

## Renforçons nos communautés

# Exit Pathways Out of Violence for Migrant or Racialized Women With Disabilities: Understanding to Better Support Survivors

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**Notre différence fait votre **force****

# What will we talk about today?

Introduction to INÉÉI-PSH and its approaches

Demystifying disability

Disability and survivors of violence

Violence in all its forms

Exit pathways out of violence: obstacles and levers

Strengthening women's voices in all their diversity

# INTRODUCTION TO INÉÉI-PSH AND ITS APPROACHES

# INÉÉI-PSH... What it is

The National Institute for Equity, Equality and Inclusion of People with Disabilities (INEEI-PSH) is a national, independent organization offering services and programs aimed at eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against people with disabilities (PWD) of all ages, genders and ethno-cultural backgrounds. It is also an institute that actively contributes to the promotion of equity to achieve equality and inclusion for all.

Using an approach based on the Intersectional analysis framework and GBA+, ADS+, considering different abilities and multiple (dis)abilities, INÉÉI-PSH has a mandate that is structured around 3 main themes:

- ❖ Intervention, assistance, support & prevention
  - ❖ Promotion, advocacy & lobbying
  - ❖ Training, education & awareness-raising
- We promote positive spaces, i.e. egalitarian, inclusive, and safe, where everyone can express themselves and participate fully.



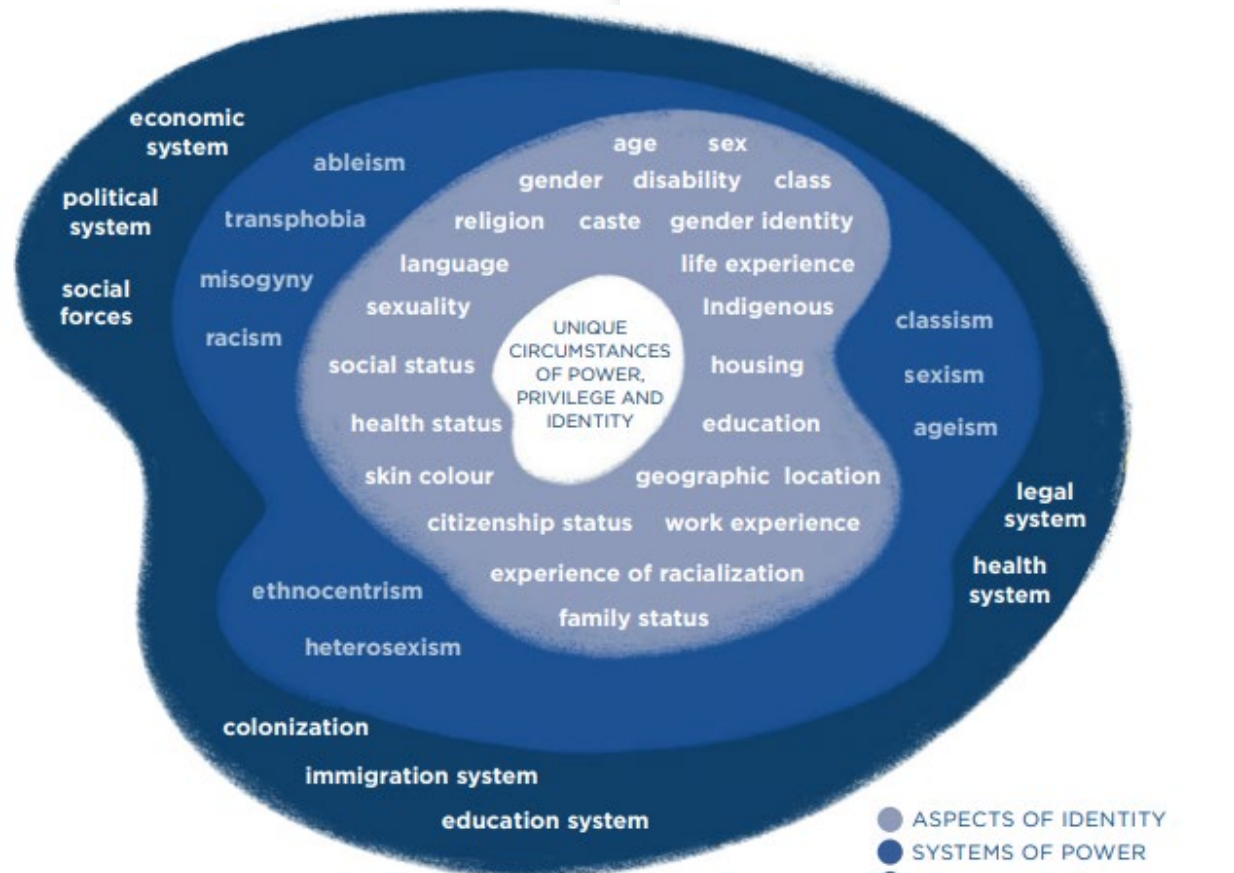
# Our approaches

- INÉÉI-PSH works according to feminist approaches and concepts using:
  - ❑ Intersectional analysis framework
  - ❑ Gender-Based Analysis (GBA+)
  - ❑ ADS+ (Gender-based and intersectional analysis, Québec)
  - ❑ The Human Development Model – Disability Creation Process (HDM-DCP) sees disability as a variation in human development, that is, a difference in the level of achievement of lifestyle or the exercise of human rights.

