



Evaluation of the Horizontal Coordination Function of the Family Violence Initiative 2011-2012 to 2016-2017

Final

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List of Acronyms

CMHC	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
DND	Department of National Defence
DG	Director General
FVI	Family Violence Initiative
HC	Health Canada
INAC	Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
IWG	Interdepartmental Working Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAA	Program Alignment Architecture
PHAC	Public Health Agency of Canada
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SWC	Status of Women Canada

Executive Summary

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the horizontal coordination aspect of the Family Violence Initiative (FVI) for the period 2011-2012 to 2016-2017. The evaluation did not intend to assess the achievement of outcomes, but rather aimed to provide lessons learned in the management of horizontal initiatives by assessing the governance of the FVI.

Since its inception in 1988, the FVI has been the Government of Canada's primary horizontal mechanism for addressing family violence in Canada, although many federal departments also fund activities outside of this Initiative to address the issue (which are not covered in this evaluation). The FVI is horizontally managed to ensure a shared federal perspective, to foster collaboration, to create partnerships, and to provide opportunities for joint action. The FVI involves seven funded departments and eight unfunded departments, with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) as the lead. Overall, the FVI expended approximately \$38.8 million from 2011-2012 to 2016-2017 (\$6.5 million per year).

Findings and Conclusions

A horizontal approach to the Government of Canada's response to family violence is important due to the multifaceted nature of the issue and the differing mandates of partners. Over the past five years, the FVI has been successful in fostering a strong network of professionals across the Government of Canada who work on issues related to family violence. The FVI forum has allowed federal partners to share information, network, and collaborate on various projects. This type of horizontality has been highly valued by FVI partners.

Although the FVI has been successful at developing a strong network, the evaluation found that the FVI is currently not demonstrating a deeper level of horizontality among FVI departments (i.e., sharing ideas and resources, frequent and prioritized communications, all members having a vote in decision-making). For example, performance measurement and reporting have primarily been conducted at the departmental level. Although interviewees were not in agreement on whether or not more integrated performance measurement would improve outcomes, best practices in the literature suggest that regular reporting on the performance of horizontal initiatives can strengthen collaboration by increasing accountability.

However, the evaluation also found that a deeper level of horizontality was not possible for the previous five years of the FVI. This is due to a number of reasons, including: (1) stagnant and limited funding; (2) limited engagement at the senior level; (3) departments do not necessarily have the same results at the delivery level; and, (4) that the Government of Canada is just one player in the response to family violence in that provinces, territories, municipalities, First Nations, Inuit, Métis and non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) also play a critical role. Nonetheless, the majority of interviewees felt that a greater degree of horizontality would improve outcomes related to family violence.

It is difficult to determine if a more collaborative approach to horizontal management would have led to an enhanced achievement of FVI goals and objectives, although it was not the intention of the evaluation to assess this aspect. However, the original program authorities (1998) outlined a more collaborative approach to the management of the Initiative, focussing on the importance of a multidisciplinary response in order to foster collaboration, create partnerships, and provide opportunities for joint action. Addressing the multifaceted nature of family violence requires a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral response (justice, housing, health, social services, etc.), drawing upon the knowledge of many disciplines. Moving ahead, it will be important for partners to discuss what is the most appropriate form of horizontality for the current FVI, including the possibility of piloting projects that involve a deeper level of horizontality and monitoring how this type of collaboration impacts program outcomes.

Finally, departments generally did not have concerns related to FVI policies and procedures; however, many departments were also not aware of these types of documents. Furthermore, the evaluation assessed if gender analysis was discussed through the FVI forum, not as a critique of performance in this area, but as a means to inform future coordination of similar initiatives. While FVI departments generally noted that gender analysis was not formally discussed, gender was a key consideration in activities related to family violence. In fact, gender was seen as integral to each department's work on family violence.

Lessons Learned

The following are some of the main lessons about the management and coordination of horizontal initiatives that were learned through the conduct of this evaluation:

- Define and communicate to stakeholders the level of horizontality that is most appropriate for the initiative, but also reassess the appropriateness of this level on an ongoing basis to ensure it remains relevant and that stakeholders agree with its form.
- For an initiative such as the FVI, that involves a number of departments (currently 15), it should be recognized that not all departments will have the same needs or incentives for horizontality. In such cases, it is important to ensure that there is flexibility in how, and in the degree to which, departments participate in horizontal cooperation.
- Ensure that governance structures are determined based on fostering the specific type of horizontality that is best suited to the initiative. For example, senior management engagement is less important for cooperation-type horizontality than for collaboration.

- Create clear procedures and policies that could be transferred to new participants. This would include purpose and number of meetings for each level in governance structure.
- It is important to balance the need for reporting performance at the initiative level with the need to respect departmental reporting requirements and time restrictions. However, at a minimum, the lead department must be able to tell a performance story of results achieved at the initiative-level, across partner federal departments.
- Sharing resources where appropriate, ensuring the initiative is a government priority, and engaging senior management are all critical to the success of developing a collaborative style of horizontality.

1.0 Evaluation Purpose

The evaluation focused on the horizontal coordination function of the FVI for the period 2011-2012 to 2016-2017. The evaluation did not intend to assess the achievement of outcomes, but rather aimed to provide lessons learned in the management of horizontal initiatives by assessing the governance of the FVI.

2.0 Program Description

2.1 Program Context

The FVI is a long-term federal commitment taking the form of a horizontal initiative led by PHAC. Through the coordination of PHAC (and prior to September 2004, Health Canada), the FVI is horizontally managed to ensure a shared federal perspective, to foster collaboration, to create partnerships, and to provide opportunities for joint action. The FVI involves seven funded departments¹ and eight unfunded departments². It should be noted that the FVI is only one source of federal funding. FVI departments also apply funds from within their departmental budgets towards programming that addresses issues related to family violence.

