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September 2012

**Report on Needs Assessment for the Immigrant, Refugee Women's Program
(IRWP) at Springtide Resources
September 2012**

Introduction

This report is a presentation of the findings of a three-tiered needs assessment conducted to review and develop future strategic directions for the Immigrant, Refugee Women's Program (IRWP) at Springtide Resources (SR). The report reviews the program's achievements and challenges, and also makes recommendations about future ideas for the program.

An independent, community researcher conducted the needs assessment from January 2012 until July 2012. It involved semi-structured interviews, a comprehensive public survey and focus groups. Review of selected documents provided by SR regarding the history of the program and other agency projects supplemented the three areas of inquiry. The researcher also drew on her prior research and knowledge of non-profit organizations, as well as her professional and academic experience in the violence against women (VAW) sector.

This report aims to provide SR with valuable information and new perspectives to generate studied new directions for the future of the IRWP. The analysis and recommendations made in the report intend to give SR forward looking strategies to reinvigorate its work with non status, refugee, immigrant, newcomer (NSRIN) communities.

Methodology

The comprehensive needs assessment was conducted in three parts, engaging past peer educators of the IRWP, service providers working in a variety of non-profit agencies and selected key informants (KIs). Below is a description of the methods employed.

The researcher conducted a two-hour focus group in May 2012 that consisted of 14 past members of the SR volunteer program who had been trained as peer educators. Discussions centered broadly on their feedback of the program, and identified what further training and education would be useful for them when engaging in current issues of VAW in NSRIN communities. Please Appendix 1 for the questions that guided the focus group discussion.

The second part of the needs assessment consisted of an extensive electronic public survey of 124 service providers in the non-profit sector. Respondents ranged from organizations including but not limited to community health centres (CHCs), immigration, refugee and non-status organizations, youth services, counseling and family support agencies, disability / access services and VAW organizations. The survey consisted of 16 questions. It asked workers to reflect on a variety of issues such as barriers clients, workers and communities face when dealing with VAW, as well as on family, community, systemic and structural violence. The survey also asked workers to determine what kinds of training and education would be beneficial for them to address and respond to the layered violence and

intersecting issues their clients are facing. Please see Appendix 2 for the survey question guide.

The third part of the needs assessment involved one-on-one in person and phone interviews with six selected KIs who ranged in position from executive director to front line worker in the non-profit areas of community health, immigrant, refugee and non-status services, VAW organizations, family/parenting programs, counseling and interpretation services. Each interviewee answered approximately 10-15 questions in semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews. The conversations were about an hour in length. They examined staff training and educational needs and discussed past and potential partnerships. The interviewees investigated a wide range of possible future directions for the program to consider and also created a space for reflection on big picture issues in the non-profit sector in general. Please see Appendix 3 for the key informant interview guide.

Needs Assessment Findings

Input from Peer Educator Focus Group:

The first part of this section gives an overview of what worked well in the IRWP. It then moves into critical feedback and finally, outlines the peer educators' training and educational recommendations for continuing to perform anti violence in work in their communities and in some cases, their workplaces.

It should be noted that more than the projected number of peer educators attended the focus group. Participants were highly motivated to reconnect with the program, each other and provide critical feedback. It is important to note, that 100% of the attendees were interested in engaging in any future training or projects should the program be renewed.

PAST EXPERIENCES

All of the peer educators who attended IRWP training felt the training program(s) was excellent and of a high quality. Peer educators reported that they were trained in facilitation skills, VAW information, how to speak about abuse, what is woman abuse, community development, training about deaf women's issues, women's rights, how to make referrals, how to develop workshops, leadership and critical analysis among other issues. Several were able to apply the training they received to provide successful workshops in the community about VAW and related issues, such as parenting. Some conducted bilingual workshops that reached a wide audience. Others utilized the experience they obtained to find employment in the non-profit sector, while others said they gained the confidence to pursue post secondary education. Below is a list of the different types of training provided in the IRWP:

- Peer education
- Facilitation
- Working with people with disabilities
- Community development
- Deaf women's training
- Women's rights
- Making referrals
- Workshop development
- Leadership
- Critical analysis

- Talking about abuse
- VAW information
- Woman abuse
- Community Connection for Change training
- Professionals from other organizations presented on various topics (workshops)

The peer educators appreciated that SR provided childcare, TTC fare, honorariums and placed a high value on their volunteer time. Additionally, SR never failed to provide necessary accommodations and held monthly meetings to keep the group connected. Also valued, was the training conducted by sources outside of the agency on interrelated issues. Peer educators mentioned that SR recognized diversity in all its forms and assisted them in learning about issues of oppression outside of their own experience and social location. Some peer educators mentioned that it was important that SR allowed for open discussions on religions, beliefs and gave space to pray. Many of the peer educators described SR and the staff as a home away from home since staff knew about their daily lives and struggles and would inquire about such things like the illnesses of family members.

Possible Enhancements for the Future

Many participants felt disconnected from the program but were unsure as to the reason for the disconnection. Some felt there was a lack of communication on the part of SR to clearly communicate if their contributions were no longer valued, if the funding for the program had ended or if SR's priorities had moved to another area of work development. Below are some of the themes that emerged from the focus group in terms of possible improvements for the program and then lists requested training areas for the future.

THEME: Lack of information regarding the program as a whole.

"What training and workshops happened in other groups? Oh, I really wanted that too."

(Participant, May 9/12)

Many of the participants felt they were unaware of all the possible training opportunities and would have liked the chance to receive training that other groups of volunteers had taken. There is still great interest in taking training that was offered to other groups that was missed by some of the members.

