

Preventing and Responding to Domestic Violence Project

FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN



Funded by the
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Financé par le
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Canada 

TRAINING AGENDA

- ▶ Community Asset Mapping / Introductions
- ▶ Dynamics of Domestic Violence for Newcomer
- ▶ Barriers Newcomer Women face in defining abuse
- ▶ Barriers Newcomer women face that may prevent them from accessing services
- ▶ LUNCH BREAK
- ▶ Panel Discussion: Cultural Awareness (VIRCS)
- ▶ Settlement and Migration (VIRCS)
- ▶ Strategies to improve services – promising practices
- ▶ Wrap Up and Evaluation

Acknowledgments: Project Partners

- ▶ Community Partnership with VIRCS, Bridges for Women Society, Victoria Women's Transition House, Cridge Transition House and Margaret Lawrence House and Victoria Coalition for Survivors of Torture

Objectives for Session 1

- ▶ Increase knowledge of the dynamics and forms of domestic violence specific to Immigrant Women
- ▶ Identify the barriers Immigrant Women face in defining abuse and learn alternatives to the Cycle of Abuse Model
- ▶ Address barriers Immigrant Women face when accessing services in equitable ways
- ▶ Identify and apply Promising Practices to case scenarios
- ▶ Foster Cultural Awareness through a Panel Discussion and Q&A
- ▶ Understand issues related to settlement and migration in the context of Domestic Violence
- ▶ Build Strategies to improve services based on promising practices in our Community Asset Map

Definitions, Terms & Language

- ▶ We all reside on this land as settlers. For today's workshop, we are going to use the term Immigrant Women
- ▶ **Immigrant** – a person who has settled permanently outside of their home country
- ▶ **Refugee** – a person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is located outside of their home country
- ▶ What is the *difference* between the two?
 - ▶ A refugee is **forced** to flee for their safety/lives
 - ▶ An immigrant **chooses** to move to another country

Reference: Canadian Council for Refugees Website

Definitions, Terms & Language

- ▶ **Newcomer** - a person that has recently arrived in Canada and has lived here for **3 to 5 years**
- ▶ **Person without status** – a person who has not been granted permission to stay in the country, or who has stayed after their visa has expired

Reference: Canadian Council for Refugees Website

Immigration Pathways

- Refugees and Protected Persons
- Temporary Residents (visitors, students, work permit holders)
- Permanent Residents
- Naturalised Citizens
- Persons without status

What is Sponsorship?

- ▶ Sponsorship involves a formal agreement between a PR/citizen of Canada to legally support a person from another country to become a permanent resident of Canada. This agreement is required before the person can come to Canada to live.
- ▶ Reference: Building Supports and IRCC Website

Conditional Permanent Residence and Abuse

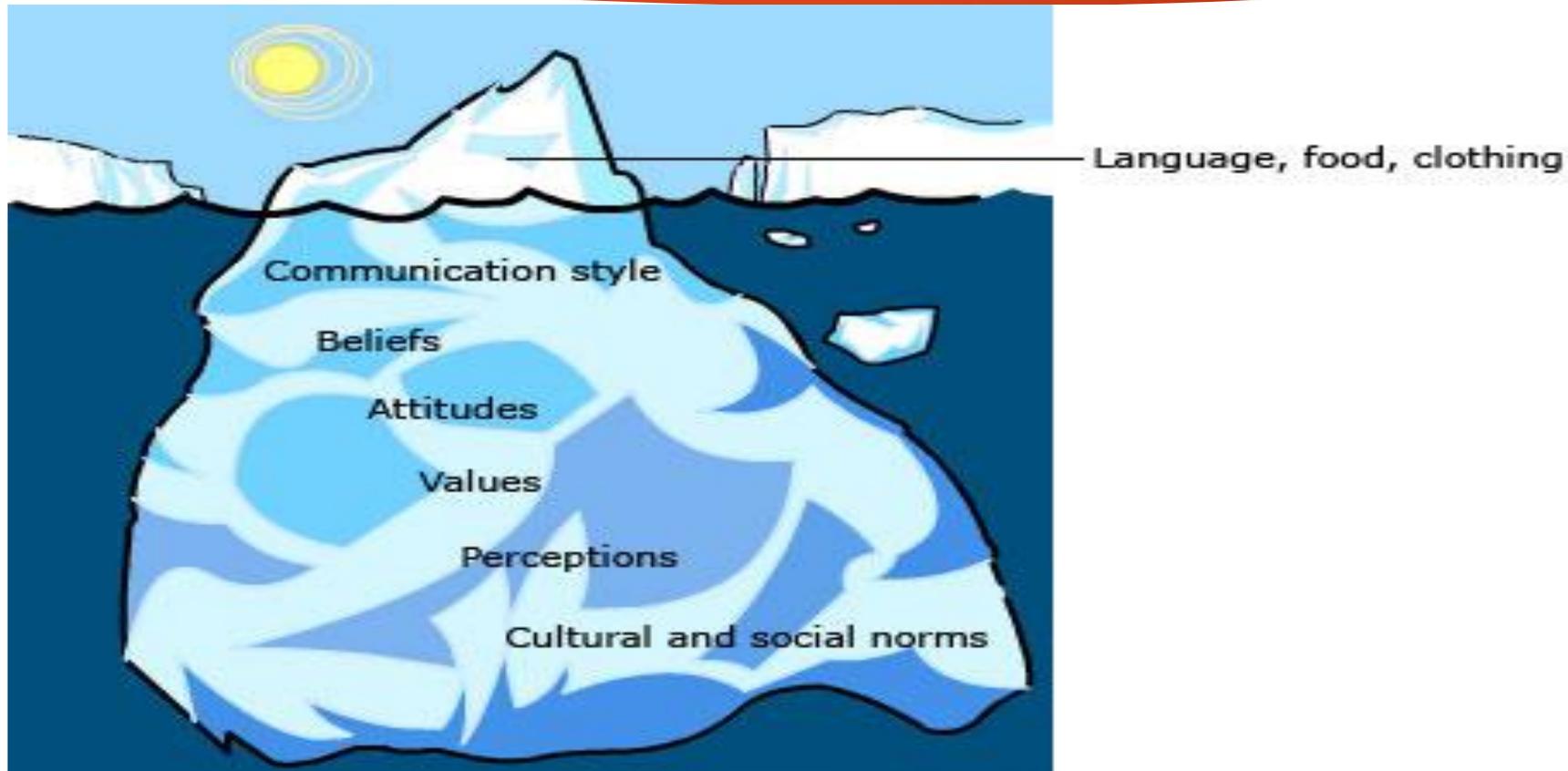
- ▶ On April 28th 2017, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada announced the elimination of conditional permanent residence.
- ▶ The condition was introduced in 2012 as a means to deter people from seeking to immigrate to Canada through non-genuine relationships. It required the sponsored spouse or partner to live in a conjugal relationship with their sponsor for two years.
- ▶ With this announcement, any case that was under investigation for non-compliance with the cohabitation condition has ceased.
- ▶ Reference: IRCC Website

COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING

INTRODUCTIONS *20 minutes*

- ▶ We will create a community asset map including all participants here today
- ▶ Please introduce yourself: Service Agency you work for, and how you support Immigrant Women now in your role.
- ▶ Write the support you offer on your sticky note and place on the “Asset Map”

Working Across Difference: Valuing and Understanding Diversity



► Photo credit -

http://sielearning.tafensw.edu.au/MCS/9362/Sterilisation%20disk%203/lo/7372/7372_00.htm

Promising Practices: Building Supports

We will use this as a Framework in our case scenario work

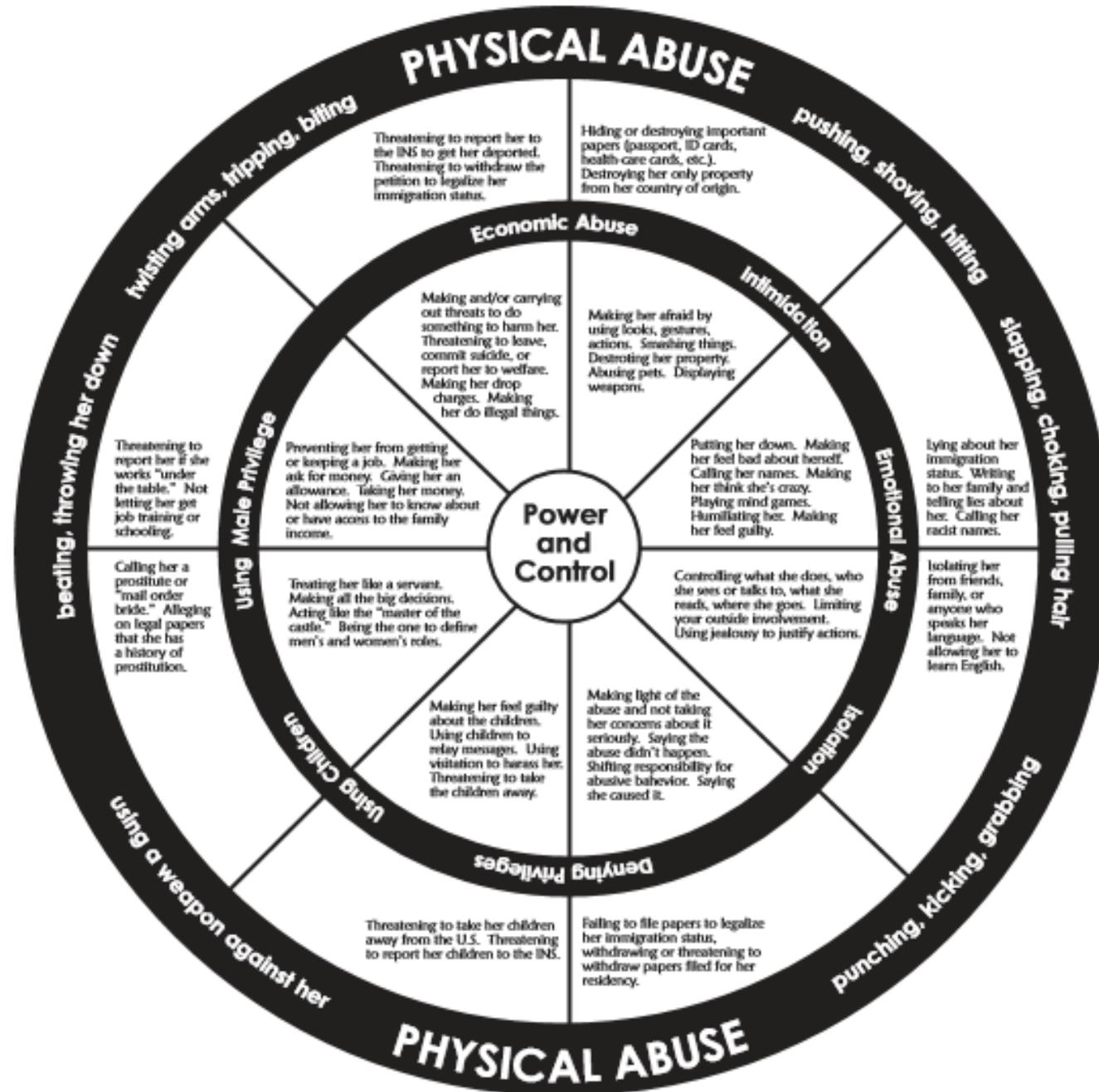
- ▶ Practice Self-Awareness
- ▶ Build Trust and Credibility
- ▶ Take a Holistic Approach
- ▶ Demonstrate Diversity
- ▶ Create Safety
- ▶ Practice Patience
- ▶ Ensure Equity in Service Delivery
- ▶ Be Responsive and Flexible
- ▶ Be Curious
- ▶ Make services and information accessible
- ▶ Provide Interpretation
- ▶ Use clear communication
- ▶ Recognize women's resilience, strength, knowledge and skills