Various evaluations have been conducted over the years, assessing individual departmental activities seeking to address family violence. This includes a 2011 evaluation of PHAC's FVI activities carried out from 2004 to 2011. This evaluation found that PHAC has a role to play in preventing family violence in Canada and that there is room for improvement of the Agency's leadership and coordination of the broader federal FVI, as well as its collaboration within the Health Portfolio. The evaluation

¹ Funded departments include the Public Health Agency of Canada, Statistics Canada, the Department of Justice Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and Status of Women Canada

² Unfunded departments include Canadian Heritage, Correctional Service Canada, the Department of National Defence, Employment and Social Development Canada, Health Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Public Safety Canada, and Service Canada.

provided three recommendations, the first being most relevant to this evaluation, which is providing immediate action to address gaps in the application of the following fundamentals of the management of horizontal initiatives: engagement and support at the senior level, clear roles and responsibilities, collective strategic priorities, and timely and open communication.

2.2 Program Profile

Since its inception in 1988 (and until the recent March 2017 budget announcement of a new \$100.9 million initiative entitled, 'It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence'), the FVI has been the Government of Canada's main horizontal mechanism for addressing the issue of family violence in Canada. The objectives of the FVI were to:

- promote public awareness of the risk factors of family violence and the need for public involvement;
- strengthen the ability of the criminal justice, social services, health, and housing systems to respond to the problem; and
- support data collection, research and evaluation efforts to identify effective interventions.

Funding priorities for the FVI have varied over the years in response to government objectives. In the first phase, funding of \$40 million per year aligned the programming of six federal departments. It supported research and innovative approaches to prevention and response, consultation with provinces, territories and NGOs, and raised public awareness of family violence.

The second phase was initiated in 1991, in response to the Montreal Polytechnique tragedy in 1989. Funding of \$136 million per year was used to increase awareness and community capacity to respond to family violence through focused health and social supports.

The third and current phase, initiated in 1997, aimed to continue previous work by leveraging efforts of 15 federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations to focus on the ultimate goal of reducing family violence in Canada. The FVI budget (approximately \$6.5 million per year) is shared among seven of the 15 partner departments.³ FVI activities include:

- Tracking the incidence and prevalence of family violence in Canada (Statistics Canada);

³ The remaining eight member departments, that solely apply funds from within their departmental budgets, are: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Correctional Service of Canada, the Department of National Defence, Health Canada, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Heritage Canada, Public Safety Canada, and Service Canada.

- Supporting shelter development and improvement (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC));
- Strengthening community-based programming to better address family violence (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Status of Women Canada (SWC), Department of Justice Canada, and Public Health Agency of Canada);
- Enhancing the criminal justice response to family violence (Department of Justice Canada);
- Providing information for awareness raising or educational purposes (Department of Justice Canada); and
- Advancing the profile of the FVI through leadership, coordination, and the continued management of the FVI's internet presence (Public Health Agency of Canada).⁴

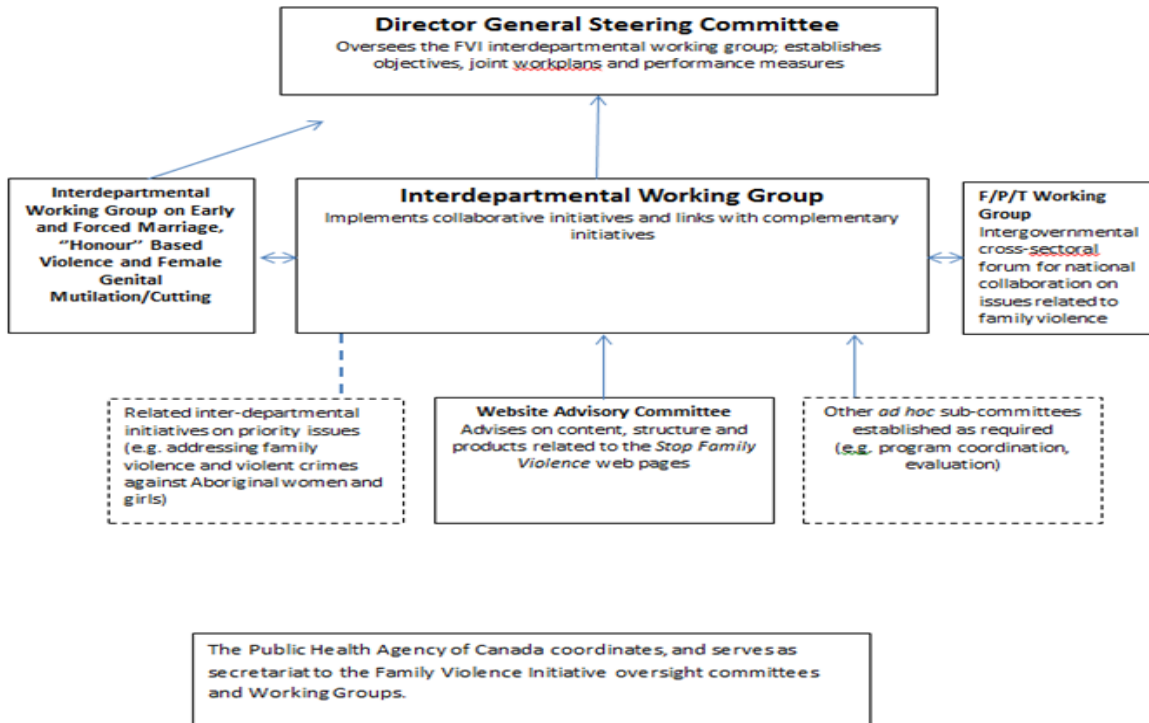
The remaining eight partner departments, as well as the seven funded departments, also apply funds from within their departmental budgets towards programming that addresses issues related to family violence. For example, Public Safety Canada contributed by developing and sharing knowledge on risk factors and conditions that underlie family violence. In fact, funding from departmental budgets is much greater than the current funding levels for the FVI.

FVI Horizontal Structure

The current interdepartmental governance structure for the FVI includes a Director General (DG) Steering Committee, an Interdepartmental Working Group (IWG), a Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group and ad-hoc committees (see Figure 1).

