EXPLORING THE PRESENCE OF GENDER-BASED APPROACHES TO WOMEN'S HOMELESSNESS IN CANADIAN COMMUNITIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Keywords: women, girls, homelessness, community, planning

Statement of Problem/Topic
Homelessness is gendered and yet there is limited uptake of gender-based approaches to community planning across Canada.

Description of Research Conducted

Exploring if/how communities use a gender-based approach to community planning to prevent and end homelessness.

Key Findings/Outcomes

- Women and girls (cis and trans) are under-recognized and underserved.
- While service providers recognize the unique needs of women and girls, they encounter barriers to the broader community accepting a gender-based analysis and approach to ending homelessness.
- Ending homelessness for women and girls means changing perspectives among leaders, policy-makers, and funders.
- Transformation must take an intersectional approach that targets actions at the individual, relationship, community, and societal level.

Recommendations for Policy, Practice, and Further Research

- Collect and develop accurate data on homelessness experienced by women and girls, including the diversity therein (e.g. transgender, Black, Indigenous, and women of colour).
- Bring/provide awareness of effective gender approaches to ending homelessness to empower leaders to create meaningful change.
- Enhance the diversity of who participates in decision making, including those with lived experience(s).
- Eliminate or reform policy that continues to limit and restrict diverse women's choices.
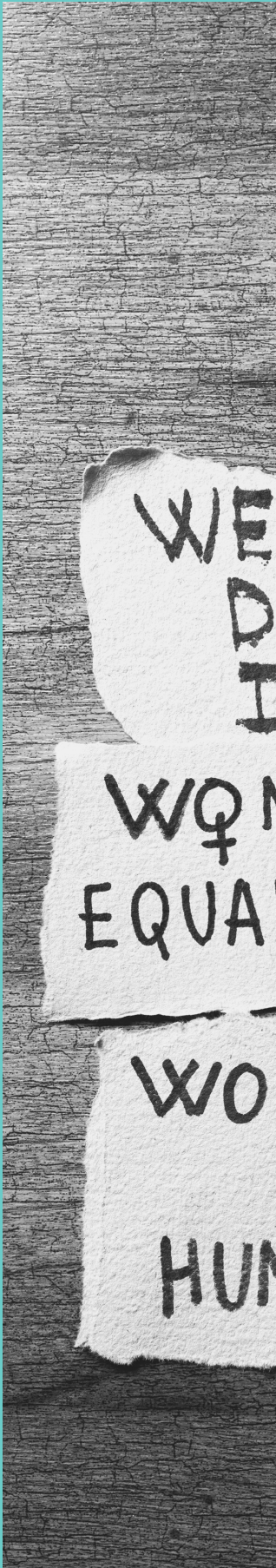
> " *Pushing the importance of acknowledging and responding specifically to womens needs, is most often met with 'yes of course, of course- there's info on our gender-based approach in the document'- which is several lines or a paragraph that sounds wonderful but that has yet to be felt on the frontlines. (Max)* "

INTRODUCTION:
BACKGROUND & SIGNIFICANCE

While there are many commonalities amongst experiences of homelessness, these experiences differ based on one's social location, and are compounded by factors such as race, ability, sexuality, age, and citizenship. Gender is one such intersection that researchers across the homelessness sector have recognized, with significant research demonstrating that **both cisgender and transgender women and girls experience homelessness differently than people of other genders:** this includes not only the challenges women face during episodes of homelessness and transitions into permanent housing, but also the myriad risk factors women are already confronted by as they move through society. Amongst the most commonly known differences are the disproportionate burden of poverty, core housing need, childcare responsibilities, trauma, interpersonal violence, and hidden homelessness (Schwan et al., 2020; Van Berkum & Oudshoorn, 2015). **Interpersonal violence and hidden homelessness are some of the most common characteristics of homelessness for women and girls, each with known serious consequences.**

Domestic violence is widely cited as a leading cause of women and family homelessness, and women experience increased rates of physical and sexual violence while homeless (Bowpitt et al., 2011; Bretherton, 2017; Mayock et al., 2015; McInnes & Drabble, 2017; Vecchio, 2019; Whitzman, 2006). As such, research highlights **distinct differences between those of other gender and women's safety during experiences of homelessness.** Women may move in and out of abusive relationships (Homes for Women, 2013), avoid other gender-dominated street and service spaces, move between emergency shelters – often as a last resort – and even 'couple' with other genders: all efforts to protect themselves from violence while living unsheltered (Cook & Corbett, 2019; McInnes & Drabble, 2017; Whitzman, 2006).

