

## Welcome to our Learning Network & Knowledge Hub Webinar

**Date & Time:** Tuesday, February 13, 2018 from 1:00 to 2:15 PM EST

### Building Supports: Housing Access for Immigrant & Refugee Women (IRW) Leaving Violence

**Presented by:** Louise Godard, Hannah Lee, and Sarah Yercich

- All attendees are muted during the webinar.
- If you are experiencing issues, please type into the chat box.
- If you have a question for the webinar speakers, please type into the Q&A box and we will spend 15 mins near the end on Questions and Answers.
- There will be an evaluation link in the chat box at the end of the webinar, please fill out the form as your feedback will guide our future webinars. You will also receive an email with the link to the evaluation after the webinar.
- The webinar recording and presentation slides will be posted on our website within the next few days: <http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/lh-kh-webinars>



## BUILDING SUPPORTS

### Housing Access for Immigrant and Refugee Women Leaving Violence



Louise Godard



Hannah Lee



Sarah Yercich



## Presentation Overview

- Project Overview
- Research Findings
- Recommendations
- Provincial Awareness Campaign  
*"You are not alone"*

## Project Overview

### BUILDING SUPPORTS

To understand the barriers in accessing short- and long-term housing for immigrant and refugee women leaving violent relationships, and to examine practices and policies that can facilitate the removal of barriers to safe, secure and affordable housing.



## Project Overview

### **Phase 1: Research**

What are the experiences of immigrant and refugee women in attempting to secure housing that is safe, affordable and culturally appropriate after leaving violence? (*Result: Phase I Report and Infographic*)

### **Phase 2: Development/pilot of promising practices and Awareness Campaign**

What practices can be developed to improve transition house workers' ability to support immigrant and refugee women in accessing longer-term safe, affordable and culturally-appropriate housing based on knowledge generated from Phase 1? (*Result: Promising Practices Guide and "You Are Not Alone" Awareness Campaign*)

## Project Overview

### **Phase 3: Policy and Literature review and consultation**

What provincial and federal policy solutions can be created to reduce or eliminate the barriers that exist for immigrant and refugee women in accessing short – and long-term housing? (*Result: Policy Frame and Analysis*)

## Research Findings

### BARRIERS TO SAFETY

- Language and cultural barriers
- Shame and fear of disclosure
- Lack of familial support, financial security, and knowledge about available services
- Limited housing options and information

### BARRIERS TO HOUSING

- Discrimination
- Misconceptions about THs
- Communal living
- Waitlists & size
- Tenant selection
- Inadequate income assistance
- Lack of support & affordable housing
- Landlords