⁴ In addition to the FVI, the Minister of Health announced on February 20, 2015 an investment of \$100 million over 10 years designed to improve health outcomes for victims of family violence. The Supporting Victims of Violence and Protecting Children: The Health Perspective investment (the Investment) has two components: \$7 million annually to be administered by PHAC, and \$3 million annually to be administered by Health Canada. This is a separate initiative from the FVI and thus will be evaluated independently.

Figure 1: Governance Structure of the FVI



Director General Steering Committee

PHAC chairs an interdepartmental Steering Committee composed of Directors General from relevant programs in each of the member departments. Officials from the Treasury Board Secretariat and Privy Council Office are ex officio members. The Steering Committee is responsible for providing strategic direction, reviewing progress and making decisions for the guidance of the FVI IWG on strategic approaches related to the implementation and horizontal management of the FVI. The Steering Committee aims to meet one to two times per year.

Interdepartmental Working Group (IWG)

The IWG is the second layer in terms of program governance and reports to the Steering Committee. The IWG is chaired by the manager of the Family Violence Prevention Unit at PHAC and is composed of representatives of each member department in charge of the initiative. The IWG is responsible for making recommendations to the Steering Committee, implementing decisions from that committee, ensuring effective coordination of the initiative, sharing information, and coordinating research, program planning and policy development activities. It aims to meet four times per year.

2.3 Program Alignment Architecture and Resources

The FVI is a horizontal initiative under PHAC's Program Alignment Architecture (PAA) Sub-Sub-Program 1.2.2.2 Healthy Communities and 1.2 Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. The FVI supports PHAC's Strategic Outcome: Protecting Canadians and empowering them to improve their health.

The Initiative's financial expenditures for the years 2011/12 through 2016/17 are presented below (Table 1). Overall, the Initiative expended approximately \$38.8 million over six years.

Table 1: Annual Program Expenditures by Department and Type of Funding from 2011/12 to 2016/17

Department	Operations and Maintenance (including salaries)	Grants and Contributions	Total
Public Health Agency of Canada	\$1,859,000	\$0	\$1,859,000
Department of Justice Canada	\$879,522	\$597,725	\$1,477,247
INAC	\$0	\$185,000	\$185,000
CMHC	\$0	\$1,900,000	\$1,900,000
Status of Women Canada	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000
Statistics Canada	\$350,000	\$0	\$350,000
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	\$225,000	\$321,000	\$546,000
Total	\$3,313,522	\$3,253,725	\$6,567,247

Source: FVI Secretariat

3.0 Evaluation Description

3.1 Evaluation Scope, Approach and Design

The scope of the evaluation covered the period from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2017 and specifically focused on the horizontal coordination aspect of the FVI. The approach to concentrate on this aspect of the initiative, rather than a review of relevance and performance, was taken for the following reasons:

- a number of reports have recently been produced on the performance and relevance of the FVI (such as previous evaluations/reviews and the Chief Public Health Officer's 2016 report);
- departments have conducted specific evaluations on other programming related to family violence;

- low materiality for the FVI (\$6.47M per year, including \$3.25M in grants and contributions) which is spread over seven departments;
- the TB *Policy on Results* (2016) states that evaluations of programs that involve less than an average of \$5 million in grants and contributions per year can target the specific information needs of senior management, rather than having to comprehensively address all issues of relevance and performance; and
- lessons learned related to horizontal coordination of the FVI could be important for informing other federal horizontal initiatives, particularly the Federal Strategy Against Gender-Based Violence.

The questions that guided the conduct of the evaluation included the following:

- Why, and in what areas, does horizontal coordination facilitate the achievement of intended results? Is there a continued need for the horizontal coordination function?
- Has the FVI developed and implemented appropriate policies and procedures for effective horizontal coordination?
- What results has the FVI achieved in terms of horizontal coordination? How has the FVI performed in terms of horizontal coordination as compared to established best practices? How does horizontal coordination ensure effective collaboration among departments involved in the FVI?
- How, and to what degree, has the horizontal coordination of FVI facilitated consideration of the gendered aspects of family violence? Has it contributed to identifying and mitigating potential differential impacts based on sex or diversity?
- What have we learned from FVI horizontal coordination in terms of measuring and reporting on results for Canadians? How has performance been measured against identified FVI objectives? What were the successes and challenges related to this approach?
- What are the best practices, both domestic and international, for managing complex horizontal public health initiatives?

The Treasury Board's *Policy on Results* (2016) also guided the evaluation design and data collection methods so that the evaluation would meet the objectives and requirements of the Policy. A non-experimental design was used based on the evaluation strategy.

The evaluation relied on the following methods:

- **literature review** – best practices related to the horizontal coordination of complex initiatives;
- **document and file review** – FVI performance reviews, individual departmental evaluations, planning and strategic documents on the governance and management of the FVI (e.g., meeting minutes and attendance records), review of horizontal initiatives in the federal government, other relevant documents;
- **key informant interviews** (n=13) – 10 of 15 FVI departments (some departments chose not to be interviewed due to limited availability, engagement or experience with the Initiative), Manager of the FVI, one previous PHAC employee who worked on the FVI (for historical context), representatives from Australia’s National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.
- **focus group** – members of the FVI IWG (all member departments were invited; six departments participated).

3.2 Limitations and Mitigation Strategies

Most evaluations face constraints that may have implications for the validity and reliability of findings and conclusions. The following table outlines the limitations encountered during the implementation of the methods selected for this evaluation. Also noted are the mitigation strategies put in place to ensure that the evaluation findings can be used with confidence to guide program planning and decision-making.

Table 2: Limitations, Impacts and Mitigation Strategies

Limitation	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
The evaluation relied heavily on interview data.	Evaluation evidence was primarily opinion-based and thus subjective.	The evaluation triangulated different lines of evidence to the degree possible. Alternatively, it was made clear when conclusions relied heavily on interview data.
Lack of institutional memory among interviewees, as most were relatively new in their positions.	Interviewees were not generally able to place their comments within the historical context of the FVI.	The evaluation relied on written documents to provide historical context. Also, an interview was sought with an employee who had previously worked in the FVI with PHAC.

