



Indigenous and  
Northern Affairs Canada

Affaires autochtones  
et du Nord Canada

***Final Report***

***Evaluation of the Family  
Violence Prevention  
Program***

***Project Number: 1570-7/10024***

May 2017

Evaluation, Performance  
Measurement, and Review Branch  
Audit and Evaluation Sector



Canada 

# Table of Contents

---

<i>List of Acronyms</i> .....	<i>ii</i>
<i>Executive Summary</i> .....	<i>iii</i>
<i>Management Response and Action Plan</i> .....	<i>vi</i>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview .....	1
1.2 Federal Context and Program Profile .....	1
<b>2. Evaluation Methodology</b> .....	<b>8</b>
2.1 Evaluation Scope and Timing .....	8
2.2 Evaluation Questions .....	8
2.3 Evaluation Methodology and Data Sources.....	8
2.4 Roles, Responsibilities and Quality Assurance .....	10
<b>3. Evaluation Findings: INAC’s Role in Responding to Family Violence: Relevance</b> .....	<b>11</b>
3.1 INAC’s Response to Family Violence .....	11
3.2 Working Relationship with Other Federal Departments .....	15
<b>4. Evaluation Findings: Shelter Capacity and Performance (Effectiveness / Success)</b> .....	<b>20</b>
4.1 Shelter Facilities - Programs and Services .....	20
4.2 Shelter Operations .....	25
<b>5. Evaluation Findings - Prevention Programs: Design and Delivery</b> .....	<b>29</b>
5.1 Funding Approach to Prevention Projects .....	29
5.2 Partnerships in Prevention.....	33
5.3 Impacts of Prevention Programs .....	39
<b>6. Conclusions and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>41</b>
6.1 Recommendations.....	43
<i>Appendix A - Bibliography</i> .....	<i>44</i>
<i>Appendix B – Annex Documents</i> .....	<i>46</i>

## ***List of Acronyms***

---

CMHC	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
FVPP	Family Violence Prevention Program
INAC	Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
NACAFV	National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police

# Executive Summary

---

## Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program

The following executive summary provides a snapshot of the key elements of the Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP) evaluation report. The reader may refer to the Table of Contents for areas of specific interest in the body of the report.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has funded shelter support for Indigenous women dating back to the late 1970s beginning with shelter reimbursements for Indigenous women using provincial shelters. The Family Violence Prevention Program was introduced in 1988 as part of a pan-government Family Violence Initiative. The current evaluation by INAC's Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch (EPMRB) finds that **work to reinforce the 41 shelter network (quality of service delivery) has been a key and important focus since the previous evaluation.** However, the impacts for prevention programming could be enhanced through **systematic attention and collaboration on learning, and expanding** from the roster of mostly small-scale prevention approaches supported by FVPP to date.

### FVPP is...

One of five social programs supported by INAC to **ensure First Nations women, men and children are active participants in social development within their communities.**

This ultimate outcome is buttressed by a mid-term result—specific to Child and Family Services and FVPP- which emphasizes the **safety** of men, women and children on-reserve.

The FVPP staff see themselves primarily as a conduit for funding community-based needs and remain at a distance from decisions about the daily operations of shelters and the design and roll-out of prevention programs. The FVPP staff, situated mostly at INAC regional offices, play an important review function of the dozens of proposals received annually for prevention funding.

This report presents the findings of an evaluation conducted by INAC's EPMRB. The evaluation assessed the relevance of FVPP, the intersections with federal partners, the emerging considerations, and the capacity of shelters and staff. It also reviewed the needs of clients, and the design and delivery of prevention programming. Finally, the report also examined possible intersections with other evaluations led by INAC.

### The program funds and leads:

1. **Shelter Operations** – the daily operating, infrastructure and staffing costs associated with running 41 women's shelter/safe house in/near First Nations.
2. **Prevention Programs** – regions launch an annual Call for Proposals for on-reserve activities, while INAC Headquarters issues a national off-reserve call for proposals. Costs covered include activity costs, honorariums for instructors, counsellors.
3. **Policy Dialogue and Engagement** – with Family Violence Initiative, federal, provincial and territorial advocacy groups, provincial counterparts, INAC programs.

The evaluation incorporated these lines of evidence:

- literature review;
- program document review;
- administrative and financial data analysis;
- on-line shelter survey (directors, staff and clients);
- key informant interviews; and
- site visits to four communities (Akwasasne, Mishkeegogamang (Ontario, Quebec); Fort Qu'Appelle (Saskatchewan), and Sampson and Sucker Creek (Alberta).

## **Outcomes - Relevance**

The program remains relevant today in the wake of the launch of the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2016), results from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) and the continued growth in incidence—on-reserve—of family violence in First Nations communities. Since the last evaluation (2012), INAC has made significant progress in consolidating funding support to 41 women's shelters across the country and expanding training opportunities for directors and staff (through Budget 2016 investments). The 2016 budget will also lead to the construction of five new shelters over three years.

INAC works at arm's length of shelter operations, instead enabling responsibility by band councils and shelter directors for key operational decisions on staffing, wages and service standards for clients.

## **Shelter Use and Capacity**

The evaluation found that the shelter is often used for longer periods of time by clients—particularly in more remote communities—suffering from addictions, mental health issues and requiring other housing options. While not to the same degree as women, men also face violence from their intimate partners. According to an online survey of shelter clients, three out of four shelter users have used INAC shelters at least once before.

The evaluation found that many women transit to larger urban communities off-reserve and tap into provincially funded services, thus putting into question how INAC's shelter network intersects with other service providers and whether an approach of expanding geographical coverage is the answer.

The evaluation found, using the Family Violence service continuum, that most of FVPP's services fall into the category of “emergency response.” The vast majority of shelter directors, staff, clients, and health service providers underscored the necessity for more transitional or second stage, post-crisis housing and to increase prevention and treatment programs for men and boys.

## **Prevention Program Design and Delivery**

Layering prevention work onto the responsibilities of shelter directors and staff is a challenge given the time commitment they have already to crisis / shelter work with clients. As such, the evaluation found that more focused attention is required to staffing and support to prevention work, overall, in the program, and an effort to re-calibrate the overall funding structure to see more emphasis on community engagement and prevention.

The FVPP has made strides in engaging community stakeholders through its Call for Proposal process but it remains inefficient with respect to numbers of proposals that are reviewed for the very limited funds available for communities. The decision making on prevention rests with INAC regional offices. The evaluation found that a range of delivery mechanisms exist for prevention efforts, however, where aggregate models have been used - in particular Prevention Boards in Alberta and Manitoba - more success has been noted in deepening the knowledge and skill of prevention workers.

Efforts to include off-reserve organizations in a separate call for proposals are noted as a positive development. Very little evidence is available on community impacts of prevention programming due to the small-scale nature of most initiatives and lack of comparative data gathered at source.

### **Evaluation Recommendations**

1. Strengthen prevention activities by:
  - a) Developing an inventory of existing prevention program delivery models (e.g., First Nation community-led, Tribal Council, other civil society organizations, theme-specific aggregate model) in order to encourage the application of good practices in each region.
  - b) Drawing from the inventory exercise focus on leveraging existing expertise in order to establish aggregate models, similar to those functioning in Alberta and Manitoba, where appropriate.
  - c) Providing Indigenous communities and their representatives with the tools that will help increase their capacity to plan, implement and oversee effective prevention activities.
2. Strengthen FVPP's focus on increasing the accessibility and/or availability of transitional housing in strategic locations. Specifically:
  - a) Reinforce data collection and reporting requirements to improve understanding of the existing levels of capacity in FVPP-funded shelter network.
  - b) Consider repurposing select emergency facilities for transitional housing services as new data on shelter capacity becomes available.
3. Adopt a more structured effort in support of mentorship and knowledge-sharing among the INAC supported network to enhance the capacity of shelter staff to meet the varied needs of community members.
4. Increase Indigenous clients' access to the range of services available by:
  - a) Building upon existing information sharing efforts aimed at coordinating the alignment of federally funded programs.
  - b) Engaging in the strategic mapping of provincial and territorial services.
5. Examine the requirements for, and draft a comprehensive prevention strategy to reach more adult men and male youth with culturally relevant prevention programming.

# ***Management Response and Action Plan***

---

**Project Title: Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program**

**Project #: 1570-7/10024**

## **1. Management Response**

This Management Response and Action Plan (MRAP) for the Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP) has been developed in the context of the reform of First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS). While the FVPP and FNCFS are distinct programming activities at Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), it is important to note that planning and commitments made in this MRAP have been developed while accounting for the continuing evolution of FNCFS.

As well, the development of this MRAP has been informed by the ISC approach toward planning and reporting as seen in, for example, the Departmental Results Framework and the Performance Information Profile for the Family Violence Prevention Program. Specifically, both this Management Response and Action Plan and the program's logic model and associated performance measurement (e.g., indicators) are closely aligned. Future monitoring of the program's performance and evolution will come from the perspective of both regular Management Response and Action Plan updates to the Department's Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee and through the program's performance measurement approach.

## 2. Action Plan

Recommendations	Actions	Responsible Manager (Title / Sector)	Planned Start and Completion Dates
<p>1. Strengthen prevention activities by:</p> <p>a) Developing an inventory of existing prevention program delivery models (e.g., First Nation community-direct, Tribal Council, other civil society organizations, theme-specific aggregate model) in order to encourage the application of good practices in each region.</p> <p>b) Drawing from the inventory exercise by focusing on leveraging existing expertise in order to establish aggregate models, similar to those functioning in Alberta and Manitoba, where appropriate.</p> <p>c) Providing Indigenous communities and their representatives with the tools that will help increase their capacity to plan, implement and oversee effective prevention activities.</p>	<p>We <b>do</b> concur.</p> <p>a) The ISC Family Violence Prevention Program will collaborate with partners such as First Nations communities, civil society organizations, provinces/territories and other federal programs to document best practices in family violence prevention.</p> <p>b) As part of documenting best practices in Family Violence Prevention (as seen in a) above), the FVPP will recommend to stakeholders that they explore the potential for establishing region-specific aggregate models for prevention activities.</p> <p>c) Work with ISC-supported and mandated organizations to enhance the capacity of staff in FVPP-supported shelters in their efforts to:</p> <p>i) develop improved/ additional tools and supports for the capacity to plan, implement and oversee effective prevention activities (based on the documentation of best practices seen in a) above).</p> <p>ii) revise the program's data collections (i.e., recipient reporting) to highlight the links between planning and program implementation.</p>	<p>Assistant Deputy Minister</p> <p>Education and Social Development Programs and Partnerships</p>	<p>a) <i>Start Date:</i> September 2018</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> September 2019</p> <p>b) <i>Start Date:</i> September 2019</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> NA / ongoing<sup>1</sup></p> <p>c) i) <i>Start Date:</i> October 2019</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> Target dates vary according to the work plans of organizations funded by the FVPP.</p> <p>A key example with target date March 31, 2019 is the National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence (NACAFV) project to enhance its tools available online. Through the NACAFV website and through social media, national online-discussion forums and groups, research tools such as scales and indices, region-specific resources (e.g.,</p>

<sup>1</sup> The program's focus on leveraging existing expertise to establish aggregate models is part of its ongoing work and so a completion date is not appropriate in this case. Additionally, stipulating a completion date for 3<sup>rd</sup> parties' establishment of aggregate organizations is beyond the mandate/influence of the FVPP.



Recommendations	Actions	Responsible Manager (Title / Sector)	Planned Start and Completion Dates
			<p>information on provincial legislation and regional organizations) will be developed.</p> <p>ii) <i>Start and Completion dates:</i> The program's data collections are reviewed and revised annually through the Department's Reporting Guide development cycle. The most recent review was in summer 2018. It will be finalised in September 2018.</p>
<p>2. Strengthen the FVPP's focus on increasing the accessibility and/or availability of transitional housing in strategic locations. Specifically:</p> <p>a) Reinforce data collection and reporting requirements to improve understanding of the existing levels of capacity in FVPP-funded shelter network.</p> <p>b) Consider repurposing select emergency facilities for transitional housing services as new data on shelter capacity becomes available.</p>	<p>We <b>do</b> concur.</p> <p>a) In order to better understand the existing levels of capacity across the FVPP-funded shelter network, the program updates annually its Data Collection Instruments to highlight areas related to capacity levels. For example, the program collects information related to capacity levels (e.g., requests for shelter services vs. turnaways). Information such as this contributes to the use of best practices and the documentation of shelter needs.</p> <p>b) The program will collaborate with ISC-funded shelters and associated organizations (e.g., First Nations) to establish a strategy for repurposing parts of existing emergency facilities where appropriate and feasible given contextual factors and existing resources.</p>	<p>Assistant Deputy Minister</p> <p>Education and Social Development Programs and Partnerships</p>	<p>a) <i>Start and Completion dates:</i> The program's data collections are reviewed and revised annually through the Department's Reporting Guide development cycle. The most recent review was in summer 2018. It will be finalised in September 2018.</p> <p>b) <i>Start Date:</i> December 2018</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> December 2019</p>
<p>3. Adopt a more structured effort in support of mentorship and knowledge-sharing among the ISC supported shelter network to enhance the capacity of shelter staff to meet the varied needs of community members.</p>	<p>We <b>do</b> concur.</p> <p>To support continued enhancement of mentorship and knowledge sharing among ISC-funded shelter staff, the program will utilize the best practices identified in 1a above in order to develop a strategic approach to supporting mentorship and knowledge sharing among the ISC-supported shelter network.</p>		<p><i>Start Date:</i> September 2018</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> March 2020</p>

Recommendations	Actions	Responsible Manager (Title / Sector)	Planned Start and Completion Dates
<p>4. Increase Indigenous clients' access to the range of services available by:</p> <p>a) Building upon existing information sharing efforts aimed at coordinating the alignment of federally funded programs.</p> <p>b) Engaging in the strategic mapping of provincial and territorial services.</p>	<p>We <b>do</b> concur.</p> <p>The ISC Family Violence Prevention Program will:</p> <p>a) i) work closely with Status of Women Canada to ensure that the National Strategy to Address and Prevent Gender-Based Violence includes Indigenous perspectives as it is a target group under the Strategy. The first deliverable to be supported by ISC is the Knowledge Centre (SWC lead). ii) ensure strong ISC representation on the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group for the Family Violence Initiative.</p> <p>b) seek opportunities to collaborate with provinces and territories to develop a "snapshot" report documenting available services for family violence protection and prevention, whether provincial, territorial or federal, and their availability/ proximity to Indigenous clients. This effort will support initiatives designed to enhance access to these services.</p>	<p>Assistant Deputy Minister</p> <p>Education and Social Development Programs and Partnerships</p>	<p>a) i) <i>Start Date:</i> The Strategy was announced in June 2017.</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> Fall 2018 (SWC lead)</p> <p>ii) Start and Completion dates are not applicable as the Family Violence Initiative (lead by PHAC) is ongoing.</p> <p>b) <i>Start Date:</i> October 2018</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> October 2019</p>
<p>5. Examine the requirements for, and in cooperation with First Nations, draft a comprehensive prevention strategy to reach more adult men and male youth with culturally relevant prevention programming.</p>	<p>We <b>do</b> concur.</p> <p>The program will work with First Nations, other federal departments, and regional and national organizations involved in supporting Indigenous people experiencing family violence issues to develop and implement a strategy to address the needs of Indigenous men and boys, both as victims of family violence and as perpetrators.</p>	<p>Assistant Deputy Minister</p> <p>Education and Social Development Programs and Partnerships</p>	<p><i>Start Date:</i> November 2018</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> May 2019</p>

# 1. Introduction

---

## 1.1 Overview

This is the final report of the evaluation of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC) Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP). It was conducted as part of the Department's approved Five Year Plan on Evaluation and Performance Measurement Strategies (2015) and in accordance with the 2016 Treasury Board *Policy on Results*. While informing policy, the evaluation primarily aims to address the relevance and performance of the following program authority: *Contributions to support culturally appropriate family violence shelter and prevention services for Indian women, children and families resident on-reserve.*

The report presents findings covering the 2012-13 to 2015-16 fiscal year periods. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide a credible, reliable and timely assessment of the FVPP.