THEME: Discomfort concerning boundaries, disclosures of violence in group settings, vicarious trauma.

"That session was a nightmare...I had a lot of women coming from the shelter...Some of them cried, looked around and we felt terrible. We didn't know how to help them. They were in the middle of the storm... We didn't know what to say, just that we are sorry. There were in the middle of the pain...I felt I didn't have that tool. I went home and was stiff for 2-3 days thinking about how could this happen. I didn't know how to support them." (Participant, May 9/12)

Some peer educators felt comfortable responding to members' disclosures of extreme violence in workshops, however others felt unprepared and said they were adversely affected by the experience. Many peer educators also spoke of the difficulty of maintaining boundaries after workshops. Making a connection with workshop participants meant earning their respect and trust. That connection created the expectation that the peer educator respond to the direct needs of their community members which in turn, caused some anxiety and boundary crossing. Many made comments about the external referrals they made being ineffective due to services not being offered in the appropriate languages, services being overburdened or calls not being returned.

THEME:The need to address layered, intersecting violence in NSRIN communities
"Most of the people say, there is no violence in their family, but if you teach them how to avoid oppression and to be aware of how not to be dominated by anybody, even on the bus, it would help them more than approaching it as violence in the family." (Participant, May 9/12)

"When I was doing the workshop, we did parenting first and then went to abuse. We talked about raising the child, what happened to the parents. How were they raised? We did it with men and women. They were new to Canada, and when we talked about it, the husband didn't realize it was abuse because of how they were raised. Sometimes the culture or community doesn't know what's abuse until we show them how it affects them. They liked it and wanted to tell their friends. So it's good if it's for men and women together." (Participant, May 9/12)

Several peer educators raised complexities around the violence their communities are facing and the need to take an intersectional approach to performing VAW work. NSRIN communities experience VAW, however many focus group participants also discussed the barriers to dealing with that violence as rooted in systemic, political, and structural violence, as well as patriarchal and sexist notions. The group mentioned that violence addressed in all its forms might form a different perspective to approach discussions of VAW in NSRIN communities. Several participants mentioned the men and boys from NSRIN communities also experience violence from various actors. For example, it was mentioned that in the black community, because of racial profiling and the historical experience of the police brutality in particular neighbourhoods, using dominant, systemic forms of violence intervention such as phoning the police during a domestic violence incident are not seen as options. However, it was noted by the group that there is a high degree of VAW that is normalized in the community and they felt there are no specific programs for this group. Below is a list of training ideas and general suggestions from the peer educators' focus group for the IRWP to consider pursuing.

Training and Educational Requests of the Peer Educators:

- Legal terminology and information about rights
- Training on different types of abuse such as child abuse
- VAW prevention: specifically for working with youth
- Developing specific VAW programs for the needs of the black community
- Understanding Layered Violence and its Impacts – racial profiling by police, legal mechanisms that make reporting undesirable and dangerous for particular targeted communities such as those with precarious immigration status
- Working with boys and men
- Working specifically with Black boys and men's support services
- Working specifically with Chinese men and boys support services
- Training male allies
- Training on New Immigration Laws: Bill C-31
- General Refresher Training in VAW
- Training in legal issues – family, criminal, immigration
- Next level of training after, Community Connection for Change
- Understanding Canadian Border Services, CBSA entering shelters
- Anti violence training for men and women using parenting as the entry point
- Making meaningful referrals
- Community / Family abuse

- General anti-racism / anti-oppression workshops that recognize violence in all its forms against NSRIN communities and not just violence against women in immigrant communities
- How to work with and support undocumented people
- Training in how to make presentations to funders
- Grant writing training

Peer educator ideas for other types of possible directions for the program generally:

- VAW Poster campaign in women's washrooms
- Info (pamphlets, cards, phone numbers) at Dr.'s office, health centres, libraries
- VAW Training for health care providers
- Workshop series as opposed to 'one offs'
- SR should have an outdoor public event

Input from Survey of Service Providers:

Results Overview:

The survey for service providers was completed by 124 respondents, both online and in person. Respondents ranged from areas including but not limited to CHCs, immigration, refugee and non-status services, youth services, counseling services, disability and VAW sectors. Additional respondents came from agencies serving the Francophone community, justice sector, and those working in the area of mental health and wellbeing. The majority of the respondents at the time of the survey provided services for women experiencing violence, NSRIN communities, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, and people living with mental health issues in both group and individual settings.

The following information groups the main areas of the survey needed to inform future directions for IRWP training and educational goals for the non-profit sector. The full survey asked questions above and beyond the themes listed below and is available to SR staff for review or to find relevant information that can be used in future programming.

Theme: Outreach to NSRIN Communities

"Outreach can be enhanced by reminding women that the choice remains theirs. We work to empower women not make them do things against their will. Absolutely, art therapy and storytelling are good methods as women share information differently. Religious sites could better understand what Women's shelters do as they may have the impression that they break apart families/homes and don't attribute that to the behaviour in the home." (Survey respondent June/12)

When asked how their organizations outreach to NSRIN communities about VAW, 34% or 1/3 of the respondents stated that their organizations do very little to no outreach, and that services are accessed through word of mouth, or on a one-on-one basis. This figure indicates a lack of outreach to NSRIN communities by service providers and their agencies. Suggestions on how to enhance outreach to NSRIN communities included promoting VAW information in public spaces such as laundromats, grocery stores, theatres, washrooms, salons/barbershops, reaching out to faith-based centres such as churches, mosques, temples, gurdwaras and others, community services such as CHCs, community legal services and raising awareness of services to NSRIN groups in educational institutions.