# Intersectional Feminist Framework (IFF)

- First promoted by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (1989)
- **Understanding how multiple forces intersect and interact to reinforce situations of inequality and social exclusion.**
- **Be aware of factors such as socio-economic status, race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, geographic location, refugee or immigrant status.**
- **Explain the combination of these factors with broader systems of discrimination, past and present, such as colonialism and globalization, to simultaneously create inequalities between individuals and between groups. (CRIA-W-ICREF)**

# Intersectional approach



<https://www.criaw-icref.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Feminist-Intersectionality-Poster.pdf>

# DEMYSTIFYING DISABILITY



# Definition of disability

According to the UN (Art1, CRPD)

**Persons** with disabilities include those who have long-term **physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments** which in **interaction with various barriers may hinder** their **full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.**

*This definition is adopted by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) RATIFIED BY 182 COUNTRIES INCLUDING CANADA*

**Disability is a form of human diversity (UN, 2006)**



# AS SIMPLE AS...

Impairment, disability  
and/or illness

+

Exclusionary  
environments and/or  
attitudes

=

DISABILITY

11



## Human Development Model – Disability Creation Process (HDM-DCP)

Developed by P. Fougeyrollas and his team (Québec, 2013), this model makes it possible to identify the obstacles and facilitators that interact together, in the environment and for the person, to produce a situation of participation or disability in the achievement of living habits.



# Personal Factors

## Organic systems

An organic system is a set of body components that perform a common function (e.g. respiratory system).

## Life habits

A life habit is a routine activity or a role valued by the person.

## Aptitudes

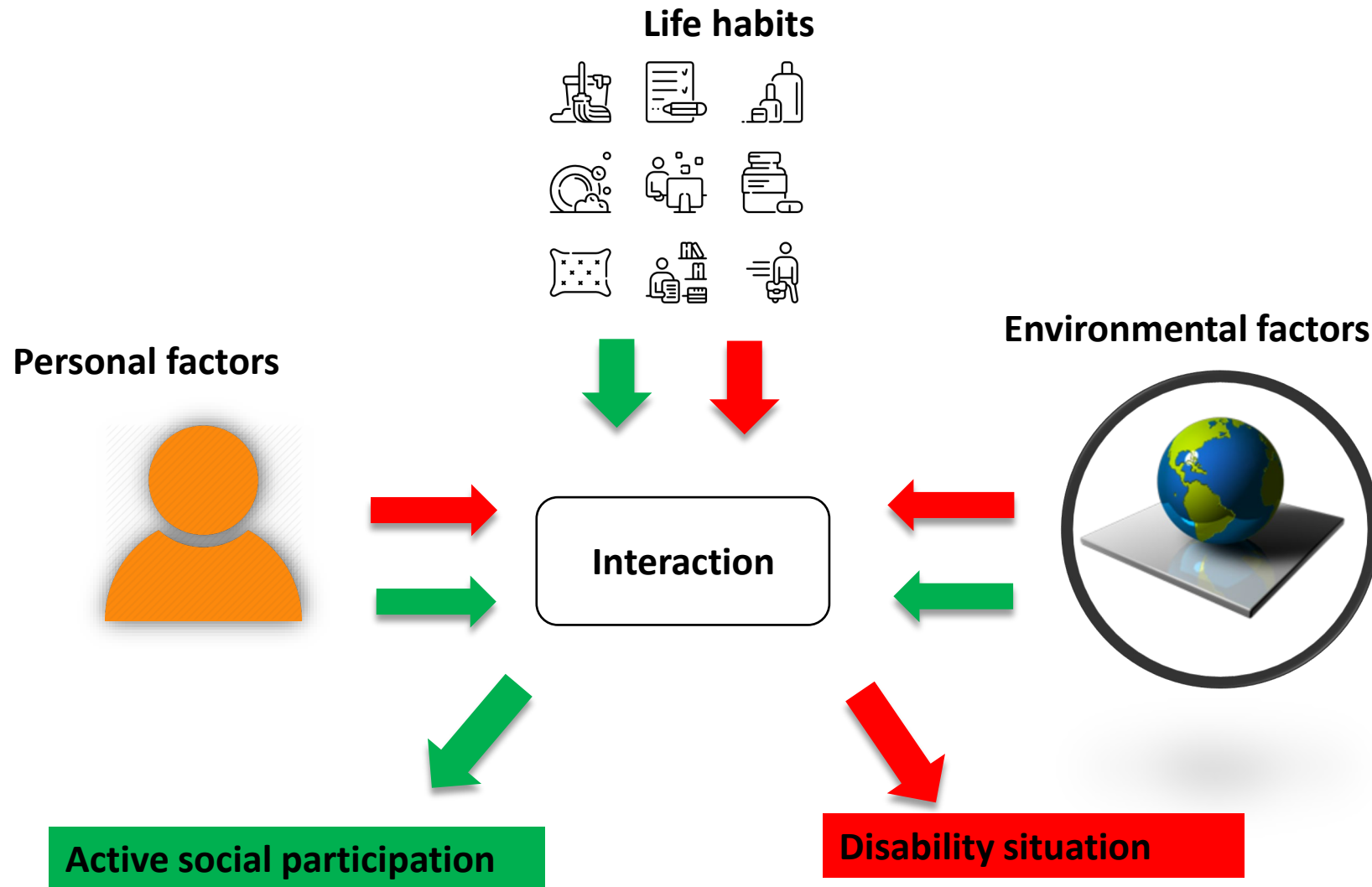
An aptitude is the ability for a person to perform a physical or mental activity (e.g., language skills).

