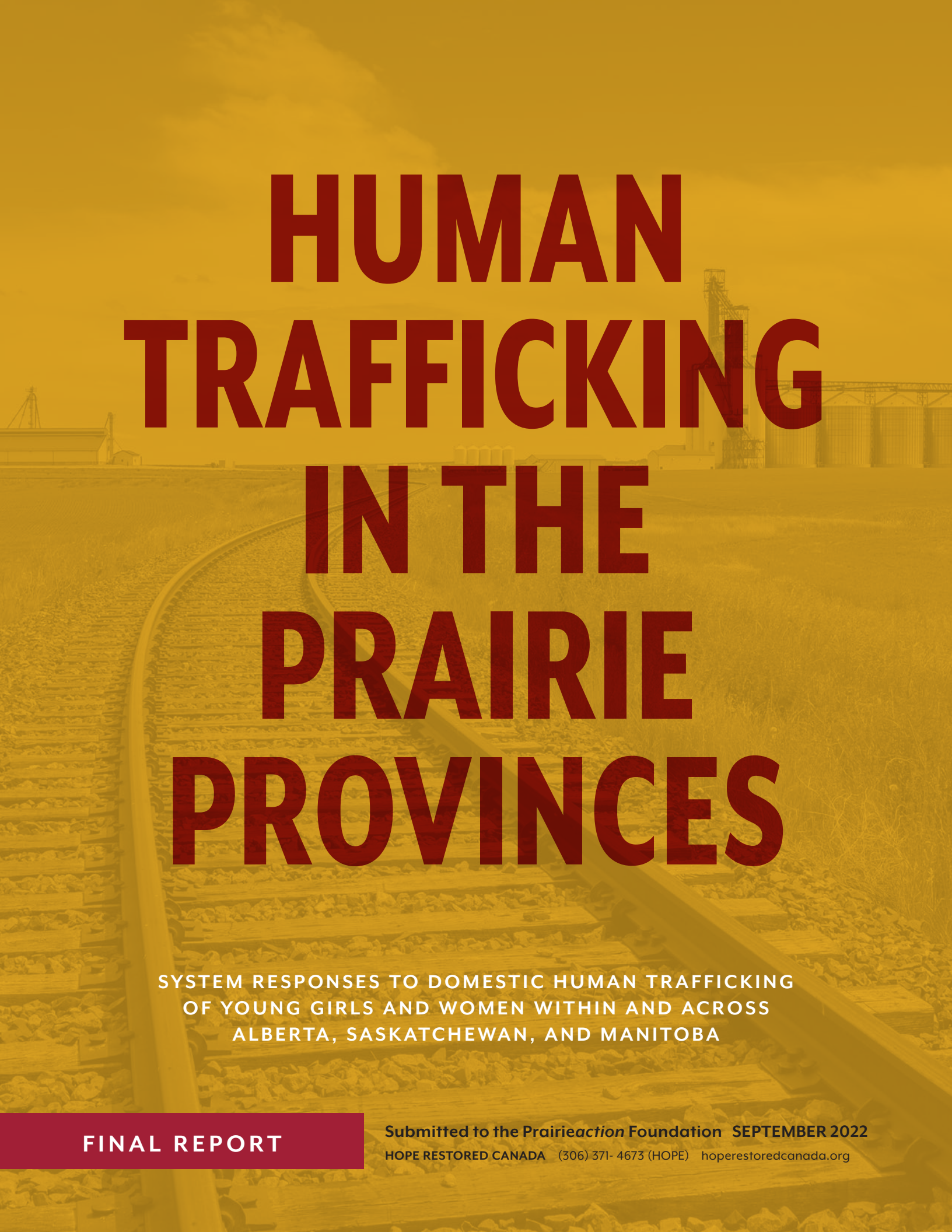


HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES

SYSTEM RESPONSES TO DOMESTIC HUMAN TRAFFICKING OF YOUNG GIRLS AND WOMEN WITHIN AND ACROSS ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN, AND MANITOBA

FINAL REPORT

Submitted to the Prairie*action* Foundation SEPTEMBER 2022
HOPE RESTORED CANADA (306) 371- 4673 (HOPE) hoperestoredcanada.org

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to all the women, girls and two-spirit people who have experienced or continue to experience harm because of trafficking, exploitation, incarceration, overpolicing, and system neglect.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The settlers of this research team acknowledge that we are working in Treaty 6 Territory, homeland of the Métis and the ancestral lands of many First Nations including the Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Dakota, and Lakota peoples.

We strive to build right relationships between Indigenous and settler peoples, as well as to contribute to repair the harms of settler colonialism by responding to the *Calls for Justice of the Inquiry Report on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* as well as the *Calls for Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.*

We take this research proposal as an opportunity to enact our responsibilities in the process of reconciliation to which we are all committed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Hope Restored Canada is grateful for the financial support received from Prairie*action* Foundation for this research project. Prairie*action* Foundation (PAF) is committed to funding research that leads to evidence-informed outcomes for communities as these relate to issues of violence and abuse. They specifically provide grant funds for research that engages in solution focused outcomes that lead to better programs to keep our communities safer.

The Research Team is grateful to the members of our Advisory Committee, and especially to Jonny Mexico from the Manitoba Harm Reduction for their continued guidance, support, and feedback. We are of course, most grateful for the stakeholders who participated in the interviews giving us their time to share their reflections and analysis.

ARTIST CREDIT

LEONARD WHITEHEAD

Born in Kelvington, Saskatchewan in 1968, Leonard Whitehead now resides in Yellow Quill FN, SK. His artistic journey started at an early age while attending a residential school when his preferred media was pen/pencil. After an encounter with another artist, it was suggested he try painting with acrylics which Leonard grew to love.

Leonard includes eagles, drummers, and floral designs in his original paintings. Although Leonard is a self-taught artist, he gives credit to his uncle Wayne Young for influencing his journey to his creations. In the spring of 2019, during his journey to sobriety, Leonard used his art as therapy and continues to do so today.

Table of Contents

Introduction

This research project responds to the call for proposals issued by the Prairie*action* Foundation for proponents to measure the scope, characteristics, and determinants of domestic human trafficking of women and girls within and across the three provinces of the prairies (Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba), and to gauge stakeholder services and supports available for those who are or have been impacted by sexual exploitation and human trafficking. While human trafficking is currently presented as an unproblematic subject of policy, decades of feminist intersectional and anti-racist research have documented the harms that this framework can reproduce if not analyzed critically.

In the research proposal, submitted in August 2019, the project team assembled by Hope Restored Canada proposed a community-based model of research that emphasized capacity building, and a decolonizing, trauma-informed perspective that would produce qualitative and quantitative data specific to domestic human trafficking for the purpose of sex exploitation in the prairies. Early in the process of formulating the proposal for this project, the research team led by Dr. Priscilla Settee and Dr. Manuela Valle-Castro, identified the need to approach domestic human trafficking with an intersectional, feminist, decolonizing, trauma-informed perspective, and a community-focused model of research that emphasized agency and capacity building. At the same time, the research team wished to co-construct, with input from key stakeholders, an evaluation framework for future programming and a model of prevention, education and support, built on adequate and rigorous evidence.

The research project goals initially formulated were to:

1. Inform, consult, and engage with Indigenous organizations and community-based organizations about the goal, objectives, frameworks, and methods for researching domestic sex trafficking on the prairies.
2. Produce a literature review on domestic sex trafficking within and across the tri-provinces of the prairies;
3. Generate primary quantitative and qualitative data about domestic sex trafficking of women and girls within and across the tri-provinces of the prairies to:
    - Capture the lived experiences of victims of sex trafficking.
    - Identify existing services and supports for victims.
    - Identify how it is determined if women and girls are victims of trafficking.
    - Understand how services are being constructed.
    - Identify and qualify the relationships between justice, police services, community organizations and other stakeholders.
    - Understand the similarities and differences between the three provinces.
    - Explain the role of economic structuring of the prairies in enabling labour trafficking.

4. Produce an environmental scan of stakeholders around sex trafficking in the tri-provinces of the prairies by:

    - Co-constructing, with agencies, an evidence-based evaluation model that includes baseline and indicators of success to gauge the nature and effectiveness of services and supports for victims of domestic sex trafficking in the prairies.
    - Building capacity, relationships, and networks among community and Indigenous agencies and services that can inform a prairie coalition against sex trafficking.

In July of 2020, an advisory committee with individual and community-based stakeholders was established to provide guidance, advice, and feedback to the research team of this project, at a time when the Covid19 global pandemic was also starting to shape new remote ways of communication and collabouration. Relevant stakeholders including non-profit organizations, government services, and advocates with lived experience were identified in the three provinces and invited to participate via email and phone calls. The goal was also to connect practitioners across the prairies in conceptualizing and developing an evaluation framework for future programming and a model of prevention, education and support, built on adequate and rigorous evidence. Terms of reference were created that framed the role of the members in the research project while also addressing the power differentials between members by establishing an equitable reimbursement structure.

During the process of building relationships with community stakeholders across the three provinces, we were challenged many times. Early in the process, some stakeholders who have a hard abolitionist stance—who seek first and foremost to eradicate sex work—declined to participate in the project based on the participation of other organizations that practice harm reduction. As anticipated then, agencies and organizations that are aligned with the discourse of human trafficking from an abolitionist perspective expressed a hostile and adversarial relationship with those actors that work with sex worker organizations. We chose to move forward with organizations who are prioritizing the safety and integrity of sex workers. We established a contract of collaboration to ensure that we could address power dynamics and potential conflicts that arise from conflicting perspectives on the topic, as evidenced in the terms of reference for the advisory committee:

> 2.3.1 Advisory committee members will respect the goals and frameworks of this research as centered in decolonizing, trauma-informed, and intersectional principles.
>
> 2.3.2 While advisory committee members need to be able to raise challenging questions and critiques, they commit to build relationships based on mutual respect with fellow Advisory Committee members.
>
> 2.3.3 Advisory committee members recognize that the final control over decisions regarding the research resides with the Research Team and not with individual Advisory Committee members.
>
> 2.3.4 Advisory committee members commit to stay open to address power dynamics created by class, race, sexuality, or any other markers of societal power within this committee. When conflict arises, members will be offered both support and accountability to remedy the harm caused.

As academic researchers, many times we paused to reflect on and listen to the voices of frontline harm reduction workers, organized sex workers, Indigenous elders, and advocates with lived experience. We witnessed the frustration

of people feeling over-researched as another layer of exploitation. We saw firsthand the fierce, loving commitment of community organizations providing services, over-extending their scarce resources, as they have been left to deal with the consequences of inadequately funded support systems.

SHIFTING THE FOCUS

The initial methodological proposal outlined in-person interviews to be followed by a survey to capture demographic trends of ex-victims or survivors of human trafficking. This approach was soon challenged by the advisory committee, particularly by advocates with lived and living experience who pointed at the need to examine the systems and stakeholders rather than trying to create a profile of a potential risk population based on a model of social deviance. The excessive and almost exclusive focus on studying the individual characteristics of folks who experience intersecting vulnerabilities renders invisible the structural determinants of such vulnerabilities. Instead, we were encouraged to bear witness to the voices that are already being expressed by people with lived experience in other venues, such as their independent conferences, publications, and their organization's statements and documents. This is consistent with the anti-oppressive approach to research that prioritizes the study of systems of oppression—how they are institutionalized and normalized—rather than the oppressed subjects themselves (Gillies, 2022).

One of these arguments is expressed eloquently by Amy Lebovitch, sex worker and activist member of the advisory committee, in her foreword to *Street Sex Work and Canadian Cities: Resisting a Dangerous Order* (Harris, 2015):

> As sex workers, we are often over-researched and given little, if any, control over how our contributions are used. Often our very selves are erased by the research. All too often sex workers are not consulted from the ground-up on these research projects and papers. As sex workers, we are not seen as part of the greater community but rather on the fringes, needing rescuing or pity.

Many of the stakeholders in this project suggested that people with lived experience who participate and benefit from programs are often put in a position of having to 'perform victimhood' in a way that fulfills the perceived expectations of the program managers and researchers. In turn, program managers are put in a position of performing saviourism to funders who condition their financial support on this pre-established narrative. Continuing to over-research people who experience a range of gender-based violence and exploitation under the framework of the deviant subject further reinforces their othering, stigmatizing and silencing. In this research, it is the systems that

"There are so many generalizations around human trafficking survivors and it ends up totally diluting their experience by pretending it is all the same? It is not all the same..."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

"It's further complicated as a racial issue. Discourses centred around sex work are inherently exploitative and used as a tool of colonization. This exists, but there are more complications around this. Indigenous leaders and service organizations hold this belief tightly. There is a pendulum and real people experience it… to say it can only be sexual exploitation raises questions. Not all experiences are exploitative… saying that the one who asks questions is on the side of the colonizer. We've seen this as an effective way to shut down conversations…"

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

create this script of victims and saviours that are scrutinized—their practices and discourses identified and analyzed.

With this in mind, we identified some of the actors who design programs and interact with clients, the ones who create and enact policy around human trafficking, and those who embody and practice governmental and non-governmental approaches to human trafficking. Using a snowball strategy and guided by the members of the advisory committee we identified and interviewed 21 stakeholders, experts and advocates from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Questions were created to address four general areas:

- Human trafficking legislation
- Justice and social services
- Economic security
- Program evaluation

The research team then met regularly to analyze the discourses within systems in relation to themes that were already outlined in the literature as well as the concerns expressed by our advisory committee.

The first chapter of this report reviews the literature on domestic human trafficking in Canada focusing on decolonial and intersectional feminist approaches, including recent reports on gender-based violence related to the MMIWG2S in Canada.

The second chapter provides an overview of the research methodology/data collection including the environmental scan and interview processes. Themes applied to the scan are identified in this chapter as well as in Appendix C. Quotes from the interviews with participating individuals and agencies are included throughout the text of the report.

The third chapter analyzes the system responses looking briefly at each province's approach, then separately at child and family services, social services, the justice system, and the nonprofit sector.

Finally, chapters four and five outline the much-needed shift in the narrative for settler government and nonprofit organizations to work with vulnerable communities without reproducing a colonial discourse. It concludes by proposing an evaluation framework for programs that addresses multiple forms of intersecting gender-based vulnerabilities informed by evidence and the organized voices of people with lived and living experience.

CHAPTER ONE

Beyond villains, victims, and saviours: A review of literature on human trafficking

A comprehensive literature review highlighted that the term 'human trafficking' has been subjected to extensive critique and deemed as an inaccurate framework to address gender-based violence in Canada (Hunt, 2015; Maynard, 2015; de Shalit et al, 2014; Millar & O'Doherty, 2020). Human trafficking has become a confusing shortcut to refer to the disproportionate levels of structural gender-based violence affecting particularly Indigenous women, girls and queer youth living at the intersection of multiple vulnerabilities. **The evidence has documented exhaustively how these vulnerabilities are produced and reproduced by ongoing colonial policy and systems.** Furthermore, the systems are directly responsible for neglecting basic human security to people who experience multiple barriers already because of ongoing colonial policy. Presenting the narrative of human trafficking as a modern-day slavery phenomenon renders invisible the structural inequities caused by colonial policy and the complex ways the state is complicit in exploitative labour practices.

Hunt (2015) & Maynard (2015) argue that many Indigenous organizations working on gender-based violence have adopted the language and framework of domestic human trafficking as an attempt to present violence against Indigenous women as a crisis to which the state should urgently respond. Hunt (2015) notes, however, that the human trafficking framework reinforces power relations that represent Indigenous women as dependent on the colonial government and the law to be saved and protected from physical and sexual violence. So far, this relationship of dependency has not worked in Indigenous women's favour and, in fact, perpetuates colonial power relations and racist notions of Indigenous moral inferiority.

The literature analyzed in this chapter demonstrates the need to move from a narrative of individual villains, victims, and saviours to an understanding of the complex systemic factors that have created acute crises and vulnerabilities that have made folks more subject to a range of forms of violence and exploitation.

