

## WHAT IS ECONOMIC ABUSE

Economic Abuse is a very prevalent but notoriously underestimated form of domestic violence that often has lasting adverse consequences for victim-survivors. In Canada, Economic Abuse is noted as one form of gender-based violence in the National Action Plan (NAP) to end gender-based violence, while Financial Abuse is included in the “family violence” definition of Canada’s Divorce Act.

Economic Abuse incorporates a range of behaviours that allow a perpetrator to control someone else’s economic resources or freedoms. It refers to various tactics that limit an individual’s financial autonomy, including but not limited to denying them access to their money, exerting control over their resources, or leveraging intimidation and threats to constrain their economic freedom.

## ECONOMIC ABUSE PREVALENCE IN CANADA

While women from all socioeconomic statuses, backgrounds, and identities can experience Economic Abuse, those from racialized, gender-diverse, and other marginalized communities, as well as low-income and educational backgrounds, are at a higher risk of Economic Abuse.

CCFWE’s research study conducted in the Greater Ottawa region with victim-survivors confirmed similar studies from the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom that more than 95% of victims-survivors of domestic abuse have experienced or are experiencing Economic Abuse:<sup>1</sup>

- 92% of women have experienced their abusive partner keeping financial information away from them.
- 93% have had their abusive partner make important financial decisions without talking to them at first.
- 94% of women have had their rent or bill money spent by their abusive partner without their permission.
- 84% of victims’ abusers have built up debt under their name

## 1 IMPACT OF ECONOMIC ABUSE

Economic Abuse affects victim-survivors beyond financial stability and independence; it impacts their mental and physical health, quality of life, and ability to provide for themselves and their dependents. Economic Abuse can lead to

- Economic hardship and coerced debt,
- Housing insecurity,
- Lack of education and employment,
- Poor mental and physical health

- Poor quality of life,
- People remain in physical and sexually abusive situations.

#### IMPORTANCE OF PROCLAIMING AN ECONOMIC ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

By declaring November 26th as Economic Abuse Awareness Day, CCFWE seeks to raise awareness on this important issue. We want to create a world free of Economic Abuse, and survivors have the resources and support they need to achieve economic empowerment. To do so, we need leaders like you to champion this change.

An Economic Abuse Awareness Day is crucial to raising awareness about this prevalent but often overlooked form of domestic violence. Informing people of the signs and consequences of Economic Abuse can further empower individuals to identify this type of abuse and help survivors within your constituency and beyond.

An awareness day can also promote empathy and solidarity among constituents, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for the well-being of survivors. This can translate into increased support for initiatives that assist survivors and promote their financial health.

#### ABOUT THE CANADIAN CENTER FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE) is the only Canadian national non-profit organization dedicated to addressing Economic Abuse and injustice through advocacy, education, research, economic empowerment, and policy change. It is based in Ottawa.

CCFWE works collaboratively with organizations and individuals to develop a comprehensive approach that enables domestic violence survivors to recover from Economic Abuse. It also addresses critical policy gaps preventing survivors from recovering and becoming economically secure and independent.

Website: <https://ccfwe.org/>

Contact:

Michaela Mayer

Director of Policy, Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment

Email: [michaela.m@ccfwe.org](mailto:michaela.m@ccfwe.org)