Report 2

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July 2021

National primary prevention report

Exploring collaboration, networks and techniques for effective practice

Our WATCh

End violence against
Women And Their Children

Contents

Executive summary

Strong foundations of primary prevention of violence against women, that is addressing the underlying drivers of this violence through whole-of-population efforts, have been built across the country. In this second report delivered by the National Primary Prevention Hub (the Hub) project, we explore some of these foundations and emerging lessons about effective and impactful prevention practice.

The first report provided an overview of the background and context to the project.[1] It provided an overview of primary prevention in Australia by taking stock of the current state of prevention in Australia including policy context, the prevention workforce, and an overview of prevention activity across the country. It also examined the impact of COVID-19 on work towards the primary prevention of violence against women by providing information about the considerations for and examples of how prevention work was being adapted in the COVID context.

Building on the first report, this second report examines key themes that are central to the delivery of the Hub's strategic ambitions of supporting information-sharing, enabling connection and collaboration, and facilitating coordination among organisations designing and delivering primary prevention in Australia. These are also strategic ambitions of the *National Plan*,[2] *Fourth Action Plan*,[3] and *Change the story*.[4]

It focuses on two key themes:

1. A better understanding of coordination, collaboration and networks
2. Organisational development to prevent violence against women

The first theme examines the kinds of coordination, collaboration and networks that currently exist among those working on the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia. The report considers examples and approaches to provide an overview of the landscape. While the first national primary prevention report provided an analysis of how national, state and territory frameworks provide a degree of coherence to primary prevention work, in this report we take a different approach. We focus primarily, but not exclusively, on local networks and collaborations. We do this to consider how 'ground up' approaches that meet the needs of their communities are central to the development of any larger coordination processes. Having a better understanding of how these networks and collaborations work at the local level provides important insight to enable the Hub project to build from the strength of this basis, to provides opportunities for building a deeper understanding about connecting coordination at the local, regional, state and federal levels in future work through the Hub.

The second theme of organisational development is critical to the success of the prevention of violence against women. We know that we need to change the culture of the organisations that all of us engage with every day if we are to make sustained reductions in gendered violence. This includes workplaces, schools, sites where we participate in sport and exercise, health settings, and a range of other organisations. The report considers some of the recurrent important practice elements that emerge when discussing organisational change, including how to support the readiness of an organisation, taking a whole-of-approach, and preparing for resistance and backlash. In this section we have also looked at 'ground up' approaches as well as others that tend to be led more from the top. We have done this to demonstrate the many ways in which change occurs, and to examine the many possible opportunities for building on successful approaches to organisational change. Organisational change takes time and resources, but it is achievable, and small gains are made along the way. There is currently significant momentum in Australia to make our organisations safer and more equitable, and it is important to build on this momentum to make lasting change.

This report has been developed utilising several information gathering and synthesising processes. Peer reviewed and grey literature was reviewed, although not systematically.[i] Stakeholders working in primary prevention and gender equality initiatives provided us with information on projects and programs. In addition, information about practice was found through review of material such as grant recipient announcements, newsletters and sector communications. Reflections on key issues and developments in work towards the primary prevention of women were provided from key stakeholders including members of the Hub Stakeholder Group and colleagues at Our Watch. The Hub team would like to thank everyone who contributed their time and expertise to this report.

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i   The National Primary Prevention Hub supports information-sharing, enables connection and collaboration, and facilitates coordination among organisations designing and delivering primary prevention policies, programs and campaigns. This report is one way in which the Hub reports on key themes arising from prevention work across the country. Rather than undertaking systematic reviews to inform these reports, the Hub gathers and synthesises information about primary prevention activity, gaps, effectiveness and learnings through stakeholder engagement and environment scanning.

Key points

A better understanding of coordination, collaboration and networks

1. Existing mechanisms for collaboration on primary prevention at the local, regional and state level offer a promising foundation for learning and expanding mutually reinforcing and impactful initiatives.
2. Collaboration, relationship and network building is central to effective primary prevention initiatives, however, this work often takes time and, in many cases, currently sits outside of formal program delivery funded under outcomes frameworks.
3. Supporting and facilitating collaboration through planning is critical to maximise the impact of prevention efforts across the country.

Organisational development to prevent violence against women

4. Organisational development is a critical technique that can be used to effect structural and cultural change to prevent violence against women. An enabling environment at policy, regulatory and leadership levels can provide a strong foundation for primary prevention programming at the organisation level.
5. Organisational development needs to be holistic, take a whole-of-approach and encompass all aspects of an organisation's ecosystem in order to support sustained change to the drivers of violence against women.
6. There is significant organisational development work already underway across the country, particularly with a focus on transforming workplaces. To ensure long term change, this momentum can be built upon through long-term investment and alignment with other prevention activities.

A better understanding of coordination, collaboration and networks

Overview

Effective mechanisms for coordination and collaboration are critical to the successful delivery of work aimed at the primary prevention of violence against women. This is true of all preventative public health approaches, such as for the prevention of mental illness and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing, and smoking cessation.[5]

Change the story, the shared national primary prevention framework, identifies that coordination mechanisms provide the support necessary to enable mutually reinforcing programs across multiple levels and settings.[6]

Increased coordination of services has long been a focus of sector improvement, especially in the violence against women response and early intervention fields. The push for integration and coordination is usually motivated by the perceived negative consequences of fragmentation and uncoordinated services.[7] These issues are critical, as Victoria's Family Violence Royal Commission, Queensland Not Now Not Ever Taskforce, and numerous other reviews have demonstrated.[8]

Because of the nature of primary prevention work, coordination mechanisms will likely engage different agencies and organisations than those for early intervention and response, although linkages between such mechanisms are essential.[9] Increased coordination and collaboration in primary prevention is much needed to maximise the impact of this work. Efforts to establish, improve and sustain such mechanisms take significant resourcing, and cannot solve all problems.[10] For example, tensions between organisational approaches cannot necessarily be solved by greater integration. Similarly, power differentials between organisations or settings may impact on the effectiveness of collaborative approaches.[11]

As outlined in the first national primary prevention report,[12] there are currently a number of structures in place that attempt to enable various forms of coordination of efforts to prevent of violence against women. These range from the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children* (the National Plan) and associated governance mechanisms, the *Change the story* framework, various state and territory frameworks, policies and implementation plans, and peak bodies and networks.

Coordination and collaboration are also needed at the local and regional levels to see progress in primary prevention. This report builds on the analysis of coordination and collaboration outlined in the first report to provide a more detailed analysis of collaboration and coordination in the delivery of primary prevention work and explore what a mutually reinforcing approach can look like. Mutually reinforcing activities work across the socio-ecological spectrum, "at all levels from policy, legislative and institutional reform to community and organisational level programs and communications campaigns".[13] Prevention work takes many forms across these levels, but if it is working from a common basis and coordinated, it has the potential to increase the reach and impact of all aspects of work that aims to prevent violence against women.