The evidence points to undeniable connections between historical and ongoing child apprehension, and incarceration, trafficking and sexual exploitation. The cycle of child apprehension, incarceration and trafficking where the foster care system and a racist policing system are implicated, has yet to be addressed and its harms interrupted. These are the impacts of colonialism on removing Indigenous communities' access to livelihood, the inflicted housing and food insecurity in the reserve system, the reproduction of poverty, and all the resultant social outcomes and psychosocial effects. The Canadian settler colonial state continues to be implicated in sustaining the underlying conditions for structural violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people, creating welfare economies that benefit from the poverty of Indigenous peoples.

"There is conflation of human trafficking with sex work. It is not new and it is a deliberate choice made by radical feminists in the 70's who made an unholy alliance with evangelical Christians. We see this pushed in the ideas around human trafficking now, even in international policy."

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

In May of 2019, Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan (SASS) released *Working Together: Your voice, your story, your action*, the first Saskatchewan Sexual Violence Action Plan, in which they establish that, in Saskatchewan, there are "[m]ultiple factors that intersect and contribute to sexual violence victimization in Saskatchewan including sexism, racism, power imbalances, social class, alcohol and substance misuse, previous experience of interpersonal violence, poverty, being involved in sex work, ableism, being incarcerated or institutionalized, queerphobia and transphobia." In other words, they point to the need for an intersectional model of analysis and policy development when it comes to addressing sexual violence in Saskatchewan.

The first factor of vulnerability in the prairies that contributes to being sexually victimized or exploited in all three provinces is to be an Indigenous woman or girl, which is accentuated by disability, previous history of sexual abuse, child abuse, transgenerational trauma, mental health, inflicted poverty, and isolation, and living in areas of structural unemployment. Gender and sexual diversity also add to vulnerability, as being Two Spirit, a trans-woman or a non-binary person means navigating homophobia and transphobia in addition to other forms of violence and oppression. We also know there is both international evidence and Canadian evidence of the impacts of the oil, gas, and mining industries on the trafficking of predominantly Indigenous women and girls. "Communities located in the western part

of the province have seen a major increase of trafficked young women due to mining and forestry camps." (*Journey to Safe Spaces: Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Engagement Report 2017–2018*, p. 7).

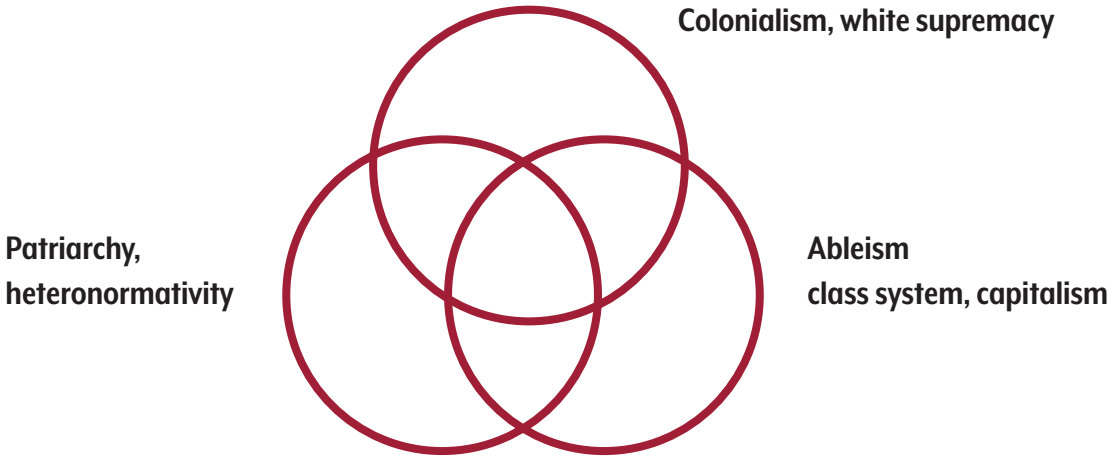
"Children and, disproportionately so, Indigenous girls are being exploited. They are vulnerable because of multi-system, entry/touch points, the trauma at so many points—from residential schools' legacy to no connection with cultures. What works, what we need, is an appropriate Indigenous lens."

(MB ADVOCATE)

A meta-analysis of the existing research and reports on the root causes and the recommendations to address the epidemic of violence against Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people reveal an overwhelming consensus regarding those root causes. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights points out that "Canada's history of colonization, long standing inequality, and economic and social marginalization are the root causes of violence against Indigenous women." (paras. 295–297). Both the reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls have established that the Canadian state has enacted a series of policies that amount to genocidal practices: the Indian Act, the reserve system, residential schools, the foster care system, criminalization, and incarceration, forced sterilizations among others. The indisputable fact that Indigenous peoples in Canada continue to live in a state of colonization is reflected in several social and health outcomes such as poverty, over-incarceration and suicide rates.

According to the report, Sexual Exploitation And Trafficking Of Indigenous Women And Girls: Literature Review and Key Informant Interviews (2014), Indigenous women and girls are overrepresented in forms of exploitation and trafficking and have been studied repeatedly. **The authors, however, point out that the identified root causes, which are associated with the accumulated impacts of historic and ongoing colonial policies that create and reproduce poverty, trauma, food, and housing insecurity, never seem to significantly change.** The recommendations articulated in this report indicate many ways that policy needs to change to protect Indigenous women and children, concluding that addressing poverty may be the most comprehensive strategy to change the conditions that create vulnerability to violence and exploitation. The Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Engagement Report 2017–2018 confirms the root causes, and formulates a series of recommendations to formulate safe spaces for Indigenous women, a strategy that centers on culturally safe, trauma-informed approaches: streamlined services for survivors including long term supports, as well as policy and system reforms.

Interlocking systems of oppression



Intersection of sexism, racism and classism places Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ in Canada in an extremely dangerous situation.

As illustrated in the above diagram, and according to the report *Journey to Safe Spaces: Indigenous Anti Human Trafficking Engagement Report* (2017–2018), Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit youth are placed at the dangerous intersection of multiple and compounding, historical and structural factors: the legacies of colonialism, a state of economic insecurity, vulnerability to sexism, classism, racism.

In addition, the provincially focused research report, *Sexual Violence In Saskatchewan: Voices, Stories, Insights, And Actions From The Front Lines* emphasizes the complex relationship between socioeconomic factors, the ongoing impacts of colonialism and cultures of perpetration where models of violent masculinity are construed as normative. This is particularly true in remote and rural areas where gender-based and sexual violence are even more normalized, and where there is a lack of adequate education around healthy sexuality, gender and sexual diversity, and consent. The report presents a critical landscape for frontline agencies operating under constant stress because they are underfunded, unrecognized and unsupported. Provincial decisions like the demise of the public transportation system (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) is highlighted as having a role in making conditions even more dire for women experiencing gender-based violence and/or sexual assault.

"The removal of STC (provincial bus system) has had a huge impact, especially for rural and remote areas. Now you can't even do what you need to do to get out... Now you are trapped... Transportation is a huge barrier to seeking help... "

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

Colonial policies have had a direct impact on the social outcomes that affect Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ folks.

The literature highlights that Indigenous children are twice as likely to be reported for neglect than non-Indigenous children, and researchers who have unpacked the meaning of the word 'neglect' found that the factors noted were caregiver poverty, poor housing, and substance misuse, but that poverty and poor housing are very difficult for parents to change (Harris-Short, 2016). Moreover, removing Indigenous children from their mothers and their families operates against meaningfully addressing the economic and political conditions that make families vulnerable and cause communities to struggle to provide the necessary elements for healthy children and families. Bluntly put, rather than providing the means for adequate housing, food security, and adequate income, removal of Indigenous children from their families is a form of genocide.

In *The Cost of Doing Nothing: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (2017), researchers emphasize the profound negative costs of having a reactive rather than preventive approach to the inflicted vulnerability to violence of Indigenous women and girls. For the state, it is the heavy cost of administering social services, corrections, policing, judicial proceedings, and so on. For communities, the long-lasting cost is the cycle of apprehension and incarceration that leads to further vulnerability to violence, and the physical and mental health impacts that come with it.

Another layer of vulnerability and risk that impacts the safety and security of IWG2S is the inherited sexism and racism embedded in discourses and practices of various Canadian justice systems. The UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) investigation into violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada found rampant police bias against Indigenous women that is "reflected in the use of demeaning or derogatory language towards Indigenous women and in stereotypical portrayals of Indigenous women as prostitutes, transients, or runaways and of having high-risk lifestyles"

(Report of the inquiry concerning Canada of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 2015).

"So let's be clear, who are the systems? What are the structures? Who are those in power here? Let's be clear about who is doing the big pieces... We know the energy sector staff bring in girls drugged up in a van, 10–12 girls. Police cannot ever go to the door of that sector, but they are there, then off on the highway and gone..."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019) presents substantial evidence of the correlation between resource extraction and violence against IWG2S. Work camps, or man camps, associated with the resource extraction industry are implicated in higher rates of violence against Indigenous women at the camps and in the neighbouring communities. This increased rate of violence is largely the result of the migration into the camps of mostly non-Indigenous young men with high salaries and little to no stake in the host Indigenous community. Industries that create boom town and man camp environments are implicated in increased rates of drug and alcohol-related offences, sexual offences, domestic violence, and gang violence, as well as sex industry activities in the host communities. These occurrences disproportionately impact IWG2S people. The National Inquiry recommended that "[...] federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments, as well as mining and oil and gas companies, should do a more thorough job of considering the safety of Indigenous women and children when making decisions about resource extraction on or near Indigenous territories".

The focus on women's safety needs to ensure not just a preventive and systemic approach, but one that is based on evidence of the practices that create concrete outcomes for people living at the intersection of multiple oppressions. Calls for Justice 4.3 in the 2019 *Final Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* asks governments to "support programs and services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in the sex industry to promote their safety and security." This requires relinquishing models of intervention based on abstinence and morality to make room for more effective approaches based on harm reduction that recognize the inherent dignity and agency of all people.

In conclusion, extensive and substantial scholarship and research focused on sex work and anti-trafficking legislation has challenged the ideological implications of human trafficking discourse and legislation (de Shalit et al, 2014; Hunt, 2015; Maynard 2015; Ferris 2016; Bateman, 2015; Kaye, 2017).

The misconceptions, inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and fallacies that have animated human trafficking discourses and practices include the following:

- The oversimplification of complex social problems into a narrative of individual villains, victims, and saviours.
- The conflation of sex work, gender-based violence, and interpersonal violence with sex trafficking.
- The increasing policing practices and police budgets, ignoring systemic

inequities, constructing victims as lacking agency and in need of moral education.

- The language of individual 'risk' and 'vulnerabilities' that, in turn, reinforce systemic innocence, hiding that systems have already failed to provide basic rights such as housing, food security, and livelihood, and, therefore hiding that there is already a violation of human rights as well as UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People) rights for Indigenous peoples.
- The exclusion of the voices of organized sex workers, invalidating their advocacy efforts for decriminalization and labour rights.

CHAPTER TWO

The voices of individuals and agencies: Scanning, listening, seeking to understand

"Respectful relationships involve dismantling a centuries-old political and bureaucratic culture. . ."

(Truth and Reconciliation Commission)

One person's perspective: The story of our methodology

I knew this work was important. I knew I wanted to contribute. I knew the hearts and minds of the mighty folks involved were resolute and brave. I had no idea the journey itself would ultimately move us towards acting in a new paradigm of thought so deeply required for unlearning and realizing shared human rights.

[When asked about the overarching goal] "... Initially we were aiming to address the perp side of things and were very youth specific, now we have come to better understand, like addressing issues for consensual sex workers, who are also very committed to ending sex exploitation of human trafficking.... No one is more focused on ending exploitation than consensual sex workers... this gets lost..."

(JUSTICE/POLICE SK)

We knew what we didn't want to do. We didn't want to take. We didn't want to re-research and re-tell, duplicating what so many have already sweat and bled to voice.

We knew engaging in processes and systems rigidly tied to and born out of the ongoing legacies of colonialism were surely not the path out of colonialism, to truth sharing and an equitable and inclusive society.

After a uniquely, or perhaps not, lengthy cycling to achieve the required institutional ethics approval, we were ready to move forward. We spent time with practitioners who supported us in understanding trauma-informed perspectives and how we would deliberately helped us understand and see how we would connect with folks who have lived and living experience in right and meaningful ways. When we spoke about northern Saskatchewan especially, (and that's not just Prince Albert, it's really the north), there was a heavy uneasiness about the extraction of story. I have witnessed and been involved with mining stories in the past. The landscape is scattered with the parachutes of people who came to extract this precious gift, to advance the goals of someone or something else under the banner of 'here to help'. We knew we had to do different to get to different, and here is when we knew this was not a narrow path. It needed to be wide and far-reaching and have space for many. The approach needed to

be constructively, collabouratively, iteratively, intentionally, and lovingly codesigned. Out of this need the advisory committee (the AC as we called it) was born.

Early on we conducted an environmental scan, mapping the organizations and people who are part of the community along what we referred to as the continuum of services and care offered to the folks with whom we planned to speak. We also observed early on that education and awareness are the most emphasized (read further about the continuum and findings in this report). As we set out to invite organizations to join the advisory committee, with the aim to help guide and share wisdom, it became clear there were/are deeply entrenched, often dualing viewpoints between many in this community. And yet, we contended it was a community all the same, a fractal of our larger community as a whole and that our advisory committee would welcome all viewpoints, recognizing that wisdom could be achieved in convening and hosting a third space for views to be shared and discussions to take place.

The net was cast wide, a long list of people/groups from across all three provinces were invited; some accepted and some declined. Once our list of members was shared, others also walked alongside for the two years of this project, offering their generosity, endless discretionary efforts, resiliency, authentic and transparent viewpoints, and passion for this timely effort.

And then there was a global pandemic. Because of the backdrop and limitations created by that, we started to move away from the interviews we had planned. Our advisory committee was very clear about virtual interviewing being a no go. At this same time a shift was happening, a move away from the mining of stories, for they've been brought already to the surface to a shift towards holding systems accountable.

I remember the air changing with this. We were on yet another zoom call, all together and locked down, separated across the country. A member of the group challenged us, "...why are the systems getting off... I'm sick of not talking about what causes all this... what's causing all this is what needs our focus....". From this fork in the path our direction of travel changed. As we planned for interviews, we would now be focusing on systems and would speak to people and organizations across the spectrum, ***focusing not on individuals, but rather on the systems*** in place that are perfectly designed to get the results we are getting. Perhaps here is where it needs to be said again. ***This effort from its inception to call to action has been a walk taken together, with folks joining for part of the path or length of what was created, an iterative process of learning and growth, trust building, transparency, and accountability, supportive and kind at a time and in a space of uncertainty.***

As this path of work now narrows to its conclusion, having experienced the collective will, and call to action ***a new path is ready to be forged.***

Taylor Bassingthwaite
Research Assistant

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

An environmental scan was conducted with the purpose of better understanding the continuum of services, programs, and policy drivers that exist across the prairie landscape's current state. While steps were detailed, we aimed for flexibility to ensure the process was fluid enough to create space for changes suggested through the sharing of information and emergent questions by stakeholders.

The scan design consisted of seven steps:

Step 1: Determine coordinator and team member

Step 2: Establish primary area and purpose

Step 3: Identify information to be collected

Step 4: Stakeholder list expanded.

Originally established topic areas, purpose and actors increased by recommending or connecting research teams to other stakeholders (i.e., snowball approach).

Step 5: Identify and engage stakeholders for advisory council and interviews

The willingness of stakeholders to participate and share their guidance, knowledge, and wisdom, helped create not only a diverse advisory committee, but an iterative list of people and organizations with information on each topic. Individuals and organizations were invited to participate in qualitative in-depth one on one virtual interviews.

