**Transforming Together Report February 27, 2020**

1. Develop strong board governance and training for the domestic violence shelter sector in Manitoba

Survey of individual board members and organizations regarding training needs was completed. Responses of the individual survey indicate that notwithstanding challenges of resources and time, board members are passionate, motivated, skilled and highly committed to their roles and their organizations. They prepare for meetings and are engaged in discussion as evidenced by asking questions to understand their role. All respondents promote their organization in the community indicating belief in the organization and the importance of the role it plays within the community to end violence, support people experiencing violence or at risk of experiencing violence.

Capacity to govern would be enhanced by increasing knowledge of by-laws and board policies so that informed oversight and direction are embedded in the organizations. Increasing financial literacy would enhance capacity to fulfill the stewardship role of the boards.

Interestingly, the gap between the 90% strongly agree/agree that they feel involved and interested in the work of their organization and the 70% that feel they are part of a healthy and progressive team could indicate a need for time to be spent on building a sense of board as governance team.

The challenges of burnout and of recruitment are of concern and should be factored in to the systems planning component of the Transforming Together project to that ensure governance remains strong and board develop sustainability strategies.

The project’s comprehensive package of governance modules will address many of the training needs identified. The board manual is undergoing editing and layout. It contains nine separate modules. A board may choose to work through the topics in order as part of a regular board meeting, or discuss topics of particular interest and concern in a series of board meetings. Each section of the guide includes reflective questions to prompt conversation and sharing of the wisdom in the room. Tips and tools are included where appropriate. An extensive list of references is attached to enable a deeper dive into the topics.

1. Establish a collaborative and integrated system planning approach at provincial level

Service mapping, as an initial step in the system planning process to be implemented across the

province, is underway with initial focus on Brandon and Winnipeg. Brandon will be piloting all

aspects of the planning and governance pieces of the Transforming Together project. The

systems mapping is being undertaken in partnership with End Homelessness Winnipeg using

Helpseeker as a tool. Already Helpseeker has built a list of over 1900 different listings at 746

locations with 1146 programs identified. A communication strategy is being developed to

reach out to more organizations, engage the media and seek the support of Minister Cox to

have the Gender Based Violence Committee of Cabinet endorse the approach and work of

systems planning. The Helpseeker tool is supported by the federal government and has been

used in other Reaching Home communities to support coordinated access.

All communities that receive federal Reaching Home funds under Canada’s Homelessness Strategy are required to have a coordinated access system in place by March 31, 2022. Coordinated access is a shift from program oriented approaches to putting the person at the centre. The goals of coordinated access are to connect individuals to services in a more streamlined way and to ensure equity of access, prioritizing individuals in most need of assistance. Shelters need to be a part of the community conversations about coordinated access. MAWS has attended the community engagement session on Coordinated Access in Winnipeg.

1. Build capacity of MAWS to sustain governance training & regional & provincial needs assessments processes and to take on other emerging roles as clarified in system planning

A pre-project capacity assessment of MAWS was conducted. The assessment tool chosen was the Corporation for National and Community Service Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (the tool). The assessment was completed by four assessors between January 31, 2020 and February 13, 2020. The four respondents are well positioned within the organization to conduct the assessment. Perceptions of capacity amongst the respondents were largely consistent with some diversity of opinion as to the extent of need within domains. The capacity assessment indicates that MAWS has a strong base on which to build. The domains within which there is greatest capacity are the domains of leadership and governance and management and operations. The areas of greatest need for capacity building fall under service capacity and evaluative capacity.