 1 – Governance: Build our foundation

Strategic Priority	2023-24 Actions	Outcomes
Shape and solidify the governance, membership, and other internal operational processes to align with scope and mission.	Review Board and governance structure and processes and revise as needed.	EVA has defined a Board criteria and ways of working that align with scope and mission.
		EVA has an updated governance policies outlining all BOD policies and procedures.
		EVA has clear, transparent process for Board recruitment and retention.
		EVA has a complete slate of Board members as defined according to new criteria.
		EVA has updated its 5-Year Strategic Plan.
	Review membership criteria and process and revise as needed.	EVA has defined membership criteria and ways of working that align with scope and mission.
		EVA has updated membership materials outlining all membership policies and processes.
		EVA has clear, transparent process for membership recruitment.
		EVA has identified is implementing mechanisms for fostering membership engagement.
	Strengthen internal operational capacity	EVA’s human resources policies and contracts reviewed and updated as needed.

	through nurturing and growing staff team, and streamlining HR and administrative processes.	EVA has re-established a physical office in Ottawa, and strengthened mechanisms for hybrid workplace.
		Additional staff hired based on need and financial capacity.
		Regular staff planning and professional development implemented.
	Continue to be a responsible steward of financial resources and foster ongoing organizational financial sustainability.	EVA's bookkeeping and financial processes are streamlined.
		EVA is a registered charity.
		EVA has grown its operating budget.
		EVA has fostered strong relationships with funders and donors, and regularly demonstrates the impact of funding dollars.

Strategic Priority 2 – Communication: Communicate our identity

Strategic Priority	2023-24 Actions	Outcomes
Communicate and solidify our role with partners, stakeholders, and other external bodies as the national coordinating body on ending sexualized violence.	Coordinate and facilitate conversations and activities within sexual violence sector to generate support and accountability for EVA Canada as national coordinating body.	Conduct environmental scan of sexual violence and related sector to guide sector-wide communication efforts.
		Hold conversations with SV stakeholders (as identified in environmental scan) to build relationships and support for strengthening national SV coordination via EVA Canada.
		Develop advisory and working groups to support SV network and relationship-building, and to strengthen accountability measures with SV sector.
	Hold conversations with external partners, stakeholders, and	Conduct environmental scan to determine relevant stakeholders, partners, government departments, and others outside of the SV-specific sector to guide communication efforts and relationship-building.

	organizations to generate support and accountability for EVA Canada as national coordinating body.	Hold conversations with other stakeholders (as identified in environmental scan) to build cross-sectoral awareness of EVA's role and offering as a national SV organization.
		Establish accountability and engagement mechanisms to enable input and alignment with partners / stakeholders.
	Develop and implement a communications strategy to raise awareness and provide information about the role, responsibilities of EVA Canada.	Develop and implement organizational communications strategy in consultation with a communications strategist.
		Update EVA Canada's name, website, branding, and other external-facing communications collateral as needed to align with its identity as a national SV organization.
	Leverage existing project activities to lead to promote EVA's understanding of how national coordination can contribute to ending sexualized violence in Canada.	

Strategic Priority 3 – Relationships: Strengthen relationships

Strategic Priority	2023-24 Actions	Outcomes
Leverage the knowledge of and expertise of the SV sector across Canada.	Develop mechanisms to bring together and engage with a wide range of stakeholders in the SV sector.	Develop and begin to implement a network and relationship-building strategy / Strategic Priority 2.
		Continue to hold bi-monthly SV Working Group meetings to enable national dialogue and collaborative decision-making on emerging SV issues.
		Identify and establish as needed additional mechanisms (working groups, advisory committees, etc.) to foster collective action and knowledge-sharing among the SV sector.

	Foster and maintain constructive relationships with SV-adjacent GBV and related sector stakeholders to ensure inclusion of SV sector concerns and perspectives.	See Strategic Priority 2: Hold conversations with external partners, stakeholders, and organizations to generate support and accountability for EVA Canada as national coordinating body.
		Continue involvement in national CSO networks, including taking lead on SV-specific initiatives when possible.
		Continue to work as an active partner on existing partner-led projects (e.g. GBV Settlement Sector Strategy project)
	Develop and offer innovative activities for the SV sector, including developing and implementing a communications strategy to raise awareness and provide information about the SV sector across Canada.	Develop and share resources and tools to support the SV sector in advancing its priorities.
Leverage findings from national SVO survey to develop advocacy campaigns on key issues (counselling wait times; funding, etc.)		

Strategic Priority 4 – Research: Build the evidence-base

Strategic Priority	2023-24 Actions	Outcomes
Build a national hub for the SV evidence base.	Use current research initiatives (e.g. national SV survey) to contribute original research to existing national SV research base.	Share and promote national SV organizations survey findings.
		Develop research-based analysis and statements on emerging SV issues.
		Conduct research on additional SV topics as needed for current and new projects.
	Identify and develop knowledge-sharing strategies that support the SV sector in evidence-based advocacy.	

	Use current research initiatives to support the development and evaluation of accessible knowledge-sharing initiatives that raise awareness and engagement about sexualized violence as a national issue.	Identify and develop infrastructure to facilitate knowledge-sharing (e.g., database, website, etc.)
		Strengthen relationships with academic and civil society / non-profit research community focused on SV to support knowledge-sharing and engagement.
	Begin to design a plan to support the development of a national SV research hub in coming years.	Conduct literature review on existing <u>national</u> SV research and data.
		Develop research plan to guide organizational and sector SV research initiatives to 2026.

