

SERVICE PROVIDER TRAINING
Introduction



FORCED MARRIAGE PROJECT
AGINCOURT COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

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ABOUT FORCED MARRIAGE

What is a Forced Marriage?

Forced marriage is the “union of two persons at least one of whom has not given their full and free consent to the marriage.”

- UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriage, Article 1(1), 1964

“A forced marriage occurs when people are coerced into a marriage against their will and under duress, which can include both physical and emotional pressure. A forced marriage is very different from an arranged marriage in which the free and informed consent of both parties is present. Due to its confusion with the tradition of arranged marriage, forced marriage is often associated in developed states with South Asian immigrants, but it is important to remember that it occurs across many cultures and religions.”

- Department of Justice Canada, *Annotated Bibliography on Comparative and International Law relating to Forced Marriage*, 2007

Who Gets Forced into Marriage?

Forced marriage can happen to anyone, regardless of age or gender.

It can also happen anywhere in the world. It occurs in South and East Asian communities, in North African and Middle Eastern countries, in North and South America, and in Europe. It is not limited to any racial, ethnic, or religious group.

Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights.

Forced marriage is a form of violence against women and a form of domestic abuse.

Is it legal in Canada?

No. It is against the law in Canada to force someone to get married.

ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

If you work with young people, this toolkit is for you. It is meant to help facilitate open discussion with youth who may be at risk, or survivors, of forced marriage. We recognize that many people work with young people outside clinical or case-management contexts, and that forced marriage is a sensitive topic. As such, this toolkit has games that can be incorporated into your youth programming – whatever shape it may take. These games and workshops address many of the values and issues surrounding forced marriage (e.g. healthy relationships) which may be used to kick-start discussions on forced marriage.

For service providers who have the opportunity to work one-on-one with young people, this toolkit also addresses how to safely and efficiently identify, prevent and intervene in forced marriage cases.

We encourage you to share and adapt this toolkit to suit your needs.

ABOUT FMP

The **Forced Marriage Project (FMP)** is an initiative funded by **Status of Women Canada** in partnership with **Agincourt Community Services Association**.

FMP raises awareness and provides information about forced marriage in Canada through interactive workshops, presentations to service providers and community groups, a website, newsletter, and through participation in both local and international initiatives.

Legal information presented in this guide is for information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Independent legal counsel should be sought for specific cases.

FMP is not responsible for any loss or damage caused by reliance on any statement, made negligently or otherwise, contained in this booklet.

ABOUT OUR PROJECT

The Forced Marriage Project (FMP) is an awareness and education initiative. Hundreds, possibly thousands, of women, girls, men and boys in Canada are affected by forced marriage; however it is an issue that has not yet been adequately addressed in Canada. As such, we approach the issue of forced marriage from an anti-oppressive, anti-racist position, viewing it primarily as a form of violence against women, which is sometimes used to control men and boys as well, and we seek to address it along with other forms of violence and domestic abuse.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario. (2010). *Who/If and When To Marry, It's a Choice: Forced/Non-consensual Marriages - A Toolkit For Service Providers* (Toolkit). Toronto, Canada: SALCO.

"Young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage: Practice Guidance for Social Workers" booklet published by The Foreign & Commonwealth Office in the United Kingdom.

"Youth Policy Framework: Understanding Youth Development – Workshop in a Box: Facilitating Youth Dialogues across the Province" toolkit published by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2011.

INTRODUCTION

This section is for all audiences. It explores what forced marriage is, who is forced into marriage, when, where, how and why it happens. We also identify different types of forced marriage, their occurrence in Canada, the relationship to violence against women, and myths and facts about forced marriage.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Before using this toolkit, unpack your knowledge of forced marriage by filling out this worksheet.

What are some of your perceptions of forced marriage?

True or False Quiz: What do you know about forced marriage?

Carefully read the statements below. Mark down if you think the statements are **true (T)** or false (F)

STATEMENTS	T O R F
Forced Marriage is NOT supported by religion.	
Forced marriage is a thing of the past; it is NOT happening today.	
Forced marriage is a private family matter.	
Forced marriage only happens to women.	
Forced marriage is NOT the same as arranged marriage.	
Forced marriage is NOT culture specific.	
Forced marriage is religion specific.	
Forced marriage ONLY happens to young people.	
Forced marriage is illegal.	
Forced marriage is perpetrated only by males.	
Forced marriage is easy to escape.	
Forced marriage cannot be escaped; once you are married, it's for life.	