## Environmental factors

An environmental factor is a social or physical dimension that determines the organization and context of a society.



# HDM-DCP



## Terminology used by community organizations



- Motor limitation / Physical disability / Person with reduced mobility
- Hearing limitation / Deaf or hard of hearing person
- Language limitation / Person with speech impairment
- Mental health challenge / Mental illness
- Blind person | Person who is blind or partially sighted
- Intellectual limitation
- Person with autism / neurodiverse person

## The right attitudes



- **Do not identify the person by their disability.**
- **It is important to use a respectful expression such as:**
  - A person with a disability
  - A person with a hearing limitation
  - A person using a white cane

# Some statistics

According to recent results from the Canadian Survey on Disability released in December 2023, 8 million Canadians (27% of the population) had one or more disabilities, of which more than half are girls and women over the age of 15. According to the same survey, Quebec has more than 1,689 million people with one or more disabilities (20% of the population), more than half of whom are girls and women.

**This study was conducted within a GBA+ framework and the + includes trans and non-binary people.**

[New data on disability in Canada, 2022 \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://statcan.gc.ca)

# DISABILITY AND WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

# Who are women survivors with a disability?

- Women with disabilities are twice as likely as women without disabilities to experience intimate partner violence, and this risk increases further if they are immigrants.
- They may have one or more limitations: motor, organic, neurological, learning disability, intellectual disability, visual, hearing, speech and language limitations, and mental health challenges.
- They have the same needs, desires and concerns as all other women.
- To our knowledge, there are no studies or data.

➤ **“Women with disabilities face challenges in accessing decent housing, and services.”**

➤ **“Women with disabilities are [...] more likely to be institutionalized than men with disabilities”**

(Study by Miloon Kothari, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, “Women and the right to adequate housing”, E/CN.4/2005/43, paragraph 64)”

# Vulnerability Factors

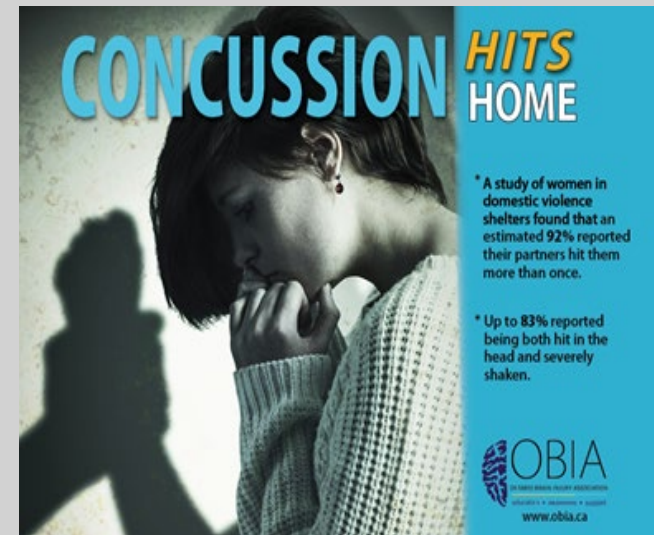
- **Every group of women faces particular forms of violence. Women with disabilities are not spared; factors of vulnerability include:**
  - **Age**
  - **Ethnocultural origin**
  - **Family situation**
  - **Financial situation**
  - **Sexual orientation**
  - **Degree of dependency (lack of autonomy)**

For example, newcomer women experience culturally-based violence – they may be bullied about their sponsorship; women in same-sex relationships may be threatened by their aggressor to reveal their homosexuality.



# Women become disabled due to violence

- Female survivors of intimate partner violence are vulnerable to traumatic brain injury
- High rates of traumatic brain injury (35-80%) have been reported (Kwako et al., 2011)
- Women criminalized and having a traumatic brain injury have a greater history of sexual abuse (60%) and physical abuse (68%) than other women without a traumatic brain injury.



*Traumatic Brain Injury and Early Life Experiences Among Men and Women in a Prison Population. Colantonio et al., 2014*



# They can die from it...

Violence does not choose, it makes people disabled and it kills.  
Our thoughts and solidarity with all victims and survivors.

