



## **Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence develops a Government of Alberta Accountability Framework to Prevent Gender-Based Violence**

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Domestic and sexual violence stems from oppressive systems, that often normalize harmful worldviews, including dominance, control, violence, and inequity (Litviniuc et al., 2022). These worldviews and many more have shaped our culture, and our structures, including laws, policies, and practices in our systems, institutions, and organizations <sup>1</sup>. To reduce and prevent domestic and sexual violence, prevention policies and frameworks have been implemented by the Government of Alberta. However, to determine if these policy frameworks are influential, they must include measures to understand if their policies for the prevention of domestic and sexual violence are having an impact.

**RESOLVE Alberta Steering Committee Member Professor Lana Wells** created Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence, a primary prevention hub for domestic and sexual violence. Over 3 years, Shift worked with the Government of Alberta and IMPACT to develop a series of policy, practice, and system recommendations to prevent domestic and sexual violence. Throughout this project, they wrote 12 different plans that were focused on root causes, drivers, risks, and protective factors. This led to The Alberta Primary Prevention playbook, which was written for partners as an implementation strategy to shift towards primary prevention as opposed to focusing on intervention and after violence. This specific accountability Framework was designed to help the Government of Alberta select a series of measures to monitor prevention efforts. It outlines responsibilities, performance expectations, and plans for monitoring and reporting progress on violence prevention <sup>1</sup>. Its goal is to lay out recommendations that will challenge systems of oppression and problematic worldviews to enable all Albertans to live a life of safety, equity, dignity, justice, and belonging free from violence <sup>1</sup>.

This research aspires to provide a framework for the Government of Alberta to focus their time and resources on prevention approaches that target causes and drivers of domestic and sexual violence. The researchers <sup>1</sup>, approached primary prevention within legislation and policy reform through three pathways:

1. Improving existing practices to promote healing, accountability, and repair resilience and skills in families and individuals.
2. Changing cultures and structures to support and reinforce prosocial norms, equity, safety, dignity, justice, and belonging.
3. Re-imagining and building worldviews that promote liberation, peace, belonging, and harmony.

Furthermore, this report relays the importance of evidence-based decision-making, objective assessment of progress, and reporting to monitor changes in rates of violence<sup>1</sup>. The accountability framework underwent a thorough development process, starting with data collection from reputable sources and internal government data. Through iterative refinement and feasibility analysis, a list of indicators were identified, aimed at measuring outcomes aligned with primary prevention efforts. Under each lever of change, the framework provides outcomes, indicators, descriptions of indicators, and ways of calculating them<sup>1</sup>. The researchers<sup>1</sup> indicate that the government of Alberta can now use this framework to identify priority areas that it wants to focus on and select outcomes and indicators based on their capacity.

In addition to conducting the research above and creating this accountability framework, Shift has produced further frameworks, policies, and strategies in the prevention of domestic and sexual violence, examples include:

- Advancing gender equality in Alberta: A Critical Strategy to Prevent Gender-Based Violence.
- A Suite of Policy and Legislation Recommendations for the Government of Alberta to Advance Primary Prevention of Sexual Violence.
- How governments and the anti-violence sector can center children, youth, and their families in primary prevention efforts.

To read the Government of Alberta Accountability Framework for the Primary Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence please visit: <https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/accountability-framework-for-evaluating-legislation-and-policy-reforms-for-primary-prevention-of-domestic-and-sexual-violence/>

For more information on Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence please visit their website at <https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/>

## References

<sup>1</sup>Litviniuc, A., Hansen, B., & Wells, L. (2022). Accountability framework for evaluating legislation and policy reforms for primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence: Phase one results. Calgary, AB: The University of Calgary, Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence.