



WOMENATTHECENTRE

EVALUATION REPORT

FEEDIN. FEEDBACK. FEEDFORWARD. (FI FB FF)

20

24

*Funded by Women and
Gender Equality Canada*

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION(S)

2019-2023

FI FB FF Project

FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward was a capacity building project funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE). It involved the implementation of strategies and resources that will ensure the sustainability of WomenatthecentrE, our survivor-centred organization.

WomenatthecentrE received core funding to support organizational capacity to achieve its mission of eradicating gender-based violence (GBV) against women, gender diverse, 2-spirit and trans folks through personal, political and social advocacy. Through this grant, WomenatthecentrE hoped to create a solid infrastructure, engage with and expand survivor membership, and strengthen financial sustainability to continue its critical work in community engagement, research, education, advocacy, and policy reform.

FI FB FF Extension Project

The FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward Extension was a capacity building project funded by the Department for Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE). This 12-month project extension allowed WomenatthecentrE to strengthen organizational capacity through planning, developing and facilitating trainings using a "train-the-trainer" approach. This enhanced the skillset across all staff, students and volunteers, as well as external community 'values-aligned' partners and service providers, across sectors.

As a result, WomenatthecentrE and the wider community are better equipped to address the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on survivors across Canada. This includes effectively addressing the escalating frequency and severity of gender-based violence (GBV) and ultimately providing better care to more survivors.

2023-2024

FI FB FF OBJECTIVES



Infrastructure Development

To create a robust infrastructure that will allow the organization to connect with its membership and provide opportunities to engage, inform policy, participate in research, and support public awareness-raising initiatives.



Communication Strategies

To develop and implement strategies for effective, ongoing and sustained communication between the organization and membership.



Financial Sustainability

To strengthen the financial sustainability of the organization by obtaining federal charitable status, expanding donor partnerships, and developing & implementing fee-for-service programs.



FI FB FF EXTENSION OBJECTIVES



Human Relations Management

To develop an organizational Volunteer Outreach, Recruitment and Engagement Plan.



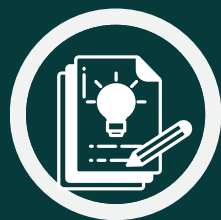
Human Relations Management

To build capacity for internal and community team members to support survivors of GBV.



Social Enterprise Model

To develop a revenue generating training program to build capacity amongst the GBV and corporate sectors to best support survivors of GBV.



DEVELOPMENT OF
VOLUNTEER
PROGRAM PLAN



HEART WORK
CONFERENCE



RELAUNCH OF
SPARK TRAINING
PROGRAM

FI FB FF EVALUATION PURPOSE & QUESTIONS

Project evaluation ensures the FI FB FF project meets its work plan objectives, in alignment with stakeholder requirements and Womenatthecentre's organizational mission. Evaluation plans, project monitoring, and resultant reports equally offer organizations and the broader community adaptable opportunities to learn from project processes, activities, and outputs.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation is:

- To assess the degree to which project results were achieved
- To document the lessons learned
- To examine the changes that resulted from undertaking the project
- To provide input to guide strategic decision making for the future of our organization

STANDARD EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- 1 To what extent has the project been implemented as planned?
 - 2 To what extent has the project achieved its planned results?
 - 3 To what extent did the project meet the needs of survivors in the community?
 - 4 How have partnerships contributed to the success of the project?
 - 5 What lessons learned have emerged that can be used to improve the efficiency, sustainability and economy of the project?
 - 6 How effective were the practices in sharing project results?
-

FI FB FF EVALUATION

1

To what extent has the project been implemented as planned?

The project has been implemented as planned, with 5 out of the six key activities completed.

These activities include:

- Developing members outreach & engagement, communication and organizational strategic plan
- Re-animating existing Chapters and establishing new Chapters, focusing on diverse members, such as women with disabilities, Indigenous, Black, Francophone, and Trans folk
- Creating a 'Feed-in, Feed-Back & Feed-Forward' process,
- Developing an 'Indicators of Success' framework, tools and evaluation plan & process
- Creating and disseminating a Chapters' Constitution process & documentation
- Creating and delivering online orientation and social action trainings/webinars for members.

The remaining outstanding deliverable is applying for and achieving charitable status. However, progress is being made towards this goal. Despite this barrier of process, we successfully applied for and received funding to develop and scale up existing programming and projects through. This includes a **1.6 million dollar grant** from the Public Health Agency of Canada and a **2.5 million dollar grant** from Women and Gender Equality Canada.

Overall, we completed **83%** of the project's planned activities. The remaining 17% is reflective of our lack of charitable status, as our organization, amongst the rest of the world, was forced to navigate the upheaval of the COVID-19. This global pandemic tested our team's flexibility and resilience. Our success is witnessed in the achieved deliverables, regardless of upheaval, and our live adaptation to meet these unpredictable and extraneous circumstances. We consider our activity alignment with our original work plan, and our continued growth and flexibility, a significant success.

2

To what extent has the project achieved its planned results?

The project achieved the majority of its planned results, as demonstrated by the number and impact of project outputs. These outputs include a Strategic Blueprint, a Membership Needs Assessment and Indicators of Success Framework, a FeedIn, FeedBack & FeedForward MOE process and tools, and an Evaluation Plan. In addition, the target numbers for each output, as indicated in the Evaluation Plan, have been exceeded, demonstrating that we effectively achieved our planned results. Please see the following examples:



01 — Strategic Plan

A organizational strategic plan was developed. It provides a clear roadmap for the organizations future development.



02 — Membership Needs Assessment & Indicators of Success

These tools were developed and implemented, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to ensure the organization's activities and goals align with the needs of our members, and are measurable.



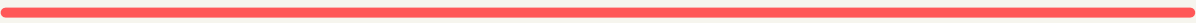
03 — FI FB FF Membership, Outreach and Engagement

These processes and tools were developed and implemented to support and increase organizational reach to survivors. This ensures organizational activities are survivor led and centred, and provides an approach to monitor & evaluate organizational impact.



04 — Evaluation Plan

An evaluation plan was created to assess the success of the project and identify areas for improvement. The plan supports our ability to understand and mobilize project achievements, challenges, and lessons learned, improving future projects through time-tested recommendations.



The success of the project can also be witnessed in its Planned Indicators:



05 — Capacity Resources

During the course of the project, **37** capacity building resources were developed or improved in the areas of program planning and implementation, human relations management, financial management, performance measurement, and communications.

23 NEW
CAPACITY
RESOURCES



06 — Membership Engagement

We meaningfully connected with **62** new members over the course of the FI FB FF project, exceeding our expected target of 50. The majority of members identify as women, with **56%** of survivors identifying as living with a disability. Our member reach spanned not only across Canada, but globally.



07 — Chapter Engagement

We developed several new localized and national Chapters during the duration of the project. This both exceeded our expected chapter development target and signifies increase organizational awareness and community building amongst survivors.

11 CHAPTERS
DEVELOPED



08 — Fundraising

We saw a **250%** increase in funding and donations directed at our organization during the project. This funding came from a variety of sources and avenues, but ultimately demonstrates increased valuation of our organization, community connections, and organization activity.

The examples shared demonstrate that the project achieved its planned results. This provides a foundation for the organization's growth and development beyond the funding period.

3

To what extent has the project been implemented as planned?

We performed a **Membership Needs Assessment Survey** to better understand the current needs of survivors that we work with and adjust our Work Plan activities to meet these accordingly. The survey results answered the following two questions:

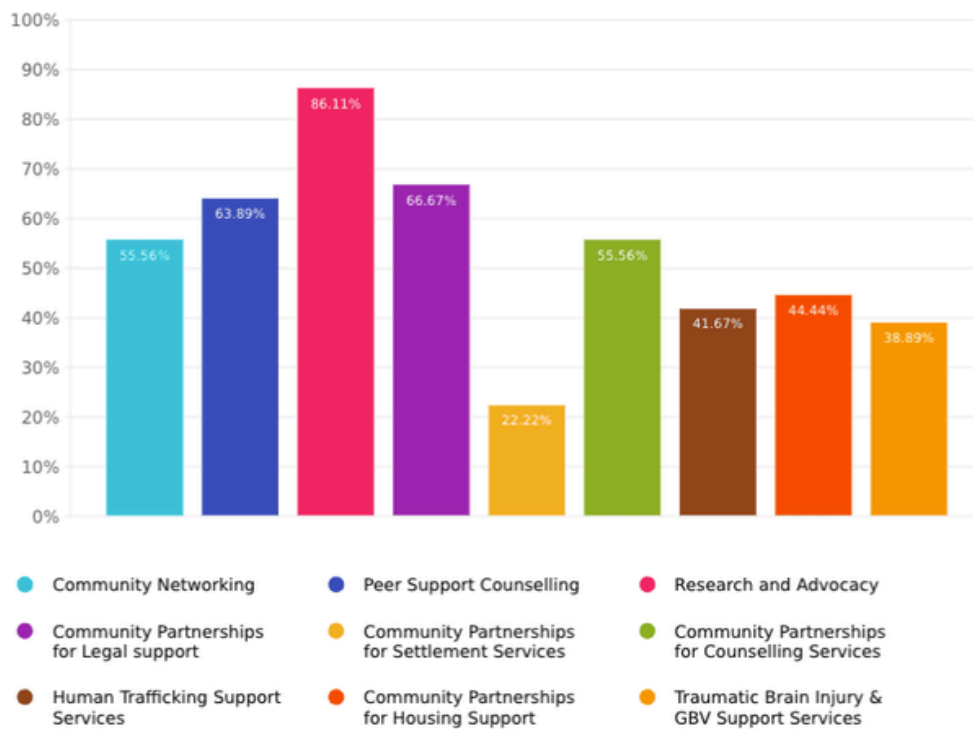
- Of the services we provide or may provide in the future, which ones are most important to you? Please check all that apply. (Infographic 1)
- Which of the following modes of engagement/communication do you need to feel connected to our organization and other survivors? Please check all that apply. (Infographic 2)