The degree to which primary prevention of violence against women work is coordinated, and the extent of networks and infrastructure, varies significantly between and within jurisdictions across Australia. In some jurisdictions, there is a significant amount of coordination in some settings, in particular local government and primary and secondary schools and the education system that supports them. However, in other contexts there is less coordination as well as less primary prevention work in general. There are many local networks and collaborations across Australia, some focusing specifically on primary prevention of violence against women and gender equality, and many others working across intersecting areas. Many take a collective impact approach to building networks, collaborations and coalitions that work towards shared goals. A collective impact approach understands that significant social change requires broad cross-sector collaboration.[14] It provides a framework for engaging sectors and organisations to work together to address complex social issues.[15] [ii]

The following sections highlight key issues and case studies that demonstrate good practice in this area, rather than attempting to provide a detailed summation of these local networks and collaborations across the country.

Primary prevention frameworks as a coordinating mechanism

The first report produced by the Hub discussed the role of international, national, state and territory prevention frameworks as a way of ensuring that primary prevention work is coordinated and coherent.[16] Since publishing *Change the story*, Our Watch has published the Prevention Handbook as a way of supporting how the 'big picture' framework of *Change the story* can be translated into 'on-the-ground' action with practical tools.[17] This section of the report considers this process of translation from frameworks to action more broadly and examines how the development and implementation of prevention frameworks in particular communities or settings can work to coordinate prevention work.

Frameworks can provide a shared language and understanding of the drivers of violence and actions needed to address these.[18] Additionally, they can identify different roles and priorities needed, supporting stakeholders to understand the contribution that they can make to a national or regional effort towards ending violence against women.

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ii   An example of a collective impact approach that is often referred to is the Maranguka Justice Reinvestment project in Bourke, NSW. This project was developed in response to concerns about the number of Aboriginal families experiencing high levels of social disadvantage and rising crime. Bourke has worked for many years to develop a model for improving outcomes and creating better coordinated support for vulnerable families and children through the true empowerment of the local Aboriginal community. Maranguka, meaning 'caring for others' in Ngemba language, is a model of Indigenous self-governance which empowers community to coordinate the right mix and timing of services through an Aboriginal community owned and led, multi-disciplinary team working in partnership with relevant government and non-government agencies. Justice Reinvestment in Bourke - Just Reinvest NSW Inc

For example, Rainbow Health's development of the *Pride in Prevention* framework has been widely welcomed as an important contribution.[19] It adapts and develops the existing evidence base and frameworks, such as *Change the story*, to address the drivers of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities. The guide will underpin the work of several pilot primary prevention activities to be co-developed and delivered as part of the next phase of this project.[20] These include a project by the Zoe Bell Gender Collective aimed at preventing violence experienced by trans women, Thorne Harbour Health who are developing a campaign and messaging guide, and Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria, who are revising their suite of workforce capacity building materials to be more inclusive of LGBTIQ people. In this way, *Pride in Prevention* provides an overarching coherence that ensures that prevention work is evidence based and is working from a shared understanding of how to address the fundamental drivers of violence through program work.

Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council's *Strengthening Community Capacity to End Violence* framework is another key example of the potential for frameworks to guide and coordinate prevention efforts. Since its publication in 2017, it has supported the continuation and development of community led, evidence based primary prevention work in central Australia.[21] The process of developing frameworks at the local level is critically important to their success. Such processes have been identified by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA) as a key mechanism to support and coordinate the work of the communities that a framework represents. For example, during 2020 and 2021, NATSIWA supported the Mura Kosker Sorority, a women's organisation in the Torres Strait based on Thursday Island to develop their own Domestic Violence Framework for the Torres Straits.[22] Ensuring that communities are provided the resources to develop their own frameworks is a critical aspect of self-determination and the process builds significantly more engagement and support than frameworks that are imposed from outside or above. The development of frameworks in this way helps coordinate effort at the local level to prevent violence against women and situates it within a broader context. Lead by those already undertaking this work, the significant energy and expertise that is held by the community in working to prevent violence against women is brought together and strengthened.

Response and early intervention networks and coordination

The focus of this report is on primary prevention. However, there is a significant amount of coordination in the response and early intervention of violence against women sectors at the local and regional level which we can learn from.[23] It is also important for people and organisations working on primary prevention to plan for coordination with services and systems responding to violence when developing and implementing initiatives.

Networks and collaborations in the response sector can include the full spectrum of social services and justice responses, including mental health and alcohol and other drugs, schools and early childhood organisations, police and the legal sector. Every state or territory has made attempts to integrate a range of systems, often involving police, child protection and specialist violence against women services. This report will not provide a comprehensive account of these arrangements, but it is important to note that these form part of the context in which networks at the more local level operate in, and often feed in to. These integrated approaches can range from partnership arrangements through to hub systems offering 'one-stop-shops'. For example, Western Australia has the Family and Domestic Response Team, a partnership between the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Western Australia Police and community sector family and domestic violence services.[24] Hub systems are currently most well-known through Victoria's Orange Door network, which provide support and safety hubs in each of the 17 Department of Families, Fairness and Housing regions across the state. Orange Doors provide services for women and children who have experienced family violence and referral for support and accountability for men who use violence.[25] Victoria's Family Violence Regional Integration Committees, which pre-date the Orange Door system, are also a critical part of the infrastructure in this state.[26]

At the local and regional level, networks and collaborative ways of working have often emerged through day-to-day practice out of necessity.[27] In some instances, these are informal networks that operate as required in order to meet a particular need, commonly the effective referral of clients. For this reason, they can vary in length of operation significantly. Some are more formalised networks have existed for decades, whereas others come and go as need and funding arrangements shift. The Gold Coast Domestic Violence Integrated response (GCDVIR) is one example of a long running, community-based, multi-agency response to domestic violence, established in 1996.[28] Under the GCDVIR, agencies work together to provide co-ordinated, appropriate and consistent responses to women and children affected by domestic and family violence and to men who perpetrate domestic violence. The GCDVIR operates within a justice reform model.

There are also many examples of projects and processes that attempt to build capacity across sectors and embed coordinated and cross-sectoral ways of working in organisations. For example, in NSW the Sydney Women's Homelessness Alliance brings together sectors (such as the mental health, family and domestic violence, alcohol and other drugs and community legal sectors) that engage with the housing needs of their clients on a daily basis. The aim of the alliance is to ensure effective connections between organisations and ways of working. Part of the way they achieve their outcomes is by a staff exchange program that build cross-sector knowledge and capacity.[29]

As *Change the story* highlights, the preventative, early intervention and response approaches to violence against women need to be coherent: "A comprehensive and holistic approach to violence against women must involve a continuum of interdependent and interlinked strategies, where prevention efforts are integrated with early intervention and response activities."[30] Existing networks across the response and early intervention sectors and the increasing coordination of prevention work provides the potential for increased integration of work across the spectrum of work to address and prevent violence against women. At a practical level, increased integration would support the increase in disclosures that tends to be associated with the delivery of prevention of violence against women activities. As communities learn more about gender-based violence and create safe environments for women experiencing violence to seek support, there can be an increase in demand for response and early intervention services.

However, it also has more strategic potential to enable response and early intervention services that work to holistically to address the gendered drivers of violence to work increasingly upstream. In turn, there is potential for primary prevention work to be able to increasingly engage across the early intervention and response spectrum to ensure the gendered drivers of violence are effectively addressed upstream and downstream. Many organisations are already taking a holistic approach and working across the whole spectrum of activity to address violence against women (primary prevention, early intervention and response), in order to meet the needs of their local communities. This is particularly the case for those in regional, rural and remote communities and in key sectors such as sexual assault services. For other organisations this is work that still needs to be developed. Providing support through the strengthening and expansion of existing networks and coordination mechanisms offers potential to build this capacity.

