



Safety for Immigrant, Refugee and Non-Status Women¹ A Literature Review

**Ju Hui Judy Han
October, 2009**

A. Introduction

The objective of the Safety for Immigrant, Refugee and Non-Status Women Project is to address serious policy gaps or problems that compromise the safety of refugee, immigrant and non-status women who experience violence. This literature review is one of a series of documents and reports produced by the project.

Preliminary research

In 2003, EVA conducted a consultation with immigrant serving organizations. We had a roundtable discussion with immigrant women of colour working as frontline advocates for immigrant, refugee and visitor women. We also invited the Phillippine Women's Centre, Vancouver and Lower Mainland Multicultural family Support services, MOSAIC, the Prince George Elizabeth Fry Society and Battered Women's Support Services as well as a prominent immigration lawyer to provide us with written submissions on policy issues impeding the safety of immigrant, refugee and visitor women experiencing violence. We received written submissions from three of the six invitees: the Vancouver and Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services, the Prince George Elizabeth Fry Society and Battered Women's Support Services. We incorporated findings from the 2003 consultation into our source materials for the Safety for Immigrant, Refugee and Non-Status Women Project. Complete copies of the 2003 submissions can be requested from the EVA office. Summaries of the issues raised can be found on our website.

¹ For simplicity, the term "immigrant" is used here to include everyone who has immigrated and chosen to live in Canada whether they have landed-immigrant status or Canadian citizenship. The term "refugee" includes a person who has had to flee his or her country because of a well-founded fear of persecution, regardless of whether they are refugee claimants or have been granted asylum.

Current consultations

To build on the foundations laid in 2003, we organized four focus groups with service providers in key communities with significant populations of immigrant, refugee and non-status women in BC: in Vancouver, Victoria, Kelowna, and Prince George. In addition, a sixth focus group was organized for Law Foundation projects currently working on issues related to immigrant and refugee women.

At the focus groups, frontline workers from the anti-violence and settlement sectors were invited to discuss issues of common concern among their clientele of immigrant, refugee and non-status women who have experienced violence. We discussed the nature of the problems and risk factors particular to these groups, as well as suggestions for actions to improve existing services and ways to promote the development of other relevant and appropriate services and policies. The main purpose of the focus groups was to verify the findings of our 2003 consultation and the 2008-09 research and literature review. An overview of the 2009 consultation is included as an appendix to this literature review. A complete summary of focus group findings is also available on request from EVA.

B. Background

A number of recent, high-profile incidents in British Columbia have raised concern for the safety of immigrant, refugee and non-status women. These incidents include the murders of Denise Purdy in Nanaimo, in 2003; Amandeep Atwal, killed by her father near Cache Creek in 2003; Navreet Kaur Waraich in Surrey and Manjit Panghali in the Delta area, both in 2006; Sunny Park, her six year old child and parents, murdered by her husband in Victoria, in 2008; and Gurjeet Kaur Ghuman in Port Coquitlam, who survived after being shot twice in the face in 2006. All were immigrant women.

Research evidence and the experience of frontline service providers indicate that violence against women and children increases during times of economic distress. (EVA, 2009) Women may be less likely to report abuse during such times, fearing that it could result in them losing their job and/or becoming homeless. Cuts to services that may accompany an economic downturn pose further risks to women and children because they make it more difficult for women to leave the abusive relationship and more difficult to access assistance and achieve financial independence when they do leave. These factors are all likely to increase the prevalence and severity of domestic violence.

Immigrant and refugee women experiencing violence—including domestic violence, spousal and intimate partner violence, family violence, and sexual assault—have been the subject of much recent scholarly and policy research. While there is no statistical evidence to indicate that violence against women is more prevalent among immigrant and refugee women than it is among the general population in Canada, current and ongoing research, coupled with the experience of frontline service providers, indicate that immigrant and refugee women who are victims of violence are faced with additional barriers to reporting the violence and accessing support and assistance. These barriers include: social isolation, language issues, immigration and sponsorship barriers, and economic vulnerability (Light 2007, Smith 2004, Shirwadkar 2004, Russell 2002, Status of Women Canada 2001, McDonald 1999). Many American and Canadian researchers concur in suggesting that immigrant and refugee women also experience systemic racism and significant legal barriers which negatively impact the women's access to resources and quality of care (Brownridge and Halli 2002, Ku and Waidmann 2003, Jiwani 2005, Decker et al. 2007, Light 2008). These researchers underscore the fact that even though intimate partner homicide rates are in decline in Canada (Dawson et al. 2009), and reported rates of violence against immigrant women may, in some cases, be lower than for non-immigrant women, it is still possible that immigrant and refugee women experience higher severity and prevalence of violence given the barriers making it more difficult for them to report the abuse and get the help they need. Our ability to determine the incidence of domestic violence with any accuracy is hampered by the underreporting of this crime in general. Statistics related to incidence with respect to immigrant women are particularly problematic in this regard.

Immigrant and refugee women also face economic vulnerability as immigrants. The material need for affordable housing, employment, transportation, and childcare are all crucial factors in women's struggle for safety and independence. Poverty levels tend to be higher among less-educated immigrants, immigrant women, those who do not speak English at home, and those who are of non-European ethnicity. In 2006, the unemployment rate of recent immigrants was almost double that of the non-immigrant population and their average income was considerably lower than that of the Canadian-born population—\$20,999 compared to \$36,243, respectively (Perreault 2008). Due to issues related to legal status, immigrant and refugee women may also face difficulties obtaining work permits, further compounding their economic vulnerability. Lack of legal status can also negatively impact the women's access to social assistance programs (Raj et al. 2002).

Immigrant and refugee women experience violence in unique ways, and have specific needs stemming directly from their experiences and status as immigrants and refugees (Abu-Ras 2007, Ayyub 2004, Bui 2003, Kim 2005, Chan 2008). A combination of: social isolation, lack of information about rights and available services, lack of English language skills, lack of services in their own language, immigration and sponsorship issues, racism and other systemic discrimination, and lack of support from their own cultural community, increase the vulnerability of immigrant and refugee women (Critical Components Project Team 2008). A recent report commissioned by the BC Ministries of Attorney General, Community Services and Public Safety and Solicitor General, based on consultation with immigrant-serving organizations and immigrant women who had suffered abuse, identifies a strong need to take these critical factors into account to address existing policy gaps which currently compromise the safety of immigrant and refugee women. (Light 2008).

It is important to note that national statistics on violence against immigrants and refugee women are unreliable for a number of reasons. In a 2006 report entitled “Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends,” Statistics Canada concluded that “visible minority status does not raise the risk for spousal violence,” and that immigrant women report spousal violence to the police in no higher rates than non-immigrant women (Johnson 2006). However, the report itself acknowledged the severe limitation of the General Social Survey (GSS) on which such a conclusion is based—it is conducted only in English and French, and therefore their data likely under-represents the actual rates of violence against visible minority and immigrant women. Given the fact that: 1) nearly 200,000 immigrants and 10,000 refugees have settled in British Columbia between 2003 and 2007; 2) that nearly 27.2% of the entire population in BC are classified as immigrants, a figure which includes only those with permanent resident status and does not account for temporary, visitor, or non-status immigrants; and 3) that nearly half of BC’s foreign-born population stated neither English nor French as the language they spoke most often at home (BC Stats 2006), it is clear that GSS data is incomplete and potentially misleading. The GSS should not be used as the primary source on which to base conclusions about immigrant and refugee women’s safety.