Things to think about:

- What influences your perception of forced marriage?
- How does your identity influence how you view forced marriage (e.g. race, culture, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sex, sexuality, class, dis/ability... etc.)?

WORDS TO CONSIDER »

Nobody chooses to be oppressed, abused or forced into a marriage. It is a violation of our basic human rights and must be recognized as such.

~ Azra Rashid - documentary film maker. Her documentary, *Unveiling the Abuse*, tells the story of Canadian forced marriage survivor, Sandeep.

HOW TO IDENTIFY CASES OF FORCED MARRIAGE

What is a forced marriage?

A forced marriage is any marriage that takes place without the full and free **consent** of both of the individuals involved.

Forced marriages are a form of:

- Violence
- Violence against women
- Domestic abuse
- Human rights abuse
- Illegal practice

Forced Marriages are very different from **Arranged Marriages**. The difference lies in **the right to choose**:

- (a) **If** the individuals wish to marry
- (b) **When** the individuals wish to marry
- (c) **Who** the individuals wish to marry

Who gets forced to marry?

Although forced marriages can happen to anyone regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity or faith, most of those affected are young women.

In many cases the individual faces pressure to marry from their parents, relatives, caregivers, and community.

Why do forced marriages happen?

Parents and caregivers who force marriages often believe that their children's lives are their responsibility and that therefore they have the right to decide who and when their children marry. They believe that they know what is best for their children.

Some of the **motives** for forcing a marriage include:

- To increase the family's economic status
- To obtain immigration status for someone
- To increase the family's social status
- To reinforce the family's particular view of cultural or religious practices
- To control the individual's sexuality, or perceived sexuality
- Succumbing to community pressure
- To preserve family honour
- To protect the child and assure that they are taken care of in the future

Did You Know?

Any form of forced marriage is a violation of human rights and deprives women of other fundamental rights, including: freedom of movement, the right to education, the right to work, the right to be free from forced or compulsory labor, as well as a woman's right to liberty and security of person, and right to life and physical integrity, especially if it involves battery and/or rape.

~ United Nations Forced and Early Marriage: A Focus on Central and Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union Countries with Selected Laws From Other Countries, Cheryl Thomas

CONSIDER »

Making a list of other motives you think might play a part in someone being forced to marry.

How do forced marriages happen?

Forced marriages happen when **violence** or **coercion** is used to manipulate an individual to agree to a marriage.

Forms of **violence** include:

- Physical harm
- Sexual harm
- Threatening behaviour
- Confinement
- Abduction
- Mental and social pressure using religious and cultural justifications
- Restrictions on lifestyle, such as limitations on movement, association, dress code, education and career choices
- Financial control
- Isolation from community and family members
- Other demeaning, humiliating and controlling behaviour

Forms of **coercion** include:

- Shaming someone to uphold the family's reputation by getting married
- Stressing that if the person says no, it will affect their parent's health and wellbeing
- Being told that refusing will affect their siblings' future chances of getting married
- Threats from a parent, a sibling or a close family member to kill or harm themselves if the marriage does not take place
- Inducing fear of losing immigration status

Forced Marriage: Contextualized

There are no valid excuses or justifications for the practice of forced marriage.

It is important to understand that individuals who arrange forced marriages are often victims of complex, interacting factors that are context-specific. It is critical for service providers to remain **non-judgemental**, and to display anti-oppressive, anti-racist and anti-violent attitudes when working with diverse communities.

Survivors Speak

You were just one of the kids going to school with everybody else one day, and the next day you're a wife.

~ Debbie Palmer, formerly of Bountiful BC, home of a fundamentalist sect of the Latter Day Saints. Her husband, who was 57, already had 5 wives and 30 children. Debbie was 15.

WORDS TO CONSIDER »

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

~ Arundhati Roy

TYPES OF FORCED MARRIAGE

Forced Marriage by Parents, Families and Communities

The most common type of forced marriage occurs when parents or other family members force one or both of the participants into the marriage. This type of forced marriage is usually supported by the surrounding community, making it difficult to avoid or escape.

Forced Marriage by Religious Leaders

In this type of forced marriage, one or both of the participants to the marriage are forced into it by religious leaders, supported by their religious community. In isolated communities, such as the polygamous Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) in Bountiful, BC, the isolation ensures that those forced into these marriages have few or no outside ties, making avoidance or escape difficult.

Forced Marriage in Conflict Zones

In the upheaval of war and conflict, with the breakdown of law and government, women and girls may be forced to marry men on either side of the conflict. This has occurred recently in places such as the Sierra Leone, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Historically it has happened globally with women being treated as "the spoils of war" to be raped, forced into prostitution, forced into marriage by the men who capture them, or given as rewards to higher ranking leaders.