Primary prevention networks and coordination: Placed-based approaches

Increasingly, formal evidence is acknowledging the importance of placed-based approaches to a range of issues, including the primary prevention of violence against women.[31] There is a growing acknowledgment of the need for interventions to be embedded in the communities in which they are delivered and underpinned by responsiveness to, and a nuanced understanding of, the local context. At the same time, connecting these often very local initiatives up to larger networks can increase their reach and support them to be sustainable.

In many jurisdictions across Australia, place-based networks that support the delivery of primary prevention work are established. Such networks have often emerged organically over time, as those working at the local level have identified the need for networks to support gender equality and primary prevention work. Community organisations and not for profits, local councils and local health services are some of the key channels through which this work is delivered in many jurisdictions. For example, Women's Health Queensland runs the Community Ally Network, which connects and provides resources to communities undertaking primary prevention of violence against women work.[32] The program is particularly focussed on ways to support socially, culturally or geographically isolated communities in their primary prevention work.

Local government has long been acknowledged as central in the primary prevention landscape that has a critical interface with local communities and is well positioned to deliver tailored, placed based work.[33] In some jurisdictions, primary prevention is integrated into a significant amount of council work in a systematic manner. In others, the approach is more uneven and varies from council to council depending on priorities, budget and a range of other issues. In an attempt to build upon the momentum and potential that local councils provide, a new initiative is currently in development, the Local Government Associations' Prevention Network. This network focused on the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in the local government context will have representatives from Australian Local Government Association, and State and Territory Local Government Associations. In doing so it will build on placed-based work but also utilise the shared expertise and information sharing that comes with a national network.

A key issue for organisations and those professionals delivering placed based primary prevention work is the time and resources needed to build the local networks, relationships and capacity at the local level in order to effectively deliver prevention programs. This work is often not recognised or resourced in funding arrangements. Stakeholders across the sector have articulated that the in-depth knowledge needed to effectively deliver placed-based primary prevention initiatives can at times sit in tension with the impetus to scale up successful prevention approaches. Scaling up successful prevention initiatives and implementing them more broadly across communities, regions or even entire jurisdictions has obvious benefits. When prevention initiatives that are demonstrated to be effective are scaled up it means that there is potential for:

• comparable activity known to be effective that lends itself to measurement, even if it is tailored to local context

• potential to reach an increased proportion of the population

• more cost-effective programming

However, scalable initiatives need to have enough flexibility to enable adaptation while still maintaining fidelity to the model and evidence base. The critical groundwork that ensures local relationships are developed effectively needs to be able to be maintained in any scalable programming. This can be especially heightened in rural, regional and remote areas of the country, where local communities can be geographically dispersed, often have higher health and social needs in general, as well as having local specificities that need to be accounted for. Maintaining integrity in the model and evidence base of primary prevention approaches also requires resourcing. For example, not spending sufficient time focused on the gendered drivers of violence against women can compromise effectiveness. These concerns about the tensions between the resource intensive nature of placed-based work and the limits of scalability of programming have been raised by stakeholders across the prevention sector are increasingly reflected in the evidence base.[34] Linking locally specific work into a broader infrastructure that strengthens and supports work is one way of addressing some of these concerns, as reflected in our case study.

Case study: Victorian women's health services - regional partnerships and strategies

Women's health services across Victoria lead regional partnerships and the development of primary prevention of violence against women strategies that cover the entire state. There are 12 women's health services in Victoria that cover the whole state, across 9 regions.[35] The partnerships enable the collaboration of key local stakeholders, including local councils, health services and hospitals, Aboriginal controlled organisations, schools and early childhood education services, community groups, emergency services, family violence response services, local businesses and a range of other community members in the development of the regional strategies.

Women's health services have worked in the area of primary prevention of violence against women for many decades. They also provide a broad range of health services to their communities and have developed local relationships over an extended time as part of meeting the needs of their communities. Women's health services and their partnerships are supported and connected through infrastructure that is facilitated by the peak body for gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women - GENVIC. The Women's Health Council (the Council), a critical part of GENVIC, brings together the CEOs of all the women's health services. The Council provides the architecture to enable a strategic approach to the work undertaken by women's health services across the state at the local level.

These partnerships and plans enable women's health services to work strategically and effectively at the local level. Women's Health Loddon Mallee developed the Collective Action for Respect and Equality (CARE) Framework 2020-2025 following extensive engagement with a range of local organisations and services.[36] Having GENVIC support the process by providing a larger infrastructure enabled Women's Health Loddon Mallee to focus on working with these community representatives to identify the local priorities for the CARE Framework. It also enabled them to put in place a structure to ensure the implementation of the plan, with a Stewardship Group in place to provide guidance and feedback as the CARE Framework is delivered across the Loddon Mallee area.

Women's health services undertake primary prevention in the context of multiple other demands and priorities. In this context, support from the peak body is useful in coordinating information gathering, undertaking advocacy, and feeding key issues into Respect Victoria and other forums at the state level. Collaboration on projects, submissions and funding applications through the Women's Health Council are also important ways to pool resources, enable coordination and minimise duplication of effort.

Primary prevention networks and coordination: Peer-based approaches

Peer-based approaches to building networks and coordination, such as communities of practice, have been utilised by the primary prevention sector for a number of years. For example, the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria has been running the Partners in Prevention network, initially aimed at supporting the implementation of respectful relationships education, since 2007.[37] Communities of practice are also utilised in a range of other sectors, including education, clinical health, and the public sector.[38] Evidence indicates that their key advantages include: [39]

- Reduced isolation
- Encouraging peer learning and support
- Enabling information sharing and collaboration

Stakeholders across the prevention sector have communicated the importance of communities of practice to build the capacity of the sector and reduce isolation in particular. Increasingly, prevention work is being undertaken across sectors and settings that do not have a specialist background in prevention work, for example a human resources professional in a large corporate business, or a project worker developing and implementing primary prevention work in a vocational education setting. This is a necessary development in order to increase the reach the prevention work and is an indicator of the success of advocacy for this work. However, it does present challenges, including the isolation of single prevention workers in organisations and how to maintain specialist knowledge of prevention when this work is necessarily dispersed among employees in an organisation or sector. These organisational issues will be explored in more detail in theme two. This section points to the importance of networks such as communities of practice to help to address some of these concerns.

The sense of connectedness that communities of learning actively cultivate is critical to their ability to support peer learning. Evidence indicates that creating a sense of trust, the facilitator's understanding of who is in the room and their needs, and applying participatory techniques support peer learning and collaborative information sharing.[40] For communities of practice to keep members engaged and learning to continue, it is often not sufficient to only share existing knowledge.[41] Mechanisms must be developed to enable innovation and problem solving amongst the group.[42] Having clearly defined outputs of the group can support this process as members work towards shared goals in a concrete way.