Dynamics of Domestic Violence for Immigrant Women

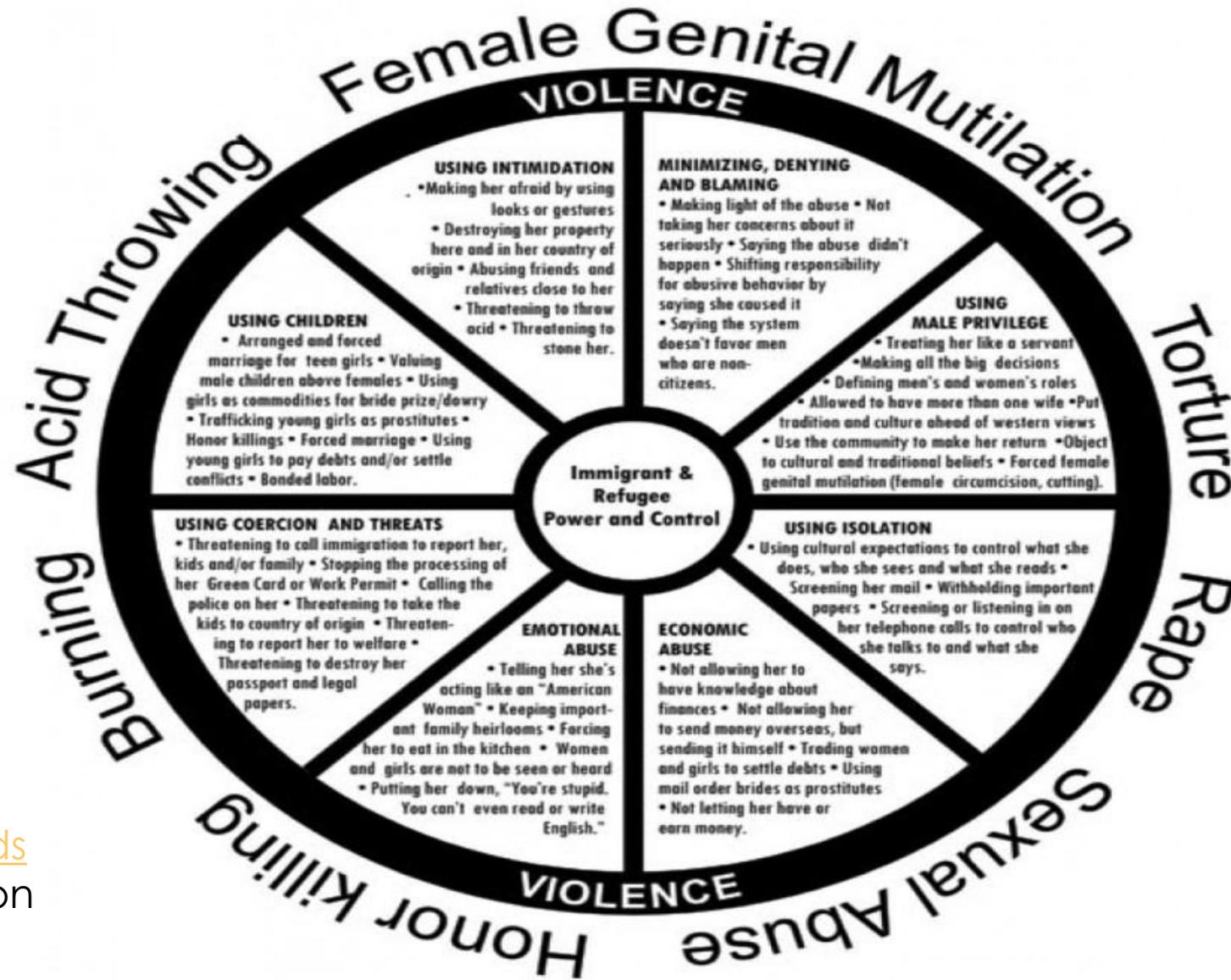
- ▶ What forms/dynamics of abuse have you encountered that are specific to Immigrant Women?

IMMIGRANT POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

Source: ncdsv.org



Immigrant Power and Control Wheel



Source: <http://www.ncds.v.org>. National Centre on Domestic and Sexual Violence

What specific barriers do immigrant women face in defining abuse?

- ▶ Not all women acknowledge they are being abused or define their experiences as abusive
- ▶ Understanding of gender roles may lead them to believe they are not being abused
- ▶ Extended family may accept abusive behaviors leading a victim to believe it is not abuse
- ▶ Some service providers define various forms of abuse as “cultural” leading a woman to believe she cannot be helped

Does the 'Cycle of Violence' Apply to Immigrant women?

- ▶ Confusing if she can not see herself in our definition of violence and abuse within the Cycle of Violence
- ▶ Women describe less linear and more chaotic experiences than the cycle of violence details
- ▶ The woman's experience should be the priority rather than unknowingly trying to fit her into a theory or a formula
- ▶ *Reference: "Building Supports: Promising Practices for Supporting Immigrant & Refugee Women Leaving Violence"*

Cycle of Abuse: Lenore E. Walker

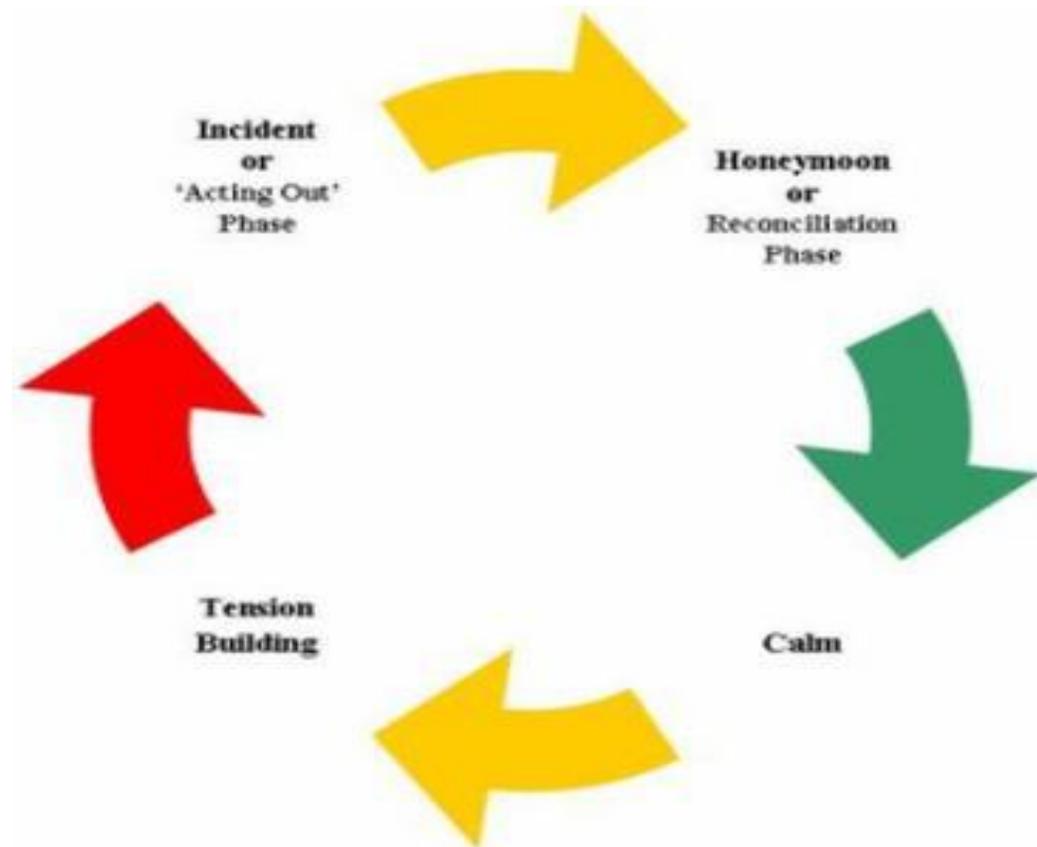
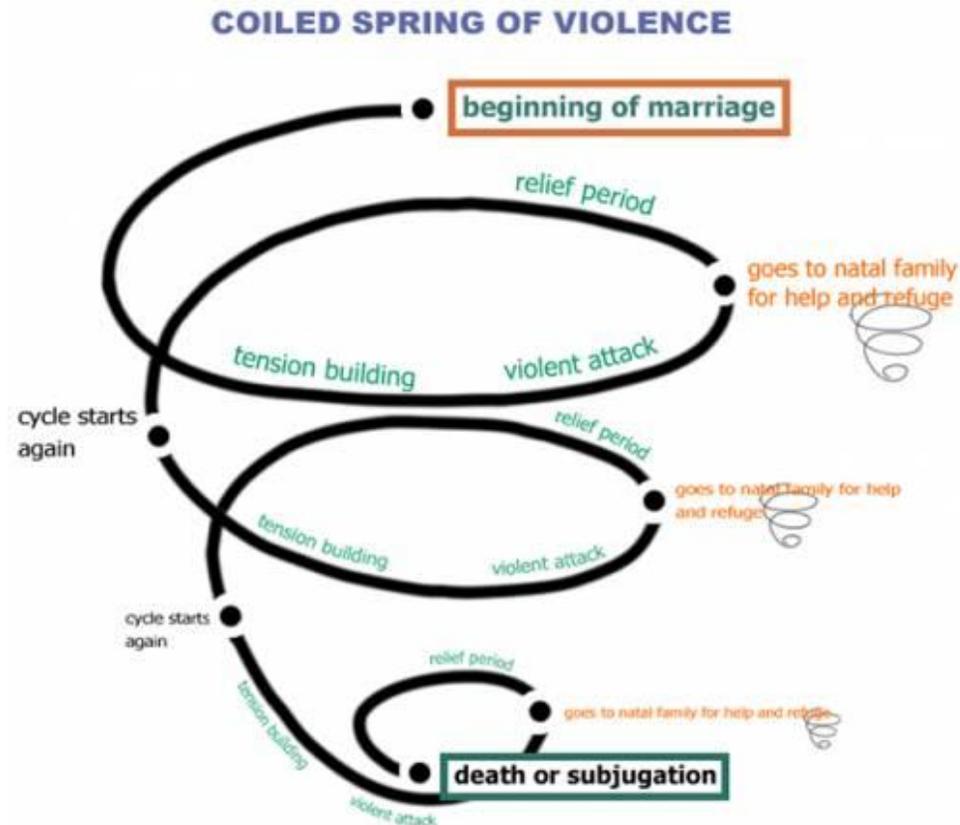


Image source:
Adapted model of Lenore E.
Walker Cycle of Abuse. Domestic
Violence in India. 2013.
<https://domesticviolenceinindia.wordpress.com/tag/dv/>

Alternative to the Cycle of Violence: Coiled Spring of Domestic Violence



Source:
Asia Pacific Island Institute On
Domestic Violence; web:
www.apiahf.org/apidvinstitute

Gender Violence Occurs Across the Lifespan: Asia and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

- ▶ From the aborting of female fetuses to intimate homicide, girls and women may encounter numerous oppressions during infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and as elders. Domestic violence is just one amongst many forms of violence against women.
- ▶ Highlights living in a climate of fear including the cultural burdens of shame and devaluation on a systemic level.
- ▶ The Lifetime Spiral implicitly locates a range of abusers in the lives of girls and women, revealing patterns of victimization and perpetration.

Why are Immigrant Women Reluctant to Report Abuse?