Trafficking for the Purpose of Forced Marriage

There is a growing trade in the trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of forced marriage. This trade is most common in countries where the male to female ratio has been artificially altered through **female-selective abortion**¹ or **female infanticide**,² or through the adoption abroad of female children.

Kidnapping for the Purpose of Forced Marriage

In many cases women are kidnapped by the man who wishes to marry them, often with the help of a group of his friends. There have also been a number of international cases where women and girls have been kidnapped by men to serve as second wives in a **polygamous marriage**.³

Adoption for the Purpose of Forced Marriage

In a number of reported cases, girls have been adopted from abroad to serve as second or third wives in polygamous marriages.

Forced Marriage Through Hereditary Slavery

In these cases, a slave owner forces the slaves he inherits into marriages of the slave owner's choosing. Although the slavery itself is illegal, lack of enforcement in some areas allows it to continue with all the attendant abuses.

Forced Marriage by Partner

In these cases, an abusive partner forces the other partner into marriage through the use of violence or threat of violence.

¹ **Female-selective abortion** – occurs when tests are done on a pregnant woman to determine the sex of the fetus, and only those fetuses determined to be female are aborted.

² **Female infanticide** – occurs when a female infant is purposely killed **because she is a girl**, or when she is abandoned without food, shelter or care so that she will die from starvation, frostbite, dehydration or injury.

³ **Polygamous marriage** – a marriage in which one partner has two or more spouses at the same time. In these cases it is a male having two or more wives at the same time. Polygamous marriages are illegal in Canada.

Did You Know?

In May 2004, the Special Court for Sierra Leone included forced marriage in its statute as a crime against humanity. This amendment was in response to the thousands of women who were abducted and forced to become "bush brides." They were forced, usually through threats of violence, to undertake all the duties expected of a wife in Sierra Leone. This involved cooking, cleaning, as well as bearing and rearing children, which were often the result of rapes.... The court set legal precedent by considering forced marriage as a crime against humanity, separate from other forms of sexual violence and specifically sexual slavery. The fact that many of the marriages lasted for years and involved the domestic nature of marriages was a factor in that decision.

~ United Nations Forced and Early Marriage: A Focus on Central and Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union Countries with Selected Laws From Other Countries, Cheryl Thomas

Did You Know?

In rural areas of Chechnya, 80 percent of married women are forced into marriage through kidnapping.

~ From the round table discussion on "Improvement of legislation in the sphere of marriage age and implementation of religious marriage customs" – Osh, Kyrgyzstan, May 26, 2009, as reported in 24.kg news agency, 27/05-2009

DO FORCED MARRIAGES HAPPEN IN CANADA?

Yes. Some forced marriages take place in Canada while others involve Canadians being taken abroad and forced to marry. At present there are no accurate statistics on the number of forced marriages taking place in Canada or involving Canadians taken abroad. This is because guidelines for identifying and reporting forced marriages have not yet been established. There is also **underreporting** by victims because of the lack of institutional protocol, stigma, shame, isolation, fear, and a lack of awareness of resources and alternatives available to those at risk.

FORCED MARRIAGE AS A FORM OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

It is important to recognize forced marriage as a form of **violence against women** in order to understand that:

Forced Marriage is Not a Cultural or Religious Practice

Forced marriage occurs in all patriarchal societies at some point, and manifests itself in all patriarchal institutions, whether they are religious, legal, cultural or governmental. Understanding forced marriage as a form of violence against women allows us to understand that it is not a core tradition of any particular culture or religion but rather a symptom of patriarchal control.

Forced Marriage is Directly Related to Women's Inferior Position Within Society

Forced marriage is overwhelmingly a form of power and control used against women and girls. Like partner abuse, rape and other forms of sexual assault, it is used to control women, their sexuality, and often, their offspring. If forced marriage is not positioned as a form of violence against women, women's treatment and status throughout society will not be examined, leaving the roots of this form of violence - women's inequality - untouched.

Male Victims of Forced Marriage are Treated "As If" They Were Women

In patriarchal societies, the worst insult that can be given to a man is to equate him with, or call him, a woman. Men who are forced to marry often feel less "manly", less in control, because they feel that they are being treated like women. In her study of young men from immigrant communities in Norway, Anja Bredal found that "Forced marriage is an especially problematic term when trying to get young men to talk. It has been a topic related to young women, and it is important for these men not to be associated with women's problems."⁴

Positioning forced marriage as a form of violence against women allows us to critique the position of both women and men within society, and the damage done by gender stereotypes and the devaluation of women.