INFOGRAPHIC 1

36

Membership Needs Assessment Survey Question 2

survey respondents



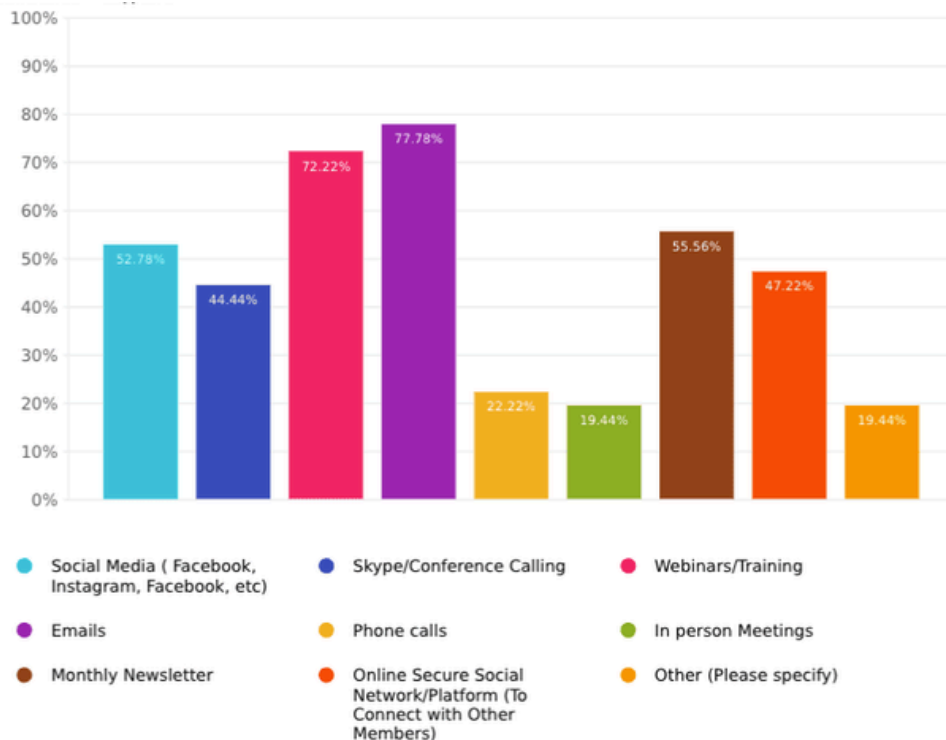
These results indicate that the top three services that survivors were/would be interested in are **Research and Advocacy**, **Community Partnerships for Legal Support**, and **Peer Support Counselling**. It is important to note that survivors also expressed a high interest in Community Partnerships for Counselling Services, Community Networking, Community Partnerships for Housing Support, and Human Trafficking Support Services.

INFOGRAPHIC 2

36

Membership Needs Assessment Survey Question 3

survey respondents



These results indicate that the top three preferred methods of communication are **Emails**, **Webinars/Trainings**, and a **Monthly Newsletter**, with Social Media, an Online Secure Social Platform, and Skype/Conference Calling also drawing high interest.

These results informed how we engaged with survivors, meeting accessibility, communication and connection needs. They also informed our FI FB FF activities and outputs, where we ensured our plans aligned with the needs of survivors in our community. Please see the non-exhaustive list of examples on how we applied this learning to meet the self-identified service and communication needs of survivors through the FI FB FF initiative below:

IDENTIFIED AREA OF SERVICE NEED:

Research and Advocacy

86.11% of members who completed the survey pointed to a clear need for more Research and Advocacy specific supports and services. This led to the formation of the **Children's Rights and Family Law Committee**, a member-led and staff, volunteer and student supported collective of survivors with lived experience navigating various facets and processes related to family law. The committee's work centred on advocacy around family law issues, peer-to-peer support for survivors navigating similar processes, and informal and secondary research into family law issues.

IDENTIFIED AREA OF SERVICE NEED:

Community Partnerships in Legal Support

66.67% of members who completed the survey expressed a need for more supports, information and partnerships in relation to legal needs. This led our Community Partnerships and Outreach Coordinator to develop a number of specific partnerships with legal/law organizations and persons who either provided resources, tools, trainings, information and/or workshops to survivors, or direct services, like pro-bono, low-bono, or contingency based representation, advice, or information.

Peer Support & Counselling

63.89% of members who completed the survey expressed a need for peer-support counselling. This led to our consistent and ongoing drive to ensure sustainable funding for our C-6 Peer Counselling Program, which we successfully funded and adapted through multiple project funding opportunities.

IDENTIFIED AND PREFERRED METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT:

Emails & Newsletters

77.78% of members who completed the survey identified emails/newsletters as the best method of engagement and communication. This led our membership and chapter coordination team to use email and e-blasts/newsletters as the main method of communication with survivor's in the community.

Webinars & Trainings

72.22% of members who completed the survey expressed an interest in attending and participating in webinars/trainings, as a method of engagement, connection and communication. This reinforced our intention with **Key Activity E**, where we developed, adapted and delivered community driven workshops, trainings and webinars to meet community needs.

IDENTIFIED AND PREFERRED METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT:

Webinars & Trainings cont.

This included:

- Silent No More workbooks
- Court Watching training
- Leadership Training Program
- WE Webinar Series
 - Peer Support
 - Self-Representing in Family Court
 - Intersections of Fatphobia and GBV
 - Reclaiming Touch After Gender-Based Violence
 - Leading with Abundance: Transformative Justice and Accountability Webinar
 - Femicide and Intersectionality: The role of media in reporting femicides of Black and Indigenous women, girls and gender-diverse people in the Canadian context
 - Breaking the Silence: Addressing Spiritual Abuse at the Intersection of Gender Based Violence and Islamophobia

Social Media

52.78% of members who completed the survey expressed an interest in social media, as a method for connection, engagement and communication. This affirmed our intention for **Key Activity A3**, a Communication Plan, ensuring us it aligned with survivor and community needs. This led to us working closely with **Reicura**, our marketing and communication team, to ensure our social media and website were always up to date with accessible information shared to our network of members.



WomenattheCentre Instagram - Social Media Page

This list of non-exhaustive examples outlines how we both identified the needs of the survivor community and how we strived to meet them, both through the project and future project objectives.

4

How have partnerships contributed to the success of the project?

Our project's success is heavily dependent upon the formation of strong, value-driven, like-minded, and compassionate partnerships. We are lucky to have consistently found and made such partnerships throughout the duration of this project. This includes **181** newly developed partnerships. We highlighted some examples of our partner's fundamental support in project development and implementation below:



01 — Capacity Building Resources

Project partners broadly supported the development, review and implementation of our Organizational Strategic Plan, **Activity A1**, our Indicators of Success Framework, **Activity C2**, an Evaluation Plan, **Activity C3**, and the facilitation and delivery of WE Webinar series, workshops and trainings, **Activities E3 and E5**. It is through their collective knowledge and expertise sharing that we successfully achieved project activities and outputs. This increased our capacity as an organization, alongside survivors and the broader community capacities through skill and knowledge building.



02 — Reicura

Reicura is our fundamental partner for marketing and communication. Their support throughout the duration of the project proved fundamental on many fronts, but we want to highlight **Key Activity A3**. They reviewed our past and current communication patterns across our social media platforms, resulting in a revamped social media strategy & process. This supported our organization in understanding communication gaps, thus improving how, when and where we share our programs, resources, research, and advocacy efforts. Reicura also updated our website, increasing navigation & information sharing. Their support increased organizational awareness, garnering attention otherwise impossible without a website basis & social media presence.



03 — Educational Institutions

We formed partnerships with numerous educational institutions who supported the project's success. Several of our Chapters are associated with universities, such as York University and the University of Toronto. This collaboration, alongside the support of Chapter Members, supported us in completing **Key Activity D and F**. Our organization also works with over a dozen practicum students each year. Students have been paramount to the delivery of the project, supporting the **Children's Rights and Family Law Committee**, partnership development, research, webinar facilitation and development and more.

These examples make it clear how our creative, engaged, and value-aligned partners contributed to the success of this project.

5

What lessons learned have emerged that can be used to improve the efficiency, sustainability and economy of the project?

The project revealed a valuable lesson concerning the importance of developing projects, programs, and capacity resources with feedback from members and internal teams. We recognize the significance of listening to the needs and experiences of our members, staff, students and volunteers. This fosters a sense of empowerment and support, leading to positive word-of-mouth referrals and experiences with our organization. For example, we used surveys to gather feedback from membership, including our Membership Needs Assessment, Organizational Awareness Survey & WE Webinar survey. We strongly believe that our organizations' approach to feeding into our community is a best practice for community engagement. **Moving forward, we will ensure that survivors and team members always inform project and program development.**

We learned the significance of ongoing evaluation and monitoring of our initiatives. This method improved efficiency, sustainability, and economy of our organization and project. Regular feedback from stakeholders and program officers has enabled us to identify areas that require improvement, enabling us to pivot and modify project strategies in real-time. Furthermore, this approach led to the development of more effective and efficient processes, leading to improved project outcomes and organizational growth. **This demonstrates how critical the reflective and review process is for project success and organizational sustainability.**

We also learned that **effective communication with stakeholders is crucial to promoting the sustainability and success of projects and programs.** We successfully increased community awareness and engagement through regular updates on project progress and outcomes via newsletters, social media, and media engagement. Additionally, by soliciting and incorporating feedback from stakeholders, we were able to make informed decisions that align with members' needs and priorities.