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L'Équité • L'Égalité • L'Inclusion



**La violence ne choisit pas, elle rend handicapée et elle tue.**

**Nos pensées à toutes les victimes et notre solidarité à toutes les survivantes.**



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**Une fin « cruelle » pour une femme paralysée**

Fatima Gossa ne répondait pas aux critères d'admissibilité à l'aide médicale à mourir.

**PHILIPPE TEICHERA-LESGARD** 25  
LA PRESSE

Cesser complètement de boire et de manger. C'est la seule solution qui restait à Fatima Gossa pour s'échapper de son corps, laissé paralysé par une agression conjugale violente.

Son demi-frère, qui vient d'adopter sa nièce la seule orpheline de mère, dénonce la décision déclarant qu'il doit prendre M<sup>me</sup> Gossa, cinq ans

# Some statistics

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39% of women and girls with disabilities experienced the most severe forms of spousal violence compared to 16% of men

(Enquête sociale générale (ESG) sur la victimisation, 2014)



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Youth with developmental disabilities are 3.46 times more likely to be sexually assaulted than other children.

The average age at the time of the assault was 11.

(Isabelle Daigneault, Udm, 2018)



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Forms of gender-based violence can include any physical, emotional or psychological violence including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, forcible confinement, neglect, discrimination and harassment (and cyberbullying), violence drives separation



# Words from women with disabilities (WWD): Violence manifests itself in...

(INÉÉI Focus Groups 2022)

**Life trajectory**

**Myths and prejudices**

**Difficulty naming one's own experience**

**Cause the person with a disability to doubt herself**

**Institutional violence**

**Additional effort to simply live**

**Be treated as a commodity for men**

**Continuum of violence from a young age**

**Fear of access to services being cut off**

**Internalization of violence**

**Manipulative violence**

**Family violence**

**Non-compliance with specific requests**

**Unadapted communication**

**Not valuing the PWD's knowledge and education**

**Not seeing the whole person**

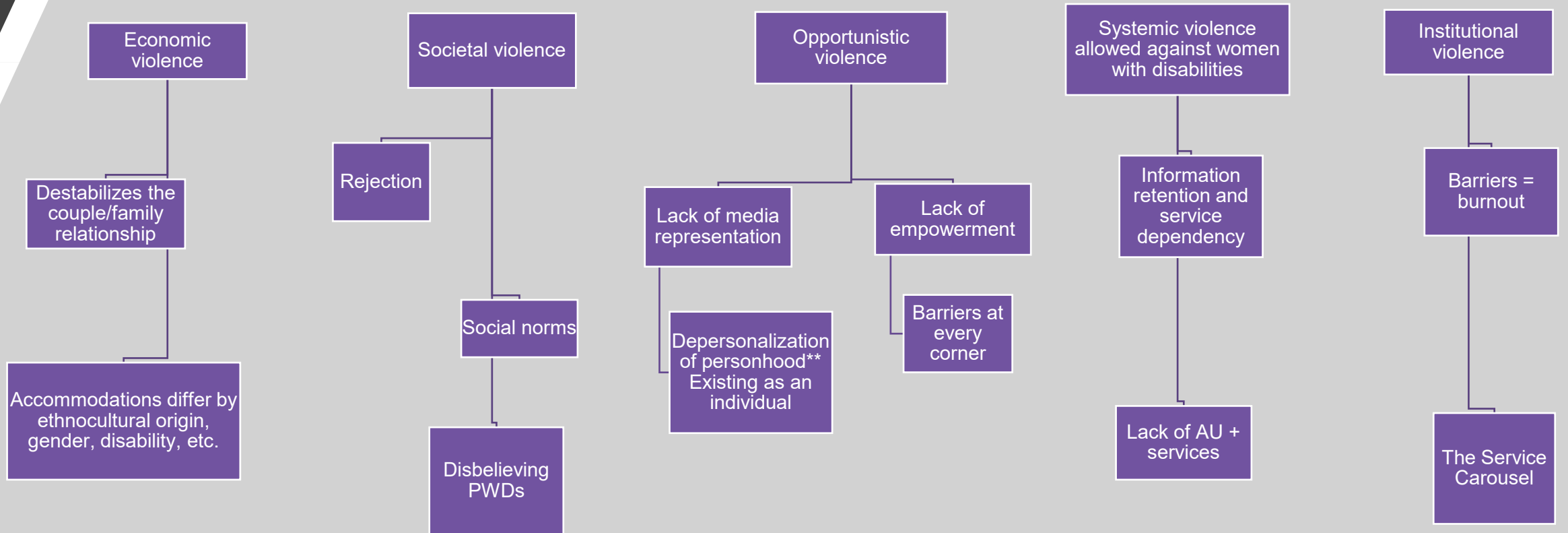
**Invisibilization in the MeToo movement**

**Deprivation of self-determination from a young age**

**Systemic violence**

# VIOLENCE IN ALL ITS FORMS

# Violence manifests itself as... Words from WWD



# Different forms of violence

- **Psychological and verbal**
- **IPV and post-separation**
- **Institutional violence**
- **Destruction of mobility aids, etc.**
- **Deprivation of service or emotional support animals**
- **Financial**
- **Sexual**
- **Physical**
- **Racism and ableism (discrimination based on ability)**
- **Homophobia**

# AT THE CROSSROADS OF OPPRESSION...

- Denies their ability to exercise their rights: right to autonomy and right to free and informed choice
- Sexuality and reproductive rights
- Education
- Work
- Leisure
- Access to basic services
- Dependency
- Exclusionary
- Etc.

