

EVA Canada and Anova Research Spotlight on Gender-Based Violence and COVID-19

On December 8, 2020, EVA Canada and ANOVA organized and hosted a virtual dialogue bringing together 15 researchers and advocates across the country currently researching the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender-based violence services, service providers, and survivors.

Here is a brief summary of the common themes, gaps, and opportunities for further exploration that emerged from the discussion:

Key themes and common areas of focus:

- strong focus on adaptations made by VAW/GBV shelters
- the impact of the pandemic on the nature and prevalence of violence
- challenges and adaptations related to the digital shift for services and affiliated digital divide
- focused examinations of impact of the pandemic on specific systems and sectors, such as VAW services, and justice system -- but not all systems, e.g. housing
- importance of centring knowledge and experiences of communities with an intersectional lens
- commonly-used methodologies: surveys and interviews with service providers

Gaps:

- limited focus on the pandemic's impact on tech-facilitated violence/abuse
- almost no focus on the impact of the pandemic on GBV prevention work, including training and education
- limited focus on the distinct impacts of the pandemic on sexualized violence; primary focus centres on IPV/DV
- limited knowledge about and engagement with survivors not connected to services who may be most deeply impacted

Opportunities for further exploration and collaboration:

- strengthening an intersectional analysis and approach to GBV and COVID research
- teasing out the impact of the research on post-pandemic planning (the what and the who needs to be part of it)
- creative and new methodological learnings and approaches best suited to conducting research during a pandemic
- comparing learnings and findings among projects with similar areas of focus to develop well-supported findings that can be used to support advocacy efforts to further strength GBV services and supports