

Report 3



February 2022

National primary prevention report

Enabling and creating change



Contents

- Executive summary _____ 3**
- Key points _____ 5**
- Community mobilisation and leadership _____ 6**
- Prevention workforce _____ 10**
- Policy and legislation _____ 15**
- Primary prevention programming _____ 22**
- Research, evidence and expertise _____ 28**
- Gaps and opportunities _____ 35**
- Endnotes _____ 40**

Executive summary

Enabling and driving change to achieve a society free from violence against women and their children is possible in Australia. By identifying and supporting the factors and infrastructure that enable and drive primary prevention of violence against women we can create deep and lasting change to the drivers of this violence and ultimately prevent it.

This third national primary prevention report outlines how primary prevention work is enabled and what enables primary prevention of violence against women activities and change across the country. In doing so, it identifies opportunities to build on this work and advance change to the underlying drivers of gender-based violence. It builds on the previous two reports developed through the [National Primary Prevention Hub](#):

- The [first national primary prevention report](#) provided an overview of primary prevention in Australia including the policy context, the prevention workforce, and an overview of prevention activity across the country. It also examined the initial impacts of COVID-19 on work towards primary prevention of violence against women.
- The [second national primary prevention report](#) examined the kinds of coordination, collaboration and networks that currently exist among those working on the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia, and explored organisational development across different systems and settings as a prevention technique.

This report explores what is enabling change across the domains that make up the primary prevention infrastructure as identified in [Counting on change: A guide to prevention monitoring](#), by focusing on 5 themes:

1. community mobilisation and leadership
2. the prevention workforce
3. policy and legislation
4. primary prevention programming
5. research, evidence and expertise.

This report examines ongoing activities across the country in areas that have been identified as essential for enabling primary prevention, highlights case studies, and identifies gaps and opportunities to further embed and integrate primary prevention for the future.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have far reaching impacts on women's experiences of violence, and the prevention sector and workforce, this report will build on the initial insights of how the prevention sector was adapting to the pandemic (outlined in the [first national primary prevention report](#)). It expands on some of the continued impacts of the pandemic and how this has enabled work in some cases and limited primary prevention in others.

This report has been developed utilising several information gathering and synthesising processes. Peer reviewed and grey literature was reviewed, although not systematically. Stakeholders working in primary prevention and gender equality initiatives provided us with information on projects and programs. Information was also found through review of material such as newsletters, grant recipient announcements, and sector communications. Reflections on key issues and developments in work towards the primary prevention of violence against women were provided from key stakeholders who engaged with the Hub through online events and members of the Hub Stakeholder Group, as well as colleagues at Our Watch.

The Hub team would like to thank everyone who contributed their time and expertise to this report.

Key points

1. By identifying factors and infrastructure that enable primary prevention of violence against women, we can create deep and lasting change to the drivers of this violence and ultimately prevent it.
2. There is a strong culture of community mobilisation and leadership on preventing violence against women across the country, including by civil society organisations, victim-survivors, community members and governments. This work is vital for creating change.
3. The prevention workforce is critical to embedding approaches to address the drivers of violence against women. This workforce is currently under strain and experiencing reduced capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Planning is needed to ensure that the workforce is supported, has requisite capacity, and can be sustained.
4. Policy and legislation that addresses gender inequalities is critical for enabling and sustaining changes to the underlying drivers of violence against women. There are opportunities to place a greater focus on institutional, systemic and structural change in the coming years, including strengthening the gender policy machinery of governments.
5. Innovative and community focused programming is a strength of Australia's approach to preventing violence against women. Funding and policy settings can be designed to support sustainable and longer-term programming, and to allow organisations to adapt to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
6. Research, evidence and data can deepen our understanding of the drivers of violence against women and how to address them. Evidence translation is essential to ensure the utility of this work to a diverse range of stakeholders and practitioners.

Community mobilisation and leadership

Community mobilisation and leadership for primary prevention

Mobilisation and leadership by governments, organisations, movements, civil society, communities and individuals is critical for creating an enabling environment for challenging the gendered drivers of violence against women and achieving change. Each of these stakeholders contribute to drawing attention to the importance of primary prevention to motivate widespread participation in recognising and rejecting gendered power relationships and have roles to play in redistributing resources, power, authority and decision-making more equally.¹

Community leadership can occur formally and informally where visible changes can be a result of sustained, grassroots, bottom-up activism and advocacy that builds buy-in and commitment by more public figures.

[Community mobilisation](#) is often used as a strategy for building awareness of and movement towards preventing gender-based violence. Mobilising and supporting communities to address violence against women and the social norms that condone it can be highly effective approaches. Stakeholders engaging with the Hub have shared with the project team and each other how they raise awareness and engage communities in action to address and prevent violence against women. Key moments such as the passing of a specific piece of legislation, such as the decriminalisation of abortion in Queensland, can provide openings to have conversations among communities about the gendered drivers of violence and free up space for other prevention work. Practitioners participating in Hub forums have highlighted how in working with men and to address dominant forms of masculinities, practitioners combine individual-level efforts and mobilising communities with coordinating work with organisational development, policy advocacy, and building relationships for multi-sectoral initiatives.

Mutually reinforcing contexts for mobilisation

Community mobilisation is critical for creating enabling environments for the prevention of violence against women, as identified by [a recent synthesis review by the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women \(UN Trust\)](#). Civil society organisations and women's rights organisations are vital to mobilising communities, to advocate for changing laws and policies, and ensuring government and institutional accountability to prevention commitments and obligations. This work involves working with key leaders in communities such as religious and cultural leaders, the police, education, health and social services, as well as those who live or work in communities.

Drawing from academic literature² and building on learnings from 10 prevention projects from across the world,³ the review outlines four critical contextual factors that community mobilisation is dependent on:

1. **Symbolic context** describes the social norms and cultural meaning associated with violence against women that characterise social settings and how people understand themselves, others, and the activities they engage in. For primary prevention, this is the gendered norms, practices and structures which drive violence against women. Organisations, communities and individuals mobilise around key events or days that highlight gender-based violence and women's rights such as 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. During this period, various campaign and public relations activities are undertaken by governments civil society organisations, and businesses. For instance, in 2020 the Western Australian Government developed and promoted [Respect Starts with You](#), which included videos and a toolkit for community-based organisations and companies, with the aim of building community participation to take action in their communities to show their support for an end to gender-based violence.
2. **The material context** (resources) describes how people can access socioeconomic resources to live healthy lives free from violence; and, importantly, sustained economic resources for community mobilisation interventions to do the work of preventing violence against women. Stakeholders and practitioners report, through engagement with the Hub, that much prevention work in Australia is done 'off the side of the desk' and often in addition to other work such as supporting victim-survivors of violence against women or intervening to prevent further occurrences of violence. Sustained and long-term resourcing for this work is essential for enabling prevention activities, and ensuring stakeholders have capacity to take full advantage of opportunities to drive change. As detailed in the [second national primary prevention report](#), this mobilisation can be strengthened through coordination and collaboration mechanisms.
3. **The relational context** consists of relationships between community members that strongly support and mobilise for prevention goals (described as bonding capital). The relational contexts also consists of the supportive relationships between communities such as different marginalised groups and leaders (conceptualised as bridging capital). This involves coordination and collaboration mechanisms to engage stakeholders within and across different sectors seeking transformational change to discriminatory and oppressive norms, practices, and structures. Stakeholders engaging with the Hub have identified that sharing learnings between organisations is critical to informing practice and approaches. For example, Rainbow Health has adapted the Common Cause framework used in the [Framing gender equality: message guide](#) to assist practitioners in messaging about prevention of violence against LGBTIQ+ people in its [Pride in Prevention Messaging Guide](#).
4. **The institutional context** includes the structures that support gender equality and the gender relations that are institutionalised in laws, policy, education, and health and other community services. In Australia at an institutional level, policies and strategies related to violence against women, family violence, and domestic violence have been an important step in mobilising efforts to address and prevent gender-based violence.

These four contextual and interlinked environmental factors can drive and enable effective and successful mobilisation.

Victim-survivors and community advocacy

Women’s rights and gender equality organisations are fundamentally critical for enabling and driving change to address the gendered drivers of violence. As detailed in the [first national primary prevention report](#), there are many alliances, coalitions and peak bodies across the country that seek to advance efforts to respond to and prevent violence against women, promote gender equality, and create change in other intersecting violence prevention and social policy areas. These collaborative bodies deliver meaningful leadership and advocacy for prevention priorities and needs, often with limited resources and support.

Individuals can be hugely influential in bringing attention to violence against women. There are an array of advocates from school-aged students to household names such as Rosie Batty and Grace Tame who have been recognised for their advocacy and leadership through awards such as Australian of the Year. [Recent research](#) shows the significant influence that Rosie Batty, for example, has had as a victim-survivor advocate in spotlighting the national crisis of domestic and family violence, alongside women’s movements.

Individuals who have significant political, economic and social influence are important actors to highlight and maintain a focus on violence against women; however, such leadership can depend on other factors that can help bring visibility to a particular issue and can be dominated by white, older, economically privileged women who represent an ‘ideal’ victim.⁴ There are opportunities to pay greater attention to the leadership of women who highlight the diversity of experiences of gendered violence including, for example, young women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, migrant and refugee women, and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women.