The environmental scan process identified **leading** organizations and individuals from across the continuum of services, programs, and policy drivers in the prairie provinces. The scan, conducted through systematic methods, assessed the various facets of systems available for those 'exiting' and those in post 'exit'. To better understand offerings and efforts across the three provinces, the following descriptors were used to map along the continuum:

- Pure prevention (advocacy/ awareness)
- Prevention (education/targeted initiatives)
- Early Intervention
- Acute services and harm reduction
- Ongoing supports/sustained relational support
- Post supports/healing/ maintenance phase of change

Step 6: Analysis and synthesized results.

The environmental scan developed into a concise summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) by province (See Appendix C). Results informed the action plan for the research.

Step 7: Shared results of scan and conclusions with full research team and stakeholders.

The environmental scan was used to assess the external and internal environments of system responses to help identify challenges and opportunities.

Through the environmental scan, organizations and individuals were identified and invited to join the advisory committee with the aim of sharing their wisdom and guidance, and collaborating towards the goals of the research.

INTERVIEWS

The advisory committee identified key stakeholders to interview, some of whom were members of the advisory committee already including people with lived and living experience. These stakeholders were contacted for individual interviews.

"There is so much good work going on underground. Sex workers, people with human trafficking lived and living experience, are always excluded. They have tried to be included. I have seen it happen, but they are cut out, shut down, humiliated, dismissed, constant silencing. They say they consult, but they only consult with those who share their agenda."

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

The defined domains for those participating included:

- Community-based organizations,
- Government and social services,
- Economic and industry agencies,
- Crisis and mental health agencies,
- Policing and the legal system.

The advisory committee and research team designed a set of research questions about legislation, justice and social services, economic security, and evaluation. Responses and questions were not limited but contributed to creating an appropriate space and providing time for the wisdom of each unique interview to emerge. As we moved through phases of the research, we routinely shared our process and methodology with the advisory committee and research colleagues to better inform the work and ensure our practices were conducted in a right and meaningful way.

The dynamic process of comprehensive assessment aimed to explore the current landscape in a way that enabled connections not previously established, highlighting challenges and opportunities not previously identified. The intent was to empower stakeholders by collating information for future strategic planning and decision making.

Stakeholders, and their willingness to participate in the environmental scan and interviews resulted in a diverse group of engaged people who have helped develop, ask, and answer research questions, critique published and gray literature, analyze qualitative and quantitative data, all while disseminating findings to their own internal and external stakeholders, furthering opportunities for subsequent planning and decision making.

CHAPTER THREE

Good intentions, harmful impact: System responses to domestic human trafficking

3.1 THE EVIDENCE IS NOT INFORMING SYSTEM RESPONSES

For the most part, when stakeholders are asked about domestic human trafficking, they use it as a shortcut to name a range of different situations, from adult women choosing to sell sex services in parlors or independently online, young mothers using street sex work as a survival strategy, to Indigenous children being apprehended and exploited sexually by criminal organizations. There is a lack of proper distinction between these situations and a proper understanding of the structural situations that need to be addressed in each one of them. This results in a lack of specific and adequate supports, and produces system responses based on moral panic, fueled by a rush to rescue and to save. This project identified a concerning **disconnection between system responses under the rubric of human trafficking and the evidence** emerging from research about intersecting vulnerabilities and gender-based violence in the prairies.

Across the three provinces, system responses to domestic human trafficking focus on two strands of action: **policing and incarceration** and **education and awareness**. These approaches are not being informed by evidence nor evaluated properly, so we do not have measurable outcomes that demonstrate if and how they are effective. Ultimately what is trying to be accomplished is often not clear. In addition to lack of clarity regarding purposes, often, only process measures are shared as indicators. This makes it difficult to interpret the impact of efforts along the continuum. For example, organizations identify the number of sessions taught, or attendance at learning events as the measure, yet without any outcome measures it becomes difficult to say what, if any impact those activities have towards the broader goals, aims and ultimate vision. Metrics are also rarely co-created with the very people for whom the continuum of services and care exists to serve.

The government's loud moral outcry and outrage about human trafficking, Indigenous children's' lives, and MMIWG2S that takes on visible space in public discourse does not directly translate provincially into funding programs that support vulnerable ('at-risk') women, children and youth by addressing the root causes of vulnerability: economic, housing and food security for communities. Not incorporating the evidence in a meaningful way, and not working with community stakeholders with diverse perspectives has harmful consequences.

> **"I'm sceptical [of emerging legislation]. We don't need more laws. Sounds great in a press release to empower police. I already have what I need. Rather, what are the root causes?"**
>
> (JUSTICE/POLICE SK)

First, system **responses to human trafficking tend to be heavily justice oriented**, leaving law enforcement and the judicial system with very limited resources to respond to complex social problems rooted in colonial history. Despite the amount of scholarly research done in Canada in the past decade, as reviewed in the last chapter, policy decisions in the prairie provinces are consistently prioritizing increased funding and power to law enforcement

institutions such as police and corrections, while defunding basic social services. The lack of adequate, culturally safe, and ongoing social supports end up burdening health care and corrections institutions, which already acts as the frontline system to address complex social issues, such as homelessness, mental health, and addictions. Many frontline workers recognize that while institutions are trying to adapt their programs to the calls for action and justice, there is the 'elephant in the room' of intergenerational poverty and trauma that keeps pushing people into those vulnerable positions to begin with. The perception of these adaptive responses as band-aid solutions to a much more systemic issue was reiterated over and over in our human trafficking discourse.

In addition to justice-centered and public safety approaches to human trafficking, there is a strong economic logic that appears in the discourse of stakeholders the idea that to protect vulnerable folks from sexual exploitation, it is a matter of a supply/demand analysis. This type of analysis has resulted in interventions such as 'John schools' that have not been proven to have any significant impact on reducing demand.

Secondly, system responses to human trafficking that are not evidence-based are built on unaddressed colonial biases about sexuality, in which Victorian notions of purity and innocence of women mediate their ability to receive protection from violence. Women who are victimized in the context of sex work, cannot claim victimhood and agency at the same time. This is reflected in the fact that in the three provinces, campaigns focused on **education and awareness as the main tools for intervention** to address human trafficking receive significant government funding. These programs are premised on the idea that women are innocent and unaware victims who are being duped into sex work. To be perceived as victims deemed deserving of protection, Indigenous women must navigate and negotiate deeply entrenched and historically rooted Indigenous women's sexuality. Organizations managing these programs need to reflect on the history of the representation of Indigenous women in relation to white Victorian femininity in colonial discourse.

Razack's (2000) analysis of the case of the murder of Pamela George, an Indigenous woman working as a prostitute in Regina, concludes that in the Western prairies, colonization is an ongoing process in which spaces of respectability (civilized) and degenerate spaces (violent) are defined along racial lines by the state, first as the monitoring and control of reserves, and later, the urban slum. In this analysis, Razack sees space as identity-making: White men achieve their sense of identity as colonizers by being able to move back and forth from elite to degenerate spaces. Pamela George was dehumanized both during her murder and the trial, when she was presented as a prostitute belonging to a degenerate, racialized space where violence inherently occurs. In this narrative, Indigenous women are racialized as sexually available, and lacking the decency and purity of Victorian white women. White settler masculinity is constructed, achieved, and maintained by establishing the boundary with a racialized/gendered other. The police and criminal justice system has proven ineffective in prosecuting and taking proper measures to protect Aboriginal women or investigate their disappearances operating under the same kinds of assumptions about the degenerate space described by Razack.

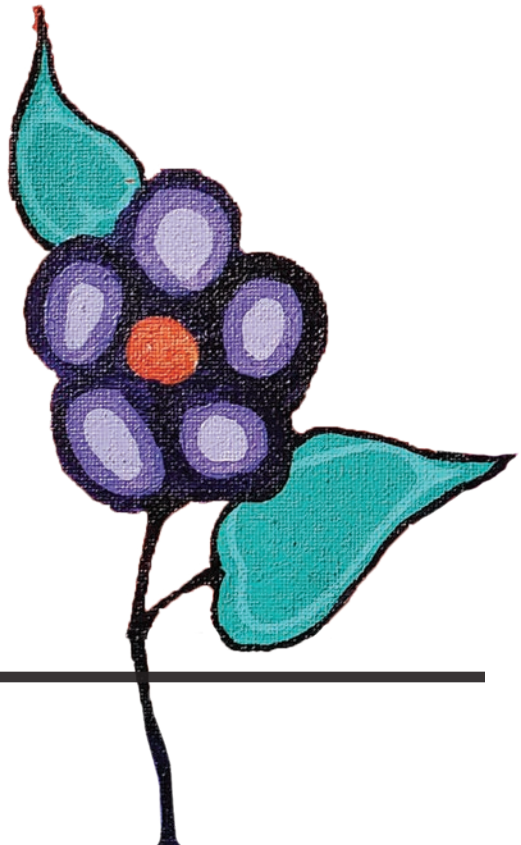
Saskatchewan

Take for example, the new policing initiative, the Saskatchewan Trafficking Response Team, announced on November 24th of 2021, with dedicated funding of $2.1 million for 2021–22 and $6.4 million subsequently per fiscal year to be dedicated to 30 new RCMP officers, 2 criminal

analysts, and 3 support staff across three locations in the province. In the same year, the provincial government cut the social assistance support programs (SIS), did not develop a safe housing strategy, which has resulted in a homelessness crisis both in Saskatoon and Regina; and has consistently denied funding for a supervised consumption site in the core neighborhood of Saskatoon. System responses to human trafficking that focus on policing while systematically neglecting the basic needs of communities such as housing and food security, and opposing harm reduction, from a moral perspective, have harmful impacts on communities.

In October 2020, community based organizations that deliver frontline services to people living in poverty—Quint Development, the Lighthouse Supported Living, Elizabeth Fry Society, Prairie Harm Reduction, OUTSaskatoon, the Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership, the Westside Community Clinic, and the Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership, among others—met at Station 20 West in an emergency community meeting to discuss the impacts of recent changes in social assistance on their clients. They described a situation in which nonprofit organizations are forced to compete for scarce funds to deal with band-aid programs to address complex social problems like poverty and homelessness. They denounced the lack of provincial social support as a situation of **systemic neglect** and a violation of basic human rights, as well as Indigenous rights as established by the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

As expressed in the 2018 Point-In-Time Homelessness Count (Saskatoon), almost 85% of homeless people are Indigenous. Many are residential school survivors, many face severe health problems such as complications from diabetes that lead to amputations, which in turn leaves them facing more barriers. These clients are not allowed to stabilize when they are thrown into a cycle of housing crisis, eviction, and homelessness. The provincial government does not fund shelters for people if they are intoxicated, leaving those who are homeless and living with addictions to a sure death in the winter. The biggest casualties of this systemic neglect are the children of these families, as lacking adequate housing leads to family instability and results in too many Indigenous children disproportionately going into foster care. Family disruption is one of the main predictors of incarceration, poverty, overall poor health, and short life expectancy. The failure of our social systems to address these inequities properly and proactively is not just socially and politically unsustainable, it also results in an extra burden for the health care system and law enforcement. It is economically unsustainable.



Alberta

In Alberta, Bill 8 *Protecting Survivors of Human Trafficking Act* promised to introduce tough new measures to help address human trafficking and better protect and empower survivors. All these measures contribute to turning social problems into discrete judicial cases. Protection is used as a code word for policing, and human trafficking as a misnomer for sex work, creating much space for interpretation of how the legislation is applied by police. In a script of individual villains and victims, some are hailed as the heroes even if they lack any expertise and knowledge of the topic, such as renowned country singer Paul Brandt, who was appointed chair of the Alberta Human Trafficking Task Force.

"Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world, and it must be stopped.

Serving as a chair for the Alberta Human Trafficking Task Force is an immense privilege and responsibility, as we work together to protect those who are most vulnerable. Freedom should be for everybody."

ANTI-HUMAN-TRAFFICKING CHAIR OF THE ALBERTA HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE, PAUL BRANDT, COUNTRY SINGER AND TRUCK COMPANY OWNER

"There's a saviour complex, soundbites through moral panic, click bait. Whenever its a 'child sex ring', people will always click. There's this desire from the public to consume information that is morally repugnant and to see the police kicking ass and taking names, especially in conservative strongholds. Now it's champions with specific ideas, not academics, people with information, knowledge. It's 'influencers', people with a social media pull now, especially with the introduction of celebrity. For better or worse, it's an interesting interplay with policies. The public is not provided with discourse on evidence. 'This is horrible, here's an image, here's a police officer, here's an influencer... somewhere down the list is an academic saying something else... who hears it?"

(MB ADVOCATE)

Manitoba

In Manitoba, human trafficking legislation is informed entirely on a tragic and sensationalized narrative rather than evidence. In March of 2021, Families Minister Rochelle Squires made the announcement that March 7th to 13th would be declared *Stop Child Exploitation Awareness Week* in Manitoba, stating that "[t]he safety and security of children is a priority for our government, and we are committed to enhancing supports to ensure the best possible outcomes for vulnerable youth, including those at risk of sexual exploitation." The Manitoba government then announced that it was investing $900K, a rather modest amount, to "stop sexual exploitation of children."

"There is so much money put into things like a hotline and campaigns, but what does it accomplish? That hotline rang once... but campaigns, it sure looks good to say you've offered all of this training. That's not an OUTCOME. Organizations and agencies have poor metrics. Everything is a process measure, not what is actually being achieved towards any stated objective because there is no agreed upon goal. Who actually is any of this helping? It's about people, white people in services feeling good."

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

"The classic arguments pulled from the gray literature used in big campaigns are myth, it's all been debunked! How helpful is it to teach large groups of people to be suspicious of other people—based on what? These big campaigns actually increase violence and surveillance."

(SCHOLAR)

The programs and activities that are described support the goals of Tracia's Trust, Manitoba's provincial strategy for human trafficking. Tracia's Trust programs conceptualize human trafficking as sexual exploitation and under that banner, link legislation pertaining to child exploitation and adult prostitution together. Practices emphasize education and awareness as well as perfecting police mechanisms for identifying individual perpetrators and victims. The logic that by over policing adult sex workers the government will protect children is flawed and not supported by evidence.

On the Manitoba government website, it is implied that sexual abuse and exploitation are the root causes of complex psychosocial problems: "It is estimated that hundreds of children, youth and adults are victimized in the visible sex trade on the streets of Winnipeg and other cities each year. It is also estimated that thousands are victimized in the invisible sex trade that takes place in hidden venues such as private homes and drug houses located throughout the province. Most adult sex trade workers report that their victimization began at a very young age; sometimes as young as 9, and at an average age of 14. Without intervention, these children, youth, and adults are at far greater risk of violence, including abusive relationships, sexual assault and homicide; sexually transmitted diseases; gang

involvement; early pregnancy; mental health difficulties; academic difficulties; involvement with the child and family services and criminal justice systems; long term dependence on social services and government assistance; and raising children who are much more likely to repeat the same cycle".

One of the outcomes of this approach has been the creation of a high-risk youth database which, in practice, gives more power to police and Child and Family Services to apprehend youth.

"The law is so broad and leads to confusion. We know there are ugly, awful things, but there's a lot of myths around human trafficking and a lot of 'research' that is not true. We know this, yet it is still out there. 'The study'? Not a lot of rigour, they craft it, relay the information, then people say 'OMG, it's so awful, what can we do'? There is interest in keeping a lot of this work in the public, people can get a lot of funding, especially the morality squad."

(MB ADVOCATE)

Federal strategy

The current 2019–2024 *National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking* frames federal activities under the internationally recognized pillars of prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships and will add a new pillar of empowerment. Canada has added this new focus area to enhance support and services to victims affected by this crime.

"The National Strategy will enhance efforts in a number of priority areas, such as the need for increased support and services to protect and rehabilitate victims and survivors and the promotion of culturally sensitive approaches, such as tailored services for Indigenous victims' needs. It will aim to increase awareness of human trafficking so that Canadians can better understand the signs of this crime that can occur in their communities and improve the ability of government officials and front-line staff in key sectors to identify, detect and protect victims and survivors". (National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, pg. 7)

In addition, *"The National Strategy will provide enhanced support services to victims and survivors that are trauma-informed and culturally relevant and address some of the root causes of exploitation, such as poverty, sexism and racism, and lack of education and employment opportunities. It aims to raise awareness of what human trafficking is among Canadians, at-risk and vulnerable populations, and front-line staff in key industry sectors, so they are better positioned to help prevent it. It also aims to promote a victim-centered criminal justice system. Finally, the National Strategy recognizes that human trafficking is a complex problem that can affect anyone, takes place both in Canada and abroad, and requires action from multiple actors, including the Government of Canada, provinces and territories, civil society, and the private sector"* (National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, pg. 13).