However, while the emerging evidence for communities of practice is that they indicate effectiveness in these ways, it should not be assumed that all communities of practice will support their peer learning and the creation of trust, or at least not necessarily for all members. The research on communities of practice also highlights the potential for such groups to reproduce the social inequalities of which they are a part.[43] This can mean that some participants can feel excluded from, or silenced within, communities of practice. In some contexts, however, communities of practice can provide participants with the opportunity to address the structural issues they face when undertaking prevention work. For example, ANROWS' Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Projects with Action Research (CALD PAR) brought together a large number of professionals working on prevention projects from a significant number of community organisations from across the country.[44] As part of the project, it delivered a community of practice. A productive focus of this community of practice for participants was group discussion of the way resistance they experienced in the delivery of their prevention work intersected with theirs and their communities' experiences of structural racism, such as over-policing and exclusion from visa categories.[45]

Another key aspect of peer-based networks is their ability to build momentum for prevention work in areas where there is appetite and enthusiasm for this work from professionals within the social services sector, but for a number of interrelated reasons it has tended to not have a significant amount of focus at a more strategic level. These reasons may include, for example, a justice focused response to violence against women with a lack of significant funding for primary prevention work. The potential for communities of practice to support those in the broad social services sector who see the need for prevention in a context such as this is articulated in our case study.

Case study: New South Wales Primary Prevention Collaboration

Domestic Violence NSW (DV NSW) and City of Parramatta Council co-convene the NSW Collaboration on the Primary Prevention of Gender Based Violence (the Collaboration).[46] The Collaboration has been running since approximately 2018, has developed gradually and taken different formats over time. It brings together professionals from across Sydney and NSW whose work relates to primary prevention of gender-based violence.

The aims of the Collaboration include advocating for institutional, law, policy and program responses that address the gendered drivers of violence and building momentum and capacity for this work in NSW. The co-conveners identified that there was a lot of interest in primary prevention work, but few avenues to develop and discuss this work across organisations and sectors. The Collaboration was an attempt to begin to address this gap. Recognising the leadership role local government could undertake in the design and implementation of local primary prevention strategies the Collaboration sought to increase connections between specialist organisations with primary prevention expertise such as DV NSW and local councils. They also invited Local Government representatives to be members.

The early phase of the Collaboration focused on providing introductory primary prevention training to key stakeholders, such as peak bodies in the social services sector. Once this aspect of the Collaboration had achieved its aims, the group developed into more of a community of practice model. Meetings tend to consist of a mix of presentations and workshops.

Membership has gradually grown over the time the Collaboration has been running and currently there are approximately 40-50 members. There is a core group of engaged members and others who attend events when they have capacity. Membership of the group includes peak bodies, not for profit organisations, local council employees and state government public servants working in related policy areas and academics.

There is a high level of commitment to primary prevention from members and excitement to be working together and this helps sustain momentum for the Collaboration. Key achievements of the Collaboration include:

- Increasing the visibility and understanding of primary prevention across a wide range of organisations and sectors
- Reducing isolation and increasing a sense a collegiality and support amongst professionals undertaking primary prevention work in different organisations and settings across Sydney and NSW
- Providing an avenue for members to be more aware of primary prevention funding opportunities, and support in application processes
- Raising the profile of primary prevention work in consultations regarding the revision of the NSW Government's *Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021*[47]

Key challenges for the Collaboration are focused on resourcing, as most members are already working beyond capacity, and this limits what they can contribute and consequently what can be achieved. The Collaboration has very limited funding apart from a small workload allocation from both co-convening organisations. The Collaboration is in the process of seeking additional resourcing to embed the Collaboration into a sustainable organisational structure so that it can continue to build the infrastructure needed to support a community of professionals working towards ending violence against women in NSW.

Multi-faceted social marketing campaigns

Social marketing campaigns are an important component of a whole-of-population approach to address the drivers of violence against women and have been used to support public health outcomes in Australia since the 1970s.

Campaigns that raise awareness of the prevalence, nature and consequences of violence against women are important to support audience understanding of the problem and establish a foundation for prevention work, however it is crucial that awareness is translated into knowledge and skills for taking action to address the issue. Social change campaigns must move beyond awareness and create change in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours, instilling actions that will help to prevent violence against women, by challenging the drivers of this violence.

Additionally, research shows that social marketing campaigns are most likely to be useful when combined with other components of interventions designed to impact at a community level.[48] For example, campaigns can be implemented in a sustained way with a multifaceted approach that uses a range of platforms combined with direct participation or group education (for example by using social media, television and digital advertising alongside complementary resources or training for practitioners), to create changes to the underlying drivers of violence.[49]

Partnerships and collaborations can be a useful tool to amplify and contextualise messages from social marketing campaigns across settings and population groups. As shown in the examples below, these partnerships can also make changes at different levels of the socio-ecological model. For example, by communicating gender equality and anti-violence messages from an organisational values platform rather than only at an individual level or integrating components that transform the environments in which people interact.

Case study: Our Watch - Doing Nothing Does Harm

Our Watch's *Doing Nothing Does Harm* campaign aims to encourage and support people to do something when they witness disrespect towards women. The campaign, which has a focus on engaging men aged 25-44 who are motivated to act when they see sexism and disrespect but don't know what to do, uses a range of advertising platforms to reach the audience and multiple techniques to engage them, including using high profile male sportspeople as ambassadors to demonstrate action and start conversations with men about recognising disrespect and how to take bystander action. It also includes a content partnership with media publishers, digital and web content to provide detail on disrespect as a driver of violence and how to take action. Practice and training resources to help build the capacity of community and organisational leaders to promote bystander action against the drivers of violence against women are also incorporated.

Over the 16 Days of Activism (25 November – 10 December) in 2020, Our Watch worked with the Tasmanian state government and some local councils to develop a coordinated approach to communications, utilising the *Doing Nothing Does Harm* campaign. State government agencies focused on engaging their staff in the messages from the campaign while local councils used the materials to communicate with their communities. By using existing collateral including videos and posters and supported by a stakeholder toolkit, state government agencies and local councils in Tasmania were able to reach a broader audience than the original campaign and to tailor communications to their employees and/or local communities. For example, as part of a joint initiative, four Mayors created a video recognising violence against women as an ongoing concern in their communities and articulating the councils' commitment to eliminating violence against women. The development of this video script drew on information from the stakeholder kit.

Case study: Vic Health – This Girl Can

Vic Health launched its *This Girl Can* campaign in 2018 with the aim of motivating and empowering women to be active.[50] The campaign aims to increase women's participation and representation in physical activity and sports. It supports women to feel comfortable in their bodies and in public spaces and encourages women to get active without worrying about being judged for their ability, what they look like, or how they prioritise their time.

This Girl Can challenges outdated stereotypes about what women can and can't do in sport, in the gym, and in their neighbourhoods. This objective directly supports *Change the story's* Essential Action 3 to 'encourage and support children, young people and adults to reject rigid gender roles and develop positive personal identities that are not constrained by gender stereotypes.'

This Girl Can is a multifaceted primary prevention campaign that utilises various platforms and methods in order to reach and engage women across multiple spaces where they live, work and play. This includes advertising, social and traditional media engagement, ambassadors, a website, e-news and podcasts to reach a broad audience of Victorian women and girls with its messages.