Theme: Comfort Level and Training

“Unfortunately the organization is at the beginning stages of developing a firm policy position on immigration related issues. We do not turn folks away with precarious immigration statuses but we do not have a strong analytical sense about the issues that so many of the families, individuals face in these situations.” (Survey respondent, May/12)

The survey asked service providers to rate their comfort level in responding to the needs of NSRIN clients who are experiencing violence in their lives. While 50% of respondents stated they were very comfortable responding, 43% said that they were somewhat comfortable, and the rest not at all comfortable. The survey then asked what training would help increase their ability and comfort level to respond to the needs of NSRIN communities dealing with VAW. Service providers listed legal information including family, immigration, human rights, information about referrals, resources, services and basic VAW (disclosures, how to respond), diversity, cultural sensitivity and awareness; anti-racism and anti-oppression when working with immigrant communities as their top areas of interest.

Theme: Barriers

“The biggest barrier for non status women is the fear of being deported as it adds a whole other layer of complexity to their situation. Often refugees and immigrants have misinformation regarding their rights and are fearful that they will have their rights taken away from them. They are fearful of reprisals from their partners because they called (sic) the police.” (Survey respondent, June/12)

Service providers identified the specific barriers NSRIN communities face when accessing services. Pre-selected categories were provided along with a text box for other answers.

Below are the results:

- Language - 97%
- Cultural & Religious barriers - 91%
- Systemic (racism, poverty, immigration status, etc) - 90%
- Social (isolation, etc) - 89%
- Legal – 77%

In addition to these five categories, service providers added the (a) lack of information/knowledge about services and resources, (b) financial, and (c) lack of accessible or available services as additional barriers that NSRIN communities face when accessing services. Some other key responses that emerged in lower numbers were mental health, sexism, lack of service coordination and fear.

Next, service providers were asked to identify the barriers they face when providing services to NSRIN communities. Pre-selected five categories were given for respondents to select all that applied. Again a text box was provided for additional answers. Below are the results:

- Communication – 60%
- Understaffing - 55%
- Lack of training – 49 %
- Organizational issues – 35%

In addition to these five categories, the service providers added the (a) lack of information/knowledge about services and resources, (b) lack of

funding/resources/services and (c) cultural awareness as additional barriers that they face when providing services to NSRIN communities.

Theme: Relevant Training Past and Present

“(We need)...Information about the particular challenges faced by NSRIN, in terms of navigating multiple systems simultaneously.” (Survey respondent, July/12, italics added)

In order to inform future directions for the IRWP the survey captured the training areas that service providers have found valuable in the past and then inquired about current training needs. The number one training topic that respondents identified as useful in the past was Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression (79%), followed by How to Navigate Legal Systems (64%), then Crisis Intervention (63%), and Preventing Woman Abuse at 50%. Areas identified in the ‘other’ category included Trauma, Mental Health, and Conflict Resolution.

When asked what kinds of training would be useful currently and in the future, respondents identified VAW training for organizations working with NSRIN groups as the most useful (81%), followed by dealing with vicarious trauma (63%), and training for men and boys and training on newcomer LGBTQ youth and violence (both at 58%). Additional training areas listed by respondents include basic VAW training (disclosure, healthy relationships), and working in NSRIN communities (disclosure of immigration status, specific communities). Respondents also indicated that Anti- Racism /Anti- Oppression for future training would be useful.

A vast majority, 91.8% of survey respondents indicated their organizations set aside funds for education and training and 67 respondents left their contact information (an option within the survey) to receive information about upcoming educational or training opportunities provided by SR. Additionally, 71.4% said they would like in person training, 39.8% preferred online and 56.1% cited a combination would work best. Considering these survey results along with SR’s history of creating diverse training and educational tools in a wide variety of learning formats, the IRWP is well placed to continue developing specific, new and updated materials for front line workers.

Input from Selected Key Informant Interviews

Six selected key informants (KIs) from various non-profit agencies participated in one-on-one interviews in person or by phone. Each informant was identified by the researcher or SR staff members as leaders working in the areas of VAW and/or in NSRIN communities or represented a sector the program would like to make connections with in the future. Their responses have been organized using a thematic analysis based on the most recurring answers regarding both current trends and big picture issues.

The most persistent generalized theme that emerged from the KI interviews was the lack of intersectional approaches employed when conceptualizing and performing work with NSRIN communities and clients by the various sectors that are involved in different, but connected ways in the lives of NSRIN clients and communities. Results also highlighted the need to develop effective ways working with NSRIN communities with disabilities, information on NSRIN laws and VAW, human trafficking survivors, working with men and boys, responding to LGBTQ exclusion, war and political violence as interrelated issues. This section details persistent themes that emerged from the KI interviews and is followed by a series of recommendations for the IRWP to consider for the future.

1) Theme: War & Political Violence:

When speaking to KIs who are specifically engaged in working with refugees, issues of political violence, including systemic rape of women in camps arose. Informants illuminated that rape of women and children during wartimes are one of main issues NSRIN clients are presenting. NSRIN women accessing services are recalling enormous amounts childhood sexual abuse and rape in refugee camps. Many KIs also identified that in war torn countries, political violence and harassment are mainly perpetrated by men, but are also experienced by men and boys.

