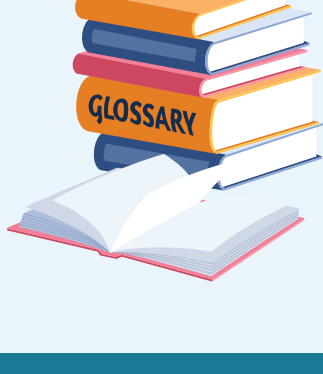


Strengthening the Gender-Based Violence Workforce in Canada



What is Gender-Based Violence (GBV)?

Harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender identity, gender expression, or perceived gender.

1 in 3 women experience this type of violence*

This can include sexual violence, intimate partner violence, femicide and many other forms of violence.

Who are GBV workers?

Anyone whose paid or unpaid work routinely exposes them to survivors or perpetrators of GBV; the stories of survivors or perpetrators of GBV; and/or the trauma caused by GBV.



GBV workers play multiple roles and fill gaps in communities.



Many GBV workers provide crisis intervention, counselling and other one-to-one services to survivors, families, and/or perpetrators.



GBV workers also keep communities safe through education, prevention and advocacy.

GBV work is done in many different areas of the community including:

- Sexual assault centres
- Shelters and transition houses
- Multi-service organizations
- Victim services
- Court or legal support
- Services for perpetrators
- Post-secondary campuses
- Hospital based services
- Advocacy, research and policy organizations

GBV workers fill gaps in community services by providing many different types of support, and helping survivors meet complex needs



"The lack of resources available, low-income housing, increase in food expenses, makes our work that much more difficult because the basic needs of many are not met"

Working with offenders is under-recognized, under-supported and often invisible

"The pressure of worrying about the victim's safety by trying to manage the offender's risk feels unbearable at times"



The GBV workforce is a diverse, woman-majority sector.

67%

of workers identified as belonging to one or more equity seeking groups.

27%

of workers identified as 2SLGBTQIA+.

22%

of workers identified as BIPOC.

18%

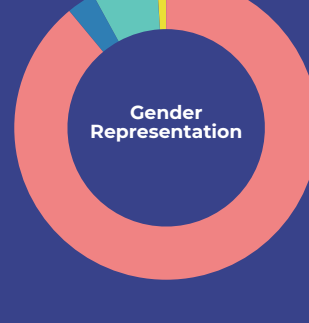
of workers identified as being from rural, remote or northern communities.

16%

of workers identified as being lower income/working class.



- 18% - Rural, remote or northern resident
- 12% - People with disabilities
- 27% - 2SLGBTQIA+
- 3% - Black
- 15% - Low income
- 3% - Recent immigrants
- 9% - People of Colour
- 10% - Indigenous
- 3% - Prefer not to answer
- 3% - Other
- 30% - None



- 89% - Women
- 3% - Men
- 7% - Non binary
- 1% - Other/ Prefer not to answer



GBV work is trauma exposed work that carries health & safety risks.



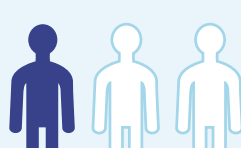
Over half of GBV workers agreed that they often feel emotionally exhausted and/or worn out due to their work



"I have witnessed many colleagues negatively impacted by this work. Compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma are commonplace amongst front-line workers"

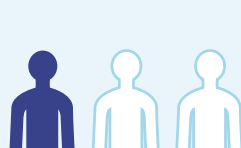
Systemic stressors and barriers experienced by survivors are a major cause of occupational stress for workers

"The lack of resources and the gaps in the system that create more difficulty for victims is what mainly affects my mental health negatively"



More than 1 in 3 workers

said their work drains so much of their energy that it negatively effects their private life.



More than 1 in 3 workers

said that exposure to the traumatic experiences of others on the job negatively impacted their mental health.

over 50%

of GBV workers with disabilities experienced these impacts

GBV work is insecure and undercompensated, despite requiring highly specialized skills.



1 in 4 workers

were worried about becoming unemployed.

1 over 3 BIPOC workers

were worried about becoming unemployed.

60%

of GBV workers said that they work at a fast pace throughout the day.

Many workers work multiple jobs or were forced to leave the sector due to financial constraints



"...most of us working in this field hold multiple jobs within the sector. Primarily because we are unable to afford life on one income"

Over one third of GBV workers do not think they are fairly compensated for the work they do

"I have been working in the field of sexual violence for 17 years and have experienced an increasing level of employment insecurity and decreasing compensation for the last 5 years, despite growing experience"



The GBV sector lacks the core, stable funding needed to protect the wellbeing of workers.



Precarious funding leads to occupational stress, low wages and job insecurity



"The piece that has been most draining over the past 15 years working in this field is that the field is insufficiently staffed so daily we have to turn away women and children"

The lack of core, stable funding creates employment conditions that are unsustainable

"I grieve that fact that I may need to leave a sector that I have devoted my career to, in order to maintain health benefits for myself and my children"



GBV workers do important work and need supportive environments to thrive.



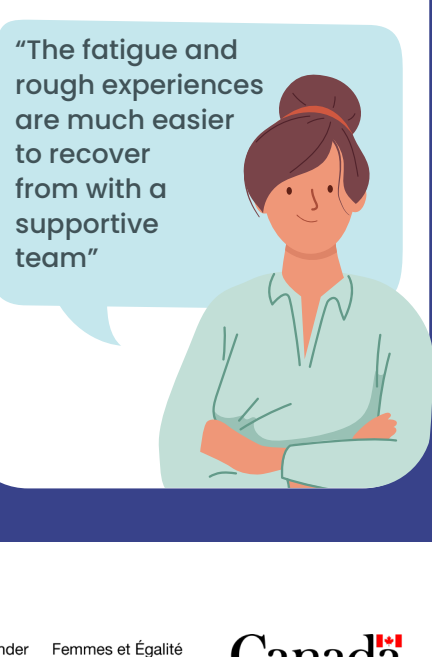
GBV workers impact communities and see the benefits of the important work they do



Workers feel positively about creating change at the individual and societal levels



Supporting GBV workers can mitigate the negatives of occupational stress and help them thrive



BUILDING SUPPORTS FOR THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE WORKFORCE



Ending Violence ASSOCIATION OF CANADA



Women and Gender Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada



References

*<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women>

Data is from the Ending Violence Association of Canada's National Questionnaire on the Gender-Based Violence Workforce in Canada, completed by 420 respondents who self-identified as carrying out GBV work in Canada. To learn more, go to endingviolencecanada.org