Advocacy programs can be one way to enable different people who have experienced violence to share their stories and be supported. For example, [NSW Voices for Change](#) project (led by DV NSW) aimed to raise community awareness about and to reduce and prevent domestic, family, and sexual violence through survivor-led media advocacy. Originally focused on violence against women, the project centred intersectionality and was expanded to include a cohort of LGBTIQ+ survivor advocates. The project also ensured that it included advocates living in both urban and regional locations. Consisting of training, support and facilitation for survivor advocates, the project mobilised survivor advocates to engage with a wide range of mainstream and independent media outlets to raise awareness and promote accurate and sensitive media reporting of violence against women. Through participating in the project, survivor advocates reported feelings of empowerment and personal development including feeling heard, developing self-confidence and recovering from the violence and its impacts. Overall, the impacts on survivor advocates, DV NSW and its members and partner organisations, and all other stakeholders who engaged with the Voices for Change project was overwhelmingly positive.⁵

Another example of victim-survivors telling their stories to effect change is [Teach Us Consent](#), which is a grassroots social media mobilisation of thousands of Australian women and girls pushing for consent education to have a greater focus for school students. The Teach Us Consent movement, initiated by Chanel Contos, has illustrated the endemic nature of sexual assault and violence experienced by young women and girls with thousands of testimonies detailing assault dating back to the 1980s in Australian schools. Teach Us Consent has been focused on creating change and identifying solutions, including hosting a roundtable with senior ministers, stakeholders and survivors to discuss how sex and consent education can be better embedded in the Australian Curriculum. This occurred during the Australian Curriculum Review which provides an opening to discuss how to integrate consent and violence prevention education as part of a broader program of [teaching and learning gender equality and respectful relationships](#).

There are significant opportunities for progressing primary prevention at key 'tipping points' encouraging collective action to challenge the norms, practices and structures that drive violence against women. Often representing tragic events and the systemic nature of violence against women, such tipping points of outrage drive awareness and action towards challenging the gendered drivers of violence. Importantly, we can move the onus from victim-survivors by mobilising communities to create and drive change.

Prevention workforce

The prevention workforce can drive change

The prevention of violence against women and other related sectors are at the forefront of driving primary prevention activities across the country. A specialist primary prevention workforce who have expertise and knowledge of the core concepts, frameworks and evidence to address the gendered drivers of violence is key to reducing resistance and driving change.

The prevention workforce includes people who work in women's health, domestic and family violence response services, women's organisations with a focus on women's discrimination, people in prevention and/or gender equality roles in government, at specific prevention focused organisations and embedded within private corporations such as sporting or financial organisations. This emerging prevention workforce is multiskilled and diverse, working across a variety of roles, organisations and settings.

An Our Watch survey of prevention workers indicates that three-quarters of workers spend between most or a little of their time working on primary prevention or incorporating primary prevention into their practice.⁶ Those who specialise in primary prevention are a smaller component of the workforce. Nevertheless, there is an emerging specialist and expert workforce to provide leadership and technical assistance to other practitioners where primary prevention is only some of their work. This makes an important connection between generalist workers who have settings-specific knowledge with primary prevention specialists that enables work across settings.

Participation in the Hub over the past year reflects the diversity of the workforce. Through online forums, participants occupying diverse roles have discussed and shared the different types of work happening around the country and across sectors, with different target populations, and in settings. Prevention workers often play a dual role with prevention sitting alongside and complementary to response and early intervention or other related work. Stakeholders have identified that prevention is often being completed 'off the side of the desk' with limited capacity, and financial and human resources, which creates challenges for sustaining activity and creating long-term change.

There are opportunities to address this reduced capacity of prevention workers by creating long-term job security around prevention roles in different sectors and settings to enable prevention work to have its greatest and intended impact. Primary prevention specialisation is important to provide expert, technical guidance and assistance to individuals and organisations whose primary prevention work is only a small part of their mandate. A specialist role that can build evidence, educate about primary prevention, build capacity of settings, institutions and organisations, and support the delivery of initiatives is needed. For example, [the Australian Local Government Association \(ALGA\)](#) recently called for a dedicated family and domestic violence prevention officer in every jurisdiction to support local governments in delivering prevention commitments. Such roles must be distinct from but support and be closely aligned with response services.

For example, since 2010, [Municipal Association of Victoria \(MAV\)](#) has had a dedicated ongoing prevention of violence against women Policy Advisor role to specifically support local governments in the prevention of violence against women and facilitate the coordination, collaboration and information exchange between local government representatives and community partners through the [MAV Gender Equality and Preventing Violence Against Women and all forms of Gender-Based Violence Network](#). This has enabled local governments in Victoria to have the guidance and expertise to build capacity to do prevention work in their communities.⁷

To build the workforce at a state level, Victoria has developed a 10-year strategy, [Building from Strength: 10-Year Industry Plan for Family Violence Prevention and Response](#). Taking a systems-level approach, it aims to build a system that works together, build capability across systems, strengthen the specialist workforce, and maintain the workforce's health and wellbeing. The workforce strategy includes:

- the roll out of a recruitment campaign "[So, what do you do?](#)" to promote awareness of the family violence sector and attract and recruit people with the skills and knowledge the sector needs
- [a Centre for Workforce Excellence](#) that leads initiatives to support organisations interacting with victim survivors and perpetrators
- develop [Preventing family violence and violence against women capability frameworks](#) for specialist and generalist workers.

A recent [census of the primary prevention workforce in Victoria](#) as part of the workforce strategy details core activities of primary prevention practitioners, which included developing and maintaining partnerships and networks, project management, and implementation of primary prevention initiatives. Generally, there is a lack of understanding about primary prevention roles; however, practitioners felt that their role was extremely or very well valued by others in their organisation.

There are opportunities to build systems approaches to build the workforce nationally with the specialist knowledge and skills to drive change. Sustained workforce development that is based in evidence and aligned with [Change the story](#) would enable primary prevention activities across the country.

The workforce is at different stages in their knowledge around primary prevention and require different levels of support to undertake their work. This support might include practical resources; ongoing support by skilled and resourced practitioners for advice on specific initiatives; and opportunities to collaborate and learn from other workers.

For example, DVRCV/DV Vic have also recently launched a [Primary Prevention Helpdesk](#), where practitioners submit an enquiry with the helpdesk providing information and direction to relevant resources, contacts, and networks. It also supports practitioners facing resistance and backlash through ad hoc peer support.

Engagement with stakeholders across Australia, through the Hub, shows a clear interest in further coordination, collaboration and learning from each other for supporting their work and to innovate and drive strengths-based prevention activities and programs. Stakeholders have conveyed feelings of isolation in doing this work, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to online working environment. Initiatives such as [communities of practice](#) and sharing case studies can provide spaces for practitioners to share the challenges they face in driving prevention work such as isolation, critical self-reflection, develop general and sector-specific skills, build an understanding of other prevention initiatives, and create solidarity and cohesiveness as a group to effect change. However, there are some barriers to engaging in such forums and activities, such as capacity and time to undertake professional development. This is particularly relevant for regional based workers, and for practitioners working in small organisations. Contexts that have limited focus on primary prevention and investment in prevention infrastructure means that primary prevention workers may not recognise or principally identify their work as primary prevention, meaning that outreach across sectors and creating connections is critical.

COVID-19 impacts on the prevention workforce

The prevention workforce is made up of committed people and organisations, doing innovative work. In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, practitioners and stakeholders require increased support due to the multiple, intersecting demands on the prevention workforce, including:

- significant increases to the rates and severity of violence against women in Australia during the pandemic,⁸ especially in the home
- changes to how the prevention workforce and their organisations work due to public health measures including lockdowns, working from home, and travel and gathering restrictions.

As discussed above, a significant portion of workers driving and implementing primary prevention activity in Australia are doing this work 'off the side of their desk' or in addition to roles that are largely focused on other areas such as responding to violence against women and community development. Due to this context, and in light of increased rates and severity of violence reported by service providers and documented in emerging research over the past 18 months, it is likely that there have been impacts to prevention capacity across the country which need to be further examined. This pressure on the response and prevention workforce has been expressed by participants engaging in the Hub. This pressure and reduced capacity indicate prevention work is currently reduced and hampered by the ongoing context.

Victorian prevention workers have [reported to Gender and Disaster Australia](#) that they have taken up additional duties during the pandemic related to responding to violence against women, or the delivery of online programs and services for clients. This was generally not supported with additional resources to ensure primary prevention activities were being completed, in addition to new early intervention and response activities. For example, one research participant reported that the primary prevention role of 30% dropped to 5 or 10% of their work and it was a struggle to maintain the inclusion of gender equality on their organisation's agenda. In contrast, another participant reported that their role was made permanent as a consequence of COVID-19.

The Victorian research identified that prior organisational support and leadership buy-in was critical for the sustainability and/or adoption of prevention work during the pandemic. Prevention experts' inclusion in decision-making about how best to respond to increased prevalence of violence against women varied, according to how well primary prevention had been embedded in an organisations systems, programs, and strategic planning prior to this disaster. At the same time, increased awareness of violence against women, family violence, and domestic violence during lockdowns has led to greater inclusion for gender equality and primary prevention within organisational policies and practices during disasters. How the pandemic has led to both increased attention but also deficits to primary prevention work across the workforce indicates the unevenness of prevention work in Australia, highlighting the need for greater integration of primary prevention in such emergency response. As the report notes, “[u]ntil primary prevention has a seat at every table, the primary prevention workforce will continue to be put on hold in disasters as organisations turn their attention to response and yet another spike in violence against women by their male partners”.⁹

In addition, the economic impacts of the pandemic have had a significant impact, with female-dominated industries hardest hit and women carrying heavy unpaid and domestic workloads.¹⁰ The recovery phase of the pandemic is an opportunity to integrate gender and prevention of violence against women in emergency response, relief and recovery planning going forward. This can include considerations of not only how a disaster or crisis impacts women's experiences of violence, but the female-dominated workforces that work towards preventing violence against women in the first place. Embedding the importance of prevention throughout emergency, relief and recovery measures that apply to COVID-19 and other emergencies and disasters would enable the prioritisation of critical prevention of violence against women work into the future.