Where forced marriage is not understood as a form of violence against women, some men have reacted by taking out the anger they feel at their loss of control onto the women they have been forced to marry. When this happens, these men are in fact perpetuating the very system that abused them.

When men come to an understanding of the negative consequences of patriarchal control for **both** genders they will be able to work **with** women to overcome these attitudes and practices. Men who have faced forced marriage will come to understand that the inferior status of women in patriarchal societies needs to be eliminated in order to ensure the freedom of all members of society.

WORDS TO CONSIDER »

If it were between countries, we'd call it a war. If it were a disease, we'd call it an epidemic. If it were an oil spill, we'd call it a disaster. But it is happening to women, and it's just an everyday affair. It is violence against women. It is rape at home and on dates. It is the beating or the blow that one out of four Canadian women receives in her lifetime. It is sexual harassment at work and sexual abuse of the young. It is murder.

~ Michael Kaufman

On the Ground

The girls do equal amounts of work in two jobs. They are sex slaves, not just to one man but a group of 10 or 12 men. Apart from that there is agriculture - working on the farms with animals from morning until night.

~ Shafiq Khan runs a grassroots organization in India dedicated to tracking down bride traffickers and their victims

⁴ Bredal, A. (2011). Mellom makt og avmakt ("Between Power and Powerlessness") (No. 4) (p. 136). Oslo: Institute for Social Research. Retrieved from http://www.socialresearch.no/content/download/31823/630521/file/R_2011_4web.pdf

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT FORCED MARRIAGES

MYTH	FACT
Forced Marriage is supported by religion.	Forced marriage is NOT supported by any religion.
Forced marriage is a thing of the past; it's not happening today.	Forced marriage is still happening today, in Canada and around the world. However, victims are often afraid to speak out, so forced marriages often go unnoticed and unreported.
Forced marriage is a private family matter.	The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to which Canada is an original signatory, states in Article 16, section 2, that "Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses." Everyone has the right to choose who, when, and if they marry. Denying this right is a breach of one's basic human rights and, as such, becomes a public matter that requires public intervention.
Forced marriage only happens to women.	Although most of the victims of forced marriage are women, men are also victims. Men may be victimized because of a prior marriage commitment made by their parents, or because they are perceived to be gay, trans, or engaged in other behaviour the family finds objectionable, and forcing them into marriage is seen as a means to "cure" them.
Forced marriage is the same as arranged marriage.	Forced marriage is NOT the same as arranged marriage. There are many differences, the most important being that in an arranged marriage, the full and free consent of both parties to the marriage is sought and obtained prior to confirming the marriage. Contrarily, in a forced marriage, one or both of the parties are forced or coerced into marriage, most often for the benefit of a third party.
Forced marriage is culture specific.	Forced marriage has been practiced in most patriarchal societies at one time or another. It was practiced across Europe during the medieval period and well into the latter part of the nineteenth century. In North America, "shot-gun" weddings were common in the twentieth century and forced marriage by religious leaders has taken place recently in polygamous sects in both Canada and the US. In the GTA, forced marriages are known to affect women and men born in Canada, as well as those born abroad. Ethnic backgrounds of victims range from North and South America, South and East Asia, Europe and Africa.
Forced marriage is religion specific.	Forced marriage occurs within all major religions. Forced marriage also occurs in families that are non-religious.
Forced marriage only happens to young people.	Although many victims of forced marriage are young, there is no age restriction with forced marriages. There are numerous cases of adults being forced into marriages. Women with children, who have managed to escape one abusive forced marriage, may be forced into another in order to retain the family's support. In a recent UK survey of forced marriage, the youngest victim was a 5-year-old girl and the oldest, an 87-year-old woman.

Forced marriage is not illegal.

Although forced marriage is not a distinct criminal offence in Canadian Law, many of the actions involved in forced marriages are illegal such as the use of violence, threats of violence and forcible confinement. In family law, any marriage conducted without the full and free consent of both parties is not a valid marriage and can be legally annulled whether the marriage took place in Canada or abroad, and regardless of whether the parties to the marriage are Canadian citizens or not.

Forced marriage is only perpetrated by males.

Although forced marriage is practiced in patriarchal cultures, it is important to note that many forced marriages are perpetrated or supported by women (mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and/or sisters of the victims).

Forced marriage is easy to escape.