KIs also informed that some groups of NSRIN from war torn countries may be aware of women's rights due to political involvement or consciousness and that a human rights perspective could be a way to begin the conversation about abuse. Another KI reported however, that women from other conflicts may have had different experiences, such as internalized sexism from living under the Taliban that need to be taken into consideration. In general, women from NSRIN communities were said to have multiple vulnerabilities related to state and interpersonal violence that present unique challenges to agencies and workers.

2) Theme: Human Trafficking

Human trafficking was seen as a burgeoning trend that requires shelter workers, along with drop in and community centre workers, CHC workers and those working schools to become aware of the issue and how to respond. It was mentioned that survivors of human trafficking often access similar spaces as non-status groups (with the exception of schools) since these spaces and services are known to serve everyone. However, workers in these areas may not be cognizant that they are working with trafficked groups and how issues of violence and status are impacting them.

3) Theme: Intersectionalities

The area of intersectionality or more precisely the lack of an intersectional lens when meeting the needs of clients was the largest area of concern for all KIs. There is a high degree of agreement that the funding structures of agencies have contributed to the problem by creating organizational silos that sometimes compete for funds. Interview results show a strong desire to move in the direction of understanding and addressing the multiplicity of violence in the lives of NSRIN communities by creating planning and procedures to respond to the overlapping issues they face through partnerships and training. KIs stated that the lack of training on looking at intersections means organizations are not meeting the needs of people in NSRIN communities who have multiple barriers or multiple vulnerabilities. The need to create something that 'addresses all of it' (personal interview July/12) - issues of gender, race, class, disability, sexual orientation and VAW in the context of immigration and status is needed. The following subsections describe the KIs most popularly mentioned intersections.

a) Intersection: Immigration Status and Violence Against Women

Two key areas were identified by all informants as resulting in harmful effects on clients: 1) A lack of current information and understanding of immigration laws, policies and procedures by VAW workers, and 2) insufficient information and analysis by those working with NSRIN communities, such as immigration lawyers or settlement workers about VAW.

VAW and immigration status were stated as becoming increasingly problematic issues due to the upcoming and ongoing changes in immigration/refugee/ precarious status laws and rights. At least half of the KIs stated that their biggest priority was the many changes to immigration and refugee protection and its impact on VAW. Working with women without status or with precarious status who might be more vulnerable to deportation, combined with the factors of living in poverty, racialization and living with disabilities were identified as some of the growing and complex needs that require further investigation and resource development.

KIs were highly concerned with lack of updated training for shelter workers that specifically address the intersections between VAW, immigration and law enforcement. While shelters may have an immigration committee or worker, the rest of the staff lack information in differentiating between immigration, Canadian Border Services Agency and changing refugee rules and regulations in general (personal interview July/12). The implications of confusion around status, such as trying to access Ontario Works (OW) for Canadian born children and not recognizing the consequences for non status parent(s), was raised as a problem for shelter workers and their clients. Considering the upcoming changes to timeframes for refugees to file their cases, the need for appropriate and accurate legal information in the hands of shelter workers was viewed as crucial by the KIs of this report.

Additionally, the bureaucracy of the shelter was identified as a barrier for NSRIN communities to access services because of proposed changes and heavily truncated timeframes for filing for immigration related papers. KIs informed that shelter workers, as well as clients are often unclear about what questions to ask or what stories to relay and this uncertainty along with shortened timeframes can have dire consequences such as deportation.

Similarly, the absence of understanding and knowledge of VAW by those working in with NSRIN communities in non-profit agencies dealing with immigration was mentioned. Lawyers alike were identified as being workers with whom clients experience many difficulties due to an absence of VAW information and analysis. For example, lawyers working on women's criminal cases are often unaware of the immigration aspects of her situation and the lack of integrated services or communication about these interrelated issues often lead to negative consequences for the client.

b) Intersection: VAW and Working with NSRIN People with Disabilities

In the interviews conducted, NSRIN women with disabilities were seen to be at higher risk of experiencing violence and isolation due to lack of training and understanding by agency staff. Additionally, creating appropriate and responsive services to work with the NSRIN deaf community was seen as an area for growth. Specifically, working with NSRIN communities with disabilities was raised as a current issue requiring outreach, service and resource development.

c) Intersection: Racism, Homophobia and Culturally Appropriate Services

It was raised by a majority of the informants that accessing mainstream programs that work from a VAW model are not appropriate for NSRIN clients due to racism, homophobia, islamophobia and a variety of other reasons. The complexities and intersection of violence, interpersonal and state driven are not reflected in the strategies that are currently being used to work with NSRIN groups, according to KIs. It was raised by several of the key

informants that the models being employed by workers and agencies do not fit with the current population of Toronto.

While clients may access mainstream programs, KIs relayed that there is a lack of understanding in terms of the complexities of being queer, racialized or coming from an NSRIN population. For example, it was cited that someone who doesn't want her husband to be involved with the police may not get support, because she is seen as uncooperative. KIs felt that these complexities are issues that the VAW and other non profit sector workers must deal with - to listen to what NSRIN women communicate to workers and not push them towards something that workers think is the only or best solution.

d) Intersection: VAW, Health and Mental Health

The health and mental health or wellbeing of NSRIN communities was seen as a relevant issue for various non-profit sectors. One KI from a CHC suggested a more integrated way of looking at VAW could be through viewing it as a social determinant of health. KIs spoke of the wide range of things such as experiencing war, political persecution or displacement that affect health and what can be called mental health or mental wellbeing. The KI contributed that contextualizing VAW as occurring within a field of other types of violence that are all considered to be social determinants of health that have physical, mental/emotional and social effects on whole communities can be a way to broaden how the sector views VAW and how to respond to it, even if the mainstream doesn't see it that way.