In conclusion, we learned that feeding into our community, evaluative tools, and maintaining effective communication with stakeholders are critical factors in improving project efficiency, sustainability, and economy. We are confident that **by incorporating these lessons into future projects, we can continue to make a meaningful impact on our project teams, organizational stakeholders and the broader community.**

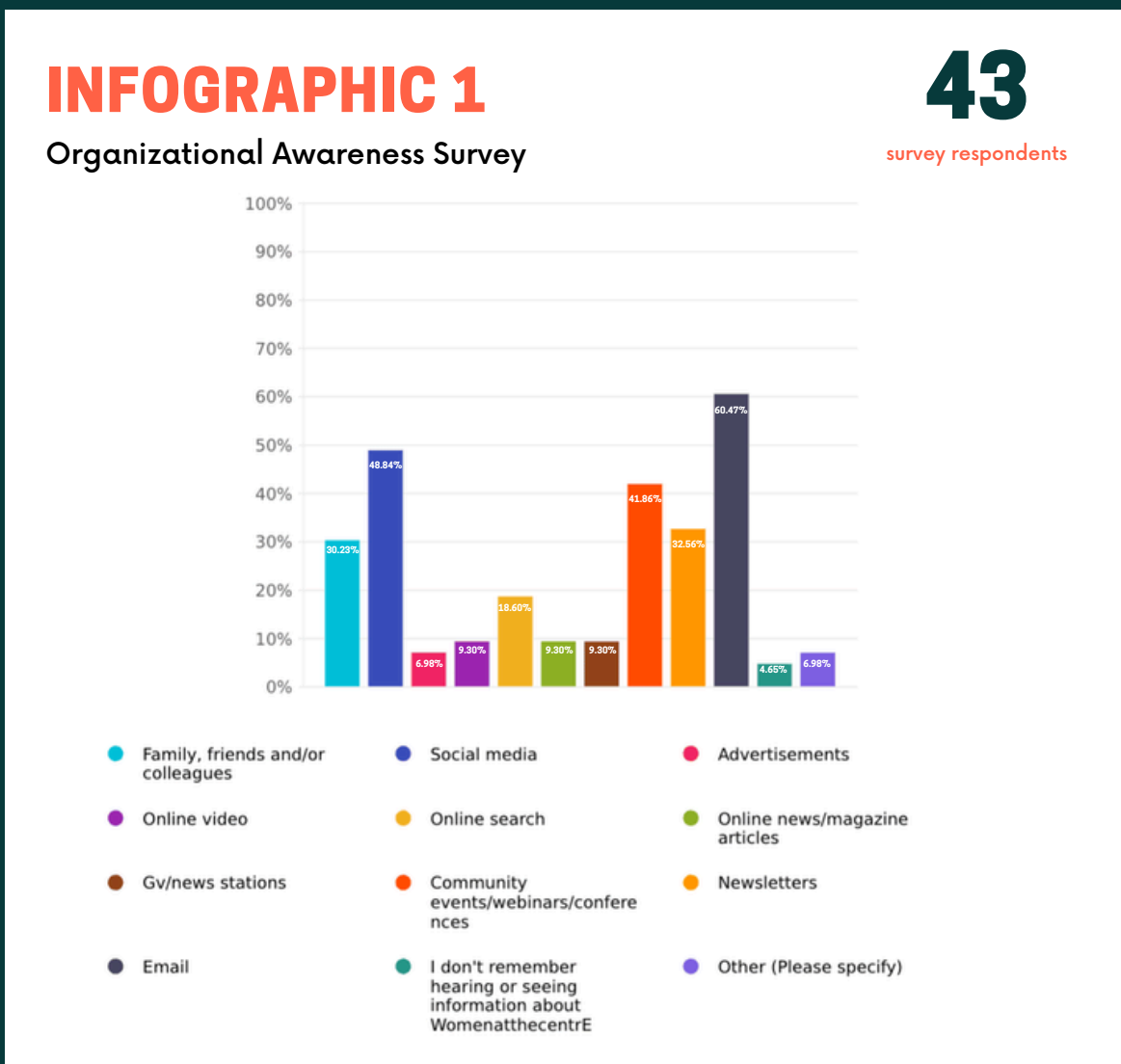
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How effective were practices in sharing project results?

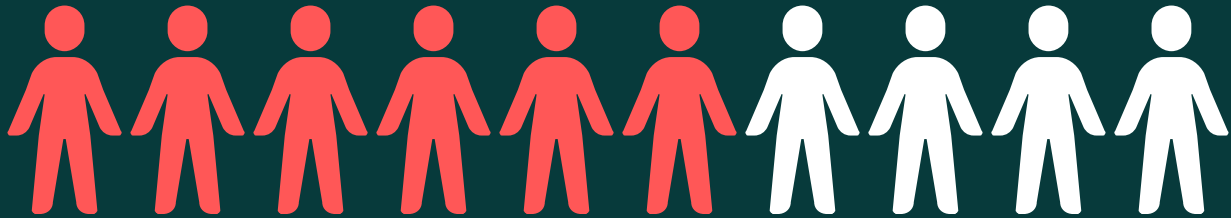
The project team used a variety of strategies and practices to share project results, including media engagement, progress reports, social media, webinars, community engagement events and newsletters. These strategies supported us in reaching a wide audience and generating interest in our organization and our work. This is demonstrated through the consistent results obtained through our previously submitted **Stakeholder Organizational Awareness Survey**, deployed on an annual basis.

Our communication objective was to raise community awareness about our organization and the work accomplished. Our most recent **2023 Organizational Awareness Survey** indicates that newsletters, social media, and media engagement were the most effective methods in reaching the community. The survey posed the following question to stakeholders:

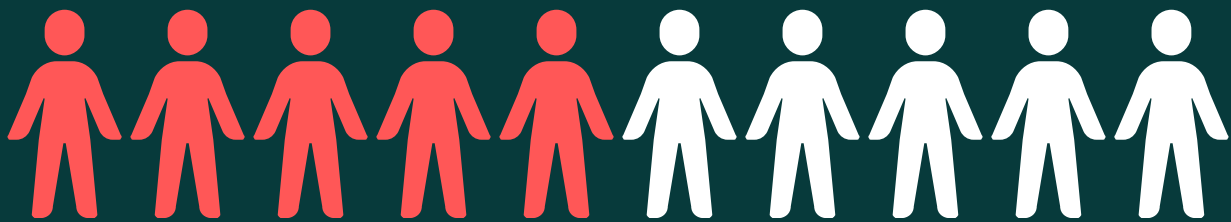
- In the past year, where have you seen or heard of Womenatthecentre? **(Infographic 1)**



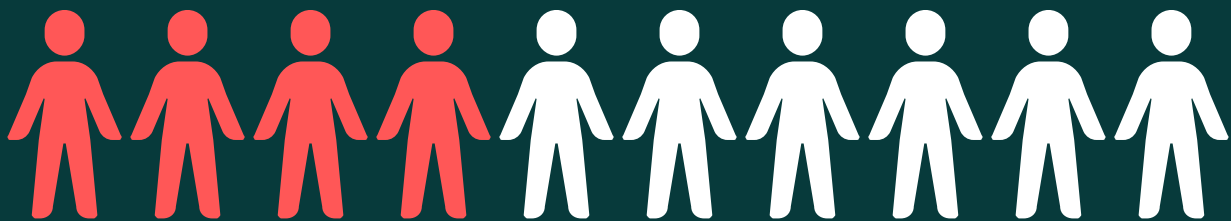
A significant proportion of our stakeholders reported that these methods were the primary means through which they became familiar with our organization and its initiatives. These findings underscore the importance of leveraging diverse communication channels to disseminate project results effectively and enhance organizational visibility among the community. This is a method we consistently embraced throughout the project, flexing to the specific and changing needs of survivors, project partners and other stakeholders.



Over **60%** of survey respondents indicated they heard of WomenatthecentrE through email in the past year.



Just under **50%** of survey respondents indicated they heard of WomenatthecentrE through social media in the past year.



Over **40%** of survey respondents indicated they heard of us through webinars/events/conferences in the past year.

Our organization also diligently reported on the project's progress through monthly meetings with our program officer at WAGE. These meetings proved instrumental for sharing project updates and receiving valuable feedback and support, enabling us to successfully deliver on project objectives. Their expert guidance and ongoing support have been invaluable in driving our team's motivation and commitment to delivering the project's desired outcomes.

FI FB FF EXTENSION EVALUATION PURPOSE & QUESTIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation is:

- To explore the process of project development and implementation
- To document the lessons learned, problems faced, and strategies developed
- To provide strategic outcomes and learnings for future capacity and sustainability organizational efforts
- To examine the impact of the project on the target communities

STANDARD EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- 1 How well did the project achieved its planned objectives?
- 2 How well were the project's planned activities implemented?
- 3 How much and what kind of difference did the project activities have on training participants, in terms of knowledge or skill change?
- 4 What kind of impact did the project have on the organization and/or community more broadly?
- 5 Describe any factors that positively or negatively influenced project activities?
- 6 Did the project meet the needs that led to its development? Do those still exist? Did new ones arise that the project could not address?
- 7 What critical lessons were learned during the development, delivery or evaluation of the project activities?
- 8 How has the project contributed to the sustainability of the organization?
- 9 What could be the long term impacts of this project?

1

How well did the project achieve its planned objectives?