"The number of women accessing shelter is lower than the number of men. They treat what they see without consideration of hidden homelessness."
(Max)

Another key factor differentiating women and girls' experiences is the phenomenon of hidden homelessness. Since women are more likely to rely on friends, relatives, or previous partners for accommodation rather than accessing emergency shelters, public spaces, and social services, **their experiences of homelessness are less 'visible' to society than the experiences of other genders** (Bretherton, 2017). This reduced visibility of women's homelessness may impact women's interpretations of their own experiences of homelessness based on 'who' they see in similar situations (i.e. single men) (Klodawsky, 2006). Further, the hidden nature of women and girls homelessness is associated with a **common misrepresentation and underreporting of the extent of the problem** that can have implications for the provision of services tailored specifically to women and girls' needs (Schwan et al., 2020).

What do we do from here?

Due to the gendered nature of the experience of homelessness, responses to prevent and end women and girls homelessness must include a gender-based approach (Schwan et al., 2020).

The Government of Canada (2018) defines a **gender-based analysis** as:

"...an analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men, and non-binary people may experience policies, programs, and initiatives" (p. 2).

A gender-based analysis also allows researchers to explore the ways in which gendered experiences intersect with other social locations, such as race, class, (dis)ability, sexuality, and other lived realities (McInnes & Drabble, 2017). Further, it is important to not view women as a large homogenous group- they have a wide array of intersecting identities and experiences that compound and are compounded by homelessness.

Communities across Canada depend on community plans to organize collaborative responses to homelessness, and it is a core assumption of this report that these community plans benefit significantly from gender-based analyses, and gender-based approaches more broadly. To date, there has been no comprehensive reporting/research into the degree to which communities are taking up gender-based approaches and analysis. Similarly, little is known of facilitators of, or barriers to, inclusion of a gender-based approach in community homelessness prevention plans in Canada.

Therefore, the **purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which Canadian communities are (or are not) including a gender-based approach within community plans to end homelessness.**

Developing an understanding of the use or absence of a gender-based approach in community planning will be the first step in helping to ensure that **all community responses include a consideration of the gendered nature of homelessness.**

Those communities seeing the most progress in this area have provided data on how that progress has been achieved, and communities that lag in this area have provided data on the barriers they are encountering. Learning from communities that have successfully navigated the inclusion of gender-based analysis in their planning and service provision, as well as what community barriers continue to gridlock progress will have important policy and knowledge translation implications for Canadian communities that are determined to end homelessness for women and girls.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

What is known:

Historically, gender considerations have been frequently absent from analyses within homelessness research, with feminist literature providing most of the gendered perspectives on housing and homelessness until the early 2000's (Whitzman, 2006). There is now some evidence of a gender-based lens in homelessness literature, albeit mostly within literature focused on women's homelessness. The available literature reveals important factors and features of women's lives to consider when describing and responding to women's homelessness, and more broadly recognizes **a need to engage in deeper analysis of the "great complexity" within their experiences** (Phipps et al., 2019, p. 5). Some of the factors and considerations discussed in relevant literature include: the invisibility of women's homelessness; women's common avoidance of shelters (McInnes & Drabble, 2017); women's experiences of intimate partner violence; and the lack of gender considerations in the analysis of chronic or long-term homelessness (Mayock et al., 2015).

In contrast to using a gendered lens, McInnes and Drabble (2017) discuss the implications of a **"gender blind" approach** (p. 2) **which examines the experiences of people of all genders. There are many examples in which a gender-blind approach does not work for women or has left women behind, having only "...scratched the surface of women's experiences, casualties, and what is required to end homelessness among women"** (McInnes & Drabble, 2020, p. 2). A gender-blind analysis does not parse out or disaggregate gender as a necessary factor in the analysis of experience.