Strategic Priority 5 – Policy & Advocacy: Identify the levers for change

Strategic Priority	2023-24 Actions	Outcomes
Continue advocacy on pressing SV issues at the federal / national levels.	Develop and foster a pro-active and intentional approach to advocacy and policy change to address sexualized violence.	Develop an internal Advocacy Plan and Priorities document (including decision-making, advocacy options, key priorities, etc.) that can guide EVA Canada's decision-making and actions related to advocacy and policy change.
		Set the groundwork to facilitate development of a coordinated, national-level theory of change to end sexualized violence.
	Represent the views of the SV sector and other SV-specific concerns on (emerging) issues of national importance through advocacy with the federal	Strengthen relationships with departments, ministers, etc. across government to build avenues to promote a systemic, cross-sectoral awareness of SV.
		Contribute SV-specific analyses and input on federal government initiatives (i.e. legislation, committee work, budget, etc.)
		Initiate (pro-active) advocacy and policy change activities as outlined in Advocacy Plan.

	government and other decision-makers.	
	Participate and engage with broader GBV and systems change advocacy and policy change efforts.	Continue to engage with government and advocates in implementation of National Action Plan.
		Engage in advocacy initiatives on existing partner-led projects (e.g., GBV Settlement Sector Strategy project)
		Participate and attend consultations, engagements, conferences, and other opportunities to promote systemic change.

Strategic Priority 6 – Sector and Survivors: Centre the needs of survivors and those supporting them

Strategic Priority	2023-24 Actions	Outcomes
Increase access to specialized supports for SV survivors.	Leverage current initiatives to make visible the national crisis in services for SV survivors.	Develop and share baseline data on community-based sexual violence sector organizations to communicate current realities and evidence-informed targets for change and action (through national SVO survey).
		Utilize other project initiatives to bring attention to issue of access to services.
	Support SV organizations in responding to issues relating to well-being, health, and safety in their workforce through continuing work of the <i>GBV Worker Wellness</i> project.	Leverage activities in GBV Worker Wellness and other existing projects to promote changes and protections for the SV/GBV workforce.
		Utilize capacity as a national organization to bring together organizations working on GBV workforce issues and share learnings.
Leverage current initiatives to support SV organizations in accessing training to enhance supports for	Use current projects to equip SVOs with tools and resources for decision-making and process related to engaging with male-dominated institutions.	

	survivors in different communities.	
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Our Projects and Supporters

In 2023-24, EVA Canada's work will be enabled and supported through the following projects and initiatives:

Transforming the National Response to Sexual Violence in Canada (2023-27)

Funder: Anonymous Donation

Transforming the National Response to Sexual Violence is an ambitious and transformative five-year project through which EVA Canada will set in motion the operationalization of a long-term strategy for ending sexualized violence in Canada. The primary objective of this project is to solidify and expand EVA Canada's role as a national coordinating body for sexual violence in Canada through undertaking activities in four target areas: building a national sexual violence evidence base; stabilizing the sexual violence sector; nurturing a growing national sexual violence network, and building multi-sectoral commitment.

Strengthening Community-Based Anti-Violence Worker Wellness through Systemic Occupational Health and Safety Supports (2022-24)

Funder: Women and Gender Equality Canada, Feminist Response & Recovery Fund

The *Strengthening Community-Based Anti-Violence Worker Wellness* project will develop and implement a national evidence-based strategy to advance systemic change that addresses the need for equitable access to occupational health and safety supports for community-based anti violence workers across Canada.

Enhancing Capacity of Community-Based Sexual Violence Centres to respond to CAF/DND survivors of Military Sexual Trauma (2023-26)

Funder: Department of National Defence, Community Support for Sexual Misconduct Survivors Grant Program

In consultation with CAF/DND partners and key community-based leaders and advocates in the sexual violence sector across the country, this project will develop an evidence-informed, competency-based, bilingual online curriculum to educate SACs on responding to MST in the community and will facilitate the development of standardized protocols for the provision of services for SACs across the country.

Gender-Based Violence Settlement Sector Strategy (2019-2026)

Project Lead: YMCA Halifax/Dartmouth; **Project Partners:** EVA Canada; Ontario Council of Associations Serving Immigrants (OCASI); Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance (CISSA_ACSEI)

Funder: Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada

This collaborative national project explores how working collaboratively across the gender-based violence and settlement sectors can equip both sectors with the skills and knowledge necessary to support the needs of NSRI survivors and to advocate effectively for systemic change.

Making visible the critical role of community-based sexual violence counselling services in Canada, (April - September 2023)

Funder: Canadian Women's Foundation

Despite this increase in demand for services, there has been limited, long-term additional investment in community-based sexual violence counselling programs. At the same time, advocates working to draw attention to these issues have struggled to access current and compelling data to demonstrate the critical role SACs play in responding to the public health crisis of sexual violence through the provision of such counselling, and to make visible the significant challenges they are facing to meet the need for these services. This project will seek to address this gap through developing an evidence-based awareness and advocacy campaign that documents the current state of specialized counselling services for sexual violence survivors in Canada.