Once a person is forced into a marriage, it can be very difficult to escape. The victim may be coerced, threatened or physically harmed by their spouse or in-laws. Victims often do not know their rights and do not have access to information and resources to aid them. Furthermore, once children are born, the fear of loss of custody prompts many victims to stay.

Forced marriage cannot be escaped; once you are married, it's for life.

There is always a way out, but it may not be easy. Victims of forced marriage believe there is no way out because they are told to believe this by their abusers. The first step to making a safe exit from a forced marriage is to reach out to an organization that is trained to help people in such situations. Many survivors of forced marriages have gone on to live full, free and happy lives whether or not members of their families agree to reconcile with them.

ARRANGED MARRIAGE VS. FORCED MARRIAGE

ARRANGED MARRIAGE	FORCED MARRIAGE
<p>Marriage is freely discussed, with input from the individual who wants to marry.</p>	<p>Marriage is discussed by the parents or other family members, and a marriage partner is assigned to the individual. The individual has no say in the matter.</p>
<p>The individual freely and fully consents to marry. While the families are involved, the final decision is made by the individual.</p>	<p>There is no freedom of choice for the individual involved. Violence, manipulation and coercion are applied to make the individual agree to marry.</p>
<p>An agreement to marry is made. Arranged Marriage takes place.</p>	<p>The person is married against their will. Forced marriage takes place.</p>



An arranged marriage is a legitimate way of finding a suitable marriage partner. In an arranged marriage, the parents or extended family members take the lead in finding a potential marriage partner for their adult child. These marriages often result in stable, satisfying, long-term relationships. An arranged marriage should have the full and free consent of both parties to the marriage. They must be the ones to ultimately decide WHO, WHEN and IF to marry.

It is the person in the marriage, or facing the marriage, who decides whether they have given, or are giving, their full and free consent. In some cases, an individual may look back on their marriage and realize that it was forced, yet at the time they did not believe that there was a choice and did not attempt to refuse the marriage. In other cases, an individual in a forced marriage may already have children and may be making the best of the situation in order to keep the family together. Understanding the difference between an arranged marriage and a forced marriage is not about judging another person's choices. It is about helping everyone to understand their rights and responsibilities, and to facilitate the discussion of important issues like consent, choice, negotiation, options, and the best ways of finding a marriage partner for a particular person.

WORDS TO CONSIDER »

The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.

~ Michael Kaufman

Survivors Speak

I was thirty years old and I didn't know I had "human rights," and I didn't know they had been violated.

~ Sandeep - Canadian forced marriage survivor, upon being told her marriage was a forced marriage and, as such, a violation of her human rights.

Some Questions to Consider in Determining Whether a Marriage is Arranged or Forced:

- What is the main purpose of the marriage? Is it to establish a stable, satisfying, long-term relationship? Or is there an ulterior motive such as settling a debt, assisting someone with immigration, or for the financial gain of family members?
- Has there been sufficient care taken to ensure the suitability of the potential bride and groom as to age, level of education, life goals, etc.?
- If one or both partners wish to withdraw from the process, do they have that option?
- Can the individuals involved choose to delay marriage? This might be in order to complete their education, to secure employment, or for other reasons.
- Can individuals choose to remain unmarried, if they so wish?
- Is emotional duress used to secure the marriage?
- Is threat of violence used to secure the marriage?
- Is threat of a family member committing suicide, or of suffering a heart attack, used to secure the marriage?

Is forcible confinement or violence used to secure the marriage?

WARNING SIGNS OF FORCED MARRIAGE

Cases of forced marriage may often present themselves in conjunction with other problems.

Some possible indicators:

- Appointments are often missed
- The individual appears scared, anxious or depressed
- The individual is always accompanied by someone when attending a consultation
- Injuries are inconsistent with the explanation of the cause of the accident
- One partner or the parent appears aggressive and overly dominant; the individual is passive and afraid
- Worsening academic performance
- Absence or poor attendance at school or work
- Depression
- Self-harm
- Eating disorders
- Regular visits to health care professionals with no obvious illness or reason
- Attempted suicide

WOMEN'S STATUS IN CANADA

For many native women, their status declined under patriarchal colonialism and has not recovered. Native women face some of the highest rates of violence and abuse in Canada, and have some of the lowest rates of conviction of their perpetrators. At present, there are over 600 native women missing or murdered in Canada in recent years.

