

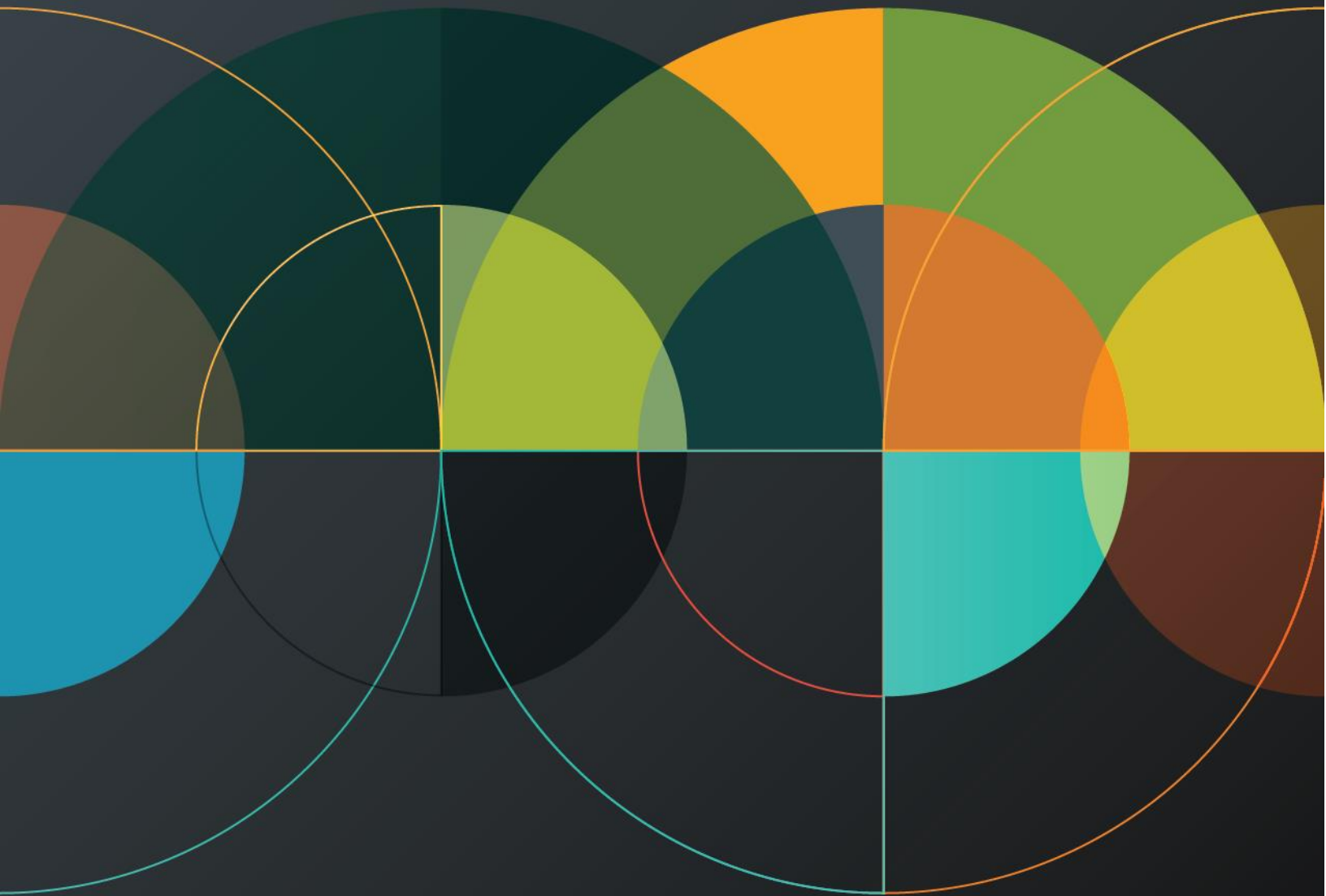


Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

Department of Justice Canada Implementation Plan for Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security – 2023 to 2029