C. The Importance of Definitions and Legal Status

“Immigrant and refugee women” are not a monolithic group, as there are other intersecting factors which differentiate them: such as class, education, English proficiency, and the various historical experiences of racialization in Canada. Defining an “immigrant” can be complicated and contentious. Some define

immigrants as simply those who have not yet received citizenship: (Ng 1993) including visitors, students, or refugees. Others use a more limited definition of immigrants, referring only to individuals who have immigrated to Canada with legal resident status as permanent residents (Smith 2004 and Johnson 2006). Some call for a broader and more inclusive definition to apply to all individuals who have immigrated to Canada, regardless of their past and current status, whether they have obtained citizenship, and including all those with “precarious immigration status.” This classification would include sponsored family members who have not yet obtained permanent resident status, those with temporary resident visas (work permits, students, etc.), women in the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), and anyone with irregular status (without legal immigration papers - due to expiry of papers, smuggling, trafficking, etc.).

The term “refugee” can also be ambiguous, sometimes including only those granted asylum in Canada, and at other times referring to everyone in the process of making an application, including refugee claimants awaiting decision regarding permanent residency status. In general, refugee women have a distinct and separate set of resources available to them and may face policy barriers and challenges that are significantly different from immigrant women.

Immigration’s legal status is “experienced differently depending on gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, language, social location, and the health and/or migration path followed” (Oxman-Martinez et al 2005). These differences are not just a matter of semantics—a woman’s social location and legal status can very much determine what kinds of rights and services she can expect when encountering violence. Keeping in mind these complexities, this report uses the term “immigrant, refugee and non-status women” in the broadest sense, including all immigrant and refugee women, regardless of their legal status or length of residency in Canada.

Current Classes of Immigration

Canadian immigrants and refugees may be considered according to four major classes that determine their location in the legal system²:

1. **Independent immigrants** (including nominated relatives) are granted landed immigrant status on the basis of the accumulated points earned for education, work experience, occupation and economic resources under the points system. Typically when a family applies for landed immigrant status, the

² Much of the following information is indebted to Roxanna Ng, “Gendering Policy Research on Immigration” in *Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy Research*. Ottawa: Status of Women, 1998. CIC and Statistics Canada documents were also consulted.

husband is designated as the independent immigrant and the wife is categorized as a family class immigrant along with the children, even if they are all immigrating together.

2. **Family class immigrants** are sponsored either by the independent immigrants or family members who are already residing in Canada as permanent residents or citizens. Because men are often designated as the head of the household, women tend to be considered “sponsored” by their spouses, even when they are applying for immigration together. Women are thus over-represented in the family class. Between 2001 and 2004, women were 61% of the family class admissions (Boyd 2006).
3. **Business class immigrants** include investors, entrepreneurs and self-employed persons who must make a \$400,000 investment that can be used by the provinces for economic development and job creation. Entrepreneurs must own and manage a business in Canada that creates employment for Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Despite their relative class privilege, many business class immigrants nonetheless experience social isolation and linguistic barriers. Women in this category most often depend on their spouses for their legal status, as they are generally not the principal applicants.
4. **Refugees** are further subdivided into two classes: first, “resettled refugees” who, even before their arrival to Canada, have been sponsored by the government of Canada or by a private group; and second, persons who make their own way out of the country or situation they are fleeing.

In both the US and Canada, women are more likely than men to be admitted in administrative and visa categories as family members and as spouses rather than as independent immigrants.

Researchers point to significant barriers rooted in legislation and policy and suggest that sexism, racism and class biases have fundamentally shaped the thinking and design of economic, social and immigration policies. They argue that “...sexism, racism and class biases do not only pertain to people’s attitudes,” but more importantly, they are “...systemic features of our society, including policy formulation” (Ng 1998). Given these structural factors affecting immigrant and refugee women’s social location and legal status, a gender lens to inform policy making—whether in immigration or anti-violence policy/legislation—is necessary and critically important. For example, the CIC’s immigration points system privileges

paid, male labor as opposed to unpaid, or underpaid, household and child-rearing labor, predominantly done by women. The current immigration policies also exacerbate women's dependency on their sponsor for immigration status, creating a situation that negatively impacts the safety of women (Community Coordination for Women's Safety 2006), as they are less able to exit abusive relationships.

Inter-related Issues for Trafficked and Non-Status Women

Canada is a source, transit point, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour (Riiskjær and Gallagher 2008). Many of these victims enter Canada legally but then are unlawfully exploited in agriculture and domestic servitude. When trafficking victims encounter violence, their precarious legal status creates additional barriers to accessing services. Human trafficking is a distinct practice with a long history, but there has been considerable confusion over its exact definition and the activities included in its scope. The source of confusion is partly due to outdated definitions that used to restrict the definition of human trafficking to the trafficking of women and girls for "immoral purposes," something that later changed to include a more gender-neutral and less value-laden language. Another source of confusion has to do with the fact that many human trafficking activities often parallel other illegal practices such as human smuggling, slavery, forced labour, child labour, etc.³

In the real world, "regular" immigrants, refugees and smuggled/trafficked migrants do not actually occupy mutually exclusive categories, and regardless of which category they are placed in, women and children are particularly vulnerable. In an analysis of European asylum policy, one report concludes that much of present day policy-making is in fact part of the problem, not the solution. Current policy development is compounding the problem, moving legislation towards ending the right of asylum in Europe (Morrison 2001). A 2001 report completed for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees found that a large percentage of refugees who claim asylum in Europe have been trafficked or smuggled. There appears to be

³ Article 3(a) of the *Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (2000) [<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html - Fulltext>], UN General Assembly Resolution 55/25, Annex II, U.N. GAOR, U.N. Doc. A/45/49 (2001), which entered into force on 28 January 2004. It defined "trafficking in persons" as the act, the means, and the purpose of "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."

a compelling case for the need to ensure that anti-smuggling and trafficking initiatives are coordinated with immigrant and refugee protection policies.

A report commissioned by the RCMP in 2004 states that in spite of the judiciaries' nominal acceptance of the official discourse regarding the trafficking of women for the purposes of prostitution by organized crime, their judgments are in fact often marked by a lack of sensitivity to the cultural, economic and social reality of the exploitation, violence and stigma experienced by these women (Brockett and Parent 2004). This study also concludes that the majority of cases involving trafficking victims are in fact analyzed outside the victim discourse, and judged according to the moralistic sex slave/sex worker dichotomy. When determined to be "undeserving," the victims are often not entitled to the consideration afforded to "victims." Victims of trafficking, in other words, continue to face an uphill battle. In May 2006 the Canadian government announced that immigration officers will issue temporary resident permits (TRPs) for up to 120 days to victims of human trafficking. They also announced that these victims will be exempt from the processing fee and will be eligible for health care benefits under the interim federal health care program. However, only "bona fide" victims of trafficking are eligible for these benefits, and increasing security protocols since September 11 have resulted in a number of new and restrictive measures that view entrants to Canada through a security lens before a humanitarian or compassionate one.

