



The Mission of CAIWA is to provide a network of support to enable immigrant women & their families to attain a satisfying & secure life in Canada. We will achieve our mission by providing opportunities for growth through education, training, employment skills & leadership.

Central Alberta Research

A 3-Year Gender Based Research in a Rural Context

1

Isolated - lack of connection with cultural community
→ mental health issues

2

Fear of unknown restricts access to community services or connection

3

Fewer services available in smaller centres

Central Alberta Research

- Major issues
 - Navigation of the bureaucratic system
 - Employment for both high & low literacy levels
 - Domestic Violence
 - Child care
 - Communication
 - Transportation
- Secondary migration from larger centres → more isolated

Women's Economic Security

Introduction

A three year collaborative project with RDC Sociology. Funded by the Status of Women Canada

- Year 1: Gender-based Analysis
- Year 2: Consultation and dissemination
- Year 3: Engenders community response & design of a community plan

Women's Economic Security

Research Findings

12 common barriers faced by immigrant women when trying to obtain economic security:

1. Non-recognition of foreign credentials
2. Insufficient English language proficiency
3. Lack of "Canadian Experience"
4. Lack of financial means to upgrade credentials
5. Lack of affordable childcare
6. Information Deficit
7. Inadequate employment services
8. Discrimination (Age, Gender, Racial)
9. Cultural differences
10. Bureaucratic hazards
11. Social network beyond ethnic community
12. Social Isolation

Women's Economic Security

Outcomes achieved

- Pilot program funded by Alberta Works, NESS - Newcomer Employment Success Strategies
- Volunteer led ESL evening class at CAIWA
- Central Alberta Refugee Effort's (CARE) RBC funded Outreach ESL program in partnership with Kerry Wood Nature Centre (KWNC)
- Online Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) levels 3 and up (CARE)
- Employer Engagement program funded by Federal Government, United Way (CARE)

Women's Economic Security

Outcomes achieved

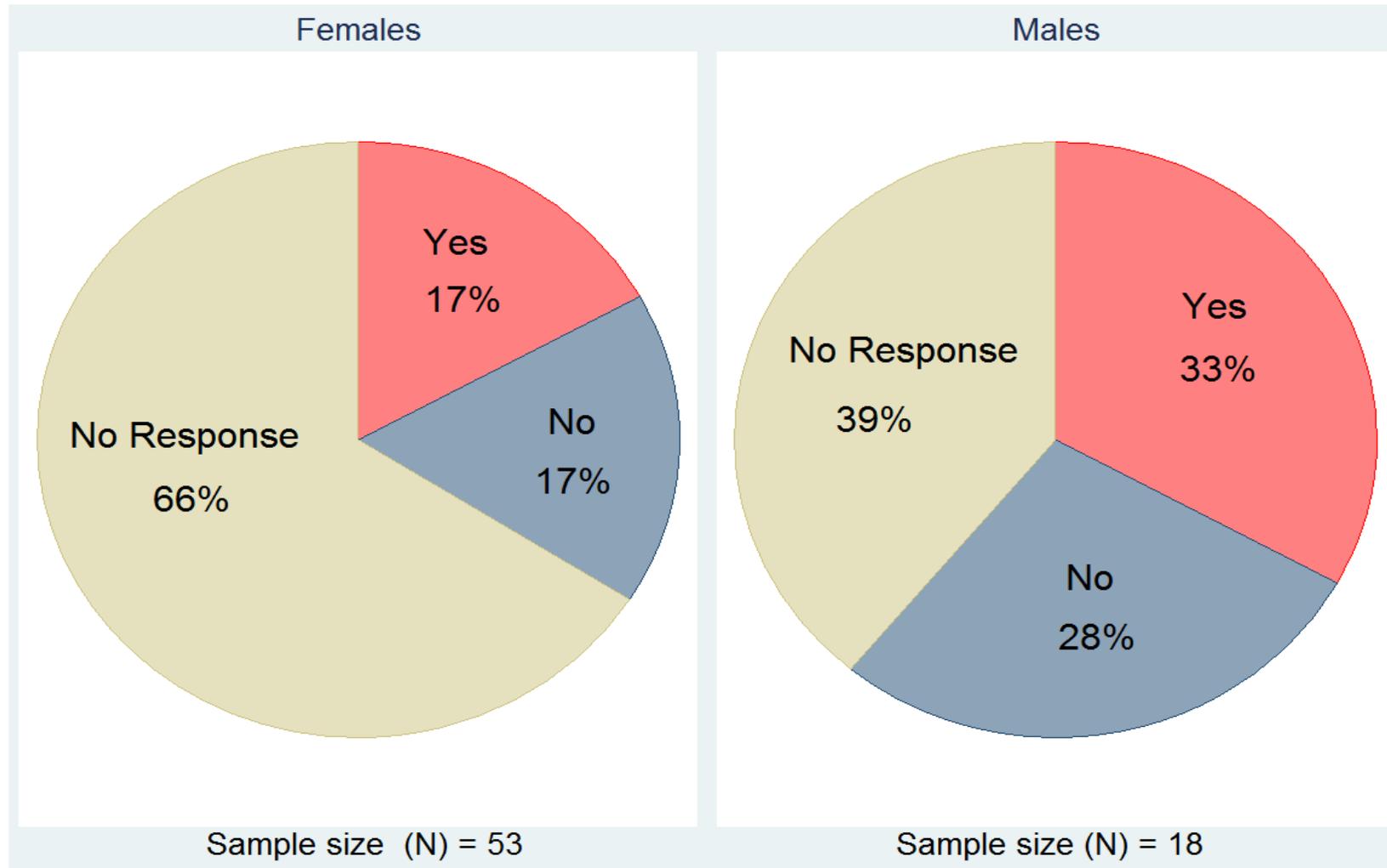
- Red Deer Public Library Adult Literacy Program- additional funding for several levels of language programs
- Alberta Innovation & Advanced Education has put a focus on literacy & foundational learning and barriers like childcare and transportation
- Smart Connection and Mentorship programs / workshops (CAIWA)