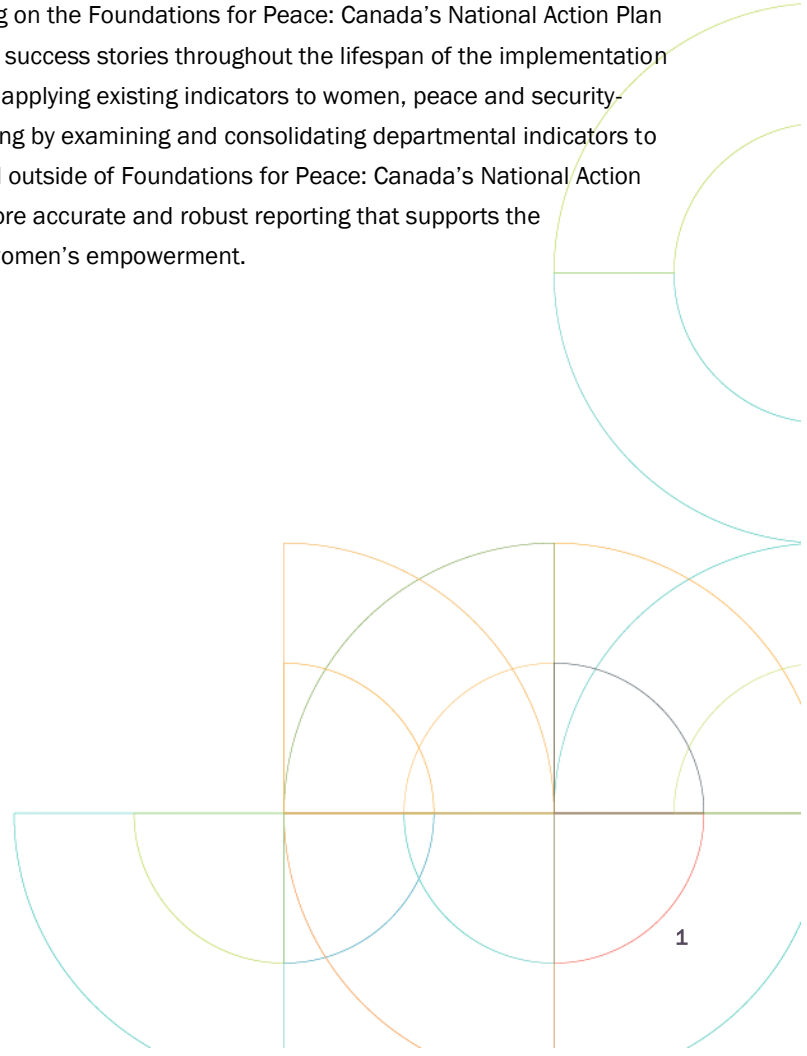


Introduction and purpose

Mandated to support the dual roles of the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada, the Department of Justice Canada works to ensure the federal government is supported by high-quality legal services and that the justice system is fair, relevant, accessible and reflective of Canadian values. These values include commitments to human rights, gender equality, the rule of law and access to justice for all, which aligns with the overall agenda under Canada's third National Action Plan: Foundations for Peace: Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. In addition, Justice Canada provides legal advice and support to a broad range of government initiatives and federal departments and agencies to ensure the implementation of evidence-based, responsive and inclusive public policy and governance.

Justice Canada is committed to advancing the implementation of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda by supporting the promotion and protection of human rights and the achievement of gender equality for women and girls in all their diversity at national and international levels. The department recognizes that progress on both fronts is necessary to achieve the ultimate outcome of enhanced peace, security and equality for all people. In addition, Justice Canada is dedicated to achieving the goals set out in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The goals mentioned include those that relate to women, peace and security, such as Sustainable Development Goal 5, which focuses on eliminating discrimination and promoting gender equality; Sustainable Development Goal 10, which aims to eliminate inequalities; and Sustainable Development Goal 16, which prioritizes peace, justice and strong institutions.

