

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IS RISING IN OTTAWA

yet East African survivors remain unseen.

Ottawa is facing an unprecedented rise in femicides and intimate partner violence. Yet, many Eritrean and Ethiopian survivors cannot access protection or help because services aren't built for them.

The Ottawa Reality

4 femicides in Ottawa in early 2025 alone.
(Ottawa Citizen, 2025)

Only 17.5% of GBV organizations have programs for refugee women
(OCTEVAW Scoping Study)

Rising reports of **intimate partner violence** across the city

(CityNews Ottawa, 2025)



“Community members want neutral, non-political, and non-religious spaces for safety.”

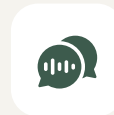
Forum finding

“Apart from family members and friends, no system gives us culturally appropriate services.”

Participant

Distinct Needs, Shared Realities

GBV affects all communities — but newcomers face unique risks:



Language and cultural barriers during crisis calls



Fear of child removal or police involvement



Isolation from trusted faith or community supports



Lack of culturally safe, non-political spaces for healing

“Bridging the Access Gap: Building Culturally Connected Supports”

Ottawa has strong GBV services — but not all survivors can access them equally. Language, cultural, and trust barriers mean many newcomers never reach the support they need. Community hubs like Mehari Centre can bridge this gap.



Services Available



Services Accessed by Newcomers

To the City of Ottawa, the Province of Ontario, and Federal partners:

Invest in accessible, culturally safe, and non-partisan community infrastructure led by trusted organizations like Mehari Centre.

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**Building trust.
Strengthening safety.
Together**