



Innovation, Implementation, & Sustainability: AVA Women's & Girls' Health Hub National Meeting Report

November 20th, 2025



**ALLIANCE OF CANADIAN
RESEARCH CENTRES**
ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**ALLIANCE DES CENTRES
DE RECHERCHE CANADIENS**
SUR LA VIOLENCE BASÉE SUR LE GENRE



CIHR IRSC
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Institut de recherche en santé du Canada
 Women and Gender Equality Canada
Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada



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Introduction

Established in 2022, the Alliance against Violence and Adversity (AVA) is a health research training platform that is creating the capacity to transform community health and social services to promote the health and wellness of girls, women, and gender-diverse populations at-risk/affected by violence and adversity over the life cycle. The AVA team comprises over 580 partners, including 95 community agency partners across Canada. It also includes a knowledge mobilization hub, funded in 2023 and funds research since 2024 with community partners across Canada.

The *Innovation, Implementation, & Sustainability: AVA Women's and Girls' Health Hub National Meeting* occurred on November 20, 2025, on the Zoom video software system. This meeting commenced with Scientific Director, Dr. Nicole Letourneau, commemorating AVA's innovative internship projects and highlighting the alliance's collective successes. Thereafter, Dr. Nicole Letourneau, Dr. Jennifer Collins, Dr. Kharah Ross, and Dr. Sarah Yercich highlighted AVA's progress, priorities, and growth. In addition, a series of presentations discussed innovation and its vital role in: 1) strengthening the gender-based violence (GBV) prevention sector; 2) sustainability in global partnerships; 3) sustaining impact through economic and policy innovation; and 4) planning for global innovation grants in GBV research and practice. Finally, an interactive workshop was held, during which participants engaged in small-group reflections on AVA's future sustainability. These strategizing sessions thereby ensured that AVA's research efforts are directly relevant and responsive to meeting the priorities of communities impacted by violence and adversity.

Overall, the AVA National Meeting showcased the collective commitment of the AVA network in championing the health and wellness of girls, women, and gender-diverse individuals at risk of, or affected by, violence and adversity.

In total, there were 156 attendees which comprised AVA members from 11 universities, 20 community agency partners, and the following Alliance of Canadian Research Centres on GBV:

1. FREDA Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children (Burnaby, BC)
2. Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse (RESOLVE): Alberta (Calgary), Saskatchewan (Saskatoon), Manitoba (Winnipeg)
3. Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children (CREVAWC) (London, ON)
4. Recherches Appliquées et Interdisciplinaires sur les Violences Intimes, Familiales et Structurelles (RAIV) (Laval, QC)
5. Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre/Centre Muriel McQueen Fergusson (MMFC/CMMF) (Fredericton, NB)

Host Biographies

Dr. Nicole Letourneau



Nicole Letourneau is a Professor in the Faculty of Nursing and Cumming School of Medicine (Pediatrics, Psychiatry and Community Health Sciences) at the University of Calgary, where she holds the University of Calgary Research Excellence Chair in Parent and Child Mental Health. She currently serves as the Scientific Director of the AVA) Health Research Training Platform and Women's and Girls' Health Hub (funded by CIHR). She is also the director of RESOLVE Alberta and principal investigator for the CHILD (Child Health Implementation and Longitudinal Development) Studies Program at the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute; examining parenting and child health & development in the context of maternal depression, family violence and other toxic stressors and early adversity.

Ms. Andrea Silverstone



Andrea Silverstone is the CEO of Sagesse, an organization committed to disrupting systems of abuse. She has led the development of innovative programs and policies addressing domestic and sexual abuse, including in under-studied communities like women of affluence and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Her leadership has driven impactful initiatives, including a provincial collective impact project, a primary prevention framework, and advocacy for Clare's Law in Alberta. Andrea has testified before parliamentary committees on coercive control and is recognized globally for her advocacy. Beginning her career at the Awo Taan Native Women's Shelter in Calgary, she transitioned to CEO of Sagesse in 2001. Andrea is committed to ensuring vulnerable individuals can reach their full potential, believing in the obligation to leave the world better than she found it. A Registered Social Worker and Mediator, she holds a Master of Psychology in Coercive Control from the University of Salford and is pursuing a doctorate in Applied Psychology.