Additionally, the campaign includes a substantial partnerships component to extend the campaign reach, actively engage both partners organisations and the primary audience, and help to reduce barriers to women's activity. By creating environments within our sports clubs and facilities that are welcoming and inclusive and that build confidence for women to get active, VicHealth is taking a systems approach to creating change. Components have included:

- Working with sports partners to promote the campaign, improve attitudes towards gender equality in sport, and promote new participation opportunities for women and girls. All of the sports partners signed a Gender Equality in Sport Leadership Pledge, which included improving sport policy and practice to create welcoming and inclusive environments for women and girls in addition to delivering new opportunities for women's participation.

- VicHealth offered a local area marketing grant for councils to localise the campaign using *This Girl Can* materials and messaging. Support for local providers to offer opportunities for women to get active and run professional development for clubs and facilities using the Getting women active guide was also provided.[51]

- A Campaign Supporter program, which includes regular communications through which VicHealth share their evidence-based insights into how physical activity providers and other organisations can increase women's participation in their programs.

Each year, the campaign has been adjusted in response to campaign research and evaluation, conducted in partnership with La Trobe University, along with audience and stakeholder feedback. The campaign has evolved to focus on the importance of how activity makes women feel in response to research that showed when women shift from thinking about how they look when they exercise to how they feel when they move. This shift helps to moderate the fear of judgement and foster more enjoyable and sustained activity patterns.

While the campaign was significantly impacted by the pandemic in 2020, *This Girl Can* pivoted to continue supporting women to get active, resulting in the campaigns' biggest impact to date. In 2019-20, more than 319,600 women got active after seeing the campaign, while home videos that were created for the campaign were watched over 12,600 times.[52]

Gaps and opportunities

1. **Existing mechanisms for collaboration on primary prevention at the local, regional and state level offer a promising foundation for learning and expanding mutually reinforcing and impactful initiatives.**

There are promising examples of coordination, collaboration, partnerships and networks for primary prevention across Australia. These networks are at varying levels of maturity, with some long-standing collaborations and others which are more recently formed. *Tracking progress in prevention* identified that partnerships provide an important mechanism for collaboration and coordination in Australia.[53]

There is much that we can learn from the successes and challenges of these initiatives, including how to leverage the skills and role of different stakeholders, models for effective partnerships, and the enablers of this type of work.

Further, strong links between prevention activities and the system responding to violence against women are required to ensure that activities and communities in both areas are mutually reinforcing, and that there is sufficient capacity to address increases in disclosures and help-seeking.

Collaboration and coordination provide opportunities to create mutually reinforcing work – that is, work in different settings across communities, and at different levels of our society including with individuals, organisations, communities, and in policy and structures. This is crucial to ensuring that change effected by primary prevention initiatives is reinforced by other interventions and actions at other levels of society.

2. **Funding mechanisms need to allow for and enable collaboration, relationship and network building as central to effective primary prevention initiatives. This work often takes time and, in many cases, currently sits outside of formal program delivery funded under outcomes framework.**

Funding models and procurement can be designed to allow the time needed for initiation and development of partnerships. Currently, funding for prevention tends to be skewed towards program delivery with direct engagement.

Ongoing stakeholder consultation through the Hub has identified that it can be difficult for organisations or partnerships to access funding for the development of networks and processes for building and maintaining collaborative relationships. Part of the reason for this is that a significant amount of this work entails relationship building, which takes time and often cannot clearly be identified as an 'outcome' within funding frameworks.[54] The consequence of this is that this important work is made invisible, and it often undertaken by organisations without adequate resourcing.

By understanding and valuing this relationship and network building as central to effective primary prevention work, funding and procurement models can contribute to more impactful initiatives.

3. **Supporting the long-term maintenance of collaboration through planning is critical to maximise impact of prevention efforts across the country.**

Funding models for primary prevention can have a significant impact on the capacity of organisations to collaborate with others, particularly in an ongoing way, and to work in partnership to create impact at multiple levels of the social ecology.

Short-term funding has been identified in numerous reviews and reports as a key barrier to the delivery of primary prevention work.[55] The cultural and societal change needed to prevent violence against women requires long term commitment. However, funding structures for primary prevention initiatives are often short term and one-off. They also require a significant amount of resourcing to apply for and administer, often for relatively small amounts of funding, and no guarantee that promising and successful initiatives will be able to continue beyond the initial funding period.

These pressures are also faced by organisations and services working at the response and early intervention end of the spectrum to address and respond to violence against women. Given that primary prevention work is critically linked to these other parts of the sector, this can have a flow-on effect to the ability of organisations to deliver prevention work. If resources are consumed by applying for funding to deliver the crisis and early intervention services needed by the communities that they work in, this can leave limited capacity to focus on the delivery of upstream prevention work, despite the identification of the need for this work.

Additionally, prevention work is often conceptualised and funded in isolation rather than considering a more whole-of-community or system view that would enable activity to occur in parallel, creating change at different levels of society and reinforcing messages in multiple settings.

Governments can embed funding models and modalities that facilitate sustainability, collaboration and impact – moving away from ad hoc grants and short-term project funding to integrated and ongoing funding for key priorities.

Organisational development to prevent violence against women

Overview

Organisations of all sizes and types need to be transformed as part of our national efforts to prevent violence against women. Organisational development to prevent violence against women can occur in any kind of setting, for example schools, sports clubs, workplaces, faith or community groups, and a range of social services. All of these organisations will be influenced by larger social, political and legal forces, as well as more local or specific forces dependent on their context. In some cases, these organisations will themselves be part of larger institutions that themselves need to undertake significant structural and systemic change to address the underlying drivers of violence.

This section reflects on experience, developments and evidence relating to implementing and supporting organisational development across a range of settings

Change the story identifies organisational development that promotes gender equality as critical to the prevention of violence against women. This is due to the role of organisations and institutions in the formation and perpetuation of the gendered drivers of violence:

> *"The gendered drivers arise from gender discriminatory institutional, social and economic structures, social and cultural norms, and organisational, community, family and relationship practices that together create environments in which women and men are not considered equal, and violence against women is tolerated and even condoned."*[56]

Our organisations and institutions are also critical sites for the production of ongoing racialised power inequalities and discriminatory policies and practices. As *Changing the picture* makes clear, these inequities and norms need to be altered in order to work towards ending violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.[57] This work needs to happen at all levels of the socio-ecological model – addressing racist attitudes, or people's attitudes towards violence, at the community and organisational level and accompanied by legislative, institutional and policy supports that protect Indigenous people's human rights, promote racial and gender equality, and ensure accountability for violence and discrimination.

Organisational development is a critical way of ensuring that work towards the prevention of violence against women is embedded in the structures that have a significant impact on our daily lives. Prevention of violence against women work that focuses on changing attitudes and social norms is strengthened by also making changes into the organisations and institutions that form the context in which we learn, work, socialise and exercise. Organisational development has the potential to have a positive material impact on the daily lives of all of our communities.

Organisational development and institutional change can be slow and non-linear because organisations and institutions are complex. Explicit backlash and resistance to organisational development aimed at gender equality and prevention of violence against women is well documented.[58] In addition, norms and practices that directly or indirectly reinforce the drivers of violence and gender inequality can be difficult to challenge. They are often naturalised within organisational structures and built into business or operating models.

