

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF NEWCOMER WOMEN

Innovative Practices for Empowering Immigrant Women Facing Economic Abuse



WHAT IS ECONOMIC ABUSE?

Economic Abuse is a prevalent but understudied form of domestic violence with lasting adverse impacts on survivors. It refers to various tactics limiting **an individual's financial independence**, including economic control, economic exploitation, and employment sabotage. **Economic Abuse is experienced by 95% of victim-survivors**, while survivors from Indigenous, racialized, immigrant/newcomer/refugee, and other marginalized communities are at much higher risk.

Economic Abuse affects victim-survivors beyond their mental and physical health; it often leaves them indebted, socially isolated, limited employment opportunities and unable to provide for themselves and their children. From CCFWE's study in the National Capital Region, findings show that:

- 93%** of victim-survivors were not allowed to have their own money and have taken paychecks and/or financial aid taken away from them.
- 90%** of victim-survivors needed to account for how money was spent by showing receipts.
- 84%** of abusive partners built up debt under the victim-survivors' name.
- 86%** of victim-survivors were forced to quit work.

Chandrarajan, N., Bedard, T., Thomas, Haileyesus, M. P., Lucente, G. (2021). Access to Economic Resources of Economic Abuse Victims During COVID-19 in the National Capital Region, Canada. Canadian Centre for Women's Empowerment, 2021.

WHY SCREEN AND ADDRESS ECONOMIC ABUSE AS A SERVICE PROVIDER?

As with other forms of domestic violence, Economic Abuse can instill a lot of shame and guilt in a victim-survivor. Cultural norms and societal taboos surrounding money can make it even harder for victim-survivors to share their experiences or seek help. Proactively addressing Economic Abuse can significantly mitigate the negative financial consequences of survivors.

- **Discussion on finances can be uncomfortable** - Many women might not be aware that they experience Economic Abuse.
- **Resources can be used as conversation starters** - Economic empowerment tools can facilitate conversations on money and Economic Abuse.
- **General lack of resources on Economic Abuse** - there is little comprehensive information available for service providers on how to address Economic Abuse
- **Economic Abuse can continue post-separation** - continues long after victims leave and can lead to increased financial instability of survivors.
- **Responding quickly to lessen any negative impacts** - If Economic Abuse is quickly detected and addressed, survivors can sooner regain financial health and stability.

CCFWE'S INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF NEWCOMER WOMEN

The Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE) developed several evidence-based resources and tools on Economic Abuse and economic empowerment to assist service providers in supporting survivors. Addressing Economic Abuse should be a pivotal element of any support program for newcomer, immigrant and refugee women.

ECONOMIC ABUSE FACT SHEETS

- Information on Economic Abuse and support resources
- Simple and trauma-informed language
- Available in English, French, Arabic, Urdu, Hindu and soon Punjabi



MY MONEY, MY FREEDOM - DOMESTIC ABUSE AND FINANCIAL LITERACY PROJECT FOR SURVIVORS

- Tailored training workshop for the needs of survivors
- Developed in collaboration with trauma expert "Trauma of Money"
- 1st cohort: November 2023 - March 2024