While statements like this have been made in the National Action plan, little has been done to address necessary systemic changes. Instead, the system's response relies heavily on the law, policing, and community safety acts. There has been no emphasis on how the systems of "prevention, protection and prosecution" are barriers within their makeup and perpetuate experiences within the cycles of powerlessness and exploitation. As the plan moves into the partnership and empowering phases of their work, the government has the responsibility to make meaningful impacts by partnering with various federal and provincial ministries, as well as front line agencies to create policy, laws, and social programs that reflect the needs and voice of those with lived experience. This is necessary to help eliminate the very barriers and systems that further exploit and limit the basic support every person deserves.

3.2 SYSTEMIC NEGLECT AND PRODUCED VULNERABILITIES

3.2.1 CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES: COLONIAL POLICY AND COMMUNITY DISRUPTION

"We never gave up our sovereignty of our children."

Chief Cadmus Delorme, Cowessess First Nation

The discourse of protecting and saving innocent children is often mobilized to support human trafficking legislation, but in practice, policy framed under this rubric can create more harm, especially to Indigenous children. According to the Ministry of Social Services 2019 data, in Saskatchewan, 86% of children in foster care were Indigenous; in Manitoba, it was reported to be 90%, and in Alberta that number is 69%. All these proportions exceed by far the average of representation nationally (52%), which is already alarming considering that Indigenous peoples nationally are less than 5% of the overall population. Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, Cindy Blackstock, says part of the issue and legacy of residential schools as cited in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is the chronic lack of adequate, equitable services and education for children on reserve, which then funnels them into foster care.

"No sex exploitation, now everything has shifted to human trafficking, with moral panic and 'save the children'. Are the 60's scoop, residential schools, our MMIWG's not human trafficked victims?!? Are all these not processes of human trafficking? Again, coming in to save, even though it is the state that is at the root. Often white men, coming to save brown women from brown men..."

(SCHOLAR)

A 2018 report from the Ontario Human Rights Commission found that the foster care system acts as a pipeline to incarceration. Conditions that put Indigenous children into the child welfare system are "related to the intractable legacies of residential schools including poverty, addictions and domestic and sexual violence," according to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report. A report by Manitoba's children's advocate that reviewed the deaths of 19 young children in the province found problems in oversight and lack of support from child welfare, concluding that "each death was preventable." The report, entitled *Still Waiting: Investigating Child Maltreatment after the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry*, recognized the

impact and role of racism, poverty, sexism and colonization in the child deaths.

Indigenous children and youth are overrepresented in foster care, a system that has historical continuities with other forms of apprehension such as the 60's scoop and residential schools. Being a youth in care is a predictor of vulnerability and violence for which there are no adequate system responses. There is no support to transition out of the foster care system, and the fact remains that there is a very real foster care to prison pipeline for Indigenous youth in the prairies. The historical trauma of child apprehension and family disruption also shapes the fact that many Indigenous women experiencing a range of violent situations will never seek help from the police because they fear the involvement of Child and Family Services. This is one of the systems that continues to perpetrate the most harm to communities.

In January 2020, the Assembly of First Nations and the Government of Canada signed a protocol co-developed by both organizations to establish a new structure to support discussions on the implementation of the Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families. Co-developed with Indigenous, provincial, and territorial partners, the Act:

- affirms the rights of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples to exercise jurisdiction over child and family services
- establishes national principles such as the best interests of the child, cultural continuity, and substantive equality
- contributes to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- provides an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to choose their own solutions for their children and families

While dealing with the consequences of preventable social problems, the harms of the cycle of foster care, imprisonment and bad health result in not only a costly approach that unnecessarily burdens healthcare and corrections, they are in contradiction with the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the spirit of reconciliation. The Liberal Member of Parliament, Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations has stated publicly that "[t]here are still children being removed, taken into care, and dying, and the system is still one that is focused on intervention as opposed to prevention in a way that does not reflect the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples". (https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/foster-care-is-modern-day-residential-school-1.6054223)

At the same time, Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett has recognized publicly that "the removal of Indigenous children from their parents and their placement in homes away from their communities is a current reality for too many Indigenous families and a present danger to children".(*https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/foster-care-replaced-residential-schools-for-indigenous-children-advocates-say-1.5459374*)

A tangible concrete measure to avoid family disruption was the decision this year of Northern Affairs Minister Dan Vandal to provide $250 million to build four schools in Northern Manitoba. This will allow Indigenous children living in remote areas to attend school locally, rather than having to leave their communities.

3.2.2 SOCIAL SERVICES: SETTING UP INDIVIDUALS FOR FAILURE

Actors and stakeholders from various sectors strongly agree that our **social services system pushes people into survival strategies** that put them into dangerous and precarious situations. To effectively prevent human trafficking, governments at all levels need to offer social supports that make up for the barriers experienced by groups who have been historically marginalized. There is, however, a dominant narrative of individualism and meritocracy that shapes social services so that instead of allowing folks to overcome systemic barriers, they are instead systematically set up for failure. Frontline workers describe how clients who are mothers will often work in the sex trade as a survival strategy to compensate for the lack of provincially funded programs that support single moms or they describe clients who struggle to build some degree of economic capacity only to find themselves punished for doing so by the social service system. The way the system works currently in Saskatchewan does not encourage stability and throws people living in poverty into a state of constant crisis and survival mode. Nonprofit organizations cannot make up for the lack of access to basic rights such as affordable housing.

> Community based rapid re-housing programs have assisted clients in getting safe affordable housing, reducing the chances of exploitation in crowded homes or being in the streets. However, there are long waitlists for this program and clients often must fit very specific criteria (they need to be chronically homeless but also not having too complex of needs that would make it untenable for support). A lot of women get exploited during the wait or if they do not fit the criteria perfectly. (Community-based organization, SK)

"It's simply about surveillance and people feeling good about themselves... it's the industrial rescue complex. It's at work everywhere—campaigns, social services, they are self-serving, they train the same people over and over again..."

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

Stakeholders across the three provinces emphasize the need to guarantee everyone access to opportunities to stabilize and heal, but especially those groups that have been made more vulnerable to exploitation, including, but not limited to, Indigenous young women and mothers, queer youth, women and youth in remote/isolated areas, foster care and other apprehended children, women, and youth with disabilities.

> Our economic policies at a provincial level keep pushing vulnerable people further into poverty and despair, supported by a narrative or meritocracy and a government that is rooted in colonialism. (Community-based organization, SK)

An intersectional framework recognizes the different systemic barriers that increase vulnerability and makes sure that they are appropriately addressed. The pillars of a support

system that appropriately addresses the needs for safety for women and youth that were raised by stakeholders can be summarized as:

Pillars of social support identified by stakeholders and advocates.

This is consistent with the notion of human security established by the United Nations Development Program, which defined the seven categories of human security as economic, food, health, environment, personal, community, and political.

3.2.3 THE JUSTICE SYSTEM: INCARCERATION AS AN UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

The justice system is not an adequate system to address complex social problems such as gender-based violence or systemic racism. Victims of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and sexual harassment are often not able to offer the system the requirements for what counts as evidence. This has been documented in terms of the impacts of trauma in gathering evidence, the sexist biases of court proceedings and the retraumatizing impacts of victims as they interact with the system. In addition, the justice system, created to manage and administer a colonial order, is not a system that Indigenous communities can trust. A justice-oriented response to human trafficking is an unacceptable response in a context where Indigenous people are already overpoliced and overincarcerated in Canada. When released, people face increased barriers

"There is a lot of money spent on policing. It is essentially them pretending to be clients, online. Police try to reach people they think may be trafficked and it is also more opportunity for surveillance... What they do is not helping victims of sex work and human trafficking."

(SCHOLAR)

to finding employment, and are released back into the same situation of poverty that they came from, only now with a criminal record. This creates a revolving door back into the prison system and reproduces a cycle of intergenerational poverty and trauma.

Justice stakeholders themselves point out how inadequate the responses are when only centered on policing and incarceration. Many of them recognize that even from a policing perspective, these measures may have an impact on the public's perception of public safety, but they are not effective in addressing the root causes. The system is effective in identifying victims and perpetrators, but completely unable to address and redress the structural issues that put the victim in that situation. Part of that failure has to do with the framing of victims and villains: it leads to the construction of pimps and Johns as static vilified individuals, while victims are constructed as powerless and innocent. This frame renders invisible the fact that both victims and villains are engaged in survival strategies due to the failure of systems, and in that sense, they represent dynamic and changing positions in the same script. That is, villains (pimps and Johns) can also be victims.

> Identifying and accessing victims is not an issue. We have those laws, the problem is dealing with a person after, who is broken, [there are] so many issues with the starting point being mental health and addictions, they have already been exploited for months if not years, so they are dependent on the trafficker who provide a tangible sense of safety and support. (Justice system, SK)

The conflation of human trafficking with sexual exploitation, sex work and a range of gender-violence forms, is most apparent in the interviews with the stakeholders from the justice system. While some of them seem to understand the nuances of choice, many of them interchangeably use terms like sexual assault, trafficking and child abuse as they straightforwardly discount the voices of sex workers who claim to be safe working in parlors and brothels:

> The victims are controlled and always pretend to be otherwise. "Yes, I am safe" [they say] while they're being controlled, terrified, families threatened. They are trafficked under this belief of being independent. (Justice System, SK)

"They [law makers] would need to confront systems, and need to confront their own identity and privilege. These are not things you can do right away. As long as this doesn't happen, issues will be individualized. That always comes down to addictions.... we also find supports are very limited..."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

There is veiled racism when Indigenous women and youth are seen as individuals making bad choices, in need of saving, and educating. They will moralize:

> Indigenous girls are more targeted, they are more vulnerable and susceptible to the 'Romeo pitch,' where someone comes along and offers you things you've never had, it can be hard to say no. (Justice system, SK)

One community-based organization stakeholder further described the settler colonial justice system as predatory, since it focuses its resources on punishing Indigenous people who are dealing with intergenerational poverty and trauma.

3.3. A LEGACY OF RESCUING

"Some organizations have done a lot of silencing. There have been conflicts, hostility between [different points of view]. It's about power, people have lost critical thinking with human trafficking. We're talking about a lot of made up research that is being used to raise money... it's lazy intellectually... [specifies stats on young people entering sex work average age of 13] They're using debunked gray literature. Even after they know, it's still on their websites and campaigns. It's about moral power."

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

Nonprofit organizations constitute a diverse sector providing a range of interventions from education and awareness to harm-reduction. These organizations are often attending to crises created by provincial systemic neglect and lack of basic services to vulnerable communities. They are positioned across divisive lines and conflicting approaches (abolitionist versus harm reduction) depending on their attitudes toward sex work. Interventions and programs created and administered by non-Indigenous organizations that focus on education and awareness tend to maintain a patronizing relationship between white upper- or middle-class professional women/men and their clients, many of whom are Indigenous women. This approach avoids any critical analysis and accountability for the systems that are creating and recreating the conditions of the clients' lives in the first place. Earlier in this report, we documented the vulnerabilities that Indigenous women and youth experience that are caused by structural inequities such as inflicted poverty, housing and food insecurity, misogyny, and racism.

> For Indigenous peoples, the state creates conditions for economic exploitation and then it makes moralistic judgements about peoples' survival options. This is wrapped in Christian morality. The state erases their own participation in how Indigenous people are pushed out of the economy and then demonized for creating alternative ones. (Indigenous advocate, MB)

For many organizations led by white middle class women and men, human trafficking is the new banner for the colonial narrative of saving and rescuing Indigenous women. Unfortunately, the conservative, fundamentalist narrative of evangelizing, moralizing, and civilizing, along with a white-saviour complex is embedded in the identity of many well-intentioned charitable

"...there are people making careers and lives on the backs of sex work. Classic white feminist move, bourgoie—do their charity, gain notoriety, power. They claim to speak for, how do they claim that right?"

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

organizations. While individuals in these organizations genuinely desire to improve the conditions of their clients, in the long run they contribute to the rationalization and normalization of colonial violence.

> An NGO staff on a gang-intervention program received 10k to make a video in which the narrative was that youth crime is the result of family dysfunction and where in the end they were saved by good intentioned, white folks. It turned a systemic failure into a bad family narrative, confirming stereotypes of Indigenous [peoples] as violent, uncivilized and in need of rescuing, erasing the history of how colonial policy has disrupted family and kinship, and how it introduced intergenerational trauma. We are constantly pathologized, meanwhile, white folks benefit economically from nonprofit work and build their identity as good people. (Indigenous advocate, SK)

Human and sex trafficking discourse and legislation have the potential for harm by reinforcing the deficit ideology of the victims, and their dependence on patronizing white moral guidance. For a long time, Indigenous women and women of color have been pointing at the dangerous intersections of racism and sexism when it comes to sexual violence, from anti-colonial feminist analysis of rape as a tool of colonization (Smith, 2005), to the ways that Black and Indigenous women have been represented as hypersexual in relation to Victorian white women (Razack, 2000), positioning the latter as the saviours and educators of the former. A lack of awareness of one's own positionality can reproduce hierarchies between white and racialized women, perpetuating a discourse of white moral superiority and white innocence.

"Survivors say women are trafficked across the province because there are no basics, no food, housing. If you try to exit with nowhere to go, you're held in a cell, right? Because there's nowhere else. In rural areas, there's no shelter, no bus. All these things put people back out..."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

"...Specifically, with legislation, we've made mistakes. Lots of chatter right now around redoing our legislation... we have to look at online porn, child sex images. We need to re-develop legislation because right now it is based on the nomadic model, and it is very abolitionist... we don't have anything that is viewed through a survivor-based lens. All our legislation is from people who have no idea what they're really talking about. They are people who haven't been involved in anything..."

(JUSTICE/POLICE SK)

Simply put, system responses to human trafficking from both government and non-government agencies are insufficient and inadequate because they are not recognizing nor addressing the root causes of intersecting vulnerabilities that enable trafficking and exploitation, both of sexual and non-sexual nature. There is a concerning disconnect between policy decisions and the voices of people with lived experience and the body of anti-racist, decolonized, intersectional, feminist scholarship and evidence; as well as a lack of

"If connections are managed well, we can build collabouration as well as community. Gain the respect of the right people involved in the issue—from biker gangs, tourism, police, farmers, everybody, there is a way to do this if you get the right people involved... Work with local communities, out of our own pockets if we have to. We need strategic leadership, some measures across sectors and ministries. We may not use the same language yet but there are certain points we can all get behind. There is an opportunity here to intervene, and prevent, which also means looking at the system and risk factors for perpetrators."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

a coherent framework for programming and evaluation for funders.

Moreover, legislation of human trafficking is based on a sensationalized moral panic that has not improved the safety of sex workers but rather made it more precarious. The moral panic has allowed for the channeling of government funds into policing and incarceration as well as to support programs based on awareness and education.

Human trafficking is a construct that, in practice, seems to be based on the desire to eradicate sex work altogether (based on notions of social hygiene and social deviance) and erases the responsibility of governments for creating equitable systems for all citizens. An excessive focus on "public safety" and the consequent funding of policing and incarceration results then in the disregard for human security. This lack of adequate social support (economic, food, and housing security) results in overwhelming the health care and the justice system. In short, the current human trafficking framework is an approach that has a high cost, not only, for the individuals involved within it, but for all systems. **When a young woman is found in the back of a vehicle and she is being trafficked, we need to understand what are all the levels of systemic failure that have already happened. Layers of basic human and social rights must be already neglected to get to that situation.** Focusing most of our resources on identifying and punishing those who are trafficking has proved an ineffective way of responding to this problem, when we consider the dollars spent in relation to the number of convictions under human trafficking legislation and policing.