Employing a gender-based analysis will help to better understand women and girls intersecting experiences and ultimately ensure that **women and girls are not left out of community plans to end homelessness.**

Research has documented the inability of some services and programs to offer specialized supports to women living with acute mental and physical health needs, trauma associated with sexual exploitation and violence, and substance use and addiction (Potter-King & De Jong, 2012; Uller et al., 2010).

Other present gaps in supports related to adapting the Housing First model to more appropriately address the needs of women. In examining the episodic and often hidden nature of women's homelessness, concerns arise regarding women's "categorical" exclusion from Housing First programs, for which eligibility criteria typically consider the number of consecutive days that an individual has experienced street homelessness (Homes for Women, 2013, p. 4; Potter-King & De Jong, 2012). Indeed, Potter-King and De Jong (2012) find that **there are few services designed to support chronically homeless women,** and the services that do exist follow the traditional "treatment first" approach where substance use and mental health care prioritized before securing independent housing.

As reported by service providers and lived experts in various studies, there are key opportunities to improve the gaps in supports. At a systems level, there is a need to enhance women's homelessness prevention efforts and improve:

- Accuracy of data regarding women's homelessness;
- The amount and access to women specific services;
- Collaboration between women's services;
- Recognition of high priority needs for the most at-risk women;
- Reimagining public system failures (e.g. policies that are discriminatory on the basis of gender) (Schwan et al., 2020);
- Expanding income supports (Uller et al., 2010); and,
- Expanding and reforming resources and shelter availability to better support 2SLGBTQ+ communities (Schwan et al., 2020)

For those women who do experience homelessness, service recommendations include: redesigning services originally based on men's needs (Uller et al., 2010); and introducing more day programming (Schmidt et al., 2015), service 'hubs' (Whitzman, 2006), supports for non-abused women with and without children (McInnes & Drabble, 2017), and system reforms targeting **"culturally appropriate services for Indigenous and newcomer women, girls, and gender diverse peoples across Canada"** (Schwan et al., 2020, p. 23).

A recent national report entitled the "State of Women's Housing Need & Homelessness in Canada" (Schwan et al., 2020) illuminates key service gaps for women, girls, and gender diverse peoples:
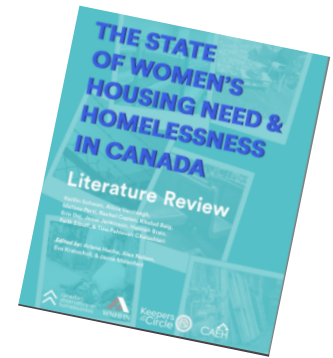
- Across Canada there is an increasing demand for emergency shelter beds, of which 68% are co-ed or allocated to men, while only 13% are specifically allocated to women (Economic and Social Development Canada, 2019).

- During one day in April 2018, Canadian Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters turned away 82% of those requesting support because they were full. This included 669 women and 236 accompanying children (Statistics Canada, 2019).

- Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ peoples are disproportionately more likely to experience violence, which can be both a cause and consequence of their homelessness (Bringham et al., 2019; Bucik, 2016; Schwan et al., 2020).

- 2SLGBTQ+ peoples and women and girls with (dis)abilities are critically underserved when it comes to emergency shelters and related services (Schwan et al., 2020).

Both emergency shelters and VAW services are not dispersed equitably/per capita throughout the country, creating further disadvantage for those in rural and underserved communities (Schwan et al., 2020). In addition to the known issues with emergency shelter support for women, **there are "gaps, silos, policies, and practices within VAW and homelessness sectors" that can create additional hardship and unintended harm for women** (Schwan et al., 2020, p. 5). This is evident as Canadian research exploring community services for women experiencing homelessness outline that women access a variety of supports and services with varying degrees of success.