The Immigration and Refugee Act (IRPA, passed in 2001 as Bill C-11), which replaced the Immigration Act of 1976 as the primary federal legislation regulating immigration to Canada, expanded the offences relating to organizing entry into Canada and increased the penalties associated with these offences. It made trafficking in persons a criminal offense with penalties of up to life imprisonment and fines of up to one million dollars. The Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA)'s report, *Canada's Failure to Act* (2003), raised concerns that IRPA's preoccupation with "improperly documented travelers," its emphasis on sweeping efforts to criminalize smuggling and trafficking, together with the increased measures of interdiction, will have a differential and disadvantageous impact on women. Similarly, Boyd (2006) argues that "gender based analysis did provide a framework for more gender sensitive changes" in several sections of IRPA, but that there is great variation between individuals and between various government agencies concerning the "application of a human rights based protection of victims and the emphasis placed on crime and security aspects of trafficking" (Boyd 2006; Gozdzik and Collett 2005; Oxman-Martinez et al 2005).

Women who have been trafficked are at increased risk for a range of physical and mental health problems. Victims are usually vulnerable, often young and single (or single mothers), from poorer educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. Most victims are likely to stay in abusive situations because they are either unable, or afraid, to ask for legal help because of past or present abusive situations, fear of retaliation, language barriers, or expectations of deportation and criminal charges. As a result of these barriers, trafficked and non-status women are most at risk for inadequate health care and other forms of social assistance.

D. Intersections and Coordination

As many previous reports have recommended, there needs to be better collaboration, networking, and information-sharing within and between sectors; better working conditions for service providers; and better training on a range of topics, with a particular focus on issues related to violence against women for the settlement and English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) sectors; and immigrant and refugee issues for the anti-violence/victim services sector (Community Coordination for Women's Safety, 2006; Light 2008). The emphasis on collaboration and cross-sector coordination addresses the widespread concern that immigrant, refugee and non-status women experiencing violence also face specific needs stemming from immigration and their status in Canada. Since multiple factors, in combination, increase the vulnerability of immigrant and refugee women, multiple policy efforts, in combination, can increase the safety of women regardless of their status in Canada.

Because of the complexity of sponsorship and immigration matters, clear and accurate information is difficult to access, not only for the women experiencing violence, but also for the service providers. Service providers face a doubly difficult task: understanding the complex and constantly changing policies surrounding immigrant and refugee women's safety, while also interpreting and explaining these policies to their clients. It is thus critical to combine policy change with sustained and ongoing legal education.

E. Protecting Immigrant Women: a Cross-National Comparison

This section takes a cross-jurisdictional look at immigrant women abused by citizen, or lawful permanent resident spouses. The most thorough policy response to this issue is the US's first comprehensive federal legislation responding to violence against women, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) 1994. The VAWA provided key funding to enhance investigation and prosecution of the violent crimes perpetrated against women, increased pre-trial detention of the accused, gave

victims the right to mandatory restitution, and allowed civil redress in the cases that prosecutors chose not to prosecute. It advocated for “a multipronged approach that requires the criminal justice system, the social services system, and nonprofit organizations to collaborate to effectively respond to domestic violence,” and recognized the “particular difficulties battered immigrant women face.” The VAWA included special provisions, known as the Battered Immigrant Women Protection Act, to prevent the use of immigration status as a tool of control and to increase protections available to this class of domestic violence victims (Conyers 2007).

The VAWA (reauthorized in 2000 and 2005) allowed abused immigrant spouses to “self-petition” for legal residence and citizenship in the US, rather than face the loss of legal status or possible deportation. It contained, however, class biases and stipulated that the women must be married to the US permanent resident or citizen spouse for at least three years, creating extreme hardships for women who experience abuse in the early years of marriage. While no one felt that the VAWA completely addressed the needs of victims of domestic violence and critics decried its emphasis on criminalization and prosecution, many anti-violence advocates still believe that it was a vital first step in creating new penalties for gender-related violence and new grant programs encouraging states to address domestic violence and sexual assault (Dragiewicz 2008). Perhaps most significantly, the VAWA acknowledged the particular vulnerability of immigrant victims of violence, it was designed to help immigrants escape abuse, achieve safety and security, and become active participants in US society (Meyer-Emerick 2001). The following are some key provisions:

- Allowed abused immigrant women to self-petition to request permanent residency without having to leave the US.
- Suspended deportation proceedings.
- Changed conditional residency status to permanent residency status.
- Allowed the abused immigrant women to request work authorization.
- Extended protections for immigrants regardless of how they entered the country.
- Created a new type of visa for victims of serious crimes that will allow some to attain lawful permanent residence.

Although not all aspects of VAWA will be applicable in Canada, the principles underlying the American legislation may help guide Canadian policy change to increase the safety of vulnerable women with precarious legal status. Ensuring a path to legal status allows the abused women to access much-needed resources,

such as health care and social assistance, currently available only to citizens or permanent residents in most countries. Increasing protection for temporary status and undocumented immigrant women would also have the effect of diminishing fear among women who have legal status, but remain concerned about potentially losing it.

The following chart compares policies concerning immigrant women in four national contexts—Canada, United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. While the details of specific legislations and provisions may change frequently, the chart provides a general comparison of the various policy initiatives that seek to protect and empower abused immigrant women facing precarious legal status.

Comparison Chart of Policies Concerning Immigrant Women in Four Countries

Canada	US	UK	Australia
<p>Provided that a woman who has permanent resident status, (“landed immigrant” or protected person/refugee) she cannot lose that status or be removed from Canada only because she leaves an abusive relationship. This is true even if her abusive partner is her sponsor.</p> <p>If a woman has not yet received permanent resident status, and she separates from her spouse or partner, she can still pursue her application to remain in Canada. If the application was made under the Spouse or Common-law Partner in Canada class, she will likely have to make a new application on humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) grounds.</p> <p>An application for permanent resident status on H&C grounds should be as detailed as possible. If a woman has left an abusive situation, her application should set out the history of abuse and include copies of reports from shelters, medical professionals, and the police, if possible. If the abused woman is required as a</p>	<p>Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) passed in 1994, the spouses and children of US citizens or lawful permanent residents (LPR) may self-petition to obtain lawful permanent residency. The immigration provisions of VAWA allow certain battered immigrants to file for immigration relief without the abuser’s assistance or knowledge, in order to seek safety and independence from the abuser.</p> <p>VAWA provisions relating to immigration are codified in section 204(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), the law that governs immigration in the US.</p> <p>The self-petitioning spouse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be legally married to the US citizen or lawful permanent resident batterer. A self-petition may be filed if the marriage was terminated by the abusive spouse’s death within the two years prior to filing. A self-petition may also be filed if the marriage to the 	<p>Those who enter the UK on the basis of marriage are required to remain in that relationship for two years in order to secure residence and access to state support. Ending the relationship within that period, even if due to violence, limits access to support. There are only limited and discretionary allowances to remain in the UK in cases where proof of domestic violence can be given. Immigration status therefore shapes the level and nature of protection from violence.</p> <p>The requirements to be met by a person who is the victim of domestic violence and who is seeking <u>indefinite leave to remain in the UK</u> are that the applicant is able to produce such evidence as may be required by the Secretary of State to establish that the relationship was cause to permanent break down before the end of that period as a result of domestic violence.</p> <p>In addition, the UK government’s</p>	<p>Implemented in November 1991, the Family Violence Provisions (FVP) of Australia’s migration program allow certain people applying for permanent residence in Australia to continue with their application after the breakdown of their spouse or partner relationship if they, or a member of their family unit, have experienced family violence committed by their spouse, de facto or interdependent partner (who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident).</p> <p>Application of the FVP depends on eligibility criteria and proof of violence. Acceptable evidence may be judicially or non-judicially determined.</p> <p>Acceptable judicially determined claims include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certain court injunctions • certain court orders against the spouse or partner made under an Australian state or territory law • evidence that a court has convicted the spouse or partner of an act of violence against