Case study: Our Watch panel of facilitators

In 2017 Our Watch launched *Workplace Equality and Respect*, a suite of tools and resources to support workplaces to improve gender equality and prevent violence against women through an organisational change process. Since the launch, this approach has been adapted and used in a number of workplace settings, including government, not-for-profit, sports and corporate settings. *Workplace Equality and Respect* was designed to be an 'off the shelf' package for independent use, but learnings from implementation, as well as ongoing requests for implementation support, indicated that most sectors and workplaces require a tailored approach with specialist gender expertise to enable them to make changes to the drivers of violence against women.

To address this need, and with the aim of increasing the reach and uptake of *Workplace Equality and Respect* Our Watch developed a facilitator panel model in 2021. This model supports a small external workforce of gender equality and primary prevention practitioners to facilitate implementation of *Workplace Equality and Respect* in workplaces across Australia. The facilitators are screened, trained and coordinated by Our Watch to support workplaces to undertake organisational change to prevent violence against women and promote gender equality. The facilitators participate in a community of practice that enables peer-to-peer learning, direct support from Our Watch, and opportunities to contribute to the reflection and continuous improvement of the *Workplace Equality and Respect* tools and resources.

While the panel has only recently been established, the model enables Our Watch to support implementation across Australia and in doing so, hopefully grow demand for the work and for the workforce.

Policy and legislation

Government policies and strategies

Commonwealth, state and territory governments have a critical role in providing the institutional context for prevention work to occur, with laws and policies framing the enabling environment for primary prevention across the socioecological model. Governments also have unique levers that provide foundational and obligatory contexts to 'do' prevention work. They influence and operate at a number of different levels effecting societal and institutional change and guiding investment by identifying priorities at grassroots and community levels, and across systems and structures.

All Australian governments include prevention as a priority or focus in various [iterations of policies, plans and strategies](#) that address violence against women, sexual assault and domestic and family violence. For example:

- the Northern Territory government is implementing its [Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028: Safe, Respected and Free from Violence](#), which includes prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence as a key priority
- the South Australia plan, [Committed to Safety: A framework for addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia](#), prioritises primary prevention as one of three pillars to address violence against women
- Tasmania has adopted [Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence 2019–2022](#), which includes 40 actions to prevent and respond to violence.

The identification of prevention of gender-based violence as a focus area is critically important to driving action and supporting evidence-based activities with resourcing. Different jurisdictions have funds and grant rounds of different amounts to support primary prevention programs and activities. For example, as part of the Northern Territory's strategy there is a specific prevention focused grant program established, [the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grants](#), to support localised projects, activities and actions with 28 violence prevention projects receiving \$150,000 as part of the grant program. Grant recipients include community-developed and community-led projects, social media campaigns, workshops, focus groups, pilot programs, and informational resources targeted at community members and young people across the Territory.

Similarly, the New South Wales Government has committed \$20 million to its [Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund](#), under the [NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children](#). Supporting early intervention, prevention and crisis solutions to domestic and family violence, the Fund targets projects which focus on at-risk and diverse communities. Primary prevention and early intervention have been the focus of 14 out of 20 projects that have been funded, such as Accountable, Respectful and Connected (ARC) Gender Relations project aimed at engaging men to challenge and change attitudes and behaviours that support violence, delivered by [Men and Family Centre](#). However, all funded projects are due to be completed in 2021.

An intersectional perspective in recognising the disproportionate effect of gendered violence on marginalised communities is important in driving prevention of violence of all people. Among the Victorian Government's prevention resourcing, the Government has committed to an Aboriginal-led Victorian agreement [*Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families*](#). Co-designed with Aboriginal representatives across the state, it centres Aboriginal self-determination as an underlying principle of the agreement and includes the implementation of Community Initiatives Fund projects and the establishment of the Dhelk Dja Aboriginal Family Violence Fund. Partnering with over [45 Aboriginal-led organisations](#) sharing \$18.2 million dollars over 2 years, this funding will enable the delivery of culturally appropriate family violence services that are tailored to the needs of their communities. State-led Indigenous representative bodies, like the Victorian model, is an important local and regional ground-up approach that facilitates culturally diverse groups' representation at state and federal levels.¹¹

Policymaking to address the drivers of violence against women

In addition to specific prevention of violence against women policies and resourcing prevention activity, governments can look across portfolios to integrate gender-responsive policy making. To advance structural change, a gender and intersectional lens can be integrated into the design, development, ongoing review and updating of policies and the distribution of resources to ensure the achievement of primary prevention goals. This approach assesses all public policy for its impact on women and includes an analysis of any differential impact on different groups of women in order to achieve a truly inclusive gender equality.

For example, a gender and intersectional approach accounts for the ways in which racism and sexism intersect, and the ways in which laws, policies, economic measures, and organisational and institutional practices can have discriminatory impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. This informs more effective strategies to address the specific drivers of violence against Indigenous women. An intersectional approach to gender responsive policy-making can contribute to addressing how policies and expenditure impact different groups of women, men and non-binary people. This will enable and drive multisectoral change across systems, settings and Australia's diverse populations.

A key aspect of gender-responsive policy making is a gender analysis of budgets and expenditures to consider the gendered impacts of resource distribution for women and men.¹² In addition to funding for specific policies that addresses violence against women like those described above, governments have fiscal levers that can have significant bearing on shaping the underlying gendered drivers of violence. Such an approach considers the differing impacts of budgets that may seemingly present as 'gender neutral' but have unintended consequences that economically disadvantage women and exacerbate gender inequalities.

Various jurisdictions do already release statements in different forms about budget measures and the economic impacts on women. At a Commonwealth level, the [Women's Budget Statement](#) is the most recent iteration of Federal budget impacts on women that details government expenditure and commitments to women's safety, economic security and health and wellbeing, such as funding for women's services and encouraging higher participation of women in male dominated sectors. At the state level, Victoria has recently announced the [establishment of the gender-responsive budgeting unit](#) within the Department of Treasury and Finance to aid the integration of a gender impact analysis in Government's budget decision-making from design to implementation. Other jurisdictions such as [Queensland](#) and [the Australian Capital Territory](#), include a women's economic impact statement detailing funding and expenditure that is specific to women.

Currently, comprehensive gender analyses of budgets are generally undertaken after the fact by non-government organisations such as the National Federation of Australian Women (NFAW). NFAW carry out a [Gender Lens on the Budget](#), an independent, expert, and detailed analysis of Federal budget impacts on women. The *Gender Lens on the Budget* looks at budget impacts across different groups of women including young women, older women, migrant and refugee women, women with disabilities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. It also looks across portfolios, including social services and housing, violence against women, early childhood education and care and parenting payments, and tax and infrastructure. Providing this level of detail highlights the structural changes needed to shift gender inequalities and address the underlying drivers of violence against women.

These considerations of how to enable primary prevention through gender-responsive policymaking is particularly pressing in the context of responses to the short and long-term gendered impacts of COVID-19. As the country moves towards opening up after the pandemic, there are opportunities to consider embedding primary prevention into policies guiding the recovery, as well as in broader emergency and disaster responses to ensure the resilience of this vital work. For example, OECD have developed a [policy brief](#) to assist governments in designing gender-inclusive approaches to emergency management and recovery. The Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) has recently held a conversation series with one session focused on [gender and disaster recovery](#) to prompt discussion on incorporating gender into emergency response.¹³ A gender-inclusive recovery is an opportunity to embed a gender and intersectional analysis in policy and resourcing to ensure that the benefits of recovery measures are fairly distributed and addresses gender and other inequalities.¹⁴

Inquiries

Formal processes such as parliamentary inquiries and other investigations led by governments or other bodies can lead to a suite of reforms that can have far reaching impacts that support prevention goals. They are an important opportunity for civil society to provide analyses of violence against women and give recommendations to governments on actions that could address gender and other social inequalities. They can lead to significant legislative and policy reform.

Victoria has created significant opportunities since [the Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria](#) leading to wide-ranging policy, legal and regulatory reforms in the state across the response, early intervention and prevention areas. The Victorian government committed to implementing all 227 of the Royal Commission's recommendations, which linked gender inequality to violence against women. For example, Victoria's first gender equality strategy, *Safe and Strong*, has resulted in substantial law reform to establish public entities and frameworks to guide implementation. This includes the Prevention of Family Violence Act (2018), the creation of a statutory body to prevent family and domestic violence, [Respect Victoria](#), and a state-wide roll out of [respectful relationships education](#) in schools.

The Sex Discrimination Commissioner's inquiry into sexual harassment in Australia's workplaces received over 460 submissions and held 60 consultations with more than 600 participating individuals from across sectors and across the country. The [Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry Report](#) published in March 2020 illustrates the pervasiveness of sexual harassment. A new approach is formulated in the report that is evidence-based, victim focused, framed through a gender and intersectional lens. It also refers to how primary prevention initiatives outside the workplace can address workplace sexual harassment. An inquiry that produces such a significant body of evidence and resulting recommendations can guide governments on how to address systemic and structural issues of violence against women.