# EXIT PATHWAYS OUT OF VIOLENCE: OBSTACLES AND LEVERS



# Exit pathways out of violence: obstacles and levers

**“I’ve often heard this question: But why are you staying?”**

“I have often sought help and support, especially when it became urgent for me to leave the home with a child...” IPV comes in many forms!

# Absence of reporting

- **Fear of repercussions**
- **Need for services, therefore, tolerance of abuse**
- **Think they won't be listened to/or nothing will change anyway**
- **There is no complaint process or no one to complain to**
- **Seniors wanted to leave the residence but can't go anywhere i.e. no other housing; and**

# A world of obstacles...

Police, family, counsellors,  
shelter workers, lawyers,  
nurses, social workers,  
co-workers...don't believe  
them.

Lack of knowledge about what  
abuse is.

Precarious status.

Don't know where to go or  
who can help.

# Lever: Universal Accessibility

## Universal design

A lever for exit pathways out of violence for women with disabilities at the crossroads of oppressions

By Sofia Benkirane

# Société Logique



- NPO, a social economy enterprise founded in 1981
- 13 employees: architectural and urban planning professionals, guidance and mobility specialist
- Architecture, urban planning, urban design
- Planning consulting, consulting and promoting Universal Design
- Conferences, training, studies, guides, assessment tools

# Remember...

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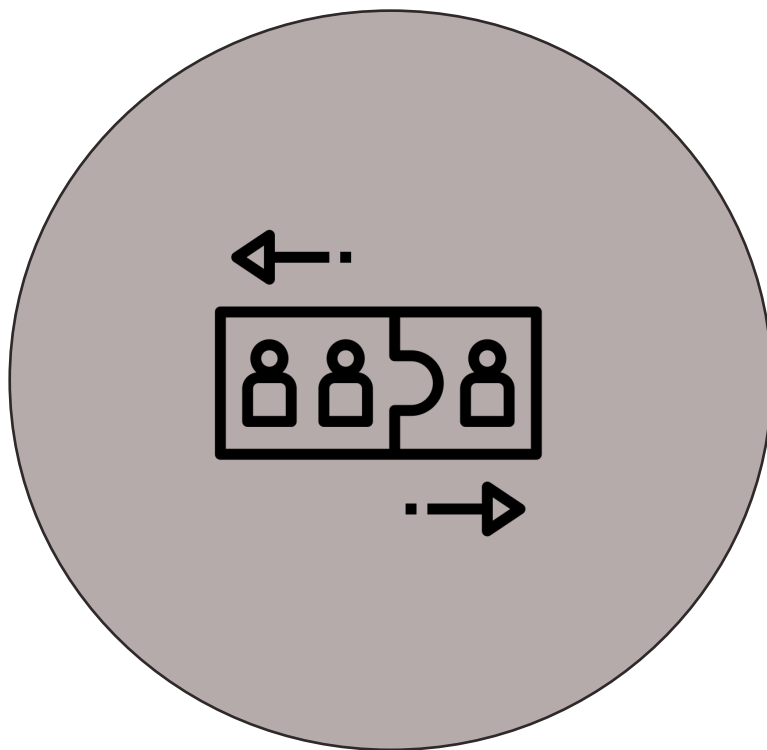
- The intersection of oppressions in relation to the concept of intersectionality
- Increased risk of victimization of persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls
- Difficulties in housing women: communication and crisis management, inaccessibility of premises and lack of awareness of specific needs
- Housing as a safe, adapted and inclusive shelter
- Universal design as a lever to break free from violence

