

LIVING WITH DIGNITY:

Lived Experiences of Latina Immigrant Survivors

Lessons Learned from a community-based participatory investigation

Study



14 immigrant women from Latin America participated in one small virtual focus group or individual interview.

Research team consisted of academic and community members. All data collection, analytic, and interpretation procedures were conducted in Spanish.



Implications

THE DEFINITION OF **SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING** IS NOT UNIVERSAL

Understanding how survivors themselves define safety and stability is key to providing housing services and resources that are relevant, culturally and contextually grounded, and aligned with survivors' needs and goals.



LANGUAGE JUSTICE MUST BE AT THE CENTER OF HOUSING SERVICES

Beyond access to resources in their preferred language, survivors must also have access to culturally grounded interpretation by individuals that understand survivors' perspectives and cultural background. This is critical to survivors' safety and wellbeing. It is also central to adequately understanding survivors' immediate and long term housing needs and concerns.



HOMEOWNERSHIP AND WEALTH BUILDING STRATEGIES ARE NECESSARY

Latina immigrant survivors face a multitude of obstacles when purchasing property or accessing resources related to acquiring assets (e.g., limited culturally responsive services and resources in Spanish and relevant information to better understand the laws that protect immigrants from discrimination, abuse, and threats).



Recommendations and Possible Strategies

1 Understand survivors' unique housing needs

Engage in conversations with survivors about **how they define safe and stable housing** and about their long-term housing goals

Consult with local survivors and stakeholders about the **community's contextual realities and needs**

Offer ongoing trainings for service providers about the **community's socio-political context** and housing needs

Connect with other organizations and community members that are able to provide **ancillary culturally responsive services**

2 Provide culturally and contextually responsive supportive services

Train service providers and leadership about the importance of **understanding the culture and context of survivors** accessing their services

Hire and adequately compensate staff that are part of the community served or that have a profound understanding of the **community's culture, context, and needs**

3 Consider language justice an integral aspect of housing services

Develop an **organization-wide language access plan**

Connect with key providers **committed to culturally and contextually responsive services** that center survivors' language needs

Provide written materials in the **community's preferred language(s)**

Collaborate with translators and interpreters that offer **services grounded in social and language justice**

4 Increase access to homeownership and wealth building strategies

Offer workshops regarding **resources and supportive services available** for survivors interested in homeownership

Support establishing and/or restoring **social support networks** for immigrant Latinas