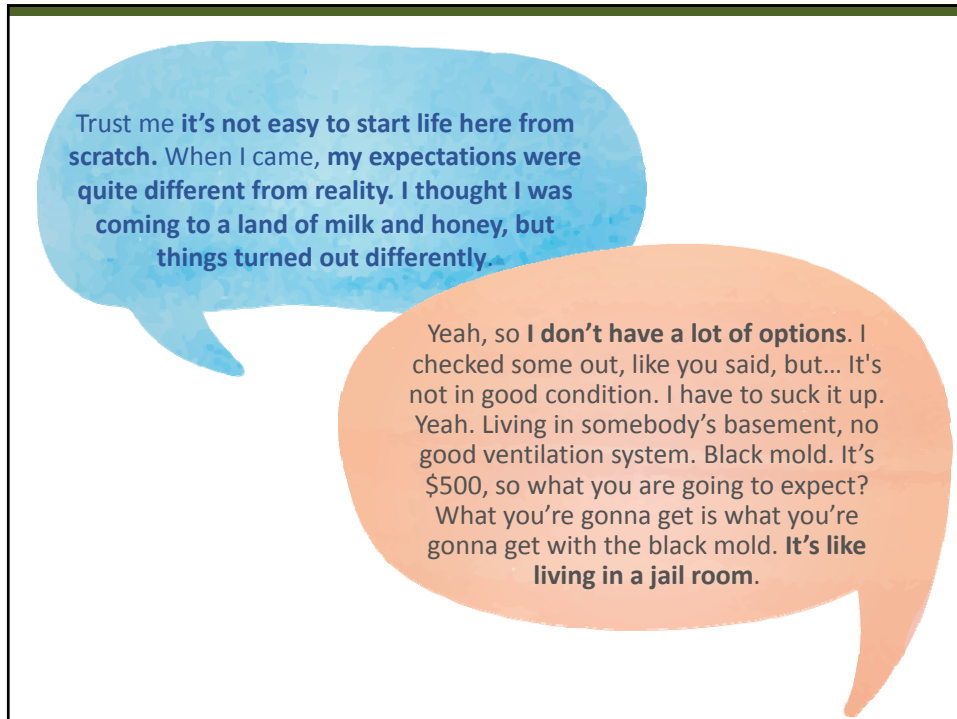
### POLICY BARRIERS

- Time limits in transition housing
- Income assistance policies
- Legal / immigration status
- Legal aid
- BC Housing policies

When we call police, our relatives, our friends all stop talking to us; that all this happened to me.

You are coming from a country where you are always... you don't have rights. You are always lied in your face, so even here they say 'you can trust me, give your...' Like you said, everything it's... under control. And these, **how do you say that, um...** [Confidential?]. Yes. I didn't believe it.

They're also worried about that, their family's not going to support them. **In my culture, like they're old thinking, you have to live with your husband no matter what.**



## Recommendations

### Housing Regulations and Procedures

- **Review and reform existing laws and policies** governing discrimination in the rental market to ensure that the needs of vulnerable populations, such as IRW, are considered.
- **Improve housing budgets** for immigrants and refugees at the policy-level.
  - This can be accomplished through **increased funding overall**; and
  - **More specific funding allocation** within existing housing budgets for vulnerable populations, including immigrants and refugees.
- **Shift the approach** for supporting IRW in housing markets.

## Recommendations

### The National Housing Strategy



- **Implementation and on-going review** of the Canadian National Housing Strategy (NHS) to improve affordability and availability of housing nation-wide, as well as make housing more accessible to vulnerable groups such as immigrant, refugee, and non-status women fleeing violence.
- **Systematic review and subsequent reforms** to the NHS to address recent critiques and concerns raised regarding the limited support for rental market and non-profit housing offered in the strategy.

## Recommendations

### Federal/Provincial Regulations and Procedures

- **Review BC Housing policies** and amend current housing regulations to allow for flexibility in policies that better reflect the realities and lived experiences of IRW fleeing violence.
- **Affordability-focused policy reform** during the development and implementation of BC's provincial housing strategy.
- Development and implementation of the **City of Vancouver's own housing plan** to address the challenges that are more pronounced in the Greater Vancouver Area, such as high cost of rentals and insufficient rental availability.

## Recommendations

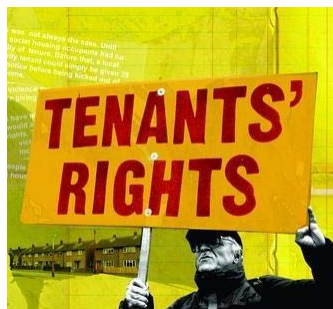
### Accessible, Appropriate, and Affordable Housing

- Emphasize **both accessible and appropriate housing** in the development of policy and funding structures.
- Build more **affordable housing and improve access** to safe, adequate, and stable housing for IRW and children.
- Ensure that **advocates provide support for IRW in navigating housing systems.**



## Recommendations

### Racism and Discrimination on the Housing Markets

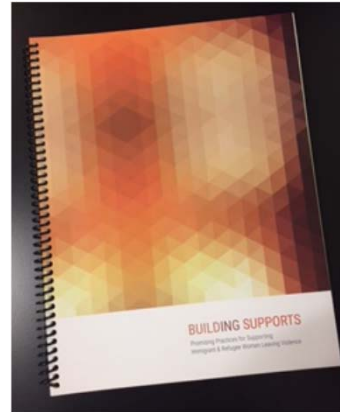


- Increase **awareness of racism and discrimination** and its impacts on access to housing for IRW and children.
- **Improve tenants' rights and protections**, as well as accessibility of such knowledge for immigrant and refugee populations.
- Implement and enforce policies to **eliminate institutional racism** that create barriers to housing access for IRW and children.