- Certain cultures, such as the Mohawk, were matriarchal or matrifocal, meaning that a group of female elders decided the business of the nation, and they practiced matrilineal descent.
- When the British and French took over much of what would become Canada, they brought with them the practice of patriarchy including forcing this upon native cultures which were not previously patriarchal.
- However, over the years, Canadian women have made many strides within the patriarchal culture.
- In 1897, after a very long fight, Clara Brett Martin became Canada's first lawyer and the first woman to practice law in the entire British Empire. She was taunted and ridiculed by classmates, professors, the public and the media simply for enrolling in law school.
- In 1909, the Criminal Code was amended to criminalize the abduction of women.
- After a long struggle, most Canadian women obtained the right to vote in federal elections in 1918. In Quebec, this did not happen until 1940. Aboriginal women (and men) did not obtain the right to vote until 1960.
- In 1925 the federal divorce law was changed to allow a woman to divorce her husband on the same grounds that a man could divorce his wife - simple adultery. Before this, she had to prove adultery in conjunction with other acts such as "sodomy" or bestiality.
- In 1932, Dr. Elizabeth Bagshaw directed Canada's first family planning clinic, which was illegal at the time. In 1936, Ottawa nurse Dorothea Palmer was arrested for telling women about birth control.
- In 1955, restrictions on married women in the federal public service were removed. In the past women public service employees were fired upon marriage.
- In 1967, women student protesters succeeded at integrating women into the University of Toronto's Hart House, for which women students paid fees but were restricted from entering.
- In 1969, the distribution of information about birth control was decriminalized.
- In 1973, the first rape crisis centres in Canada opened - in Vancouver and Toronto. In the same year, Interval House, one of the first shelters for abused women, also opened in Toronto.
- In 1981, 1,300 women gathered as they were concerned about the fact that women's rights were excluded from the proposed new Charter of Rights. They lobbied Members of Parliament intensively which resulted in the inclusion of women's rights in Canada's constitution.

- In 1983, rape laws were broadened to make it a criminal offence for a man to rape his wife. In the same year, Ontario police were directed by the Attorney General to lay charges in domestic violence cases. Before this, men usually faced no consequences for beating their female partners.
- In 1988, Bertha Wilson became the first woman Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. When she had first applied to law school, a professor told her to go home and take up knitting.
- In 1993, Canada's refugee guidelines were changed to include women facing gender-related persecution.

* Adapted from Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (<http://www.criaw-icref.ca/millennium>) "Some facts and dates in Canadian women's history of the 20th century" CRIAW Newsletter, vol. 20, no. 1 (Winter 2000).

DEALING WITH FORCED MARRIAGES

Important Information

The One Chance Rule.

Remember that **you may only have one chance** to meet, talk and consult with the person, so make efficient use of the time, get as many details as possible, and provide as much information and support as you can.

- **DO NOT Send the individual away** without assistance, in the belief that it is not your responsibility, or that you cannot help them
- **DO NOT Approach the family or friends**, unless the individual asks you to do so
- **DO NOT Send the individual back to their family** without their permission
- **DO NOT Breach confidentiality**
- **DO NOT Attempt to be a mediator**
- **DO NOT Contact community leaders or members** unless requested to do so by the client
- **DO NOT Disclose immigration status** to police or immigration authorities
- **DO NOT Provide legal advice** unless you are qualified to do so

WORDS TO CONSIDER »

I call these revelations the slime under the rug of patriarchy. We are hearing about it only now, but it has been there forever.... The most important accomplishment of the feminist movement may be the exposure of this secret, the hauling it out of the private darkness where it has flourished and hanging it out in the air for all to see.

~ Marilyn French

WORDS TO CONSIDER »

When men are oppressed, it's a tragedy. When women are oppressed, it's tradition.

~ Bernadette Mosala - South African Teacher

FORCED MARRIAGE ABROAD

How to assist a client who suspects that they may be taken abroad to get married.

If possible, they should find a way to keep from going abroad. Assist them with alternatives. If this does not work as an option, assist your client in registering with the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (**DFAIT**) **before leaving**. The form can be found on the DFAIT website <http://www.voyage.gc.ca> or by calling **1-800-267-6788** (inside Canada) or **613-996-8885** collect (outside Canada).

Provide DFAIT with the following personal information:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Passport details (number, city and date of issue)
- A recent photograph
- Overseas contact information
 - Names of people you will be staying with and your relationship to them
 - Address of place where you will be staying
- Local contact information
 - Contact details of someone you trust in Canada.
 - Names and occupations of your parents
 - Anticipated departure and return dates/ Flight details (carrier, flight #)
 - Names of people you are travelling with

The client should also take these things with them:

- Currency – Canadian currency as well as the local currency of the country you will be visiting (try to keep hidden)
- Cell phone (try to keep hidden - can be used to text to Canada)
- Photocopies of your passport, tickets, and other major identification (try to keep hidden)
- Important phone numbers of resources and contacts in Canada (try to keep hidden)

In addition, if possible, leave a copy of the information you have given DFAIT along with photocopies of your passport and tickets, and a recent photograph of yourself, with a trusted friend or adult. If the client wishes, have them leave a copy with you.