<p>witness in a criminal trial, this should also be mentioned. Women who <u>do not</u> have permanent resident status, women with temporary status (work, study, or visitor permits), with no immigration status at all, with “inland spousal sponsorship” applications in progress, refugee claimants, and live-in caregivers face a different set of challenges.</p> <p>Women who <u>do not</u> have permanent resident status and who leave an abusive situation <u>can be at risk</u> of being removed from Canada. If she leaves the relationship, or is thinking about leaving, she must seek legal advice right away.</p>	<p>abusive spouse was terminated, within the two years prior to filing, by divorce related to the abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have been battered in the United States unless the abusive spouse is an employee of the United States government or a member of the uniformed services of the United States. • Must have been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty during the marriage, or must be the parent of a child who was battered or subjected to extreme cruelty by the US citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse during the marriage. • The Obama administration just announced in 2009 that foreign women who have been victims of severe domestic beating and sexual abuse could receive asylum status in the United States. 	<p>policy focus on human trafficking has primarily viewed women in these circumstances as illegal migrants, rather than victims of abuse. The government’s under-identification of abuse in the trafficking process and over-hasty deportations compromise the safety and well being of women who have experienced abuse and they remain vulnerable upon return to their countries of origin.</p>	<p>the visa applicant or their dependants (or has recorded a finding of guilt against the spouse or partner).</p> <p>Acceptable non-judicially determined claims include both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statutory declaration completed by the spouse or interdependent partner of the person alleged to have committed the family violence which sets out the allegation of family violence and names the person alleged to have committed it • two statutory declarations, completed by competent people in two different professions, that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ set out the evidence on which they have based their opinion that family violence has occurred ○ name the person alleged to have committed it.
--	---	---	--



Appendix

Key Issues and Focus Group Discussion

As part of the consultation phase, we conducted five focus groups with service providers in key communities who have a significant population of immigrant, refugee and non-status women in BC. Frontline workers were invited to discuss issues of common concern among their clientele of immigrant, refugee and non-status women who have experienced violence. We discussed the nature of the problems and risk factors particular to these groups, soliciting suggestions for improving existing services and promoting the development of other relevant and appropriate services and policies. The focus groups were well attended by representatives from the anti-violence and settlement sectors.

For discussion purposes, focus group participants were presented with the following four broadly defined key issue areas which were previously identified as policy priorities for increasing safety for immigrant and refugee women: immigration, cultural competency, settlement, and the legal system. These key issue areas reflect findings from the Community Coordination for Women's Safety consultation in March 2006 that addressed specific policy provisions impeding safety of immigrant, refugee and visitor women experiencing violence (CCWS 2006), as well as previous meetings held with immigrant women of colour who work as front-line advocates with immigrant and refugee women. A survey taken at the end of the focus group indicate that the participants felt they gained new insights about the issues, and that they felt hopeful about impacting policy changes.

Participants in the focus group identified several additional issues including: health care; funding; education; specific refugee trauma, how to look after people regarding lasting effects of abuse and trauma once they arrive in Canada; building language capacity; preparing women to talk about sponsorship concerns with, or without, their spouses; and training and support for victims of human trafficking. In particular, many expressed concerns that women who are trafficked

and women with temporary visitor status, or no legal status, are especially vulnerable and face little social assistance. They often find that subsidized housing excludes the children of women leaving abusive relationships. There was also great interest in extending public education and information outreach to women *before* their arrival in Canada and many emphasized that crucial legal information be provided on an ongoing, continual basis.

In general, the focus groups echoed the findings from the Provincial Cross-sector Forum and Consultation: Improving Responsiveness of Services for Immigrant and Refugee Women Experiencing Violence, held in 2008 and organized by the Ministry of Attorney General, Multicultural and Immigration Branch. As in the Cross-sector Forum, the focus groups identified a need for better collaboration, better training, and more services as primary needs. The participants strongly emphasized the need for more, and better, interpretation and translation resources to address the language barriers facing many immigrant and refugee women. They supported the Cross-sector Forum's recommendation to develop strategies to address language issues as a priority health and safety concern.

Focus group participants were provided with the following discussion points based on key issues distilled from the 2003 consultations and the literature review and were asked to comment.

1. Immigration

Sponsored immigrant and refugee women and domestic live-in caregivers are especially vulnerable to abusive relationships. Uncertainty around women's immigration status makes it difficult for women to access services such as income assistance or subsidized housing and job training programs (Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children 2004).

- 1.1 Services should be available to women experiencing violence regardless of their immigration status. Women should be able to access social assistance without becoming inadmissible for permanent residence status. Legal aid eligibility should be extended to every woman who is, or is likely to be, in Canada with no status. Steps should be taken to ensure that women with permanent resident status know that they have the right to social assistance. Service providers

should be knowledgeable and able to present options that ensure the women's safety without jeopardizing their status or risking deportation.

Many focus group participants echoed their frustration with accessing accurate and timely information regarding immigration policies. Especially in cases where non-citizen women face criminal charges, there are serious legal implications for pending citizenship or permanent residency applications, yet not all frontline workers are aware of how to proceed. Focus group participants reiterated how important it was to obtain legal advice.

In addition, focus group participants pointed out that legal aid for example is unavailable in the Kootenays, requiring women to seek legal advice from Vancouver. Smaller and rural communities face even more difficulties accessing timely legal information.

- 1.2 Women who are non-status, temporary or visitor status have little to no access to services, and face few alternatives to staying in abusive relationships. Services should be available to non-status, temporary or visitor status women or refugee claimants awaiting status. For example, policies could mandate that the English language schools provide safety and "know your rights" training to students with temporary or visitor status.

It was suggested during several focus groups that temporary residents are not eligible to receive services from multicultural societies and are not eligible for income assistance.

It was pointed out that private language schools in BC are mostly unregulated and may be difficult to reach. On the other hand, ELSA programs are government-run, and could be reached and cooperation encouraged, for them to provide basic information on abuse issues. There could even be an anti-violence ELSA curriculum.