In exploring services that are supportive for women experiencing homelessness, positive elements include access to: basic needs; relational and advocacy support; assistance with system navigation; employment and educational programs; and services that are: free, 24-hour drop in, centrally located, child-friendly, trauma-informed, culturally-appropriate, accessible, gender-affirming, and women-specific (McInnes & Drabble, 2017; Schmidt et al., 2015; Schwan et al., 2020)

RESEARCH PROBLEM & QUESTION:

Through the All Our Sisters and Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness national conferences, it has become apparent that experiences of including gender-based approaches in community planning vary widely. Where some communities are actively including a focus on women and girls as priority populations and providing funding and services accordingly, other communities encounter resistance to the suggestion that women and girls experience homelessness differently than those of other genders. Alternatively, some communities encounter resistance that a focus on women and girls will disproportionately take services away from those of other genders. As such, a baseline is urgently needed to understand what is happening in communities across Canada that outlines barriers and facilitators to change.

The purpose of this study is to explore if and how Canadian communities are using gender-based approaches to community planning and service delivery for preventing and ending homelessness. Where gendered approaches are lacking, we seek to understand barriers or limitations to their inclusion. Where gendered approaches exist, we seek to understand what these approaches may be and facilitators enabling them.
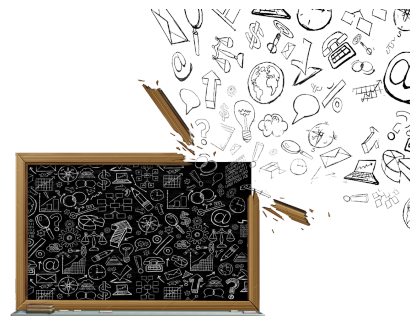
This data will assist policy makers and advocacy groups to understand the next steps in disseminating best practices towards ending women and girl's homelessness across the sector. Additionally, the findings may assist organizations within the sector to ensure they are using intersectional, gender-based approaches in (re)designing and delivering their services.

METHODOLOGY & METHODS:

Methodology:

Based in a critical feminist, intersectional approach, this study followed a mixed methods descriptive survey format. Descriptive quantitative analysis was supplemented with qualitative content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Participant pseudonyms are used throughout the report.

Sample & Recruitment:

Of Canada's 289 communities with a population greater than 10,000, the goal was to sample 173 service providers from across the country to represent 60% of the population. The final participant sample was 107 service providers. A decision was made to end data collection with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic that was disproportionately affecting the service providers we were surveying. Recruitment occurred through dissemination channels including relevant social media, e-mail distribution lists, websites, conferences, collaborative networks, online contacts, and within organizations serving women or girls experiencing homelessness.

Survey (Appendix A)**:**

The mixed methods survey was distributed from January 27/2020 to March 25/2020. Quantitative questions asked participants to rate their level of agreement with varying statements relating to the unique nature of women's homelessness, and whether women's needs are met through service delivery. Qualitative questions invited participants to provide further information and elaborate on their views.

Limitations:

The decision to end data collection due to the pandemic disproportionately affected French language respondents as the French version had yet to be disseminated at the time of ending the data collection. Therefore, only English language responses were received. The completion of demographic and qualitative questions was lower than the overall response rate. This means demographic and qualitative results may not be truly representative of participants or fully capture their opinions and experiences.

FINDINGS: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Participants identified areas of employment were:

Area	Value
Homelessness	~47
VAW/Women Specific	~32
Healthcare	~11
Housing	~8
Family Services	~3

(bar chart axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50)
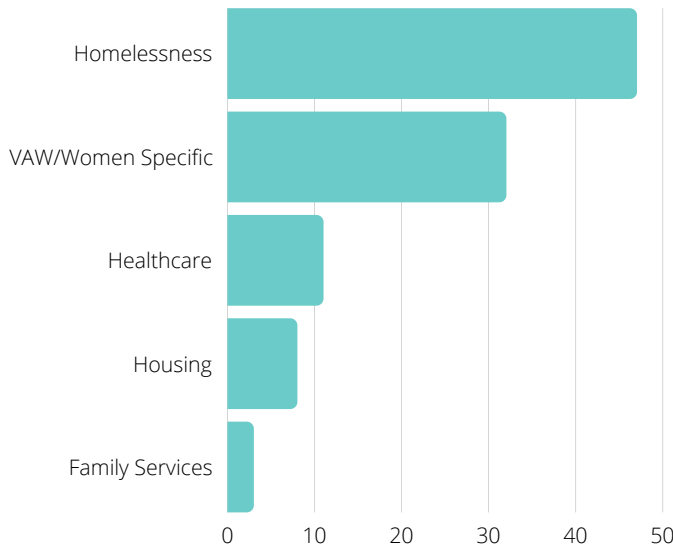
Canadian region where participants are located:

68% Central Canada
14% Atlantic provinces
12% Prairie provinces
6% West Coast
1% Northern Territories

Participants worked in:

32% Frontline
30% Volunteer/Other
27% Management
11% Lead administrator

25% Large city (1 million+)
61% Mid-size city (10,000- 1 million)
14% Small community (0- 10,000)

Participants had:

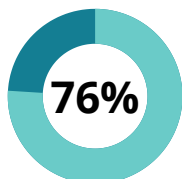**71%** worked in sector for 1-10 years.
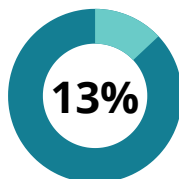**29%** worked in sector for 11+ years.

86% formal sector education/ training.
14% no formal sector education/ training.

Participants identified:

76% feminist

13% racialized

84% Women
11% Non-binary
5% Male

FINDINGS:

1) Capturing Gendered Experiences of Homelessness

When asked whether participants felt that women and girls experience homelessness differently than men, 97% responded with agreement. Similarly, the vast majority of participants (95%) agreed that a gender-based approach is important for their community to end homelessness. In sharing how participants felt homelessness is different for women and girls, they spoke of many unique causes, consequences, and realities of a woman's experience, including: the hidden nature of women's homelessness; pregnancy through to varying experiences of motherhood; menstruation and sexual/reproductive health needs; and historical to present day violence. Comments related to safety considerations reverberated throughout the data.

> *"Most women who are homeless has young children whom they are responsible for. This increases their responsibility and put up barriers to access housing because rent is dependable on the size of the family and rooms required."*
> *(Anisa)*

When concerned with whether or not participants felt that local elected officials recognize women as a unique population experiencing homelessness, the response varied. The majority of participants neither agreed or disagreed, with more results leaning towards disagreement. Despite the majority of participants endorsing that women and girls experience homelessness differently than men, most did not feel as though those in positions of power held the same view, or understood the extent of the issue due to its hidden nature.

> *"Even during municipal elections, homelessness is an issue discussed mostly in general without considering the difference within the population." (Anisa)*

FINDINGS:

2) There are Unique Populations of Women

In addition to a gender-based approach to homelessness, participants acknowledge that "women" do not comprise a homogenous group - and that understanding the complex and intersecting nature of identities and social locations is vitally important to ending women and girls' homelessness. Women's experiences of homelessness are compounded or influenced by myriad factors such as race, class, (dis)ability, sexuality, citizenship, age, community ties, and motherhood status.

"An intersectional approach must be built into the very fabric of any kind of response. It must be recognized from the very beginning that various social locations differentially impact folks experiencing any social issue, including homelessness." (Emmanuel)

Although some participants suggested that Black women, Indigenous women, women of colour, and transgender and non-binary people were included in the planning processes of participants' respective communities, the data demonstrates that the majority disagreed with this statement.

Agree 28.6%

Disagree 53.3%

Neither 18.1%
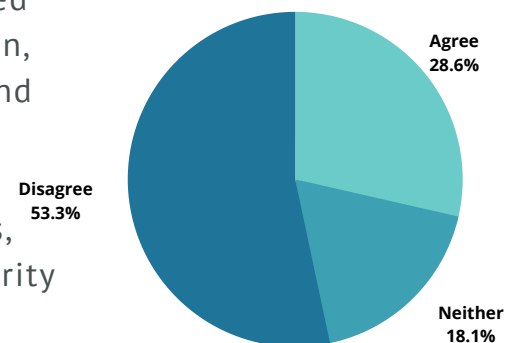
Participants further elaborated on the importance of an inclusive, participatory approach to community planning which involves diverse lived expertise.