e) Intersection: Violence and LGBTQ

Most KIs felt that LGBTQ communities are excluded by NSRIN VAW programs and by NSRIN organizations. KIs said due to homophobia, violence against LGBTQ communities goes beyond interpersonal violence. Also, KIs informed that many LGBTQ NSRIN individuals escape violence in their home countries because of sexual orientation and claim refugee status in Canada. KIs inform that Toronto has a large population of LGBTQ groups who escape their home countries because of homophobic violence and then arrive in a place where the ethno cultural programs that serve their community are unable to respond to issues related to being queer identified due to homophobia, lack of information and training or believing support to these communities is not part of their organizational mandate. Similarly, LGBTQ NSRIN communities accessing LGBTQ services may not have their immigration issues adequately supported, experience racism or have language / cultural differences.

It is also important to note that KIs from some agencies are seeing a significant number of lesbian clients who are forced into marriage, raped, or have endured 'corrective' or 'restorative' rape. These clients have been able to escape that situation and get into Canada, however they don't have access to culturally appropriate immigration services. Transgender clients were also identified as experiencing an especially high level of violence in Toronto and in their home countries from community and family.

f) Theme: Family / community accountability models for anti violence intervention

KIs were clear about the need to develop new models or frameworks from which to address VAW in NSRIN communities. One KI answered that in their work with Muslim communities they are experiencing demands for family solutions as opposed to women only

solutions. KIs believe a model that answers some of the following questions could help to guide a new model of family/community accountability when working with NSRIN responding to VAW: How does a worker provide services to a woman and child who want the family to stay together but the violence to stop? How do workers work with a woman who wants to stay married because of the implications of loss of extended family and community when traditional VAW models are followed? KIs believe the non-profit sector is not yet equipped to deal with solutions that involve whole community or families but also suggest development of these models are ignored at the expense of the safety of NSRIN communities.

A related theme raised by one KI was her organization's need to assist women to relocate from city to city, because the family, (cousins, brothers, in-laws, etc...) is after her. KIs stated that family and community violence must be acknowledged and addressed, however the VAW sector lacks a collective way of responding leaving a critical question unaddressed: How does the VAW sector respond to deal with multiple perpetrators of violence?

g) Theme: Youth and men

Another frequent and big picture theme that emerged from KI discussions was the issue of working with men and boys to address and prevent VAW. KIs spoke of the absence of methods to engage male partners in meaningful ways. Of particular concern was the inability of programs to involve those groups of males who face systemic violence in society and who want to change their violent behaviours. One KI spoke of a colleague who runs a Partner Assault Response Service (PARS) group with NSRIN men who have been convicted of domestic violence. The group mainly discusses childhood abuse, violence in the home and that they never set out to be violent men. The facilitator felt unprepared to deal with all of the very emotional men in the room. KIs inform that it is time to think what kinds of support the VAW sector give to male perpetrators who want to change their violent behavior and hold the family together. She suggested that using the lens of social construction can stretch our understanding of violence in the VAW sector to see that one generally does not just wake up one day and become violent. Another KI contributed that, so far the VAW sector has not done a good job of including men in solutions and it has always troubled her that VAW programs target the groups that experience violence and not those who are engaged in it.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Training: Short term, Mid Length and Long Term

Taking into consideration the breadth and scope of results from all levels of the needs assessment, several branches of recommendations emerged. The following section combines the themes and makes recommendations for the program in the short, mid and long term. While recommendations can be implemented separately depending on the ability of the program to respond, it may be more fruitful to have sections build on each other, moving from the short to long term recommendations over time.

The recommendations made in this report consider some of the possible directions the program could realistically take in the future. While much of the feedback of the three levels of the needs assessment is reflected in the recommendations, every possible area of development has not been exhausted. The recommendations therefore reflect the researcher's suggestions on the most realistic and useful directions at the time of writing,

however the research is open to the analysis and discretion of the program management to pursue other avenues and / or limit potential training areas.

Short – Mid Term Recommendations:

Peer Educators

Recommendation:

Updated Refresher Training& Creating Partnerships for Effective Referrals

In the spirit of applying intersectional approaches, the IRWP can engage peer educators from the BABOB program, along with past peer educators who are currently conducting workshops in their communities or working with communities in a VAW context of some kind, to gain updated refresher training. Both groups have some baseline VAW training and are ready for the next level of training / education. The updated refresher training can combine a number of the training recommendations and partnership requests made by the peer educator focus group.

The training can begin with refresher VAW training specifically for NSRIN communities to remind participants of what they have learned. If peer educators from the BABOB group have done the appropriate training recently they can deliver the refresher to other peer educators.

Then, the next level of the training for all peer educators, including the BABOB group, can provide techniques on: a) how to respond to disclosures of extreme violence, pronounced emotions related to trauma that emerge in group settings/workshops or one-on-one, b) vicarious trauma and c) provide specific legal and resource information to effectively respond to VAW occurring in non status or precarious status groups.

As part of the training, SR can provide a space for peer educators to outline the kinds of organizations their communities are most in need of and develop cross-sectoral partnerships with such agencies to be able to properly refer at workshops or where requests for one-on-one help are made. It is important that the partnerships created are cross-sectoral and multiple, reaching areas highlighted by the research. These areas include VAW, immigration / settlement, CHCs, LGBTQ services, agencies that work with people with disabilities and others. There are different ways partnership development could be done, such as through information exchanges that then have the potential to branch out into fuller partnerships. For example, a CHC mentioned that they would like to have someone for SR come to their centre and educate health providers about SR's work, as well as provide basic information about VAW. Another KI identified the need for home support staff to be trained on safety planning and how to deal with disclosures of violence in the home.