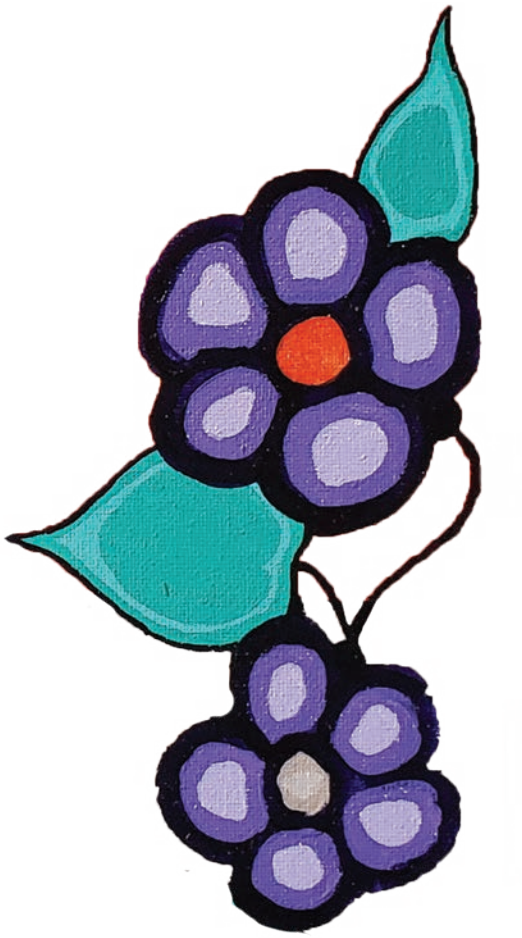
In conclusion, system responses based on moral panic that prioritize spending on policing-incarceration and education-awareness actions end up producing harm and provide no social return on investment. On the other hand, a model based on evidence provides non-judgmental and non-biased stabilization and support while advocating for systems that provide basic social rights, ensuring that communities are strengthened and that levels of social cohesion and engagement increase, thereby providing more meaningful levels of public safety.

"There have been some innovative solutions from organizations—as advocacy points—but not necessarily policies.... What about standard protocols at hospitals for all forms of gender and sexual violence and human trafficking, proper care and referrals to appropriate services?"

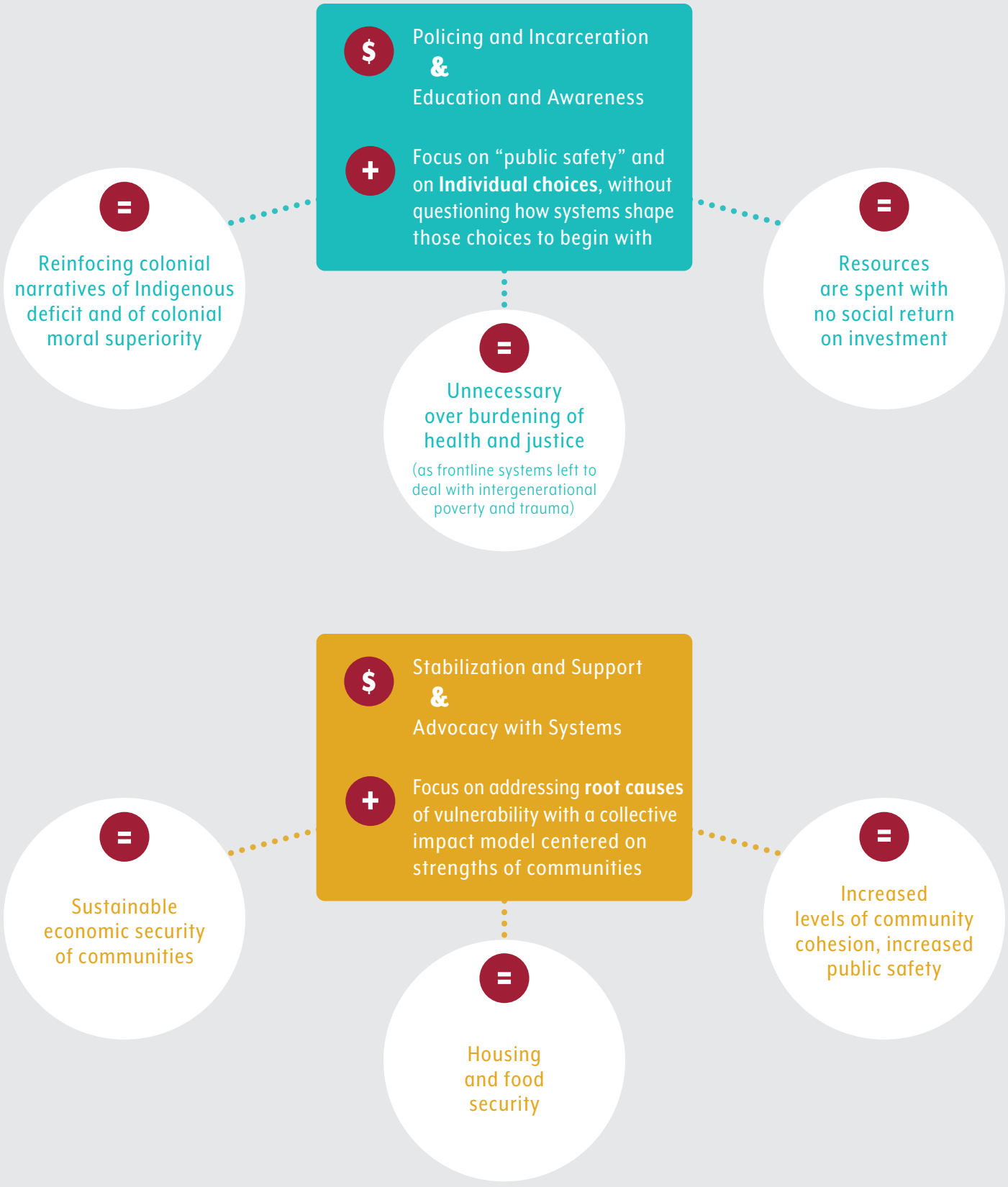
(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

"There are missed opportunities to share with other sectors, with businesses. There are very tangible ways to get involved, and if they were told how, they would help. Because there's no clear roles or leadership, when things are clearly articulated the private sector will rise when called upon, particularly in rural and remote areas, they will engage, even if because it's only good from the bottom line..."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)



System Responses to Human Trafficking



CHAPTER FOUR

What can provincial governments do to prevent domestic human trafficking?

"Economic security and prosperity are more than securing employment. Thinking holistically, both economic security and prosperity are linked with culture, food, safety and relationships."

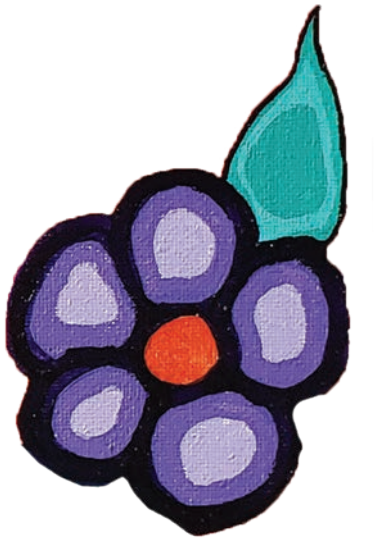
Honoring Her Spark: A Saskatchewan Indigenous Women's Economic Framework (AFCS, 2020)

When this project was initially undertaken, the research group viewed it within a much larger picture. **The team viewed the collective condition and daily realities of trafficked women and children within a set of relations, and politically and socially constructed conditions.** Rather than seeing women and children as victims, we see them originating from and situated within very rich and diverse cultures that have been trampled by a mode of development that is both historical and contemporary; a culture that was structurally and state supported, intentionally undermined through the process of colonization. This chapter provides context to suggest possibility for transformation and change, not for the women, girls and two-spirit people that experience trafficking and exploitation, but rather for the communities they inhabit, and most importantly, for the social systems that continue to produce similar conditions.

"For us, the first thing is always safety. What are those things we need to put in place? These types of issues [socioeconomic] are looked at, but we also need to ensure we don't put people in boxes. Victims of human trafficking are not always those without funding. It's not about kids in care. It's about vulnerability—we can all be vulnerable at any point... people can pick up on those vulnerabilities. We have to be concerned with those who are watching and listening for those vulnerabilities..."

(JUSTICE/POLICE)

For healing to happen, and to ensure safety and security for all people, there is a need for re-imagining and building socio-economic systems that honour life and center the organization and distribution of resources in such a way as to protect the most vulnerable - a system built for the greater collective good and unlike the present, one that does not push biodiversity into extinction. Because much of this research project is centered around Indigenous realities and analysis, it necessitates solutions that emulate Indigenous world views and values. These are laced throughout this chapter.



If we are learning that the problem that creates human trafficking is relational and systemic, the solutions lied in restoring relationships and creating systems that put care at the centre.

In this chapter, we suggest that government systems incorporate a framework of Indigenous wordviews on community care, social feminist economies and alternative budget solutions, and provide concrete examples of how these are in use and the conditions that are required for them to be fully implemented. We believe an important part of this research project is to pose socio-economic solutions and we believe, women, youth and other voices from the margins must be leading the way as we recognize that the solutions lie within the community and must be led by the respectful relationships within all communities.

Provincial governments that want to prevent domestic human trafficking along with other forms of exploitation and gender-based violence can swiftly follow some of these measures that have already proven to have an impact on outcomes. Most of these measures are best achieved through intersectoral collabouration (public, private, and non-profit sector representatives), coordinating, and streamlining processes between systems (Justice, Health, Social Services, Corrections and Policing), and most importantly, in partnerships and with leadership of Indigenous governance bodies. A rationale like Jordan's Principle needs to be applied when it comes to basic social and human rights. Essentially, the right must be provided first with attention to and resolution of jurisdictional issues later.

"What do we need overall? No one can do this on their own. It's going to come from collabouration, from the perspectives of the survivors. We need cross-ministerial, cross-sectoral engagement and investment. Organizations are so siloed, mostly because of capacity. People would like to do more but just can't because they are also carrying their own trauma, dealing with life. You know this needs to be accounted for—survivors should not be the only ones pushing for support for themselves."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY, SK)

Indigenous peoples are guided by cultural laws and values such as *Wichitowin*, an Indigenous value that means taking care of each other and working for the greater good. This value reminds us to be unselfish. It means to care for each other and all of life, to watch out for each other and to manage ourselves with the thought of the seven generations that are to come. It includes the natural world, where we are reminded to take care of the environment so that future generations will have food, water and a natural world that gives us sustenance and sets our life right. This approach to life calls into question, first, what mainstream society views as wealth, and secondly, how that wealth is distributed especially within the framework of the socio-political system of capitalism. If we look around our communities today, we see rapacious forms of development that are life defeating. While a lot of rhetoric is rights based, Indigenous peoples view the struggle as responsibility based as is so aptly worded by Grace Lee Boggs (2011):

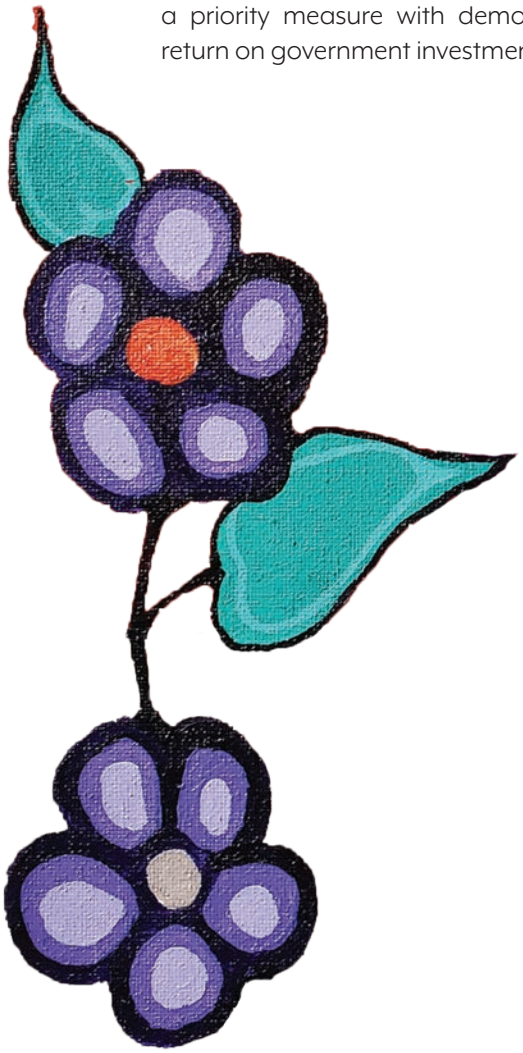
> With the end of the empire, we are coming to an end of the epoch of rights. We have entered the epoch of responsibilities, which requires new, more socially minded human beings and new, more participatory, and place-based concepts of citizenship and democracy.

There is no doubt that the current social and economic development model is in crisis as demonstrated by an environmental crisis that has taken its toll on human and animal life and the loss of biodiversity. People closest to the land feel the brunt of this collapse. The news is filled with stories of wildfires, rising oceans, more violent hurricanes and tornadoes, desertification, and shortage of safe water. Humanity is not being spared. The current COVID 19 crisis reflects the disrespect we have shown to nature and in some cases a callous disregard for the lives of fellow human beings.

Two other related values are *wakotawin* and *pimatisiwin*. Wakotawin means that all of life is related and must care for each other. This again relates to the natural world—whatever we do to fellow life forms, we do to ourselves. *Pimatisiwin* means the good life must be lived and protected by natural laws. Life is beautiful and is good especially when cared for. The current model of development flies in the face of these values. If our social and economic systems followed some of these Cree principles and world views, humanity would benefit. The current model of capitalism breaks all the rules of nature to make the most profit. In recent years and in different parts of the planet, some effort has been put into the topic of alternative models of development that cover several topics including, but not limited to, feminist economies and gender budgets.

4.1 HOUSING FIRST POLICY

A priority for safety and security is implementing a Housing First Policy that automatically guarantees safe and adequate housing for single mothers, women and youth fleeing domestic violence, youth aging out of foster care, residential school survivors, and other folks who have been impacted by intergenerational poverty and trauma. Since housing insecurity and chronic homelessness is the root cause behind many exploitative situations for women and youth, this Housing First policy must be a priority measure with demonstrated social return on government investments.



"We just can't even think ahead. We are just always responding to immediate needs. We aren't allowed to think ahead and be strategic. There is not enough capacity to support many issues. It's a 2–3 year cycle, grant based. We're not able to build on what we have. Organizations lose steam this way. There are tensions between agencies and other sectors. It's challenging to have dialogue like this. It needs to be about systems. Prevention needs to look at the whole gambit—housing, basic income, children in care, The justice system... It's massive but until we do that, we will be here."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY, SK)

MEDICINE HAT:

The first Canadian city to eradicate chronic homelessness through housing first policy.

https://caeh.ca/medicine-hat-functional-zero/

4.2 SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Governments that have made commitments to address the epidemic of missing and murdered women, girls and two-spirit people can take an important step towards decreasing risk and vulnerability for those who may be or are trafficked, exploited, and sexually assaulted by offering accessible and safe means of public transport for remote and rural communities. Provincial governments can articulate a model that combines multiple government, private, and community resources to serve the transportation needs of single mothers, the elderly, and young people, whose ability to obtain health care and social services is often dependent on accessible, efficient, and safe means of transport.

4.3 COMMUNITY POLICING INITIATIVES

Community initiatives that contribute to reducing encounters of marginalized people with police need to be replicated and supported across the prairies. It is key for provincial governments to provide ongoing and sustainable funding for culturally safe policing services based on the community, such as the Saskatoon Okihtcitawak Patrol Group (OPG). This is a more just and humane approach, as well as more efficient in terms of resources, as de-escalation prevents the overloading of judicial cases that are caused by intergenerational poverty and trauma. While community policing initiatives like this are welcomed, these agencies themselves need to be cautious about being used by mainstream policing services as a surveillance strategy.