- ▶ Role of Sponsor: control over finances and basic security of person
- ▶ Power imbalances based on language barriers, financial and employment status
- ▶ Role of the women's in-laws can become central to the reluctance of the women to report abuse
- ▶ Family may participate in the abuse by exerting control over her through the children or communicating with her family back home, or shaming her
- ▶ They may be her **only family now** due to war and genocide in her home country

Barriers to Reporting Abuse

- ▶ Abuse can be very linked to her immigration status
- ▶ Fear of deportation or detention based on false allegations of illegal activity
- ▶ Fear of having the children taken away and confidentiality issues
- ▶ Fear of perpetrator being sent back if they are a refugee
- ▶ Knowing that what she faces in her home country is worse than her experience with her partner

Barriers to Reporting Abuse

- ▶ Refugees being bonded through trauma/torture experiences, knowing that no one else will understand and fearing judgment
- ▶ Feeling that violence is an expected and normalized part of life
- ▶ Dependence by Family back home (sending money home) her poverty is far reaching and impacts the whole family
- ▶ Lack of trust of authorities due to experiences with severe abuses of power

Barriers to Reporting Abuse

- ▶ Domestic violence is not a new issue in the relationship or country of origin
- ▶ Religious expectations to keep the family together
- ▶ Losing face with family and friends
- ▶ No idea of how to survive without the support of the abuser (fear of the unknown) in an unfamiliar country
- ▶ Unaware of what her legal rights are as a resident of Canada
- ▶ Fear of losing family and/or existing support systems

Voices of Immigrant Women: How did you know when you were ready to leave?

PROJECT FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK

- ▶ When he destroyed me totally, I chose to start thinking of myself first
- ▶ When I felt the atmosphere at home was hard to breathe
- ▶ Felt like you were imposing
- ▶ When you reached the point that it has happened so long you are fed up
- ▶ I knew there was a safe place to go that I could trust
- ▶ I had a dream of killing my husband and I took the children away
- ▶ When the stress of staying in the relationship starts to impact your health
- ▶ No connection with your partner and there is no hope for change
- ▶ When the pain of staying becomes greater than leaving

Small Group Scenarios Exercise:

15 mins

- ▶ In your small groups please read over the scenario and have a discussion focused on the following questions: **Refer to the Coiled Spring of DV, Immigrant Power and Control Wheel, Life Time Spiral of Gender Violence and the Promising Practices handouts.**
 - 1) **What forms of abuse are being perpetrated against the woman?**
 - 2) **What factors make it difficult to report the abuse or leave the relationship and why?**
 - 3) **What strategies and promising practices can be used to support this woman and her children?**
- ▶ ****Report back to the large group a summary of your discussion. If your group is sharing in the **second round** of the scenario please add new thoughts to the discussion in the interest of time.**

Between Worlds: Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZUV2tsMEw8>

- ▶ Created for the Penn Law Documentaries & the Law Program. Published on Dec 18, 2014.
- ▶ This video focuses on the unique challenges immigrant women face in navigating the road to independence that arise from language barriers, cultural differences, social isolation, and economic insecurity stemming from their inability to obtain legal employment.
- ▶ Five brave survivors of domestic violence describe the hurdles they faced in escaping abusive circumstances, accessing social and legal services, and attaining legal immigration status. Social workers, health care providers, law enforcement officers, and lawyers who wish to assist immigrant victims of domestic violence should find this video useful.



Group Discussion

- ▶ What are your reflections after watching the video?
- ▶ What issues have not been identified here that you see in your practice?

Barriers: What is preventing Immigrant Women from accessing services?

- ▶ An understanding that leaving the family may result in living in poverty without access to family resources
- ▶ Judgement from Canadian society about culture, ways of living, dressing and communicating
- ▶ Lack of access to service providers who are culturally aware and comfortable with diversity across all social services
- ▶ Role of racism, discrimination, stereotypes and anti-immigrant sentiment

Barriers: What is preventing Immigrant Women from accessing services?

- ▶ Inability to speak English
- ▶ Lack of transportation or lack of knowledge about public transportation
- ▶ Lack of familiarity with Canadian laws, social structures, and social services
- ▶ Use of an inappropriate translator such as a child, relative or community member who is not able to be objective

Equity Versus Equality: What are the differences?

Equity Versus Equality in Service Delivery

- ▶ The importance in promoting Equity in our services through acknowledging the inequality that Immigrant Women face at all levels of society
- ▶ Why can't we treat everyone the same and equally? Isn't that what we are supposed to do?
- ▶ Not all women coming into a Transition House or other social service are starting from the same place
- ▶ Equity means understanding and providing the particular services and supports each woman needs
- ▶ Women may need us to reach out as she may need assistance but is very adverse to asking for help as it is not culturally appropriate to ask for what they need
- ▶ Reference: Building Supports

Small Group Scenarios Exercise:

15 mins

- ▶ In your small groups please read over the scenario and have a discussion focused on the following questions:
- ▶ **1) What practices are needed to promote equitable access to services for the woman in your scenario?**
- ▶ **2) How can we use our existing community resources to assist this woman in getting the protection and help she needs?**
- ▶ **3) What strategies can be used to effectively and safely support this woman?**
- ▶ **Report back to the large group a summary of your discussion. If your group is sharing in the **second round** of the scenario please add new thoughts to the discussion in the interest of time.

Cultural Awareness and Cultural Safety

Cultural Awareness

- Acknowledgement of difference

Cultural Sensitivity

- Understanding the need to respect differences

Cultural Competence

- Effective skills and resources in cross-cultural situations

Cultural Safety

- Challenge unequal power relations

Panel Discussion: Cultural Awareness



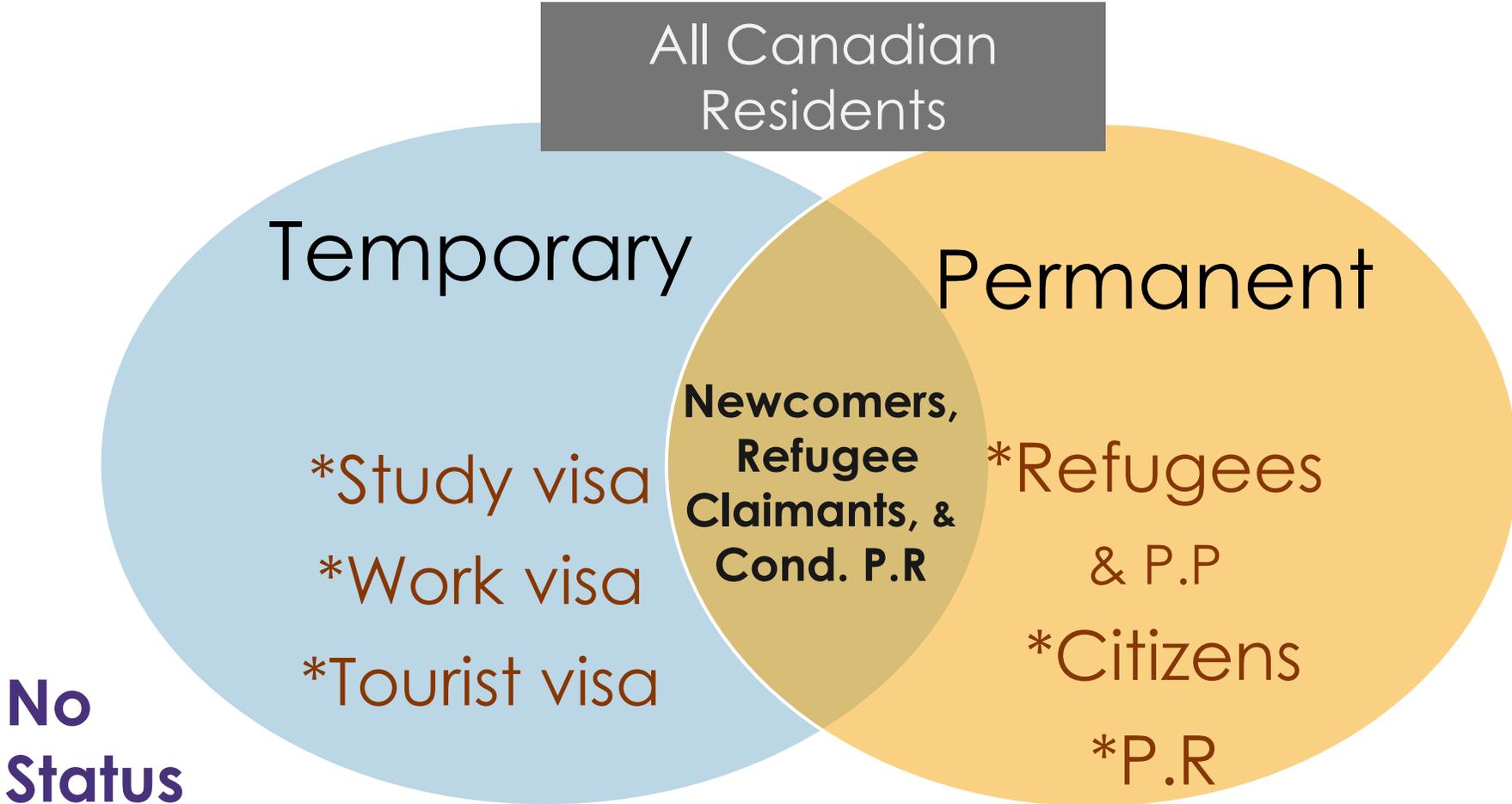
Migration & Settlement

Reasons for Migration

What are some of the factors to come to Canada?

- ❑ Education
- ❑ Employment
- ❑ Family and Spouses
- ❑ Refuge
- ❑ Other

Residency & Immigration Status



All Canadian Residents

Temporary

Permanent

Newcomers,
Refugee
Claimants, &
Cond. P.R

- *Study visa
- *Work visa
- *Tourist visa

- *Refugees & P.P
- *Citizens
- *P.R

No Status

Canada's Immigration Statistics

- ❑ 710,000 (9%) from China,
- ❑ 620,000 from India (8%), and
- ❑ 545,000 from the Philippines (7%)