Home stay abuses appear to be a growing problem for women on temporary, visitor or student status. There seem to be no regulations or central regulatory agency overseeing that the international students and temporary visitors are safe in home stays. There is a critical need for an ombudsman and a need to address concerns for abuse in this context.

- 1.3 Citizenship and Immigration Canada should respond to women who write to them with the details of the abuse they have endured. CIC should strongly consider such information when these abusers/husbands try to sponsor other women into Canada.

See the next section for more discussion on sponsorship. Some focus group participants felt that there should be a more formal process for individuals who wish to become sponsors, requiring information beyond just the sponsor's financial documentation. There was a suggestion that a different application be used for second-time sponsors. However, some participants expressed concern that such effort would worsen the already difficult and onerous immigration bureaucracy.

The current process does not check if the potential sponsor has a criminal record, if he is sponsoring numerous women, and if other sponsorship breakdowns have occurred with this sponsor. In one case, a participant recalled hearing about a man who allegedly had sponsored 7 people.

- 1.4 There should be a "fast track" for abused women, and a specialized legal aid system that serves as a resource for service providers.

CIC should conduct interviews with women in a confidential way, to inform them that the information given will not affect their status, and once determined as abused, the woman's case should be fast-tracked.

- 1.5 CIC should develop a policy to protect women who, as a result of the relationship breakdown, are taken out of the refugee claim process and left in legal limbo. To help refugee women in these situations, as well as abused women applying for humanitarian and compassionate grounds to stay in Canada, CIC should develop a protocol to offer legal information about navigating the immigration legal system. CIC should also consider abuse a ground to guarantee landed status to women who report it, on the basis that it is a life-threatening situation.

A suggestion was made that an immigration legal aid lawyer should be made available to women facing possible deportation due to sponsorship breakdown. It was also stated that CIC should create a

more user-friendly form that the women can fill out to express, in their own words, why they want to remain in Canada.

It was pointed out that some definitions in this document were unclear, and that there needs to be clearer definitions of immigrants, non-status, and especially “refugees”—in order to distinguish them from “refugee claimants” and “asylum-seekers.” These definitions may reflect different stages in the process, but there should be a clear understanding of the specific needs and vulnerabilities at each stage of the legal process.

- 1.6 A clear and safe process needs to allow abused women to “self-petition” for permanent residency, refugee status and citizenship. This process needs to be applied without risking loss of legal status or possible deportation, due to the reporting of the violence perpetrated against them by the principal applicants, usually husbands. Abused women in the entrepreneurial category should likewise be eligible to apply on their own behalf.

Focus group participants agreed that this kind of process would ensure women’s safety without jeopardizing their legal status. It was pointed out that the abuser may not always be husbands, but could be other family members.

2. Sponsorship

Being a sponsor consists of making a commitment to the Canadian government to “assume responsibility” for the essential needs of the sponsored individual and to ensure that she/he does not require social assistance during the period of undertaking. The period can range from 3 years after becoming a permanent resident (for spouse, common-law partner, conjugal partner, or adult child over the age of 22) to considerably longer (for children under the age of 22, the period of undertaking can last 10 years or until they reach 25 years of age). The sponsorship regime has a discriminatory effect on immigrant women who are sponsored by their husbands. It exacerbates women’s unequal status within the marriage, diminishes their dignity and degree of independence, aggravates existing socio-economic disadvantages and violates their most basic human rights.

Many participants felt strongly that sponsorship issues pose critical problems for women facing violence, and suggested both small and comprehensive policy changes.

- 2.1 CIC should establish provisions to recognize the breakdown of sponsorship due to violence. These provisions should include definition/recognition of: power-based crimes, marriages of convenience, safety issues for women and children, and the impact on the marriage of a victim's extended family both in Canada and in the country of origin.

Many participants felt strongly that clear and accessible information regarding sponsorship breakdown should be provided to women on a continual basis in multiple ways. This information should be included in the paperwork from CIC before the women arrive, upon arrival, and when receiving passports and visas.

This information should be presented in the women's first language and in a culturally sensitive manner. It should also focus specifically on sponsorship.

It was also suggested that the sponsorship breakdown is very one-sided, giving the sponsor all the power, as they are able to pull their sponsorship at any given time. The current process requires only a faxed request from the sponsor to end their sponsorship. It was suggested that the sponsorship process be tightened, placing a greater onus on the sponsor by requiring them to provide "good reason" for pulling a sponsorship and renege on the undertaking.

It was also pointed out that there should be policies in place to allow women to work immediately (instead of the current process which can take up to 18 months), in cases of sponsorship breakdown. This has implications beyond just financial aspects. For example, if a woman with only a visitor permit works "under the table" to support herself, her family or her under/unemployed sponsor or partner with a work permit, she is exposed to human rights violations, e.g. long hours/low pay, verbal/sexual abuse, etc.

In another example; a woman works two jobs and attends English classes to support a child and an unemployed husband, who receives

income assistance. There is nothing presently in place to hold the sponsor/husband financially accountable in such situations.

Many women work under the table because they do not have a work permit and when their employers or husbands abuse them, they have few options. By issuing work permits before permanent residency status is granted, CIC can allow women to leave abusive relationships and earn their own income without exposing themselves to illegal and potentially harmful working conditions.

- 2.2 Points system and immigration fees should be abandoned or reworked in order to increase women's ability to proceed as independent applicants. This will reduce risks to their safety that arise as a result of being dependent on their spouse, especially when working as a caregiver, exotic dancer, etc. or through trafficking.

There is a \$550 permanent residency application fee for sponsored spouses, which is no longer covered by Legal Aid. Many frontline workers felt that this often creates hardship for abused women and should be abolished.

Temporary work permits should be expedited. Open-ended work permits should be created for the women experiencing abuse. Participants also suggested that CIC provide work permits instead of extending a visitor's visa to people applying for permanent residence under sponsorship. It was mentioned that in the case of common law marriages, this would provide opportunity for women to work and support themselves.

The issue of the 3-month waiting period required for any immigrant person before they are eligible to apply for health care, needs to be looked at through the lens of an immigrant woman leaving an abusive relationship. A person immigrating to Canada is not covered by any medical plan for the first 3 months unless they have private medical insurance coverage. Even if a woman is pregnant and leaves a relationship, she cannot access healthcare. A focus group participant recalled the case in which the doctor and nurse backdated the paperwork to help a woman in dire need.

- 2.3 CIC should consider abuse as grounds to guarantee landed status to women who report it, on the basis that it is a life-threatening situation. CIC should also consider expediting the processing period for the sponsorship applications. Many abused women are risking their lives because of the slowness of the system.

Many participants felt that the sponsorship period is too long and should be shortened. Current sponsorship agreement states that the undertaking ends on the last day of the period of 3 years following the day on which the sponsored person become a permanent resident. Many felt that once the legal status of permanent residency is achieved, all sponsorship obligations should be voided immediately.

There appeared to be widespread confusion about the exact duration and terms of the sponsorship undertaking even among the frontline workers in the settlement sector.

