



Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses

DEVELOPED BY  STRATEGY
SYSTEMS

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 2029





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OAITH is pleased to introduce our five-year strategic plan to our members, ally organizations, partners and supporters who have worked alongside us. With all levels of government invested in addressing gender-based violence (GBV) through the implementation of a National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence¹, we stand united to improve outcomes for survivors. OAITH is rooted in our commitment to working with our members and ally organizations as you deliver a broad range of services to survivors, their families and your broader community.

Over the past five years, we have made significant strides in achieving our goals set out in OAITH's last strategic plan. Building upon these successes and lessons learned that strengthened our foundation, OAITH is positioned and committed to leading with intention as we embrace the transformative changes required to end gender-based violence. We are, however, faced with increasingly complex socio-economic, and political realities and tensions for survivors, their families and the organizations who support them. These realities will require us to shape and shift our responses in addressing GBV as outlined in OAITH's Anti-Racist & Anti-Oppression Intersectional Gender-Based Violence Framework, "...developing an anti-racist and anti-oppressive framework involves adopting a broad understanding of community and violence, to further an integrative and holistic approach to achieving social justice"².

We are in the midst of changing community demographics that may require different societal responses to address GBV. Systems and services have become depleted, while poverty, housing, and food precarity have stagnated movement within the shelter system. Digital transformation and innovation can bring new possibilities however we must ensure these solutions address persistent systemic barriers for survivors. New and emerging workforce trends demand our focus and resources as the complexities for those we serve and those working to support them increase—both are redefining and impacting workplaces and service delivery responses concurrently. As broader understandings of gender, violence and trauma evolve, multiple truths and experiences are emerging where lines and boundaries are challenging the binary concepts we once depended on.

Through this transformative time, we will support our members as you contend with and make connections between the rising rates of GBV, femicide, hate crimes and hate-motivated violence - all within the context of this changing landscape. OAITH's primary objects will remain the same, but our strategic focus and values must be relevant, responsive, and adaptive as we endeavor to lead with intention.



Marlene Ham
Executive Director

Abi Ajibolade
President, Board of Directors

¹ National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. Government of Canada Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE).

² Bernhardt, N., Cooper, A. Taking Action in Our Spheres of Influence: Intersectional Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression Gender-Based Violence Framework. March 2022.

OAITH is an association representing violence against women shelters, transitional housing and gender-based violence organizations. We support our member and ally organizations through government relations and advocacy, public awareness, training, education, and research to end gender-based violence.



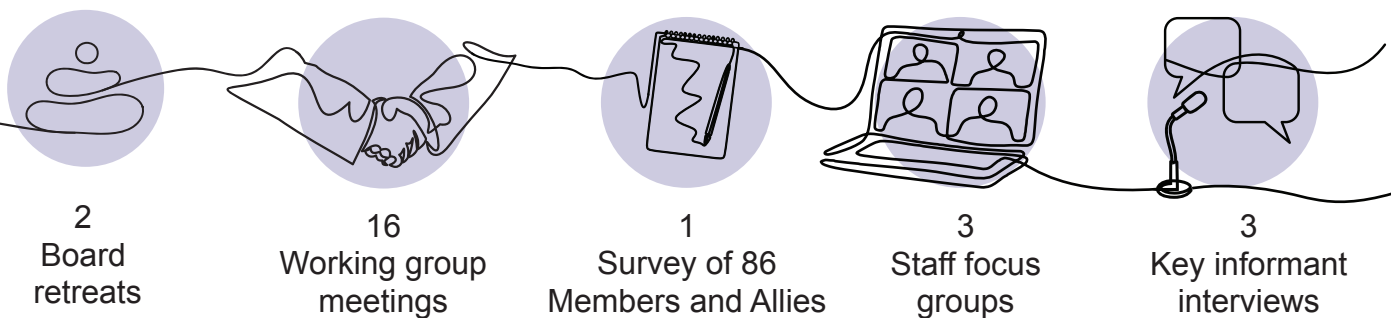
OAITH MEMBER PROFILE

- Supports those impacted by gender-based violence through counselling, education, shelter.
- Long standing leadership with a high rate of turnover.
- Capital investments are limited (infrastructure, including Information Technology).
- Funding increases are limited and demands are increasing.
- Increasing inflation costs and lack of affordable housing.
- Staff dealing with compassion fatigue.

OUR APPROACH

This five-year strategic plan was developed through an environmental scan, review of OAITH’s work, including government submissions, frameworks, and positions as well as the National Action Plan and our response to it. This review guided the SWOT³ analysis well as a review of progress against the last strategic plan. A thoughtful engagement process was designed by the working group that included Board retreats, focus groups, interviews with experts in the field as well as a member survey. Through this engagement, the vision, mission, and values were redefined and validated. These set the context for the strategic directions for the next five years.