Ms. Carrie McManus



Carrie McManus is Director of Innovation and Programs at Sagesse, where she breaks down barriers and drives change. Passionate about eradicating domestic abuse, she leads innovative initiatives that challenge beliefs and empower communities. Under her leadership, Sagesse has expanded its work to rural and remote areas, sex work, and underserved communities, and she has led initiatives supporting informal supporters—friends, family, and colleagues of those experiencing or using abuse. With over 20 years of experience, she previously worked at Mount Royal University's Stepping Up program and holds a Bachelor of Arts from Dalhousie University and a Diploma of Social Work from Mount Royal University.

Speaker Biographies

Ms. Ana López van Balen



Ana López van Balen is Vice President, Workplace & Economic Opportunity at Futures Without Violence, where she advances culture, policy, and systems change to support a thriving and equitable world for women, children, and all people. She oversees the national resource center Workplaces Responds, which provides free resources, training, and technical assistance to employers, workers, and advocates to prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence, and stalking in the workplace. With over 20 years of executive experience, she has worked with community stakeholders at local and national levels to support businesses and jurisdictions in addressing systemic barriers affecting the social and economic needs of vulnerable families and individuals. She holds a master's degree from Columbia University School of Social Work and a bachelor's degree in Human & Organizational Development from Vanderbilt University, with a concentration in Community Development and Social Policy, as well as a Certificate in Public Management from George Washington University's Council of Governments Institute for Regional Excellence. She is a Presidential Leadership Scholar, a Daily Record Maryland's Top 100 Women honoree, a Center for Progressive Leadership Executive Fellow, a Washingtonian of the Year, and an Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation Exponent Award winner.

Ms. Charmaine Crockett



Charmaine Crockett, Interim CEO and a long-serving Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health (CanWaCH) leader, Charmaine brings a collaborative approach to advancing women's and children's health globally. She draws on deep experience across membership-based organizations and government to guide the organization through transition, while strengthening partnerships, leading key initiatives, and ensuring alignment across the team and network.

Dr. Jennifer Collins



Jennifer Collins joined AVA in 2025 as an Early Career Researcher and is an assistant professor with Memorial University's Faculty of Nursing. She has a background in arts-based research, teaching; learning and interventions; neurodegenerative disorders (i.e. multiple sclerosis and dementia) including gendered research for women with multiple sclerosis; gerontological health; nursing education; mixed methods in nursing research; phenomenology and critical phenomenology.

Dr. Kharah Ross



Kharah Ross is a Health Psychologist, with a specialization in maternal-child health and psychoneuroimmunology, or the study of the connections between psychosocial states (e.g. stress, close relationship quality) and immune activity. Dr. Ross was a postdoctoral scholar at the University of California – Los Angeles (2015-2018) and with the Preterm Birth Initiative at the University of California – San Francisco (2016-2018). She then returned to her hometown, Calgary, AB, where she was an Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions and CIHR Postdoctoral Fellow (2018-2019) at the Owerko Centre in the Alberta Children’s Hospital Research Institute, University of Calgary. Dr. Ross joined the Psychology program at Athabasca University in 2019, and is currently an Associate Professor. As lead of the AVA Online Program, Kharah has led the development of the AVA Online Certificate Program and AVA Online 2.0.

Dr. Sarah Yercich



Sarah Yercich is an Instructor in the Department of Sociology and Criminology and Chair of Women’s and Gender Studies at Capilano University. She is a multi and interdisciplinary researcher, activist, and teaching scholar focused on violence against women, children/youth, and gender diverse communities, as well as knowledge mobilization, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and prison education. Her expertise spans the disciplines of criminology, sociology, socio-legal studies, social justice, and women’s and gender studies.

Sarah is also the Co-Director of the FREDA Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children at Simon Fraser University. As host of the AVA Webinar Series, Sarah is involved in the coordination and hosting of AVA’s weekly webinars.