Peer educators with training can perform this work and potentially add those agencies, to their to the roster of resources that they can share with the particular communities who may need their services, and over time create a meaningful partnership with them. Since SR does not provide frontline services, it is vital for the peer educators to learn about and develop relationships with organizations that provide services to NSRIN communities, with particular attention to those who effectively serve people with precarious status. It is also possible for interested peer educators to begin attending meetings and networking / training spaces with SR staff to promote their community workshops, exposing them to multiple players in the VAW sector and others, thereby expanding their knowledge of community resources and increasing the visibility of SR's programs.

Recommendation:**Peer Educators****Outreach Strategies to Non Status / Precarious Status Communities**

Another dominant theme revolved around reaching people without status or with precarious status at drop in centres, CHCs, legal clinics, schools and other places that are frequented by non status communities to provide information on VAW. For example, one KI suggested the Davenport Perth Community Centre's panels about migrant workers rights or forums on the changes to the refugee health bill are places SR can establish a presence. She also mentioned that settlement workers have a yearly high school conference that parents attend and where workshops on VAW, human rights, immigration, criminality and youth issues occur. Peer educators can create a list of services along with a calendar of events that are geared towards non-status or precarious status groups. Peer educators can attend events to inform groups about SR's work and offer to do information exchanges with agencies that are present, with the aim of establishing relationships with organizations that work with people with precarious status.

Short – Mid Term Recommendation:**Service Providers****Training for Front Line Immigration Workers in Basic VAW**

Peer Educators use the training they have gained from the updated refresher training to facilitate or co-facilitate basic NSRIN VAW information and resources to service providers in the immigration field who lack the information but are working with VAW survivors. Several KIs identified an absence of communication between VAW and immigration sectors although the two are often intertwined in the lives of NSRIN communities. Where possible, partnerships for referral could also be made.

Recommendation:**Services Providers****Continuous Upgraded Integrated Immigration Legal Training**

Create an updated training for people working with NSRIN in the VAW sector on the intersections of family, criminal, immigration, child welfare law and VAW. One KI mentioned this type of training was done 2 years ago, was very successful and needs revisiting in terms of current legislative changes. Providing continuous upgraded legal training in the area of immigration (in all its forms,) to VAW workers meets recurrent demands made in all three levels of the needs assessment. Additionally, another KI mentioned that there is an assumption that refugees do not know their rights and that permanent residents know more. However, when looking at the intersection of domestic violence and immigration, many of her clients and their workers said they wished they knew more about mandatory charging, child welfare laws and other legal issues, such as following advice to plead guilty and not knowing the impacts of such decisions on immigration status.

Furthermore, survey respondents and KIs agreed that training occurs in VAW organizations, however due to the significant turnover, the knowledge base shifts and changes, evidencing the need for continual renewal. Secondly, the research identified that training generally does not include follow up to assess how it is being applied or to problem solve issues that arise when workers apply the training they received. Therefore, this updated integrated

legal training is recommended to be offered in cycles (4 per year for example to selected organizations) and can be an area of continuous learning for service providers (and potentially peer educators, where relevant) to update their knowledge and skills. Both on line and in person training were identified by respondents as appealing and useful.

Recommendation:

Service Providers

Training on Human Trafficking (that takes the existing tool kit further)

Some KIs identified human trafficking as a burgeoning trend that the VAW and immigration sectors must respond to through the creation of resources and information. Developing information on women and girls who are trafficked across borders requires having an understanding of border, domestic and international laws, its impact on people and their status. There is some work happening in the area of human trafficking by refugee organizations however, the VAW sector and others need to be able to identify and respond to the growing problem. According to one KI, interpreter training for trafficked persons particularly for anticipated groups from parts of Africa, Asia, south east Asia, Russia Ukraine and Moldova is currently in process. Additionally, it was mentioned that the tool kit, *Breaking the Chains of Human Trafficking – Linking Community Supports in Peel, Train the Trainer Manual* (Sexual Assault Rape Crisis Centre of Peel, May 2012) gives some preliminary information about human trafficking and how workers can respond. However, it was recommended by a KI that SR, in partnership with other organizations develop information that delves further into the issue, looking at available local resources and practical responses that workers can employ when providing services to human trafficking survivors.

Long-term Projects

Recommendation:

Service Providers

Creating Intersectional Approaches - VAW, Family and Community Accountability Model(s)

One of the most consistently repeated themes from the KI interviews was the need to develop new and effective model(s) to deal with VAW in NSRIN communities. It was frequently raised that the violence prevention models currently in use are inadequate to respond to present and future demographics of Toronto. KIs stated that there are a lot of people doing VAW work in ways that are not relevant to the communities their agency serves. Current VAW models have been flagged as missing the intersection of the NSRIN experience and do not tackle necessary questions such as: What does calling the police look like for NSRIN communities? What is the alternative for those don't want to do that for a number of reasons? What does staying in an abusive household mean? How does lacking English language skills and/or an unwillingness to give up all family supports effect options for living free of violence? If a shelter is not an option, what supports can respond to VAW in NSRIN communities?