However, while inquiries and reviews can lead to legislative change, this approach tends to focus on responses to violence. While this is a good start and provides important opportunities for victim-survivors, it doesn't prevent the violence from happening in the first place. For example, since 2018, New South Wales via the Law Reform Commission has [reviewed consent laws](#) in the state which has led to several reforms to strengthen and simplify laws around sexual consent. Drawing from 197 submissions and a survey of almost 3,900 participants, the LRC produced 44 recommendations that supports an affirmative model of consent. While this is a step in the right direction for victim-survivors and drives attention towards different experiences of violence, such approaches need to be supported by greater investment in primary prevention overall, and increased policy approaches that support evidence-based activities such as [whole-of-school respectful relationships education](#).

Regulatory frameworks

Regulatory frameworks assist in holding public and private institutions accountable to prevention laws and policies. Regulations place an onus on institutions and organisations to prevent and respond to violence. Regulatory mechanisms must be accountable and transparent to ensure compliance.

Australia has existing regulatory mechanisms in a range of areas, especially the workplace, with further opportunities to address the gendered drivers of violence across a range of other portfolios and settings.

For example, a key nation-wide regulatory framework that focuses on addressing underlying gender inequalities is the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* and the [Workplace Gender Equality Agency \(WGEA\)](#) that promotes and improves workplace gender equality. Private companies with over 100 employees are required to report against several gender equality indicators. Indicators include gender composition of the workforce and governing bodies, equal remuneration, sex-based harassment, and availability and utility of employment terms, conditions and practices relating to flexible working arrangements for employees and to working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities. Although data collected is categorised along the male/female binary with nothing on non-binary genders, data against these indicators contribute to a growing dataset on the ways in which workplace conditions are gendered.

WGEA releases an annual scorecard, summarising key findings and painting a picture of the environment in which women are working in, such as the policies that support women's safety and wellbeing, and where they are positioned. For example, [the 2019-2020 reporting period](#), over 98% of reporting organisations had a policy and/or strategy on sex-based harassment and discrimination prevention. However, training for management levels on sex-based discrimination remains stubbornly static and there is no data on broader organisational capacity building and education around sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination contradicting best-practice whole-of-organisation approaches.

This is concerning given [the prevalence of sexual harassment and abuse in Australian workplaces](#). However, in 2021 Safe Work Australia launched its [prevention of workplace sexual harassment guide](#) and [other resources](#) that are aimed at small and large businesses to manage the risks of sexual harassment as an overall approach to workplace health and safety. The guidance supports businesses and employers to meet duties under workplace health and safety laws to eliminate and minimise risks and harms that sexual harassment poses.

A [comparative analysis of gender pay gap reporting](#) found that Australia's gender pay gap reporting has many strengths. For example, companies can be listed by WGEA as [non-compliant](#), meaning that they are 'named and shamed' and as such are not supposed to be eligible to receive government contracts. Regulatory levers must ensure compliance to drive change as without accountability, regulations can be tokenistic.

Most private companies are compliant and the framework enables openings for conversations around workplace gender equality and the prevention of violence against women. WGEA awards the [Employer of Choice for Gender Equality \(EOCGE\)](#) citation, a voluntary leading-practice recognition program designed to encourage, recognise and promote organisations' active commitment to achieving gender equality.

Over time, many workplaces are going beyond minimum requirements and adopting more transformative organisational structures, policies and practices to embed primary prevention into their organisations.

Combined, coordinated gender-responsive policy, laws and regulations at the national, state/territory and local levels can create a mutually reinforcing effect. This will amplify our prevention efforts by increasing the reach and impact of work to address the underlying drivers of violence against women.

Case Study: Victorian Gender Equality Act (2020)

The [Victorian Gender Equality Act \(2020\)](#) (the Act), which came into force in March 2021, will promote gender equality by requiring the Victorian public sector, local councils and universities (defined entities) to take positive action towards achieving gender equality. The Act will support the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs and delivery of services in workplaces and communities and recognises that gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience (on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes).

The Act directly links the achievement of gender equality with the prevention of violence, by seeking to address structural change and challenging disadvantage, stigma, stereotyping, prejudice and violence in the workplace and address the gendered impacts of outward public facing policies and services. The Act applies to defined entities that have 50 or more employees, which are required to:

- develop and implement a [Gender Equality Action Plan](#) that includes (a) results of a workplace gender audit and (b) strategies and measures for achieving workplace gender equality
- publicly report on their progress in relation to the Gender Equality Action Plans submitted every two years
- promote gender equality in policies, programs and services that impact the public
- complete [gender impact assessments](#) on all new policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public, as well as those up for review.

The Act also addresses other dynamics that contribute to the gendered drivers of violence, including the gender composition of leadership and decision-making, equal remuneration and the gender pay gap, occupational gender segregation, and developing and implementing policies such as family violence leave, flexible working, and the gendered nature of caring responsibilities. Additionally, organisations are required to consider other intersectional dynamics of discrimination and disadvantage that compound gender inequality. [Initial research](#) has already found that “Reporting against the Act, linked with the COVID-19 related increase in family violence, was seen as providing incentives for organisations to address primary prevention.”

The Act established the [Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner](#) – currently held by Dr Niki Vincent as the inaugural Commissioner—to oversee and lead on the implementation of the Act. The Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (CGEPS) provides and coordinates education, supports implementation of the Act and enforces compliance. It has developed a range of [practice-based tools and resources](#) that describe the minimum requirements that defined entities are to meet, as well as other recommended steps organisations can take to embed gender equality. Adapting to the online working environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission held ten virtual roadshows for defined entities in March 2021 across the education, health, Victorian Public Service, local councils, environment, and sports sectors, among others.

The Commission are engaged with the gender equality and primary prevention sectors to aid defined entities with gender expertise by establishing a [panel of providers](#) that are assisting defined entities in meeting their obligations. For example, [GenderWorks Australia](#) was appointed to deliver gender audit workshops with over 211 defined entities participating. [The Equality Institute](#) delivered trainings on Gender Impact Assessments. The [Action for Gender Equality Partnership \(AGEP\)](#) has state-wide reach and were funded by the Commission to provide workshops to deliver useful information in developing Gender Equality Action Plans. AGEP is also delivering four pilot communities of practice (CoP) to support implementation over a 6-month period and encourage shared practices and learnings around approaches to meeting obligations under the Act. The establishment of the panel of providers has led to an indirect upskilling and capacity building between members on the panel of providers through opportunities created through collaboration and engagement via the Act and in being identified as experts that defined entities can engage to provide tailored support to individual organisations.

A number of [research grants](#) have been awarded that cover a range of topics, including the context in which the *Gender Equality Act* was established, how organisations can enable equality for culturally and linguistically diverse women in public sector workplaces, and understanding how defined entities such as Councils have navigated the Act to date. This will assist in building the evidence base on best practice and perhaps, drive the adoption of similar legislation in other jurisdictions. Evidence on the successes and the shortcomings of the Victorian experience of implementing such large-scale legislative gender equality reform will aid in developing evidence for other-like change processes.

Primary prevention programming

Primary prevention programming activities

Prevention programming in Australia has grown in complexity of approach, with a range of combinations of settings and techniques to address prevention across the socioecological model. Policy and funding arrangements need to be in place to support sustainability of activity and action at all levels (individual, organisational, community, system, institutional and societal). It is this approach that has been critical to the success of efforts to address other public health issues.

Effective primary prevention programming is long-term and multifaceted. Seeing programs as part of a holistic strategy that works with individuals and across communities and organisations, institutions and systems, will drive and enable the prevention of violence against women. A **gender transformative approach** underpins quality primary prevention programming to avoid inadvertently reinforcing or perpetuating the social systems and structures that produce and maintain gender inequalities and drive violence against women. This approach to prevention actively challenges and changes harmful gendered social norms, structures and practices by deliberately questioning and challenging the gendered drivers of violence. It promotes alternative norms, structures and practices that are based on gender equality and respect.¹⁵

Generating evidence and sharing key learnings about what works from different contexts to strengthen capacity of design and delivery of quality prevention programs will enable the greatest impacts of prevention work. For example, the [Prevention Collaborative](#), a global network of practitioners, activists and researchers working towards preventing violence against women and children, established a [knowledge hub](#) that collects and synthesises resources for practitioners working to reduce and prevent violence against women and their children. The knowledge hub includes a guide for effective programming, strategies for prevention and program examples from across the world of best practice prevention work to enable work everywhere.

Prevention programs must be underpinned by a whole-of-approach to the prevention of violence against women and 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.

For example, Women’s Legal Service Victoria’s [Starts with Us](#) initiative is a settings-based and sector-specific initiative that addresses high rates of sexual harassment in the legal sector in Victoria. Through several phases, the project is undertaking workplace research and co-designing prevention programs with legal sector organisations and all stakeholders who come into contact with working in legal and justice. One of the overall aims is to develop a sector-wide implementation action plan to prevent violence against women.

[Sexual Assault Support Service \(SASS\)](#) in Tasmania deliver [primary prevention programs](#) in schools. Seeking to engage not only students, but the whole school, SASS deliver a compulsory information session for staff, and an optional (but strongly encouraged) information session for parents, guardians and school members, providing an overview of the program and equipping participants with necessary information to talk to their students and children about program content. Offering age-appropriate content for students from grades three through to twelve, enables students to develop knowledge and skills, over a number of sessions, on topics including consent, ethical decision making, and respectful relationships.

Direct participation programs work at individual, relationships or group level to build knowledge and understanding of violence against women and the gendered drivers. For example, [Good People Act Now](#) is a youth-led family violence prevention initiative and program in Melbourne that trains a class of young people each year to understand and raise awareness about the drivers of violence against women. More than 100 young people have completed the program since it was established in 2014, with the goal of enabling young people and other community members to become gender equality leaders and advocates and active bystanders in their communities. This direct participation in primary prevention programs can drive mobilisation in participant's communities.