Meeting Program and Key Takeaways

The meeting on November 20, 2025 began with Scientific Director Dr. Nicole Letourneau acknowledging AVA's innovative internship initiatives and celebrating the alliance's shared achievements. Drs. Nicole Letourneau, Jennifer Collins, and Kharah Ross then highlighted AVA's recent progress, key priorities, and growth. Presentations explored the role of innovation in strengthening the GBV prevention sector, sustaining global partnerships, leveraging economic and policy innovations to maintain impact, and planning for global innovation grants in GBV research and practice. The meeting concluded with an interactive workshop, where participants engaged in small-group discussions on AVA's future sustainability, ensuring research efforts remain responsive to the needs of communities affected by violence and adversity.

Summary of AVA

Presenters: J. Collins, N. Letourneau, K. Ross, S. Yercich

Objective of Presentation

- To summarize AVA's mission, reach, and programs, highlighting how implementation science, lived experience, and training platforms transform health and social services for women, girls, and gender-diverse people affected by violence and adversity.

AVA's Mission and Reach

- **Mission:** Build capacity to transform community health and social services for girls, women, and gender-diverse people at risk of or affected by violence and adversity, and reduce family violence and early childhood adversity to improve health and wellness across the life course.
- **National Network:** AVA brings together national, academic, and community partners across all provinces and several territories, with more than 500 members involved in collaborative work.

Implementation Science and Research

- **Closing the Gap:** AVA uses implementation science to close the “knowledge–do” gap by identifying and addressing barriers to uptake of evidence-based interventions in community and health settings.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Multidisciplinary teams of academic and community partners conduct implementation-focused research on evidence-based solutions for women, girls, and gender-diverse people experiencing violence and adversity.

Centering Lived Experience and EDIA

- **Lived Experience Lens:** AVA intentionally includes women and gender-diverse people with lived experience, including those with disabilities, to address inequities in resources and higher risks of intimate partner violence and to inform research, policy, and practice.
- **EDIA Integration:** Equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility are embedded across AVA's activities through training and advisory structures that include sexual and gender minorities, Indigenous knowledge holders, and Black and racialized communities.

Dual-Path Structure and Core Programs

- **Indigenous Path:** Two Indigenous Women and Girls Health Hubs led by Drs. Marlyn Bennett and Malcolm King focus on Indigenous girls' well-being, healing, and empowerment, and on Indigenous health equity grounded in traditional knowledges and medicines.
- **Core Program Path:** The Women and Girls Health Hub anchors six interconnected programs: AVA Online, Triadic Mentorship Program, Community Agency Internship Program, Early Career Researcher Program, and AVA's research program.

Knowledge Mobilization: Women and Girls Health Hub

- **Activities:** The Hub convenes regional and national meetings, supports Indigenous hubs, and offers a rich suite of knowledge mobilization activities including Webinar Wednesdays, the HERHealth podcast, social media outreach, and an inventory of innovative practices and programs.

AVA Online Training Modules

- **Design:** A free, bilingual, asynchronous curriculum built around gendered violence and adversity, EDIA, and implementation science, co-created by academic and community partners and delivered through varied, interactive formats.
- **Credentials and Recognition:** Organized into four topic pillars and three levels (Foundations, Intermediate, Advanced) with badges and a certificate equivalent to a three-credit course, recognized for university credit and used for professional development and staff training.

Mentorship and Experiential Learning Programs

- **Triadic Mentorship Program:** Pairs graduate trainees with an academic and a community mentor to develop community-engaged career paths and bridge academic–community divides.

- **Community Agency Internship Program:** Provides paid, flexible internships with community agencies on community-identified projects, resulting in substantial internship hours and shared funding for partners.
- **Early Career Researcher Program:** Offers teaching release to early career researchers to develop leadership, support AVA programs, and strengthen academic–community collaboration.