# 01

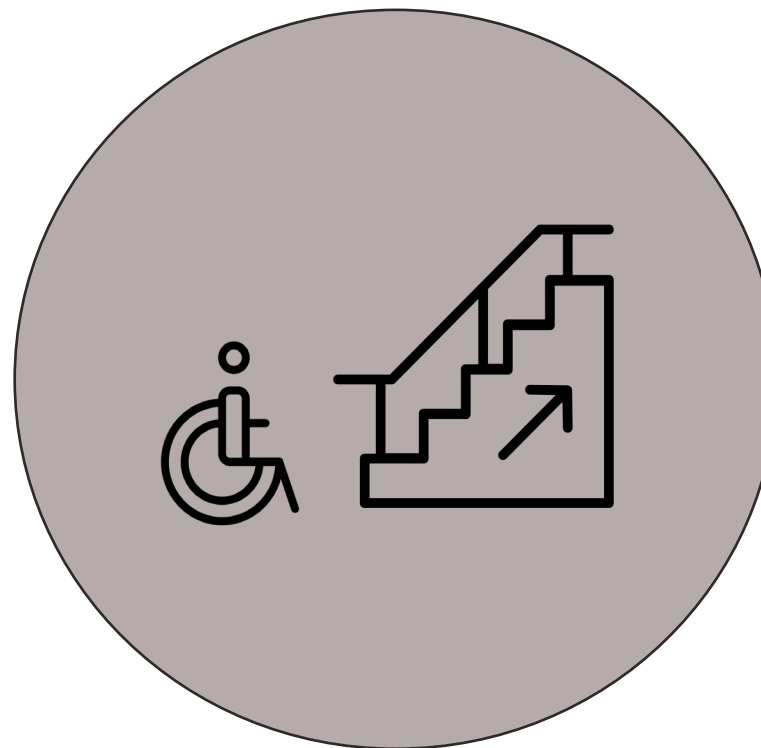


Impact of structural  
and architectural  
discriminations

# Forms of discrimination



**Structural**



**Architectural**



## Impact of discriminations: some data

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- 25.8% of women with disabilities experienced **emotional abuse**
- 8% experienced **financial abuse**, compared to 3.6% of women without disabilities
- Significant gaps in **shelter accessibility**
- In 2009, only 54% of shelters had a **wheelchair-accessible entrance**, 41% had **accessible bathrooms**, and 39% had **adapted bedrooms**
- 9% of these facilities offer specialized services to **people with visual disabilities**

## Impact of discriminations: some findings

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- The inaccessibility of shelter structures may **force women to live on the street or return to an abusive environment that is often toxic**
- **Difficulty in accessing accessible housing** is a major obstacle for women with disabilities who wish to leave an abusive environment
- **The lack of a directory of emergency resources** including information on the degree of adaptation of infrastructure perpetuates the difficulty for these women to leave an abusive situation.
- A **lack of financial resources** is among the barriers to accessibility often identified by resources providing assistance, including shelters. Then there is the **lack of space and the lack of knowledge and time**.

# 02



## Introduction to Universal Design

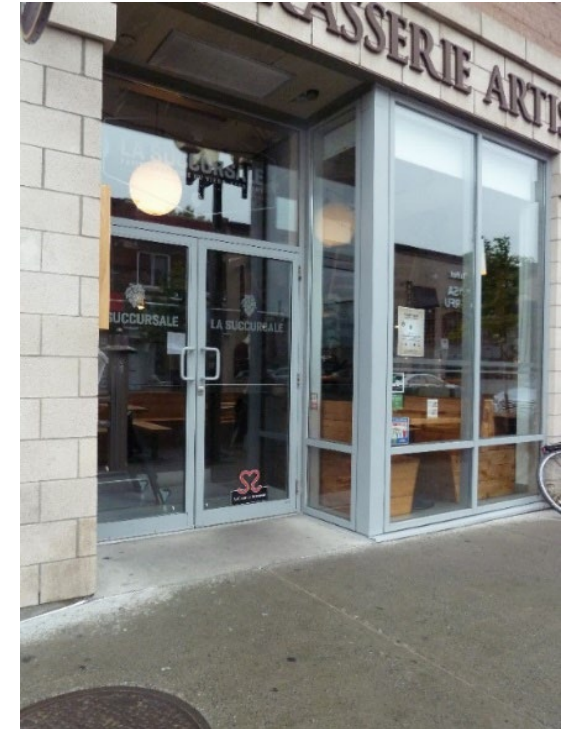
# Three Ways to Address Barriers



“Adapted” entrance



“Accessible” entrance



“Universal” entrance

# Three ways to address barriers

	Adaptation	Accessibility	Universal Design
Approach	Case by case	By customer	Inclusive
Target population	Individual applicant	Persons with functional limitations	All citizens
Needs considered	Applicant's specific needs	Manual Wheelchair Users	All types of functional limitations
Result	Environment consistent with the applicant's abilities and life habits	Environment allowing limited and different use for persons with functional limitations	Environment allowing identical or similar, autonomous and simultaneous use by all citizens

# Chain of actions and movements



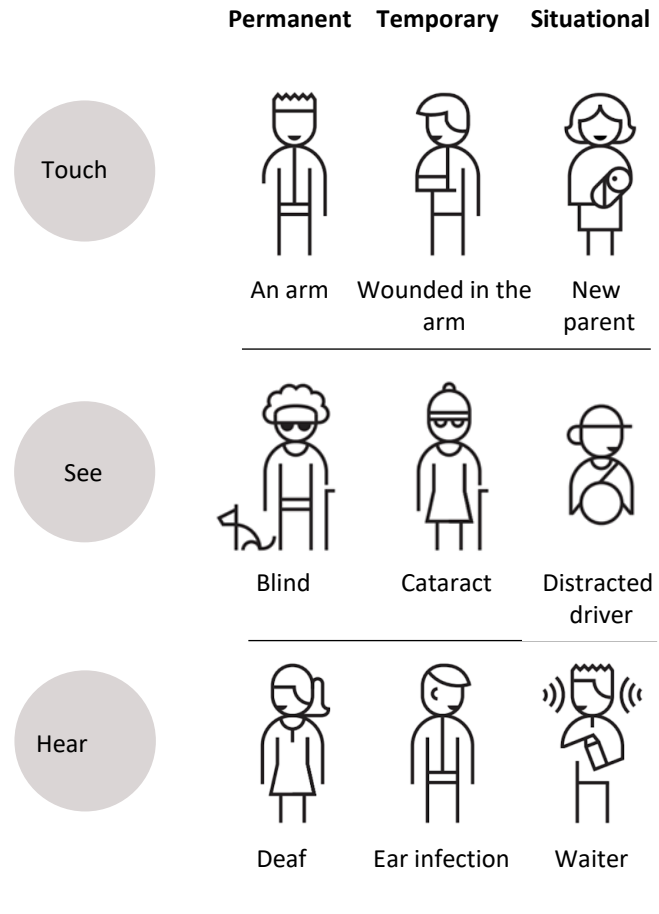
# Universal design

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“It is about creating **inclusive** places that take into account the **needs and capacities of as many people as possible** to create common accommodations that benefit everyone.”



# Universal design

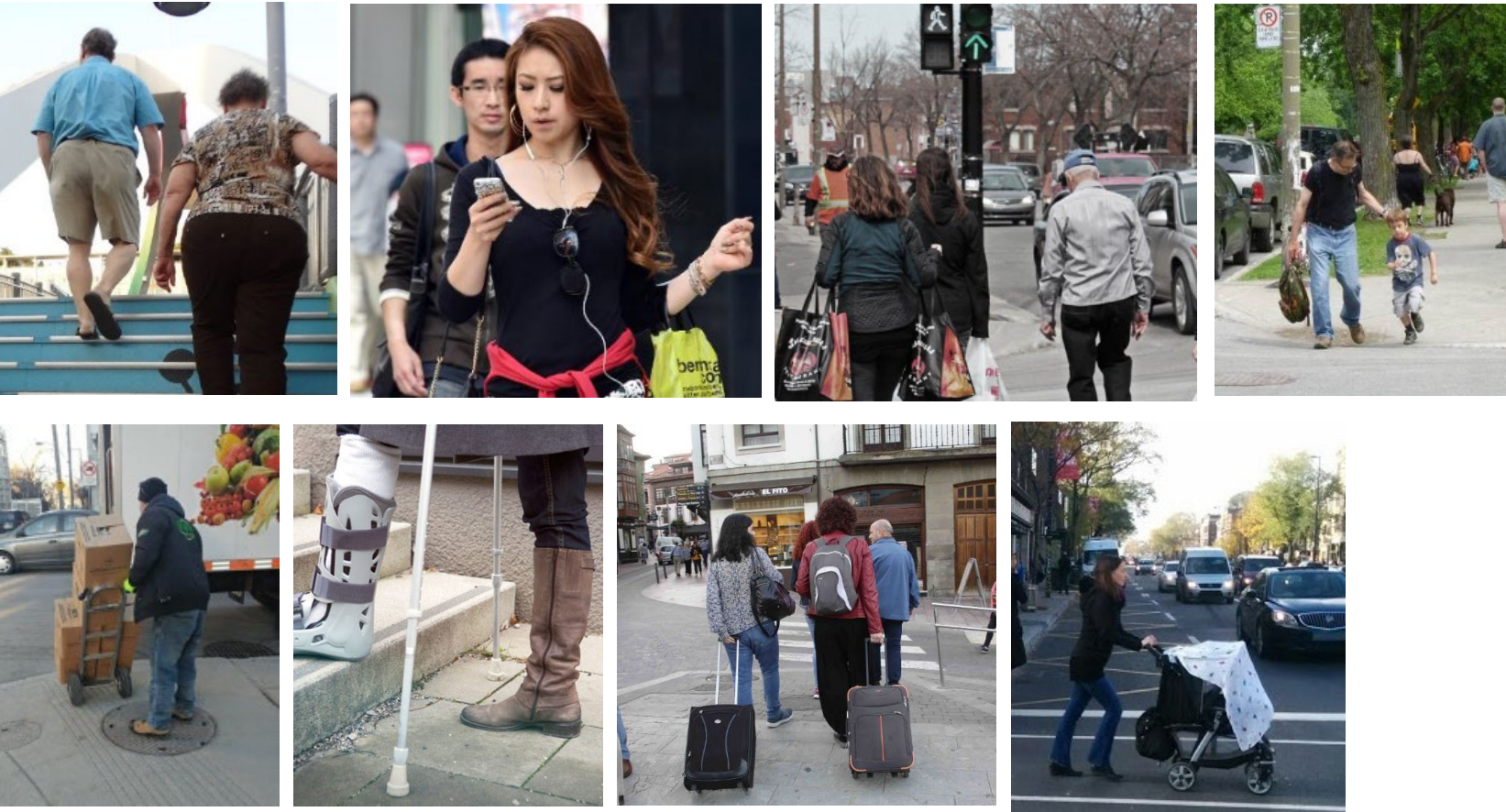


It benefits different people

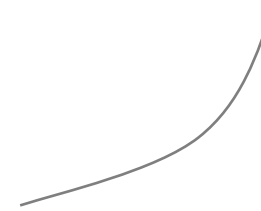
By designing for a person with a permanent disability, a person with a temporary or situational limitation can also benefit.