Justice Canada will take a new narrative-based approach to reporting on the Foundations for Peace: Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security by focusing on overall outcomes and success stories throughout the lifespan of the implementation plan. The department aims to inform reporting over the long term by applying existing indicators to women, peace and security-related outcomes. Furthermore, the department will enhance reporting by examining and consolidating departmental indicators to support a centralized performance measurement process within and outside of Foundations for Peace: Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. These measures will lead to more accurate and robust reporting that supports the department's continued success in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.



Context

The pillars of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325¹ align closely with the pursuit of the sustainable development goals.² Justice Canada is the lead department for advancing [Sustainable Development Goal 16 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), which commits the global community to working together to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

Efforts to advance Sustainable Development Goal 16 include promoting women’s participation in justice, preventing and addressing sexual violence, and strengthening the rights of women, girls and gender-diverse people, as well as promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels to ensure equal access to justice for all.

Justice Canada recognizes that women are diverse and that various identity factors within historical and social contexts shape their experiences with government initiatives. Therefore, the department prioritizes a people-centred and intersectional approach to justice that considers diverse individuals’ unique needs and experiences, including gender perspectives.³ By doing so, Justice Canada aims to advance legal empowerment and equality for women, girls and gender-diverse people. This approach is integrated into the department’s efforts to advance the WPS agenda.

¹ The adoption of UNSCR 1325 was driven by the joint effort and foresight of civil society and UN member states to address the lack of recognition of women’s roles in peacebuilding and the lasting effects of conflict on their lives. The resolution’s mandates are organized under 4 key pillars: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

² In 2002, the Security Council was informed by Kofi Annan, then secretary-general of the United Nations, that attainment of sustainable peace and security is heavily dependent on the full and equal participation of women. <https://press.un.org/en/2002/sc7550.doc.htm>

³ Justice Canada is dedicated to ensuring that its activities are aligned with the Government of Canada’s commitments to GBA Plus, and it aims to help foster fair outcomes for diverse groups of women, men and people with other gender identities. Officials in all parts of the department, whether working on legal services, litigation, law reform, policy and program development, international agreements or programs, research, communications, evaluation, management or other areas, are to use GBA Plus to ensure their work considers and reflects the diverse needs of different groups of people. See, [Justice Canada’s Policy on Gender-Based Analysis Plus: Applying an Intersectional Approach to Foster Inclusion and Address Inequities](#).

Focus areas

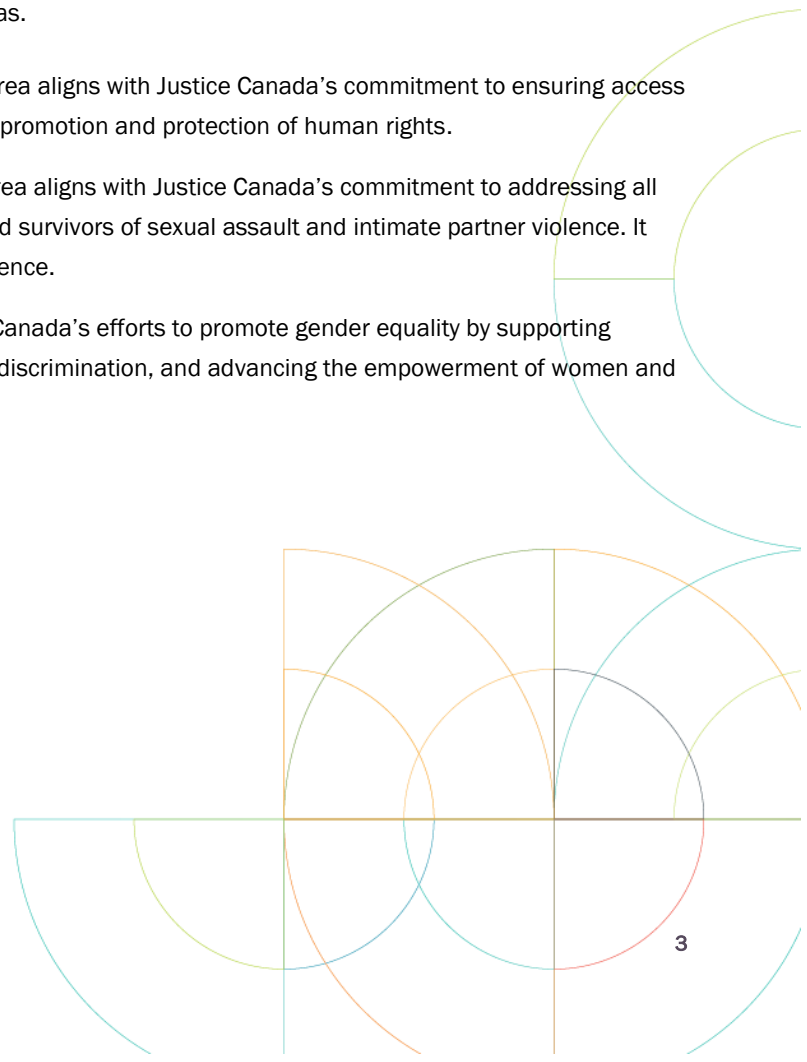
Justice Canada has developed an implementation plan to address gender inequality and enhance access to justice for everyone. The plan is focused on preventing impunity and promoting legal empowerment for women and girls across the country. Its goal is to strengthen the rule of law and ensure that justice is accessible to all. The strategy takes into account both domestic and international perspectives.