Future Directions

- **Ongoing Research and Engagement:** Current implementation science projects are collecting data on six evidence-based solutions, with future findings expected to further inform practice, while AVA continues to grow its membership and invite participation in AVA Online and mentorship initiatives.

Innovation, Implementation, and Sustainability

Presenters: C. McManus, A. Silverstone

Objective of Presentation

- To empower attendees to think about how to incorporate innovation within their structures and processes, and promote sustainability and strategy as part of their innovation planning.

Key Takeaways on Innovation

- **Need for Innovation:** There is a need for a better way to address the complexity of current systems and structures.
- **Cycle of Learning:** Innovation is driven by a continuous loop where new learning leads to application, resulting in new outcomes, which then leads to new learning.
- **Innovation as Strategy:** Innovation at Sagesse is a deliberate strategy rooted in organizational goals to effectively disrupt domestic abuse within Canada's social services sector.
- **Innovation Horizons:** Three horizons were outlined for effective innovation and disruption:
 - **Incremental Innovation:** Focuses on improving existing systems, rather than changing their core performance.
 - **Reform-oriented Innovation:** Aims to change aspects of an existing system that perpetuate specific societal challenges.

- **Transformative Innovations:** Seeks to transform systems or create new ones based on radically different ideas to achieve unprecedented ways of working.
- **Mindset and Resilience:** Effective innovation requires identifying and experiencing failure and then engaging in resilience by asking how to improve next time. A suggested approach is the "say yes and you'll figure it out afterwards" mindset.
- **Humbleness:** Innovators must practice humility, "point the finger at themselves," and question whether they're serving the right clients.

Focus on Sustainability

- **Core Focus:** Sustainability must center on sustaining goals and impact, not just programs or structures.
- **Not the Focus:** Sustainability should not primarily be about the product, the organization, or the persona.
- **Support System:** A web of support and accountability is necessary for sustainability.
- **Process:** The sustainability path will feel "hard and messy" but requires slowing down when needed, humility, and room for growth and change.

How to Collaborate and Sustainability in Global Partnerships

Presenter: C. Crockett

Objective of Presentation

- To emphasize that collaborative partnership and co-creation across sectors is the fundamental strategy for achieving sustainable and scalable impact in women's health and social initiatives.

CanWaCH's Model and Premise

- **Role:** CanWaCH serves as the coordinating center for the Pan-Canadian Women's Health Coalition, of which AVA is one of ten research hubs.
- **Coalition Strength:** CanWaCH is a coalition of over 100 Canadian organizations (NGOs, research institutions, professional associations) founded on the premise that they are stronger when they work together – not just in global health, but in every sector.
- **Impact Through Partnership:** The coalition model is built to combine different strengths and experiences to achieve an impact that no single organization could achieve alone.

Collaboration and Inclusivity

- **Co-creation as Practice:** True partnership is co-creation, where each organization contributes unique knowledge, networks, and lived experience; it's the starting point, not an afterthought.
- **Value of Lived Experience:** Collaboration must intentionally include voices often left out (e.g., those with less capacity, trainees, early career staff, day-to-day workers) from grassroots to senior leaders.
- **Inclusivity in Global Health:** Longevity comes from trust, flexibility, shared ownership, and making partnership easy—celebrating shared success rather than gatekeeping.

Building Capacity and Thought Leadership

- **Global to Local:** Many collaborations are grassroots/bottom-up; CanWaCH helps turn member ideas and needs into scalable outputs through capacity-building activities like the annual CanWaCH Academy.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Build thought leadership by linking work to current conversations/events, aligning with like-minded champions for awareness/policy, and using subject matter expertise to shape public discourse.
- **Connecting the Dots:** Most impactful collaborations come from unexpected places requiring curiosity and courage (e.g., CanWaCH-Wickfest hockey tournament linking global health, girls' sport, nutrition, and empowerment; Foreign Policy by Canadians; Healthy World Conference).

Path to Sustainable Impact

- **Collective Building:** Sustainable impact is defined by building something as a collective that no single actor could build alone.
- **Willingness to Adapt:** True collaboration takes the willingness to "see a dotted line and make it solid" and the proverbial effort of fitting a square peg in a round hole.
- **Key to Sustainability:** Achieving sustainable impact requires staying open, staying connected, and fostering true collaboration.