KIs stated they felt that SR, along with potential partners are well placed to cultivate a navigation model and analysis that is practical, intersectional and provides a variety of options to assist workers to help clients identify abuse and violence in their lives and navigate them through the system. This is a long term project because it involves deconstructing current models of violence intervention and would require a long term commitment from interested parties to research and create new anti violence models, of which there are very few examples. Additionally, it is an area where the development or

inclusion of strategies for working with selected boys and men from NSRIN communities could be explored as part of a violence prevention part of the model. One KI informed that they are increasingly being asked for anti violence responses that involve family or community and these types of interventions have been overlooked by current VAW approaches.

Recommendation:

Service Providers

Trauma Based Approaches to Counselling

Research findings demonstrate a lack of appropriate counseling for NSRIN communities dealing with a wide variety of violence throughout their lives. A couple of KIs mentioned the development of trauma-based approaches to counseling would be useful and provide a wider angle with which to view violence and its effects.

One KI from a CHC suggested that SR partner with some of their therapists to produce education and training materials on trauma based techniques and analysis, with the aim to provide joint workshops or materials so that multiple sectors (health, VAW etc...) can begin creating a bigger mass of people that can utilize these approaches. Counselling techniques vary from organization to organization and while workers maybe doing workshops on trauma or Post Traumatic Stress (Disorder) each worker develops their own way doing it. The suggestion is to create a common training and joint educational materials so key messages are shared by a base of trained workers.

Also, it was raised by multiple key informants that counseling techniques need refreshing and updated training and this area is underserved. Many of the KIs also said that the level of the violence against the women they are seeing is so traumatic and complex that they need more trauma counseling, while another KI mentioned that 80% of the clients at her agency who come for counseling have experienced some form of violence (personal communication, July 2012). Due to cutbacks in women's services, counseling is being done by workers who lack updated training, but are intricately involved in the lives people who experience high levels of violence. Several mentioned that SR could develop this approach in partnership with other interested parties, such as interested CHCs, front line family violence and VAW counsellors.

This recommendation could dovetail effectively with others such as, family or community accountability models for violence intervention because trauma allows for a broader interpretation of violence that can span whole communities (including boys and men). It is elastic enough to take into account war and political violence as well as domestic violence that, according to the findings of the needs assessment is crucial to understanding the violence NSRIN communities face in all its complexities.

Recommendation:

Senior Managers and Executive Directors

Creating Meaningful Partnerships

As some of the recommendations in this report suggest creating meaningful partnerships, it is important to note that a number of KIs mentioned they have serious concerns about entering into partnerships in the same ways they have been doing so in the past. Many said they were genuinely interested in partnerships but felt the need to change dominant concepts of partnership. Financial requirements were identified as limiting the potential for

partnerships or ones that vary from current models that see one organization acquire funding, contact another agency for expertise, allocate a portion of the money and keep the core of it. More transparency in order to make honest expertise exchanges and partnerships with equity in terms of work performed and funding allocated, were common complaints.

It was raised by one KI that establishing more equal partnerships would face resistance because it varies from current models, but she felt if they are attempted and set a precedent, others would warm to the idea that all parties receive the same amount of money for a project if they are doing the same amount of work. It was further mentioned that disregarding the thorny issues of the financial structures that agencies are bound by and competition for funding has resulted in significant distrust among organizations that should be working together more effectively.

A couple of KIs mentioned that training and education should not be limited to peer educators and staff members. Several brought up the need for Executive Directors and leaders across sectors to learn to work together more equitably. It was suggested SR create a project towards that goal, particularly to address big picture issues for the future of the non-profit sector. Suggestions stated that training should be focused on: a) how agencies should be working together, b) what elements constitute working well together, c) how to anticipate expectations and how to clarify expectations between like-minded groups.

A related proposal emerged from the KI interviews, suggesting that SR, in conjunction with others in the VAW and non-profit sector create a code of conduct. One KI commented that support groups for clients in the VAW sector have agreed upon codes of conduct or group guidelines, however VAW (and non profit) organizations do not have agreements for working together in potential partnerships. Training could be developed together with leaders in agencies facing similar issues and work towards establishing standards of practice, common understandings of what comprises integrity, openness and fiduciary duties.

Furthermore, it was suggested that a place be created where difficult discussions around big picture issues such as racism, homophobia and other issues between agencies occur, where leaders can talk about what has happened in the past, celebrate and critique the culture the VAW sector has created and take enough risks to learn, rebuild and enhance it for the future.

Appendix 1:

Focus Group Question Guide

PAST EXPERIENCES

- 1) Please describe your involvement with Springtide Resources' Immigrant Refugee Women's Program (IRWP).
- 2) What skills and training did you receive?
- 3) What did you like about the training you received from Springtide?
- 4) Would you recommend Springtide Resources for anti Violence Against Women training and education to volunteers from immigrant, refugee, newcomer, non-status communities?
- 5) What does taking an 'intersectional approach' to violence against women mean to you? (Facilitator clarify 'intersectional')
- 6) In your opinion, has Springtide applied an intersectional approach to their work in the IRWP? If yes, please give examples. If no, please elaborate.

TRAINING APPLICATIONS AND GAPS

- 7) Has the training you received prepared you to respond to diverse immigrant, refugee, newcomer, non-status populations experiencing violence? Please give examples.
- 8) When engaging in conversations with immigrant, refugee, newcomer, non status communities about violence against women, what challenges do you still face?
- 9) What training would help increase your ability and/or comfort level to respond to the needs of immigrant, refugee, newcomer communities dealing with violence against women?