The team successfully achieved its objectives of building organizational capacity, as well as developing strategic initiatives to promote organizational sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

Objective A

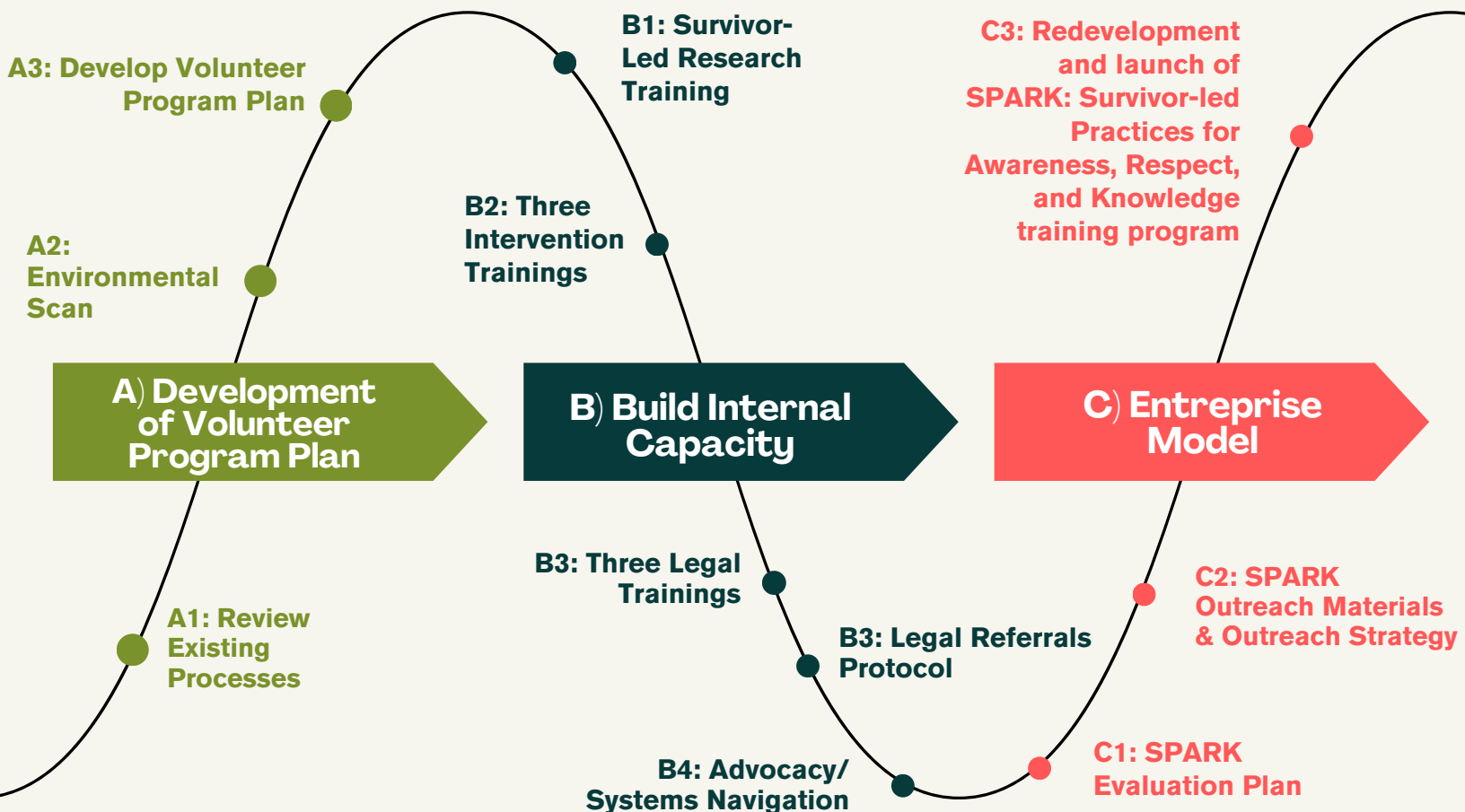
The team successful developed a **Volunteer Program Plan**.

Objective B

Members of the organization, placement students, community partners, and the broader community participated in various training workshops, gaining valuable tools and skills to enhance their ability to better respond to the needs of survivors of GBV. This includes the organization and delivery of the **Heart Work Conference**.

Objective C

The team redeveloped and relaunched the **SPARK: Survivor-led Practices for Awareness, Respect, and Knowledge** training program



Objective A

A **Volunteer Program Plan** was developed in consultation with community partners and with insights from existing internal volunteer processes and feedback from previous volunteers. This was collected through WomenatthecentrE's **Volunteer Engagement Survey**.

This plan streamlined the organization's approach to volunteer management, incorporating effective strategies for a successful volunteer program. The plan outlines processes in volunteer engagement, recruitment, and retention, and provides guidelines and tools to support volunteers. It ensures that volunteers are well-equipped and empowered to contribute effectively, aligning their roles with both organizational needs and their own skills and interests. This ensures a more efficient and fulfilling volunteer experience. Volunteers are essential not only to promote and sustain programming but also to develop new initiatives and expand the organization's impact within the community. Volunteers can also gain valuable professional experience and join a supportive community of survivors by participating in the Volunteer Program. This Program Plan will promote sustainability within the organization.

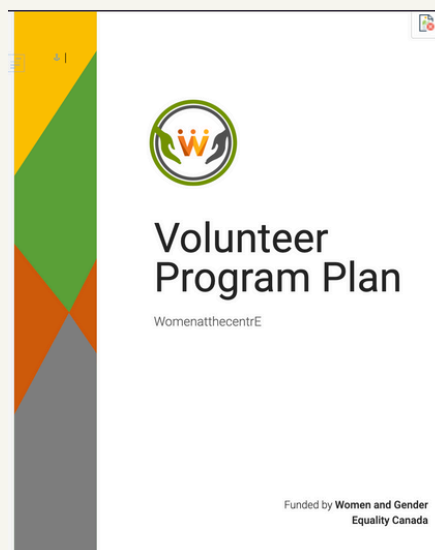


fig. Volunteer Program Plan Cover-Page

Objective B

The intervention workshops significantly increased the organization's capacity by providing practical, scenario-based training across diverse topics. The **Gender and Sexuality training**, in collaboration with the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD), equipped staff, students and community partners with skills to inclusively support 2SLGBTQIA+ survivors and engage in meaningful allyship with Queer communities. The **harm-reduction and crisis intervention sessions** provided real-life examples and tangible tools to navigate crises using harm-reduction and transformative justice frameworks. The **community care strategies session** provided practices for building supportive and caring networks and preventing burnout. Finally, Dr. Robyn Bourgeois' training on **participatory research methodologies in Indigenous communities** gave insight into culturally sensitive and ethical research practices. This increased understanding and enabled more effective support and advocacy, ensuring the organization can navigate complex challenges and provide comprehensive care to diverse communities.

Another objective of this project and **Objective B** was to increase our community's proficiency in legal topics. This objective was achieved through the coordination of legal training sessions with legal professionals. The first legal-focused workshop covered essential aspects of **family law**, equipping staff, placement students, and community partners with knowledge to better support survivors navigating the family law system. The second workshop focused on **immigration law**, providing crucial insights into legal issues affecting immigrant and non-status survivors and pathways to attain legal immigration status in Canada. The third workshop addressed **human trafficking and the law**, offering vital information on legal issues survivors of human trafficking may navigate.

160 TRAINING ATTENDEES

Objective B cont.

In addition to these workshops, we developed a comprehensive internal **Legal Referrals Protocol**, designed to streamline the referral process for legal support. This protocol includes basic legal information and a curated list of legal resources, ensuring that staff are well prepared to assist survivors in accessing necessary legal services. These trainings and resources collectively improved the organization's ability to provide informed and effective support to survivors facing different legal issues.

Our project team also successfully developed and facilitated a 3-day fee-for-service virtual training for service providers on advocacy and systems navigation supports for survivors of gender-based violence. The **Heart Work Conference: Survivor-led Expertise in Practice** featured **14** workshops led by internal and external presenters, who shared their knowledge, wisdom, research and experiences of different survivor-centred approaches and practices to supporting survivors. The knowledge shared over these three days further built our organizational capacity to provide better care and support to survivors. It also increased broader community capacity, as this event was open to the public and attracted **104** attendees. The conference also contributed to building organizational sustainability by raising funds through pay-what-you-can donations from registrants, as well as promoting WomenatthecentrE's work within the community for future endeavors.



Fig. Legal Referrals Protocol Cover-Page



HEART WORK Conference

Fig. Heart Work Conference Logo



Fig. SPARK Logo

Objective C

The launch of a Social Enterprise Model, **SPARK: Survivor-led Practices for Awareness, Respect, and Knowledge**, is another significant initiative that was implemented, establishing a revenue-generating training program. This program extends capacity-building efforts to corporate sectors, focusing on employer prevention of violence and building safer communities. The SPARK program will be an integral source of income to aid in maintaining WomenatthecentrE's programming through its fees for training sessions, workshops, and consulting services marketed to businesses and organizations. By offering these services, SPARK helps to create an income stream for WomenatthecentrE's sustainability efforts, while also providing tangible tools and knowledge to address and prevent gender-based violence.

2

How well were the project's planned activities implemented?

The planned activities of the FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward Extension Project were implemented effectively, bringing significant benefits to both the organization and the larger community. Below is a breakdown of the planned activities within this project and how these were successfully implemented.

Key Activity A) Human Resource Management Volunteer Program Planning: Development of Volunteer Program Plan



A1

Review of existing internal volunteer processes and feedback from previous volunteers.



A2

Environmental scan using community resources, in consultation with partner organizations and internal staff members.



A3

Analysis of responses and research from an environmental scan to inform the development of WomenatthecentrE's Volunteer Program Plan. This plan encompasses short & long term strategies for volunteer recruitment, training, engagement, recognition & ongoing evaluation of the volunteer program. This plan was disseminated to stakeholders at a Strategic Planning meeting on April 25th, 2024.