Safe Families

- Funded by the Human Services of Alberta
- 71 immigrants sampled in Central Alberta (53 females and 18 males)
- 75% of interviewed clients knew someone experiencing domestic violence
- 66% of female respondents did not respond to question on direct experience with domestic violence
- Physical abuse experience is common for both men and women

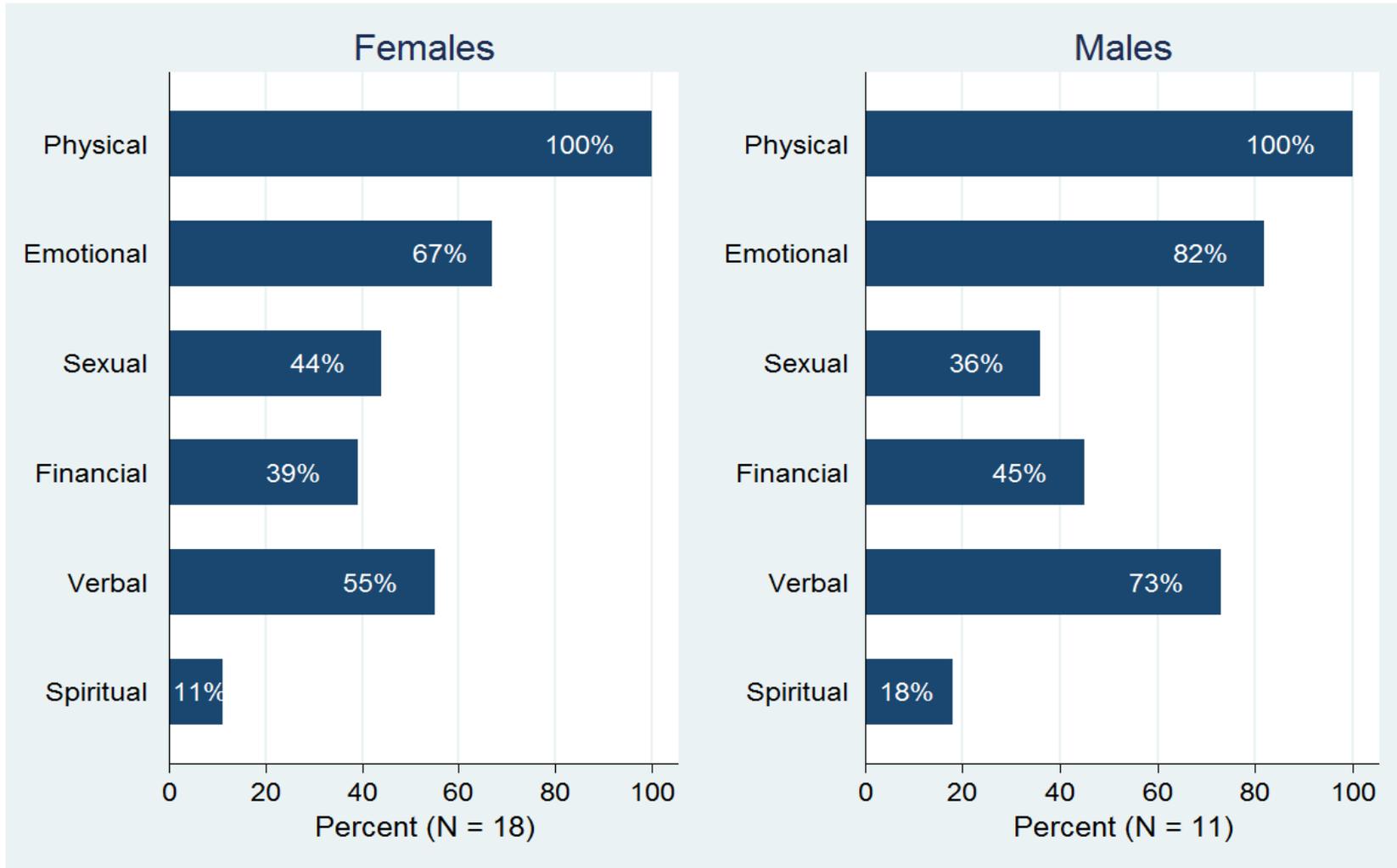
Safe Families

Direct Experience with Domestic Violence



Safe Families

Type of Abuse Experienced by Gender



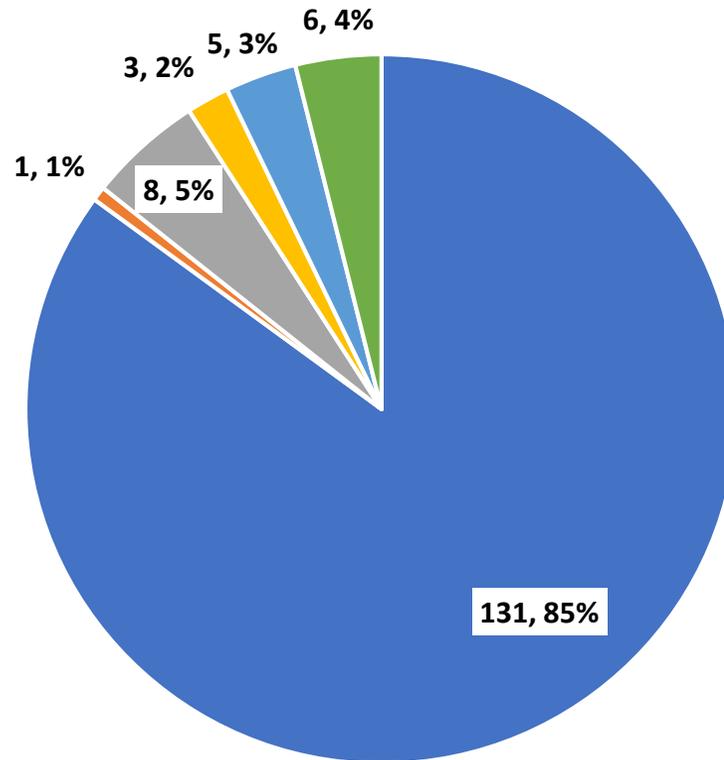
Making Life Easier: A Participatory Assessment of Programs and Services for Immigrant Women in Central Alberta (2015-2018)

Introduction

- Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
- Year 1: Survey of settlement experiences of recent immigrant women (n=154)
- Year 2: Photovoice project with recent Immigrant women to gain a deeper understanding of their settlement needs
- Year 3: Knowledge mobilization – community consultation and translation of research findings into better settlement services for present and future immigrant women.

Demographics: Current Town/City of Residence

Current Town/City of Residence, n=154



■ Red Deer ■ Rimbey ■ Ponoka
■ Penhold ■ Blackfalds ■ Lacombe

Making Life Easier: A Participatory Assessment of Programs and Services for Immigrant Women in Central Alberta (2015-2018)

Survey Research Findings

- 36% of respondents had utilized community services and programs provided
- Immigrants who most commonly used settlement services in their first year of arrival were refugees (67%)