4.0 Evaluation Findings

Family violence is a critical issue that dramatically impacts the lives of Canadians. In 2014, over one quarter (26%) of all victims of police-reported violent crime were victimized by a spouse, a parent, a child, a sibling, or another immediate or extended family member. This represents more than 85,000 victims of family violence. When including dating violence, this number increases to 133,920 victims.¹ Reported cases of family violence generally decreased across Canada between 2010 and 2014, similar to other violent crimes. According to the Chief Public Health Officer's *Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2016 - A Focus on Family Violence in Canada*, the reasons for this are not clear, but are generally linked to the reduction of severe spousal violence.²

Finding #1: A horizontal approach to the Government of Canada's response to family violence is important due to the multifaceted nature of the issue and the differing mandates of the partners involved.

A horizontal approach to the Government of Canada's response to family violence is important for three reasons:

1. **The multifaceted and multi-dimensional nature of the issue and the resulting need for a multidisciplinary perspective.**

Family violence involves a multitude of causal and resulting factors, ranging from the impacts on victims' health to the role that mental health plays on victims and perpetrators, public health's role in preventing family violence and developing strategies to support survivors, the role housing can have in facilitating family violence but also as a means to escape violence, the legal aspects of assisting survivors of family violence while also bringing perpetrators to justice, law enforcement's role in preventing and addressing family violence, etc. The multi-dimensional nature of family violence necessitates a multifaceted response.

I'm working on issues related to female genital mutilation/cutting, and there is definitely a criminal aspect to it. But more importantly it is something that affects people's health, young girls' health, psychological, physical, etc. If I were just to look the criminal aspect of it, it would really be lacking in terms of my ability to work on prevention, raising awareness, etc.

- Interviewee

2. **The fact that various aspects of family violence fall within the mandates of many different federal departments.** As a result of the previous point, there are a number of different departments who work on issues related to family violence. For example, the issue of family violence is mentioned as a priority in the mandate letters of five federal departments (Justice, SWC, INAC, Infrastructure Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada), suggesting that these departments currently have a prominent role in addressing issues of family

violence at the federal level. Numerous other departments also work on issues related to family violence; the current FVI involves 15 departments.

3. **The link to federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) and First Nations, Inuit and Métis areas of jurisdiction and responsibility.** Horizontal coordination across the Government of Canada provides a mechanism where all relevant federal departments are able to come together to discuss broad issues related to family violence with their counterparts in provincial/territorial governments and First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. The provinces and territories are important contributors to addressing issues related to family violence and thus it is critical that FPT activities are coordinated. For example, the provinces hold jurisdiction over the health care system and thus work closely with the Government of Canada in terms of the health response to issues of family violence. Similarly, the federal and provincial governments must also work closely with First Nations to deal with issues of family violence in their communities. In many cases, First Nations are responsible for a number of areas related to addressing family violence, such as health care and housing, and thus work closely with FPT governments in these areas.

We're not the only players in the game, obviously. Other levels of government and community partners are important. Then across the federal system there are lots of players as well. I think having a horizontal initiative is a requirement because there are so many players.
 - Interviewee

Finding #2: According to the literature, horizontality should be clearly defined based on the specific needs of the particular initiative. For the FVI, horizontality was originally defined as being closer to coalition. Currently, there is some uncertainty around what is the overall goal of FVI horizontality.

According to the literature³, there are various types and degrees of horizontality. It is therefore important to clearly define what horizontality means based on the specific needs of the initiative. Frey, Lohmeier, Lee and Tollefson (2006) outline a continuum of horizontality from networking to collaboration, where networking involves a more informal set of relationships, whereas collaboration involves members acting in unison (see Table #1 below).

Figure 2: Levels of Horizontality

Networking	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aware of organization - Loosely defined roles - Little communication - All decision made independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide information to each other - Somewhat defined roles - Formal communication - All decisions are made independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share information and resource - Defined roles - Frequent communication - Some shared decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share ideas - Share resources - Frequent and prioritized communication - All members have a vote in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members belong to one system - Frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust - Consensus is reached on all decisions.

Source: Frey, Lohmeier, Lee, Tollefson. Measuring Collaboration Among Grant Partners. American Journal of Evaluation, September 2006, p.387

Bakvis and Juillet (2004) expand on this, making the connection between the different levels of horizontality and how horizontality is implemented:

“The structures and processes used to achieve coordination can range from informal networks to jointly managed secretariats. The means used to put into effect and manage horizontal initiatives described by terms such as ‘coordination,’ ‘collaboration,’ and ‘partnerships.’ Often these terms are used interchangeably. More careful examination, however, suggests that they convey rather different meanings and tend to be used in different contexts. Nevertheless, the scale, workability or sustainability of any given horizontal initiative may require quite different approaches with respect to commitment and the institutionalization of arrangements.”⁴

Given that there are different meanings for the term horizontality, it is important to define what horizontality means based on the particular needs of a given initiative. This is a consistent finding across the literature on horizontality.⁵ As one author states:

“To overcome these challenges and build these important relationships, many case studies noted that it is essential to specify the type of collaboration expected from partners in the initiative, and define what collaboration looks like.”⁶

Defining What Horizontality Means for the FVI

Although horizontality was defined for the FVI during the latest funding renewal in 1997, there is currently some uncertainty with respect to the overall goal of FVI horizontality. This ambiguity is further complicated by the fact that the departments involved in the FVI have different levels of need related to horizontal cooperation.

A definition of horizontality for the FVI was last documented during funding renewal in 1997. At that time, program authorities noted that as the FVI lead department, Health Canada (and after 2004, PHAC) would provide the necessary coordination among departments to ensure a multidisciplinary response in order to foster collaboration, create partnerships, and provide opportunities for joint action. Although it is not possible to know exactly what was meant by this statement, this type of horizontality appears to be closer to coordination or coalition as depicted in Table #1 above. Specifically, the statement “to provide opportunities for joint action” could be viewed as directing departments towards working in unison rather than partnering as independent entities. However, the legislative mandates of each department require independent decision-making for accountability purposes. For instance, Ministers are accountable to Parliament for decisions made within their respective departments and discretionary funding under a given Minister must accord with the terms and conditions of individual grants and contributions programs.