Our project team successfully implemented all planned project activities for **Key Activity A**. The development of the **Volunteer Program Plan** was an in-depth process that began with a thorough review of existing internal volunteer processes and feedback from previous volunteers. This initial step provided valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement within the previous volunteer program. Following this, an environmental scan was conducted. This included exploring community resources and consulting with partner organizations and internal staff members to gather a wide range of perspectives and successful practices. We compiled additional insights from available resources, such as CharityVillage.com and Volunteer.ca. These resources provided valuable and proven volunteer strategies regarding recruitment, training, retention and evaluation practices. We also reviewed publicly available volunteer information from other organizations and informally interviewed two community partners, via Zoom, to gain more insight into their volunteer processes.

This includes WomanACT, who shared their volunteer program experiences, successes, and lessons learned, that have shaped their volunteer program. The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, another organization that has been successful thanks to its volunteers, also provided valuable insights from their volunteer program structure and outreach strategies. Lastly, we consulted with staff members on previous volunteer processes through an anonymous survey. Staff were able to provide their feedback and suggestions. These consultations played a key role in shaping the development of our **Volunteer Program Plan**.

We gathered the research and feedback from the environmental scan, pinpointing critical volunteer programming needs and strategies. This multi-step process, including personal insights and secondary research, allowed us to draft such a comprehensive and practical plan. This process directly followed our Work Plan, reflecting **Key Activities A1, A2, and A3**, in context and detail. This emphasizes how well our team implemented the planned project activities for **Key Activity A**. This work ultimately led to the delivery of a short- and long-term **Volunteer Program Plan** that includes strategic considerations designed to effectively re-launch and create a more successful and effective Volunteer Program for WomenatthcentrE.

Key Activity B) Human Resources Management: Internal Training to Build Capacity for Internal WomenatthcentrE staff to support survivors of GBV



B1

Coordination of **1** survivor-led research training - Research with Indigenous Communities with Dr. Robyn Bourgeois.



B2

Coordination of **3** intervention training workshops guided by organizational and community needs- Choosing Each Other, Choosing Ourselves on self and community care with Kai Chen Thom, Crisis Navigation: Being With in Grassroots Transformative Justice Work on crisis and conflict navigation using using transformative justice and harm-reduction frameworks with Naty Temblay, and Gender and Sexuality, Gender-Based Violence, and Allyship, on supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ survivors of gender-based violence and fostering meaningful allyship within these communities with Lydia Collins from the Canadian for Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD).



B3

Development of Legal Referrals Protocol.



B3 cont.

Coordination of **4** legal trainings workshops according to WomenatthecentrE's community needs for legal information- Family Law with Jasmeet Dhaliwal, Immigration Law with Adrienne Smith, and Human Trafficking and the Law with Shalini Konanur from the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)



B4

Advocacy/Systems Navigation Training - Development and coordination of the **3**-day-fee-for-service Heart Work Conference: Survivor-Led Expertise in Practice, from March 19th to March 21st, 2024. This knowledge mobilization and community care event was open to the broader community and featured both internal and external presenters.

B1: The Survivor-Led Research Training was accomplished in collaboration with Dr. Robyn Bourgeois, who conducted a peer community-based participatory research training session focused on **Research with Indigenous Communities**. This training aimed to equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to conduct effective and ethical research with Indigenous communities, particularly focusing on survivor-led initiatives. This training emphasized inclusive, community-centred research practices, enhancing the capacity of participants to lead impactful and culturally-sensitive research projects. Having an Indigenous educator was an important consideration when coordinating a training because WomenatthecentrE is dedicated to reconciliation with Indigenous communities, fostering meaningful solidarity and incorporating anti-colonial frameworks into our practice. We also firmly believe, as a survivor led organization, that those with lived experience are best equipped to share knowledge regarding their experience. Research is also an important component of different WomenatthecentrE projects, and therefore, knowledge of how to respectfully collaborate with Indigenous communities in research was imperative to our work. The principles and practices shared in this training are also semi-adaptable to working with survivors, and/or other specific communities.

B2 & B3: Our project team coordinated specialized training sessions tailored to address the needs of survivors, our team members and the community. These needs were identified through the internal needs assessment survey, which highlighted critical topics and issues that the community of survivors and WomenatthecentrE staff navigate collaboratively. Responding to these needs, the FeedInFeedBack FeedForward team coordinated the facilitation of a series of legal and intervention workshops. The training workshop' topics were adapted to address the increased challenges and evolving dynamics brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and current societal trends. This approach ensured that the trainings were directly relevant and responsive to the pressing needs of the survivors in the community, equipping staff with the necessary knowledge and skills.

The coordination of the intervention trainings took into account different factors that were relevant to the needs of our community. First, we compiled the results of the Needs Assessment Survey, which identified training topics relevant to our organization. This included team building, crisis intervention, burnout management, and anti human trafficking training. Different societal factors impacting our communities during the planning of the intervention trainings were also taken into account. The **Choosing Each Other, Choosing Ourselves** workshop on self and community care was coordinated because of the organization's need to build community, ground ourselves, and learn how to care for each other. Many of us were affected by external factors, including the ongoing atrocities happening in various parts of the Global South, including in Palestine, Congo, and Haiti. These global crises, along with systemic racism and discrimination, left many of our team members feeling depleted, burnt out, and some having to navigate uncomfortable and divisive discussions. These reasons, along with the **Needs Assessment Survey** highlighting the need for crisis navigation, led us to coordinate the **Crisis Navigation: Being With in Grassroots Transformative Justice Work** training on crisis and conflict navigation. This training focused on transformative justice and harm-reduction frameworks.

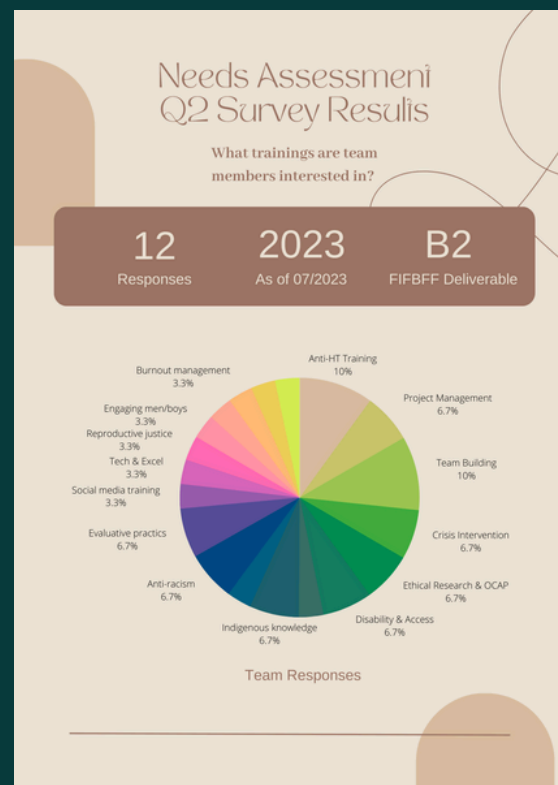


Fig. Question 2 Results from Needs Assessment Survey

<< Witnessing Within Immediate Crisis >>

After you've established connection, a safer space to talk and/or resources to support grounding*

10:30 - (10 mins) Using a Transformative Justice framework of inquiry to witness & build empathetic understanding about risks, impacts & needs without seeking "evidence", pursuing judgement or "to fix the person";

- What do you understand has happened?
- How has this impacted you or others (safety implications)?
- What are you thinking and feeling (worried) about most right now?
- What's the hardest part about all of this?
- What do you feel could help "make things right" in this moment and into the future?

R.J poster by *Silvia Ines Gonzales*

Fig. Presentation Slide by Naty Tremblay

WHAT DO YOU VALUE ABOUT Women at the Centre?

Education: sisterhood, friendship; Recognizing each other's humanity; Supporting each other in supporting survivors; Heart-work: Validating lived experience as real knowledge; Being survivor-led; EXHALE

Social presence: Engagement, connection, support, community; Cognitive presence: Understanding, reflection, learning, growth; Educational experience: Learning, teaching, practice, application; Teaching presence: Inspiring, motivating, challenging, supporting

Compassion: Reflexivity; The circle of intention we create together; Trying our best; The sense of community we continuously build!

The space we create for each other: "belonging," when "othering" seems easy; coming to the space "as-is"; Not being so quick to 'cancel' each other; Creating & holding space for one another; Encouraging realism

Fig. Jam Board from Choosing Each Other, Choosing Ourselves Workshop

Furthermore, the planning of these trainings was informed by internal discussions in our ongoing community check-ins, where we have a space for candid and informal conversations related to our work. Through these discussions, we identified the need for the **Gender and Sexuality, Gender-Based Violence, and Allyship** training on more inclusive practices to providing better support to 2SLGBTQIA+ survivors of GBV. This community is often overlooked within the GBV field and the learning gained from this workshop fostered more respectful and inclusive practices amongst colleagues and community members. The responsiveness and flexibility of the project team critically ensured that the trainings coordinated did not respond to stagnant needs, but present and persistent ones.

The coordination of the legal training sessions was guided by the **Needs Assessment Survey** results. This survey identified the key legal topics that staff members would benefit from learning more about: family law, immigration law, and human trafficking and the law. We sought out legal professionals who were not only knowledgeable in their fields, but also aligned with our values and had a history of providing legal services to survivors of GBV. For the family law training, we coordinated with Jasmeet Dhaliwal, a family lawyer with whom Womenatthecentre has had a longstanding partnership. For the immigration law training, we reached out to Adrienne Smith, an immigration lawyer and adjunct professor at Queen's University. Adrienne is a dedicated advocate for immigrants and refugees and has spoken in the House of Commons against ableist immigration policies. When coordinating the human trafficking and law training, it was crucial to find a legal professional who would not conflate sex work with human trafficking, as such policies create harm and violence. Addressing this distinction while gaining further information from a legal perspective was essential to our work as advocates and to better support survivors of human trafficking. We collaborated with Shalini Konanur, the Executive Director at SALCO, who had previously done a community presentation that included this important perspective, alongside other relevant legal information.