2.4 In cases where a sponsored woman is in the process of applying for a visa waiver and her marriage ends because of abuse, the breakdown of the marriage should not adversely affect her visa waiver application. Policy with regards to breakdown of sponsorship needs to be inclusive of senior women who have been sponsored by the adult children and are being abused.

- 2.5 There should be a policy of sponsorship debt forgiveness if the sponsorship breakdown is caused as a result of abuse.

Participants suggested creating a separate agency similar to the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program that would collect the money on behalf of the women, alleviating the need for a woman to go to her abuser for financial assistance.

- 2.6 We need policies to allow self-petition so that women can continue their applications for immigration or citizenship status without being subjected to violence by the sponsoring spouse or family member. Once a sponsorship application is in process, even if the sponsor, who

is the abuser, tries to withdraw the application, CIC should proceed with such applications either on the woman's merits and/or on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

It was pointed out that if abuse is happening, it is the abuse that should have priority over all other considerations, since abuse can be life threatening and is illegal in Canada.

- 2.7 There should be extensive public education and training about the sponsorship issue. We would need clear and easy-to-understand guidelines explaining if, and how, women can get their sponsorship debt forgiven and when they can make a new application on humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) grounds.

H&C applications often have a long wait and carry very small chances of success (1%). Many settlement workers said they were hesitant to recommend this route because it is such a long shot and they did not want to raise false hopes or drag their clients into a long, drawn out process. Many expressed enthusiasm for an expedited process for abused women.

As of now, most women are advised simply to seek legal counsel. Focus group participants agreed that the information must be presented in the women's native language and specifically address the issue of sponsorship. Relevant information could include: preventative measures, bank account information and how to establish their own identity, photocopies of identification documents; such as passports, social insurance cards, other paperwork from CIC, etc. This information should be made available in a culturally sensitive way, and provided on an ongoing basis, at multiple points of contact with CIC or settlement workers.

Many settlement workers also felt that the telephone service for CIC is poor and frustrating, and that it is very difficult to speak with a person and receive correct and current information. They felt that there is a need for more accountability on the part of the CIC in making the information and their services more accessible..

3. Cultural Competency

Language barriers and lack of access to interpretation are a serious impediment to accessing services. Many newcomers lack access to information about Canadian laws and rights, social infrastructure and available services. Interpretation and culturally sensitive services were consistently identified as key factors in ensuring safety of immigrant women with limited English proficiency.

3.1 Adequate interpreter services are critically important.

All focus groups emphasized the importance of language access in ensuring the safety of immigrant and refugee women with limited or no English proficiency. They stated that building language capacity is critical for improving services. There were some suggestions of utilizing telephone-based interpretation service, although its efficacy and ease-of-use were in question.

Not only should there be interpreters available at all points of contact, but there should be measures to ensure that the interpreters are culturally sensitive and properly trained. Several participants spoke of cases where interpreters acted unprofessionally and passed inappropriate judgments on deserving versus undeserving victims of violence.

A point was also raised that some interpreters do not have adequate professional and clinical language training to be effective. Questions were raised concerning whether there exists a regulatory body that oversees interpreters and translators. The Society of Translators & Interpreters of BC is one such body although its services are not known among social service sectors.

3.2 Adequate training should be provided for the police, Crown, victim services, and religious communities.

Hospitals and medical offices should also be provided with training. This training is especially important because there is a big push for medical and legal partnerships, as doctors are often the first to see signs of abuse. There appears to be some variation in hospital policies concerning abuse. Vancouver General Hospital, for instance, is now

required to screen for domestic violence. The procedure seems to vary from hospital to hospital, some are required to call a social worker when abuse is disclosed and some are not. It was suggested that there could be more standardized/coordinated policies in the health sector and that the health sector should share in the financial burden of interpretation and translation expenses.

Training around interpretation needs, the dynamics and the impact of abuse, should be made available to CIC, hospitals and medical office staff. The training should include a list of community resources, though the reality is that most agencies are only available Monday through Friday, during business hours.

- 3.3 General information on Canadian laws and practices, with specific information about services available for women who experience violence, should be provided to women prior to, or immediately upon, their arrival in Canada.

All information should be made accessible in multiple languages. In addition, training should be offered as to how we can consider the cultural differences in legal systems—marriage vs. common-law, secular vs. religious laws, whether Canadian divorce is recognized in the country of origin, and the fact that in some cases, the woman may lose her right to return home to visit her family after a divorce. Many women need the appropriate education and awareness around the various impediments, and so do the legal service providers.

- 3.4 An information packet at the point of entry should provide key phone numbers and information in a variety of languages in an easy-to-understand format e.g. brochures, frequently asked questions, myths & facts, etc.

There are several resources that already exist, but the question is how to make them more readily available and easily accessible. Some of these initiatives include the South Fraser Women's Services Society's Handbook for Physicians: Violence Against South Asian Women. The Save Our Daughters Coalition, an initiative based in Surrey, BC, has started preparing an informational "passport" for South Asian women

leaving India to come to Canada. It is aimed at providing women with some pertinent information on resources, before their arrival in Canada

4. Settlement and Housing

Current policies for subsidized housing can deny assistance to sponsored immigrants in cases of a sponsorship breakdown, even if the breakdown is due to abuse. There is little to no hardship assistance for non-status women, even if they are in the middle of the immigration application process.

Lack of acceptable options in temporary shelters and subsidized housing can force immigrant, refugee and non-status women to enter a continuum of homelessness, and may even force them to return to abusive relationships (Chan et al. 2005). Children, especially male children, can pose more difficulty in securing shelters and subsidized housing for women.

Many focus group participants brought up concerns of adequate housing for women leaving an abusive relationship. Although most focus group participants did not specifically use the language of “homelessness” to describe the situation many women face, it is worth considering research which found that a sizable portion of the population at-risk of homelessness is left out by policies that focus too narrowly on more recognizable forms of poverty and economic disadvantage. Vancouver researchers found that in 2006, among immigrants and refugees, “homelessness may be expressed in ways other than presence among the ‘street’ or ‘sheltered’ homeless population,” and that “homelessness more often takes the form of ‘hidden’ homelessness that is characterized by involuntary ‘doubling-up’ or sharing housing accommodation, while in other cases it is revealed by unsustainable rent burdens” (Fiedler et al. 2006). Women experiencing violence are likely to face this condition of hidden homelessness.

- 4.1 The definition of a victim of violence needs to be re-defined with immigrant/refugee women in mind and this new definition needs to be consistently applied in all Ministry of Housing and Social Development

offices. Hardship assistance should be reinstated for women who have no immigration status but are in the process of applying.

Many focus group participants felt that settlement issues and other deciding factors are entirely dependent on the particular officers in charge of application processing, and that these officers often make arbitrary decisions with lasting effects. There should be policies to ensure that settlement and housing issues are addressed in a consistent manner.

Many also expressed the need for more outreach and home visits to make sure that the refugees are settling and adjusting well in Canada. While everyone recognized that insufficient funding is a concern in every sector, and that such an effort would require even more work and more funding, there was widespread agreement that some sort of ongoing oversight may be necessary.