## Recommendations

### Education and Training

- **Prioritize education of landlords and housing managers** regarding the unique needs, circumstances of vulnerable populations, as well as dynamics and impacts of violence.
- Rights-based education and awareness raising within immigrant and refugee communities.
- Promising Practices guide and online training for THs.



## Recommendations

### Culturally Safe and Appropriate Housing

- Ensure that housing supports, services, and programs are **culturally safe, informed, and appropriate.**
- Provide **cultural safety training** to housing managers and landlords at the operational level, as well as to government administrators at the institutional level.
- Research and develop **culturally safe housing models** locally, provincially, and nationally.





## Recommendations

Outreach, Advocacy and Systems Navigation


As soon as you got out from the airport that's it, **you're lost...** you don't know nothing.

I was in a relationship waiting and living [in] hell because I **didn't know that we have all this kind of supports.**

When I came here, he started to abuse me sexually, emotionally, and verbally. He isolated me, he didn't let me go outside, have contact with other, and I **didn't know English language very well.**

## Recommendations

Raising Awareness and Knowledge Translation



- **Raise awareness** about the supports and services available to IRW fleeing abuse, including access to housing.
- Prioritize the **multi-language translation** of relevant information and improve health literacy and accessibility of information about health services.
- **Create and promote awareness** of multi-language information and resources related to status and immigration-related concerns, including health care

Her [My daughter] friend she's Canadian, **her mom last year went to transition house but she said bed bugs, the food it's not enough, all people are weird there...** my daughter got frustrated, she got depressed she screamed '**no way, I'm gonna kill myself if you take me there**'. So I said 'ok ok we sit here. No problem. We are not gonna move.

**I think you should promoting more that those people know what is a [transition house] like, what... why they are there kind of thing.** And some women, like for me, I didn't know I was experiencing violent relationship. I don't know, maybe different culture, but I didn't know until I talked to someone that it was not healthy relationship. Yeah, I think most **parts you should promote more. Let other people know.**

## Awareness Campaign

**"You Are Not Alone"**

Do you feel unsafe in your home?  
Transition Houses offer free support  
and shelter for women and children.

A multi-lingual, province-wide poster, video, TV and radio awareness campaign reaches out to immigrant and refugee women experiencing violence, informing them about Transition Houses and how to access their support.

Most woman stay in violence, they get killed, because they don't want to leave their man. **Because they're worried what's the shelter going to be like.**

## Posters & Postcards



**You are not alone**  
 انتي مش لحالك  
 ਤੂੰ ਮੈ ਢਿਕਲੇ ਨਹੀ ਹੈ  
 تو تنها نیستی.  
 妳並不孤單

BC Society of Transition Houses  
[www.bctsh.ca/youarenotalone](http://www.bctsh.ca/youarenotalone)



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اگر تو در خانه اتھ احساس نامانی من کرتی؟  
 خانہ خانہ کی ترانسیشن ہاؤسز کو بلا کوئی خرچہ فراہم کرتے ہیں۔  
 لیکن حمایت میں کھنڈ اور پناہ میں رہنا۔

لا نشعروں بالانمان فی ہونگ؟  
 البوت الانتقاليہ تقدم المأوى والدعم  
 المجاني للنساء والمطالين

ਫਿ ਗੁੱਠੇ ਸਹਲੇ ਵਾਹ ਫਿਰ ਸੁਆਰਥੀ ਅੱਡਿਯਾ ਕਾਲੇ ਚੇ? ਚਾਰਟਰਡ ਆਫਿਰ ਆਬਾਦ ਮੋਠੇ ਚਿਲਾਕੇ ਸਹੀ ਯੁਵਕੇ ਆਬਾਦ ਅਹੀ ਯਠੇ ਸਹੀ ਵਾਹ ਯੁਵਕੇ ਆਬਾਦ ਚੇ!

ਘਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਕੀ?  
 ਟਰਾਂਜ਼ਿਸ਼ਨ ਹਾਊਸ਼ਜ਼ ਕੋ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਖਰਚੇ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਆਰਾਮ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

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**You are not alone**  
 Do you feel unsafe in your home?  
 Transition Houses offer free support and shelter for women and children.