The development of the **Legal Referrals Protocol** document contributed to our organization's capacity-building goals while also streamlining the referral process and increasing our team's legal knowledge. Our organization has grown to support survivors Canada wide and, therefore, this document includes legal resources and information for folks across all provinces. The creation of this document was driven by the frequent legal navigation and challenges faced by survivors in our communities. The document itself was intentionally drafted to be easy to use. It includes a glossary to support our team and survivors to better understand legal-language, which frequently presents as a barrier in court rooms, when reviewing legal documents and more. The document is clearly organized, including a navigable table of contents, and written in accessible language, ensuring that all readers, regardless of their legal knowledge, can utilize it effectively.

B4: The coordination of the **Heart Work Conference: Survivor-Led Expertise in Practice** was a powerful and successful, but not without its challenges. This community capacity-building event was open to members, practitioners working with GBV survivors, and the general public. The conference theme was decided upon to celebrate community heart work and showcase survivor-led work and practices, reflecting the core of Womenatthecentre's initiatives and values. The conference aimed to build sustainability by obtaining pay-what-you-can donations and promoting our work within the community. However, we also wanted to ensure accessibility, therefore, the event provided no-cost ticketing options.



Fig. Heart Work Conference Promotional Flyer



HEART WORK
Conference

HEART WORK CONFERENCE

103

Attendees

3

Days

6

Community
Workshops

7

Team-Led
Workshops

1

Documentary
Screening

4.6

Average # of
Workshops
Attended per
Attendee

The conference featured **7** sessions from various WomenatthecentrE project teams. This conference presented as a unique opportunity for a variety of project teams to showcase their work, achieve deliverables, and reach unique audiences.

In addition to internal training sessions conducted by WomenatthecentrE staff, external speakers contributed valuable perspectives through workshops. We intentionally invited external speakers that were values-aligned with WomenatthecentrE and committed to survivor-led and survivor-centred work. We also built on pre-established partnerships that had positively resonated with our community in previous collaborations, such as Lisa Shen, Madhurie Dhanrajh and Naty Tremblay.

Beyond training topics, the conference also featured a spoken word performance, a guided somatic self-care session and a documentary screening, followed by a Q&A session. This added variety within the presentations and depth and engagement to the schedule. This aligned with our intended multi-media and collective care approach, ensuring "Heart Work" was always at the centre of our conference development process and delivery.

587 VIEWS
OF CONFERENCE
WORKSHOPS

6.3 HOURS
AVERAGE TIME
SPENT AT THE
CONFERENCE



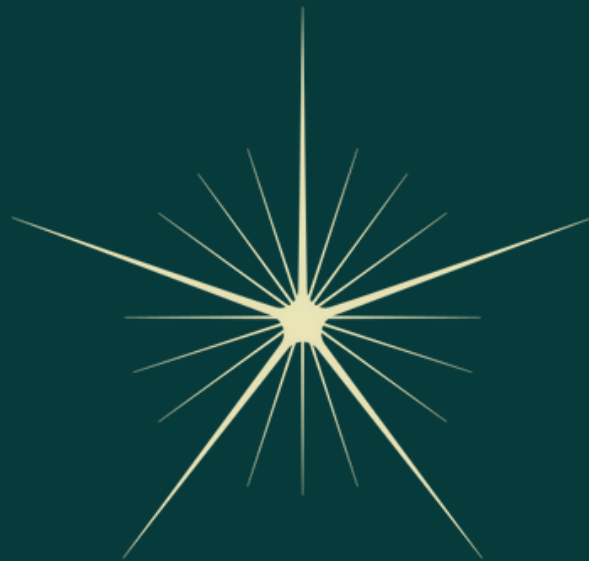
HEART WORK
Conference

HEART WORK CONFERENCE PROCESS & ACTIVITIES

The planning and coordination was a multi-step and complex process, including:

- Brainstorming with the project team on conference themes, objectives, and coordination plan and timeline
- Researching and forming an outreach list for potential conference speakers
- Performing outreach to conference speakers and collaboratively exploring conference presentation and workshop content and themes
- Collaborating with WomenatthecentrE staff and students for streamlined conference development and delivery
- Collaborating with our Ring Central platform representative, to understand and optimize use of the new platform
- Familiarizing the project team, students, staff, and external presenters with a new virtual platform through 1-1 support and technology accommodation meetings
- Ensuring all presenters felt comfortable and supported before and during their presentations, which contributed to the overall success of the event
- Collaborating with Reicura, our marketing and communication team, to develop conference-specific branding, an outreach strategy, an outreach flyer, materials for the Ring Central platform, and a series of outreach posts across our social media accounts
- Creating the Ring Central platform for the Heart Work Conference
- Performing outreach for the conference, including a Save the Date, Conference Speaker Promotional Post, and generalized Conference Posts
- Developing and implementing evaluative questions
- Facilitating the Heart Work Conference
- Follow up with conference attendees & participants post-conference
- Post-conference promotional content sharing

Key Activity C) Social Enterprise Model: Development of revenue-generating training program for gender-based violence and corporate sectors to better support survivors.



SPARK

Fig. SPARK Logo

C1

Development of evaluation plan to measure the success of the SPARK: Survivor-led Practices for Awareness, Respect, and Knowledge training program.

C2

Collaboration with Reicura to develop the SPARK's outreach strategy and outreach materials.

C3

Re-development and launch of the SPARK: Survivor-led Practices for Awareness, Respect, and Knowledge (formerly EmPACT) training program and materials, a revenue-generating training program for the GBV and corporate sectors.

The creation of a Social Enterprise Model, **SPARK: Survivor-led Practices for Awareness, Respect, and Knowledge**, is another significant activity that was successfully implemented, establishing a revenue-generating training program. This program extends capacity-building efforts to previously untapped for-profit sectors, focusing on employer prevention of violence and building safer communities.

Our project team re-developed and updated training materials, drawing on a previously developed corporate training program, EmPACT (Employer Prevention of Abuse through Certification & Training). We created a new training under the name SPARK: Survivor-led Practices for Awareness, Respect, and Knowledge. The transition to the name SPARK was intentional to reflect Womenatthecentre's commitment to using language that aligns with our core values of anti-oppression and survivor-centred care. We moved away from the term "abuse", which was part of the former EmPACT name, as this can oversimplify interpersonal violence. Using this language also fails to address broader systemic issues, and does not convey the complexity and multifaceted nature of GBV.

These revamped learning materials incorporate updated information to ensure they are current and reflective of the ever-evolving circumstances and events in our society related to GBV. We updated statistics throughout the training modules, added interactive activities, and included more information regarding intersectionality, marginalized identities and systemic issues that contribute to, generate, and perpetuate GBV in Canada.



The SPARK program redevelopment and implementation involved consultations with the internal team, to ensure the training materials were relevant and informative, and to identify any gaps in the previous and new content. The workshops were designed to build capacity amongst the broader community, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to support GBV survivors effectively and build safer communities starting in the workplace.

We also collaborated with Reicura, to develop the following related materials:

- A certificate of completion, signifying certification
- An evaluation tool/strategy
- SPARK logo and brand
- SPARK template slides
- Outreach materials: Outreach flyer, information package, and social media posts and stories
- An outreach strategy
- A website page to showcase the training and provide an avenue for interested parties to connect with us about the program



Fig. SPARK Website Page

Fig. SPARK Social Media Post

Fig. SPARK Certificate Template

It is clear that Key Activity C, in its entirety, was implemented successfully and as outlined in our Work Plan.

3

How much and what kind of difference did the project activities have on training participants, in terms of change in knowledge and skills?

The training sessions coordinated as part of the FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward Extension Project activities were successful in building capacity amongst our staff, placement students, WomenatthecentrE members, community partners, and the community at large. This was evident from the qualitative and quantitative feedback provided by training participants through our evaluation surveys and discussions in our community spaces.

We evaluated knowledge gained from the training sessions using pre and post-training surveys on our workplace platform, Zoho Surveys. We used this data to determine the increase in knowledge and skills from specific trainings.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILL INCREASE;

14%
Knowledge & Skill
Increase

The **Self & Collective Care Training** emphasized the need for collective care and included exercises to build community. While the percentage of knowledge gained is lower compared to other trainings, the session's interactive nature provided substantial qualitative benefits, as participant's reported positive grounding experiences and community building. The timing of this intervention training was also important as attested by one of the participants: **"This will help me be more grounded and centred in my work and be more aware of the importance of self and community care. This is important when supporting survivors because if we are not taking care of ourselves, we cannot take care of others."**

89%
Knowledge & Skill
Increase

This **Harm Reduction & Crisis Navigation Training** saw one of the highest increases in percentages of knowledge gained, highlighting the importance of crisis navigation skills training in supporting survivors and the gap in knowledge our community had on this subject.

