

Consider the intersections!

Whether they offer services related to conflict and violence or other general supports, service providers must recognise the complexities of gender relations in diverse communities.

Further, to avoid negative consequences in the future, services must be informed by knowledge of how these relations can shift and be altered in the process of migration so that appropriate services can be made readily available as and when they are required. Considering the intersections of migration, settlement, and gender relations will allow service providers to address underlying issues that may contribute to tensions and conflicts experienced in the home. Additional services for exploration may include skill building for employment for both men and women, connection to financial literacy programs, programs for youth to foster healthy relations, culturally appropriate mental health services (i.e The Alberta Black Therapist Network), etc.



For more information on this project please visit our website:

<https://africacentre.ca/enhancing-gender-equity/>

or

<https://pran-network.ca/knowledge-mobilization/tools/>

For more information on our programs or to get involved please contact us via email at gender.equity@africacentre.ca

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Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

Gender Relations

Intimate Partner Violence



Gender relations

Relationships between men and women in intimate partnerships are often defined by the individual roles they play and the responsibilities they take on within the family. These are often determined or at least impacted by gender. Migration introduces new roles and responsibilities for each partner and, consequently, new dynamics within gender relations including access to spaces and resources, and voice in decision-making. Often, these new dynamics can prove as stressors that lead to conflict and IPV. This requires us to incorporate a thorough, well-rounded understanding of changing gender relations into intervention plans.

“Gender relations are the specific subset of social relations uniting men and women as social groups in a particular community, including how power and access to and control over resources are distributed between the sexes. Gender relations intersect with all other influences on social relations — age, ethnicity, race, religion — to determine the position and identity of people in a social group. Since gender relations are a social construct, they can be transformed over time to become more equitable”.¹

1. Gender Relations. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2016, January 3). <https://archive.unescwa.org/gender-relations>

Migration and Gender Relations

Gender relations are more volatile than we think. They are influenced by prevailing trends, changing social pressures, and by the various challenges of migration. Migration requires people to rebuild their lives, often from scratch, in their countries of resettlement. This means that previously held world views and social hierarchies may need to be reassessed and reconfigured to meet new post-migration needs. All these factors play a role in altering gender relations in migrant communities.

Research suggests that changes in gender relations during and after migration can leave migrant women more vulnerable to violence at home. This isn't to say that men can't be victims of violence too, they can and are.²

Most major family-related decisions relating to the migration process, such as the timing, the destination, and other logistical matters, are often made in the private sphere, where men traditionally exercise more power and control.

2. To better understand men's unique experiences and roles please see our pamphlet "Bringing Men into the Conversation on IPV".

Post-migration

Men usually take on the role of breadwinner and therefore have access to more social opportunities than women. In families where women are expected to stay at home and focus on rebuilding the family, women often end up financially dependent on their partners and thus, vulnerable to exploitation.

In cases where women end up earning the main income for the house, men may perceive a loss of their status. This sudden or gradual shift in the power dynamics within the couple can contribute to conflict.

Many immigrant communities falsely perceive the Canadian system as one that supports women at the expense of men. This perception of systemic benevolence towards women can challenge the traditional authority of men in many communities and contribute to men feeling unwelcome or undermined in Canada, which can become a triggering factor for conflict and violence at home. Ties to countries of origin, especially extended family influences could impact gender relations.