**Nous n'êtes pas seule.**  
**Sie sind nicht allein.**  
**No estás sola.**  
**Hindi ka nag-iisa.**  
**혼자가 아닙니다.**

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**Women's Washrooms**  
150 posters

**newad.**



**Bus Interiors Advertising**  
200 Buses through out BC

**LAMAR**



## Bus Shelters

10 Bus Shelters in Vancouver



## Vancouver Live! 2 Outdoor Video Screens downtown Vancouver

www.bcsth.ca/youarenotalone

The screenshot shows the BC Society of Transition Houses website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'Get help now', 'Donate', 'Members', 'Resource', 'News', and 'Contact'. A search bar and a red 'Exit Now' button are also present. The main heading is 'YOU ARE NOT ALONE'. Below this is a large image of hands holding a small object, with text in English and multiple languages (Arabic, Urdu, Punjabi, Chinese). To the left of the image is a QR code labeled 'QR Code'. Below the image, there are sections for 'If You Are in Immediate danger' with a list of phone numbers, 'Transition Houses & Women's Shelters' with links to learn more and find services, and 'Multicultural Organizations' with links to various community groups. On the right side, there are sections for 'Related Downloads' (Radio PSA and PSA 60 sec in various languages) and 'Related Links' (PSA 60 sec and PSA 30 sec in various languages).

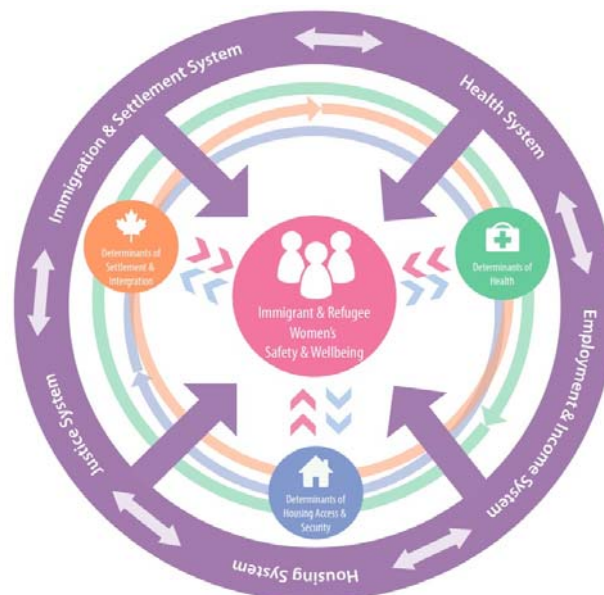
“After listening to this PSA one of them started crying. And when I asked her why she was crying...She said because I know this will help lot of women who are in this situation.”

## Recommendations

### Collaboration, Connection, Coordination, and Communication

- **Coordination and partnerships** with interpreter and translation services.
- **Enhance cross-sectoral support and collaboration** across housing, health and immigration and settlement sectors.
- Improve **coordination and collaboration** between justice systems.
- **Consult with communities** and foster relationships with agencies such as community-based immigrant and refugee services and informal community networks.

### Intersecting Systems and the IRW Experience



## Immigration, settlement, and integration

- **Coordination between the IRCC and other federal and provincial agencies/ministries** is key to ensure that IRW and their children who are fleeing abuse have access to services while awaiting the results of an Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds (H&C) application.
- Temporary resident stakeholders should be allowed **access to child subsidies** under the *Child Care Subsidy Act*.

## Health sector

- Promote and support **coordination, connection, communication, and collaboration** to provide essential health care to non-status women.
- **Foster collaboration** among health ministries, the police, provincial justice ministries, IRCC, housing ministries, and income and employment ministries to improve health outcomes for IRW.

## Resources Available



[www.bcsth.ca/projects/building-supports/](http://www.bcsth.ca/projects/building-supports/)

- Phase 1 Final Report and Infographic
- Promising Practices Guide
- Promising Practices online training
- “You are not alone” Awareness Campaign
- Policy Analysis – identification of barriers and recommendations.





Thank you!

**BUILDING SUPPORTS**



Questions or  
comments?

Louise Godard [louise@bcsth.ca](mailto:louise@bcsth.ca)  
Hannah Lee [hannah@bcsth.ca](mailto:hannah@bcsth.ca)  
Sarah Yercich [syercich@sfu.ca](mailto:syercich@sfu.ca)

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