### Structure of the Report

This report is divided into six key sections. Section 1 summarizes the federal response to family violence on-reserve, including a profile of the FVPP. Section 2 details the methodology used to conduct the evaluation. Sections 3 to 5 present evaluation findings, and Section 6 discusses the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations.

## 1.2 Federal Context and Program Profile

Family violence is a broad concept that includes the abuse of children, youth, intimate partners and elders. It includes physical assault, intimidation, mental or emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, deprivation, and financial exploitation. It is a complex social problem with serious consequences for individuals, families and society.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.2.1 Federal Context

Indigenous women make up four percent of Canada's female population; however, they represent 16 percent of all murdered women and 12 percent of all missing women on record (1980-2012).<sup>3</sup> On August 4, 2016, the federal government launched the independent national Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The mandate of the inquiry is to "examine and report on the systemic causes of all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada and look at patterns and underlying factors."<sup>4</sup> The launch of the inquiry is an important step in the national recognition of the long-standing cycle of violence and harm experienced by Canada's Indigenous women and girls, and a social problem that affects Indigenous communities across the country.

---

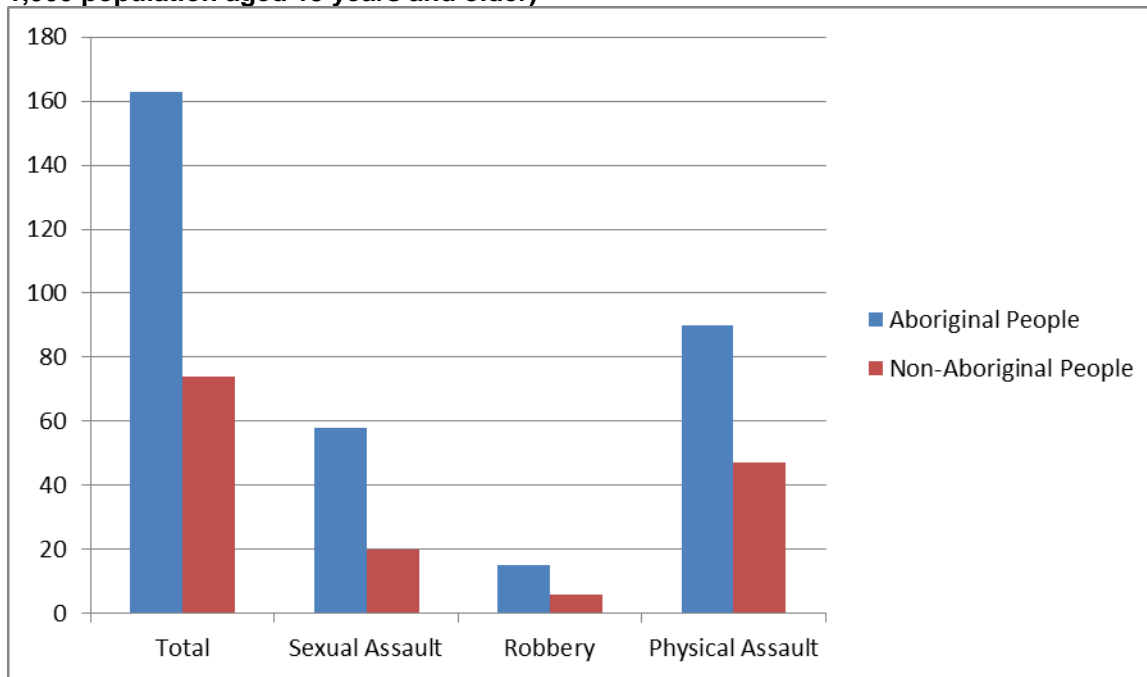
<sup>2</sup> "What is family violence?" Public Health Agency of Canada: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sfv-avf/info/fv-eng.php>.

<sup>3</sup> Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls: A National Operational Overview: <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-national-operational-overview>.

<sup>4</sup> Mandate of the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: <http://www.mmiwg-ffjda.ca>.

On June 28, 2016, Statistics Canada released a study entitled *Victimization of Aboriginal people in Canada, 2014*. The study, which highlights the continued relevance of delivering family violence prevention in Indigenous communities, focused on the prevalence of various types of victimization and the characteristics of victims, such as gender, age and other risk factors. The study also notes that the overall rate of violent victimization of Indigenous women is 2.2 times higher than that of non-Indigenous women (i.e., 163 versus 74 incidents per 1000 people). This is illustrated in Graph 1.<sup>5</sup> The study notes that prior to age 15, Indigenous women are nearly three times as likely as their male counterparts to experience both physical and sexual maltreatment, i.e., 14 percent compared to five percent.<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 1: Violent Victimization Incidents Reported by Indigenous (Aboriginal) People and Non-Indigenous (Aboriginal) People (By type of violent offence, provinces and territories. Rate per 1,000 population aged 15 years and older)**



**Note:** All differences between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people are statistically significant, except for robbery.

**Source:** “*Victimization of Aboriginal People in Canada*,” 2014 Statistics Canada Study.

<sup>5</sup> “Victimization of Aboriginal People in Canada,” 2014 Statistics Canada Study: (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/160628/dq160628a-eng.htm>).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

The study also found that Indigenous women are more than twice as likely to experience the most severe forms of physical spousal violence. Over 48 percent reported being sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, or threatened with a gun or knife.<sup>7</sup> As well, an Amnesty International 2014 Report found that there was a “disproportionate incidence of violence against Indigenous women in Canada.”<sup>8</sup> In a 2009 government survey of the ten provinces, Indigenous women were nearly three times more likely than non-Indigenous women to report being a victim of a violent crime.”<sup>9</sup>

## Federal Government Response

In general, the chronology of the federal government’s engagement and response to family violence in Indigenous communities dates back almost 40 years. Table 10 in Appendix B provides a full overview of the federal government response. Some milestones include:

- **1978:** INAC begins its involvement in family violence prevention by providing shelter reimbursements to some provincial governments and to the Yukon territorial government.<sup>10</sup>
- **1988:** Start of the Family Violence Initiative and a supporting network of 13 federal government departments.
- **1998:** Statistics Canada releases its first Family Violence in Canada study.
- **2016:** Federal Budget provides new funds to address Family Violence:
  - \$10.4 million over three years for the renovation and construction of five new shelters for victims of family violence in First Nation communities; and
  - \$33.6 million over five years and up to \$8.3 million ongoing in additional funding to better support shelters serving family violence victims in First Nations communities, including some attention to training initiatives.

The federal response to family violence, led and coordinated through the Public Health Agency of Canada led Family Violence Initiative, has varied.<sup>11</sup> Table 1 highlights the Family Violence Initiative and the partner departments/agencies involved.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> “Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada: A Summary of Amnesty International’s Concerns and Call to Action,” retrieved from:

[https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/iwfa\\_submission\\_amnesty\\_international\\_february\\_2014\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/iwfa_submission_amnesty_international_february_2014_-_final.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Shannon Brennan, “Violent victimization of Aboriginal women in the Canadian provinces, 2009,” Statistics Canada: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11439-eng.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> “Terms of Reference” (2009), Audit of Family Violence Prevention Program.

<sup>11</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada is leading a horizontal evaluation on the Family Violence Initiative (began in December 2016), which will inform future work among departmental partners.

**Table 1: Family Violence Initiative Partnerships**

The Family Violence Initiative	Partner Departments/Agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims to prevent and respond to family violence by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reforming and implementing laws to help women victims of violence (Justice Canada)</li> <li>– Enforcing laws (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Public Safety)</li> <li>– Designing initiatives to help deal with the root causes of family violence, including addictions, mental health and intergenerational abuse experienced by Canada’s Indigenous populations (Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada)</li> <li>– Building and supporting a network of on-reserve shelters (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s Shelter Enhancement Program and INAC’s FVPP)</li> <li>– Incorporating gender and cultural considerations into community awareness raising, programs and other tools (Canadian Heritage, INAC and Status of Women)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada</li> <li>• Status of Women Canada</li> <li>• Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation</li> <li>• Canadian Heritage</li> <li>• Royal Canadian Mounted Police</li> <li>• Health Canada</li> <li>• Justice Canada</li> <li>• Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada</li> <li>• Employment and Social Development Canada</li> <li>• Public Safety</li> <li>• Statistics Canada</li> <li>• Service Canada</li> <li>• Public Health Agency of Canada</li> </ul>

Over the years, the FVPP has evolved to more effectively respond to the complex challenge affecting the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples. During the period covered by the evaluation, the 2014 introduction of Canada’s Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes Against Aboriginal Women and Girls provided the FVPP with some funds<sup>12</sup> increasing its annual budget allotments to approximately \$33 million per year; this supported the expansion of the programs’ work to fund off-reserve initiatives to address family violence (See Table 10 in Appendix B).

### ***1.2.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes***

The expected results of the FVPP are articulated in the Social Development Performance Measurement Strategy under the “People” Strategic Outcome; there are five programs in total nested under this umbrella strategy, including FVPP.<sup>13</sup> This evaluation focused primarily on the immediate outcomes related directly to FVPP:

#### **Immediate Outcomes**

- Men, women and children in need or at-risk have access to and use FVPP prevention and protection supports and services;
- Existing prevention projects’ effectiveness is maximized;
- Existing levels of shelter capacity is sufficient to meet FVPP objectives; and
- The effectiveness of partnerships and coordination is maximized.

<sup>12</sup> In 2014, \$1.34 million transferred to INAC from Canadian Heritage.

<sup>13</sup> Performance Measurement Strategy - 2.2 Social Development. The umbrella strategy covers five key programs. They include: Income Assistance; National Child Benefit; Assisted Living; First Nations Child and Family Services; and Family Violence Prevention.

The scope of the evaluation was expanded to look at the linkages with Child and Family Services as included in the Intermediate Outcome: Men, women, and children are safe.<sup>14</sup>

### ***1.2.3 Program Governance, Key External Stakeholders and Beneficiaries***

The FVPP is managed by the Children and Families Branch, Education and Social Development Program and Partnerships Sector. INAC provides operational funding for shelters to First Nations in each province and in the Yukon Territory. These funds are used to support the operation of shelters that primarily serve First Nation women and children on-reserve.

In 1992, under an agreement with the Province of Alberta (“Arrangement for the Funding and Administration of Social Services”), INAC has the authority to reimburse costs for off-reserve, provincially funded shelter services used by on-reserve residents, while the province pays per diems to the shelter for all women who used the on-reserve shelter but are not residents of the reserve.

In the Yukon where there are no reserves, the FVPP reimburses the territorial government for shelter services. All First Nations clients are considered ‘ordinarily residents on-reserve’ in this territory and have access to all shelters and their services.

#### *Key External Stakeholders*

INAC’s external stakeholders include:

- Federal government Family Violence Initiative partners (Table 1). Consultations occur with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) on shelter funding proposals; with Health Canada and the Assembly of First Nations on the First Nations Mental Health and Wellness Continuum Framework; and with Status of Women on the Gender Based Violence strategy.
- Eligible Recipients for FVPP Funding: First Nations; tribal councils; other aggregations of First Nations approved by Chief and Council or, an authority, board, committee or other entities providing family violence protection and prevention services.
- The National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence (NACAFV): A national Indigenous organization to which the FVPP provides core and project-based funding. The organization is mandated to provide support to INAC-funded shelter directors and front-line shelter personnel.

#### *Beneficiaries*

- The Indigenous men, women and children living on-reserve and off-reserve affected by family violence.

---

<sup>14</sup> The Intermediate Outcome encompasses two of INAC’s social programs, namely First Nation Child and Family Services and FVPP.

### 1.2.4 Program Resources

The FVPP has two key program components for which it provides funding and which focused on protection and prevention.

- **Protection** (approximately 75 percent of the budget): Funding for the day-to-day operations of a network of shelters that provide services for women and children living on-reserve in provinces and in the Yukon. The funding envelope for protection includes the salaries of shelter directors and staff who run the network of INAC facilities and offer varying degrees of prevention programming at the shelter or in the community, as part of their regular work duties;<sup>15</sup> and
- **Prevention** (approximately 25 percent of the budget): Funding for annual or multi-year community-driven prevention projects such as public awareness campaigns, conferences, workshops, stress and anger management seminars, support groups, and community needs assessments on- and off-reserve.

INAC's 2016-17 Report on Plans and Priorities states that there are 12 Human Resources (full-time equivalents). However, the regions, as indicated in the 2012 INAC evaluation, do not have a full-time equivalent dedicated to the FVPP as they manage other programs, for instance, the First Nations Child and Family Services.

Table 2 outlines the resources.

**Table 2: Family Violence Prevention Program Cost and Source of Funds**<sup>1617</sup>

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Total
<b>Vote</b>	<b>Actual</b>				<b>Planned</b>	
<b>Vote 1 Personnel Salary and Operation and Maintenance</b>	121,044	995,955	963,890	1,007,245	1,764,099	4,852,234
<b>Vote 10 Grants and Contributions</b>	33,969,978	31,428,789	31,036,124	32,007,889	35,705,393	164,148,173
<b>Non-budgetary expenditures</b>	12,767	146,246	144,451	143,877	281,010	728,352
<b>Total</b>	34,103,789	32,570,991	32,144,466	33,159,012	37,750,502	169,728,761

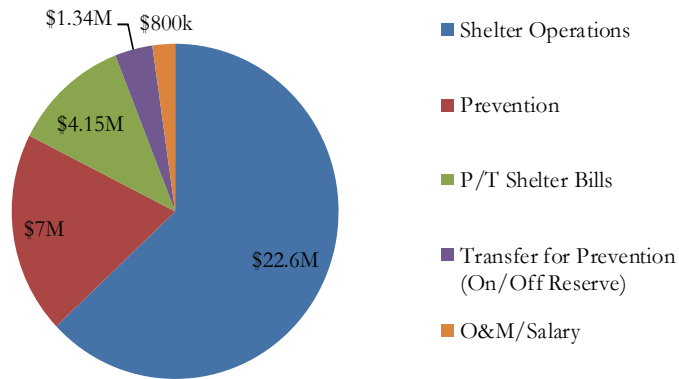
<sup>15</sup> According to feedback from shelter directors / online staff survey conducted by INAC, protection work consumes the largest proportion of their workday compared to prevention-specific activities. In some shelters where a specific "outreach officer" was identified, a higher proportion of prevention programming was offered/available in the community as per Akwesasne model (See Section 5.2.2).

<sup>16</sup> New funding as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, as part of a transfer from Canadian Heritage (through Canada's *Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes Against Aboriginal Women and Girls*).

<sup>17</sup> Data received from FVPP program official.



**Figure 2: FVPP total allocations 2016-2017 (36.5M)**



P/T: Provincial/Territorial

O&M: Operations and Maintenance

Funds for the FVPP are primarily disbursed at a regional/community level by INAC regions:

- Funding for the operation of shelters is based on a national proposal-based funding formula, developed in 2006 and designed to establish regional allocations and shelter operating budgets that are fair and consistent across Canada. Shelter allocations consider the size of the shelter, its province of operation, geographic location and, where applicable, the costs associated with remoteness and emergency needs.
- Family violence prevention activities are funded on a project basis in most regions, with some INAC regions placing emphasis on selecting projects based on partnerships and maximizing reach.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Since the program was last evaluated in 2012, there has been a move towards aggregate prevention funding in higher-capacity organizations in some regions, particularly Saskatchewan and Alberta. This model will be discussed in further detail in Section 5.1.1.