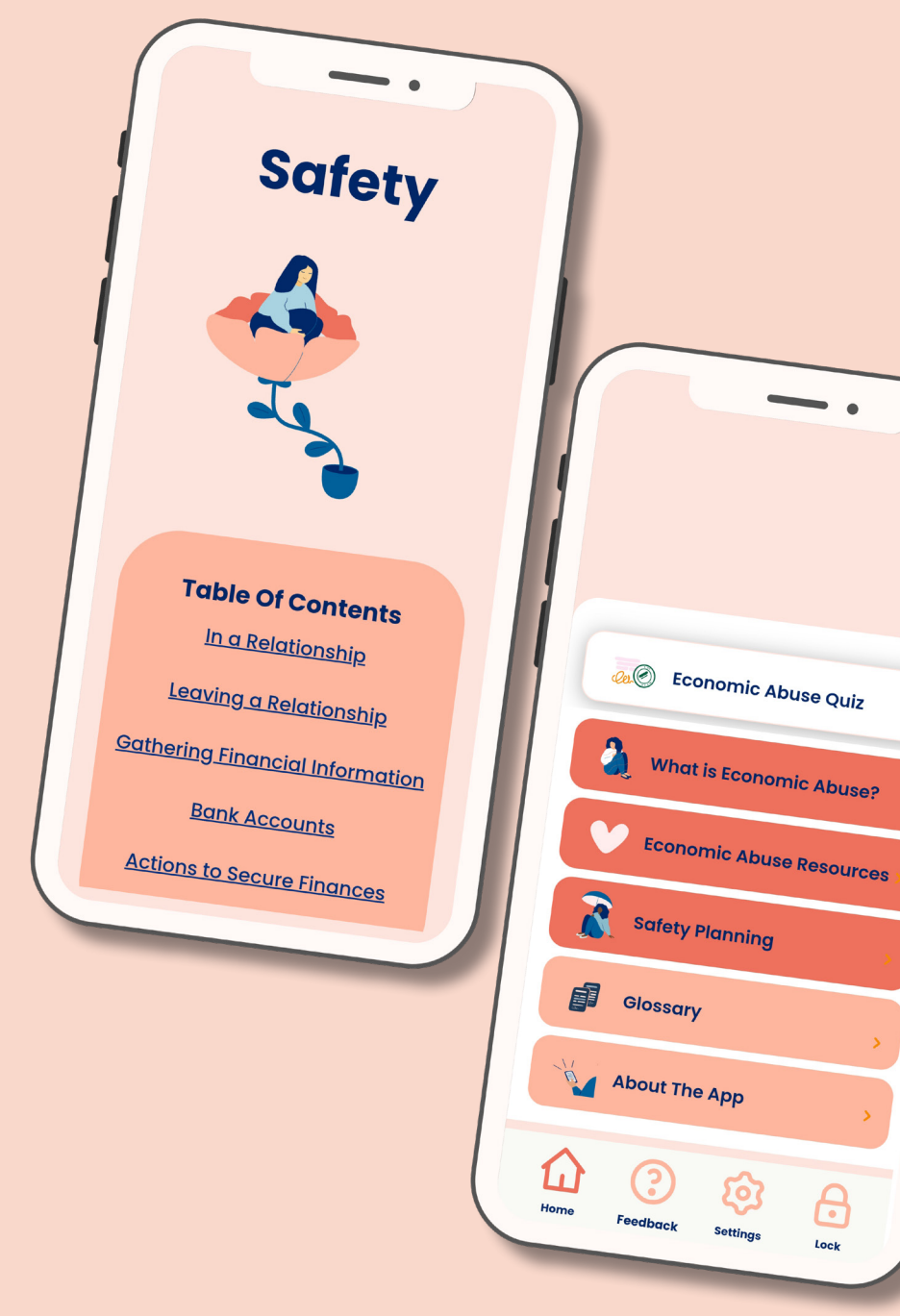
FIRST CANADIAN ECONOMIC ABUSE SCREENING TOOL (EAST) FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Equips social service providers to identify Economic Abuse and better support survivors
- Includes screening questions, background information on Economic Abuse and an extensive resource and reference guide (including immigration options for newcomer survivors)
- Available in English and French



STEAR MOBILE APP FOR SURVIVORS

- Tailored for survivors to access information on Economic Abuse and resources
- Resources and references per province and territory
- Safety feature to hide app's content
- Available in English, French, soon Arabic, Urdu and Hindu for Apple and Android.



ABOUT THE CANADIAN CENTER FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE) is the only Canadian national non-profit organization based in Ottawa dedicated to addressing Economic Abuse and injustice through advocacy, education, research, economic empowerment, and policy change. CCFWE works collaboratively with organizations and individuals to develop a comprehensive approach that enables domestic violence survivors to recover from Economic Abuse. It also addresses critical policy gaps preventing survivors from recovering and becoming economically secure and independent.

WWW.CCFWE.ORG



CONTACT US

Michaela Mayer, Director of Policy, CCFWE, michaela.mayer@ccfwe.org
Meseret Haileyesus, Executive Director, CCFWE, mesi.haileyesus@ccfwe.org



CANADIAN CENTER FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

CENTRE CANADIEN POUR L'AUTONOMISATION DES FEMMES