"[We need] ...intentional and meaningful inclusion of women/non-binary individuals with lived/living experience in planning activities." (Monika)

Participants described a desire for enhanced supports and services for unique populations of women and girls that is initiated at a policy level and enacted and felt in communities. Coordination amongst services supporting unique populations of women is thought to be an area of improvement, as an equal number of participants did and did not feel that VAW and the homelessness serving sector worked collaboratively in their community.

"The needs of women within the homeless sector are not being met because policy development continues to be traditionally executed or a one problem fits all model." (Erin)

FINDINGS:

3) Current State of Community Gender-Based Approaches

In seeking to understand the current context across Canada, participants were asked to share their perceptions of how their respective communities include and prioritize women and girls' homelessness. **Nearly all participants felt that their community plan to end homelessness should include women and girls as a priority population, however, just over half of the participants felt that this was a current reality.** Further, when asked if participants felt that their regional or municipal service manager was supportive of a gender-based approach to homelessness, 45% agreed, 38% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 17% disagreed. It was clear from participants that a gender-based approach is not currently being thoroughly implemented across Canada- some communities are supportive, though a great many are not.

There were mixed responses as to whether or not homelessness serving sectors used a gender-based approach, and whether or not participant's respective communities had experienced an increase in supports for homeless women in the last 5 years.

Where participants tended to agree however, is that women and girls receive less community support, and that the needs of women experiencing homelessness are not well met. Participants elaborate by sharing the impact of disregarding the gendered experience of homelessness and the inequities apparent in male and female services.

"The supports are built to suit a single unattached male who desires a single room occupancy, which we know would not work for the vast amounts of women." (Andrey)

Some of the participants who felt that services for women had improved in their respective communities shared how awareness of women's homelessness, strong female leadership, and funding created this forward momentum. Time limitations to funding pose unique challenges with the sustainability of initiatives. Instead, some participants advocate for funding built into a community's core funding model.

"Increasing due to perception of need & empowered female leaders spearheading programs." (Shubham)

FINDINGS:

4) Common Barriers to Gender-Based Approaches

While some communities are making progress in a gendered approach to ending homelessness, others remained visionary and hopeful. Survey participants were asked several questions regarding the barriers to implementing a gendered approach. Themes included: exploring perceptions of why leaders did not approach homelessness with a gendered lens; considering if and why women-centred services were decreasing; how communities were resisting this change; and evaluating the pitfalls of not including a unique population approach.

> *"Council has pushed back on this. The trope of men's homelessness eclipsing women's issues continues to prevail. Despite more than 40% of individuals experiencing homelessness identifying as women, we see a community that only dedicates around 18% of resources to this work."*
> *(Andrey)*

Commonly cited barriers include:

- Lack of awareness, including the hidden nature of women's homelessness which leads to an underestimate of its prevalence
- Addressing homelessness as though all whom experience it are a homogenous group- little attention to different needs for different peoples
- Lack of political will, leadership, and required policy that is inclusive and equitable of women experiencing homelessness
- Pervasive social ills such as discrimination, colonialism, transmisogyny, racism, sexism, and violence
- Budgetary constraints and resource shortage
- Challenges with service collaboration
- Lack of affordable, adequate, and permanent housing
- Dependence on a Housing First model which does not have an explicit gendered lens
- Failing to include lived experience in a meaningful and equitable manner throughout all stages of change
- Decision making forums that lack diversity, inclusivity, and a willingness to try novel approaches
- Perceptions that an approach for particular populations is divisive and that no one group should be prioritized

FINDINGS:

5) Common Facilitators to Gender-Based Approaches

Participants shared examples of how they envisioned a gender-based approach in community planning to end homelessness. Imagining this different future included:

- Intersectional, diverse, and participatory approaches to community plans/ planning to addressing/ ending homelessness for women and girls
- Improved data which captures hidden homelessness
- Greater awareness, knowledge, and compassion towards women and girls' homelessness
- Increasing women-specific services and supports
- An approach that prioritizes the safety of women and girls experiencing homelessness
- Funding that does not limit and restrict the choices of women as they encounter varying life experiences (e.g., intimate partner violence, motherhood)
- Acknowledgement from formal and informal leaders across public and private sectors, backed up with funding commitments that support gender-based approaches/solutions to ending women and girls homelessness

When asked about the promising approaches to support the unique needs of women and girls taking place in communities, participants shared experiences of:

- Supports and services that are unique to women's needs (e.g., shelters specific to women or transgender and non-binary people, the provision of childcare, or a drop-in centre)
- Psychosocial supports including support groups that focus on recovery from violence, self esteem, and self worth
- Affordable, permanent housing for women and children
- A Housing First program for women
- A volunteer group of community partners collaborating to find and address service gaps for homeless women and girls

DISCUSSION:

In seeking to explore if and how Canadian communities are using gender-based approaches to community planning and service delivery for preventing and ending homelessness, the results indicate that **there is significant opportunity for improvement.**
Throughout Canada, cis- and transgender women and girls' needs are unrecognized and thus they are consequently underserved (Schwan et al., 2020). Where gendered approaches exist, they are outliers, as while those who work in the sector acknowledge the needs, this is not necessarily being supported by leaders and their broader communities. This report seeks to understand the barriers and facilitators to the inclusion of a gendered approach to preventing and ending homelessness for women.

The findings in this report suggest that the hidden nature of women's homelessness and the paucity of accurate data regarding its prevalence remain a contributing factor in the lack of awareness and consideration of the unique needs of women and girls. The inaccurate count of women's homelessness is a recognized challenge in the literature (Bretherton, 2017) and yet, a concrete action plan that aims to turn 'conservative estimates' into facts is yet to be seen. This gap in data is "...leaving governments and advocates in the dark with respect to the scale of the issue, who is struggling, and where to go from here" (Schwan et al., 2020, p. 274).

Despite the overwhelming agreement amongst participants that women and girls experience homelessness differently and that community plans to prevent and end homelessness require a gender-based approach, the broader community, municipal councils, and some public sector housing leaders do not acknowledge the uniqueness of the need. While some participants shared that the impact of strong and empowered leadership was transforming a gender-based approach to ending homelessness in their communities, others spoke of the challenges in its absence. Continuing to homogenize the experience of homelessness, or fear of being divisive by attending to unique population needs, continues to harm women and girls. As such, research, policy, and practice that honours diverse populations of women and girls (e.g., transgender, Black, Indigenous, and women of colour) is required.

Without adequate representation, support, and action of leaders in various levels of government and social service and housing sectors, women and girls' will continue to experience inequities and social disadvantage- a lack of specialized and required services, funding that limits and restricts women's choices, inadequate housing, failing to meet women's and girls fundamental basic needs, and communities that are unsafe to live in. The will and compassion of leaders can impact policy and create a more inclusive and equitable approach to preventing and ending women and girls' homelessness in our communities.

Engaged leaders committed to meaningful change for women and girls' experiencing homelessness will likely need to reimagine and redesign a sector that has historically lacked an explicit gender lens. Specified in the findings is the need for leaders to engage different and diverse people at decision making tables, inclusive of women with lived experience(s) of homelessness. Further, women and girls experiencing homelessness cannot be considered a homogenous group: Black women, Indigenous women, women of colour, and transgender women are particular populations that participants felt did not have enough specialized services and were rarely engaged in community planning.

These data also illuminate that a gender-based approach to community planning to prevent and end homelessness for women and girls will require upstream innovation and transformation that takes place at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels (World Health Organization, 2021). The complex interplay of factors that perpetuate traditional gender blind approaches to preventing and ending homelessness occur in and between each level. For example, as we change individual discriminatory attitudes, how we work collaboratively in relationship with one another, enhance measures of safety and protection within communities, and eradicate social policies that help to maintain gender inequality, **the way forward points to a clear direction:**

IF WE ARE GOING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS, WE NEED TO WORK IN SOLIDARITY TO TRANSLATE A GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS INTO HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA.