Justice Canada aims to ensure that legislation and policies abide by the rule of law and promote respect for human rights as well as a fair, accessible and relevant legal system in Canada. To achieve this, the department engages with different levels of government, Indigenous governments, civil society organizations and communities.

Justice Canada works in partnership with other countries and international organizations to identify arising legal concerns, establish effective plans, enhance justice systems, and ensure public safety and security. These partnerships provide important opportunities to exchange information and experiences, as well as develop best practices. Justice Canada's innovative approaches are valuable resources for international agencies and organizations, offering expert guidance and training. Additionally, Justice Canada strives to promote a rules-based international order, the rule of law, and access to justice by actively supporting Canada's participation in international bodies.

In keeping with Justice Canada's mandate, the departmental implementation plan for Foundations for Peace: Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security will prioritize 3 focus areas.

1. **Focus area 2 – Security, justice and accountability:** This focus area aligns with Justice Canada's commitment to ensuring access to justice for all, the empowerment of women and girls, and the promotion and protection of human rights.
2. **Focus area 4 – Sexual and gender-based violence:** This focus area aligns with Justice Canada's commitment to addressing all forms of gender-based violence, including supporting victims and survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. It also seeks to prevent, address and fight impunity for sexual violence.
3. **Focus area 6 – Inclusion:** This area of focus aligns with Justice Canada's efforts to promote gender equality by supporting women's full participation, addressing societal inequalities and discrimination, and advancing the empowerment of women and girls in the justice system.



Narrative

Focus area 2: Security, justice and accountability

Justice Canada is fully committed to achieving the gender equality goals of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 by empowering women, girls and gender-diverse people, improving institutions advancing access to justice, and promoting and protecting human rights.

The scope of Justice Canada's involvement in Focus area 2 includes promoting gender-responsive justice institutions and transitional justice processes; improving access to justice; advancing federal initiatives to empower women, girls and gender-diverse people; and meaningfully shaping justice and security institutions, processes and outcomes. The department's primary activities, which support Focus area 2, are as follows:

- The department will continue to work in collaboration with various partners across governments and agencies to provide victim services and support for Indigenous people who have been victims and/or survivors of crime and violence, as well as provide support to families of missing or murdered loved ones. The department's approach involves funding the design and delivery of Indigenous-led, trauma-informed and co-developed services.
- The department will continue to offer legal advice and support to federal departments and agencies, with a focus on ensuring that government legislation, policies and international initiatives are legally sound, inclusive and responsive to the diverse experiences of Canadians.
- The department will continue to identify and address inequities and barriers that may exist by incorporating critical considerations (e.g., intersectionality, diversity and inclusion, privacy, modern treaty implications, strategic environmental assessments, and the prioritization of a people-focused approach to justice) in its work, which includes providing legal input during the policy development process and conducting legal risk analysis.
- The department will continue to promote gender equality for women, girls and gender-diverse people by implementing equity-enhancing lenses, such as intersectional GBA Plus, into the work of Justice Canada. This approach helps to remove barriers to women's increased and meaningful participation in the justice sector and supports respect for women and girls' human rights. All Justice Canada employees are required to undergo GBA Plus training and incorporate these considerations into their work. This aligns with the WPS agenda and supports its goals