- 4.2 Housing policies need to reflect trends in our society: our society is becoming more and more diverse, with people from various different ethnic origins. There is a need for greater sensitivity towards different cultures and an increase in the availability of senior housing and assisted living complexes. The federal government also needs to subsidize more co-operative housing for low-income earners, especially women leaving abusive relationships.

Focus group participants identified subsidized housing as one of the most important issues when discussing immigrant women wanting to leave abusive relationships. A place for these women to go is important for their safety and well-being.

Focus group participants also argued for more consistency in services provided by MCFD, including services for older children who may not be able to access a shelter for women. An example was provided that a 16-year-old boy was not allowed into a shelter with his mother. There is a need for Independent Care Agreements that would address the legal status of youth in cases of abuse by the mother/father and/or both.

The sponsorship system is much too rigid. A participant discussed a case in which BC Housing rejected women because they are being sponsored and are thus ineligible for social assistance. It was pointed

out that Income Assistance can “go after” the sponsor if they don’t pay up within three years.

- 4.3 The subsidized housing organizations should change and/or be flexible with their policy and/or legislation for eligibility criteria. The housing societies need to include single, visitor women as eligible for subsidized housing. At present, we are not aware of any single housing society that accepts this group of women.

There is a continuum of “limbo” periods for immigrant women leaving abusive relationships, including the time at the shelter (30 days), then waiting for housing (3-4 months). Some shelters clarified that they assist refugee and immigrant women regardless of their immigration status.

- 4.4 The Ministry of Housing and Social Development should ensure that all staff should adhere to the policy prohibiting workers from contacting sponsors if abuse is suspected.

Focus group participants felt that there is quite a bit of confusion about this policy of confidentiality. Many emphasized the need to ensure that no one informs the abusive sponsor about the whereabouts of women fleeing an abusive situation, no matter what, but that sometimes the housing sector workers lack training about the policies..

5. Legal System

A woman’s reluctance, or fear of proceeding through the legal system is often considered to be the most persistent challenge in cases of violence. These fears may be a rational reaction to the realities of their lives and what they know about the immigration and criminal justice system. The limitations of the legal system are exposed when it fails to provide abused women with long-term protection, forces women to choose between personal safety and family life, and allow domestic violence laws to reinforce male domination. (For more information, see EVA’s Briefing Note 6: Effective Enforcement of

Protection Orders from the series, *Critical Elements of an Effective Response to Violence Against Women*. It is available at www.endingviolence.org)

- 5.1 Protective orders are still one of the few legal remedies available to women experiencing violence (ACLU 2007). Without necessarily viewing protective orders as the only way to ensure women's safety, systemic barriers and patterns of disparity must be addressed for those seeking to obtain protective orders.

Research suggests there are **systemic barriers** that must be addressed (Logan et al. 2005, Russell and Light 2006). One study, published in 2000,⁴ found that there are inherent differences in women who actually go through with the process of filing for a protective order (Wolf et al. 2000). In this study, women who sought protection orders were more likely to: (1) be older, (2) have better prospects for financial independence, (3) be married to the abuser but no longer living with him, (4) be recently sexually abused, (5) have seen friends or family abused or threatened, (6) be pregnant, and (7) be depressed, than women who did not seek protection orders. One glaring absence in such studies is a direct and in-depth discussion of race and immigration status. In a notable 2003 study, a team of researchers conducted focus group sessions with 41 women from social service agencies that serve intimate partner violence (IPV) women with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Wolf et al. 2003). The study found three recurring themes: (1) Predisposing characteristics, situational and personal factors; (2) fears and negative experiences with police response; and (3) fears of possible repercussions. These studies share in the conclusion that many questions remain regarding the protective order process, barriers, and outcomes that need future research attention; for example, there are many unanswered questions about women who are denied, or who do not follow through on protective orders.

Many focus group participants felt that protective measures such as peace bonds and restraining orders are generally ineffective. Unless there is physical evidence of abuse, it was perceived to be difficult to obtain a restraining order.

⁴ The study was part of the Interagency Consortium on Violence Against Women and Family Violence Research in Seattle, Washington.

5.2 There should be enhanced coordination and renewed efforts to address the lack of coordination among some victim services and responses to breaches of protection orders. Hospital-criminal justice system coordination should also be improved.

5.4 The immigration and refugee system does not take into account ongoing custody issues in Canadian family court. There should be improved coordination between the legal systems and service providers, and between family law and immigration law.

- 5.5 CIC should acknowledge having children born in Canada as an important factor to allow women to gain status in Canada. This is especially necessary for women who have children and are struggling through the family law system.

It was suggested that if a child is born in Canada, the onus should be on the CIC to prove that the mother should not be allowed to stay in Canada, rather than the mother having to prove why she should remain in Canada. Many participants also felt that there is a great deal of misinformation about the rights of mothers with Canadian-born children, and expressed the need for public education to prevent women from mistakenly thinking that having children in Canada grants them legal status.

- 5.6 CIC should develop a protocol to offer women in legal limbo about their options in navigating the immigration legal system.

Many focus group participants felt that it is difficult for many immigrant women to understand the various menu options on the telephone when contacting CIC, and that the CIC needs to offer services at times that are more convenient for the clients, not just the agency staff.

A more detailed summary of focus group discussions can be obtained from EVA BC.

Works Cited

(Please see more details in the **Increasing the Safety of Immigrant Women- Annotated Bibliography.**)

- Abu-Ras, Wahiba. "Cultural Beliefs and Service Utilization by Battered Arab Immigrant Women." *Violence Against Women* 13, no. 10 (2007): 1002-28.
- American Civil Liberties Union. *Domestic Violence: Protective Orders and the Role of Police Enforcement* 2007. Available from <http://www.aclu.org/womensrights/violence/28743pub20070301.html>.
- Ayyub, Ruksana. "Domestic Violence in the South Asian Muslim Immigrant Population in the United States." *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless* 9, no. 3 (2004): 237-48.
- BC Stats. "2006 Census Fast Facts: Ethnicity and Visible Minority Characteristics of BC's Population." BC Stats, 2008. Available from <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/facts/facts.asp>
- Boyd, Monica. "Gender Aspects of International Migration to Canada and the United States." In *International Symposium on International Migration and Development*. Turin, Italy: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, 2006.
- Brownridge, Douglas A. "Cultural Variation in Male Partner Violence against Women: A Comparison of Québec with the Rest of Canada." *Violence Against Women* 8, no. 1 (2002): 87-115.
- Brownridge, Douglas A., and Shiva S. Halli. "Double Jeopardy?: Violence against Immigrant Women in Canada." *Violence and Victims* 17, no. 4 (2002): 455-71.
- Bruckert, Christine, and Colette Parent. "Organized Crime and Human Trafficking in Canada: Tracing Perceptions and Discourses." Ottawa: Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2004.
- Bui, Hoan N. "Help-Seeking Behavior among Abused Immigrant Women: A Case of Vietnamese American Women." *Violence Against Women* 9, no. 2 (2003): 207-39.
- Chan, Sherman, Daniel Hiebert, Silvia D'Addario, and Kathy Sherrell. "The Profile of Absolute and Relative Homelessness among Immigrants, Refugees, and Refugee Claimants in the Gvrd." In *Prepared for the National Secretariat on Homelessness*. Vancouver, BC: MOSAIC, 2005.
- Chan, Wendy. "Exploring Immigrant Women's Fears of Criminal Victimization." In *Metropolis British Columbia Working Paper Series*. Vancouver, 2008.
- Community Coordination for Women's Safety. "Analysis of Policies Affecting Immigrant, Refugee and Visitor Women Who Experience Violence." BCASVACP, 2006.