TANSI WÂHKÔMÂKANTIK,

We are getting asked what **Okihtcitawak Patrol Group** (OPG) is and what we do.

- We do needle patrols around the core neighborhood.
- We engage with people POST crisis by providing crisis counseling and offering Indigenous cultural support such as smudging
- Assist individuals who may need a bed to sleep on instead of sleeping on the street in the core neighborhood
- Connect people to resources they may need for further assistance such as AIDS Saskatoon, WBYL (White Buffalo Youth Lodge), OUTSaskatoon, etc.
- Provide water and lunches to people in the core neighborhood when we do get lunches (donations welcome)
- Be present at the core neighborhood by making conversations with people on the street.
- Report suspicious vehicles around Pleasant Hill Park and St. Mary's Park to SPS
- Participate in walks and vigils in Saskatoon
- Set up traditional singing and drumming on Pleasant Hill at Wednesday evenings

Kinanâskomitin Delano (he/him)

Facebook post July 9th 2020, Okihtcitawak Patrol Group

4.4 INVEST IN KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

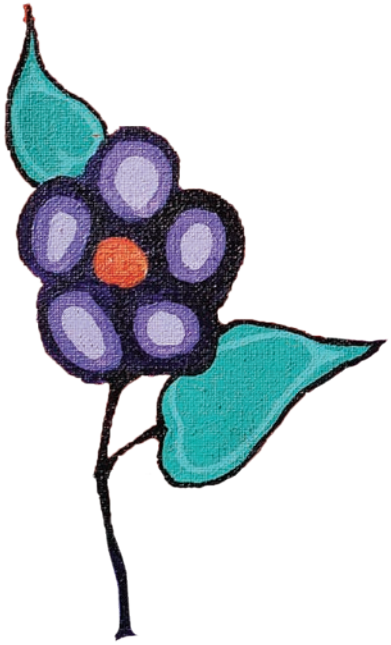
Protecting children from unstable environments does not require removing them from their families. It does require investing in supports for families and providing a continuum of care services that are culturally safe, accessible, and judgment free, starting with quality and barrier free childcare focused on preschool ages. Programs to ensure food security for single mothers and their children, along with recovery services for addictions and mental health, mentorship of Indigenous mothers by Indigenous mothers, are measures that can immediately have an impact on supporting families staying together.

"It's about the big systems, access to childcare, these kinds of things would actually reduce people in the sex trade who don't want to be there."

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

"You can't criminalize half an activity—so stupid—everyone is confused by this, illegal to buy sex but not to sell it?... What is this asymmetrical criminalization? What ends up happening is it just goes dark, people just go darker. When [sex work] goes underground it becomes harder to help those exploited and trafficked. Everyone is hiding what they are doing. Those who actually need help can't get it..."

(SCHOLAR/ADVOCATE)

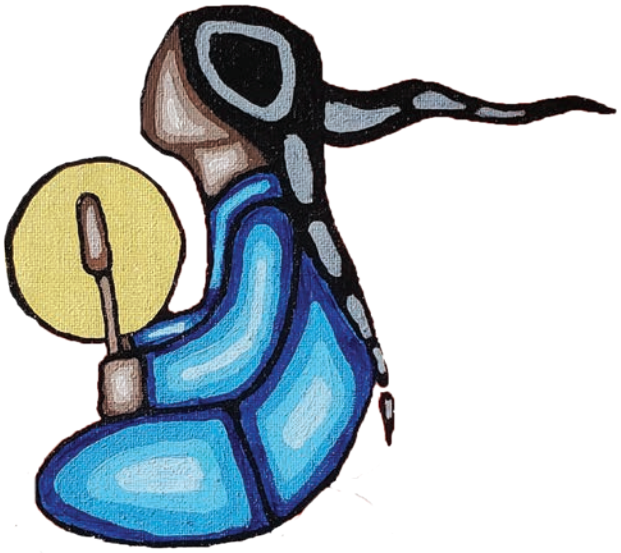


4.5 DECONGEST CORRECTIONS WITH ALTERNATIVE LAND-BASED RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

Policing and corrections in the three prairie provinces need to make specific commitments to decrease the numbers of Indigenous peoples that are incarcerated, especially women and girls. The implementation of alternative rehabilitation programs centered on recovery, land and cultural connections, family reunification, social enterprise collectives, and community development needs to be explored with the leadership of Indigenous authorities. Provide ongoing opportunities for training on trauma-informed practice, human rights, anti-racism, unconscious bias, and restorative justice to all levels of staff and leadership in corrections and policing as part of the regular curriculum. Increase opportunities for interprofessional teamwork for policing and corrections staff with community advocates and professionals from the arts and sciences to deepen and expand understanding of alternative approaches to incarceration.

"What if we were strategic in this province? What if there were clear roles, goals and we had leadership—embedded and cutting across industry and government (Ministries)—all part of the solutions?"

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY, SK)



Examples of social enterprise initiatives that focus on steps based in part on community development

CASE STUDY: THE NDN COLLECTIVE

NDN Collective is a US based Indigenous and primarily youth led and operated non-profit organization whose approach is defend, decolonization and development.

NDN Collective is dedicated to building Indigenous power. Through organizing, activism, philanthropy, grant-making, capacity-building and narrative change, they are creating sustainable solutions on Indigenous terms. The collective developed after the massive pipeline protests in South Dakota in 2018 which was motivated by the fact that many youth are not willing to sit idly while their future is being determined by unsustainable projects developed by a handful of white males, for the most part. The Dakota Access pipeline (DAPL) is a 3.7-billion-dollar project that will transport crude oil from the Bakken oil field in North Dakota to a refinery in Patoka, Illinois. The local Standing Rock Sioux tribe and thousands of Native and non-native American supporters from across North America set up camps in Cannon Ball to block the oil project. The opponents of DAPL say the project threatens Indigenous lands and their water supply from the Missouri river.

https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/03/north-dakota-access-oil-pipeline-protests-explainer (accessed June 2020)

The treatment of protesters by police including use of police dogs and incarceration prompted a philanthropic response which included funding mechanisms to protect the work of the protestors and help pay for legal fees. The protestors believe that their actions reflect Indigenous values of caring for humanity while caring for the natural world. The collective has several programs that support indigenous leadership development and project funding. through its one-year funding fellowship program/ the fellows are chosen from a rigorous application process that reflects holistic principles of operation. The funded projects all follow the collective's three main themes of defend, develop, and decolonize.

NDN collective operates from three places of Defend, Develop and Decolonize, principles which are described below:

DEFEND They(we) rise to the defense of our people, communities, and nations from the ravages of climate change that poisons our people, pollutes our water, destroys our land, and violates our human rights. They do this by communities organizing, speaking truth, and utilizing a wide variety of central strategies in shifting the political and financial systems that are impacting their communities. In other words, standing up to business as usual.

DEVELOP NDN promotes regenerative and sustainable development of Indigenous communities based on Indigenous values and connection to land, culture, and identity. Meeting the needs of the present generation does not need to compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Regenerative community

development, renewable energy investments and social enterprise development promotes this type of development.

DECOLONIZE Decolonization of minds, communities, and sovereign nations is central to NDN and is directly related to our ability to survive and prosper. This is accomplished through the revitalization of Indigenous ceremonies, culture, languages, and life ways, strengthening identity, and breaking free from the disconnected oppressive systems that prevent our people from achieving the healing growth and connection to spirit that is integral for us as Indigenous people.

CASE STUDY: AKI ENERGY

WHAT ARE SOCIAL ECONOMIES?

If we are to mitigate socioeconomic and environmental disruptions and improve the quality of life, a new model of development is required. One solution that is represented by Aki Energy follows social enterprise principles and approaches. Social enterprise development is not common across Canada but the two provinces that have been involved considerably are Quebec and Manitoba. Simply put, social economies are ones that work to benefit and keep control and profits within the community where they are developed. They require investment and work best when governments support them through funding as in the case of Quebec.

In the case of Manitoba some of the social economy projects were successful because Manitoba hydro provided financial settlements for the massive flooding that occurred in northern Indigenous communities. We believe that a carefully planned and thoughtful socioeconomic system can lead to improved human living conditions. Aki has installed six million dollars' worth of energy efficient geothermal energy systems in 350 homes on four First Nations including seven Manitoba First Nations communities. Local employees do the actual work, and each venture is a non-profit social enterprise. Utility bill reduction pays for work thus creating sustainable and local employment. The local enterprise model sometimes referred to as the solutions economy model is sustainable and helps respond to the mitigation of climate change through decreased usage of fossil fuel. And it does more by providing solutions to the extreme community poverty by creating local employment.

Social enterprises work with the community and surpluses go back into the community or enterprise. It is referred to as community-based entrepreneurialism; the mode of operation is non-profit with a business ethos. (p.11) Social enterprises can help mitigate climate change through the pursuit of solar and wind energy projects. This model of development is a response to changing cultural and economic needs. An important outgrowth of Aki was the establishment of Aki Foods/the Meechim project in 2015 which is referred to as the farm in a box. The Meechim project operates with some of the surplus from the energy project and takes no government funding. The Aki members believe the government needs to provide money to buy outcomes rather than feeding the problems. Aki operates from the belief that positive change will come when investment provides the condition for healthy communities. For example, it requires far less investment to ensure the availability of healthy foods than paying for diabetes dialysis machines. This is an example of social investing where upstream thinking ensures healthy communities are both planned and supported, and surpluses earned in community are put back into the community.

CHAPTER FIVE

Shifting the narrative: A path forward for organizations concerned with human trafficking in the prairies

Given the preceding commentary and analysis, how then can well-meaning government and community organizations engage appropriately in sustainable efforts for eradicating gender-based trafficking, violence, and exploitation in the prairies? How can they work towards gender and racial equity and justice without normalizing and rationalizing further the violence that the settler state perpetrates against Indigenous communities when depriving them of access to basic human needs? How can they ensure they are co-constructing or developing programs and interventions in solidarity, rather than saving or rescuing people based on their perceived moral inferiority?

This chapter discusses some critical learning points for organizations who want to resist the saviour complex and the colonial narrative of white women rescuing young Indigenous girls and women from their bad choices and shift their focus towards equitable outcomes under a framework of human and social rights.

5.1 RE-FRAMING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN TERMS OF RECONCILIATION, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

Simply put, organizations that genuinely want to make a difference need to begin by adopting the *Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission* and the *Calls for Justice from the report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit* people. As a first step, they need to make sure that they understand and apply the evidence-based literature on intersectional violence researched and written by Indigenous researchers to their program's design. Most importantly, they must move away from the characterization of trafficking as a matter of simply *villains, victims, and saviours.*

Instead, they need to develop programs informed by long-term relationships with the communities and people they want to support. Using this framework, relationships between nonprofit agencies, government, and communities are reciprocal, in which the former are not positioned as saviours, but as allies: **agencies need to be advocates working with communities to make systems accountable for responding to their basic needs.**

Organizations can become true allies through commitments such as:

- Showing up and speaking up for the economic and political sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, the honoring of treaty relations, and the interruption and redress of colonial policy responsible for intergenerational poverty and trauma,
- Knowing when it is their turn to step back, listen, reflect, and learn about the biases inherited from settler colonial education.
- Respecting Indigenous leadership and sovereignty by learning about protocols, history and becoming familiar with feminist Indigenous critical analysis.

5.2 MOVING AWAY FROM A DEFICIT/ DEVIANCE DISCOURSE

Organizations must be aware of and challenge institutional and organizational practices around human trafficking that are premised on the intellectual and moral inferiority of the clients they purport to serve. Most of these narratives are deeply entrenched institutionally, and psychologically embedded in the form of unconscious racial bias and social stigma around poverty.

"We have adopted survivor integration into the unit, lived experience that we just don't have. Doesn't matter how much training or how good at communication I am, I don't connect in the same way..."

(JUSTICE/POLICE)

It is imperative that government and non-government organizations make sure they are:

- Introducing nuanced language that recognizes the agency, dignity, and voice of sex workers and the diversity of their experiences;
- Applying an intersectional framework that recognizes the existence of multiple systems of oppression (economic, gender-based, colonial, racial, etc.);
- Shifting the focus from scrutinizing individuals to making systems accountable for upholding peoples' basic human rights;
- Incorporating non-tokenistic or paternalistic community representation in decision-making structures, as well as within strategic planning and program design processes.

5.3 INCORPORATING EVIDENCE AROUND HARM-REDUCTION AND DECOLONIZING PRACTICES

It is well known that academic research findings take an average of seventeen years to be incorporated into policies and programs. In 2007, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse published the Report on Harm Reduction for Special Populations in Canada, with a section on harm reduction policies and programs for persons of Aboriginal descent (sic). This report highlighted that harm reduction policies and programs have been shown to be effective for responding to the health and social harms resulting from problematic substance use, but indicated several major barriers to implementing such measures, such as the public resistance to non-judgmental, care-centered approaches and the stigma associated with substance abuse and survival strategies.

It is time then, in 2022, for decision makers and leaders to finally follow recommendations from years of rigorous academic research and implement harm reduction strategies and processes into their programs. Further to this,

government and nonprofit agencies need to be able to communicate to the public, policy makers and funders why evidence-based approaches such as harm reduction need to be adopted to guarantee the human rights of all people, no matter where they are in life. In the case of human trafficking, they need to advocate for the prioritization of the safety and health of sex workers and substance users over notions of public safety and beyond notions of deserving and undeserving victims.

"The elephant in the room—what circumstances led to someone being vulnerable in the first place? Not a single one doesn't involve mental health and addictions..."

(JUSTICE/POLICE)

5.4 APPLYING ANTI-RACIST REFLECTION TO BECOME AN ALLY AND ADVOCATE

It is imperative for organizations to understand the historical legacy of white saviourism, faith-based morality and charity within nonprofit culture and identity. A way of achieving this is incorporating anti-racist and anti-oppression training and equity frameworks into the organization's regular practice. For example, many organizations have mandated training sessions that include the history of colonial policy and their impacts on Indigenous peoples, such as Four Seasons of Reconciliation or the Kairos blanket exercise. It can also start with peer groups dedicated to informal reflection such as book and film clubs, using the multiple resources made available and accessible for all kinds of audiences.

5.5 IMPLEMENTING AN EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

All programs whether run by government or nonprofit organizations have implicit premises about what needs to change and what the direction of that change should be. Programs that aim to address the root causes of vulnerability, poverty and violence need to include deep reflection about what it is that needs to change, how to determine that change took place, and whether evidence or deficit discourse informs that intervention. Programs and interventions that start from the premise that the problem is located at the level of individual choices of women will aim to correct this with education and awareness. Programs and interventions that start from the premise that the problem is located at the level of ongoing colonial policies, such as child apprehension, will aim to disrupt the institutional practice of family disruption.

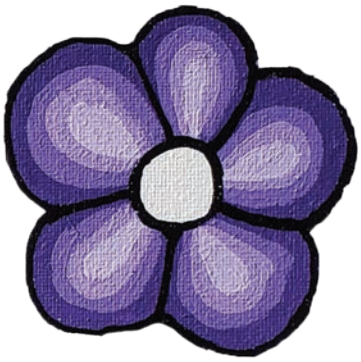
Many programs determine their success based on notions of morality: acquiring life skills and work ethic, exiting sex work as the only possible success. When programs fail to produce these outcomes, it is the pathologized individual who it is to blame. From the perspective of this project, **we need to envision and articulate a**

"I have been so humbled and learned so much over the last decade. It's been such a pleasure working with consensual sex workers and victims of exploitation. We support a huge rainbow, an umbrella, all different groups..."

(JUSTICE/POLICE SK)

definition of success that involves a strong social and community infrastructure, Indigenous families staying together, Indigenous food sovereignty, Indigenous-led education, restorative justice systems, and guaranteed access to language and culture. Programs need to name the factors of economic exploitation that are shaping women's and youth choices for strategies of survival. They need to specify how interventions will improve structural conditions that allow for more choices.