Evaluation helps us understand the change that happening as a result of prevention initiatives, the mechanisms and enablers of this change, and contributes to our knowledge about how to effectively utilise prevention techniques such as organisational development. Building evaluation measures and processes into program design can improve our collective understanding of the impact of organisational development and institutional change. Resource allocation for evaluation from the outset that correlates to the type and scope of information that is needed is an important step in the process. Organisational development and institutional change is a diverse practice, with initiatives tailored to the specific needs or the organisations or institution in which change is sought. However, there are recurrent themes that have been identified and reflected on as key elements of successful organisational development.[iii] These include readiness and engagement, whole-of-approaches, communications, planning for resistance, and building in opportunities for peer learning.

Readiness and engagement

Organisations benefit from 'warm up' time where the idea of the change sought is socialised amongst the members of the organisations. Ideally organisations will opt into the change, rather than being nominated or instructed to do so. If the broader policy context is supportive of the change this can assist with readiness and engagement. Ensuring leadership is on board and that there is an authorising environment for work is crucial, but so too is creating a sense of engagement throughout the organisation.

Readiness for primary prevention may be informal or formal work. For example, where individuals and groups have raised issues relating to gender inequality within that organisation in a 'bottom up' approach, with the aim of building understanding and calling for action. Readiness can also be planned, for example undertaking a program of professional learning for teachers and creating support roles at the school and regional levels in a stage prior to implementation of respectful relationships education.[59]

Having an enabling policy environment and leadership from government or industry bodies can be an important factor in the readiness phase that enables organisations to participate. At times, the impetus for organisational development is determined by a shift in the legislative or regulatory landscape rather than organisations opting in following a recognition of the need for improving gender equality within their organisation. The introduction of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* (Vic),[60] which came into effect on 31 March 2020, is an example of this. Although the lead time to the introduction of the Act enabled socialising of the change with impacted organisations and agencies, the role of the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (the Commission) will be critical in ensuring effective implementation of the Act.[61]

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iii   Our Watch has delivered many projects aimed at organisational development and institutional change, including in sports and education settings. Through the evaluation of approximately 40 of these projects (a range of developmental process and impact evaluations), these recurring themes have been identified.

The Commission has produced a range of guidance materials for organisations impacted by the introduction of the Act. These include support materials for undertaking gender impact assessments, workplace gender auditing and gender equality action plans.[62] Additionally, the Commission has been holding sessions with different agencies and bodies who have obligations under the Act to provide them with information in the lead up to the commencement of the legislation.

On the ground, sectors and organisations in Victoria who now have obligations under the Act are working to implement the legislation. Some sectors, for example universities and parts of the public service, have undertaken gender equality work over previous years to varying degrees. Others, such as TAFEs, are earlier on in the process of embedding gender equality work in their organisations. Professionals within these organisations are finding that they need a significant amount of support to implement the Act. Primary prevention officers and human resource professionals from a number of TAFEs are working together collaboratively to keep up to date with developments from the Commission, interpret and apply the Commission's guidance materials to their TAFE, and provide problem solving support to each other.

Whole-of-organisation approaches

Whole-of-approaches work across all areas of an organisation or institution to help to ensure consistent messages and practices throughout each organisation's sphere of influence.[63] Using strategies across multiple levels of the organisation can reinforce change, as opposed to one-off activities. This approach is important to the success of organisational development and institutional change. Whole-of-approaches were first developed in educational settings in relation to anti-bullying approaches and are a well-established core part of best practice respectful relationships education.[64]

Taking a whole-of-approach to the prevention of gendered violence in a university context, for example, means working across multiple domains, such as business and operations, research, student life, teaching and learning, and the workplace.[65] Taking such an approach allows us not only to see how the different domains are relevant to organisational change work to prevent gendered violence, but also how they overlap and interact. Addressing this complexity of interdependent aspects of an organisation is a critical part of a whole-of-approach.

A whole-of-approach to the prevention of violence against women includes work across the socio-ecological model – including a range of prevention techniques, from direct participation to organisational change and development, and structural and policy change. There is room for direct participation training in a whole-of-approach. For instance, the *Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices): Securing Our Rights, Securing Our Future Report*, released last year, found support for cultural awareness training delivered in workplaces from the women and girls who contributed to the report:

"Our women and girls are calling for cultural awareness and training and education to be prioritised, funded and mandatory across all sectors and layers. They hope that this will have a positive and transformative effect, not only on individuals, but also on organisations who have the power to shift the negative narrative of our people and culture and replace it with positive cultural change in our workplaces and institutions."[66]

At the same time, the findings highlight the need for organisations to undertake responsibility for this work, and not expect it to be held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the organisation.[67] Working across all aspects of the organisation helps to ensure that organisational change is not carried by one person or area within an organisation and increases engagement from across the organisation.

Communication

Developing shared language, understanding and rationale for primary prevention can help address misinformation among those impacted by organisational changes. It is important to ensure clear communication throughout the process, including from those implementing a change program and to both members within an organisation as well as to wider stakeholders. These might include, for example, a school community or members of a sporting club.

Communication is a critical part of program design, implementation and evaluation and thus should be part of the full program design cycle. This includes clear communication by those implementing the change of the purpose, benefits, evidence of the project to ensure that partners understand the purpose and approach. There can be hesitation to communicate about gender equality and the prevention of violence against women, which can contribute to confusion or misinformation about the purpose of the organisational development. In some settings, high profile public debates can be seen as distracting from good work, undermining credibility, and also having an impact on staff and morale. In contrast, the promotion of positive results and stories of change can assist to build support and momentum for prevention work undertaken by and within organisations.

In recent years there has been the development of communication guidance based on a social norms approach to messaging, for example on gender equality messaging and masculinity.[68] Guidance such as this helps organisations working across settings and geographic locations to utilise consistent messaging using a shared language. The use of existing resources also reduces duplication of effort and can streamline approaches to communication in prevention activities such as organisational development.

Plan for resistance

Resistance and backlash are expected as part of the change process. Because of this, organisations need to be supported to expect, understand and respond to resistance. This helps to manage expectations and ensure stakeholders stay steady on what is a long-term course for change. It is now well understood that resistance and backlash exist along a spectrum and that within any groups of individuals or an organisation there will be forms of resistance, backlash and support.[69] It is also widely understood that there is a 'moveable middle' that sits along a spectrum from entrenched opposition to fully committed.[70] It is this moveable middle where the bulk of any organisational development or institutional change efforts are most effectively deployed, however this must be balanced with specific efforts with those who hold power within the organisation.

Resistance and backlash have been extensively examined at the individual level. However, there is less understanding of how organisational resistance and backlash operates and possible ways to manage it. Addressing organisational resistance and backlash is an area where specialist primary prevention experience and expertise can help the process. For example, while a whole-of-approach requires engagement from across an organisation, prevention officers or diversity and inclusion managers can be critical in the process. They may have significant experience implementing prevention of violence against women initiatives combined with knowledge of organisational processes. This enables them to know how to navigate internal systems and areas of resistance.

Build in opportunities for peer learning

Gender inequality and gender-based violence can be personally and professionally challenging concepts. As discussed in the section above on peer-based approaches to networks and coordination, professional learning, and in particular peer-learning and exchange can be an enabler to processing and applying concepts. In the context of organisational change, establishing processes for peer-based learning supports the embedding of gender equality initiatives at all levels of the organisation.