*All stats are rounded to nearest 5,000

In 2015, Canada welcomed **7.8 million new immigrants

Victoria's Immigration Statistics

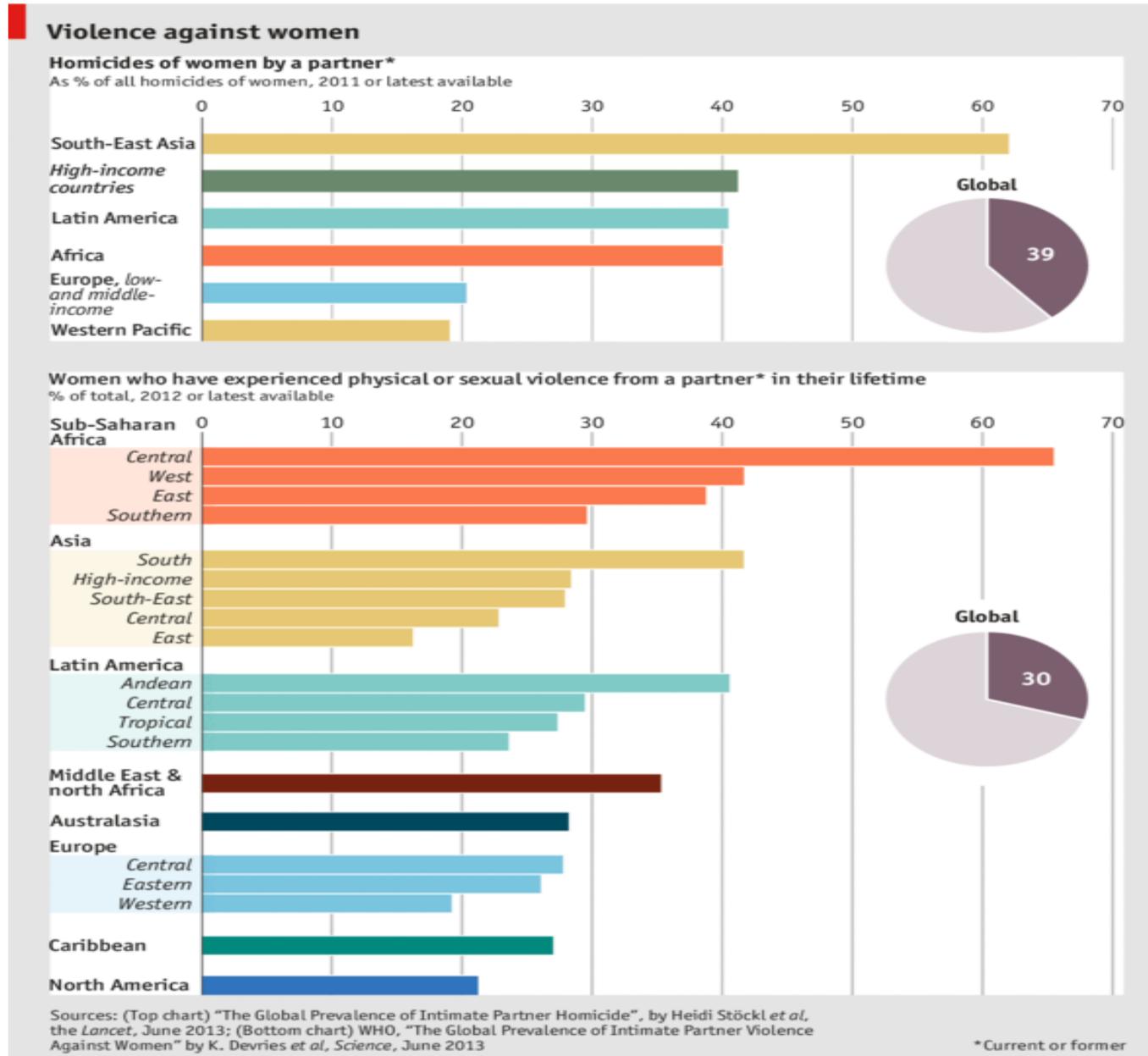
- ▶ In 2006, Victoria welcomed 62,000 immigrants which is 19% of total population
 - 4,000 from China,
 - 2,000 from India,
 - 2,000 from Philippines and
 - 2,000 from Africa

***All stats rounded to nearest 1,000**

Pre-Migration Experience

- Cultural norms - sometimes violence is not seen as a punishable crime within country of origin
- Women coming to Canada as conventional refugees are exposed to:
 - Rape
 - Human trafficking
 - Sexual exploitation
- Often experienced from authoritative figures within the refugee camps