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- 10) Springtide is currently exploring different ways of engaging volunteers who want to work with immigrant, refugee, newcomer and non-status communities dealing with violence against women. If there were future opportunities in the IRWP, would you consider being involved?
 - 11) In your opinion, how could Springtide enhance outreach and engagement with immigrant, refugee, newcomer, non-status communities dealing with violence against women?
- Please feel free to make additional comments regarding your experience with the IRWP and its future directions

Appendix 2:

Service Provider Survey Questions

BACKGROUND

- 1) Please identify what kind of work your agency is engaged in (Check all that apply)
- 2) Please identify which of the following groups you serve (Check all that apply)
- 3) Do you work with? Individuals? Groups? Both?
- 4) Were you aware that in 2005, we changed our name from Education Wife Assault to Springtide Resources?
- 5) Did you know that Springtide Resources is an agency with a demonstrated history of training and education in violence against women from diverse communities?
- 6) How does your organization outreach to NSRIN (non status, refugee, immigrant, newcomer) communities about violence against women?
- 7) What challenges do service providers face when engaging in conversations with NSRIN communities about violence against women?
- 8) In your experience, how could outreach to NSRIN communities dealing with violence be enhanced? Please include any non-traditional methods that come to mind (ex: through art, storytelling, VAW info in 'unusual' places – barbershops, religious sites, beauty/nail salons).

Barriers

- 9) Please identify what barriers NSRIN (non status, refugee, immigrant, newcomer) communities face when accessing services?
- 10) What barriers do you face as a worker in supporting NSRIN communities dealing with violence against women?

11) How would you rate your comfort level in responding to the needs of NSRIN clients experiencing violence in their lives (at home, at work, in relationships, from a caregiver, within families, etc...):
Very Comfortable, Somewhat Comfortable, Not Very Comfortable

Training

- 12) What training would help increase your ability and/or comfort level to respond to the needs of NSRIN (non status, refugee, immigrant, newcomer) communities dealing with violence against women?
- 13) Does your organization provide opportunities for training and/or professional development?
- 14) What challenges do you face when trying to access training? (ex: Time, Cost, Physical Space, Geography, Accommodations, Other)
- 15) What methods of training would you engage in? In person, online, combination
- 16) Please identify the type of training you have received in the past that you have found valuable to your work. (Note: The following list contains just a few examples, please add all types of training that you have found useful): Crisis Prevention, How to navigate legal systems – family, immigration, criminal law, Preventing woman abuse, Anti racism / Anti oppression, None
- 17) Springtide Resources offers education and training in the area of violence against women. What kinds of training would be useful for you as a service provider working with NSRIN communities? (Note: The following list contains just a few examples, please add all types of training that you would find helpful): Dealing with vicarious trauma; Training in VAW for orgs working NSRIN groups who are dealing with mental health issues; Supporting LGBTQ newcomer youth fleeing abuse; Training for working with men, young men, boys about healthy relationships
- 18) In your opinion, what can Springtide Resources do to facilitate greater awareness of our organization in NSRIN (non status, refugee, immigrant, newcomer) communities?
- 19) If you are interested in receiving information on training and educational opportunities offered by Springtide Resources please provide your contact information (email address) below:
20. Would you consider partnering with Springtide Resources in the future?

Appendix 3:

Key Informant Interview Guide

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR OUR SECTOR (S):

- 1) What current trends or local needs in terms of violence against women is your agency responding to?
- 2) What gaps are you seeing in terms of the training and educational needs of your staff?
- 3) There is often resistance to addressing issues related to violence against women. In the communities that you work with, what language can we use to open doors to the conversation? Are there specific issues in the communities you serve that are of primary concern that you see could be linked to violence against women if we were at the table?
- 4) Please share your thoughts about how our sector(s) can engage new players and ideas. How do we think 'outside the box' or reach those who are unaware of our services?
- 5) From your perspective, what are some of the 'big picture' issues organizations like Springtide Resources and others should be considering when planning for the needs of the non-profit (specifically VAW & Settlement) sector in the future?
- 6) In your opinion, is there a role for the VAW and settlement sectors to do systemic advocacy for structural and political change more broadly in society? If so, how do you envision that role?
- 7) In a world without funding concerns, what projects or partnerships would your agency pursue to address the layered violence facing NSRIN communities?
- 8) Would like to add any further comments?

STAFF TRAINING AND INTERAGENCY PARTNERSHIPS

- 9) In what ways has your agency been involved with Springtide Resources in the past (i.e. doing a workshop for the staff, working in coalitions/groups together on issues, etc...)?
- 10) How would you describe the partnership with Springtide Resources? Please reflect on what was valuable about the partnership and also, how it might be enhanced in the future?
- 11) What if any opportunities exist for your agency to continue partnering with Springtide? Could you give some examples or insight as to how you see that could be done?

12) **(For new agencies only are any of the KI's from new agencies? Might not be necessary for new agencies but just generally...like the ones that weren't starred).** If your agency has not partnered with Springtide in the past, are there reasons why not? Would you be open to a partnership with us?

If they respond yes, additional probes...

b) What kinds of training would be beneficial to your staff working with non-status, refugee, immigrant, and newcomer (NSRIN) communities around issues of violence?

c) Do you see this as training that Springtide Resources could offer?

d) What methods of training would be most beneficial to your staff: Face-to-face? Customized online training? Combo?

13) Would you be interested in having your staff trained on different techniques for working with clients on the front line? For example: trauma based approaches, feminist group counseling, anti-racism and anti-oppression, strength based approaches, others?