When establishing communities of practice or other peer-based learning to support organisational development it is important that these are resourced sufficiently. Even relatively informal networks will need support in terms of workload allocation at a minimum. The case study below considers how a community of practice is one aspect of organisational change that works in conjunction with leadership statements and a range of implementation practices.

Case study: Equality and Respect in Sport

Our Watch's Equality and Respect in Sport is an initiative that aims to assist national sporting organisations to build their capacity to promote gender equality. It takes a whole-of-sport approach to preventing violence against women in sports workplaces and sporting communities. Sporting organisations and leagues have been a focus of gender equality work for several years and implemented a number of initiatives within their organisations in partnership with Our Watch. However, sport was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during 2020, and this had implications for gender equality work in this setting. Most sporting organisations and leagues lost significant revenue during 2020, and stood down many employees, including those staff members who drive diversity and inclusion work. Sporting organisations are now slowly rebuilding after last year, and it is important that gender equality work stays as a priority. In partnership with five national sporting codes, the Australian Football League (AFL), National Rugby League (NRL), Rugby Australia (RA), Netball Australia (NA) and Football Australia (FA), Our Watch publicly launched a Leadership Statement in November 2020 to ensure sporting organisation stay committed to gender equality and ensuring that the promotion of gender equality within their sport remains a priority during the sport's recovery from the pandemic.[71]

Behind this, clubs and codes are working to develop and implement their gender equality work and are at different stages in this process. In 2021, this work is being supported by a community of practice and tailored training on Our Watch's key violence against women frameworks, including *Changing the picture*, *Men in focus* and *Change the story*. Our Watch has engaged with ten major sporting organisations around Australia who attend the quarterly community of practice and maintain a level of engagement with Our Watch through the broader sports engagement project. The community of practice is an important way for those involved in national sporting organisations and elite sporting leagues, to talk through the implementation of gender equality initiatives within their organisations. It provides an opportunity to discuss specific issues that are faced by sporting organisations and leagues and to learn from each other in undertaking this work. Our Watch is also working closely with sporting organisations to support and guide them through their implementing the Equality and Respect in Sport standards into their organisations.[72]

Despite the disruption of 2020, project participants are excited by the ways that relationships that have been built up over years are continuing to develop. These relationships are often based on peer-learning that helps sporting organisations and elite sports clubs further embed gender equality work in their sport. For example, Golf Australia recently raised the issue of how to navigate sponsorship and advertising to ensure arrangements are consistent with their commitment to gender equality. The National Rugby League have previously done some work in this area and offered to support Golf Australia in this process. Developing the capacity of sporting codes to work together on improving gender equality in ways such as these is a significant success of work done over a number of years. Other sports have organised joint international women's day breakfasts independently of Our Watch as they have developed strong relationship with each other through the partnership. The concentrated effort from sporting organisations to maintain focus on this work during the COVID-19 recovery phase has avoided these relationships losing momentum at this critical time.

Organisational change as a part of community mobilisation approaches

Organisational development and institutional change can commonly be thought of as 'top down' approaches, however these processes are often initiated and led at the community level. For example, placed-based whole-of-community gender equality and primary prevention of violence against women approaches engage a range of organisations as part of their broader work. Wagga Wagga's theDVproject: 2650 in NSW and Geraldton's Community, Respect and Equality in Western Australia reflect this approach.[73] Both work across the whole community and have numerous aspects of their projects - for example the development of a community stakeholder group, delivery of prevention of violence against women training, and community engagement activities. A key part of the project is engaging with a diversity of organisations in the local community to embed organisational development. These organisations include sporting clubs, local industry and employers, schools and higher education settings. In other contexts, organisational development is initiated in response to specific community needs, such as demonstrated in the case study below.

Case study: Women With Disabilities Victoria - Women's Health Services Capacity Building Project

Women With Disabilities Victoria (WDV) has developed the Women's Health Services Capacity Building Project. WDV has partnered with four women's health services, including Women's Health East, Women's Health Grampians and Women's Health Loddon Mallee, to ensure that their violence prevention initiatives include the needs and perspectives of women with disabilities. The project was initiated because it was identified that this was an area that could be strengthened in order to better meet the needs of all members of the community.

WDV works with the women's health organisations to support the development of disability inclusive violence prevention action strategies, training and connections to local disability organisations to enable the participation of women with disabilities in local violence prevention activities. Women's health services who are partners in the project share the knowledge and skills gained from project participation with local governments and other community organisations. Project learnings will also be shared with other Victorian women's health services via practice seminars.

WDV and project partners have co-designed disability and violence prevention needs analysis and auditing tools for women's health services to assess the disability inclusiveness of their current activities, partnerships, capacity, communications, operational practices and physical infrastructure, and to plan for greater disability inclusion in the longer-term. This project will lead to greater participation, safety and equity for women with disabilities and more inclusive regional activities to prevent violence against women.

Workplace Equality and Respect

Workplace equality and respect approaches are one of the most common and recognisable forms of primary prevention organisational development. There has been significant uptake of workplace equality and respect initiatives over recent years and a number of organisations working on primary prevention of violence against women deliver a range of training, support, standards, accreditation processes and capacity building in this field. Some of the most well recognised include White Ribbon's Workplace Accreditation Program[74] and Our Watch's Workplace Equality and Respect.[75] The work that the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH) has undertaken in aged care settings - also applicable across sectors - is another critical resource in this area.[76]

Workplace organisational development and institutional change has been a central focus of feminist and gender equality work for many decades. A range of organisations have led and supported this work including women's organisations, trade unions and workers' rights organisations, and equal opportunity and human rights bodies. This focus has resulted in significant change in the representation of women's employment across a range of institutions, such as the higher education sector, medicine and law.[77] However, even in these fields, which are examples of some of the most successful change, critical issues remain. Gender equity may be achieved in terms of graduates or employees, however, issues such as male dominated leadership, sexual harassment, the impact of caring responsibilities on career establishment and progression, and unequal gendered implications of precarious labour arrangements remain common.[78]

This has been made starkly clear by projects such as 'Starts With Us', led by Women's Legal Service Victoria and by steps taken in NSW to address sexual harassment in the legal profession.[79] 'Starts with Us' aims to support legal professionals and organisations to take action to prevent violence against women.[80] The project has identified that even though there are increasingly more women in the legal profession, they still face significant gender inequality.[81] In institutions and organisations where less progress has been made, these and other issues are even more pointed. For example, highly gendered workplaces such as early childhood education and care and personal care work remain undervalued and some of the lowest paid employment in Australia. An example of an initiative to address underlying inequalities in this context is Asian Women at Work (AWatW) a small organisation based in Sydney that works with precarious employees such as clothing outworkers and factory workers, cleaners and beauty workers.[82] AWatW takes a peer-based approach to increasing knowledge among workers of their employment and migration rights and understandings of gendered violence. AWatW also works with organisations such as TAFEs to improve understanding of the teachers in vocational courses of the issues that many women face in these precarious forms of work.