Pre-Migration Experience Barriers to Reporting

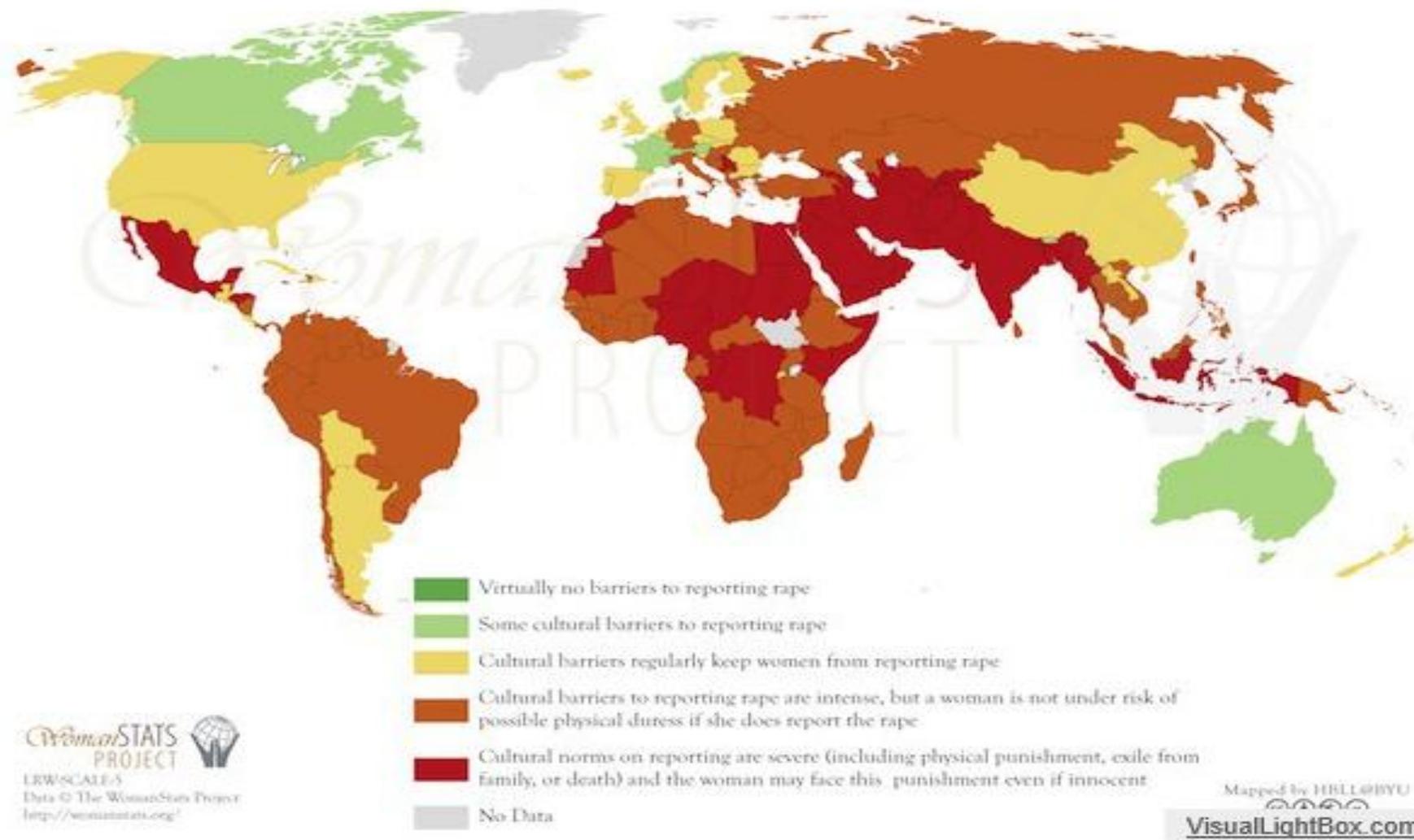




Strength of Barriers to Reporting Rape

Scaled 2011

Pre-Migration Experience



Settlement Experience

Stress Factors

- ▶ Loss of a physical support system
- ▶ New geography, weather and landscape
- ▶ Struggles with a sense of direction/location
- ▶ Language, cultural and communication barriers
- ▶ Disruption of family life
- ▶ Updating of gender roles
- ▶ Unaware of support services
- ▶ Feeling isolated
- ▶ Inability to find stable work

Pre-Migration and Settlement Experience

- ▶ Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nY3MrF6h1w>
- ▶ CULTURAL SHOCK AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE US
- ▶ First 8.5 mins
- ▶ Any thoughts?



Energizer exercise: “cross cultural instructions”

- ▶ Building empathy with our New Immigrant Clients
- ▶ Small Group Exercise
- ▶ What was that like for you?
- ▶ What insight did you gain?

Voices of Immigrant Women: What made it difficult to reach out for help?

FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK

- ▶ Not being aware of the services
- ▶ Language was a barrier
- ▶ My husband got in the way
- ▶ Financial reasons
- ▶ Time needed to make a decision
- ▶ Husband was present at the time of seeking services
- ▶ Society's impression of your life
- ▶ I didn't want to air my dirty laundry
- ▶ Services treat you like an alien
- ▶ MCFD and School Principals were not very understanding of the children's circumstances

Strategies and Gaps: Small Group Exercise

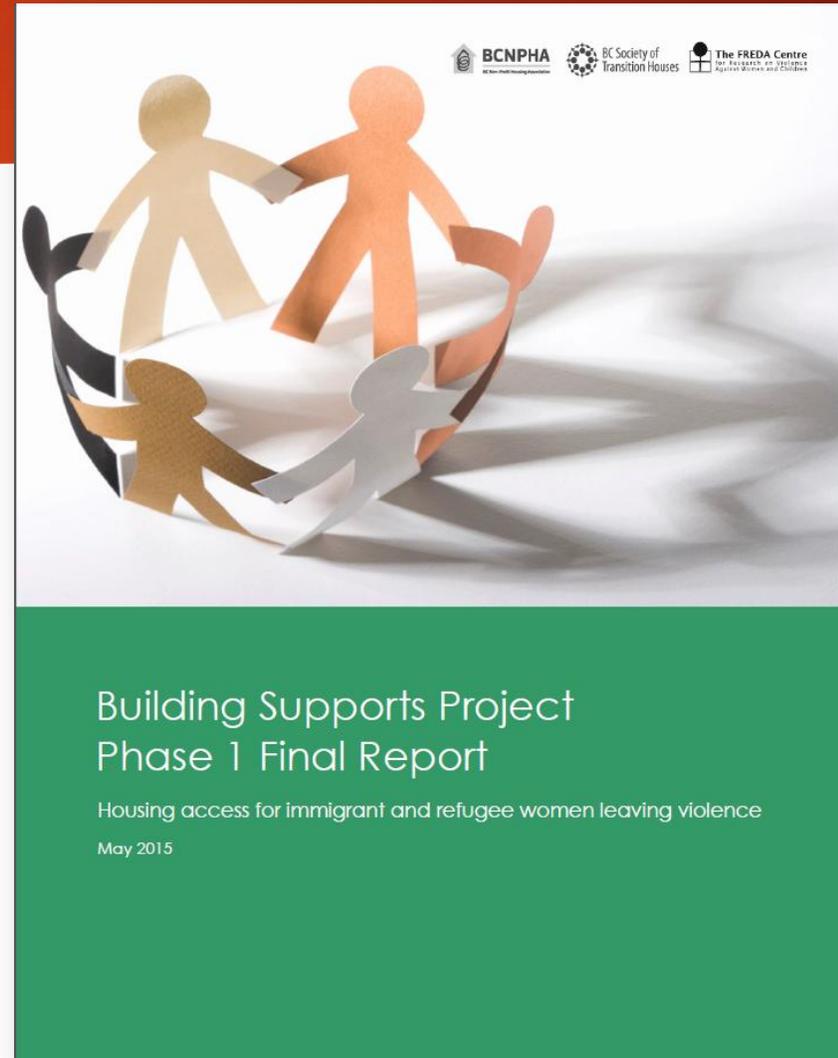
15 minutes

- ▶ What strategies and strengths exist in your agency that support serving Immigrant women in effective ways?
- ▶ What promising practices can I implement ?
- ▶ What recommendations would you make for services still needed to assist Immigrant Women and their families in cases of DV? What are the gaps?
- ▶ Record and report back to the group

References

- ▶ Building Supports Phase 1 Final Report. (May 2015). *Housing, Immigrants, Refugees, Women.*

<http://bcsth.ca/publications/building-supports-phase-1-report/>



Wrap Up and Evaluation

- ▶ In the next session we will focus on specific legal issues and risk assessment practices when working with Immigrant Women
- ▶ Please fill out the evaluation form
- ▶ Thank you all for coming!

THANK YOU!



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