Current FVI members have shown uncertainty in respect to the overall goal of horizontality for the FVI. For example, one interviewee commented that the overall

policy goal of FVI horizontality is not well-defined. Furthermore, it was felt that the FVI Strategic Plan developed in 2015 to outline concrete steps to address programming challenges, seemed to move the FVI towards collaboration. However, the results ended up being more of a broad outline of objectives than a concrete plan of action for moving forward in a coordinated manner. It should be noted that a few departments stated that the process for developing the Strategic Plan did strengthen the horizontal work of the FVI, but that more could have been done to foster collaboration. One department suggested that including an accountability component in the Strategic Plan may have helped to foster greater collaboration. It should also be noted that it was a purposeful decision to scale back the Strategic Plan, including not following up with a work plan for collaboration, out of respect for the fact that several key partner departments were engaged in intense priority work on related files at the time (forced marriage, “honour”-based violence, and violence against Indigenous women and girls), and thus wanted to focus on these priorities.

It would have been helpful to have a better sense of how things were being coordinated and why. Again, it was never very clear to me what the Initiative, from a policy perspective, was set out to achieve.

- Interviewee

A case study on the FVI conducted in 2007 came to similar conclusions:

“... intersectoral action within the FVI has also faced a number of challenges. Of significance is the lack of consensus and clarity as to exactly what is meant by interdepartmental coordination and horizontal issue management.”⁷

In addition to the uncertainty around the overall goal of FVI horizontality, FVI departments also have different levels of need and incentives related to horizontal engagement, and thus have different levels of expectation. Departments also have their own accountability framework and legislative mandates. The FVI involves 15 departments, all of which are involved in somewhat unique activities related to the issue of family violence. For example, a representative from one unfunded department noted:

We have our own unique levers we can pull, so we have been working on that ourselves. We still value the fact that there is a federal FVI, but I don't think that we have, in the past few years, really needed to take advantage of the FVI for our own purposes.

Another interviewee expressed the idea that their needs are different, due to the fact that they don't actually directly deliver programming related to family violence:

The challenge that I find, related to the horizontal part of the FVI, is I feel very far removed. We provide the funding to the provinces and territories who, in turn, provide delivery on the ground. So as a federal arm, I find it challenging to be that far removed from where the program delivery is, in that when I sit on the FVI call, I don't feel like I have a lot to offer or to take with that information, and I don't even know who I would give that to because I'm so far removed.

This is not to say that, because the FVI departments have different needs and mandates, it is not possible to define horizontality. Rather, it is important that all departments have a common understanding of how horizontality can support the achievement of Initiative goals and to have a clear understanding of their role in supporting this goal. However, this may require flexibility in how and to what degree departments participate in horizontal cooperation. As an illustration, although many non-funded partner departments did not always attend the FVI meetings (suggesting a lower level of need for horizontality), this does not mean that the meetings are not valued. As one non-attending member of the IWG from a non-funded FVI department explained, he and his colleagues value the Records of Decisions which are reviewed for relevant content, particularly best practices.⁸

Finding #3: *The FVI has been successful in fostering a strong network of professionals across the Government of Canada who work on issues related to family violence.*

The evaluation found that, overall, departments feel that the FVI Secretariat is providing a strong coordination function. Furthermore, there is agreement that the FVI has been most successful in terms of facilitating information sharing, networking and partnerships. FVI departments have found that these types of outcomes have been very valuable.

According to the program's 2016 Strategic Plan Review, there is a high level of satisfaction among partners with the FVI Secretariat's operations and responsiveness. The FVI platform is seen as effective and inclusive, with potential to create opportunities for collaboration. Interviews for this evaluation validated this finding.

Virtually all interviewees noted that networking and information sharing have been the most successful outcomes related to FVI horizontal coordination. One interviewee noted:

I think that what horizontal coordination provides for us the most is information sharing. It really allows us to have information shared with us and also to share information with our interdepartmental partners so that we can be well-informed without having to do the separate work to inform ourselves on areas that are outside of our expertise, but are still quite relevant to what we do.

Another noted:

I find that it helps a lot in terms of the intersection with the different components because family violence touches so many different aspects of people's lives, whether it is mental health, physical health, access to the criminal justice system,

Public Health Agency individuals who are doing the coordination are very helpful at helping us connect with the right people, if we need that. It has had stronger years and weaker years. I would say we're in a fairly strong period right now. I find that there's a lot of leadership and a lot of knowledge from the teams at the Public Health Agency right now.

- Interviewee

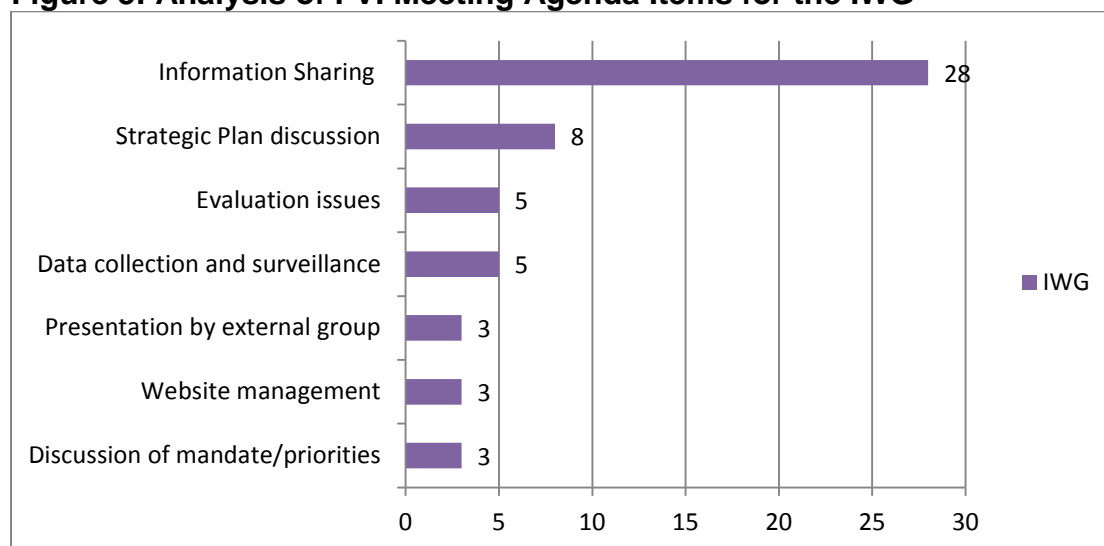
etc. I find it really helps in terms of not working in silos and to be able to approach it in a more holistic way, taking into consideration the intersections of all the different aspects.