## 2. Evaluation Methodology

### 2.1 Evaluation Scope and Timing

The evaluation examined FVPP activities between 2012-2013 and 2015-2016. Terms of Reference<sup>19</sup> were approved by INAC's Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee on June 22, 2016. Fieldwork was conducted between November 2016 and January 2017.

### 2.2 Evaluation Questions

The evaluation issues of Relevance, Design and Delivery, and Performance were addressed under the following questions:

1. Is the FVPP an appropriate response to family violence in Indigenous communities?
2. What are the key issues that the FVPP should address in order to meet its objectives in response to the 2012 INAC evaluation recommendations?
3. Design and Delivery: Are shelters meeting the needs of clients in terms of access and service?
4. Performance: How effective are prevention programs? What opportunities exist to improve their impact?
5. Does the current FVPP funding structure contribute to efficient program delivery?
6. To what extent is the FVPP achieving its expected outcomes (impacts on those affected)?

### 2.3 Evaluation Methodology and Data Sources

Evaluation findings and observations are based on the following lines of evidence: media and literature reviews; document, data and file reviews; key informant interviews; site visits; and an online survey for shelter directors, staff and clients. The literature review compiled in support of the evaluation covered a cross-section of national data and some international literature from both academic and practitioners' sources (Bibliography in Appendix A). The total number of individuals interviewed by the evaluation team was 91 (See groupings in Table 3).

**Table 3: Number of Interviewees by Organization Type**

Organization Type	Number of Interviewees
National Indigenous Organizations	7
INAC Headquarters	7
INAC Regions	11
Other Federal Departments	7
Provincial Governments	5
Site Visit Interviews ( met with four communities in total)	47
First Nation's Community Organization Representatives (phone outreach)	7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>91</b>

<sup>19</sup> "Terms of Reference: Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program," Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2016.

Four site visits (Ontario = two; Saskatchewan = one; and Alberta = one) were undertaken. The sites were identified in collaboration with INAC’s FVPP officials, with the goal of reviewing existing FVPP operations within or close to Indigenous communities, and examining the FVPP’s role and experience at each site (See Table 4). The site visits included focus group sessions with FVPP service providers, interviews with provincial government officials, Indigenous organizations, community service providers and clients.

**Table 4: Family Violence Prevention Program Evaluation Sites Visited**

Location	Rationale for Selection of the Four Site Visits
Ontario (Akwasasne Mohawk Nation) <i>Iethinisten:ha Women’s Shelter</i>	Opened in 1993. Considered by many to be a high-capacity and ‘best practice’ model. The Shelter is well-supported by the community and is unique in that it serves multiple jurisdictions (Ontario, Quebec and the United States of America).
Northern Ontario (Mishkeegogamang First Nation) <i>Mishkeegogamang Safe House</i>	Recently opened (2016) after a period of closure due to management issues. The shelter is road accessible but otherwise relatively isolated. It was selected to underscore the challenges of delivering support in a more isolated setting.
Saskatchewan (File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council) <i>Fort Qu’Appelle Safe Haven</i>	Opened in 1995. The shelter has helped to identify changing needs and issues in the area. It is recognized for having developed and delivered a prevention model that is based on cultural and traditional family values.
Alberta (Three Eagles Wellness Society) <i>Sampson/Sucker Creek First Nations</i>	Established in 1991. The Society is a FVPP fund recipient, acting as an intermediary with all three Treaty areas in Alberta. It is an example of a “Prevention Board” that supports the identification of needs and delivery of family violence prevention programs in these communities. <sup>20</sup>

Seventy-five surveys were completed by shelter directors, staff and current clients of shelters; some were completed online and some on paper (See Table 5).

**Table 5: FVPP Number of Survey Respondents by Respondent Type**

Online Survey	Number of Respondents	Response Rate
Shelter Director	24/41 <sup>21</sup>	59%
Shelter Clients	23	N/A
Shelter Staff	28/41 <sup>22</sup>	68%
<b>Total:</b>	75	N/A

Each of the 41 INAC-funded facilities received electronic links for all three individualized surveys. Staff, excluding shelter directors, were asked to complete one survey per shelter as a “team.”<sup>23</sup> Directors provided paper copies to current clients in-house and requested their consent to participate.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Note that there is another Prevention Board in Circling Buffalo, located in Manitoba.

<sup>21</sup> Shelter directors responded one per shelter/facility.

<sup>22</sup> Denotes a team response for each shelter and not individual staff person responses.

<sup>23</sup> Some larger shelter facilities have up to nine to ten staff whereas smaller facilities have only three or four paid staff.

<sup>24</sup> Special consideration was given to ensure shelter client survey was not requesting personal information or sensitive information that would potentially re-traumatize an individual.

### ***2.3.1 Considerations, Strengths and Limitations***

#### *Considerations*

A working group was established composed of representatives from key government departments engaged in the Family Violence Initiative, with whom INAC maintains a regular contact.<sup>25</sup> It also included a representative from an external advocacy organization.<sup>26</sup> The group reviewed and commented on the evaluations' findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Two meetings of the working group were held.<sup>27</sup>

#### *Strengths*

The online survey, using a simple web-based platform, reached INAC's entire network of 41 shelters. Where requested, paper copies were also made available to shelters. The use of an on-line survey proved effective as it allowed the evaluation to gather information directly from shelter directors, staff and shelter clients. Receiving feedback from shelter clients was particularly important because previous evaluations had not collected input from this group. In addition, FVPP program officials administered a survey (2016) as part of overall program data collection efforts. This survey supported data triangulation, as it included details on shelters' needs, as well as the role of the NACAFV in ensuring better training and supports for Indigenous communities.

#### *Limitations*

*Data:* Inconsistent reporting on shelter usage; lack of information on proportion of beds used for emergency versus transition purposes; and, on length of stay of clients.<sup>28</sup>

*Number of Site Visits:* Given the allotted time for data collection, only four sites were visited (Table 4). A broader sample of shelters and prevention activities would have been advantageous to compare, particularly in how they relate to provincial networks, engage communities.

*Site Selection:* The selection of the site visits was not randomized. To compensate for the limited number of site visits, communities employing different prevention approaches were selected.

## **2.4 Roles, Responsibilities and Quality Assurance**

The Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch led the evaluation study. To complement its activities, the Branch engaged Auguste Solutions and Associates Inc., an Indigenous private sector consultancy experienced in program evaluation and INAC social programming. Quality assurance was ensured by an internal branch review process, the use of a working group to provide guidance and rigorous review, and through an internal departmental review and approval process.

---

<sup>25</sup> See Section 1.2.4.

<sup>26</sup> The Native Women's Association of Canada.

<sup>27</sup> Meetings were held on October 25, 2016, and February 17, 2017.

<sup>28</sup> FVPP programmers noted that data was mostly collected by hand (at shelter level) and sent manually (scanned, PDF image) to Headquarters staff for review and assessment.

## 3. Evaluation Findings: INAC's Role in Responding to Family Violence: Relevance

---

This section explores the relevance of the program. It looks at whether the FVPP is an appropriate means of responding to family violence in Indigenous communities. It also looks at the key issues that the FVPP should address in order to meet its objectives in response to the recommendations of the 2012 Family Violence Prevention Program Evaluation.

### 3.1 INAC's Response to Family Violence

***Finding 1: There remains a strong need for continued focus by INAC—and other federal government partners—on the issue of family violence. The FVPP draws from its cumulative experience and network to address the significantly higher levels of family violence incidences occurring in First Nations communities.***

The evaluation found that there is a strong continued need for the FVPP (e.g., the provision of funding for emergency shelter responses to family violence experienced by First Nations people and opening up avenues for dialogue about prevention). There also continues to be a need for a range of prevention activities. Program officials, since the last FVPP evaluation (2012), have undertaken 36 on-site shelter visits. The program has also undertaken the development of shelter work plans/prevention project work plans with the goal of assessing shelters' capacity and needs.

The relevance of INAC-funded programming could be optimized further by a more thorough understanding of the systemic causes of family violence and an enhanced connection to other federal, provincial and territorial programs and services that are mandated to work with Indigenous women, children and men. Interviews with other government departments, and internally within INAC, highlight that there are several multi-sectoral prevention approaches currently being applied to address and prevent family violence.

The evaluation found that current shelter operations program funding (\$24 million per year, on average) represents about 75 percent of overall FVPP funding. Meanwhile, available funds to respond to prevention-specific needs equates to \$8 million per year (on average, 25 percent of overall FVPP funding). The consensus amongst those interviewed during this evaluation is that:

- The *crisis response* provided by the shelters is essential; and, the importance of shelters is reinforced by the 2016<sup>29</sup> Federal Budget announcement of funding for the construction of five new shelters, which will raise the number from 41 to 46 over the next three years;
- The need for prevention, considered the only *viable long-term solution* to reducing violence; and,
- Data on FVPP-funded prevention *program impacts* is in limited supply thus contributing to uncertainty over which funded-approaches work the best in achieving long-term results.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> As noted in Section 1.2.1, A-base salary in 2015 plus \$1.34 million transfer from Heritage Canada.

<sup>30</sup> To be discussed in more detail in Section 5.1. The program currently collects a range of information via Data Collection Instruments but these do not provide for a longitudinal analysis against specific criteria, which would be required for impact assessment, (i.e. geographic reach, beneficiary perception of impact, independent review of third party records for example, police and health records)

INAC officials are sensitive to the current funding proportionality (protection vs. prevention), however, interviewees suggested that their role is to support the availability of shelter services and, as funding providers, to respond to community-articulated needs. While there is often overlap between prevention and protection, it is clear that the FVPP focusses the largest portion of its annual funding envelope on shelter operations. In essence, the relevance of the FVPP is as well heightened by the *sine qua non* nature of protection in confronting family violence: ensuring shelter and protection of life by providing safety for victims of abuse. Thus, the primary orientation of program funding towards protection is apparent given that, by its nature, real-time violence requires immediate attention to avert further harm.

The evaluation found that shelters supplement prevention services by leveraging the resources of other stakeholders, including community-based prevention activities, the goal of which is to reduce the incidence of family violence. The relevancy of the FVPP is increased as there appears to be less focus on prevention because of limited funding and varying degrees of community capacity to plan and implement such programs. From a program planning perspective, the results associated with prevention programs are more difficult to track over time in an efficient, consistent manner across First Nations' communities that are using, for the majority of instances, a wide-range of small-scale and disjointed methods. However, notwithstanding the fact that prevention has the potential to produce better outcomes, it is also clear that early detection of family violence could lead to remedies and interventions that will prevent further abuse by holding the abuser accountable and helping to mitigate the consequences of family violence.

The FVPP funding levels for prevention which have remained steady since 1991 (\$7 million a year), points to relevancy. The cost of delivering these programs has not kept pace with the Consumer Price Index inflation rate (36 percent) that has occurred since program inception. This indicates that budget allotments do not appear to consider population growth among the fast-growing First Nation communities.<sup>31</sup>

### ***3.1.1 Factors Contributing to Family Violence in Indigenous Communities***

As noted in the introduction (Federal Context 1.1.2), Indigenous peoples in Canada face a much higher rate of violence in their daily lives and over their lifetime compared to non-Indigenous Canadians. The causes of family violence are complex and, even more so for Indigenous communities. The literature reviewed for the evaluation illustrates the areas impacting the occurrence of family violence and encompass the social determinants of health, including economic and social conditions and their distribution among the Indigenous population.

---

<sup>31</sup> Between 1996 and 2006, the Indigenous population grew at a much faster rate than the non-Indigenous population at 45 percent and eight percent respectively. Projections suggest that the Indigenous population could increase to approximately 1.4 million by 2017 from 1.1 million in 2006. The proportion of the Canadian population that identify themselves as Indigenous is projected to increase to four percent in 2017 from three percent in 2001.

A range of factors can be summarized under two key areas—social and cultural impacts. These include poor socio-economic conditions, high rates of alcoholism and substance abuse, and sub-standard housing. According to the literature review, the most common unifying experience across Canada’s First Nations people is the trauma left by the residential school legacy (Anderson, 2010), which has generated cycles of intergenerational violence.<sup>32</sup> Racism, colonization and residential schools have also had long-term impacts, including a breakdown in connectedness to land and culture, and the impacts of inter-generational trauma on social relationships.<sup>33</sup>

Lack of adequate housing, in general, appears to be a contributing factor to the occurrence of family violence. Crowded living conditions compound the health and violence challenges faced by Indigenous peoples. A safe home requires affordability as well as enough space for the family.

### ***3.1.2 Statistical Knowledge Base***

***Finding 2: Reliable statistical information on the incidence of family violence is challenging to gather as violence is under-reported. The challenge is more acute in Indigenous communities due to multiple barriers to accessing services. These information gaps impede a full understanding of the changing contributing factors and attitudes towards violence.***

The literature review revealed that there is limited to no data about violence facing individuals living *on-reserve*. This is confirmed by such studies as The Transitional Home Survey<sup>34</sup>, and other wide-ranging surveys of Canadians, including Indigenous people living *off-reserve*.<sup>35</sup>

Current Statistics Canada data is obtained through police-reported statistics and self-reported victimization surveys. It is important to note that family violence often goes under-reported or unreported for various reasons, including stigma faced by the victims, perceived influence or mistrust of officials (Child and Family Services or police), manipulation by the perpetrators over younger victims.

The evaluation found that considering the proportion of Indigenous women/people facing domestic violence, the FVPP’s relevancy is compromised by a fundamental challenge to its delivery: the lack of reliable statistical information, which appears to limit the FVPP’s ability to adjust to different contributing factors and realities emerging at national, regional and community levels.

### ***3.1.3 Jurisdictional boundaries in provision of family violence supports***

***Finding 3: There is a tendency for Indigenous women to transition to off-reserve services to seek support.***

---

<sup>32</sup> A broader cross-section of relevant literature was compiled (37 sources) by the National Collaboration Centre for Aboriginal Health in 2009-10.

<sup>33</sup> Shaw, Candice (2013), “The Contours of Family Violence in Indigenous Communities. The Prevalence and Effectiveness of Initiatives Implemented to Address Indigenous Family-Based Violence,” *ISID Aboriginal Policy Study Papers*, McGill University, Montreal.

<sup>34</sup> The Transition Home Survey showed that 60,341 women used family violence shelters in 2013-14. The 2014 General Social Survey showed that about 380,000 women reported spousal violence over the past five years.

<sup>35</sup> Literature Review, “Conclusion.”

According to the literature review, there are 627 women’s shelters (including provincial and territorial funded shelters) in Canada. This shelter network, both on- and off-reserve, includes crisis response shelters, second-stage (transition) housing and other facilities that provide services to women and their children fleeing family violence. In most provinces and territories, services are provided to Indigenous women and children both on- and off-reserve. Data from the 2014 Transition House Survey indicates that around eight percent (49 shelters) of shelters serve mainly on-reserve residents. While three percent (17 shelters) serve exclusively on-reserve clients, five percent (32 shelters) were located on-reserve and some reported also serving women off-reserve. Twenty-seven percent (169 shelters) that primarily serve off-reserve residents also serve people who live on-reserve.