- Conyers Jr., John. "The 2005 Reauthorization of the Violence against Women Act." *Violence Against Women* 13, no. 5 (2007): 457-68.
- Critical Components Project Team. "Keeping Women Safe: Eight Critical Components of an Effective Justice Response to Domestic Violence." 2008.
- Dawson, Myrna, Valerie Pottie Bunge, and Thierno Balde. "National Trends in Intimate Partner Homicides: Explaining Declines in Canada, 1976 to 2001." *Violence Against Women* 15, no. 3 (2009): 276-306.
- Decker, Michele R., Anita Raj, and Jay Silverman. "Sexual Violence against Adolescent Girls: Influence of Immigration and Acculturation." *Violence Against Women* 13, no. 5 (2007): 498-513.
- Dragiewicz, Molly. "Patriarchy Reasserted: Fathers' Rights and Anti-VAWA Activism." *Feminist Criminology* 3, no. 2 (2008): 121-44.
- Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC). Briefing Document: Issue: Violence Against Women Services Are Vital Social Services That Must Be Maintained At Current Levels During Economic Downturn." 2009
- Feminist Alliance for International Action. "Women's Civil and Political Rights in Canada 2005." 55, 2005.
- Fiedler, Rob, Nadine Schuurman, and Jennifer Hyndman. "Hidden Homelessness: An Indicator-Based Approach for Examining the Geographies of Recent Immigrants at-Risk of Homelessness in Greater Vancouver." *Cities* 23, no. 3 (2006): 205-16.
- Gozdziak, Elzbieta M., and Elizabeth A. Collett. "Research on Human Trafficking in North America: A Review of Literature." *International Migration* 43, no. 1-2 (2005): 99-128.
- Jiwani, Yasmin. "Walking a Tightrope: The Many Faces of Violence in the Lives of Racialized Immigrant Girls and Young Women." *Violence Against Women* 11, no. 7 (2005): 846-75.
- Johnson, Holly. "Measuring Violence against Women: Statistical Trends 2006." Statistics Canada (Catalog number 85-750-KIE), 2006.
- Kim, Mimi. "The Community Engagement Continuum: Outreach, Mobilization, Organizing and Accountability to Address Violence against Women in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities." Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, 2005.
- Ku, Leighton, and Timothy Waidmann. "How Race/Ethnicity, Immigrant Status and Language Effect Health Insurance Coverage, Access to Care and Quality of Care among the Low-Income Population." Kaiser Family Foundation, 2003.
- Light, Linda. "Empowerment of Immigrant and Refugee Women Who Are Victims of Violence in Their Intimate Relationships." New Westminster, BC: Justice Institute of British Columbia, 2007.
- . "Cross-Sector Forum and Consultation: Improving Responsiveness of Services for Immigrant and Refugee Women Experiencing Violence." Vancouver, BC: Ministry of Attorney General, Multiculturalism and Immigration Branch, 2008.

- Logan, TK, Lisa Shannon, and Robert Walker. "Protective Orders in Rural and Urban Areas." *Violence Against Women* 11, no. 7 (2005): 876-911.
- McDonald, Susan. "Not in the Numbers: Domestic Violence and Immigrant Women." *Canadian Woman Studies* 19, no. 3 (1999): 163-67.
- Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC). "Non-Status Women in Canada: Fact Sheet." Toronto, ON: Rights of Non-Status Women Network, 2004.
- Meyer-Emerick, Nancy. *The Violence against Women Act of 1994: An Analysis of Intent and Perception*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001.
- Morrison, John, and Beth Crosland. "The Trafficking and Smuggling of Refugees: the End Game in European Asylum Policy?" *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper 39, UNHCR Geneva, 2001.
- Ng, Roxanna. "Racism, Sexism, and Immigrant Women." In *Changing Patterns: Women in Canada*, edited by Sandra Burt, Lorraine Code and Lindsay Dorney. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart, 1993.
- . "Gendering Policy Research on Immigration." In *Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy Research*. Ottawa: Status of Women, 1998.
- Oxman-Martinez, Jacqueline, Jill Hanley, and Fammy Gomez. "Canadian Policy on Human Trafficking: A Four Year Analysis." *International Migration* 43, no. 4 (2005): 7-29.
- Oxman-Martinez, Jacqueline, Jill Hanley, Lucyna Lach, Nazilla Khanlou, Swarna Weerasinghe, and Vijay Agnew. "Intersection of Canadian Policy Parameters Affecting Women with Precarious Immigration Status: A Baseline for Understanding Barriers to Health." *Journal of Immigrant Health* 7, no. 4 (2005): 247-58.
- Perreault, Samuel. "Immigrants and Victimization, 2004." In *Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, 2008.
- Raj, Anita, and Jay Silverman. "Violence against Immigrant Women: The Roles of Culture, Context, and Legal Immigrant Status on Intimate Partner Violence." *Violence Against Women* 8, no. 3 (2002): 367-98.
- Riiskjær, Maria, and Anna Marie Gallagher. "Review of UNHCR's Efforts to Prevent and Respond to Human Trafficking." Geneva: Policy Development and Evaluation Service, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2008.
- Russell, Mary. "Measures of Empowerment for Women Who Are Victims of Violence and Who Use the Justice System Victim Services Division." Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2002. Available from <http://www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=85-570-XIE>.
- Russell, Mary, and Linda Light. "Police and Victim Perspectives on Empowerment of Domestic Violence Victims." *Police Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (2006): 375-96.
- Shirwadkar, Swati. "Canadian Domestic Violence Policy and Indian Immigrant Women." *Violence Against Women* 10, no. 8 (2004): 860-79.

- Smith, Ekuwa. "Nowhere to Turn? Responding to Partner Violence against Immigrant and Visible Minority Women." Ottawa, ON: Canadian Council on Social Development, 2004.
- Status of Women Canada. "Sponsorship... For Better or for Worse: The Impact of Sponsorship on the Equality Rights of Immigrant Women." Ottawa, Ontario, 2001.
- Wolf, Marsha E., Victoria L. Holt, Mary A. Kernic, and Frederick P. Rivara. "Who Gets Protection Orders for Intimate Partner Violence?" *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 19, no. 4 (2000): 286-91.
- Wolf, Marsha E., Uyen Ly, Margaret A. Hobart, and Mary A. Kernic. "Barriers to Seeking Police Help for Intimate Partner Violence " *Journal of Family Violence* 18, no. 2 (2003): 121-29.