# Universal design



Users with similar needs!



## How does a person with a functional limitation use their environment?

- Like everyone else!
- Being and feeling safe
- Deciding and acting on your own
- Ability to use all available services and carry out all proposed activities
- Having the same experiences



# 03



Case Presentation:  
Mandate with  
Logifem



# Logifem mandate



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# CHEZNOUS

514-510-7772 - [info@logifem.org](mailto:info@logifem.org)



**Universal accessibility at Logifem is so much more than adding a ramp!**

**Société Logique**  
design universel | universal design

# Logifem mandate

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- The functional limitation may be present from birth, have developed over the years, have been caused by an accident, etc.
- It can develop following episodes of violence
- Funding from the Plan d'action du Gouvernement du Québec contre la violence conjugale (Action Plan against IPV)

# Logifem mandate

## STEP 1: Feasibility Study by Société Logique

- Options for making their building accessible.

## STEP 2: Funding Received

- Part of the Government of Quebec's 2018-2023 action plan was to fund shelters.



# Logifem mandate

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## STEP 3: Committee Formed

- A technical committee was created to guide the administration through the process

## STEP 4: Partnerships Created

- Partnership with INÉÉI-PSH and CIUSSS' Regional Diversity and Inclusion Service

## STEP 5: Staff trained

- All staff participated in a training session offered by INÉÉI-PSH





# Logifem mandate

## STEP 6: Renovations completed

- Work in 2022

## STEP 7: Equipment purchased

- Logifem's occupational therapist was involved in the room design and furniture selection

## STEP 8: First residents welcomed

- In late 2022, Logifem was able to **accommodate two women in wheelchairs**





# The importance of universal design

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- The crucial importance of adapting existing physical spaces or designing new spaces that are already universally accessible
- Various levels of accessibility in housing:
  - **Not accessible:** The vast majority of homes built prior to 1976, no features to facilitate use by a person with limitations (e.g. exterior steps, door thresholds, etc.).
  - **Accessible:** Mainly fairly recent multi-family buildings (1976+) or renovated or made accessible. Features allowing entry and movement up to the entrance door of the dwellings.
  - **Visitable:** Features allowing entry into the dwelling and into a washroom, the living room and the dining room. No features to get to or use the kitchen, the bedrooms, etc.
  - **Adaptable:** Features that facilitate adaptation for the future resident's specific needs. Features allowing entry and use of the washroom, kitchen, dining room, living room, bedrooms, etc.
  - **Universal design:** Common spaces and 100% of housing units intended for everyone. No units for persons with disabilities. Features allowing people to age in place, to visit, to easily adapt to specific needs.

# Universal accessibility and regulations

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- 2005: Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration
- In Quebec since 2009: Equals in Every Respect: Because Rights Are Meant to Be Exercised, aimed at increasing the social participation of persons with disabilities
- In Canada since 2019: The Accessible Canada Act aims to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040
- Building Code: provides a minimum and offers a small framework for universal accessibility. Neglects visual, auditory and intellectual limitations as it focuses on motor limitations
- Standards and regulations are currently inadequate

# STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S VOICES IN ALL THEIR DIVERSITY

# THE CONVENTION...

## Article 6

- **States Parties recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.**
- **States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the present Convention.**

## Article 16

- **Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse.**
- **States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects.**



# Knowledge and power... Exercising rights

**PHYSICAL INTEGRITY;  
INFORMED CHOICES**

**INFORMATION, EDUCATION;  
UNDERSTANDING THE REALITIES OF  
MIGRANT WWD; EXPERIENTIAL  
KNOWLEDGE**

**EQUALITY AND  
NON-DISCRIMINATION;  
REPRESENTATIVENESS**

**EMPOWERMENT: EQUITABLE ACCESS TO  
THE LABOUR MARKET, AND TO HEALTH AND  
SOCIAL SERVICES**

# A few notions

## In Quebec

- In Quebec, the policy "Equals in Every Respect: Because Rights Are Meant to Be Exercised", adopted by the Government of Quebec in 2007, identifies two priority areas:
- Act against prejudice and discrimination; act against all forms of exploitation, violence and maltreatment;
- Devise barrier-free laws, policies, programs and services; [...] and design accessible environments.

## Ableism

- "Ableism" refers to societal attitudes that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities.
- Belief systems based on ableism often revolve around negative attitudes, stereotypes, and stigma towards people with psychosocial disabilities.
- Ableism is: ...similar to racism, sexism or ageism, whereby a person with a disability is less worthy of being treated with respect and consideration.

# Discussions



# Thank you

**For more information on INÉÉI-PSH, please follow this link:  
<https://linktr.ee/ineeipsh21>**

**For more information on Société Logique, please follow this link:  
<https://linktr.ee/societelogique>**

**Notre différence fait votre **force****