When responding to the online survey administered as part of the evaluation, shelter workers in INAC funded facilities suggested that many women seek refuge elsewhere (beyond their resident First Nation community) for a variety of reasons.<sup>36</sup>

To validate this information, evaluators visited shelters in “gateway” communities, which facilitate easier access to more remote areas of Ontario in order to understand why and how Indigenous women move from northern, more remote communities to southern shelters, most often to non-INAC funded shelters. Information gathered from these gateway communities indicate that almost all of the shelter clientele arrive from First Nations’ communities in remote northern Ontario where emergency services may not be available or where the women rather choose to leave, corroborating reasons provided through the INAC staff-administered survey. Said a shelter manager,

*“We serve 26 communities, 19 of them are fly in communities. The ones accessible by road—we use taxi transportation to bring them here. We know where the federal shelters are—but sometimes the women just want to leave and come here for their safety.”*

*Provincial Shelter Director*

### **3.1.4 Responsive Model and Mechanism**

***Finding 4: No inventory or mapping of services accessible off-reserve is available to help support strategic program decisions about the construction of new shelter or protection-oriented services.***

Since the last evaluation, the program has worked to support the expansion of its shelter network guided by a proximity analysis<sup>37</sup> to ensure the widest possible coverage of First Nation’s communities served by the existing INAC-funded shelters. However, considering the trend of women desiring to leave their communities and seeking a range of social services off-reserve, the overlay of strategic funding to shelters should not only be guided by coverage among the First Nations, but also by the existing services provided by other off-reserve jurisdictions, as this will ensure that a complementarity of services and cost-efficiencies are arrived at. This may eventually allow for a proportion of existing funding levels to move towards prevention. This re-balance or

---

<sup>36</sup> Survey (n = 23 responding shelters), Shelter workers of the FVPP funded shelters cited the following three reasons women seek shelter off-reserve: desire to obtain transitional housing; desire to access other health/social services (rehabilitation for addictions, mental health counselling); fear for their safety due to perpetrators’ proximity to shelter.

<sup>37</sup> Undertaken in order to inform Family Violence Prevention Program Evaluation 2012 (study completed in 2011).



shift could only occur where off-reserve emergency shelters may be in closer proximity for some First Nations, and/or transportation supports are provided to guide women to nearest available/existing shelter services.

In total, there are 617 First Nations' communities and often times access to both these networks of shelters proves to be an issue. INAC has estimated that 87 percent of the registered Indigenous population is covered by its shelter network (meaning 528 bands either have a shelter located on-reserve or have road access to one of the INAC-funded shelters. (See Table 9 in Appendix B for more detail).

While collaborating with CMHC, the Department maintains, as a priority, its response to community-driven proposals to build shelters in their communities; now with the 2016 Federal Budget, the FVPP is expanding its shelter network.<sup>38</sup> Often, a shelter is prioritized by First Nations' community officials as a tangible and needed response to immediate safety concerns of victims; it appears, however, that perhaps this is done without weighing other options of services available within close proximity. The current role of INAC is to maintain a supportive role in helping those communities fulfill their identified priorities. While not assuming a challenge function, exploiting the possibility of mapping services by looking at the balance of other service providers available in the vicinity could then free up some funding for other equally valuable family violence responses along the Family Violence continuum.<sup>39</sup>

In an era that is now characterized by advances in communications, technology and transportation, a First Nation community's request to build a new shelter within its territory provides a good opportunity, not only to close the distance gap with other unserved First Nations but also to undertake an inventory of support services that are available in neighbouring vicinities, with support for transportation factored in accordingly.

## **3.2 Working Relationship with Other Federal Departments**

In response to a key 2012 INAC FVPP evaluation recommendation, i.e., "strengthen linkages with other departments to ensure that projects are delivered in a coordinated manner to improve access," there is ample evidence suggesting that the FVPP has since worked to maximize its partnership opportunities within the Family Violence Initiative. For instance, in terms of supporting women's shelters on-reserve and providing prevention programming for on-reserve and off-reserve activities, INAC is the lead.

### ***3.2.1 Horizontal Information-Sharing***

***Finding 5: INAC is a part of the federal Family Violence Initiative, which serves primarily as an information-sharing platform. There is some evidence of program collaboration among other departments but it appears to occur mostly on an ad-hoc basis.***

---

<sup>38</sup> In November 2016, a joint committee of INAC and CMHC reviewed a total of 15 proposals in depth to arrive at decision to fund five new shelters according to pre-assessed criteria and importance. A total of 37 proposals were received from First Nations across the country.

<sup>39</sup> Lamontagne, Manon (2011), "Violence Against Aboriginal Women." Scan and Report, Canadian Women's Foundation.

INAC officials meet on a quarterly basis with other Family Violence Initiative departments, as convened by the Public Health Agency of Canada.<sup>40</sup> According to participants, the primary function of the Family Violence Initiative is information-sharing, which to date, has proven valuable.

Evaluators found some evidence, which demonstrates that during the period covered by the evaluation, the Family Violence Initiative<sup>41</sup> forum helped enhance program collaboration. Examples of collaboration include:

- Development of a legal toolkit for women in shelters. INAC funded consultations, and Status of Women funded the development of a toolkit. The Department of Justice funded the in-person training for the staff at 41 shelters.(2014)
- Public Safety worked with Health Canada and the RCMP to determine which First Nations communities might benefit from the Community Safety Planning initiative.(2015)
- Health Canada and the Assembly of First Nations worked together to introduce a First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework. INAC is a part of the implementation team and there has been sharing among Family Violence Initiative partners.(2015)
- INAC and CMHC reviews proposals for shelter site selection and renovations. (ongoing)

The Family Violence Initiative collaboration is occurring primarily in the National Capital Region. The evaluation did not probe to determine whether collaboration occurs among federal counterparts located in regions. This issue was highlighted in a number of interviews with key informants:

*“There needs to be an ongoing mechanism to get all federal departments who are addressing family violence together and making sure that the funds are being spent effectively and sharing where we can.”*

*Other federal department representative*

### **3.2.2 Relationship Among Federal Departments on Family Violence**

***Finding 6: Key partners are concerned about improving alignment among the full complement of federally-funded programs addressing family violence in Indigenous communities.***

The Prime Minister has identified reconciliation with Canada’s Indigenous people as an overarching theme of his government’s approach, and underscored among his Cabinet the importance of addressing recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.<sup>42,43</sup> The Commission’s “Calls to Action” feature several recommendations related to family violence, including calls to address gaps in mental health services, reduce the number of Indigenous people in custody, and create culturally relevant healing centres.

---

<sup>40</sup> In addition, INAC officials sit on a related Federal-Provincial-Territorial Table on the thematic area of family violence, which is also chaired by Public Health Agency of Canada.

<sup>41</sup> There is also the Family Violence Initiative - Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group, which shares knowledge, information and best practices to advance the shared goal of preventing and responding to family violence in Canada. The Working Group is composed of representatives from each of the participating departments and representatives of the lead provincial/territorial ministries responsible for addressing family violence. The Working Group meets by teleconference up to three times per year.

<sup>42</sup> Official Statement (2016) - Prime Minister of Canada. INAC website.

<sup>43</sup> Document Review has identified the following recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action (numbered): 1; 19; 20; 22; 30; 33-36; 37-40; 55).

Another instance of federal departments' opportunity to strengthen their relationship is the five-year, Status of Women-led "Canada's Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes Against Aboriginal Women and Girls" (Economic Action Plan 2014). Federal departments collaborate in terms of support and coordination of efforts, sharing of information and best practices. The Action Plan's three pillars (Preventing Violence, Supporting Aboriginal Victims, and Protecting Aboriginal Women and Girls) indicate the Government of Canada's specific focus on addressing violence that is perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls. Through the Action Plan, Heritage Canada transferred responsibility and funding for *off-reserve* proposals in family violence prevention to INAC in order to better synchronize efforts. (2014)<sup>44</sup>

The interviews with other federal government partners underscored a willingness among working level public servants to share knowledge and practices, however, rarely has it led to much more than cost-sharing agreements around small-scale programs and information-sharing on family violence statistics and programming. This is due to the departmental guidelines and Terms and Conditions, approved by the Treasury Board.

Most interviewees are calling for a major "re-think" of how government works on this issue in order to be more impactful in reducing the incidence of family violence in Indigenous communities. The preferred approach is a combination of improved alignment and a more strategic horizontal engagement that takes advantage of the following opportunities:

- Using the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework to support streamlining programs and policies for enhanced impacts on mental wellness, reconciliation and healing, and overall system level change;
- A proposed Gender Based Violence Strategy to govern program approaches; and,
- A Gender Equality Charter<sup>45</sup> to help support a more strategic and horizontal approach to gender analysis and programming amongst federal public servants.

*"We need to get out of the jurisdictional box and figure out a way to work together on this huge issue. I think the Government's strategy to address Gender Based Violence is a great way to get people to think about breaking down silos."*

*Senior Manager, Government*

---

<sup>44</sup> KII with Other Government Department and INAC officials.

<sup>45</sup> Currently under review by Status of Women Canada.

### 3.3 Learning from other INAC programs

Several events and INAC evaluation reports have been concluded that evaluators find beneficial to the FVPP. These include the Human Rights Tribunal Ruling<sup>46</sup> on Child and Family Services,<sup>47</sup> which INAC has responded to by sending, for instance, a ministerial representative to lead a wide-ranging engagement and consultation process to reform First Nations Family and Child Services.

In interviews with INAC's social program areas and other departments, the Human Rights Tribunal Ruling is viewed as having the potential to influence program design and funding for a broader cross-section of federal government programs which have, up until now, worked within the specific program's parameters without making the most of the potential synergies among them.

*“Child and family (services program) reform might help to catalyze larger-scale changes. There is a rigidity to how (INAC) has worked. You have 20 people sitting in First Nations doing 20 proposals for different funding programs. This is how they become silos in their communities.”* INAC Manager

The following 2012 INAC evaluation findings may also be considered for horizontal learning:

- Evaluation of On-Reserve Housing (January 24, 2017). The literature review for this evaluation noted: “Many circumstances and factors can lead to a family becoming vulnerable, including poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence, physical and mental illness and a lack of adequate housing.”<sup>48</sup>
- Evaluation of the Implementation and Enforcements of Family Homes on Reserve and Matrimonial Real Property Assets (January 24, 2017). Research and preliminary findings indicate that many Indigenous people are not aware of their rights to access the family home after marital breakdown nor are there appropriate supports in the provincial court systems to help them access the legislative tools at their disposal to do so.
- Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (January 24, 2017). This evaluation found a strong need for multi-year funding of initiatives and supports, which was echoed both by shelter directors during FVPP site visits. Further, the need for developing a platform for success stories to benefit community knowledge sharing was identified.

---

<sup>46</sup> In a landmark ruling (January 2016), the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal that found that the Government of Canada discriminates against children in the on-reserve welfare system, underfunding the agencies (up to 38 percent less compared to off-reserve agencies) that are mandated to meet their needs.

<sup>47</sup> November 21, 2016, launch of the Department Performance Report, Ministerial Message excerpt: “The Government of Canada has accepted the decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. The Department provided immediate relief through new investments announced in Budget 2016 to enable the provision of greater prevention services to children and families and establish stability for front-line services. INAC is also committed to working in partnership, and engaging regionally and nationally, on the full-scale reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program.

<sup>48</sup> “Fragile Lives, Fragmented Systems: Strengthening Support for Vulnerable Infants,” 2011. Excerpt from On-Reserve Housing Evaluation Literature Review.

**General Observation 1:** Investing in evidence-based statistical research<sup>49</sup> on family violence occurring in on-reserve communities is essential to better informing and tailoring FVPP approaches. While other federal actors have a role to play in broader data collection at the national level (Statistics Canada, Status of Women), an enhanced FVPP capacity to improve on program data gathering from a paper to an electronic-based system would be beneficial for a more accurate and flexible reporting mechanism.<sup>50</sup> This will also augment alignment between INAC's programs while strengthening its relationship with other federal departments.

---

<sup>49</sup> Linked to findings 2, 3, 4 and 5 refer to information needs. This also links with the Shelter Operations /data collection systems Section (4.1.2) and General Observation 2.

<sup>50</sup> See Section 4.1.2 for shelter-level data collection information.

## **4. Evaluation Findings: Shelter Capacity and Performance (Effectiveness / Success)**

---

This section examines whether shelters are meeting the needs of clients in terms of access and service (Q3); if funding structure(s) are contributing to effective program delivery (Q5); and, overall result impacts of investments (Q6).

A main focus of the FVPP's *protection* component has been on consolidating the shelter network in on-reserve communities by adding five shelters (from 36 to 41 since the 2012 INAC evaluation) and, as announced in Budget 2016, adding another five facilities for a total of 46. In addition, key accomplishments include: renovations to infrastructure and improvements in safety features, and in an increase in training opportunities for shelter staff.<sup>51</sup> As a response to the 2012 INAC evaluation recommendations, the program instituted a regular calendar of site visits across the country in order to ascertain issues emerging across its network of shelters and to incorporate these visits as a regular performance measurement technique. The visits resulted in follow-up actions and remedial measures addressing budget management, shelter governance, and infrastructure needs. Furthermore, the FVPP's own 2016 study/survey of shelter directors helped draw a composite picture of shelter requirements, such as training and infrastructure.

Evaluators found that increasingly, the FVPP is expending more thought and effort to collect data (2016 survey, site visit reporting) across the network of shelters to better understand the strengths and weaknesses as a whole, and not simply as individual shelters. However, a major limitation in tracking trends (e.g. shelter usage) is the lack of consistent, electronic data generated by shelters, which translates into limited data for strategic planning purposes by Headquarters and regional offices.

### **4.1 Shelter Facilities - Programs and Services**

Responses from shelter clients<sup>52</sup> corroborate positive statements on shelter services and general support from shelter staff. Clients noted that the inherent value of the staff extends well beyond their mandate of providing shelter and protection. Clients mentioned that staff went beyond their assigned duties to accompany their clients beyond the crisis phase.

Recurrent themes that emerged throughout the evaluation included the need for enhanced attention to: transition/second stage housing; outreach and prevention programs for young mothers; programming for men and teenage boys; specialized counselling for children who witness violence; and, awareness of elder abuse. Further, a need for staff training, including staff support and self-care, were identified. The need for additional space to accommodate these programs and/or to support clients with co-occurring diagnoses was often cited as an urgent requirement. The recurrent themes pose a challenge to the 41 INAC-funded shelter networks that largely caters to emergency shelter needs. For instance, 18 of these facilities cater to transition needs by committing beds to, or have a

---

<sup>51</sup> Budget 2016 has provided funding for the construction of five new emergency shelters as well as \$4.1 million annually, and ongoing, in operational funding to the existing network of 41 shelters.

<sup>52</sup> The FVPP has collected responses through shelter feedback forms and exit surveys.

specific transition or second stage mandate. See Table 6, which provides the type of services offered and the number of beds available.

**Table 6: Shelter Network Profile** <sup>53</sup>

Type of services offered	Total Shelters (%)	Beds
Only emergency	16 (47.1%)	217 (43.8%)
Only second stage and/or transition	6 (17.6%)	81 (16.3%)
Combined emergency and second stage/transition house	12 (35.3%)	197 (39.8%)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>34</b> <sup>54</sup>	<b>495</b>

Annual operating budgets for shelters vary between \$118,321 (Ross River First Nation, Yukon Territory) to \$934,000 (Six Nations, Ontario) for larger facilities. Approximately 20 percent of INAC funded shelters have a regular supplement from provincial authorities for operating expenditure, some full or part-time staff or for specialized program delivery.

Interviews and site visits confirm that FVPP-funded shelters assist women and children fleeing family violence and when space is available, serve as emergency housing for these same women and others from on-reserve communities. However, and depending on the region/province, shelter or in some cases emergency housing can be provided for Indigenous women outside of the reserve from various locations and distances. For example, some women travel several hours to access shelters as there is no shelter in their community. Barriers to access, including transportation, will be treated in the following section (4.1.1).

Based on the evaluation research, the policy of many shelters on- and off-reserve is not to turn away anyone seeking help. The services provided include counseling, referrals, transportation and support, education and life skills, cultural and traditional teachings, and fitness and recreation activities. Others provide programs with the view of helping children who, by virtue of having witnessed abuse, are also considered trauma victims.