Sustaining Impact through Economic and Policy Innovation

Presenter: A. López van Balen

Objective of Presentation

- To demonstrate the massive economic burden of GBV and harassment to motivate policy and system innovations that better support survivors in the workplace and promote economic equity.

The Economic Impact of GBV and Harassment

- **Lifetime Cost of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV):** \$3.6 trillion present value for all U.S. adult victims (32M females, 12M males); government sources bear \$1.3T (37%) of burden.
- **Cost Breakdown:** Government sources pay an estimated \$1.3 trillion (37%) of this economic burden.
- **Impact on Economy:** The \$3.6 trillion IPV lifetime cost is comprised of:
 - 59% in medical costs.
 - 37% in lost productivity among victims and perpetrators.
 - 2% in criminal justice activities.
 - 2% in other costs, such as property loss or damage.
- **Ripples of Harm:** The harm of IPV extends beyond the perpetrator and survivor/family, impacting workplaces, communities, coworkers, and friends.

Impact on Employers

- **Work Days Lost:** Workdays lost due to IPV, sexual violence, and/or stalking over victims' lifetimes are worth an estimated \$137.8 billion (2022 USD).
- **Employee Absence:** 12.7% (or 15.9 million survivors) missed at least one day of work as a result of IPV.
- **Employment Sabotage:** Nearly 9 in 10 survivors of domestic/dating violence report experiencing employment sabotage, with up to 60% reporting job loss.
- **Cost to Replace:** The cost to replace an employee ranges from 50% - 200% of their annual salary. Indirect costs include lost productivity, institutional knowledge, decreased morale.

Economic Abuse

- **Definition:** Economic abuse includes behaviors that are coercive, deceptive, or that unreasonably control or restrain a person's ability to acquire, use, or maintain economic resources to which they are entitled.
- **Prevalence:** 99% of survivors experience economic abuse.
- **Barrier to Leaving:** 3 in 4 survivors stay in abusive relationships due to the need for economic security.
- **Access to Funds:** The average amount women have to access without oversight is \$300.

Employment Needs and Protections for Survivors

- **Key Employment Needs:** Time off, job separation support, reasonable accommodations, and protections against discrimination.
 - 40+ American states offer paid/unpaid leave, unemployment insurance, crime victim leave, anti-discrimination laws, and workplace accommodations for DV safety.
 - New American national survivor survey (2K+ respondents) shows 71% unaware of protections, 50% unaware of paid leave.
- **How Survivors Use Time Off Work:** For relocating to safety, attending court, seeking medical care, working with an attorney or advocate, or helping a loved one with the same needs.
- **Workplace Safety Adjustments:** Used for staying safe while at work (physically & online), scheduling flexibility, or additional time off when leave is used up.
- **Anti-Discrimination & Retaliation Protections:** Used for addressing employer mistreatment due to survivor status, ensuring language and community-specific support, and supporting informal workers.

International (i) Alliance against Violence and Adversity (AVA): Expanding Training, Knowledge Mobilization, and Implementation Science Research to Transform Social Services for Girls and Women Affected by Violence/ Adversity in Low and Middle-Income Countries

Presenter: N. Letourneau

Objective of Presentation

- To expand AVA training, knowledge mobilization, and implementation science research to transform social services for girls and women affected by violence/adversity in low and middle-income countries.

The Global Crisis and Rationale

- GBV and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are recognized as major public health challenges worldwide.
- Over 1 billion children (more than half aged 2–17) experience violence annually, largely in Africa and Asia.
- Regions with the highest IPV rates include South Asia (35%), Sub-Saharan Africa (33%), and South America (~33%).