- Many immigrant women had used the help of friends and family in dealing with issues of housing, education, employment, language, and in finding settlement programs
- About 60% of participants have family in Central Alberta when they arrived
- About 33% of participants have friends in Central Alberta when they arrived.

Making Life Easier: A Participatory Assessment of Programs and Services for Immigrant Women in Central Alberta (2015-2018)

Survey Research Findings

- About 60% of participants did not use services provided by settlement service providers
- Most serious issue with regards to:
 - i. Housing – “Cost too much money”;
 - ii. Education – “Language”, “Money”, “Non-recognition of Foreign Credential”;
 - iii. Employment – “Language”, “Non-recognition of Foreign Credential”, “Lack Canadian Work Experience”;
- Very few respondents reported issues regarding their children’s education
- The majority of the respondents (92%) had a positive settlement experience and would choose Central Alberta as the place of residence if they had to make the choice again.

Making Life Easier: A Participatory Assessment of Programs and Services for Immigrant Women in Central Alberta (2015-2018)

Outcomes achieved

- The project is ongoing. Some research findings have been translated into practical improvement of settlement services, such as the lowering of ESL fee (high ESL fee is one of the findings of the first year survey)
- Has recently completed the Photovoice data collection and preliminary findings presented at the Advisory Committee meeting on March 24, 2017. A Working Committee is being set up to translate research findings into practical solutions to settlement needs of immigrant women.