ENGAGEMENT JOURNEY



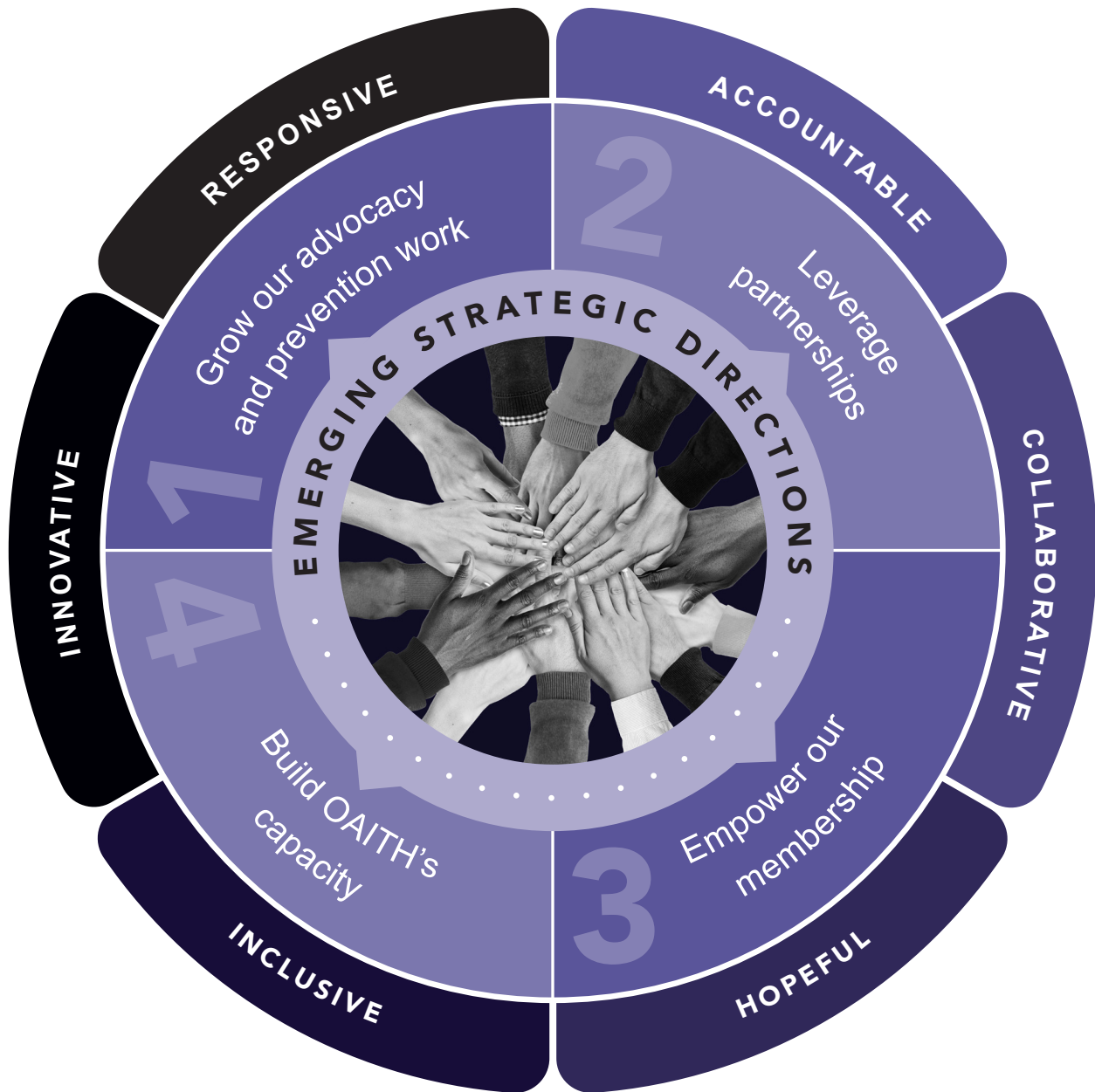
³ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

Vision

A future free of gender-based violence (GBV) services for women, children, and gender-diverse communities.

Mission

OAITH works towards ending all forms of gender-based violence and oppression through advocacy, education, prevention, research, and training.



Values and Guiding Principles

OAITH demonstrates their values through advocacy, education, prevention, research, and training about gender-based violence.