Workplaces have been a key focus of national debate about primary prevention of gender-based violence. The Respect@Work report released by the Sex Discrimination Commissioner identified that gender inequality is a core driver of sexual harassment in the workplace, other forms of intersecting discrimination such as racism and ableism are also key factors, and workplace characteristics and practices have an influence on setting cultures that enable sexism and harassment – such as male-dominated workplaces or those characterised by hierarchical structures.[83] The Australian Government released its response to the report in April, identifying that prevention must be a focus as one of its five key principles[84]

Case study: Office of the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity (SA)

The Office of the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity (OCEO) is working with all South Australian Government departments through the Workplace Equality and Respect Project. Implemented between 2018 and 2021, the project aims to address the drivers of violence against women and embed gender equality within the workplace. All State Government departments are implementing a Gender Equality and Respect Action Plan to drive women's equal participation, promote respectful relationships between men and women, and to break down harmful gender stereotypes at work and in the society. The project utilises the Workplace Equality and Respect Standards and associated tools, which enable organisations to assess their organisation and identify key actions to make lasting change. In addition, all agencies participating in the project are seeking reaccreditation as White Ribbon Workplaces in 2021.

The external coordination and support provided by the OCEO has promoted a level of consistency and effort across agencies. The OCEO has supported agencies to undertake self-assessments and develop action plans, and assisted agencies to develop guidance and provide practical advice to their staff about what safe, respectful workplaces look like. In line with the Workplace Equality and Respect Standards, the OCEO's support has focussed on the different aspects of the participating organisations – leadership; embedding gender equality in employment conditions and processes; fostering a safe and respectful workplace culture; ensuring supports are in place for staff experiencing violence and harassment; and embedding gender equality and primary prevention in core business.

The OCEO has convened a governance group to oversee the project that includes representation from external organisations with relevant expertise in women's safety and women's workplace rights. Leadership has been critical to this initiative, with chief executives of each agency signing off on agency action plans and committing resources for implementation. The OCEO's experience in leading this project has shown that organisational development for primary prevention is an ongoing process, including for agencies that have been committed to this work for several years. Challenges remain, including the capacity of agencies to focus on primary prevention work amid a range of competing priorities. Leadership commitment and accountability, as well as a level of support and coordination have been important factors in driving and supporting workplace prevention efforts across the South Australian public sector.

Gaps and opportunities

4. **Organisational development is a critical technique that can be used to effect structural and cultural change to prevent violence against women. An enabling environment at policy, regulatory and leadership levels can provide a strong foundation for primary prevention programming at the organisation level.**

Shifting attitudes about gender norms and violence against women is one part of the picture, but for long-lasting change to occur to the underlying drivers of this violence, this needs to be accompanied by change across multiple levels of the socio-ecological model (individual and relationship, organisational and community, system and institutional and societal levels).

Changing the cultures and practices of the organisations that we engage with every day has the potential to create significant shifts in these drivers. This includes work within schools, workplaces, sports and recreation settings, our hospitals and doctors' surgeries, and countless other examples.

Organisational development involves critically reflecting and undertaking a multi-faceted and staged program of change, taking a whole-of-organisation approach, changing organisational policies, modelling positive and respectful behaviours, tailoring initiatives to the specific context of the organisation and the wider context of the community that the organisation is situated within.

Organisational development occurs within a broader context in which support for structural change can shift depending on priorities and commitments. An enabling environment at policy, regulatory and leadership levels is critical to ensuring change. This includes political, sector-specific and civil society leadership in engaging and supporting organisations to participate in prevention efforts. Policy and legislative reform are also needed to drive broad, deep and sustained changes to the underlying drivers of violence against women. Change at this structural level can provide a strong foundation for primary prevention programming at the organisation level.

5. **Organisational development needs to be holistic, take a whole-of-approach and encompass all aspects of an organisation's ecosystem to support sustained change to the drivers of violence against women.**

Taking a whole-of-approach is an effective way of implementing organisational development aimed at preventing violence against women. There are numerous benefits to this approach, including ensuring that all aspects of an organisation are engaged in the organisational development process. Leadership is central to the success of organisational change, but without involvement and ownership from all levels of an organisation it is not sufficient to drive lasting change. Organisational development will have different implications for different areas of an organisation, and it is important for those impacted to understand what this means for their role or team, to have a degree of ownership over the process and to be able to see this as part of a larger organisational development process. Often, organisational development is driven by those who see the impact of gender inequality on the ground and who work hard to make change and get leadership on board. This motivation across an organisation is key to the successful implantation of organisational development aimed at preventing violence against women as it means that there is incentive for change. Making sure that this support is recognised and built upon is central to a whole-of-approach.

6. **There is significant organisational development work already underway across the country, particularly with a focus on transforming workplaces. To ensure long term change, this momentum can be built upon through long-term investment and alignment with other prevention activities.**

There is increasing work happening across Australia to address the underlying drivers of violence against women through organisational development. Transforming workplaces has been a particular focus of this work, however significant work is also being undertaken in sporting clubs, community organisations, schools, and a range of other organisations and institutions.

Within organisations, we know that positive change is possible, even in a short amount of time. A staged process to organisational development can assist this early success. Celebrating and communicating progress during the early phases of organisational change can be a good way of sustaining motivation for the long haul. Long term organisational development and institutional change requires long-term investment. This work takes commitment from all levels of an organisation, time, resources and effort to establish and embed.

As part of organisational development, organisations can align their work with other prevention initiatives in the community or in a setting to provide consistent messages on gender equality and ending violence against women. This strengthens the impact of different initiatives, ensures greater reach of prevention activity and reinforces messages through simultaneous complementary initiatives in other settings.

To influence long term change and build further momentum, key priorities for next steps include leadership (political, industry, civil society and organisational) and coordination (in design, resourcing and implementation of initiatives).

Conclusion

Primary prevention of violence against women is a whole-of-population approach to preventing violence before it begins. As set out *Change the story* and *Changing the picture*, it does this by addressing the underlying gendered drivers of this violence. There are opportunities to build on the strengths and emerging understanding of effective ways to do this work identified in this report in order to further develop our national approach.

This report has provided an overview and analysis of two key aspects of primary prevention in Australia, as identified by the work of the National Primary Prevention Hub. The first is the role of networks, collaboration and coordination in supporting the work towards the primary prevention of women in Australia including mutually reinforcing approaches. The report profiled networks and collaborations across the country - many of which are very local in nature but demonstrate the significant role that this collaborative work can play. Some networks are more established, forming critical regional and state-based infrastructure for primary prevention work where they are located. The degree to which primary prevention of violence against women work is coordinated, and the extent of networks and infrastructure, varies significantly between and within jurisdictions across Australia.

Individuals and organisations working on primary prevention are highly engaged in considering the adaptability and scalability of ways of working together and how to engage and collaborate with others within often constrained funding environments.

Organisational development is a key prevention technique that can embed significant gender equality gains into the structures and practices of a diverse range of organisations and institutions.

The second theme of this report provided an overview of the evidence and recent development in this area of work. The impetus for organisational development varies. It can come from legislation or leadership, or it can be a response to very local and specific needs. There is an increasing momentum for organisational development in recent years. Utilising evidence based and good practice models to implement this work creates opportunity to accelerate progress towards ending violence against women.

The National Primary Prevention Hub will continue to engage with stakeholders and conduct environmental scanning to understand and explore key themes in the development of Australia's national approach to preventing violence against women.

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