The importance of information sharing and networking was emphasized by most departments. This is also highlighted in the literature. For example, Chomik and Treena (2007) noted that “information sharing represents another mechanism to bring member departments together within the FVI. For example, federal departments come together to develop presentations for visiting foreign delegations who want to learn more about Canada’s response to family violence. Closer to home, representatives of federal departments join together to coordinate messages and offer a ‘common face’ to provinces and territories.”⁹

An analysis of FVI meetings over the evaluation period supports the finding that networking and information sharing were important outcomes of horizontality. The IWG met regularly throughout the evaluation period, on average three times per year, suggesting that at the working level the FVI has fostered a network of professionals across the federal government who work on issues related to family violence. Twice as many funded departments participated in the IWG compared to unfunded departments. Again, this suggests that departments have different needs and expectations around horizontal cooperation. 28 out of 57 IWG agenda items were related to information sharing (see Figure #2). Other issues discussed included: Strategic Plan discussion (8), data collection and surveillance (5), and evaluation issues (5).

So often you know people say well, that’s just information sharing, but it’s hard to emphasize how important that is in view of this complexity.
- Interviewee

Figure 3: Analysis of FVI Meeting Agenda Items for the IWG



Beyond information sharing and networking, interviewees also noted some examples of departments working together on aspects of federal activities related to family violence,

such as developing legislation, funding proposal review processes, disseminating various publications, as well as consulting on guidelines, training, data collection and analysis, indicator frameworks, etc. Departments view this type of cooperation as valuable, as it promotes the integration of different perspectives on the issue of family violence, and ensures that the appropriate federal stakeholders are directly involved in the project.

A few examples of this type of work include:

- The Department of Justice Canada partnered with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to deliver training sessions to police officers on underage and forced marriages, “honour”-based violence, and female genital mutilation/cutting after the coming into force in 2015 of Bill S-7 that introduced legislative changes to the *Civil Marriage Act* and the Criminal Code.
- The Department of Justice Canada collaborated with the RCMP to develop web-based training materials for police on underage and forced marriage, and “honour”-based violence.
- Statistics Canada engaged FVI partners on a major overhaul of its Transition Home survey by sending them the consultation guide and requesting their input, which helped increase the relevance of the survey.
- While developing grants and contributions funding, PHAC participated in the RCMP's proposal reviews, helping to understand the various projects being funded, not only through the FVI, but through other RCMP funding as well. Being linked in to the RCMP's funding review helped ensure that there was no duplication of efforts by funding two different organizations to do similar work.
- The Department of Justice Canada, the RCMP, Health Canada and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) worked together helping to strengthen each department's understanding of the issues surrounding female genital mutilation. Discussions with FVI partners informed how IRCC drafted its call for funding proposals to ensure that a lens on family violence was applied to specific newcomer communities.

Finding #4: The FVI is currently not fostering a deeper level of horizontality among FVI departments, such as joint strategic planning, funding or reporting.

Some degree of collaboration did occur early in the FVI's history. However, interviews and an analysis of program documentation suggests that, although the FVI currently involves information sharing and networking, this is not leading to a deeper level of horizontality that involves joint action. A review conducted on FVI horizontality in the early 2000s described five projects that occurred in the first phase of the FVI that involved joint action. The following are two examples:

I think probably the broadest and deepest level and coordination was at the working level.

- Interviewee

- the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs worked with Health and Welfare to jointly fund more than 180 community-based projects addressing the needs of Aboriginal people; and,
- three departments cost-shared a series of projects addressing the issue of abuse of persons with disabilities.

However, according to an interview conducted as part of a case study on the FVI in 2007, although different levels of horizontality have been demonstrated by the FVI over time, the current FVI falls short of full horizontal management because it does not engage in a fully shared process of planning and budgeting.

In terms of the period covered by this evaluation, it is clear from interviewees and the document review that the success of horizontal management is centred on cooperation rather than collaboration. One representative from an FVI department noted:

The Initiative has never had the mandate to say 'here are the agreed-upon principles moving forward, that X number of departments are going to do A, B and C.' What has been agreed upon is that the departments will meet on an annual basis, inform and share information and coordinate efforts ... In the Initiative, you don't have that governance structure, you have a coordination, collaboration, 'let's share', but we don't have a shared agenda where we have to toe the party line, as it were.

The program's 2016 Strategic Plan Review came to similar conclusions: "some partners indicated that the FVI is not so much horizontally managed as coordinated, and that members prioritize their own, although related, agendas and initiatives".

Further evidence comes from the fact that the DG level Committee met rarely over the evaluation period (on average once a year) and did not meet at all in 2013. Interviewees suggested that this was because there were no management decisions that needed to be made. It is also possible that the Committee only meets as needed, and that more meetings were not considered necessary. Similarly, over the evaluation period there were limited ad hoc committees for the FVI, such as the Data User Group and Web Advisory Committee. The former created a roster of data users to enable collaboration across departments. It also developed and shared an inventory of data sources so that all partners could make better use of available data. The Web Advisory Committee revised content for the revitalized 'Stop Family Violence' web pages.

Finally, FVI departments do not share a common performance framework or indicators, and initiative-level performance reporting has been minimal. This again suggests that the FVI was not acting in unison, but rather as distinct departments, which is consistent with each Department's accountability framework.

Finding #5: A networking/cooperation type of horizontality rather than collaboration is what has been possible for the current form of the FVI.