Under the Fourth Action Plan of *the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children*, the Commonwealth Government has funded three projects under the [Men as Role Models initiative](#) to work with men in culturally appropriate ways. For example, [Ngaannyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara \(NPY\) Women's Council Aboriginal Corporation](#) run bush camps for Indigenous men in Central Australia, working within a trauma-informed framework with Aboriginal men to strengthen community capacity to end and prevent family violence.

Communications and social marketing campaigns are important tools in raising awareness and changing attitudes on the gendered drivers of violence against women. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of primary prevention campaigns and advertisement has had to adapt. For example, the South Australian Government's [Break the Cycle](#) campaign that drives awareness of violence against women, has utilised the recent widespread uptake of [QR codes](#) in public health measures, to deliver the message of prevention through advertising on bus shelters and toilet doors. The QR codes are on print advertising, allowing quick and direct access to support networks if needed.

Our Watch's [No Excuse for Abuse](#) campaign to raise awareness of non-physical forms of violence was re-launched in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The campaign incorporated advertising across a number of channels including paid advertising on both free-to-air and catch-up TV. Evaluation of the *No Excuse for Abuse* campaign found that 44% of those recalling the ads reported that they took some form of action after seeing the campaign such as having a conversation about non-physical forms of abuse, while many felt more able to access domestic violence support for self or others if needed. The context of the COVID-19 pandemic where people were spending more time at home with significant increases in online and TV activity, and media focus on increased domestic violence risk, appears to have amplified positive campaign impacts on audience knowledge and attitudes that non-physical forms of violence are serious, harmful and inexcusable.¹⁶

As discussed in the [second national primary prevention report](#), coordination and collaboration are critical for primary prevention. In the COVID-19 environment, such collaboration has needed to be sustained through online engagement. For example, Municipal Association of Victoria's (MAV) have adapted the delivery of their community of practice through the [MAV Gender Equality and Preventing Violence Against Women and all forms of Gender-Based Violence Network](#). Originally face to face, the sessions now run every quarter over two 1.5 hour online sessions. The first session is sector-wide and encourages participation from all relevant stakeholders and community-based partners to attend to listen to presentations. The second is only for local government where councils share how they have delivered prevention programs or gender equality initiatives, such as the implementation of Victoria's Gender Equality Act's gender impact assessments (see *Gender Equality Act* case study under the policy & legislation section of this report). This encourages networking and collaboration across the state and the sharing of resources and key lessons to enable prevention in other local government communities.

A key part of programming is the development of tools, resources and guides to assist practitioners in implementing primary prevention initiatives. This includes Our Watch's primary prevention suite of tools and resources on primary prevention and specific settings, such as [sport](#), [workplaces](#) and [education](#), as well as others produced by a variety of organisations including:

- [Working Together with Men: How to create male allies for gender equity in your community \(Working Together with Men\)](#), produced by Health West Partnership, offers a grassroots model to support men within communities to develop and deliver their own prevention projects with a focus on allyship.
- The [Sexual Consent Toolkit](#) from Rape and Sexual Assault Research and Advocacy and funded by a Sexual Violence Prevention grant by the Queensland Government is designed for young people, their parents and their educators, as well as anyone who wants to learn more about the law on sexual consent and communicating about sex with confidence.
- [Engaging Men: Reducing resistance and building support](#) provides guidance on facing resistance by outlining what it means to work with men, exploring strategies for practitioners and advocates can use to prevent, reduce and respond to resistance.

While a valuable addition to assisting the delivery of primary prevention interventions, they are only one part of programming. 'Off-the-shelf' tools and resources need to be adaptable to suit different contexts and settings including the framing for settings and sectors.

Advancing prevention programming

For transformative primary prevention programming to be enabled and sustained, stakeholders engaged with the Hub from across the country have continuously referred to the need for and prioritisation of a number of elements that are necessary to support their work:

- Long-term and sustained financial and human resourcing of primary prevention programs is repeatedly referred to as a critical element for prevention work to be possible. Primary prevention programming currently operates under diverse, short-term funding cycles or one-off programs that encourages competition among and between violence prevention sectors and stakeholders.¹⁷ There is constant emergence of new activities and disappearance of old ones regardless of effectiveness due to a lack of monitoring and evaluation and dependent on funder priorities rather than identification by stakeholders.
- Commitments to comprehensive, secure and ongoing funding for primary prevention across Australia to achieve change on this issue. This investment must complement (rather than deduct from) response service funding.
- Support for coordination, collaboration, information-sharing and mutual learnings within and across settings and across the socioecological model, as detailed in the [second national primary prevention report](#) .
- The importance of place-based and context-specific initiatives to drive community-owned change across different regions.
- The importance of shared frameworks, tools and resources that adopt common language such as *Change the story* to enable consistency of prevention work across the country and to maintain focus on the goals of prevention.
- Evidence-based ‘whole-of’ approaches to prevention.
- Sustainable supports for programming including primary prevention program design, guidance, delivery and monitoring and evaluation.

Programs and activities must be supported to adapt, improve, expand and, crucially, to make key learnings available as part of a shared and accessible evidence base. Additionally, policy and funding settings are needed to support sustainability of activity and action at all levels (individual, organisational, community, system, institutional and societal).

Primary prevention programming must have an intersectional approach and be determined by the community itself, lending legitimacy to primary prevention activities. As noted in [Tracking progress in prevention](#), this “means explicitly redistributing power and resources so that people affected by multiple forms of inequality and oppression, and organisations representing them, are directing decisions about both *what* and *how* primary prevention programming occurs, and are funded to lead this work.”¹⁸

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruptions across the design, delivery and evaluation of prevention programming. The interruptions caused by the pandemic and consequent restrictions have made it difficult to plan and meet deliverables, with stakeholders reporting that they are having to repurpose activities to online formats and pool resources to implement prevention work.

Community organisations that are at the frontline of response, early intervention and prevention programming are under pressure, particularly in light of the pandemic. Responsive funding models and contracting are needed to adapt to this changing environment and allow organisations to be flexible in their prevention programming and deliverables. This includes measuring deliverables not only in terms of quantitative outputs, but also in organisational capacity building, relationship building, and informal community engagement.

Case Study: Faith-based principles for primary prevention

Faith settings are identified as a priority area for primary prevention of violence against women. Faith leaders and faith communities, which play a key role in many people's lives in Australia, are well positioned to respond to and prevent violence. However, there is only [emerging evidence](#) about what works in faith settings to respond to violence, to engage men who use violence, and to prevent it across the socioecological model. A key challenge for engaging some people of faith is resistance to mainstream articulations of the gendered drivers of violence and key actions to prevent it as diverging from values associated with different faiths and cultures.

[Muslim Women Australia \(MWA\)](#), through the Saving FACE project, aims to make the links between the gendered drivers of violence against women and the principles of Islam. With participation of faith leaders in developing a faith-informed framework of primary prevention, the project includes several interlinked and complementary activities that work across several levels:

- A mapping exercise to adapt *Change the story* framework by using the language and principles of Islam. Through the lens of Islam, key actions outlined in *Change the story* are translated. For example, essential action *challenging and condoning violence against women* correlates with a foundational tenet of Islamic faith, removing and preventing harm. It demonstrates how faith and prevention are complementary, not contradictory.
- Building capacity of men in four locations across Australia that represent different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. During a number of online sessions and weekend intensives, participants are introduced to *Change the story* and the gendered drivers of violence against women, building knowledge on how primary prevention connects with Islam. MWA then guides and mentor's participants who will implement primary prevention initiatives in their local faith-based communities. Due to COVID-19, there have been some delays in the capacity building phase of the project. However, having a primary prevention framework informed and aligned with faith principles, it is expected will enable legitimacy and engagement of communities.
- Developing resources and training for the prevention of violence against women sector to enable and inform greater work across faith settings and faith communities.

Case Study: Listen Up!

Listen Up! is a project delivered by [WWILD](#) that started with a series of workshops to share rights-based information about sexual violence, domestic and family violence and other forms of disability related violence with women with intellectual disabilities. Participatory and multi-dimensional, Listen Up! provides opportunities for people with an intellectual disability to contribute to the design, content and delivery of resources for workers in the disability and violence against women sectors. Seeing a lack of crossover between these two sectors, the resources are geared towards equipping practitioners in the disability and violence response and prevention sectors on how to work best with people with intellectual disabilities who are experiencing violence.

The project hired peer facilitators who are women with an intellectual disability to run workshops on relationships and violence and hold consultations with women with an intellectual disability across several locations in Queensland. A podcast series (yet to be released) called, *And You Think You're The Expert*, and an accompanying booklet was co-created with the participants to challenge gender and ableist stereotypes of women with an intellectual disability. Each episode, the hosts (women with an intellectual disability) interview different stakeholders that may work with women with an intellectual disability who are experiencing violence (e.g., police, mental health, domestic and sexual violence workers, and support workers and support coordinators). The questions and content of the podcast was determined through a participatory approach to ensure that participants have multiple chances to provide feedback and review the material. This provided space for women who have an intellectual disability to inform the resources with their own expertise and lived experiences of violence and service delivery.

Launching in 2022, the resources are expected to challenge stereotypes about women with an intellectual disability and increase practitioners' knowledge about what makes services accessible for women with intellectual disabilities experiencing violence.

Research, evidence and expertise

The role of research and evidence in enabling primary prevention

Research and evidence are important elements in understanding what is required to create change. Combined, the Australian and international evidence base enables primary prevention by deepening our understanding of the drivers of violence against women, examining what enables effective primary prevention approaches, and, critically, uncover the silences and absences of existing activities.