Challenges and Solutions

- Global aid for gender equality and violence prevention has either stagnated or declined.
- The COVID-19 pandemic increased risks and disrupted prevention/response services, especially in low- and middle-income countries.
- Low and middle-income countries frequently lack sufficient training and infrastructure to adapt, scale, and sustain effective interventions.
- Implementation science offers vital tools to strengthen evidence-based, locally led solutions to reduce GBV and ACEs.
- The Canadian Feminist International Assistance Policy (2017) provides a 10-year, \$1.4 billion commitment to women's health and rights.

Strategic Aims and Planned Activities

- Key aims of AVA's global expansion include building on AVA's successful national model, deepening international collaborations, and enhancing community-engaged research capacity.
 - Recognizing and valuing local-led solutions for organizations based in Brazil, Philippines, Thailand, South Africa, and Pakistan will be imperative. Accordingly, it is anticipated that imparting the skills associated with the AVA platform will improve the services that they provide.
 - For example, adapting AVA Online learning resources to local contexts (i.e. translation, determination of gaps, cultural relevancy) and expanding AVA's learning platform will help meet their learning needs.
 - It is also anticipated that the expansion of implementation science research capacity will occur through the provision of the Triadic Mentorship Program and internship program.
- Planned activities associated with the AVA grant application to SSHRC include conducting environmental scans and surveying partner networks (with a target of ~500 participants per region) to adapt and expand AVA's model internationally.

Interactive Workshop: Building Sustainable Futures for AVA

During the afternoon of November 20, 2025, several workshops occurred which encompassed topics based on building sustainable futures for AVA.

Workshop A: Keeping the Momentum Going

This workshop was hosted by Dr. Kharah Ross and focused on strategies for maintaining and expanding the impact of existing AVA programs. This workshop addressed two primary questions:

1. What strategies could be used to improve the financial sustainability of existing programs?
2. What innovative approaches could be brought to existing programs to expand their scope or reach?

The workshop participants engaged in an open discussion to brainstorm ideas for financial sustainability, leveraging current assets, and non-monetary ways to sustain the programs, specifically addressing AVA Online, mentorship programs, and internship programs. The following is a summary of participants' insights with respect to strategies that should be undertaken to maintain and expand AVA's current programs:

- Include people with lived experience in planning and implementing programs and delivering services.
- Provide a safe space and encourage people with lived experience to share their experiences.

Strategies for Financial Sustainability and New Revenue Streams

To improve financial sustainability, participants proposed creating paid-for resources that could generate steady revenue. One key suggestion was for the AVA Online platform to develop a paid resource, such as a curriculum or digital textbook, that universities could incorporate into courses (e.g., generating \$50 per student) to fund the program's existing open-resource content. Another recommended avenue for income generation was the development of specific, sector-adapted tools or training for businesses and professionals (e.g., resources for workplace violence or for nurses encountering disclosures in the emergency room).

In terms of external partnerships, it was proposed that AVA partner with businesses by selling online training or resources that they can implement in their workplace. Additionally, creating professional training for regulated professions (e.g., social workers, criminologists) that offers hours required for professional credentialing or licensing in partnership with relevant unions was suggested. Leveraging existing, successful organizational training models, such as the Quebec shelter network's Institute Echo platform, where organizations pay an annual fee (e.g., \$1,000 per organization) to give their entire team access, was also highlighted as a viable revenue model to explore.

Strategic Expansion and Leveraging Impact

Participants emphasized connecting AVA's work, such as AVA Online, to measurable population-level change to attract significant funding from philanthropic organizations and other funders. A strategy consultant suggested international expansion as a high-value revenue stream by leveraging AVA's knowledge and strategy implementation expertise in English- and French-speaking countries to avoid "reinventing the wheel". Additional tools and supports that could be offered to AVA Community Members were also discussed, including potential data and case management supports.

Non-Monetary Leveraging and Program Enhancement

For its mentorship and internship programs, the focus was on increasing the value provided to external partners. One idea was to weave together different internships, knowledge, and tools so that an intern who is part of AVA brings more comprehensive value, making organizations willing to pay a premium that can be partially directed back to AVA. For non-monetary support, the concept of leveraging university-sponsored "research shops" or Work Integrated Learning was introduced. This would position AVA as a "matchmaker" connecting community partners with students who can perform specialized work (e.g., literature reviews, statistical analyses, or

business cases) for free or through existing university program funding. Finally, one participant noted that provincial differences in funding structures and laws pose a challenge to a collective voice and approach to national sustainability.