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION:

ENDING WOMEN AND GIRLS HOMELESSNESS IN CANADIAN COMMUNITIES: A GENDER-BASED APPROACH

1. HOMELESSNESS IS GENDERED

Those experiencing homelessness are not a homogenous group.

Canadian cis- and transgender women and girls' needs are underecongized, and thus they are consequently underserved. Unique groups of women have unique needs, and all must be kept safe.

"Our community plan currently includes women as a priority population"

2. ACCURATE DATA

What is the scale of the problem?

Traditional data collection does not capture the hidden nature of women and girls homelessness. Understanding the diversity, reality, and extent of the issue will better inform what changes are required.

3. ENHANCE DIVERSITY

Work together at decision making tables.

Include different and diverse people and those with lived experience(s) at community planning and decision making tables.

4. ENGAGE LEADERS

In government, housing, social services, and beyond.

Commit to meaningful change in a way that reimagines and redesigns a sector that has lacked a gendered lens.

5. ELIMINATE GENDER BLIND POLICY

Which is harmful to the well-being of women and girls.

Policy and funding decisions should be inclusive and equitable for women and girls- not restricting and limiting their choices.

"Our local elected officials recognize women as a unique population experiencing homelessness"

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APPENDIX A

Survey – English

Q1

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Women, girls and transgender women experience homelessness differently than men.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) A gender-based approach is important for my community to end homelessness.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) Our community plan currently includes women as a priority population.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d) Our community plan should include women as a priority population.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

e) Our regional or municipal service manager is supportive of a gender-based approach to homelessness services.

○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

f) Our local elected officials recognize women as a unique population experiencing homelessness.

○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

g) The homelessness serving sector in my community already uses a gender-based approach.

○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

h) The needs of women experiencing homelessness are well addressed in my community.

○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

i) In the last 5 years, my community has seen an increase in the supports for women experiencing homelessness.

○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

j) Women, girls, and transgender women in my community receive less support than men.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
k) The violence against women sector and homelessness serving sector work collaboratively together in my community.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
l) Indigenous women are included in community planning processes in my community.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
m) Transgender women and non-binary folx are included in community planning processes in my community.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
n) Racial minority women are included in community planning processes in my community.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q2 In your opinion, what are some examples of what it might look like to include a gender-based approach in community planning to end homelessness?

Q3 As you agreed that women, girls, and transgender women experience homelessness differently than men, can you tell us a bit about how it is different?

Q4 As you disagreed that your service manager or elected officials recognize women as a unique population experiencing homelessness, how would you explain why they don't recognize this?

Q5 Why or why aren't the needs of women experiencing homelessness being met in your community?

Q6 Why are services for homeless women increasing or decreasing in your community?

Q7 As you disagreed that transgender women, Indigenous women, or racialized women are included in community planning, why do you think this is so?

Q8 Are there any particular gaps in support for women in your community?

Q9 Have you ever experienced push-back in your community when suggesting that women are a unique or priority population in terms of experiencing homelessness? If yes, can you tell us more about this experience?

Q10 Tell us about any promising approaches your community has implemented to supporting the unique needs of women, girls, and transgender women.

Q11 Can you please tell us a bit more about yourself:

Q12 Name of my community/municipality:

Q13 Approximate community population:

Q14 In which sector do you work? (Ex. Violence against women; homelessness; healthcare)

Q18 For how many years have you worked in this sector?

Q19 Have you received any formal training or education related to working in this sector?

Q15 What is your role in your organization?

○ Executive Director/Head administrator (1)

○ Management (2)

○ Front-line (3)

○ Volunteer (4)

○ Service Recipient (5)

○ Other (6)

Q16 What is your gender identity?

Q26 Do you identify as a racialized person? (Including but not limited to person of colour, racial minority, Indigenous.)

Q17 Do you personally identify as a feminist?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

○ Prefer not to answer (3)

Q21 If you would like to be included in the draw for one of the three $100 Amazon gift cards, or if you would like to receive a report of the results, we will require your email contact.