Knowing and understanding *all* women's experiences of violence, including the gender and other intersectional power dynamics that create and sustain gender and other inequalities, is fundamental to primary prevention. This research and evidence allows us to understand where and how to target primary prevention strategies and activities and develop innovative ways to address and transform the gendered drivers of violence. Critical investments in the development and implementation of national research agendas, shared data platforms and translation of evidence into practical guiding principles for implementation can enable coordinated, multi-faceted and holistic progress towards prevention.¹⁹

The [Global Shared Research Agenda](#), recently launched by The Equality Institute and Sexual Violence Research Initiative, draws on 'the wisdom of the crowd' of practitioners, activists, and victim survivors alongside academics and other specialists to:

- identify evidence gaps in the violence against women field
- assist researchers in planning ethical and impactful research agendas
- guide funders to increase investment in high-quality, ethical research
- guide practitioners in partnering with researchers to evaluate interventions
- serve as an advocacy tool for more and better funding that addresses research gaps.

The participatory process for developing the agenda identified four domains and associated questions that were critical contributions to building the evidence base. The shared process with equally valued input from a wide variety of government, non-government, and academic stakeholders helps to determine where to focus investment and research attention to where evidence is needed, informed by those experiencing and responding to violence, and aiming to prevent it. There are opportunities for Australia to learn from and contribute to this global research agenda.

Currently, the evidence base in Australia is made up of multiple types and streams including academic and non-academic qualitative and quantitative research, government inquiry-based processes, datasets and databases, and non-government evidence gathering and consultation processes. Research and consultation have investigated a broad range of topics including impacts on women's health, access to services, domestic lives, working lives and employment, finances, and experiences of violence. This has been informed by the experiences of victim-survivors, women and feminist organisations, gender experts and practitioners, and broader civil society focused on human rights. Combined, this emerging evidence in Australia contributes and provides opportunities to uncovering what is effective, for whom, and in what circumstances to focus prevention activities and incorporate into national frameworks and plans, primary prevention activity, and workforce development activities.²⁰

ANROWS, the national research body, has a dedicated [Core Grant Research Program](#) that operates in 2-yearly cycles, guided by [Australia's National Research Agenda to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children](#) (ANRA). The most recent round focuses on children and young people. ANROWS also collects external research projects that relate to violence against women and their children in Australia with the ability to search topics, across populations, geographical scope and date.

As new data about women's experiences of violence comes to light, further research is needed to build understanding of the gendered drivers of violence that enables greater attention and activity on where to concentrate primary prevention activities. For example, as an outcome of the *Respect@Work* recommendations, the Federal government has committed \$5.3 million over 3 years to building the evidence and prevention initiatives to respond to workplace sexual harassment. Further, the [2021-2024 ANROWS Sexual Harassment Research Program](#) has been established to contribute to addressing the need for research to address gaps identified in the inquiry and to generate new evidence around sexual harassment and its prevention in the workplace.

Understanding the impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 has intensified existing gender inequalities leading to increased risk of violence against women. There has been a number of evidence building projects relating to the impacts of COVID-19 on violence against women and the prevention sector that illustrate the current status of violence against women and prevention infrastructure in Australia, including:

- Harmony Alliance and the Monash University Migration and Inclusion Centre released the report for the [Migrant and refugee women in Australia: The safety and security study](#). The research is informed by a survey of nearly 1,400 migrant and refugee women's experiences of domestic and family violence, victimisation, help-seeking and trust in institutions, and employment across Australia. Due to the timing of the survey, there was a shift in focus of the research to examine the lives and safety of migrant and refugee women prior to and during the pandemic. The research gathered data on how stay-at-home restrictions and other pandemic related policy measures impacted migrant and refugee women's experiences of violence, employment and financial security.
- ANROWS and the Australian Institute of Criminology conducted [a survey](#) of 15,000 women between February to May 2020 to record experiences of violence during the pandemic. The survey reveals an escalation of physical and sexual violence and an escalation of controlling behaviours in the first three months of the pandemic and associated lockdowns, with a higher prevalence if women were socially isolated, cohabiting with a partner, and under financial stress.
- Monash University Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre is conducting an ongoing research project [Gender-based violence and help-seeking behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) looking at women's experiences of violence and help-seeking under the COVID-19 restrictions as well as the impacts on health and social care workers providing support. The project conducted two surveys of practitioners in [Victoria](#) and [Queensland](#) to understand the experiences of workers during the 2020 COVID-19 restrictions in the two states. In partnership with DV Vic, it delivered a [Responding to the 'Shadow Pandemic'](#) webinar series. The project team has also published a report on [practitioner wellbeing and remote service delivery during COVID-19 restrictions](#), and [best practice guidelines to support the wellbeing of family violence workers during emergencies and crises](#).

- [*COVID-19: Understanding the sex and gender dimensions on women's health and wellbeing*](#) at the University of New South Wales seeks to understand the sex and gendered impacts in policies and public health efforts among patients, vulnerable women and health workers.

These different research projects, and others that are underway, are valuable in highlighting the gendered dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts on violence against women and its prevention. Key learnings and recommendations from this evidence can be translated into practical, evidence-based reform and targeted interventions to ensure that:

- the escalation and intensification of violence against women in crises is prevented by adopting and investing in primary prevention of violence against women policy, activities, and programs
- the inclusion of prevention activities and the prevention workforce is prioritised in the planning and management of future crises and the relief and recovery period
- an intersectional approach is adopted and embedded in crises to guarantee vulnerable and marginalised groups of people experiencing violence do not 'slip through the cracks' during crises.

The translation and utilisation of this important evidence and research around women's experiences of COVID-19, experiences of violence, and the gendered social and economic impacts of the pandemic is critical to ensuring evidence-based understandings of the current context inform prevention efforts and to creating tangible change to prevent violence against women.

Translation of evidence to drive prevention activity and change

Specialised primary prevention of violence against women organisations, individuals and communities with lived experience of violence against women, and academic and other research bodies have an important role in translating the evidence they produce into practical ideas, resources and tools for the prevention sector. It is a vital link between theory, empirics, policy and lived experiences to drive prevention and enable change. The challenge can be turning such evidence into accessible, practical guides and resources that have on the ground expertise, experiential knowledge and legitimacy for implementation. In other words, evidence identifies the 'what' needs to be addressed and challenged, but we need the 'how' to drive prevention activity at a grassroots, community level.

To assist practitioners in implementing the evidence review [*Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women*](#), a practice guide is currently under development by Our Watch to think through how to apply this evidence through prevention activity. The [*Men in focus summary*](#) outlines essential actions that should be foundational to working with men that does not reinforce essentialist, stereotypical and binary understandings of gender. This includes recognising intersectional power dynamics that shape people's privilege and disadvantage. Making those connections between masculinities and violence against women can be challenging, especially working across the community, organisational, institutional and structural levels of the socioecological model. In developing the practice guide, a number of processes were taken by the project team to ensure the involvement and inclusion of theoretical, practical and lived expertise and experiences. For example, workshops were held with the advisory group in which major themes were drawn out of those discussions to combine with the essential actions contained in *Men in focus*. This offered spaces to inform practical ways to translate the evidence to have the most impact across settings and sectors.

Other examples of evidence being translated into practice guidance materials include:

- Gender and Disaster Australia have a number of [guides, checklists and practice resources](#) that have translated its evidence base to assist in centring the safety of women and children and preventing gender-based violence in preparing for disasters.
- Vic Health's [\(En\)countering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives](#), which translated an emerging [evidence base](#) on resistance and backlash to gender equality and gendered approaches to preventing violence against women.
- ACON launched the national version of the '[Say It Out Loud](#)' website that hosts tools, resources, tips and advice to respond to and prevent violence against LGBTQ+ people and communities. Rather than a specific piece of evidence, Say It Out Loud [collects](#) and translates a range of evidence from the LGBTQ+ sector, to guide practitioners and services to respond, support and prevent violence against LGBTQ+ people in inclusive and appropriate ways that are sensitive to individual and community needs.
- Respect Victoria's [National community attitudes to violence against women survey \(NCAS\): Re-shaping attitudes toolkit](#) is designed for practitioners to promote and make accessible the evidence of the NCAS survey to professional partners and the communities in which they work.

Consideration of how best to translate evidence for practical guidance for practitioners and policy-makers working on the prevention of violence is a critical component of research efforts. This can also encompass adapting evidence to ensure its utility in different contexts and by communities that experience intersectional discrimination and marginalisation. Emerging and important evidence can provide opportunities to drive, adapt and expand prevention priorities and activities.

Understanding gender inequalities through data

Comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data can drive and enables the necessary policy, resourcing and service delivery that is targeted for Australia's heterogenous populations and their needs. Without a clear picture of women's experiences, the dynamics of violence, and what targeted interventions are required to enable lives that are free from violence, discrimination and inequality, there can be missed opportunities to address the underlying drivers of this violence.

There are a range of Australian datasets that contribute to our understanding of the drivers of violence against women as well as the prevalence, severity and nature of that violence. The development of datasets and tools such as the directory of Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Statistics and the [ABS Gender Indicators](#) illustrate the endemic nature of violence against women in Australia. Periodic surveys such as the [Personal Safety Survey](#) and the [National Community Attitudes towards Violence \(NCAS\) Survey](#) capture individual and community attitudes towards violence against women and show progress and/or barriers towards more equal attitudes about gender. The Commonwealth government has recently committed to the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Personal Safety Survey to measure the prevalence of family, domestic and sexual violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls to understand the disproportionate impacts of violence against First Nations women, to ultimately assist in reducing and preventing it.