Funders need to prioritize programs and interventions that address root causes of gender-based violence, supporting the economic security of families and communities, aiming to keep families together and support their wellbeing, offering supplemental support where the state is not offering them. The discourse of funders needs to shift from working for individual recovery or rehabilitation to economic prosperity for communities, and demand that programs designed to achieve this, collabourate with community actors and leaders.



"We need all the people, for ALL organizations to involve themselves. If not, we can't really deliver services. It needs to be client and survivor-focused, and moving out of mental models, boxes and the philosophical."

(COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY)

As the organization (Hope Restored Canada) that submitted the application to do this important research, we were mindful about holding our own perspectives and biases to ourselves as the research team conducted their work. Not only were we a part of the process, we also positioned ourselves as learners and listeners, with openness to hear how we can better serve our clients and program participants. The important recommendations in this report do not fall on deaf ears. We exist to support, elevate, and listen to what our clients' needs are, not to dictate, direct and offer what they do not want or need. As the project unfolded, there were many times that the words of the advisory committee and stakeholders came to life in our program:

- assisting mothers to keep their children in their care,
- advocating for reunification, parental rights, and visitation,
- providing safe, supportive housing and program within which participants could 'mess up' and still be met with compassion, love, and support.

As an agency we are excited to apply these recommendations and the program evaluation framework directly into the work we do, allowing it to influence our policies, services, and way we work.

The work of re-framing the terms and services of those who are concerned with human trafficking is imperative. As an organization, we are very mindful of how we position ourselves in the middle of two very polarizing groups to hold space for this important work. We know that we need to come together so we can share appropriate collective language, definitions, support, and education in this reality.

We will be using this report to advocate for change in public policy and funding for agencies who subscribe to the principles outlined in this report to promote effective action plans to move our communities forward in harm reduction, community based, reciprocal systems and support.

Joeline Magill, Executive Director
Hope Restored Canada

Program Evaluation Framework

Based on this research, the following guidelines need to be considered when assessing a program, policy decision, or an intervention that is looking to improve the lives of people impacted by trafficking or exploitation.

Sources to Evaluate

- Reports
- Analysis
- Strategic plans
- Mission statement
- Program objectives
- Program activities
- Land acknowledgment
- Partnerships with community-based organizations
- Partnerships with Indigenous organizations

Criteria and Questions

1. **Programs and interventions are designed based on current, reliable data.**

Funders and policymakers need to ensure that programs are informed by current and reliable, reputable reports and scientific evidence, that interventions build on the accumulated knowledge and recommendations in the area.

Key questions include:

a. What evidence/reports are informing program objectives and activities?

b. What are the premises that inform the program? Where is 'the problem' located? How is it defined?

c. What is the desired/expected change according to the intervention?

d. Is this expectation reasonable considering the accumulated evidence in the area?

2. **Programs and interventions prioritize the integrity, safety, and dignity of clients.**

The implementation of actions should be centered around the well-being, autonomy, and agency of clients. They should never be moralized, patronized, pathologized, infantilized, or treated as incapable of making their own choices.

Key questions include:

a. To what extent has this program been created/developed in consultation, collaboration and with the participation of individuals who have lived or living experience or with organizations of sex workers?

b. What are the expectations placed on clients' during program participation? For example, does the program require clients' abstinence or exiting sex work to access services and support?

c. To what extent do interventions enable people to make autonomous decisions?

3. **Programs recognize and mobilize the strengths of the community.**

Programs working with marginalized communities should seek collabourative and participatory ways to identify and build on the existing networks, leaders, and values.

Key questions are:

a. How does this program identify and build on the strengths of the community?

b. How does it mobilize resources to advocate for social systems and support?

c. To what extent are there opportunities for people with lived experience to contribute to the implementation of some of the actions of the program?

4. **Programs are framed and aligned with the Calls to Action of the TRC and the Calls for Justice of the MMIWG2S report, explicitly recognizing the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples.**

Given that many of these programs serve Indigenous clients, it is critical that they anticipate the needs for trauma-informed and culturally safe services, and that they establish relationships of solidarity with Indigenous communities that do not reinforce dependence, but rather encourage their sovereignty.

Key questions are:

a. To what extent does the program help advance the economic, food, and housing security of their clients?

b. To what extent does this program consider the impact of intergenerational poverty and trauma? To what extent does it incorporate trauma-informed perspectives?

c. To what extent has this program been created/developed in consultation, collabouration and with the participation of Indigenous elders, using the appropriate protocols?

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Research team

Principal Investigator:

Dr. Priscilla Settee
(Indigenous and Women's and Gender Studies, University of Saskatchewan)

Dr. Priscilla Settee is a member of Cumberland House Swampy Cree First Nations and a Professor of Indigenous Studies where she teaches courses on Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Indigenous Social Economies. Dr. Settee is Adjunct Professor for the Natural Resources Institute at the University of Manitoba where she serves graduate students on Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

Dr. Settee is also the author of several books: Pimatisiwin, Global Indigenous Knowledge Systems (2013) that looks at global Indigenous knowledge systems and The Strength of Women, Ahkameyimohk (2011) that examines the role of Indigenous women's stories in establishing truth, reconciliation and social change. Dr. Settee's new co-edited book, Indigenous Food Systems Concepts, Cases and Conversation was released in January 2020. Her other research includes gang exiting Indigenous youth, trafficked women and children, Indigenous social economies and climate change impact of Indigenous knowledge systems.

Research Coordinator:

Dr. Manuela Valle-Castro (Ph.D, College of Medicine, Division of Social Accountability)

Dr. Valle-Castro is originally from Chile and has Mestiza (Spanish-Italian and Afro-Indigenous) background. She holds a PhD in Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice from the University of British Columbia and a master's degree in Women's and Gender Studies from the same university. Dr. Valle-Castro is an experienced educator both in University and community settings who is deeply committed to social, gender, and racial justice and equity.

Manuela has extensive experience developing and delivering anti-racist and anti-oppressive curriculum to a diversity of audiences. For the past three years Dr. Valle-Castro coordinated the Anti-Racism Network. Under this capacity she led coalition building and advocacy work with a range of actors including Indigenous and settler organizations, as well as agencies and organizations that work with newcomers, immigrants, and refugees. She is also a mother of two and a resident of the core-neighborhood in Saskatoon.

Research Assistant:

Taylor Bassingthwaite
(Principal, TB Consulting)

Taylor has nearly 20 years of experience bringing together diverse groups to collectively learn and tackle complex system challenges. An adaptable and responsive coach, facilitator, leader, researcher, teacher, and trainer with a career and life in ally-ship and as a co-conspirator, who brings an intersectional feminist informed perspective. Taylor is fiercely passionate about and committed to pursuits and processes that prioritize justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Taylor holds an honours degree in Women's and Gender Studies and Philosophy and has graduate training in Interdisciplinary Studies with advanced training and certification in relational and technical aspects of improvement and change. Much of Taylor's work is with northern, remote and Indigenous communities and organizations where the foundational principles and Calls to Action within Truth and Reconciliation are honoured and embedded, principally reconciliation as relationship. Taylor lives on Treaty Six in Prince Albert with the family.

Project Managers:

Joeline Magill
(Executive Director, Hope Restored Canada)

Joeline was born and raised in Saskatoon, and is currently the Executive Director at Hope Restored Canada. Over the past 15 years, Joeline has dedicated herself to learning about and acting on the issue of sexual exploitation and trafficking. During this time she began to realize how close to home it was for her growing up in the west side of Saskatoon. Joeline applies her knowledge and skills to create positive and systemic change. Joeline has been instrumental in the advancement of the programming HRC offers.

Gwen Dueck
(Independent consultant and Board Chair, Hope Restored Canada)

Gwen's career has included roles as a teacher, sessional lecturer and chief executive officer. In 2008, Gwen was appointed as the Executive Director/CEO of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, a role she held for nine years. Since leaving the Federation in 2017, she has established an independent consulting practice.

Through her consulting services practice, Gwen Dueck applies her 37 years of experience as an educator, her commitment to social justice and equity issues with the knowledge and skills gained through senior executive leadership roles to develop interactive and engaging processes for management and boards, and contribute to organizational success.

Gwen's experience with non-profit boards includes membership on two not-for-profit boards. She is currently the chair of the board of Hope Restored Canada. She is also a grandmother to six and mother to two sons and two daughters-in-law, all of whom live in Saskatoon.

Appendix B: Project advisors and advisory committee members

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Advisory Committee Objective

To establish a committed interprovincial Advisory Committee of stakeholders that provide guidance, advice, and feedback to the Research Team of this project, and help develop an evaluation framework for future programming and a model of prevention, education and support that is built on adequate and rigorous evidence.

Scope

The Advisory Committee will commit to support the goals of this research project by providing monthly feedback during the different stages of the research project.

Responsibilities and Expectations

1. The Advisory Committee members will commit to provide guidance and feedback to the research team from their particular fields of expertise throughout the lifespan of the project.
2. The Advisory Committee members will make reasonable efforts to attend all remote online meetings. Members who are unable to attend will submit their input/ comments no later than one day prior to the meeting.
3. For the sake of continuity and confidentiality, an absent Advisory Committee member cannot be replaced temporarily by a non-committee member.
4. Advisory Committee members who miss two consecutive Advisory Committee meetings without cause or communication of intent will be contacted by the Project Coordinator to discuss reasons for absence and clarification of intention.
5. An Advisory Committee member that is leaving the committee will find a replacement working in a similar agency or profession.
6. The Advisory Committee members will respond to emails in a timely manner.
7. The Advisory Committee members will work within their expertise and knowledge.
8. The Advisory Committee members will adhere to the confidentiality clause outlined below.
9. The Advisory Committee will actively work towards consensus decision making and will utilize majority decision making as a secondary option.

Contract of Collaboration

1. Advisory Committee members will respect the goals and frameworks of this research as centered in decolonizing, trauma-informed, and intersectional principles.
2. While Advisory Committee members need to be able to raise challenging questions and critiques, they commit to build relationships based on mutual respect with fellow Advisory Committee members.
3. Advisory Committee members recognize that the final control over decisions regarding the research resides on the Research Team and not with individual Advisory Committee members.
4. Advisory Committee members commit to stay open to address power dynamics created by class, race, sexuality, or any other markers of societal power within this Committee. When conflict arises, members will be offered both support and accountability to remedy the harm caused.

Confidentiality

1. Advisory Committee members will maintain confidentiality of all discussions in the meetings. Each Advisory Committee meeting will conclude with key messages and decisions that can be shared to the public, excluding the media.
2. Advisory Committee members will not speak of or act upon any information they learn about the Advisory Committee, HOPE Restored employees, partner agencies, or any internal matters which could undermine the effectiveness of the Advisory Committee and of the Research Project.
3. Advisory Committee members will keep confidential any unpublished information that is received from 3rd parties or external stakeholders in the course of the project.
4. Advisory Committee members will abide by these rules of confidentiality both during and after their service with this Advisory Committee.

PROJECT ADVISORS

Amy Lebovitch (Sex Workers of Winnipeg Action Coalition)

Sex Workers of Winnipeg Action Coalition (SWWAC) is an advocacy group lead by sex workers and includes our allies. They aim to make sex work safer in Winnipeg. The framework that we operate from is intersectional and we stand in solidarity with the broader queer, trans and migrant communities and communities of colour. We support Indigenous sex workers' demands for bodily sovereignty. We actively oppose the harmful set of laws known as the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA). We advocate for the human and labour rights of those who sell and trade sex, which can be achieved through the full decriminalization of sex work. Some of the ways that SWWAC works to make things safer for sex workers includes providing trainings for students and community organizations; maintaining a Bad Date list for sex workers; and advocating around law reform at the municipal, provincial, and federal level. We will continue this work until sex work is fully decriminalized for sex workers, clients, third parties, friends, and family.

Amy Lebovitch has been a full-service sex worker for the last 25 years, primarily working independently; both on the street and from her home and other rented spaces. She began her activism back in 2003 when she joined Sex Professionals of Canada (SPOC) and has been with them ever since. After moving to Winnipeg in 2019, she began volunteering with Sex Workers of Winnipeg Action Coalition (SWWAC). Amy was one of the three plaintiffs in the unanimous Supreme Court decision Canada v. Bedford (2013), which stuck down three of Canada's prostitution laws because they violated sex workers' charter rights and caused great harm. She has spoken across Canada and internationally on sex work, the law, stigma, and the harms of criminalization. She speaks out against Canada's new prostitution laws, the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA), and the need for the full decriminalization of sex work as a necessary first step in achieving a world where sex workers are respected and honoured and can live free of stigma and violence. Amy is also an artist and community researcher. She advises researchers on their projects and on the ethics surrounding research on sex work. She is currently working on the Sex Worker Activist Histories Project, which includes creating a digital archive. Amy lives with her two cats, Q and Jack.

Patience Umereweneza (Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan)

Patience Umereweneza is a Project Specialist at Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan. She led the development of the first comprehensive study on the state of sexual violence that led to the creation of SASS's research report titled, "Sexual Violence in Saskatchewan: Voices, Stories, and Actions from the Front Lines." informing the development of 22 actions outlined in Working Together, the first Saskatchewan Sexual Violence Action Plan.

Patience's work at SASS is driven by the desire to work collabouratively with communities, stakeholders, and organizations to collectively advance the issue of sexual violence while providing resources that support survivors in their healing journey.

Jonny Mexico (MB Harm Reduction Network)

Jonny Mexico is the Winnipeg coordinator for the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network, a community researcher at the University of Manitoba, a member of Sex Worker of Winnipeg Action Coalition, and the co-chair of the advisory council to Tracia's Trust (Manitoba's strategy to end sexual exploitation). Jonny has

over 20 years of experience working in harm reduction, with a focus on labour and human rights for those in the sex industry, as well as the rights of people who use drugs.

Dr. Julie Kay (Department of Sociology, University of Saskatchewan)

Dr. Julie Kaye lives with her family in Misâskwatôminih, Kisiskâciwan (Saskatoon) in Treaty 6 territory and Métis homelands. Julie was born and raised in Calgary, which formally resides in treaty 7 territory, homelands of the Niitsitapi, Nakoda and Tsuut'ina nations. Her lineage stems from Scotland (Crawfordjohn and Edinburgh) and England (Yorkshire and Basingstoke). Her ancestors travelled to settle in Tkaronto (Toronto) during a time of rapid colonial expansion in the early twentieth century. Her life and spirit are intertwined with her life partner and his Cree, Métis, and Chinese families who resisted and were displaced by colonial policies aimed at assimilation and eradication. Julie gave life to children, born in Misâskwatôminih, Kisiskâciwan (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan situated on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis), whose relations embody narratives of colonial domination and colonial resistance.

As an anticolonial settler scholar working in the Department of Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan, she continues to personally situate herself into her work. Julie's mentors taught her loving accountability and the embodiment of decolonial relations. Her book, *Responding to Human Trafficking: Dispossession, Colonial Violence, and Resistance Among Indigenous and Racialized Women*, provides a new framework for critical analyses of anti-trafficking and other rights-based and anti-violence interventions. She disrupts measures that contribute to the insecurity experienced by trafficked women and individuals affected by anti-trafficking responses by pointing to anti-colonial organizing and the possibilities of reciprocity in relationships of care.