Workshop B: Innovation with Knowledge Mobilization

This workshop was hosted by Dr. Sarah Yercich. The purpose of this workshop was to discuss how AVA could innovate its knowledge mobilization (KM) efforts to better reach diverse communities and strengthen the national and international impact of its activities. AVA's core KM mission – to mobilize and translate knowledge and make it accessible to reduce the academic gap amongst service provision and people with lived experience – served as the backdrop for the discussion. The conversation specifically focused on addressing those who may not traditionally engage with academic or policy-focused content, including people who are aging, lack resources, or distrust official knowledge systems, such as Indigenous communities.

The participants engaged in a fluid discussion to brainstorm creative mediums and effective outreach strategies, moving beyond traditional webinars and policy summaries. The conversation centred on leveraging short-form video/social (i.e., TikTok, Instagram Reels), adopting audience-centric messaging, and establishing strong, trusting relationships with community partners.

The following is a summary of participants' insights with respect to strategies that should be undertaken for innovative knowledge mobilization:

Enhancing User Experience and Leveraging Digital Media

Participants strongly advocated for a shift from traditional, often text-heavy mediums (such as webinars and podcasts) to formats that improve the user experience. Key suggestions included developing interactive videos, one-pagers, and infographics to create more engaging content. To significantly broaden reach, it was recommended that AVA establish an official presence on platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels to post short, impactful video clips that hold attention and counter the tendency to scroll past written text. One participant suggested using short animated videos (like Video Scribe) to share knowledge, noting that animation can also provide confidentiality for sensitive topics while still featuring expert or lived-experience voices. It was also stressed that AVA should actively address and counter the spread of disinformation (such as the "Trad wife" trend) prevalent on social media.

Adopting an Audience-Centric and Contextual Approach

A core theme was the necessity of tailoring content to the audience's needs and language. This begins with community members co-creating materials from the outset to ensure the messaging is relevant and aligned with their priorities. Participants advised being willing to shift language (e.g., using non-clinical terms like "narcissistic person") to match the terms people are actively using, prioritizing engagement over technical correctness. To make the research relevant, content

should be contextualized by relating it to things that are "hot in the moment" (e.g., conducting movie or TV show reviews) to socialize it and ensure it reaches a wider public. Using workshops was also highlighted as a valuable approach for engaging with community organizations.

Building Trust and Implementing a Stewardship Model

To reach communities that often lack access or distrust official knowledge systems (e.g., Indigenous folks, rural populations), the strategy must focus on relationship-building and grassroots outreach. It was stressed that AVA must prioritize building trust and relationships with key contacts and community partners first. The recommended model involves partnering with community stewards or leaders who can translate information in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways, positioning AVA as a meaningful resource rather than the sole knowledge hub. This includes identifying not just formal leaders but also "natural stewards" – influential people within the community structure. For professional outreach, it was suggested to bring training modules directly to frontline professional settings (such as ERs, Urgent Care, and specialized healing centers) by having "champions" lead educational days or short courses. Finally, participants recommended that AVA encourage its existing community partners to share content on their own social media pages to further broaden the reach.

Workshop C: National and Global Impacts of AVA: Promoting Innovation and Sustainability

This workshop, hosted by Dr. Nicole Letourneau, focused on high-level strategic actions for Promoting Innovation and Sustainability to enhance the National and Global Impacts of AVA. The discussion focused on concrete ideas such as conducting more research that connects with communities, supporting each other's funding applications within the AVA network, exploring partnerships with American agencies to fund AVA Online, and improving how AVA shares information through concise materials, greater use of AI, and closer collaboration with Quebec partners.

The following is a summary of participants' insights with respect to strategies that should be undertaken to maintain and expand AVA's current programs:

Strategies for Financial Sustainability and Strategic Growth

A key focus was placed on securing funding and strategically scaling the AVA network. Participants emphasized leveraging the network's collective strength by encouraging members to support each other's funding applications. To secure revenue from international partners, a direct strategy was proposed: figuring out how to partner with American agencies or institutions to get them to provide funding for the AVA Online platform. To inform implementation strategies for large-scale change, it was recommended that the group find the Policy Quarterly issue containing the article titled "Strategy Management at Scale".

Program Enhancement and Leadership Development

Strategies for enhancing existing programs involved better integrating students, research, and new external partnerships. Participants suggested doing more research that directly connects with community needs. To integrate the AVA network with academic work, it was recommended to involve AVA members in student committees. New opportunities were identified for growth, specifically noting that new leaders for new initiatives can emerge, such as for work targeting the business community. Michael Shier, Canada Research Chair in Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship in the Human Services, was identified as a potential contact to action this business-focused work.

Knowledge Mobilization and Collaborative Efficiency

To improve the clarity and efficiency of knowledge sharing, several actions were identified. It was suggested that AVA create information materials that are more concise to enable a better understanding of AVA programs (e.g., the Triadic Mentorship in Quebec). A forward-looking approach to mobilization included the need to consider using AI more to share knowledge. To prevent redundant efforts and improve national coordination, it was recommended to connect with Audrey-Anne Lague at Laval to discuss AVA Online and the Triadic Mentorship Program, and to work more closely and collaboratively with Quebec to "not reinvent the wheel". Finally, the group noted the importance of finding a way to work with workplaces somehow on AVA Online to expand the platform's utility.

Workshop D: Engagement with People with Lived Experience: Innovation and Sustainability

This workshop, facilitated by Dr. Jennifer Collins, focused on the critical issue of Engagement with People with Lived Experience (PLE) as a strategy for Innovation and Sustainability within the AVA network. The discussion centered on current successful engagement approaches, critical gaps in access, and how to appropriately recognize and compensate the valuable contributions of PLEs.

The following is a summary of participants' insights with respect to strategies that should be undertaken for innovative and sustainable engagement with people with lived experience:

Engagement Approaches and Deepening Understanding

The discussion highlighted that engagement should be framed as a genuine partnership with people with lived experience. An important strategy identified was the need for AVA network members to access additional training and educational opportunities to deepen their understanding of GBV-related issues. A relevant example from the discussion involved a health care professional who experienced a "light bulb" moment after attending a talk with a person with lived experience, realizing that abuse extends far beyond physical violence to include complex concepts like coercive control. This illustrates that continued professional

education around the nuances of GBV, informed directly by lived experience, is a key part of sustainable engagement.

Targeted Education for Healthcare Providers

Participants recommended developing a specialized course for healthcare providers to improve the assessment and early intervention of coercive control. This recommendation was driven by an identified gap where even professionals with prior training may continue to prioritize physical violence indicators – such as strangulation – over the non-physical, coercive patterns that often precede life-threatening escalation. A dedicated course would shift the focus toward recognizing these early patterns as high-risk indicators for femicide, allowing for intervention well in advance of physical harm.

Addressing Gaps in Access

A crucial part of the conversation focused on current gaps in accessing people with lived experience, which ultimately limit the diversity and representativeness of AVA's engagement efforts. These gaps were specifically linked to limitations in reaching people living in rural and remote areas, as well as limited access to underrepresented groups. Sustainably addressing these gaps requires targeted outreach and innovative strategies to connect with these hard-to-reach populations.

Acknowledging and Compensating Contributions

A major area of success and a strategy to ensure sustainability was the recognition of the importance of how AVA expresses gratitude to people with lived experience for sharing their wisdom. Participants recognized that sharing personal experiences is a gift of time and generosity that must be properly compensated. The key actions highlighted included providing appropriate patient partner stipends and explicitly expressing gratitude for their time and unique contributions. These practices are essential for ethical engagement and for creating a sustainable model where people with lived experience feel valued and respected for their intellectual and emotional labour.