The department's goal is to increase awareness and knowledge among federal departments and agencies about the access to justice needs of women, girls and gender-diverse people in Canada. Additionally, Justice Canada aims to raise awareness about access to justice issues faced by women, girls and gender-diverse people in global forums.

Justice Canada's contributions to Focus area 2 will address both the immediate justice and accountability needs of women and girls, while strengthening rule of law institutions and legal frameworks to account for the specific justice needs and priorities of women, girls and gender-diverse people. Justice Canada's contributions to public education and information, as well as its efforts to ensure that justice and accountability processes are gender-responsive, are central to increasing security and access to justice for women, girls and gender-diverse people.

The department's contributions to Focus area 2 will also advance enhanced domestic efforts to support Indigenous people who are victims or survivors of crime, and families of missing or murdered loved ones, by working with partners across governments and agencies to fund the design and delivery of Indigenous-led and co-developed victim services and supports.

Although Canada is not typically described as a conflict-affected or post-conflict country, there are some similarities with the harms being faced by certain communities, such as racialized and Indigenous communities. Justice Canada acknowledges the roles that it has played, and still plays, in perpetuating insecurity and systemic harm against these communities. It also recognizes that the foundation on which the department is built is a legacy of colonialism in Canada. The harm perpetuated by the justice system in Canada continues to disproportionately affect women, girls and gender-diverse people.

Focus area 4: Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

Justice Canada's initiatives under Focus area 4 will address both the root causes of SGBV, including discriminatory gender and social norms and unequal power relations, and broader structural factors that remain in Canada's justice system. It includes preventing, addressing and fighting impunity for sexual and gender-based violence and increasing the knowledge of human trafficking by Canadian criminal justice professionals.

Justice Canada's intermediate outcome for Focus area 4 is to improve justice institutions' response to sexual and gender-based violence in Canada. The department's commitment is to prioritize the needs of those harmed by SGBV and impacted by systemic and intersecting oppression, such as racism, colonialism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism. One priority of Focus area 4 is to align with and enhance existing Government of Canada commitments in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan (MMIWG2S), the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence and the National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, while avoiding duplication. Indigenous Peoples in Canada have spoken and have made their priorities known through Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Acting on the report's calls to action is a priority for Justice Canada.

Justice Canada will support these Focus area 4 commitments domestically by continuing to fund pre-existing initiatives that enhance capacity, knowledge and access to justice for victims and survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. The department's primary activities, which support Focus area 4, include:

- facilitating access to free, independent legal advice and representation for victims and survivors of sexual assault and victims and survivors of intimate partner violence
- providing additional support for victims of intimate partner violence in the family justice system
- strengthening structural support, such as supervised parenting time, which protects the safety and well-being of the children and their families
- providing support for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls to ensure that families have access to culturally grounded teams to help them overcome systemic and geographic barriers in accessing information about their loved ones and access to community-led supports and assistance with their grief and trauma
- delivering training to criminal justice professionals on human trafficking in Canada
- offering legal aid for refugees coming from post-conflict situations by providing them with legal information and legal representation

Focus area 6: Inclusion

Under Focus area 6, Canada will leverage its role as a global leader in gender equality and 2SLGBTQI+ rights to incorporate gender, peace and security considerations in its work while recognizing that the WPS agenda applies to and benefits all people. Canada's ongoing leadership in women, peace and security requires an alignment between work on the global stage and actions at home. Justice Canada's priorities under Focus area 6 involve the increased incorporation of an intersectional equity and inclusion lens in domestic initiatives related to improving access to justice for groups facing intersectional discrimination in Canada. These groups include Indigenous, Black and racialized women, girls and gender-diverse people in Canada.