There are a number of reasons why a collaborative form of horizontality has not been possible for the current form of the FVI.

- **Stagnant and limited funding for the Initiative** – Annual funding for the FVI has remained at approximately \$7 million for the last 20 years. Adjusted for inflation, that would be approximately \$5 million in today’s dollars. Interviewees agreed that stagnant, low funding only allowed departments to continue basic tasks associated with the Initiative, but was not sufficient for developing new joint projects. This does not reflect total funding for family violence activities as the FVI is only one source of federal funding. FVI departments also apply funds from within their departmental budgets towards programming that addresses issues related to family violence.
- **Limited engagement at the senior level** – Little evidence was available on how senior management was engaged on this horizontal file:
 - **Political interest** – According to the literature, the level of political interest in an issue has a very significant impact on the success of horizontality.¹⁰ The majority of interviewees commented that there was little political engagement with the FVI, although they recognized that there had been more support for the issue of family violence itself. This lack of engagement could have been an important factor in not achieving a deeper level of horizontality.
 - **Senior management engagement** – Interviewees suggested that the low level of senior management engagement in the FVI was a direct result of the previous two points: stagnant budgets and low political interest. One interviewee noted that senior management will only be engaged if there are significant decisions to be made, such as those related to budgeting or planning. With low political interest in the initiative and stagnant budgets, such decisions were not needed. It should also be noted that the highest level of governance for the FVI is at the DG level, which may have also contributed to a lack of senior management engagement.
- **The nature of the issue** – Federal departments have greater challenges than other levels of government in collaborating on issues related to family violence, as they have very specific mandates and commitments that do not necessarily intersect at the activity level. Federal departments are primarily involved in policy and planning activities, rather than dealing directly with program recipients, allowing for fewer opportunities to collaborate. On the other hand, at the local level it is essential that different government agencies work closely together, such as when a local police force works with Child Welfare to directly support victims of family violence. The interviewee for the case study conducted on the FVI in 2007 noted that, ‘there may have been an overly optimistic assumption as

to what can be achieved at the federal level in terms of intersectorality as opposed to the local level'.¹¹

- **The federal government is one player in the response to family violence –** There may have been more natural connections with other jurisdictions to address certain aspects of family violence than collaboratively working closely with other federal departments. For example, as health delivery is provincial jurisdiction, it is essential for Health Canada and PHAC to work very closely with the provinces on health issues related to family violence.

Finding #6: Interviewees generally felt that a greater degree of collaboration would improve outcomes related to family violence; however not all departments agreed with this statement.

The majority of interviewees who responded to this issue supported a greater level of collaboration. One interviewee specifically suggested that the FVI work collaboratively (i.e., joint funding) on a pilot basis to see if and how this can increase program outcomes. Another interviewee suggested that the FVI Strategic Plan could have fostered greater collaboration if it had included specific metrics and accountability mechanisms. A sample of comments include:

Information sharing is good, but at the end of the day I think if we can try and work better together that would be a better use of everybody's time.

I think in many cases, there is too little consideration of what the others are doing. We make our plans too independently. If you are not doing joint planning together in terms of how you are going to spend your allocated money, you have a way to go before you reach the optimal level of intersectorality.

More opportunities in the future to go from broad information sharing to looking at ways we can collaborate more. Shared funding would probably get a better outcome.

There is a lot of information sharing, but I don't see real collaboration, which would be nice to see. Some partners have probably done joint projects, but I don't know of any. Information sharing is good, but work could be done more effectively with more coordination.

However, one participant did not agree that greater collaboration was needed to enhance outcome achievement, stating:

I found over the years that there has been a lot of effort to find joint projects that could be done, but because each of our ministers have very specific mandates and commitments in relation to family violence, and often the only overlapping factor is that it is family violence, but it is such a different area, such a different

discipline and requiring such different responses. We don't necessarily have the same results at a micro level because we're trying to accomplish different things.

As mentioned earlier, some departments (mostly unfunded) do not have the same needs or incentives for greater collaboration, due to the nature of their work on family violence. Regardless, most key informants believe that closer collaborative work may have led to more effective results in a more efficient manner.

Finding #7: Many departments were not aware of policies and procedures related to the Initiative, although they generally did not have concerns related to these documents.

Interviewees stated that they either did not have concerns about FVI policies and procedures, or were simply not aware of these types of documents (committee terms of reference, governance structures, etc.). This may indicate that well-defined and communicated policies and procedures were not necessary for the level of coordination attained with the FVI (i.e., primarily networking/cooperation).

I'm not familiar with actual policies, like written policies and procedures, but in terms of the structure of the interdepartmental working group, I think it works quite well.

- Interviewee

Finding #8: Performance measurement and reporting has primarily been conducted at the departmental level.

Four performance reports of the FVI have been completed since funding renewal in 1997 (a 20-year period), including one performance report over the evaluation period (in 2002, 2004, 2008 and 2016). This amounts to reporting every five years. However, departments did report on their activities through their own channels, including public reporting through their respective departmental performance and evaluation reports. Furthermore, the FVI has been reported in PHAC's Departmental Performance Reports three times since 2006/07 (a 10-year period). Finally, the 2016 Chief Public Health Officer Report on the State of Public Health in Canada focused on family violence in Canada, although this document concentrates primarily on indicators of the current landscape of family violence, such as statistics and linkages with other factors.

There just hasn't been a strong focus on evaluation and performance measurement, I don't think, in my view.

- Interviewee

FVI departments generally agree that there has not been a strong focus on performance measurement for the FVI. There were, however, mixed opinions on whether performance measurement should be more integrated among FVI departments, considering the uniqueness of activities in their respective departments and the time commitment necessary for such work. Nonetheless, according to the original funding documents, it was intended that performance reporting for the FVI be conducted every year, led by the lead department (HC, and after 2004, PHAC). Furthermore, according

to best practices as discussed in the literature¹², regular reporting on the performance of horizontal initiatives, at the initiative level, can strengthen collaboration by increasing accountability.