There does not appear to be a common approach as to the number and specific type of services provided. However, a trend that surfaced during the evaluation is that large shelters, with transition housing facilities like those at Akwesasne or Six Nations (which are in proximity to larger cities where access to resources and programming are better), tend to have more highly qualified staff and health and wellness techniques than those in remote and isolated areas. As noted, 20 percent of shelters have additional funds from other sources, which allow them to expand their staff as well as the types of programming available.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Document Review: data retrieved from FVPP Program Shelter Questionnaire 2016.

<sup>54</sup> There was a limitation to this method of gathering data as not all shelters, of the 41 INAC funded shelters, responded to the questionnaire. There were seven from the 41 that did not respond.

<sup>55</sup> This is the case for Akwesasne, which receives 39 percent of its funding from outside sources, and Six Nations, which receives 34 percent of its operating budget from the Province of Ontario's Violence Against Women fund.

Small shelters often serve smaller populations in more remote areas and tend to offer a narrow range of services either due to limitations in budget and in staff capacity. However, to offset this, some shelter directors seek creative and cost-effective solutions to direct women in need of other services to off-reserve facilities where these may be available.

#### **4.1.1 Shelter Use and Barriers to Access**

***Finding 7: Data on shelter use is inconsistent and manually collected across the INAC – funded shelter network. This creates major limitations for programmers in terms of making strategic decisions regarding shelter use and capacity and in responding to calls for increased transitional housing.***

##### *Trends in Use*

The request for more transition housing was a consistent message communicated to the evaluators in interviews and site visits. While the FVPP funded shelters provide essential emergency services for victims of family violence, shelter clients are left in a vulnerable position once they leave the shelter and need to seek residence elsewhere. For these individuals, the risk of continued abuse remains if the alternative is to continue living with the perpetrators.

Given the demonstrated need for transition housing, it is worth considering whether preexisting emergency shelter facilities can be converted to, or function as second stage housing. In the evaluators' survey, 50 percent of the shelter directors who responded stated that their shelters only attained full use capacity twice a year.<sup>56</sup> Where shelters were filled to capacity, most directors and staff stated that they would contact the closest shelter to organize an alternate location for victims seeking emergency services. If coordination between service providers could be further enhanced (as discussed in Section 3.1.4), it would mean that some emergency-designated beds could be converted for transition housing purposes, allowing shelters to transfer clients in times of high capacity. These considerations are essential to further improving the design of FVPP shelter services because it recognizes the issue of family violence as a sequential problem.

A major impediment in making decisions of this nature, identified by evaluators and FVPP programmers is INAC's current system of data collection at shelter source. In an attempt to reduce reporting burden on First Nation's communities, efforts have been made to shorten reporting templates, reduce qualitative information fields and limit frequency of reporting to a minimum. Overall, the current system generates inconsistent data across the facilities and a majority of shelters only collect data manually. This process increases the risk of error and miscounting. For example, the current numbers analysed annually by FVPP programmers on use do not refer to multiple visits by the same individual and/or identify the length of stay as important indicators.

---

<sup>56</sup> Data on shelter usage remains somewhat limited. While information on the number of shelter clients across the 41 FVPP funded shelters exists, there was no statistics on the return rates of these clients. This information is crucial to determining how often shelters are filled to capacity in a given year. Between 50-60 percent of shelter directors and shelter staff noted that their shelters were "at capacity" about twice a year. At most, shelter clients are encouraged to move on from the emergency shelter facility after a three-week crisis period. The shelter staff supports the clients to move to another housing situation after the crisis period. Often, as cited in the shelter survey, clients return.



Such data shortcomings of INAC-funded shelters impede a full review and analysis of the frequency of use and overall trends until sound quantitative data can be generated consistently and over an extended period. Programmers are considering how best to work with Statistics Canada to collect data from INAC funded shelters as part of a shift to a more strategic approach in program analytics.

Further, FVPP programmers referenced the Ontario's Women In Safe Housing (W.I.S.H.) system as a model that could be used for improved data collection on shelter usage. Through the W.I.S.H, the provincial government has linked all shelters in the province (including INAC-funded facilities) to an online data collection system. Shelter staff are trained in the use of the system and must enter all clients' profiles into the system. Interviewees from site visits have suggested that the system allows different shelters to track clients through their continuum of care with other health and social service providers.

The use of a W.I.S.H. (or a similar) system by shelters would enhance data gathering for First Nations and strategic planning for the FVPP. This would encourage the initiation of evaluations of the current reporting system among First Nation shelters and help examine whether and how early appropriate data is collected, is available and accessible in the program's records, what improved outcomes for the victims or families are, and promote changes based on sound research. Moreover, where appropriate data are not accessible, service providers who may wish to engage in or collaborate may not be able to provide or obtain the basic information necessary for their needs and purposes. However, with the appropriate data collected and maintained, critical pathways can be explored in areas in which long-term results may not be easily obtained.

#### *Barriers to Accessing Service*

Accessing shelter programs and services can be problematic. This is evidenced in the evaluation's site visits, focus group sessions, key informant interviews as well as surveys, which confirmed that while some existing shelters record, to some extent, information on their incoming clients, they also serve other communities, which are located at considerable distances from their locations, including remote and isolated northern ones.

While a range of services is offered by shelters, many shelter staff report that clients cannot access them due to an overall lack of awareness of what help may be available to them. This is compounded by other barriers, including, but not restricted to: limited transportation options; sense of isolation or shame; homelessness; unemployment; addiction to illegal substances; family dysfunction; mental health issues; poverty; lack of on- and off-reserve services (e.g., of child care); and a certain amount of "normalization" of violence in the community, which in the first place diminishes an individual's motivation to seek help. Some shelters allow individuals to stay longer, beyond the accepted two to three week crisis period because of reasons such as the dearth of transition houses or the need for mental health and addiction help.

#### *Transportation*

***Finding 8: Transportation (and the lack of money) are serious challenges in Indigenous communities, affecting victims' ability to access shelters and pay for childcare while clients not residing within the shelter are receiving support.***

INAC officials are aware of the barriers that remote communities face with respect to accessibility and transportation. This was acknowledged in 2011 with the attempts to assess geographic analysis / coverage of the network of shelters (see Section 3.1.4). Because of the geographic location of rural Indigenous communities, transportation is a necessary cost. In Alberta, for example, shelters have had to devise ways to transport family violence victims for short distances (local) as well as from distant points and isolated reserves.

The situation is particularly challenging for shelters located in rural, remote and isolated communities where the possibility of partnerships and referrals are more limited. In communities where most community members do not own vehicles, public transport is often non-existent, and services are hard to reach, shelters need local transportation to ensure that their clients are able to access other communities' agencies to obtain health and other services.<sup>57</sup> The Mishkeegogamang First Nation in northwestern Ontario is spread out over two main community sites some 25 km apart, creating pressure on the Band Council to address community transportation; however, there appears to be a lack of funds for an imminent solution.<sup>58</sup> Even if transportation were available, many community members interviewed say that the lack of childcare is also a barrier to attending shelter-sponsored programs.

#### *Quality of facilities*

The document reviews suggests that there is some variance in terms of the adequacy of shelter facilities. In the Online Staff Survey, certain respondents cited a number of issues covering: safety and security (i.e. lighting, alarms); lack of children's play areas and ramps for wheelchairs; and maintenance (i.e. roofing, plumbing). However, these issues appear to be more isolated than systemic; the majority of shelter ratings from the aforementioned survey varied from "reasonable" to "good" in terms of the state of the building.

#### *Culturally appropriate services*

While many shelters offer to varying degrees culturally appropriate services, there remains a need for staff training on cultural sensitivity as noted in the document review. Furthermore, language is seen as a barrier to clients' access to shelter services.<sup>59</sup> There are also clients that would benefit from more programs offered in their native language. At an INAC-funded shelter in Saskatchewan, several programs are designed with the collaboration of elders so that native language is incorporated in the training: according to some interviewees, "language is the spirit of culture, if language dies then the cultural values struggle to survive."

---

<sup>57</sup> See Section 3.1.4 for situation with provincially-funded shelter in Sioux Lookout. According to Shelter Director, an annual budget of \$50,000 to \$60,000 covers transportation of women from outlying communities to her shelter.

<sup>58</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>59</sup> E.g., the need for bilingual service in a transition house in the Atlantic region.

## *Fear of stigma*

The document review further brought to light the fear that clients particularly have of coming forward and accessing shelter services due to confidentiality issues. The communities that house shelters or transitional houses are often times small and everyone knows one another. The shelter staff do what they can to keep the clients protected but no matter how many safety features they have, ‘people talk’.

**General Observation 2:** In order to enhance data collection in First Nation communities, it would be beneficial for the FVPP to explore with provincial/territorial counterparts the existing information management systems (health and social services) available in each province or territory.

## **4.2 Shelter Operations**

***Finding 9: Shelter staff are limited in their capacity to deliver prevention programming in the community as they are fully engaged in protection activities, including shelter client support.***

With respect to shelter operations, the evaluation identified four key challenges faced by shelter staff: shortage of staff; inadequate salary compensation; location of the shelter; and need for training. Each of these areas is discussed briefly below, followed by additional elaboration on training.

1. *Staff shortages.* On evenings and weekends, shelters are typically staffed by just one person, which may limit the shelter’s ability to ensure the safety of both clients and staff. This was a key concern noted by shelter staff in both interviews and survey results. Some changes have occurred to improve the physical barriers, infrastructure, and security of the shelters; however, shortage of staff was noted as a key concern. In the evaluation’s online staff survey, it was noted that the lack of space for beds and the conditions of the shelter infrastructure itself were key staff concerns. During the site visits most shelter directors and staff stated that there was insufficient money to maintain and do major repairs to the shelters.<sup>60</sup>
2. *Inadequate salary compensation.* The issue of insufficient salary came up a number of times. Shelter employees and people involved in prevention projects are critical resources for success. Their skill, commitment, and capacity are essential to maintain services to Indigenous clients who were victims of family violence. According to interviewees and site visits, without annual salary increases, retaining the services of skilled staff is difficult. Additionally, staff turn-over compromises the ability to deliver consistent service and care.
2. *Location of the shelter:* Related to the preceding is a shelter’s location. Knowledge transfer and opportunities to enhance staff capacity (especially in remote communities) tend to suffer due to lower levels of training and lack of experienced shelter staff. As a result of the limited human resource capacity, these shelters tend to offer a narrow range of services. Conversely, the evaluation found that when shelters are in closer proximity to urban areas, the reported trend is that well-trained staff may stay but often, not for long in INAC-funded shelters as they may find a higher paying job in a provincial shelter or other facility.

---

<sup>60</sup> As of 2016-17 (Budget 2016), shelter budgets have increased. At the time of writing this report, details about how these new investments are helping shelter capacity are too early to comment on.

3. *Training:* Training offered includes teaching staff new approaches that can be used in their work with clients and ensure that staff maintain their own health and well-being to avoid burnout. Based on site visit observations and survey responses, there appears to be a large demand for community support services (mental health counselling, addictions support, parenting/coping skills/employ-ability skills/trauma informed care). However, there is not enough qualified staff or entry points in the community for such training, especially in more remote First Nations' communities. Shelter staff stated that a clear majority of their clients arrive with a co-occurring mental health or addictions issue that also require attention in addition to the need for support as a result of experiencing family violence. This requires constant training.

#### *Additional Elaboration on Current Training Approaches*

National Approach to Training of Shelter staff: Staff at INAC-funded shelters appears to be fully engaged in shelter operations with little extra time to devote to assisting with broader communitywide strategies. Staff noted that they are open to delivering more prevention programming; however, they require more specialized training to support women in crisis as well as broader prevention strategies in communities. The lack of specialized training is also linked to the unavailability of services for men. During site visits, interviews, as well as the online evaluation survey, staff and shelter directors noted that men's services were often requested but offering these services is difficult due to the lack of accommodation and the need for additional space and training, including enhanced security when dealing with male perpetrators of violence.

#### ***Finding 10: The core funding model used with the NACAFV enhances institutional capacity.***

Over the course of the period covered by the evaluation, INAC has extended core funding to the NACAFV to support training of shelter directors and staff in culturally-appropriate prevention activities, counselling techniques and self-care for shelter personnel.<sup>61</sup> The long-term relationship has allowed the NACAFV to build a five-year training plan for each shelter and review its follow up with shelter managers. NACAFV is fulfilling an important mentoring and training requirement, as identified in shelter survey and in key informant interviews. Overall, shelter participants expressed positive feedback on NACAFV engagement.

Training and Mentoring Approach by Regions: The evaluation also found evidence of informal efforts by experienced shelter staff and organizations to train those with less experience. In some instances, INAC regional offices with FVPP funds are playing a role with respect to bridging those knowledge gaps.

---

<sup>61</sup> NACAFV has received core funding since 2001. Training is offered twice a year in different locations but mostly in or around the Ottawa/Montreal area. Participants from northern, eastern or western Canada are less likely to attend due to distance.

An innovation<sup>62</sup> occurring with support from INAC (Ontario) is enabling knowledge transfer among southern Ontario shelters and more remote shelters in northern Ontario (Section 5.3.2). Akwesasne First Nation is paired with Mishkeegogamang Safe House<sup>63</sup> to share knowledge and training modules for delivery in the more remote northern community. The Safe House expects to provide prevention and shelter staff training, under the guidance of Akwesasne staff, in a number of new areas, including suicide prevention and positive fatherhood role models.<sup>64</sup> For more on community stories, see Appendix B.<sup>65</sup>

Other examples of staff training and mentorship supported by the FVPP include:

- (Ontario) Train the Trainer Webinar and Safety Application –a 15-hour Training Webinar to support distance learning for staff in remote shelter locations. The application will assist staff to help clients develop their own safety plans, upon leaving shelter.
- (Saskatchewan)Walk the Good Road program –A prevention training program in Fort Qu’Appelle, Saskatchewan, which supports adults and youth to become community facilitators on violence prevention programs, integrating cultural stories and beliefs.
- (Alberta) Annual Youth Gathering - Alberta First Nation Youth Peer Education Program. Volunteers from the First Nations from across Alberta are sponsored to attend a three-day training in a variety of lessons. Following the gathering, facilitators are then encouraged to return to their community and offer the information in evening or weekend programming to other youth, acting as a mentor and supporting youth to take the lead role of the facilitator.

#### ***4.2.1 Transitional Care - Moving from Crisis to Prevention Work***

Transitional Care involves the coordination and continuity of client’s care as they move from the emergency shelter to another setting, example a home. Sometimes, the clients may need to learn new skills to face new challenges that come with striking out on one’s own. Shelter staff described their work as dealing with the immediate crisis in the emergency shelter, supporting the clients to safe *transitional housing* and lastly, assisting with their transition back into their community or another one if that is their choice. This is referred to as the tripartite approach or, the delivery of services, which emphasizes primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

As the evaluators found, few shelters are able to provide such second stage housing given the lack of funding and resources. In order to improve the long-term outcomes for shelter clients, more focus is needed on transitional housing and follow up care (as noted in Section 4.1.1). It was noted during a site visit that there is a lack of longer-term programming for women as the focus seems to be on short-term protection when more should be done about prevention and longer term protection.

---

<sup>62</sup> Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services, Six Nations, Brantford, Ontario and Nimkii-Naabkawagon, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario) have received two to four staff from northern shelters.

<sup>63</sup> See Community Story (Appendix B) – Mishkeegogamang First Nation.

<sup>64</sup> These enhanced shelter services and training were made possible with the increased funding resulting from the 2016 federal budget.

<sup>65</sup> There are 20 shelter-members and 38 associate shelters, including some INAC funded shelters. The main objective of the Aboriginal Shelters of Ontario is focused on enhancing shelter capacity to meet the needs of victims of violence.