Focus area 6 recognizes that pursuing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and addressing racism and discrimination are integral to Canada's domestic implementation of the WPS agenda, in accordance with the Government of Canada's commitment to consult and cooperate with Indigenous peoples in implementing the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (UN Declaration Act). The UN Declaration Act, and the Government of Canada's subsequently tabled [action plan](#), affirm the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a universal international human rights instrument with application in Canadian law. They both ensure that Canada recognizes and upholds the human rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Justice Canada's domestic implementation of the WPS agenda recognizes that girls, women and gender-diverse people who are impacted by intersecting identity factors face additional barriers.⁴ The department will continue to promote an intersectional gender approach, which will help catalyze inclusion efforts in Canada.⁵

The work related to Focus area 6 will lead the department to an enhanced commitment of initiatives that advance a more equitable and inclusive Canada, with increased access to justice for all, including Indigenous, Black and racialized communities.

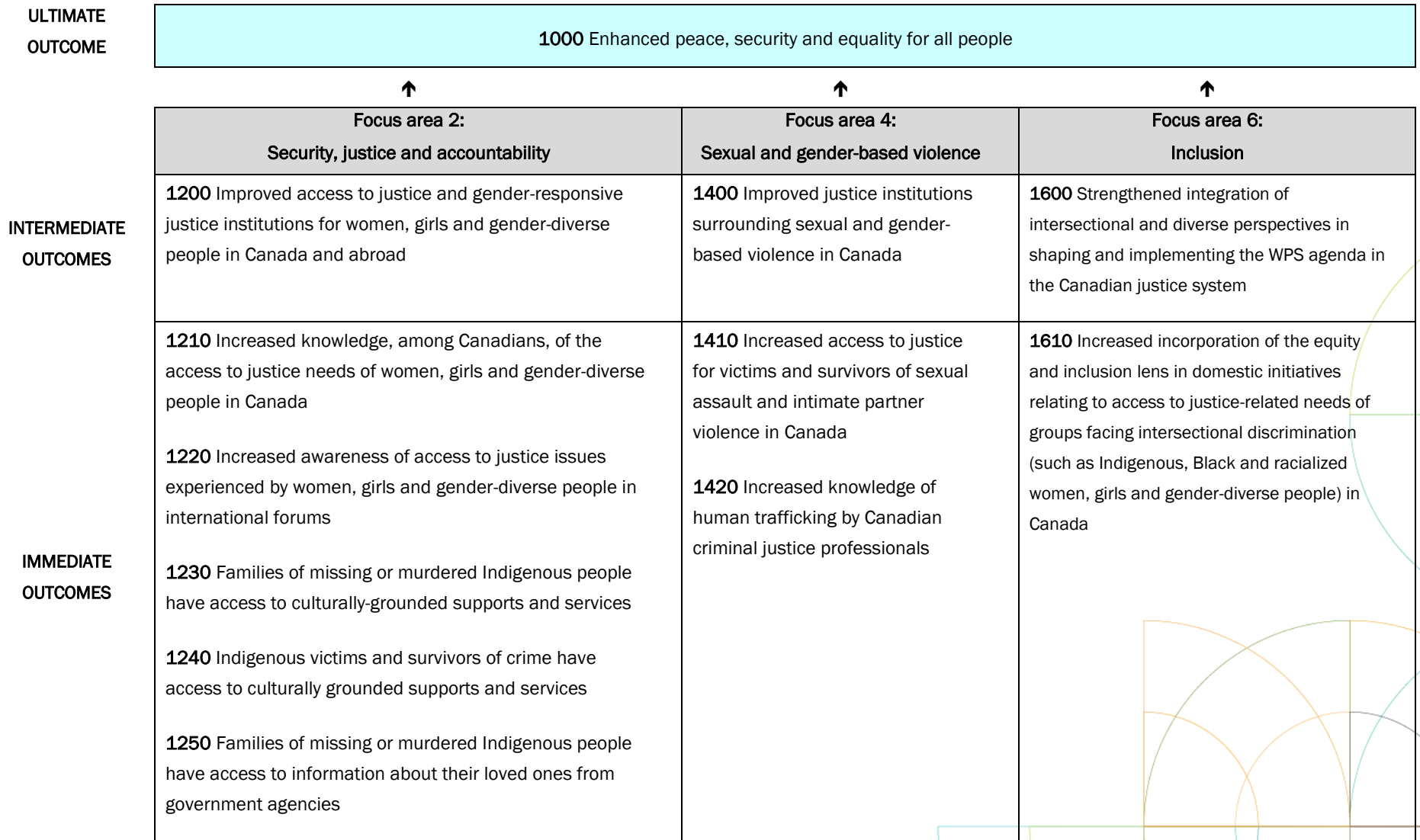
The department's primary activities, which support Focus area 6, include the:

- development of an Indigenous justice strategy that addresses systemic discrimination and the over-representation of Indigenous people in the justice system
- implementation of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan
- implementation of the UN Declaration Act and its action plan
- development of Canada's Black Justice Strategy
- implementation of other relevant policies, such as [Justice Canada's Policy on Gender-Based Analysis Plus: Applying an Intersectional Approach to Foster Inclusion and Address Inequities](#)

⁴ Justice Canada recognizes the complexity of a person's identity, which encompasses various factors, such as gender, age, racialized identity, ethnicity, Indigenous identity, economic status, immigrant status, sexual orientation, disability and geographic location. These intersecting factors play a crucial role in shaping the experiences of different groups within the criminal justice system. See, [State of the criminal justice system dashboard – Gender-based analysis plus](#)

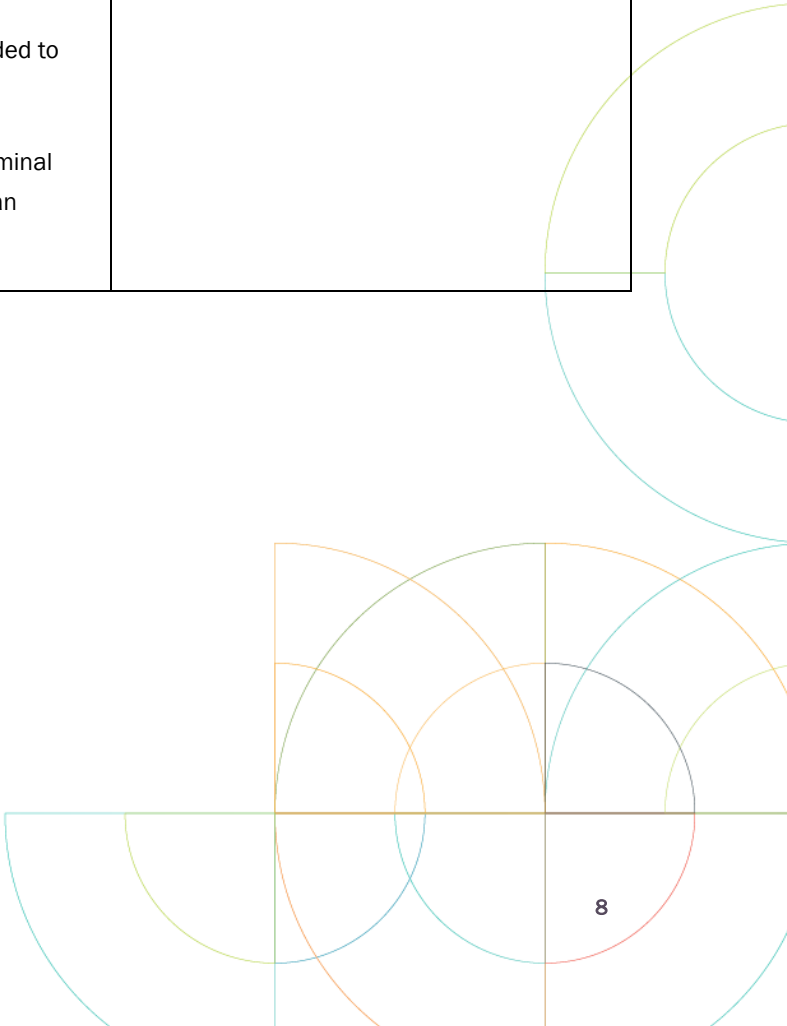
⁵ Individuals experience multiple forms or dimensions of privilege and oppression based on how identity factors are valued by social institutions and more broadly in society. The state of the criminal justice system dashboard provides an overview, not only of the performance of the criminal justice system as a whole, but also of its possible impacts on Canadians with unique and intersecting identity factors. See, [State of the criminal justice system dashboard – Gender-based analysis plus](#).