Please note that this advice applies only if the individual is a Canadian citizen. **If the individual at risk is a permanent or temporary resident** it is more complex. If this is the case, please refer them to a legal service which deals with these types of residents.

The client should also take a list of resources available in the country to which they will be travelling.

Assist the client in creating a list of agencies in Canada that may be able to support them, as well as a list of helpful NGO's in the destination country.

WORDS TO CONSIDER »

We need people to truly try and imagine -- once and for all -- what it feels like to have your body invaded, your mind splintered, your soul shattered. We need to let our rage and our compassion connect us so we can change the paradigm of global rape. There are approximately one billion women on the planet who have been violated.

ONE BILLION WOMEN. The time is now. Prepare for the escalation.

~Eve Ensler

ACTIVITY—Preparing Your Agency For Dealing With Forced Marriage Cases

Divide participants into small groups

Discuss how each agency or department could better prepare for handling forced marriage cases

Come together as a group and discuss your findings

Each group should:

- Evaluate your current safety planning guide to include the needs of individuals facing a forced marriage.
- How do you adjust your current plan to include threat from parents and extended family instead of threat from spouse?
- Can you anticipate any challenges you might face carrying out these steps?
- Can you think of any ways to overcome these challenges?
- Can you construct alternate ways of carrying out the difficult intervention steps to get the same result?

CONSEQUENCES OF FORCED MARRIAGES

(SEE PAGE 27, **APPENDIX E** FOR BLANK WORKSHEET)

For the Victim

- Increased vulnerability to domestic violence
- Physical, emotional, financial and/or sexual abuse
- Continued coercion, possibly related to immigration or finance
- Estrangement from family
- Isolation
- Stigmatized by the community
- Mental health concerns related to trauma, depression, anxiety, self-harm, eating disorders or suicidal thoughts

For the Parents

- Estrangement from child and future grand- children
- Increased chance of divorce within the family
- Increased isolation in old age

For the Community

- Stigmatization and stereotyping of communities in which incidents of forced marriage are noted
- Increased homophobia
- Strained family relationships and family breakdown
- Increased incidence of violence in the community
- Lowered family reunification due to tightened immigration controls
- Increased need for services addressing domestic violence and violence against women, including shelters, counselling services and health care services

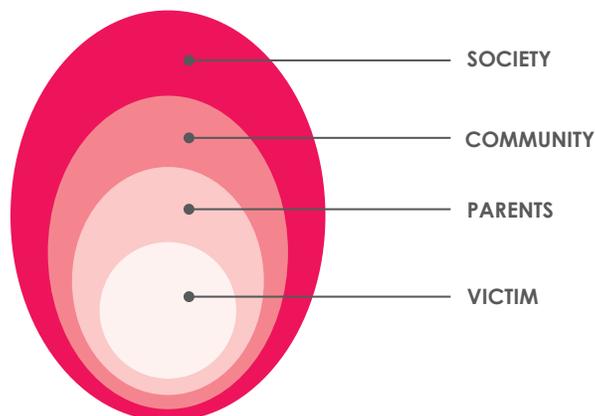
For the Society

- Decreased social cohesion and increased strife
- Increased violence
- Increased health care costs

Survivors Speak

I was frightened. If I left, I would be on my own for the first time in my life and I might never see my family again, but if I stayed I would be married to that man and that was worse than the fear of being alone.

~ Alia* name changed at the request of the survivor



APPENDIX A: CLIENT INFORMATION FORM

Only record information that your client is comfortable sharing.

Do NOT pressure client if she/he does not wish to answer a specific question(s).

Name of Client: _____

Date of Report: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____ **Nationality:** _____

Note: Obtain a recent photograph if possible.

Document any distinguishing features on the client, such as birthmarks or tattoos, etc.:

School Information

Grade Level: _____

Name and Address of School: _____

Name and contact of a person at school whom the client trusts:

Note: Acquire a class schedule if possible.

Employment Information

Name and Address of Place of Employment: _____

Length of Employment: _____

Name and contact of a person at work whom the client trusts:

Note: Acquire a work schedule if possible.