42%
Knowledge & Skill
Increase

This **Gender and Sexuality, Gender-Based Violence & Allyship Training** addressed important aspects of intersectionality and GBV amongst 2SLGBTQIA+ survivors that are often overlooked within the GBV field. This knowledge gained will support more inclusive spaces within the organization. Furthermore, the trainers from CCGSD created a comfortable training environment as illustrated by one of the participants: **"...Thank you both for breaking this down so clearly, and in such a kind of safe environment for us, so really appreciate it. The whole workshop was really great."**

KNOWLEDGE & SKILL INCREASE:

71%
Knowledge & Skill
Increase

The significant increase in knowledge from the **Family Law Training** demonstrates its effectiveness. Furthermore, many training participants reported the positive impact that this training session will have on their work. For example: **“It was super helpful to understand the practical limitations imposed on lawyers by systems and their players, like LAO, the courtroom, judges, and the law itself.”** & **“I really, really wanted to help kind of explain these areas of family law because I've dealt with this so many times with individuals coming into our office and having to deal with and not understanding what our roles are. And it makes it very, very difficult for survivors... this has been so insightful and really, really practical, very, very useful...”**

92%
Knowledge & Skill
Increase

The **Immigration Law Training** saw significant gain in knowledge & skill. This training and partnerships with legal immigration professionals are imperative to our work. One of our peer counsellors highlighted the importance of immigration law training, noting that the support provided to survivors navigating immigration issues is almost comparable to the role of a settlement worker. While we do not manage immigration cases directly, we offer survivors basic information and guidance on navigating immigration issues and refer them to legal partners for more in-depth assistance.

56%
Knowledge & Skill
Increase

The **Human Trafficking and the Law Training** focused on the legal aspects of human trafficking, providing essential knowledge to support survivors more effectively. As one participant commented: **“Thank you so much for this presentation and for the two days ... it's been very helpful, very informative, and I really hope that we have you in our space again soon.”**

134%
Knowledge & Skill
Increase

The **Building Legal Capacity Training** resulted in the highest knowledge gain. This reflects its effectiveness in enhancing participants' legal capacity and resource navigation skills. This increase in knowledge is evident in the feedback from training participants. One participant shared: **“I feel as if I can find answers to legal questions I previously would have been very intimidated by!”**



Knowledge Gained - Intervention Trainings

Knowledge Gained - Legal Trainings



The participant feedback from intervention training sessions indicates that the trainings collectively enhanced participants' knowledge and skills, significantly enhancing their abilities to support survivors and navigate complex legal and social systems.

4

What kind of impact did the project have on the organization and/or community more broadly?

The FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward Extension project had a profound impact on both the organization and the broader community.

We are grateful we were able to address internal team needs and support our team through the Extension project. This project allowed our entire organizational team, fellow survivors of GBV, to develop their skills, knowledge, and capacities. Furthermore, this project enhanced internal processes and equipped staff, placement students, and the community with tools and knowledge to better support survivors of GBV. It was a powerful year of skill building and resource, program service, and tool development for our team, which was deeply needed for our sustainability and team and personal growth. **This work brought our organization closer together, and reminded us of the power of survivor centred and led Heart Work!**

This project significantly **improved the knowledge and skills** of those who participated in the different training sessions, as previously demonstrated in **Question 3**. Staff, volunteers, and community partners obtained tangible tools and information in these workshops, such as harm-reduction frameworks in crisis responses, community care tools, and strategies for navigating legal systems in different areas of law, such as family and immigration law. These trainings enhanced their ability to handle complex situations involving survivors. On a community level, the project strengthened the capabilities of external partners and service providers, leading to stronger support networks for GBV survivors.

The project allowed us to develop a series of sustainable and needed programs, resources, services, and tools. This includes a comprehensive **Volunteer Program Plan**, which will streamline the volunteer management process, enhancing recruitment, engagement, and retention strategies. This Volunteer Program Plan will contribute to more effective organizational operations and provide a more rewarding experience for volunteers. Volunteers are essential for building organizational sustainability, maintaining current programming, and planning new initiatives. **Volunteering also provides a critical avenue for survivors, youths, and other community members to skill build, develop out their resume, and build community.** This ultimately contributes to survivor, youth, and community financial security in the long run, increasing overall well-being. Furthermore, this volunteer program can provide a meaningful experience for survivors and other community members to engage in advocacy work to eradicate GBV.

This project also led to the development of a critical service, **SPARK: Survivor-led Practices for Awareness, Respect, and Knowledge**. This training fosters our internal sustainability through a fee-for-service model, while promoting community accountability and engagement, ensuring that all sectors contribute to creating safer and more supportive environments.

SPARK fosters a holistic approach that not only improves immediate responses to violence, but also strengthens long-term resilience and preparedness within the community. **SPARK provides education on survivor support, systemic issues, and the economic impacts of gender-based violence, to name a few of the topics covered.** This broadens the reach of the project's overall impact, pointing to the longevity of impact for this funding and time, the result of which will be increased awareness of GBV, improved and developed support systems for survivors, and more effective community responses to GBV issues.

This project provided our team with the opportunity to develop a much-needed internal resource, the **Legal Referrals Protocol**. Our work has always intersected with complex legal systems through our research, advocacy and direct-service work. This led to sparse and undocumented team know-how, with regards to legal systems, language, processes, and strategies. **This project allowed our team the needed time to critically and comprehensively collect, organize, and accessibly present our gathered knowledges, as well as research new information, ultimately forming an empowering & plain-language resource.** The Legal Referrals Protocol is already being used as a resource by our peer counsellors, who are currently supporting survivors of GBV living with brain injuries navigate legal systems.

The **Heart Work Conference** had a range of positive impacts on both the organization and the community. It empowered participants by equipping them with valuable knowledge and skills related to GBV advocacy and support. This increased understanding of survivor-centred and led practices amongst attendees, leading to more effective community interventions and support to survivors. The conference also promoted Womenatthecentre and its initiatives, with the potential to attract additional support, funding, and volunteers, which enhances the organization's ability to fulfill its mission.

The positive, long-lasting, and meaningful impact of this project is demonstrated across team and community skill and knowledge building, capacity building, and resource and service development.

5

Describe any factors that positively or negatively influenced project activities.

The project was influenced both negatively and positively by the complex landscape that is our world. Our community is shaped by systemic issues, global events, internal changes, and burnout. As a team, we navigated these obstacles and adapted to the needs of our communities, which made this project more impactful. We also were forced to face the complexity of these factors. However, the project was positively influenced by the team and community's dedication to the survivors of GBV we work with, and our collective commitment to creating safer communities that eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination at the micro, mezzo and macro levels of Canadian society.



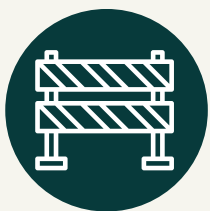
External World Events

Global conflicts, such as the ongoing genocide in Palestine, directly affected our community's emotional well-being. This influenced our decision to have a self and collective care training session and further emphasized the need for crisis navigation workshops. This also encouraged us to centre well-being in the delivery of the **Heart Work Conference**, ensuring time was always carved out for care, screen-breaks, and reflection.



Collective Burnout

It is not uncommon for folks within our community to experience significant burnout and compassion fatigue due to the demanding nature and heavy topics that are part of the work. This awareness led to a similar impact, as noted in the example above.



Systemic Barriers

Ongoing systemic issues like anti-Black racism, colonialism, xenophobia, and patriarchy continuously impact our diverse communities, while also influencing efforts to dismantle oppressive societal systems. These issues inform our work as we take on a holistic, systemic approach that goes beyond individualized solutions. By addressing these broader systemic issues, we aim to create more comprehensive and effective solutions for the communities we serve.



Team Member Departure

One of our key team members left WomenatthecentrE during the project. This forced the team to adapt and pivot project responsibilities to ensure the success of this initiative within the pre-established timeline.



Survey Burn-Out

Our team is experiencing "survey burnout". The impact of which was occasionally low data return results, which we noted on some of our pre and post training surveys.



Partnerships

The strong collaborations and partnerships WomenatthecentrE established over the years were instrumental in the planning of this project. These partnerships were especially important in coordinating capacity-building trainings and planning the Heart Work conference. It was essential to involve experts who were not only knowledgeable and aligned with our values, but also focused on survivor-centered work. These significantly influenced the planning process of this project. Some of these pre-established valuable partners, including Madhurie Dhanrajh, who consulted WomenatthecentrE on their research with survivors self-representing in the legal system, Naty Tremblay, who conducted an impactful crisis navigation workshop, and Lisa Shen, who delivered a powerful performance at the SistersatthecentrE Summit in 2022, were invited to participate in the conference.



Additionally, our valued partnership with family lawyer Jas Dhaliwal, who provided ongoing support and guidance to the survivors in our community, was key when coordinating the family law training. Furthermore, the process of coordinating these capacity-building workshops also led to new partnerships, such as with immigration lawyer Adrienne Smith and criminal lawyer Shalini Konanur at SALCO.

Finding and working with value-aligned partners facilitated honest discussions about uncomfortable yet critical topics, such as failures in the legal system, colonization, systemic discrimination influencing immigration policies and contributing to the displacement of people in the Global South, and the nuances of sex work and human trafficking.

In addition, a number of our legal partners offered their services without a request for payment. This generosity allowed us to re-allocate these honourariums to external partners who presented at the Heart Work Conference. This ensured we could appropriately and respectfully pay and acknowledge our presenters, leading to a robust conference.

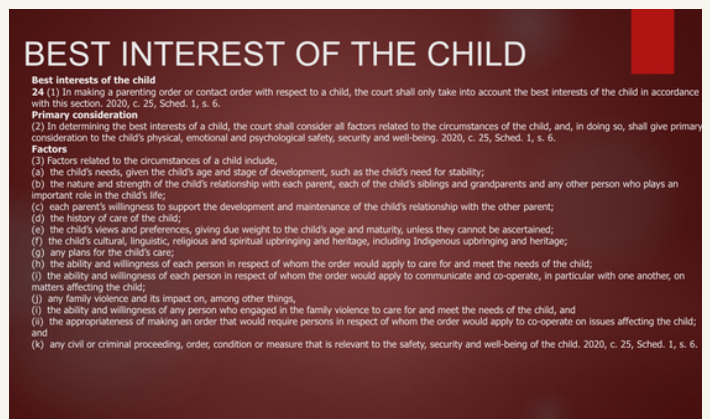


Fig. Family Law Training Presentation Slide



Community Building

The need for community building was sparked by negative external factors. But this ultimately fostered a more supportive community, crucial for the sustainability of our efforts and the well-being of our team and participants.



