



SHELTER TRENDS:

National Action Plan

Shelter Trends is a way for Women's Shelters Canada to monitor trends across the VAW shelter/transition house (TH) sector. These simple surveys are emailed to shelters/THs approximately four times a year.

The National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (NAP) was announced by the federal government in November 2022. Since its announcement, the federal government has negotiated and signed bilateral agreements with all 13 provinces and territories, with funds flowing out for at least the first year. While Women's Shelters Canada has applauded the work on the NAP done by the federal government, we have continuously raised concerns, alongside other anti-violence organizations, about the absence of accountability and transparency built into this plan. There has been a consistent lack of engagement with anti-violence organizations across Canada since the launch of the plan, as well as limited engagement with the sector about funding directions at both the federal and provincial/territorial levels.

Examination of the bilateral agreements showed limited detail of where funding is being allocated, and only Year One actions have been released, despite now being more than six months into Year Two. We continue to wait for the national review of the first year, which is expected to be released in Fall 2024.

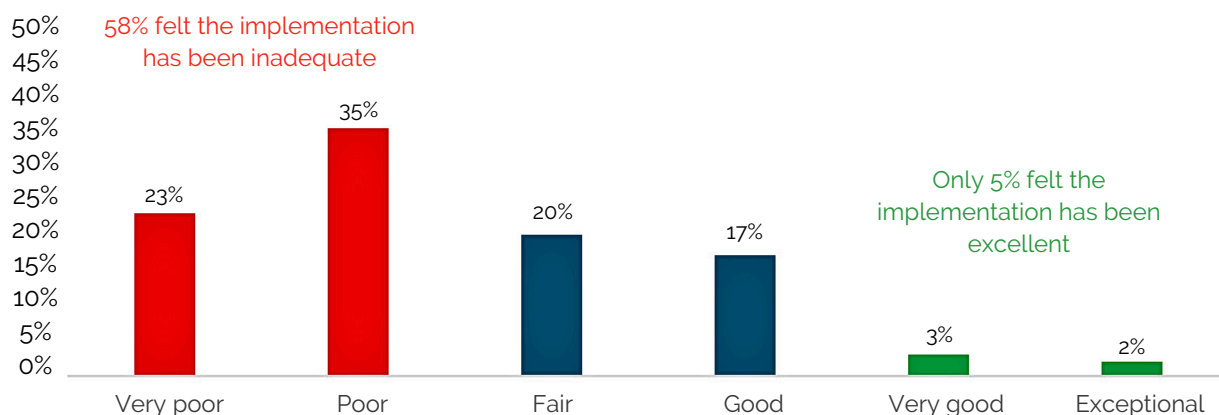
While this is the experience at the national level,

we wanted to better understand how shelters/transition houses (THs) felt about the implementation and rollout of the NAP in their own regions.¹ We asked shelters/THs to consider: how governments and their partners communicated, what consultation process was in place with the shelter/TH sector, what was included in the NAP and what may have been left out, and how transparent governments have been about funding allocations.

This single question does not allow us to investigate why organizations felt that the implementation overall has been lacking, nor where there have been successes. It does point to a lack of engagement with the sector and confusion about regional decision-making, which we have been hearing anecdotally over the last year.

We now have the infrastructure in place to affect change on gender-based violence (GBV) through the NAP, but governments need to be transparent and accountable for their actions and spending. **To achieve this, we join the call for the creation of a federal GBV commissioner to monitor the NAP and ensure coordinated and effective responses to GBV.**²

How do you feel the implementation of the NAP has been handled by the province/territory?
(n=100)



¹ The survey was sent to 487 shelters/THs, with a response rate of 21%.

² Dale, A. (2024) *What It Takes: Establishing a Gender-Based Violence Accountability Mechanism in Canada*. Toronto: ON. Women's Legal Education and Action Fund.