There are also other broader data collection processes on gendered issues, such as the [Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia \(HILDA\) Survey](#), a longitudinal study of Australian households on issues such as the gendered division of unpaid labour and attitudes towards parenting, paid work and marriage. Respect Victoria has launched the [Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform](#), tracking trends related to the prevention and prevalence of family violence and violence against women in Victoria.

Different types of data yield important insights, but there is a lack of cohesion in data collection, with gaps across different agencies and isolated projects that often restrict comprehensive utilisation of data. For example, Harmony Alliance points to the gaps in data collection that generally do not reflect the lives of migrant and refugee communities.²¹ *Tracking progress in prevention* also identifies the need for comprehensive and coordinated data collection and analysis, monitoring, accountability, reporting and evaluation at all levels.

Currently, Australia's evidence on the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people relies on smaller scale and targeted studies such as the periodic [Writing Themselves In](#) reports, a national study carried out since 1998 exploring the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ young people, with the most [recent report](#) published in 2021. Similarly, the LGBTIQ+ Health Australia collect a [snapshot](#) of available statistics about what is known of mental health and wellbeing outcomes of LGBTIQ+ people in Australia. These studies are extremely valuable. However, there are missed opportunities to include questions around gender and sexual orientation in national population data sets such as the 2021 census that would provide a fuller picture of Australian's health and wellbeing and consequent services required to support marginalised people and communities.

In addition, there has been a growing movement by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities right to exercise ownership over Indigenous data and to decolonise knowledge, data and evidence. This is relevant to research and evidence gathering to inform initiatives and reform to prevent violence against Indigenous women. There is extensive work and advocacy by First Nations people and organisations to develop measures, datasets and analyses that reflects structural disadvantage and cultural strengths experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Importantly, this supports the advocacy and action for addressing racism and the ongoing impacts of colonisation that intersect with the gendered drivers of violence (see: [Changing the picture](#)).²²

The [Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#), developed by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATAS), guides ethical research practice with Indigenous communities. It ensures research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture follows a process of meaningful engagement and reciprocity. The [Maiam nayri Wingara Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Data Sovereignty Collective](#) was formed in 2017 to develop principles of Indigenous data sovereignty. This includes [principles](#) over the creation, collection, access, analysis, interpretation, management, dissemination and reuse of Indigenous data. Using these principles, the [Mayi Kuwayu study](#) is a major, longitudinal study that is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled research resource looking at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing and culture. The Mayi Kuwayu study puts principles of data sovereignty into practice where use of data by external researchers will need to [apply](#) to use that data collected through the study. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creation, ownership and governance of data is a critical part of ethical evidence building for primary prevention of violence against Indigenous women including community-owned initiatives.

Case Study: Wiyu Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices): Securing our Rights, Securing our Future

Wiyu Yani U Thngani (Women's Voices): Securing our Rights, Securing our Future is a landmark project carried out by June Oscar AO, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. The project engaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to meet with over 2000 women and girls from across Australia. The *Wiyu Yani U Thangani* project builds on the legacy of the 1986 *Women's Business Report* and fills a crucial gap by elevating Indigenous women's voices from across the country. The first stage of the project consists of a [report](#) detailing all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls' lives. It provides a comprehensive plan and overarching recommendations for a way forward to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls' marginalisation and experiences of physical and structural violence and intergenerational trauma.

The landmark research report outlines an enabling environment specifically to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls. This enabling environment must be guided by the principles of truth telling and embedding culture and respect for identity, a place-based and rights-based approach, ensuring equity in leadership and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls' inclusion and participation, integrating an understanding of intersectional discrimination, maintaining accountability and transparency, and working from the premise that lifting women lifts the whole community.

Prevention of gendered violence, as articulated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, is not just about stopping harms, but considering how detrimental behaviours can be changed by addressing the contexts and environments in which they form.²³ For example, supporting strong families and communities is necessary to break the cycles of intergenerational harms by addressing systemic causes and diverting women, children and families away from punitive interventions. In the report, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls identify they want a system grounded in their self-determination and underpinned by healing and restorative approaches. This must be aimed at supporting individuals and families, while also improving the conditions and transforming the context in which people live and supported by place-based approaches.

The *Wiyu Yani U Thangani* project recommends the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls' representation and inclusion in decision-making that affects their lives, a key action in the prevention of violence against women. One overarching recommendation calls for an Advisory Body to engage with government about the implementation of the recommendations in the report. The Australian Human Rights Commission most recently began a process to establish a [Wiyu Yani U Thangani Design Committee](#) to design the terms of reference of a National First Nations Women and Girls Advisory Body. It is expected the Advisory Body will have a particular responsibility in assisting the formulation of a National Action Plan on advancing the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, and women's leadership at grassroots and decision-making. Such a standalone plan to end violence against women in their communities was [echoed](#) at the September 2021 National Women's Safety Summit by some [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders](#). To effect real change as called for by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, investment and work in genuine, formal partnership with women and girls is needed.

Since the release of the report, place-based initiatives have emerged to adapt the principles and recommendations to suit specific contexts. In [May 2021, 100 women, including 85 Aboriginal women](#), held a roundtable to develop a regional action plan and establish a Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Council. The *Wiyu Yani U Thangani* report and [community guide](#) was used as a framework to develop a set of place-based priorities and actions for implementation in the area.

This crucial piece of evidence is supported by a staged approach of the *Wiyu Yani U Thngani* project enables a translation between research to practice and implementing women and girls concerns, priorities and demands into practice. [Stage Two](#) takes the findings from the report to define the required actions and structural changes necessary to achieve the vision laid out in the report to achieve an enabling environment for the prevention of violence. This stage of the project aims to develop achievable, implementable actions across four crosscutting themes, all of which relate in some way to the prevention of violence against women and girls.

Gaps and opportunities

- 1. By identifying factors and infrastructure that enable primary prevention of violence against women, we can create deep and lasting change to the drivers of this violence and ultimately prevent it.**

Enabling change to achieve primary prevention of violence against women goals requires multifaceted and interlinked approaches at all levels of the socioecological model to reach the whole population.

International and Australian frameworks and evidence demonstrate the necessity for mutually reinforcing activities to establish an enabling environment for prevention of violence against women across multiple levels. The World Health Organisation (WHO) [Respect Women framework](#) implementation guide on [Strengthening Enabling Environment for VAW Prevention](#) identifies several elements of an enabling environment that is grounded in women's human rights, prioritises resourcing prevention and centres women's experiential knowledge and participation in driving and sustaining prevention work.

In Australia, [Change the story](#) makes clear that gender inequalities and violence against women are inextricably linked by articulating the gendered drivers and reinforcing factors that increase the prevalence and severity of violence against women. The framework outlines the essential actions that are required across the socioecology (that is, at all levels of society – individual, community, organisational, institutional and societal) to drive prevention to make lasting change.

Prevention infrastructure is critical to enabling and sustaining changes to the drivers of violence against women. A strong prevention infrastructure enables the design, implementation and evaluation of prevention efforts in a coordinated way. It includes a range of elements including civil society and political leadership; policy, regulatory and legislative reform; mechanisms for coordination, collaboration and quality assurance; mechanisms for workforce and sector development; a strong evidence base informed by ongoing research, practice and evaluation.

Adopting [Counting on change, Tracking progress in prevention](#) is the first attempt at nationwide monitoring and reporting of primary prevention activities across Australia (utilising the [Counting on change](#) framework). [Tracking progress in prevention](#) illustrates the progress already achieved in Australia towards preventing violence against women. It also analyses and identifies the gaps and opportunities for increased and sustained activities based on evidence and best practice across all of the prevention infrastructure to enable and drive primary prevention.

This infrastructure is the key that unlocks the potential for every sector, institution, organisation and community to play their role in preventing violence against women. It also allows us to ensure that prevention activity at all levels – from national, through to state/territory, regional and local – benefits from evidence-based support.

Primary prevention is a long-term collaborative effort and real population-level change will only occur over a sustained period of time. Achieving such change will be challenging and will require the concerted effort of all stakeholders. While no other country has yet undertaken such a comprehensive and multi-faceted effort, experience from other public health areas, such as smoking and road safety, shows that a concerted effort can measurably lower the probability of violence against women and decrease future occurrences.

2. There is a strong culture of community mobilisation and leadership on preventing violence against women across the country, including by civil society organisations, victim-survivors, community members and governments. This work is vital for creating change.

Everyone has a part to play in leading the prevention of violence against women in Australia – governments, organisations, sectors, civil society and individuals. Collectively, leadership by each of these stakeholders creates an enabling environment that encourages and supports change and ensures it is sustained over time. This leadership helps to draw national attention to the importance of primary prevention, in order to legitimise, support and motivate widespread participation by a range of stakeholders

There is a long history of community mobilisation and leadership on the issue of violence against women in Australia. This work presents important opportunities for enabling further change to prevent violence against women. This work is most effective when different individuals, groups and institutions play complementary roles to keep the issue on the public agenda and create lasting change at all levels of the socio-ecological model (individual, community, organisation, institution and societal).

3. The prevention workforce is critical to embedding approaches to address the drivers of violence against women. This workforce is currently under strain and experiencing reduced capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Planning is needed to ensure that the workforce is supported, has requisite capacity, and can be sustained.

The primary prevention workforce is a critical foundation to support the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of primary prevention and gender equality initiatives. Specialist prevention practitioners, policy-makers and other professionals can provide leadership, technical assistance, program development and policy, research, data, evaluation and communication.