Family Information

Name of Mother: _____

Address of Mother: _____

Name of Father: _____

Address of Father: _____

Names and Ages of Siblings:

Are any other family members at risk of forced marriages? If so, record details:

Situational Information

Full Details of Current Allegation:

Details of any related background information, including any involvement by police, medical professionals, school officials, social workers, or religious institutions for any previous incidents:

List of family members and friends who can be trusted:

Details of any threats or hostile actions against the client which were reported by them or by a third party:

Risk Assessment

Is the client pregnant? If yes, note details:

Is the client secretly married? If yes, note details:

Does the client have a secret boyfriend or girlfriend? If yes, note details:

Note any other important information that may be shared during the consultation:

APPENDIX B: GOVERNMENT APPLICATION FORMS

Government Application Forms

An application for **Financial Assistance for Canadians Victimized Abroad** can be found here:

<http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/pcvi-cpcv/abroad-etranger.html>

A registration for **Canadians Residing Abroad** can be found here: https://www.voyage2.gc.ca/Registration_inscription/Register_Inscrire/Login_ouvrir-une-session-eng.aspx

APPENDIX C: DEFINITIONS

Forced Marriage – a marriage that occurs without the full and free consent of **both** parties to the marriage.

Arranged Marriage – a marriage in which parents or other family members take the lead in arranging but to which both individuals involved give their full and free consent. If one or both parties to the marriage declines to marry the other individual chosen, or chooses to delay marriage, or to refuse to marry altogether, their choice is respected and allowed.

Consent

- **Free** - when both individuals agree to enter into a marriage without any form of coercion or force
- **Coerced** - when one or both individuals agree to a marriage due to external pressures that are imposed upon them by their families, communities, or potential spouse.

For more definitions visit: www.fmp-acsa.ca

APPENDIX D: CONSEQUENCES OF FORCED MARRIAGES—WORKSHEET

CONSEQUENCES OF FORCED MARRIAGE			
For Victim			
For Parents			
For Community			
For Society			

APPENDIX E: FAQ BRAINSTORM—ACTIVITY

Almost every website, information manual and resource book has a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page. You can find a comprehensive list of FAQs about forced marriage at www.fmp-acsa.ca.

However, you can also turn this exercise into an educational experience and create an opportunity for individuals and groups to create their own set of FAQs by thinking through what kind of questions other audiences (e.g. parents, at-risk youth, general public...etc.) might have about forced marriage.

Objective:

To explore what kind of questions you think different audiences might have about forced marriage.

Materials Needed:

- Playing cards
- Flipchart or chalkboard
- Markers or chalk

How to Play:

Distribute all the cards to participants. Give the participants the option of working alone or in groups.

Ask participants to turn over their cards and discover who they will become. Ask them to consider (as that person):

- What are the questions you would most need answered?
- What questions would you want to ask?
- What questions would you be afraid to ask a family member, but might ask on an anonymous website?
- What questions would you be afraid to ask a service provider, but might ask on an anonymous website?

Re-group and discuss:

What are your questions? (Write questions on a flip chart or chalkboard).

For each question ask:

- Why ask that question?
- How could we answer it?

After answering all the questions, discuss:

- What questions do certain people have in common?
- What similar questions are approached from a different angle by different people?
- Which questions could lead to dialogue between people?

PLAYING CARDS

A **person being forcibly married.**

A **service provider** who has been told that she will encounter many cases of forced marriage in her new job.

A **person in a forced marriage** who wants out but is afraid of the consequences.

A **parent** who wants their child to marry.

A **friend** of someone who is facing pressure to marry.

A **member of the public** who has never heard of forced marriage until today.

APPENDIX F: EMERGENCY RESOURCES

Emergency Links

If there is an emergency situation, immediately **call 911** for assistance. Emergency and Police Services

911

Assaulted Women's Helpline

This helpline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are available in over 100 languages. Free crisis counselling and referrals for legal advice, shelters and other supports.

1-866-863-0511
(416) 863-0511 (Greater Toronto Area)
1-866-863-7868 (TTY)
#SAFE (#7233) (cell)

www.awhl.org

Femaide (Francophone)

1-877-336-2433
1-866-860-7082 (TTY)

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)

Contact: 1-800-267-6788
(North America)
1-613-996-8885 (Call Collect
from abroad)

www.travel.gc.ca
sos@international.gc.ca

For a more detailed list of resources visit our website: www.fmp-acsa.ca



fmp-acsa.ca

FORCED MARRIAGE PROJECT
AGINCOURT COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

1911 Kennedy Rd. Unit 105, T 647.457.6914
Scarborough, ON M1P 2L9 F 416.321.6922