In another site visit, outreach workers discussed taking the initiative to build a prevention program for the neighbouring communities. This highlights the function of shelters as unique civil society institutions that can contribute to the development of local initiatives and capacity. (See Prevention Section 5.2.1) As the evaluation's literature review suggests, shelters, in addition to providing protection for victims of family violence also act as training grounds (e.g., using a cultural approach, broaden awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the issues) for Indigenous women.

In all areas of family violence, it seems that after-the-fact services predominate over preventive interventions and yet, there is a lack of follow up care, which is a major issue for shelters and their clients. The evaluators found that staff makes sure to ask clients if they want an outreach worker to follow up with them after they leave, but most often the clients refuse<sup>66</sup> (see Section 4.1.1).

Overall, the concerns frequently noted by interviewees include: the lack of transitional housing and support programs after having been at a shelter; the lack of transportation and daycare; the limited ability of shelter staff to deliver prevention programming in the community as they are fully engaged in protection.

**General Observation 3:** Exploring the best way to place more focus on the post-crisis client follow up and on transitional care will be useful to the FVPP. Due to funding issues and the need to respond to immediate, urgent, situations, the emphasis is presently put on the primary/first stage (crisis phase).

---

<sup>66</sup> See Section 3.2.3 related to the evaluation findings of the ongoing Evaluation of the Implementation and Enforcements of Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Real Property Assets.

## **5. Evaluation Findings - Prevention Programs: Design and Delivery**

---

This section looks at the prevailing FVPP funding structure and whether it contributes to efficient program delivery. It also examines the extent to which the FVPP is achieving its expected outcomes (impacts on those affected). Some of these findings have been highlighted in earlier sections of this report.

### **5.1 Funding Approach to Prevention Projects**

A funding formula is in place to distribute annual program dollars based on the population of on-reserve communities. The formula is used to determine per-shelter allocations.<sup>67</sup> The amounts determined as a regional allocation/budget are meant to help INAC regions decide on prevention initiatives.<sup>68</sup> The funding formula does not account for new services and initiatives that have emerged at federal, provincial, territorial and municipal levels.

Prevention initiatives<sup>69</sup> are funded through two main approaches. The first is via an annual on-reserve Call for Proposals, reviewed by INAC regional offices then allocated for funding to either a band or an identified tribal council. The second formula, an off-reserve model, was instituted in 2016 to take into consideration the growing network of off-reserve organizations with an interest in programming in family violence prevention. This Call for Proposals is managed out of INAC's National Headquarters.<sup>70</sup>

The formula is used to determine the amount of funding for the FVPP's recipients and the Data Collection Instruments are the primary source of administrative and performance data, based on shelter and prevention services. The evaluation found that while the Data Collection Instruments provide descriptions of prevention activities and information on attendance rates, the reports do not produce data on rates of family violence, nor on whether activities are having an impact in this regard. However, the FVPP has updated the Data Collection Instruments to record detailed breakdowns on the operational costs of shelters and prevention projects. Funding recipients are also required to indicate whether the community is employing the use of a safety plan. The FVPP has also introduced shelter and prevention workplans to help track the budgetary forecasts of services. These advancements in reporting mechanisms are a part of an ongoing effort to improve the FVPP's understanding of the costs incurred by shelters. This highlights the importance of the W.I.S.H. management system, referenced earlier, and the role it could play with respect to the appropriate data collection as well as the accessibility to this data.

---

<sup>67</sup> Shelter allocations consider the size of the shelter, its province of operation, geographic location, and where applicable, the costs associated with remoteness and emergency needs. "Terms of Reference: Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program" (2016), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. Page 4.

<sup>68</sup> Exchange with Program Manager and Review of Research documents (2006) prepared by Johnston Research.

<sup>69</sup> Family violence prevention activities are funded on a project basis in most regions, with an emphasis on selecting projects based on partnerships and maximizing reach. "Terms of Reference: Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program" (2016), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. Page 4.

<sup>70</sup> Funding for off-reserve proposals was made possible through a Canadian Heritage transfer in 2014 of \$1.34 million to INAC. Of that amount, \$500,000 was earmarked for off-reserve proposals, the remainder for on-reserve. See Section 1.2.2.

### 5.1.1 Challenges in Delivery

***Finding 11: The aggregate model (which refers to the practice of establishing a board representing the needs of different regional groupings of Indigenous communities) has the ability to overcome some of the barriers associated with prevention program delivery in low capacity communities.***

The document review and interview data suggest that despite a demonstrated need for prevention activities, the successful design and delivery of prevention projects are hindered by such factors as:

- *Matching Needs with Appropriate Funding Levels:* Interviews with community members and government officials suggest that the level of co-occurring health and social needs with family violence is high (mental health, addictions support, parenting skills). This problem is accentuated in more remote communities that are not as easily served by neighbouring *off-reserve* programs.
- *Limited Participation:* Community members interested in participating in prevention activities are often prevented from attending due to logistical issues such as: transportation; uncertainty over sharing personal information with others, and concerns over personnel involved in the activities.
- *Reporting Burden:* Many key informant interviewees cited the difficulty in drafting proposals and providing corresponding financial data. Where communities do not submit a year-end report, they may not necessarily be considered for prevention project funding in the following year.
- *Lack of Capacity (Community Planning):* Despite an interest in programs, First Nations face certain limitations with respect to organization/planning skill. There exists an opportunity through Public Safety Canada's Community Safety Plan (a component of its Aboriginal Community Safety Development Contribution Program), to solidify community leadership buy-in and planning of prevention initiatives through a participatory method of drafting these plans, with support from a trained facilitator. Enhanced First Nations' awareness of this initiative will increase the numbers of First Nations who use it.<sup>71</sup>
- *Lack of Knowledge:* Regarding promising practices or what works best to prevent family violence.

The aggregate model is used to facilitate the request and delivery of prevention projects and to alleviate some of the aforementioned problems (e.g., reporting). Aggregates are umbrella organizations that offer coverage for groups of First Nations communities in a given region.

The benefits of such organizational practices are twofold: aggregates help communities with low capacity draft proposals for family violence prevention activity funding. As well, the aggregate model builds capacity within the Indigenous communities while alleviating some of the extra administrative burden faced by INAC officials in the regions. However, it is recognized that not all jurisdictions may be in a position to support such models, particularly if prevention boards are not well supported across these jurisdictions.

---

<sup>71</sup> During the February 16 FVPP Working Group meeting, Public Safety representative confirmed that 26 communities across Canada have completed a Community Safety Plan (since 2010) and they are currently engaged with 80 communities in total on the process of drafting.



FVPP program officials have recognized the Three Eagles Wellness Society in Alberta as an example of a successful aggregate organization. The Three Eagles provide coverage for 45 First Nations communities in Treaty areas 6, 7 and 8. In 2015-2016, Three Eagles had helped 27 of the 34 First Nations communities that had applied for prevention projects to receive funding. By assisting communities in meeting the requirements of project proposals and providing the corresponding financial data, Three Eagles has reported a reduction in the number of Alberta communities abstaining from prevention project funding.<sup>72</sup> As well, while the FVPP funding allocated to projects may prove insufficient in covering every aspect of the project, Three Eagles assists the community in partnering up with another program to complete their project.

In the Saskatchewan region, the program funds seven recipients for family violence prevention activities, including all four INAC-funded shelters; this is done, based on location and coverage for services in the province. Five of the seven aggregates provide men's programming. The File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council is accountable to the 11 First Nations communities in proximity to Fort Qu'Appelle (as well as any First Nation that request for services). Amongst other responsibilities, the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council assists in the development of community prevention projects with First Nations communities. The funding of seven recipients for prevention programming is a departure from the period preceding the last evaluation when the INAC Saskatchewan regional officer fielded proposals from up to 74 different communities for prevention program funds (not including multiple proposals from individual communities). The Saskatchewan region's new funding approach yields a less arduous review process for staff and provides funding to recipients that have the capacity and expertise to deliver effective prevention programming.<sup>73</sup>

While these aggregate models allow for a high number of First Nations communities to have their prevention project proposals approved, a small portion of communities fail to submit proposals. Reasons for this include staff turnover, new staff or new Chief and Council or unwillingness to work on a proposal for its perceived low amount of funding. These reasons illustrate that despite the relative success of aggregates, there are still First Nations communities missing out on family violence prevention funding.

### ***5.1.2 Alignment of Prevention Projects with Community Stated Priorities***

***Finding 12: There is a demonstrated need for prevention programming tailored to men and boys, both victims and perpetrators alike.***

*"Healing programs for women help victims overcome traumatic experiences but they don't do anything to prevent the perpetrators from abusing other partners."*

*Shelter Director*

Site visits, key informant and stakeholder interviews, and survey findings have all emphasized the urgent need for access to certain outreach initiatives such as services for men (perpetrators and victims alike), counseling, and anger management training. The overwhelming belief expressed in these lines of inquiry was that without any services for men and boys, the root causes of violence that are perpetrated in families would not be addressed and therefore the cycle of violence would continue.

<sup>72</sup> Marilyn G. Willier, "Three Eagles Wellness Society: Annual Report 2015-2016."

<sup>73</sup> Email correspondence with INAC regional official.

Men/boys require services if the lives of Indigenous communities are to be improved. One way to address this issue would be to start a pilot project that would, for example, explore the feasibility of converting an available pre-existing protection facility, or other, into a prevention centre for male perpetrators. At the time of writing this report, there were some examples of male-based programming in place (see Table 7). However, the number of these types of programs remains relatively low.<sup>74</sup> Given that prevention projects are designed by the communities themselves, and considering that males are almost always the perpetrators in cases of family violence, there is an opportunity for the FVPP to explore how it can help First Nations communities increase awareness for prevention activities designed towards treating male community members; this could potentially contribute to lessening the incidence of family violence in the future.

**Table 7: Examples of Programs for Boys and Men**

Category <sup>75</sup>	Activity
Male Youth	<u>Three Eagles Wellness Society (Alberta)</u> - <b>Sons of Traditions:</b> Provides a character-building framework that will enable youth ages 13-17 to create healthy identities for themselves as young Indigenous men.
	<u>Akwesasne (Ontario)</u> - <b>Ohelogo:</b> For students in Grade 10, it provides separate education for boys and girls, addressing the different life/body changes they undergo in adolescence. Participants learn life skills through engagement in outdoor activities and reproductive health awareness.
	<u>Fort Qu'Appelle (Saskatchewan)</u> - <b>Leading Thunderbird Lodge:</b> Program for youth boys (12-18 years old) that have been charged of some crime/juvenile offenders or other issues at home. The lodge has 15 beds and offers cultural activities with a focus on men's role in society (what their purpose in life is).
Male Adults	<u>Akwesasne (Ontario)</u> - <b>Akwesasne Family Wellness Program:</b> A component of this program is the Partner Assault Response, which is dedicated towards helping male perpetrators change their violent behaviors into more positive and healthy life choices. Supported by the Attorney General of Ontario.
	<u>Mishkeegogamang (Ontario)</u> - <b>"Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin-I am a kind man:"</b> The original program was funded by the Ontario government <sup>76</sup> . Its overall purpose is to engage community men to speak out against all forms of abuse towards Indigenous women.

<sup>74</sup> Documentation on prevention projects provided by program officials show that activities specifically designed for men and boys have ranged between 16 percent and 20 percent of the total number of FVPP-funded prevention projects.

<sup>75</sup> Indigenous youth prevention programs are not completely uniform in their definition of an age range for youth. The Assembly of First Nations has stated that the best approach to defining age requirements for a program are to understand the specific needs of the projects at hand. "A Framework for Action: First Nations Youth Engagement Framework," National Youth Council, Assembly of First Nations.

<sup>76</sup> The program has been adapted in different locations across Ontario and through the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres.

## 5.2 Partnerships in Prevention

***Finding 13: Partnerships with other community and off-reserve organizations are key to delivering quality prevention programming.***

The evaluation found that given the level of funding currently available to the actual prevention side of the FVPP, community-level discernable impacts can be reached with more enhanced attention to the network of service providers working, in coordination and collaboration, with INAC FVPP and others. Most interviewees (shelter staff and government personnel) mentioned that shelter and prevention programs are strengthened where strong partnerships with other groups and organizations exist.

### ***5.2.1 Federally-Funded Service Providers Working at the Community Level***

As noted in the report, a high degree of information-sharing occurs in the National Capital Region, among federal departments engaged in family violence prevention and protection issues.<sup>77</sup> A key challenge is how that information-sharing and collaboration could be more effectively transferred to the actual communities. During regional site visits, evaluators found that the connection among federally-funded service providers working on issues around family violence also appears to be focused on referral of clients amongst agencies.

In northern Ontario (Mishkeegogamang First Nation), the FVPP and Health Canada-funded programs were strongly linked. The federally-funded service providers at the Mishkeegogamang Safe House and Health Centre had a good level of awareness and understanding of each other's services, and seamlessly referred individuals to services. Health Canada's mandated community-level services include the operation of the Health Centre, the provision of mental health counseling (provided by an external support who visits twice a month), post-rehabilitation addictions support, adult and youth suicide prevention, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome supports, infant and child care support and some parenting skills. Beyond the community, a state-of-the-art health facility—the Meno Ya Win Health Centre in Sioux Lookout, Ontario,<sup>78</sup> provides medical programs and support for both in and out-patients. Medical vans link Mishkeegogamang with services in Sioux Lookout.

The most repeated concern of health and social service providers in the community were provision of urgent and expanded access to mental health/addictions services in the community; and, where community-level services were available, how to bolster/expand them. An example is the National Native Alcohol and Drug Addiction Program,<sup>79</sup> where there is only one existing worker for a community of 1,100, with a caseload of up to 40 to 60 clients per month. The National Native Alcohol and Drug Addiction Program's greatest challenge appears to be the lack of space to hold and /or to organize some group activities and the lack of trained workers.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> See Section 1.2.1 (Federal Government Response) and Section 3.2 (Working Relationship with Other Government Departments) for more information on INAC collaboration within the Family Violence Initiative.

<sup>78</sup> Meno Ya Win Health Centre is a 60-bed hospital and a 20-bed extended care facility. Meno Ya Win refers to health and wellness in the Anishinaabe language.

<sup>79</sup> The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program is now in its fifteenth year of existence as the federal government's primary line of attack to combat alcohol and substance abuse in First Nations communities ([http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/pubs/substan/\\_ads/1998\\_rpt-nnadap-pnlaada/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/pubs/substan/_ads/1998_rpt-nnadap-pnlaada/index-eng.php)).

<sup>80</sup> In a related example, the Coordinator of Health Canada's Brighter Futures noted that her program offered some support for young parents to develop necessary parenting skills. With the noted increase in teen pregnancies in the

In the Akwesasne Mohawk Nation shelter, the staff has been successful in fostering partnerships throughout the community.<sup>81</sup> Examples include:

- Working with federally-funded service providers (namely Health Canada) in parenting and life skills, mental health and addictions counseling, so that they include elements of family violence prevention within their programming activities.
- Incorporating a balanced combination of clinical skills and knowledge with the family and community values found in Mohawk traditions and culture; a key component in getting community acceptance and commitment.
- Establishing more than 20 partnerships that delivered over 50 distinct prevention activities to many different age and interest groups.

Similar to northern Ontario, in Saskatchewan there were reciprocal relationships that were established between the health officials, Child and Family Services, Social Services and the shelter. Information sharing between these organizations was happening on the ground level.

In Alberta, the Three Eagles Wellness Society has an administrator who works with all of Alberta's First Nations in preparing project proposals, provides training to First Nation Coordinators, collects the required reports from the First Nations who received project funding, and works with the auditors on the annual audit submission to INAC. In 2008-2009, the Society formed a partnership with First Nations and Inuit Health branch of Health Canada regarding the Blood Borne Pathogens initiative. This initiative is included in workshops with First Nation Coordinators at Annual Youth Gathering.