Currently, there is often overlap between the workforces responding to and working to prevent violence against women, with many workers occupying both spheres simultaneously. Because of this, the increased rates and severity of violence against women in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the subsequent increase in demand for services, has had a significant impact on prevention capacity in organisations undertaking work across the spectrum of response, early intervention, and primary prevention.

Additionally, prevention workers across the country have been impacted by public health measures including a shift to working from home, and travel and gathering restrictions which have all impeded prevention activities and required adaptation and flexibility.

Planning is needed to ensure that those working on primary prevention across the country have capacity to continue and sustain this important work, and to provide support for prevention workers.

4. Policy and legislation that address gender inequalities is critical for enabling and sustaining changes to the underlying drivers of violence against women. There are opportunities to place a greater focus on institutional, systemic and structural change in the coming years, including strengthening the gender policy machinery of governments.

Policy, legislative and regulatory levers are critical for enabling primary prevention across systems and settings.

In Australia, strategies and policies identify primary prevention of violence against women as a priority and direct resources to activity aimed at addressing its underlying drivers. To enable multi-faceted approaches consideration is needed of how to better resource national, state/territory and local priorities across the socio-ecological model. Policy and funding arrangements can be put in place to support sustainability of activity and action at all levels (individual, organisational, community, system, institutional and societal), including consideration of funding models to complement existing short-term grant processes. Further investment and longer-term funding for this work would support greater progress in prevention activity overall.

Policy, regulatory and legislative levers can help to shift the underlying social norms that condone violence against women, address gender inequalities, and support prevention activities by driving systemic change. Gender-responsive policy making, which accounts for and addresses intersectional discrimination and oppression, can identify opportunities for governments to challenge the broad and underlying conditions that produce and support violence against women. This is a key strategy for creating lasting change across society. A consistent application of a gender and intersectional approach to policymaking and budgetary decisions can support and enable the kinds of structures and processes that help ensure expert gender analysis is applied at points in policy and budget development (across portfolios) and implementation processes where it can have greatest impact.²⁴

These processes can be informed by best available evidence and supported by consultation and participation from women's organisations and the prevention sector. The participation of diverse groups in decision-making can ensure that policies, laws and regulations reflect and address the multiple and varied needs of Australians across the life course and where people live, work, and play.

Finally, policy, legal and regulatory reforms and changes can prompt organisations, communities and individuals to take first steps in adopting measures to challenge the gendered drivers of violence by mandating obligations in adopting gender equality or primary prevention actions and approaches. Across jurisdictions, reforms signal commitments to other systems and settings that can prompt further uptake of change.

5. Innovative and community focused programming is a strength of Australia’s approach to preventing violence against women. Funding and policy settings can be designed to support sustainable and longer-term programming, and to allow organisations to adapt to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Led and implemented by community organisations, prevention programming is a key part of the national approach to prevent violence. Prevention programming that is based in evidence, uses multiple approaches and techniques, and addresses all levels of the social ecology, is critical to the prevention of violence against women.

Prevention programming in Australia has grown in complexity of approach, with a range of combinations of settings and techniques to address prevention across the socioecological model. Organisations leading this work require sustained, long-term and flexible resourcing and funding that is necessary for the design and delivery of programs. Policy and funding settings can be designed to support the sustainability of activity and action at all levels (individual, organisational, community, system, institutional and societal).

Single primary prevention programs and techniques (for example, direct participation programs, organisational development, and communications and social marketing) may have a positive impact but this is primarily limited to participants and is likely to lessen over time if the message is not reinforced in other areas of those participants’ lives. Because of this, Australia’s approach to primary prevention must be multi-faceted and sustained, involving multiple techniques in different settings (workplaces, schools, sporting clubs etc) and working across the life course. Stakeholders all have different roles to play in developing and implementing this multi-faceted approach.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far reaching impacts on prevention activities, with organisations having to adapt and change approaches and projects. Constraints on resources has led to a ‘resource pinch’ with stakeholders having to transfer resources from prevention to response services to meet the demands and needs of communities as violence has increased during the pandemic. Funders can support organisations to adapt to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and deliver flexible programming to meet community needs in a changing environment.

6. Research, evidence and data can deepen our understanding of the drivers of violence against women and how to address them. Evidence translation is essential to ensure the utility of this work to a diverse range of stakeholders and practitioners.

Research, evidence and data can enable and drives primary prevention activity and change by deepening our understanding of the drivers of violence against women, examining what enables effective primary prevention approaches, and, critically, uncovering the silences and absences of existing activities.

Australia has a strong national evidence base including quantitative and qualitative research, data and evidence-gathering undertaken by a diverse range of stakeholders. Continuing to identify and address gaps in this evidence base is critical to understanding the dynamics of violence against women in Australia and our progress towards preventing this violence. This includes support for national monitoring and reporting of primary prevention to track progress of the drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women.²⁵

The design of research and datasets needs to account for how power dynamics create and shape inequality and privilege across all levels of our society. Not only does this apply to power structures and people's experiences of inequality and privilege, but it also includes understanding how some forms of knowledge, evidence, research approaches and data are privileged over others. Evidence generation needs to be carried out in ethical ways, to ensure the diverse representation and participation of Australians.

Challenging and transforming the gendered drivers of violence requires the translation of existing evidence and theory into practical guidance and easily digestible messages to inform action. Such translation must maintain fidelity to the evidence base, while being accessible to specialist and generalist stakeholders and practitioners.

Endnotes

- 1 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention: A national monitoring report on progress towards the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia.*](#) Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch, p. 14.
- 2 See Campbell, C., & Cornish, F. (2012). How can community health programmes build enabling environments for transformative communication? Experiences from India and South Africa. *AIDS and Behavior* 16(4), 847-857

Mannell, J., & Dadswell, A. (2017). Preventing intimate partner violence: towards a framework for supporting effective community mobilisation. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 27(3), 196-211.
- 3 For a list of the 10 projects, see Stern, E. (2021). Community Mobilization to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls, Learning from Practice Brief Series, Issue No. 1 (New York, United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women).
- 4 Wheildon, L. J., True, J., Flynn, A., & Wild, A. (2021). The Batty Effect: Victim-Survivors and Domestic and Family Violence Policy Change. *Violence Against Women*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012211024266>.
- 5 Backhouse, C., Toivonen, C., & Funston, L. (2021). *NSW Voices for Change: Preventing domestic, family and sexual violence through survivor-led media advocacy*. Sydney: DVNSW, p. 54.
- 6 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#). pp. 35-36.
- 7 Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), & Nous group. (2017). [*Evaluation of the role of local government in preventing violence against women*](#).
- 8 Carrington, K., Morley, C., Warren, S., Ryan, V., Ball, M., Clarke, J., & Vitis, L. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Australian domestic and family violence services and their clients. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*

Pfitzner, N., Fitz-Gibbon, K., & True, J. (2020). *Responding to the 'shadow pandemic': practitioner views on the nature of and responses to violence against women in Victoria, Australia during the COVID-19 restrictions*. Monash University

Boxall, H., Morgan, A., & Brown, R. (2020). The prevalence of domestic violence among women during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Australasian Policing*, 12(3), 38-46.
- 9 Leonard, W., Parkinson, D. & Weiss, C.O. (2020). [*Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Victoria's family violence primary prevention workforce*](#). p. v.
- 10 Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). (2020). [*Gendered impacts of COVID-19*](#).
- 11 Australian Human Rights Commission. (2020). [*Wiyi Yani U Thangani \(Women's Voices\): Securing Our Rights, Securing Our Future Report*](#). Australia: Australian Human Rights Commission, p. 86.
- 12 See for example Equality Rights Alliance. (2020). [*Analysing the Gap Policy Paper: Opportunities to improve gender equality in Australia's public policy processes*](#).
- 13 See also Gender and Disaster Network (GDN). (2021). [*Reference Guide Volume 1 and 2*](#), Gender and Disaster Series.
- 14 Our Watch. (2019). [*Submission to Inquiry into Gender Responsive Budgeting*](#). Victorian Parliamentary Public Accounts and Estimates Committee. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.
- 15 Our Watch. (2019). [*Change the story three years on: Reflections on update and impact, lessons learned and Our Watch's ongoing work to embed and expand the evidence on prevention*](#). Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch, p. 34.
- 16 Our Watch. (2021). *No Excuse for Abuse – COVID-19 relaunch: Final evaluation report*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

- 17 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#). p. 60.
- 18 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#). p. 61.
- 19 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#). p. 3.
- 20 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#). p, 57.
- 21 Harmony Alliance. (2021). [*Consultation report: Voices of migrant and refugee women in the next National Plan to end violence against women and their children*](#).
- 22 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#). pp. 201-202.
- 23 Australian Human Rights Commission. (2020). [*Wiyi Yani U Thangani \(Women's Voices\)*](#). p. 145.
Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#).
Our Watch. (2017). [*Counting on change: A guide to prevention monitoring*](#). Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.
- 24 Jackson, A., & Risse, L. (2020), [*Submission to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Review of the Operations of the Parliamentary Budget Office 2019-20*](#)
National Foundation for Australian Women (NFAW). (2021). Portfolio overviews and recommendations in [*Gender lens on the Budget 2021-2022*](#)
NFAW. (2020). [*Review of the Operations of the Parliamentary Budget Office 2019-20: NFAW submission*](#)
Our Watch. (2019). [*Submission to Inquiry into Gender Responsive Budgeting*](#).
- 25 Our Watch. (2020). [*Tracking progress in prevention*](#).
Our Watch. (2017). [*Counting on change*](#).