Logic model



OUTPUTS

<p>1211 Disaggregated data related to access to justice collected and reported to Canadians and parliamentarians</p> <p>1221 Gendered component in a resolution on access to justice included in the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice agenda</p> <p>1241 New or strengthened justice system partnerships in support of Indigenous victims and survivors of crime</p> <p>1242 Additional support for Indigenous victims of crime and violence that is Indigenous-led or co-developed</p>	<p>1411 Independent legal advice and legal representation provided to victims and survivors of sexual assault and victims and survivors of intimate partner violence in Canada</p> <p>1412 Additional support provided for victims of intimate partner violence to navigate the family justice system</p> <p>1413 Support for supervised parenting time services provided to children and their families</p> <p>1421 Training provided to criminal justice professionals on human trafficking in Canada</p>	<p>1611 Development and implementation of federal justice initiatives that advance a more equitable and inclusive Canada for all peoples in Canada</p>
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Key terms

Diversity: A term used to encompass all the various national, racial, ethnic, religious and other backgrounds of people within a group, organization or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ability, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion and socio-economic status.

Discrimination: The denial of equal treatment and opportunity to individuals or groups because of personal characteristics and membership in specific groups, with respect to education, accommodation, health care, employment and access to services, goods and facilities. Behaviour that results from distinguishing people on that basis without regard to individual merit, resulting in unequal outcomes for people who are perceived as different.

Equality: While equality can mean treating individuals in the same way, it is important to note that in Canada, both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter) and human rights legislation aim to achieve “substantive” rather than “formal” equality. Whereas “formal equality” involves treating individuals the same way regardless of their differences, “substantive equality” means attending to differences in individual needs and circumstances, examining how those differences might result in different impacts from apparently neutral laws or practices and, if appropriate, taking those differences into account with a view to avoiding unequal benefits or burdens. Equality rights in the Charter and human rights codes protect against discrimination based on certain personal characteristics, such as race, sex and disability. In addition, GBA Plus assessments may also consider other personal characteristics, such as geographic location and socio-economic status, that are relevant to public policy.

Equity: Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person’s life.

Gender: Socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men and gender-diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, the distribution of power and resources in society, and people’s social, health and economic outcomes.

Gender-responsive justice institutions: A justice system that recognizes that the lived realities of individuals, including pathways to crime, are impacted [by gender](#).

Intersectionality: A theoretical approach that acknowledges that people’s lives are shaped by multiple, overlapping or intersecting identity factors (e.g., race, class, gender), which result in unique, and complex lived experiences that impact how people experience federal policy, programs and legislation. The intersection of different identity factors can create advantages or disadvantages for individuals.

Intersectional discrimination: Compounding discrimination based on identity factors that create barriers for groups of people. In recent decades, intersectionality has gained significant traction in the context of human rights law. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) was the first human rights treaty to recognize multiple and intersecting forms of [discrimination](#).

Transitional justice processes: The process of acknowledging, prosecuting, compensating for and forgiving past crimes during a period of rebuilding after conflict. Also refers to how societies respond to the legacies of massive and serious human rights violations.