Dedication to our Values

The project was positively impacted by our team's commitment to the work and values of WomenattheCentrE. The team's passion and dedication fostered an environment where meaningful change was possible.



Continuous Learning

The willingness of our staff to continuously learn and add tools to their toolkit for supporting survivors was another positive factor that influenced this project's success. This dedication to professional development ensures that our team is continuously learning and growing to provide the best support to survivors.



Team Work

The project is driven by the passion and coordination skills of its Project Coordinator, Sandy Anaya. She is the "heart" of FI FB FF, holding the team and our deliverables together. The continuous support from our management team, especially from our Program Manager, Kelsy Dundas, has also been instrumental to our success. Their guidance and dedication to this project and the organization's success provided the necessary support and leadership for the team to accomplish the project's planned objectives and activities.

The FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward Extension Project was significantly impacted by a variety of factors, both positive and negative. Our team has faced and will continue to face these head on with ever-evolving strategic planning and partnerships. This demonstrates our team's ability to adapt to the community's needs, and collaborate meaningfully with partners and internal team members.



6

Did the project meet the needs that led to its development? Do those still exist? Did new ones arise that the project could not address?

The FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward project was designed to address WomenatthecentrE’s critical needs for building organizational sustainability and capacity in the fight against GBV and to enhance support for survivors in our communities. These objectives were particularly important to address in the context of the negative aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated experiences and impacts of GBV, and highlighted the need for comprehensive and long-term programming and supports.

The project successfully met these needs by implementing several key activities:

KEY ACTIVITIES

Capacity Building

The project delivered a range of training programs tailored to our community members’ needs and addressing external societal factors. These programs equipped participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively address GBV and support survivors. The coordination of the **Heart Work** conference broadened WomenatthecentrE’s reach and knowledge mobilization efforts, while sharing essential survivor-led practice frameworks that inform our work with community partners and members of the public.

Volunteer Program Plan

The establishment of an intentional and well-researched **Volunteer Program Plan** was crucial to creating a structured and supportive volunteer program. This plan includes recruitment, training, and retention strategies, ensuring that volunteers are well prepared and motivated to contribute to the organization’s goals.

Revenue-Generating Programming

The implementation of the **SPARK** training model will generate additional revenue, which will be reinvested into the organization’s core activities. This new funding source will allow WomenatthecentrE to enhance its capacity towards new initiatives and have a greater reach, providing greater support to survivors and expanding its advocacy efforts.

The project also highlighted ongoing and emerging needs. Our **Needs Assessment Survey** included a number of needs that we were not equipped to wholly address, with the funding limits of this project.

QUESTION 2

Membership Needs Assessment Survey



Although our project made significant progress and attained its main objectives, it also highlighted persistent gaps in organizational capacity that extend beyond the project's scope.

Needs that still require directed and intentional funding:

- Community Networking
- Community Partnerships in Housing Support
- Sustainable Peer-Counselling Support or Partnerships
- Community Partnerships/Support in Settlement Supports

Our organization is currently leading separate initiatives in relation to Brain Injury and Human Trafficking.

Our organization and broader community network of like-minded folks will always have new and ever-evolving needs. Our awareness of this keeps our responsive/preventative measures and projects relevant and current, as much as it signifies the breadth of work still ahead of us.

We are grateful we could address, alter, grow and develop what we could with this project, but we are deeply aware of how much room there still is for growing!

7

What critical lessons were learned during the development, delivery or evaluation of the project activities?

The FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward Extension Project taught our team several lessons throughout different phases of the project.



Surveys

Surveys are a vital tool for gathering participant feedback and measuring knowledge gained, but staff found the heavy use of surveys overwhelming. Future projects should consider utilizing a variety of feedback mechanisms, particularly when multiple projects are being evaluated through the use of surveys at the same time.



Networks

The networks we established or mobilized with community partners facilitated valuable knowledge exchange and resource sharing in our capacity-building efforts. This emphasized the necessity of building and maintaining strong community connections. Furthermore, the importance of partnering with organizations and individuals who share Womenatthecentre's values and objectives cannot be overstated. Addressing complex topics and issues, such as GBV, colonialism, and patriarchy, requires community members who are willing to engage critically and constructively, and this project benefited immensely from such collaborations.



Creative Technology

We budgeted for the use of a new technology platform to host the **Heart Work Conference**. We typically use Zoom to host public-facing events, occasionally using Zoom Webinar features. This has worked well, but the use of Ring Central streamlined outreach, marketing, ticket-sales and donations, information and knowledge holding and sharing, networking, and conference delivery. As a result, the conference had a large reach, and greater attendance than our usual Zoom events. The conference was also delivered without a single hitch, which is due to the platform, and equally our Project Coordinator, who learned the platform so thoroughly. We learned a valuable lesson regarding investing in and budgeting for the right technological platforms to share and mobilize information.



Sustainability

It is imperative for future projects and ongoing programming to consider diverse funding sources to ensure long-term viability. Sustainable practices are essential for the continued success and impact of our work. Sustainability should also be included in precariously funded project work plans, where relevant.



Funding

The project benefited significantly from the involvement of paid professionals. The budget allowed for the hiring of skilled training professionals. This ensured that the training sessions were led by knowledgeable and engaging facilitators who provided tailored in-depth information beyond what is provided in basic community presentations. This also enabled our organization to fairly compensate individuals, addressing a common issue in some community spaces that often expect or can only ask for free labour. This highlights the importance of investing in expertise, particularly survivor expertise and knowledge.



Event Coordination

Organizing the three-day **Heart Work Conference** revealed the complexity and challenges involved in the planning of events on such a large scale. Managing multiple moving parts, including coordinating with over a dozen presenters, can be complex for a small team. This experience reinforced our belief in the power of collaborative work. It highlighted the importance of working as a team to provide diverse perspectives and skill sets, holding each other accountable while supporting one another and navigating challenges collectively. We were able to tackle the logistical hurdles by working closely and collaboratively with organizational team members and community partners.

8

How has the project contributed to the sustainability of the organization?

The FeedIn, FeedBack, FeedForward Extension project made significant contributions to the sustainability of WomenatthecentrE. It established key mechanisms that ensure ongoing capacity and support to our various initiatives. The development of a social enterprise model through the **SPARK training program provides a continuous revenue stream that supports the organization’s activities and allows for further expansion of its programs.** This innovative model will not only fund the organization’s existing activities but also facilitate the expansion of its programs and extend the organization’s impact by offering training and support to the wider community outside of the gender-based violence sector. Incoming funding from **SPARK** can also be directed at future capacity building efforts.



Fig. SPARK Promotional Flyer

Additionally, the project’s focus on building internal capacity through targeted training has strengthened the organization’s ability to support GBV survivors. This investment in internal capacity not only improves the immediate support provided to survivors but also **builds a resilient organizational foundation that can sustain and expand its services over time**, even as external conditions and survivor needs evolve. This approach builds a strong foundation for the organization, allowing it to continue working effectively, adapt to changes, and have a lasting impact.

The **Volunteer Program Plan**, another critical outcome of the project, will ensure a more effective approach to volunteer management. Volunteers play a vital role in executing existing programs and initiatives. With a well-structured volunteer plan, **WomenatthecentrE can rely on a consistent network of volunteers to support day-to-day operations and deliver services efficiently.** Effective volunteer management reduces turnover and the need for constant recruitment, saving time and resources that can be redirected toward other critical areas. This comprehensive strategy strengthens the organization's overall sustainability and capacity to maintain programming and planning of new initiatives.

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What could be the long-term impacts of this project?

The long-term impacts of this project are similar to its contribution to organizational sustainability, as seen in the response to Question 7. The long-term impacts of the project are expected to be far-reaching, with some impacts being unmeasurable.



Capacity Building

The project led to significant skill building amongst our team and broader community and the development of capacity resources & programs.

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CAPACITY
TOOLS, RESOURCES &
PROGRAMS DEVELOPED



Sustainable Revenue Stream

The revenue stream from the **SPARK** training will allow the organization to maintain and expand its programs, providing ongoing benefits to the community. It will also contribute to creating more resilient and prepared communities, better equipped to address GBV issues and support survivors in the long term. This training program also strengthens partnerships with corporate sectors and community organizations, creating collaborative networks that amplify support for survivors and GBV prevention efforts.



Volunteer Programming

A strategic volunteer program provides WomenatthecentrE with the opportunity to develop new initiatives and expand existing programs. Volunteers bring diverse skills, experiences, and perspectives to the organization, which enriches the creativity and innovation in program development. Many volunteers also identify as survivors and, therefore, play a crucial role in promoting WomenatthecentrE's survivor-led approach by actively participating in program design, implementation, and evaluation. Their contributions ensure that services are responsive to the diverse needs of survivors and aligned with survivor-led principles of empowerment and advocacy. Furthermore, volunteers are integral to WomenatthecentrE's sustainability, offering their time and expertise as invaluable assets that enhance organizational capacity without incurring additional costs. They not only enhance the organization's capacity to deliver meaningful impact but also foster a sense of accountability and community involvement among volunteers, further solidifying their commitment to eradicating GBV.

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Fig. WomenatthecentrE Team Retreat 2024