As in past years, all funds that have not been allocated by the Society are directed towards functions that will provide awareness, prevention and education projects that will benefit all communities within the Alberta region. With these funds, projects such as Coordinator Training, Youth Gathering and Awareness Campaigns can occur. Some of the events that were organized in partnership with Alberta First Nations Inuit Health Branch Blood Borne Pathogen /Sexually Transmitted Infection Prevention Program include:

- 2015 Annual Youth Gathering Facilitator Training;
- 12th Annual Alberta First Nations Youth Gathering;
- Community Coordinators Annual Training; and
- Mindfulness Meditation.

---

community, this is becoming a necessity. However, the Brighter Futures coordinator said the biggest barriers to access to individuals' accessing their programs was transportation and child care. She says she has a small budget for renting a school bus but this is used primarily for community recreation activities, another area of work she is responsible for.

<sup>81</sup> It is significant to note that the Akwesasne Mohawk Shelter's successful approach to prevention activities has been largely aided by additional provincial funding.

## 5.2.2 Provincial and Community-level Partnerships on Family Violence

***Finding 14: Provinces looking for enhanced engagement with INAC to fill identified gaps in services around family violence supports.***

The evaluation observed that responding to family violence through prevention and protection is an intricate process that requires both a coordinated as well as a comprehensive approach; this approach involves, for example, provinces and territories and organizations. The process is even more complex, particularly in the case of Indigenous women living on-reserve who wish to seek support services outside of their resident community, and off-reserve women, whose community is in close proximity to provincial or civil society-funded services. The evaluation also observed that certain of these jurisdictions (federal, provincial and territorial governments) have policies and strategies that address Indigenous-related family violence. The Federal/Provincial/Territorial Family Violence Table, which is chaired by the Public Health Agency of Canada, has addressed some of the complexities of the prevention/protection process.

Provincial authorities identified some key areas for collaboration with INAC around family violence supports and prevention. In the three jurisdictions visited, provincial counterparts identified the following as where they could work more strategically with federal stakeholders: children's programming to counter trauma; men's programming; follow up and outreach services; services in for the North and other remote areas.

Each province is governed by its own legislative and policy frameworks, which generally support Indigenous communities. The evaluation found that it is primarily the responsibility of INAC officials at regional offices to modify program models to provincial circumstances. The level of engagement is also related to the individual capacity of regional office staff to undertake this work. Some provincial authorities communicate more frequently with INAC regional offices (Ontario, Alberta) on longer-term issues; other provinces focus on the specific co-funding issues arising from specific shelters (Saskatchewan); and, in some instances (Quebec), there does not appear to be any evidence of regular communication at all.

### **Alberta**

The Province of Alberta has one of the first funding arrangements with the federal government, which recognizes the transient nature of on-reserve residents who may seek social services off-reserve, including any stay at a crisis shelter or transition house for vulnerable women. The 1991 Arrangement for the Funding and Administration of Social Services (Admin Reform Agreement) governs the reimbursement by the federal government of services to Indigenous women in Alberta who are ordinarily residing on-reserve and seek shelter services or crisis support off-reserve.

In interviews with Alberta government officials, it was noted that with respect to family violence, the province takes a common approach with all Albertans, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Further, the interviewees identified a need to establish a higher-level of partnership with INAC that goes beyond the regional office-level. According to the official, the province has some learning to do on how to improve its response to Indigenous family violence: *"Given the high number of Aboriginal women currently using off-reserve shelters (in Alberta), these shelters do not employ cultural and traditional First Nations approaches."*

## Ontario

There is a high-degree of policy engagement on relevant Indigenous issues noted in documents. These include the multi-sectoral Aboriginal Health and Wellness Strategy, first launched in 1994 and updated in 2010. The Strategy and the corresponding program delivery approach are overseen by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Their website states: The Strategy combines traditional and mainstream programs and services to help improve Indigenous health and reduce family violence. These community-based programs and services are available to Indigenous people living on-reserve and in urban and rural communities.<sup>82</sup>

The range of services includes safe houses and transition homes for women fleeing domestic violence and overarching community wellness programs. The officials of the Government of Ontario noted their interest in enhanced engagement with INAC to look at social service delivery to vulnerable Indigenous women and children, in particular those living in remote, geographically isolated northern communities where populations are sparse.<sup>83</sup>

*“The Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations are a major signal that we—as governments—need to work more collaboratively together. How governments fund programs and the models we use—it all needs to be better coordinated.”*

*Ontario Government Official*

Historically, with the Province of Ontario, INAC has had a payment agreement, referred to as the ‘1965 Welfare Agreement’, which allows for joint funding of social programs for clients on-reserve in Ontario and has contributed additional funds to some on-reserve FVPP shelters. A specific example of provincial contribution, that also suggests an immediate impact on vulnerable women in remote areas, is a 24-hour crisis telephone line that connects with a crisis worker based in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The crisis hot line helps to assess the level of safety of the individual and the closest accessible shelter. It is funded by the Province of Ontario and supported by Beendigen Women’s Shelter, in Thunder Bay. The list of federally-funded shelters appears on the crisis worker’s list, hence, these shelters are part of what the Ontario government considers as its network of service points for women in crisis. Overall, the provincial authorities were satisfied with communications and outreach, which are frequently prompted by the regional office on collaborative efforts.

## Saskatchewan

The Government of Saskatchewan oversees and regulates its network of provincially-funded safe houses and transition homes through its “Residential Services Act.”<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup> “Goal of the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy,” Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services.

<sup>83</sup> “Supporting Aboriginal people: Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Society,” Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services.

<sup>84</sup> Residential Services refers to services offered within a provincially-licensed institution.

As noted by provincial representatives in the Ministry of Justice, the relationship with INAC on interpersonal violence tends to be *ad hoc* as no specific, coordinated provincial government strategy exists to respond to family violence on-reserve. On a broader strategic planning level, there is limited formal contact with INAC; however, and where appropriate, oversight exists between the two authorities on shelters that are co-funded by both INAC and the province. This is the case for La Ronge's Piwapan Shelter where the province provides funding to support salaries of prevention outreach workers.

The co-funding approach is seen as both advantageous and problematic by provincial and federal authorities. Advantageous as the collaborative funding allows for new and different types of prevention program support to be made available to Indigenous communities; problematic, on the other hand, as different rules govern the reporting and monitoring of results and collection of data.

In terms of leveraging, the INAC-funded shelters have been able to access provincial support and provincial funds, mainly through the Inter Personal Violence and Abuse Program, which is overseen by the province's Community Justice Division (Ministry of Justice). This opportunity has arisen due to such factors as the shelter's location off-reserve (e.g., Saskatchewan's La Ronge) or because it has received provincial payment for its intake of non-reserve Indigenous (or non-Indigenous) people. The Piwapan shelter, which is off-reserve, receives provincial funding. Its Outreach Program provides help for both men and women over the age of sixteen seeking support, advocacy, referrals, and educational programming. Further, it has a Crisis Line, which through referrals, support and information sharing provides help for both Indigenous men and women who are in crisis.

At an operational level, the Provincial Association of Transition Houses is a key network connecting both federal and provincially-funded entities in Saskatchewan. The association offers workshops, shares resources and ideas and holds regular meetings, enabling shelters to learn from one another.

## **Quebec**

The evaluation observed very little interaction between the Quebec regional office and provincial authorities concerning implementation of the FVPP. The province's Secretariat des Affaires Autochtones states on its website that Indigenous residents of Quebec have the same rights and access to services as non-Indigenous residents of Quebec. It continues that the Government of Quebec plays an important role in supporting Indigenous communities, residing within its territory, to support their education, social, economic and community development.

An active civil society organization, the Quebec Native Women's Association, is INAC-funded and has been a key advocate for the province's Indigenous women and shelters. There are six INAC-funded shelters located in the province; however, none receive funding from Quebec. The Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux (Québec Health and Social Services Department) has a program for Indigenous clients, but shelters with a history of service to Indigenous clients do not appear to have access to the available funds. Funds are available to non-Indigenous associations in order that they can offer services to Indigenous people where needed. Attempts to reach Quebec officials for interviews failed.

**General Observation 4:** It is apparent that there are several layers of provincial and territorial programs and strategic policies serving Indigenous communities facing family violence challenges. It is within the best interest of serving these communities that the FVPP should consider looking into working more collaboratively with provincial and territorial partners on these common themes.

### ***5.2.3 Community-Level Partnerships***

Community-level partnerships are an important factor in determining the success of prevention projects. As family violence is a multi-faceted problem, addressing the causes of this issue requires an exchange of information on the parts of law enforcement personnel, health care officials and social workers. In Alberta, one such venue for the exchange of this information has been weekly “hub” meetings. These meetings bring partners together to discuss specific instances of violence in the community and what ought to be the appropriate response. The hubs feature a number of key band organizations, including individuals representing such sectors as Health and Wellness, Housing, Child and Family Services, as well as shelter staff and elders from the community. The experience of the hubs in Alberta is encouraged as it enhances the exchange of expertise on addressing the issue of family violence.

Public Safety Canada’s Community Safety Plan Program is another example of an initiative designed to encourage First Nations to form community-based partnerships to achieve stated safety outcomes. At the beginning of the program in 2010, Public Safety Canada worked with the RCMP and other partner organizations to create a list of 50 vulnerable communities that would be offered the Community Safety Plan. While only 13 communities initially participated in the program, the number has increased to 26 since then. Program officials have attributed the spread of the Community Safety Plan to word of mouth efforts. As well, the safety outcomes determined by the community often require partnerships to be achieved. In this way, communication between communities and different programs are essential to the design of the Community Safety Plan.

### ***5.2.4 Leveraging Resources from Other Program Areas***

Successful prevention projects typically involve strong partnerships and the leveraging of resources from other program areas. A number of key informants signaled the need for a ‘single window’ approach to prevention program funding as it would help focus departments around key objectives, resulting in greater impacts for First Nations across the country. It was suggested that since Health Canada and INAC’s mandates with respect to First Nations are closely aligned, an enhanced effort should begin there by pooling prevention-specific funding. Evidence suggests that this is already happening. For instance, given the FVPP’s limited funding for prevention activities, some First Nations communities have used Health Canada’s Brighter Futures<sup>85</sup> program funding to leverage their resources to acquire enough funding in terms of preventing family violence.<sup>86</sup> Brighter Futures encompasses a wide scope of activities to address community-determined priorities and is

---

<sup>85</sup> The Brighter Futures program is a community-based health promotion and ill-health prevention program for First Nations and Inuit communities. The program typically, promotes health and prevents ill-health through learning-related activities that strive to increase awareness, change attitudes, build knowledge and enhance skills. Excerpt from First Nations and Inuit Health (Health Canada) homepage: [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/mental/brighter\\_grandir-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/mental/brighter_grandir-eng.php).

<sup>86</sup> “Contributions to the Action Plan: Presentation to the Minister of Status of Women” (2015), Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.



well-designed for this purpose. Given that every community receives some funding for the program, there is the possibility for resources to be allocated to family violence prevention programming.

The Thunderbird Partnership Foundation in southern Ontario is an organization that facilitates the leveraging of resources. A key informant stated that the foundation was a good model for supporting horizontal approaches to prevention funding. While prioritizing a continuum of care available to all First Nations, the foundation focuses on building capacity for communities to address substance use and addiction.<sup>87</sup> The foundation employs personnel with expertise in pooling resources for broad health care initiatives. This approach allows for augmented prevention funding.

While there are examples of resources being leveraged, evaluation findings suggest that more could be done through these horizontal initiatives to support the FVPP prevention projects. Several key informants suggested that Family Violence Initiative partners work in silos, thus undermining meaningful interaction. It was stated that collaboration has not progressed much beyond ‘information sharing.’ Interviewees therefore suggested that having a “single window” to family violence prevention funding could help avoid any unexpected or possible duplications of services.

## **5.3 Impacts of Prevention Programs**

### ***5.3.1 Participation and Community Feedback***

Determining levels of success of prevention programming remains a challenge. Baseline data on family violence on-reserve are unavailable. Gauging reduction in the rates of family violence as a result of prevention initiatives (i.e., attribution) goes past shelter and community capacities. The literature review found that other countries with significant Indigenous populations have found it challenging to determine whether rates of family violence have been increasing or decreasing in recent years as a result of prevention activities. The research showed that many Indigenous prevention programs are tailored towards youth with the goal of breaking intergenerational cycles of violent behaviour. As confirmed by the literature, the outcomes of such prevention efforts, with sustained monitoring, are likely only to be seen over a long-term period. Despite the challenge in data collection on family violence, several lines of evidence have illustrated that prevention activities are generally well received by communities. The fact that these activities are largely designed by the communities themselves has contributed to high rates of participation in many cases.

Determining the impact of prevention has been mostly anecdotal and evidenced by instances of communities engaging in prevention activities over a sustained period of time. Overall, measuring effectiveness of prevention projects and determining attribution can be difficult. This is particularly so when several factors such as funding amounts or joint funding are taken into consideration. Prevention projects in the sites visited show that some of these projects benefited from joint funding with other initiatives. Further, the information gathered suggests that many factors that transcend the FVPP influence behaviour of community residents. For example, prevention activities are usually long-term in nature and therefore, success can only be measured over time. However, other means like short-term evaluations, assessments, or surveys, as undertaken by the FVPP, assist in early detection of some indicators of effectiveness.

---

<sup>87</sup> “About us,” Thunderbird Partnership Foundation: <http://nnapf.com/about-tpf/>.

Community stories from the evaluation team's four site visits have been included in Appendix B. These stories highlight some of the achievements of FVPP prevention programming. In Mishkeegogamang, the shelter staff has used innovative approaches to implementing knowledge sharing around available prevention services, despite the community's remote location. Fort Qu'Appelle has initiated a number of culturally appropriate, male-based healing programs, including the Leading Thunderbird Lodge and the "Walk the Good Road" program. Finally, Akwesasne and the Three Eagles Wellness Society have been able to extend the reach of prevention programming to a high number of First Nations communities in their respective provinces.

**General Observation 5:** Need to improve program delivery by examining and placing more emphasis on holistic approaches embodying cultural values; facilitating access to prevention funding for communities with less capacity to submit funding proposals; increasing program delivery partnerships; increasing prevention programming towards men and youth; and, gathering improved statistical information to guide program adjustments and improvements.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

---

The evaluation addressed six evaluation questions. The answers to each of these questions are presented below as the conclusions to this report.

*1. Is the FVPP an appropriate response to family violence in Indigenous communities?*

INAC's FVPP is an appropriate response to family violence on-reserve. It funds the provision of family violence protection shelters and services and prevention services and activities delivered to women, children and families ordinarily resident on-reserve. The evaluation also found that those in need of protection and prevention services significantly exceeds the capacity of the program; and, increased attention is needed for the provision of more transitional housing for victims of violence as well as increased prevention and treatment programs for men and boys.

*2. What are the key issues that the FVPP should address in order to meet its objectives in response to the 2012 evaluation recommendations?*

The FVPP has made significant progress in addressing the 2012 INAC evaluation recommendations, including but not limited to: strengthening relationships with other federal departments; improved reporting on shelter and prevention services; updating and developing improved records and management information; and, working closely with Indigenous organizations to develop and offer specialized training for shelter and prevention workers.

*3. Design and Delivery: Are shelters meeting the needs of clients in terms of access and services?*

Based upon their capacities and programs offered, shelters are, to varying degrees of success, meeting the needs of clients in terms of access, protection services and support. However, barriers for many Indigenous women seeking protection and prevention services remain, including: the lack of child care and transportation to attend support services external to the shelter; the remoteness and isolation of reserves relative to the location of shelters; and, the lack of services and program support once they leave the shelter.