Finding #9: While FVI departments generally noted that gender analysis was not formally discussed, gender was a key consideration in activities related to family violence. In fact, gender was seen as integral to each department's work related to family violence.

The evaluation looked at how gender analysis was discussed through the FVI forum, not as a critique of performance, but as a means to inform future coordination of similar initiatives. According to interviews and document reviews, gender-based analysis had not been a specific topic of discussion during FVI committee meetings. However, interviewees recognized that gender was inherent to the nature of family violence, and therefore they did not feel the need to discuss gender-based analysis as a specific topic at the horizontal level. For example, one interviewee noted that professionals working on the issue of family violence are the ones conducting training and knowledge sharing on the gendered aspects of family violence. Because family violence is a gendered issue, gender analysis has always been part of the discussion, even though it hasn't necessarily been a specific topic.

The following are a few responses by interviewees:

Our interdepartmental partners have always recognized the gendered aspects of family violence.

It's one of those things that I just can't see how coordination would impact consideration of the gendered aspect because the professionals working in this area are the ones who are, within their own groups, doing training and knowledge sharing on the gendered aspects of those types of issues. That's part of what we do.

It is part of the nature of family violence. The gendered nature of family violence is coming back into the fora, it wasn't always part of the analysis.

5.0 Conclusions

A horizontal approach to the Government of Canada's response to family violence is important, due to the multifaceted nature of the issue and the differing mandates of the partners involved. Over the past five years, the FVI has been successful in fostering a strong network of professionals across the Government of Canada who work on issues related to family violence. The FVI forum has allowed federal partners to share information, network and cooperate on various projects. This type of horizontality has been highly valued by FVI partners.

Although the FVI has been successful at developing a strong network, the evaluation found that the Initiative is not currently fostering a deeper level of horizontality among FVI departments (i.e., sharing ideas and resources, frequent and prioritized communications, and all members having a vote in decision-making). As an example, performance measurement and reporting has primarily been conducted at the departmental level. Although interviewees were not in agreement on whether or not more integrated performance measurement would improve outcomes, best practices in the literature suggest that regularly reporting on the performance of horizontal initiatives, at the initiative level, can strengthen collaboration by increasing accountability.

However, the evaluation also found that a deeper level of horizontality was not possible for the previous five years of the FVI. This is due to a number of reasons, including: (1) stagnant and limited funding; (2) limited engagement at the senior level; (3) the fact that departments do not necessarily have the same results at the delivery level; and, (4) that the Government of Canada is just one player in the response to family violence in that provinces, territories, municipalities, First Nations, Inuit, Métis and NGOs also play a critical role. Nonetheless, the majority of interviewees felt that a greater degree of horizontality would improve outcomes related to family violence.

It is difficult to determine if a more collaborative approach to horizontal management would have led to an enhanced achievement of FVI goals and objectives. However, the original program authorities outlined a more collaborative approach to the management of the Initiative, focussing on the importance of a multidisciplinary response to foster collaboration, create partnerships, and provide opportunities for joint action. Addressing the multifaceted nature of family violence still requires a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral response (justice, housing, health, social services, etc.), drawing upon the knowledge of many disciplines. Moving ahead, it will be important for FVI partners to discuss what is the most appropriate form of horizontality for the current FVI, including the possibility of piloting projects that involve a deeper level of horizontality and monitoring how this type of collaboration impacts program outcomes.

Finally, departments generally did not have concerns related to FVI policies and procedures. However, many departments were also not aware of these types of documents. Furthermore, the evaluation assessed if gender analysis was discussed through the FVI forum, not as a critique of performance in this area, but as a means to inform in this area for future coordination of similar initiatives. While FVI departments generally noted that gender analysis was not formally discussed, gender was a key consideration in activities related to family violence. In fact, gender was seen as integral to each department's work related to family violence.

6.0 Lessons Learned

The following are some of the main lessons about the management and coordination of horizontal initiatives that were learned through the conduct of this evaluation:

- Define and communicate to stakeholders the level of horizontality that is most appropriate for the initiative, but also reassess the appropriateness of this level on an ongoing basis to ensure it remains relevant and that stakeholders agree with its form.
- For an initiative such as the FVI, that involves a number of departments (currently 15), it should be recognized that not all departments will have the same needs or incentives for horizontality. In such cases, it is important to ensure that there is flexibility in how, and the degree to which, departments participate in horizontal cooperation.
- Ensure that governance structures are determined based on fostering the specific type of horizontality that is best suited to the initiative. For example, less senior management engagement is required for cooperation-type horizontality than for collaboration.
- Create clear procedures and policies that could be transferred to new participants. This would include purpose and number of meetings for each level in governance structure.
- It is important to balance the need for reporting performance at the initiative level with the need to respect departmental reporting requirements and time restrictions. However, at a minimum, the lead department must be able to tell a performance story of results achieved at the initiative-level, across partner federal departments.
- Sharing resources where appropriate, ensuring the initiative is a government priority, and engaging senior management are all critical to the success of developing a collaborative style of horizontality.

Appendix 1: Crosswalk between Evaluation Question and Findings

Evaluation Question	Findings Associated with Evaluation Question
1. Why and in what areas does horizontal coordination help to facilitate the achievement of intended results? Is there is a continued need for the horizontal coordination function?	Finding #1 and #2
2. Has the FVI developed and implemented appropriate policies and procedures for effective horizontal coordination?	Finding #7
3. What results has the FVI achieved in terms of horizontal coordination? How has the FVI performed in terms of horizontal coordination as compared to established best practices? How does horizontal coordination ensure effective collaboration among departments involved in the FVI?	Finding #3-#6
4. How and to what degree has the horizontal coordination of FVI facilitated consideration of the gendered aspects of family violence? Has it contributed to identifying and mitigating potential differential impacts based on sex or diversity?	Finding #9:
5. What have we learned from FVI horizontal coordination in terms of measuring and reporting on results for Canadians? How has performance been measured against identified FVI objectives? What were the successes and challenges related to this approach?	Finding #8
6. What are best practices, both domestic and international, for managing complex horizontal public health initiatives?	Throughout the report.

End Notes – References

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