VALUES	GUIDING PRINCIPLES
Accountable	We promote transparency and accept responsibility when considering collective action and impact.
Collaborative	We work collaboratively, building relationships with those who share and want to contribute to our vision.
Hopeful	We come from a place of hope, striving for a better and safer future together.
Inclusive	We honour and respect the lived experience, diversity and intersectionality of our membership and the communities they serve.
Innovative	We strive to adapt to changing political contexts, member, learner, and survivor needs. We do this by being creative, embracing change and transformation.
Responsive	We continuously respond to, learn, and build awareness of the struggles, strengths and systemic differential impacts with members, allies, and the community experience.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: GROW OUR ADVOCACY AND PREVENTION WORK

OAITH is deeply committed to advocating for the rights of its members, with an emphasis on affordability, funding, and human rights issues. We undertake a broad range of initiatives to support our advocacy efforts, including infrastructure investments, law reform, service delivery models, and fair remuneration, among others. OAITH has a proven track record with enhanced government relations, which requires ongoing efforts. Our work also focuses on prevention efforts that strongly support our members' community-based initiatives that increase awareness and prevent femicide. Our overarching objective is to work collaboratively towards building a safer and more equitable society.

OBJECTIVES	HIGH LEVEL OUTCOMES
1.1 Continue to focus on government relations related to gender-based violence, on current and emerging issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual key issues identification.• Monitoring of legislative and funding announcements.• Invitations to meet with the government for consultations and presentations.• Number of recommendations brought forward and adopted.• Increase in investments in the GBV sector.• Number of speaking opportunities.• Number of updates to members.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS

Our partnerships with diverse organizations across Ontario play a vital role in realizing our vision. We strive to cultivate relationships and build coalitions with groups that align with our values. As we evaluate OAITH's membership model, we understand the value of analyzing other organizations operating in the GBV arena. We will continue to engage with academic institutions and research organizations to advance our mission. By leveraging evidence-based best practices, we aim to make a significant impact.

OBJECTIVES	HIGH LEVEL OUTCOMES
2.1 Review OAITH's membership model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on needs assessment of other organizations in the GBV arena.• Equitable fee membership model completed with recommendations to the Board.• Board report on Identified scope of work for any possible expansion, e.g., CRA, by-laws, etc.
2.2 Build strategic relationships with other provincial bodies and Indigenous organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of collaborative/joint initiatives completed.• Number of resources produced.
2.3 Expand academic relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of partnership research studies.• Increase in funding revenue to support research work.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: EMPOWER OUR MEMBERS

OAITH maintains our unwavering dedication to progress and development by offering training and support on current and emerging topics. Our objectives encompass fostering Communities of Practice (CoP) around shared interests like policies and talent acquisition, augmenting our online presence, boosting participation in events and surveys, and actively advocating for our members.

Additionally, we will explore provincial and regional models to expand participation and advance our mission.

OBJECTIVES	HIGH LEVEL OUTCOMES
3.1 Explore and expand member benefits programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in number and/or variety of benefits programs.• Reported cost savings to members.
3.2 Build member capacity through education & training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in number of additional training opportunities offered.• Increase in number of participants in education and training sessions.• Participants report an increase in knowledge and/or skills.
3.3 Increase member and ally engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established baseline and increase in satisfaction scores on annual surveys.• Number of Community of Practice (CoP) facilitated events.• Improvement in relationship between and among members through OAITH events, activities, etc.• Increase in participation of OAITH members at our events.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: BUILD OAITH’S CAPACITY

OAITH's upcoming strategic cycle is geared towards achieving key objectives that will ensure financial sustainability and stability, enhance digital infrastructure, and improve internal capacity building. In addition, the team is focused on cultivating a positive virtual workplace culture that offers opportunities for ongoing professional development.

Furthermore, we plan to review the membership fee model, establish a fair and competitive compensation framework, assess governance gaps, by-laws, and risks, and enhance project management and evaluation frameworks to meet the evolving needs.

OBJECTIVES	HIGH LEVEL OUTCOMES
4.1 Explore stable funding opportunities from the public/private sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage increase in funding. • Diversified Funding Portfolio.
4.2 Strengthen the governance model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated progress on OAITH’s organizational impact assessment over 5 years⁴. • Board evaluation demonstrates the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ethical culture of decision making. o High performance and policy adherence. o Effective internal controls and risk management. o Legitimacy and credibility. • Risk register is updated annually. • 80-100% board term completion rate.
4.3 Continue to invest in our team through training, team building, and collaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable staff turn-over rate. • Increase in employee performance Ratings. • Improvement in total rewards - recognition, training, benefits, and compensation.
4.4 Enhance OAITH’s innovative digital presence and infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesigned website. • Improved tracking and marketing. • Reported data analytics.
4.5 Build an evaluation and measurement framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established mechanisms are established for board and membership reporting.

⁴Bernhardt, N., Cooper, A. Taking Action in Our Spheres of Influence: Intersectional Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression Gender-Based Violence Framework. March 2022.



OAITH is committed to reviewing our progress against this plan on an annual basis and providing an update through our annual general report. There is much to be done. For us to be successful, we need strong member engagement as we strive towards a future free of gender-based violence in Ontario.





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