*4. Delivery/Performance: How effective are prevention programs? What opportunities exist to improve their impact?*

The extent of the overall effectiveness of the prevention initiatives is not clear. Stakeholders overwhelmingly agreed that prevention activities will reduce family violence in the medium and long-term. However, the lack of evidence-based information makes it impossible to determine: the degree to which prevention activities reduce family violence; what types of prevention activities have the greatest impact; and, whether shelters or other community organizations such as the health and wellness centres are more effective in delivering prevention activities.

The consensus amongst all stakeholders is that the provision of immediate protection services for women and children in crisis must take precedence over prevention, which is reflected in the FVPP's budget where approximately 75 percent is allocated to protection and 25 percent to prevention. Although multi-year funding<sup>88</sup> was introduced in 2014 for prevention programs, many groups interviewed for this evaluation say they are not aware that they could plan beyond a one-year horizon. Limited funding to prevention projects and a probable *lack of awareness* of multi-year funding opportunity has resulted in the belief that prevention projects are short-term responses to long term problems.

*5. Does the current FVPP funding structure contribute to efficient program delivery?*

The annual project-based approach which is employed by most of INAC's regions creates inefficiencies because: First Nations' costs and levels of effort to produce annual applications for prevention projects can exceed the amount of funding received from INAC; single-year projects prevent First Nations from planning for the medium and long-term prevention activities; uncertain access to continued funding makes it difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff; and, small, remote communities face greater barriers and often do not have the capacity within their communities to develop and submit successful applications, so they are excluded from prevention funding.

Aggregate models in certain regions have addressed some of these inefficiencies by assisting communities in leveraging resources for prevention programming and guiding shelters and organizations through the proposal process. The drawback to this approach is that about 15 percent of the region's prevention budget is used to fund this administrative process rather than prevention projects.

*6. To what extent is the FVPP achieving its expected outcomes (impacts of those affected)?*

The ability of prevention projects to deliver the expected outcome of reduced violence is ultimately dictated by the relatively minimal funding allocated to this component of the FVPP. Since 1991, the budget has remained steady at approximately \$7million, which has been unable to keep pace with the 36 percent inflation that has occurred over that time.<sup>89</sup> To achieve program outcomes, there is a continuing need to maintain and strengthen partnerships between other federal departments, the regions and other stakeholders.

Determining the success of the FVPP's prevention activities is and will remain a challenge due to a lack of evidence-based and statistical means to measure outcomes. The problem is further complicated because the FVPP's approach in many regions is to fund new and different prevention projects rather than focussing on a medium to long-term strategy and approach.

---

<sup>88</sup> According to program officials, the multi-year funding would enable organizations to submit for consideration prevention initiatives of up to two to three consecutive years.

<sup>89</sup> As noted in Section 3.1.4, the transfer of off-reserve funding from Canadian Heritage has resulted in an increase of 1.34 million in prevention project funding.

## 6.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that INAC:

1. Strengthen prevention activities by:
  - a. Developing an inventory of existing prevention program delivery models (e.g., First Nation community-led, Tribal Council, other civil society organizations, theme-specific aggregate model) in order to encourage the application of good practices in each region.
  - b. Drawing from the inventory exercise focus on leveraging existing expertise in order to establish aggregate models, similar to those functioning in Alberta and Manitoba, where appropriate.
  - c. Providing Indigenous communities and their representatives with the tools that will help increase their capacity to plan, implement and oversee effective prevention activities.
2. Strengthen the FVPP's focus on increasing the accessibility and/or availability of transitional housing in strategic locations. Specifically:
  - a. Reinforce data collection and reporting requirements to improve understanding of the existing levels of capacity in FVPP-funded shelter network.
  - b. Consider repurposing select emergency facilities for transitional housing services as new data on shelter capacity becomes available.
3. Adopt a more structured effort in support of mentorship and knowledge-sharing among the INAC supported shelter network to enhance the capacity of shelter staff to meet the varied needs of community members.
4. Increase Indigenous clients' access to the range of services available by:
  - a. Building upon existing information sharing efforts aimed at coordinating the alignment of federally funded programs.
  - b. Engaging in the strategic mapping of provincial and territorial services.
5. Examine the requirements for, and draft a comprehensive prevention strategy to reach more adult men and male youth with culturally relevant, community-based prevention programming.

## Appendix A - Bibliography

---

Brennan, Shannon. "Violent victimization of Aboriginal women in the Canadian provinces, 2009." Statistics Canada: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11439-eng.htm>.

"Family Violence Prevention Program." Presentation Deck, October 2015.

"First Nation Profiles Interactive Map." INAC: <http://cipn-fnpim.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/index-eng.html>.

Fragile Lives, Fragmented Systems: Strengthening Support for Vulnerable Infants (2011): [https://www.rcybc.ca/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/reports\\_publications/fragile\\_lives.pdf](https://www.rcybc.ca/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/reports_publications/fragile_lives.pdf).

"Housing for Off-Reserve Aboriginal Families." Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Housing: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page6984.aspx>.

Lamontagne, Manon (2011). "Violence Against Aboriginal Women." Scan and Report, Canadian Women's Foundation.

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIW) (2017): <http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>.

National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP). *General Review, Final Report DAP* (1998): [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/pubs/substan/\\_ads/1998\\_rpt-nnadap-pnlaada/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/pubs/substan/_ads/1998_rpt-nnadap-pnlaada/index-eng.php).

Official Statement Prime Minister on Working Group of Ministers on the Review of Laws and Policies Related to Indigenous Peoples (2016), Prime Minister of Canada.

Performance Measurement Strategy - 2.2 Social Development, sector of Education and Social Development Programs and Partnerships (2014).

Preventing Violence Across the Lifespan Research Network (preVAİL). Identifying and Responding to Intimate Partner Violence (2016).

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC): <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php>.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police. *Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls: A National Operational Overview* (2013): <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-national-operational-overview>.

Shaw, Candice (2013), *the Contours of Family Violence in Indigenous Communities. The Prevalence and Effectiveness of Initiatives Implemented to Address Indigenous Family-Based Violence*, ISID *Aboriginal Policy Study Papers*, McGill University, Montreal.

Statistics Canada. Victimization of Aboriginal People in Canada (2014): <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/160628/dq160628a-eng.htm>.

“Supporting Aboriginal people: Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Society.” Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Terms of Reference. Audit of Family Violence Prevention Program (2009), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

Terms of Reference. Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program (2016), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN): [http://www.afn.ca/Assembly\\_of\\_First\\_Nations.htm](http://www.afn.ca/Assembly_of_First_Nations.htm).

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Retrieved from: <http://www.chrt-tcdp.gc.ca/index-en.html>.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action (numbered): 1; 19; 20; 22; 30; 33-36; 37-40; 55). Retrieved from: <http://aptnnews.ca/2015/06/02/read-94-recommendations>.

Thunderbird Partnership Foundation (2017). About Us: <http://nnapf.com/about-tpf/>.

“What is family violence?” Public Health Agency of Canada: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sfv-avf/info/fv-eng.php>.

Willier, Marilyn G. “3 Eagles Wellness Society: Annual Report 2015-2016.”

“Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada: A Summary of Amnesty International’s Concerns and Call to Action”:  
[https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/iwfa\\_submission\\_amnesty\\_international\\_february\\_2014\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/iwfa_submission_amnesty_international_february_2014_-_final.pdf).

## Appendix B – Annex Documents

**Table 8: Shelter Proximity Analysis**

Province/ Region	No. of Shelters	No. of Communities Served**	Distance Less Than 150km	Distance More Than 150km	No. of women and children served in 2012-2013
Yukon	1	16	1	15	50
British Columbia	6	167	92	75	425
Alberta	6	44	31	13	2185
Saskatchewan	4	105	41	25	605
Manitoba	4	33	24	20	1894
Ontario	9	105	56	49	1408
Quebec	6	33	14	19	518
Atlantic	5	34	29	5	126
Totals:	41	509	288	221	7211

\*The proximity analysis conducted for the 2012 Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program did not include the total number of First Nations in Canada (617). The Program is currently reviewing the total number of communities served to account for the difference. Possible variances include exclusion of Northwest Territories First Nations communities and some landless bands, as well as the definition of community versus a First Nation Band (which could have more than one community).

\*\*Shelters can serve any individual regardless of their residency or status.

**Table 9: Site Visit Shelter Profiles**

Site	Operating Funds (2014/2015)	Provincial Funds (2014/2015)	Operating Funds (2013-2014)	Provincial Funds (2013-2014)	Number of Shelter Staff (includes casual, permanent, director)	Number of Beds at Shelter
Site 1: Akwesasne, ON	1,375,004	532,947	832,959	N/A	7	18
Site 2: Mishkeegogama ng, ON	454,535	N/A	494,170	N/A	5	10
Site 3: Fort Qu'Appelle , SK	1,797,935	639,740	1,438,601	638,740	10	17
Site 4: Sucker Creek , AB	643,617	N/A	774,683	98,365	13	21 (7 rooms but only funded by INAC for 4 rooms)



**Table 10: Federal Initiatives addressing the issue of family violence.**

The federal government has been working at different levels to address the issue of violence against women, including the high rate of violence against Indigenous women and girls. The following is a summary of some federal initiatives:

- **1978:** INAC begins its involvement in family violence prevention by providing shelter reimbursements to some provincial governments and to the Yukon territorial government.<sup>90</sup>
- **1988:** Initiated the Family Violence Initiative and a supporting network of 13 federal government departments
- **1991:** Government of Canada funds creation of five Research Centres on Family Violence and Violence Against Women
- **1993:** The Violence Against Women Survey, first of its kind in Canada, is launched.
- **1996:** Release of Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which includes a section on family violence in Indigenous communities
- **1997:** Government of Canada establishes a healing fund to address the legacy of residential school abuses and intergenerational impacts
- **1998:** Statistics Canada first release of Family Violence in Canada
- **2004:** Support for Native Women’s Association of Canada Sisters in Spirit begins
- **2014:** Canada’s Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes Against Aboriginal Women and Girls
- **2015:** Release of Calls to Action, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- **2016:** Launched the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- **2016:** Budget - Announced additional funding:
  - \$10.4 million over three years for the renovation and construction of five new shelters for victims of family violence in First Nation communities
  - \$33.6 million over five years and up to \$8.3 million ongoing in additional funding to better support shelters serving family violence victims in First Nations communities
- **2017:** Commitment to develop a Federal Strategy on Gender-Based Violence (in progress)

<sup>90</sup> “Terms of Reference” (2009), Audit of Family Violence Prevention Program.

## Site Visits Reports

### Story 1: Mishkeegogamang Safe House, Ontario (Northwestern)

#### *FVPP initiates mentoring of shelter staff in northern Ontario*

The Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP) is using an innovative approach in Ontario Region to bridge knowledge gaps among shelter staff in more remote communities in the northern reaches of the province with support from Southern-Ontario based staff. Shelter Directors and staff from Akwesasne's Iethinisten:ha Women's Shelter have used their expertise in prevention programming to support expanding the portfolio of programs being offered in Mishkeegogamang First Nation. An investment of \$70,000 for a three-month period<sup>91</sup> is allowing staff from the southern based community to coach and help staff at Mishkeegogamang to offer three new areas of programming: Assist (Train the Trainers, in suicide prevention); Caring Dads; Grief and Loss.

A series of crises<sup>92</sup> witnessed in the community underscores the importance of consolidating the counselling and prevention support that the shelter can provide. The shelter staff themselves shared that they felt unprepared to deal with the pressure of continual crisis management. The cycle of community loss, which also impacts shelter staff, creates a reminder of how community members are challenged with their addictions, mental health concerns and other family concerns. In response, INAC Ontario officials stepped in to ensure linkages with Akwesasne colleagues to help fill staff capacity gaps.

### Story 2: Fort Qu'Appelle (File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council), Saskatchewan

#### *Cultural programming as a means to healing*

The Leading Thunderbird Lodge is a centre for male youth ages 12-18 who have been charged as juvenile offenders or who have experienced some trouble at home. It focuses on using cultural skills and approaches to support their healing and behaviour change. Some of these skills include: camping; tanning hides; smudging ceremonies; sweat lodges; carpentry; and horse based healing. The leading Thunderbird Lodge is part of the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, which develops and supports holistic healing approaches for First Nations people. The overall approach of the lodge fits within Health Canada's and the Assembly of First Nations' *First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework* and the *Honoring Our Strengths Renewal Framework*. The lodge is funded by Health Canada.

Feedback from instructors conveyed the importance of clients spending time outside in nature, and learning about traditional male roles in Indigenous communities.

Meanwhile, another promising program, the *Walk the Good Road Program*, is presented from a cultural traditional perspective and looks at the core reasons behind violent behaviours. The Seven Grandfather Lessons which are common to many/most indigenous populations across Canada are the basis for the program. The course may be adapted to the stories and traditions of each community where it is offered. The program is offered to adults, youth and facilitators. Participants shared that the cultural linkages helped support their individual and community healing because they were able to attribute some of the root causes of violence with their cultural losses.

<sup>91</sup> As a result of new budget allocations in 2016 or top-ups to base budget.

<sup>92</sup> During the December 2016 evaluation site visit, the community was recovering from three deaths of residents.

### Story 3: Akwesasne First Nation, near Cornwall, Ontario; St. Regis, Quebec

#### *Reaching a large, mostly rural-living reserve through strategic networking*

The Akwesasne Iethinisten:ha Women's Shelter delivers FVPP services to a very large population<sup>93</sup> that has Band members in Ontario, Quebec and the United States of America; with the shelter located in Ontario. In delivering its FVPP program to its community, the Akwesasne shelter's staff must take into account the dispersed nature of the population, which requires a multi-faceted approach and engagement with a variety of community groups.

A decision was made to establish partnerships with as many Band organizations delivering existing programs and projects to the community as possible. In all, 50 such partnerships were established. These partnerships received relatively small funding amounts, ranging from \$250 to \$1,500 to assist with ongoing activities. In return the partners would deliver a violence prevention message. The prevention effort is assisted greatly by a community-based anti-violence coalition that works with representatives from the three jurisdictions including police, school staff and health care providers. Examples of projects that partnered with the shelter included:

- A youth camp directed at young women and men who learned about respect and dignity to each other;
- A craft program that included family wellness discussions and parenting skills; and
- Recreational, sports and educational activities that promoted non-violent approaches to dispute resolution.

The shelter also maximizes substantial funding support from the Government of Ontario for both its shelter operations, and to expand its culturally-relevant prevention programming.

### Story 4: High Prairie, Alberta

#### *A prevention approach to increase First Nation community coverage*

Alberta is one of two Canadian provinces that is delivering the bulk of FVPP-supported prevention programming through an aggregate model or prevention board.

The Three Eagles Wellness Society receives most of the prevention budget, \$610,000. The primary advantages of this approach are that Three Eagles Wellness works closely with small communities who may lack the capabilities to design a prevention program; and, fewer INAC staff are required to manage FVPP. The main disadvantage is the 15 percent Three Eagles Wellness administrative fee (\$91,000) which is deducted from the program budget.

Sampson First Nations is one of the recipients of FVPP funding. Their projects have been expanded to include child and youth wellness as they are also victims of trauma when there is violence in their homes. The Nation employs a "hub" approach with regular weekly meetings of all key Band organizations (Health and Wellness, Housing, Shelter, Child and Family Services, Elders etc.), as well as RCMP and probation officers who get together to address specific instances of violence as well as community violence as a whole. There is general agreement that this has been a very productive process.

<sup>93</sup> Registered population: 12, 458. "First Nation Profiles Interactive Map," INAC: <http://cipn-fnpim.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/index-eng.html>.