Cassie VanCamp (UBC, Kelowna)

Cassie Van Camp is currently the Program Lead of Bright Minds Youth Housing through CMHA, Kelowna. Bright Minds is a harm reduction youth housing project for youth aged 16–24. These independent suites provide a safe, supportive environment where those who live there can continue to increase their level of education, develop life skills and natural supports that will transition them into adulthood and self-sufficiency. With a key focus on advancing a young person's education or career, these suites provide homes to young people to experience independence while still having access to support. Cassie is also completing her Masters of Global Studies at the University of British Columbia where she is focusing on police violence against Indigenous women in British Columbia.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jack Saddleback (OUTSaskatoon)

Lorie Harrison (Heart Song Complex Trauma)

Donna Lerat (Experiential Voice)

Fionncara MacEoin (Str8Up Saskatoon)

Marilyn Poitras (Native Law Centre, U of S)

Jocelyn Wasacase-Merasty (FSIN)

Patti Tait (Elizabeth Fry Society)

Brigit Baer (Tracia's Trust)

Judy Hughes (SAWCC)

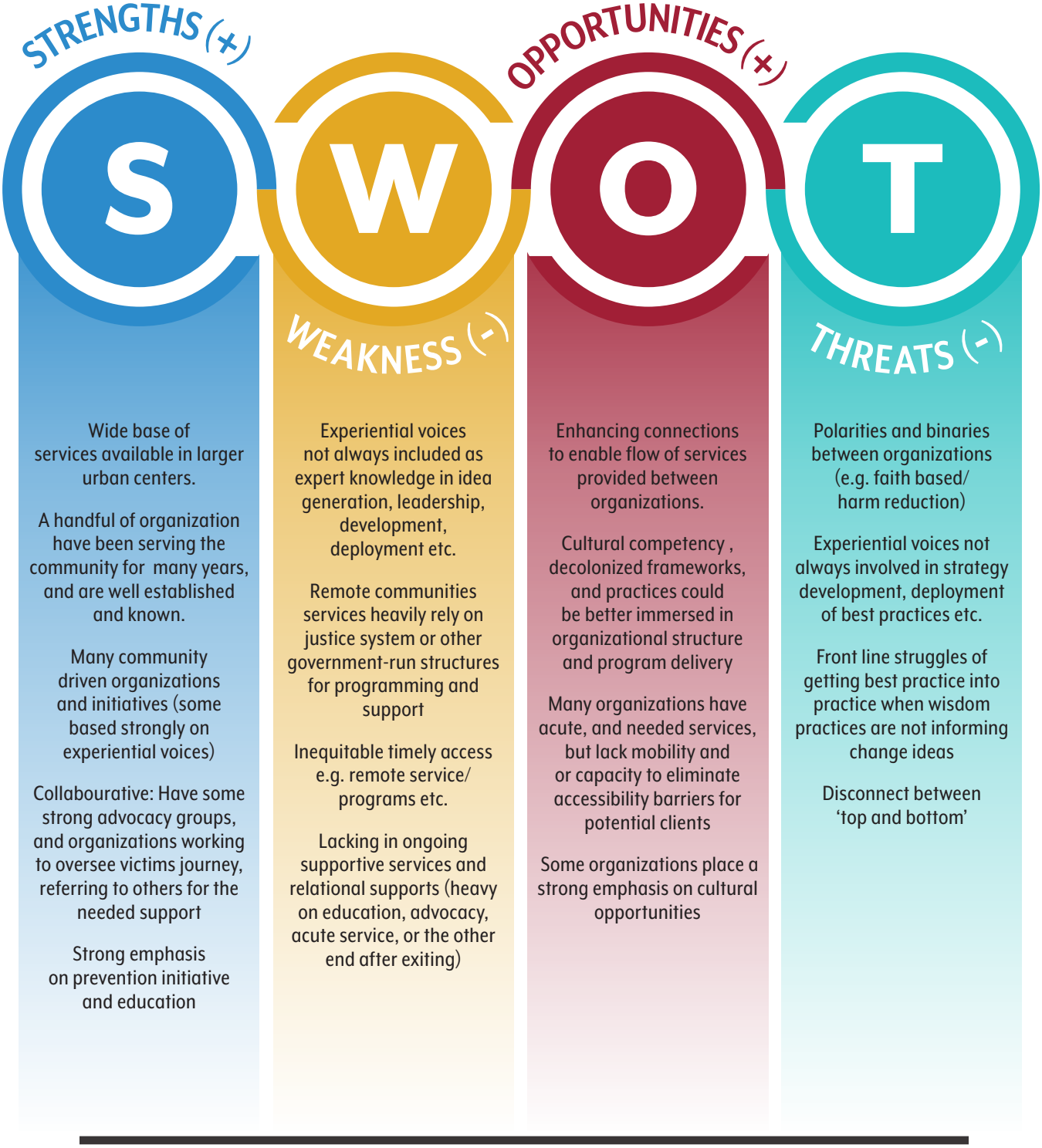
Prisca Bravo (Str8Up Prince Albert)

Savanna (SASS)

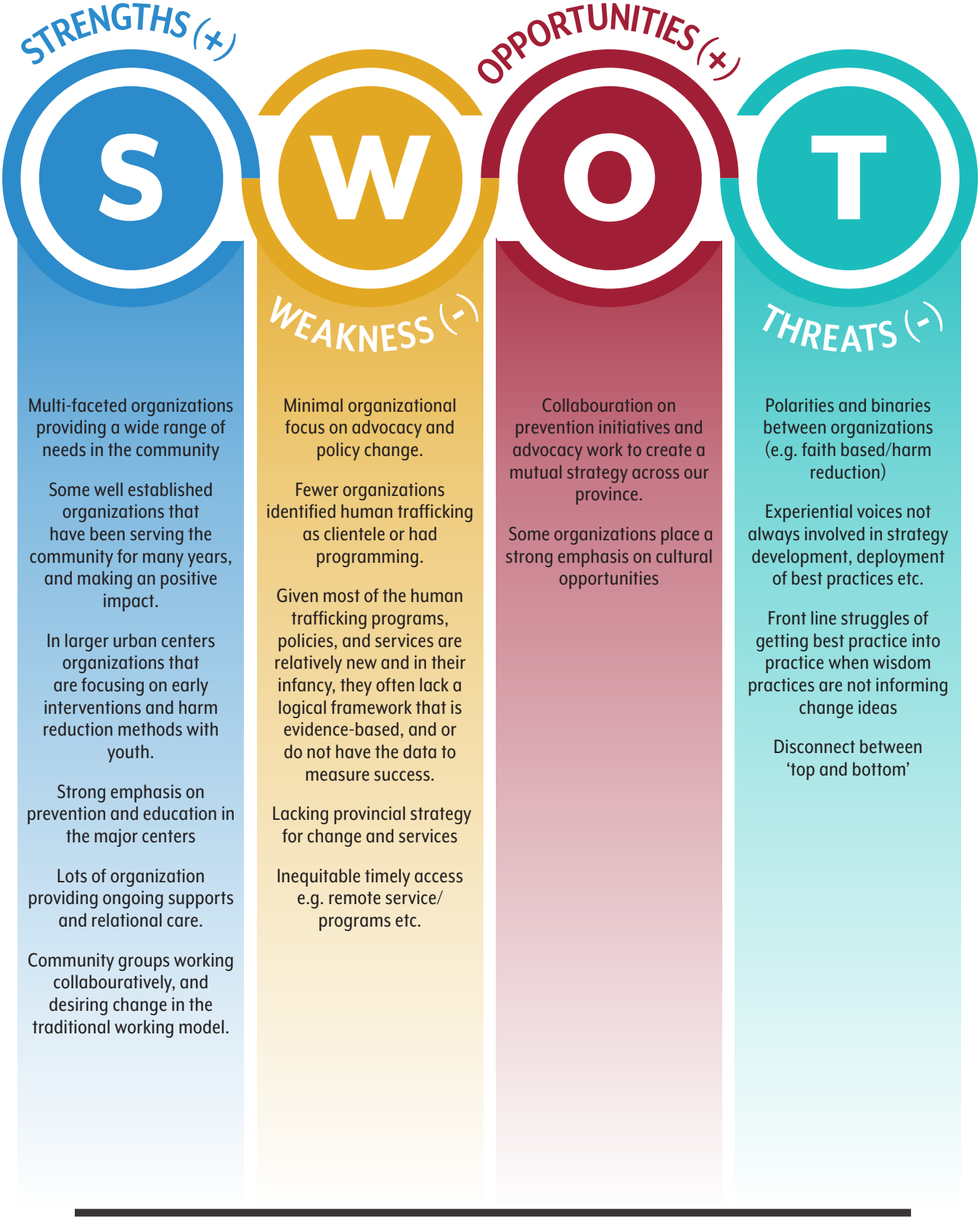
Jessie German (Gov of MB)

Appendix C: Environmental scan

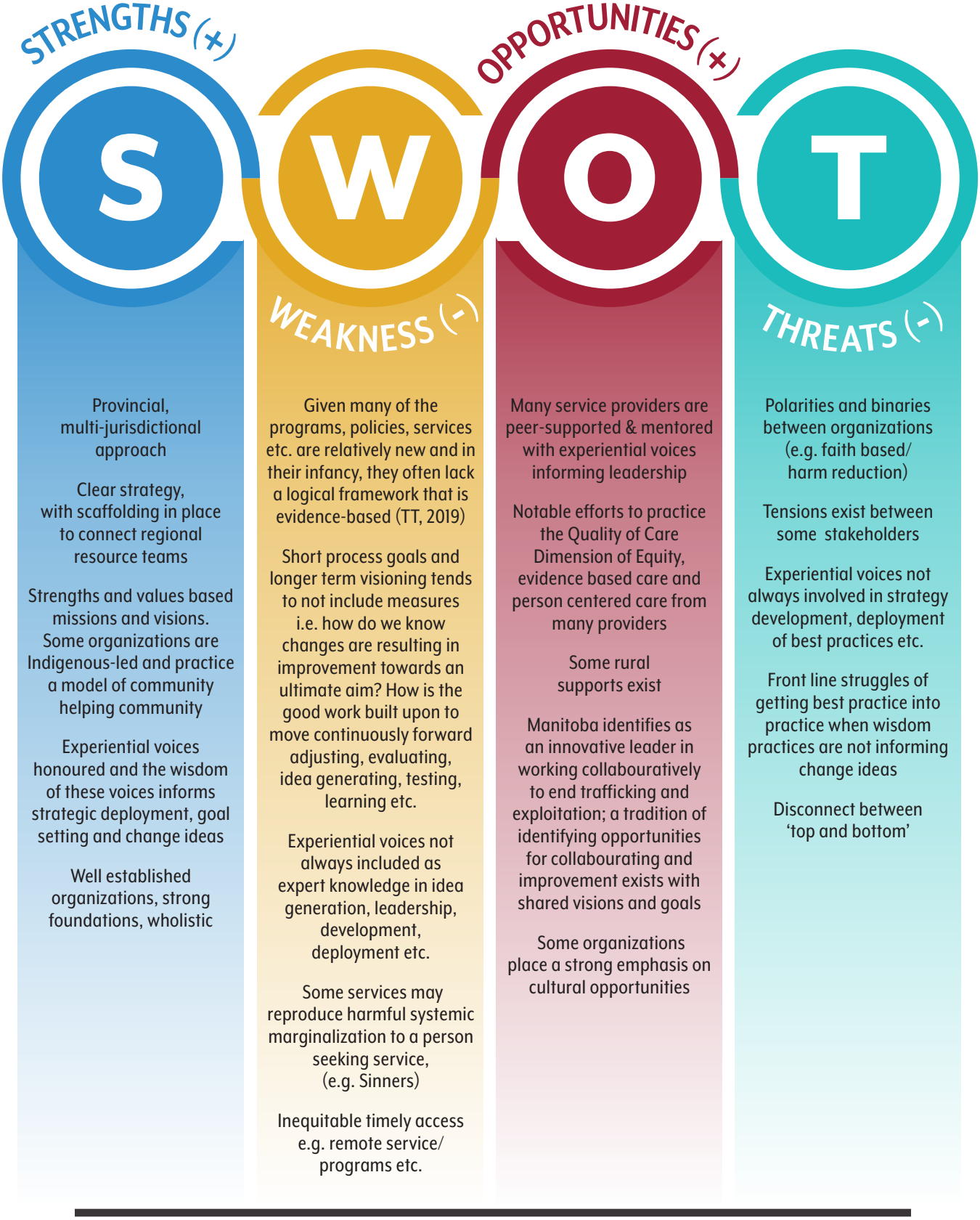
ALBERTA'S CONTINUUM SWOT ANALYSIS



SASKATCHEWAN CONTINUUM SWOT ANALYSIS



MANITOBA'S CONTINUUM SWOT ANALYSIS



Appendix D: Interview framework

INVITED/PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK

TYPE OF STAKEHOLDER	QUESTIONS
• Crisis centres that work with survivors of sexual violence • Community based organizations that work with vulnerable populations. • Organizations and projects that work with exiting gang members.	• Do you know the current legislation around human trafficking in this province? • How does the current legislation around human trafficking impact your clients? • Do you know what are the concrete outcomes of that legislation? How many people have been arrested/ charged/convicted? • In terms of your clients' situations; what do you perceive is the relationship between child apprehension, incarceration and being trafficked? • Evidence shows that the economic security of women (as well as housing and food security) is the best way to prevent different forms of gender-based violence. • What policies have impacted positively/negatively the communities where your clients are situated? • What policy decisions have shaped the distribution of resources and power in such communities? • How are communities resisting and healing from colonial harms?

TYPE OF STAKEHOLDER	QUESTIONS
• Police • RCMP • Justice system and corrections • Victim Services • Crown prosecutors or other criminal justice actors that deal with human trafficking cases.	• Do you know the current legislation around human trafficking in this province? • Do you know what are the concrete outcomes of that legislation? How many people have been arrested/ charged/convicted? • Evidence shows that the economic security of women (as well as housing and food security) is the best way to prevent different forms of gender-based violence, so what policies have impacted positively/negatively the communities where your clients are situated? • What policy decisions have shaped the distribution of resources and power in such communities? • How are communities resisting and healing from colonial harms?
• Social Services • Health system • Social workers	• Do you know the current legislation around human trafficking in this province? • Do you know what are the concrete outcomes of that legislation? How many people have been arrested/ charged/convicted? • Evidence shows that the economic security of women (as well as housing and food security) is the best way to prevent different forms of gender-based violence, so what policies have impacted positively/negatively the communities where your clients are situated? • What policy decisions have shaped the distribution of resources and power in such communities? • How are communities resisting and healing from colonial harms?

TYPE OF STAKEHOLDER	QUESTIONS
• Economic actors • Chambers of commerce • Representatives of largest industries of province	• Do you know the current legislation around human trafficking in this province? • Do you know what are the concrete outcomes of that legislation? What has the legislation achieved? • How many people have been arrested/charged/convicted? • Evidence shows that the economic security of women (as well as housing and food security) is the best way to prevent different forms of gender-based violence, so what policies have impacted positively/negatively the communities where your clients are situated? • What policy decisions have shaped the distribution of resources and power in such communities? • How are communities resisting and healing from colonial harms?

HOPE RESTORED
CANADA

Hope Restored Canada is a non-profit charitable organization based in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Our members, board, staff, and volunteers believe that all forms of sexual exploitation harm one's heart, family, and communities. Exploitation and the short and long-term effects undermine the dignity of women, men, and children and are destructive to healthy relationships.

Our mission is to eradicate sexual exploitation and trafficking by employing the H.O.P.E. model: Holistic Restoration, Outreach, Partnership and Education.

- **Holistic restoration** is achieved by providing each person whom we serve with opportunities for mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual restoration through recovery programs, support groups, mentorship and access to safe housing and case planning.
- **Outreach** includes access to referrals, volunteer outreach workers, individualized social support through exit strategies providing compassion, empathy, holistic support, and caring intervention.
- **Partnership** includes both formal and informal relationships with affiliate organizations, service providers, funders, and members.
- **Education** informs and influences individuals about the systemic and systematic causes and effects of exploitation and trafficking, including preventative action through public awareness, educational sessions, and training for service providers on sexual exploitation and trafficking.

The board of directors and staff of Hope Restored Canada believe that all humanity is inherently valued. The mandate of the organization is to provide support for victims of sexual exploitation and sex trafficking by:

- utilizing trauma-informed approaches and resiliency education that promotes and nurtures healthy relationships;
- championing fundamental human rights;
- responding to the *TRC Calls to Action and MMMIWG Calls for Justice*; and
- working alongside individuals and organizations to raise awareness and collectively challenge the harmful impacts of sexual exploitation and trafficking.