Summary of

Counting on change:

A guide to prevention monitoring

A guide for policy-makers, researchers and advocates
on measuring population-level progress towards
the prevention of violence against women
and their children in Australia

Why we need to 'count the change'

Over recent decades, Commonwealth and state/territory governments, nongovernment organisations and others have invested in policies, initiatives, and campaigns to prevent violence against women and their children in Australia. There is a strong evidence base around what works to prevent violence against women, drawn from local and international research. Evaluation of prevention initiatives continues to build on this evidence base, and we have seen positive change among those reached by prevention programs.

What's missing is a picture of change at the national or whole-of-population level. A companion piece to *Change the story: a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence*, *Counting on change* provides guidance to policy makers and researchers on how to comprehensively track short, medium, and long-term progress toward prevention at the population-level.

Counting on change is a world-first in identifying indicators of change for the **drivers** and **reinforcing factors** of violence against women, and advising on available data sets and processes for gathering this information into a 'picture of progress' which will tell us whether Australia is headed in the right direction overall.
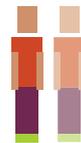
**KEY STATISTICS ON VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA**
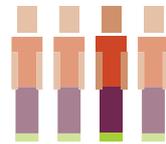
1 in 4 women
**has experienced intimate
partner violence since age 15**
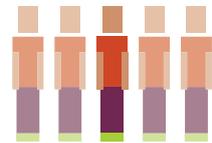
1 in 5 women
**has experienced sexual
violence since age 15**

1 in 2 women
**has experienced sexual
harassment during their lifetime**

Change the story: a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence

Launched in November 2015, *Change the story* is Australia's shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children. It draws on robust international evidence to identify the core elements required in a strategic, collaborative, and consistent national approach to preventing such violence. *Change the story* reinforces the direction outlined in the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010– 2022*, and seeks to consolidate and strengthen work already occurring around the country. All Australian jurisdictions have committed to implementing *Change the story,* as part of the National Plan's Third Action Plan.

The expected process of change: progress in prevention of violence against women in Australia

Our goal is the elimination of violence against women and their children, as a human rights abuse with devastating individual and social consequences.

Change the story made clear that to reduce and ultimately end such violence, we need to address its underlying drivers. To do this effectively we need to use strategies that have been shown to work, ultimately on a scale that will create impact for the whole of Australia.

The story of change therefore begins with the testing, implementation and scale-up of such strategies, through quality prevention programming that is supported by an appropriate 'infrastructure' (such as an expert workforce and coordination mechanisms). This crucial support work is represented by the grey line in the figure below.

This work in turn will begin to increase gender equality, and promote equal and respectful relationships, represented by the gradual upward trajectory of the blue line.
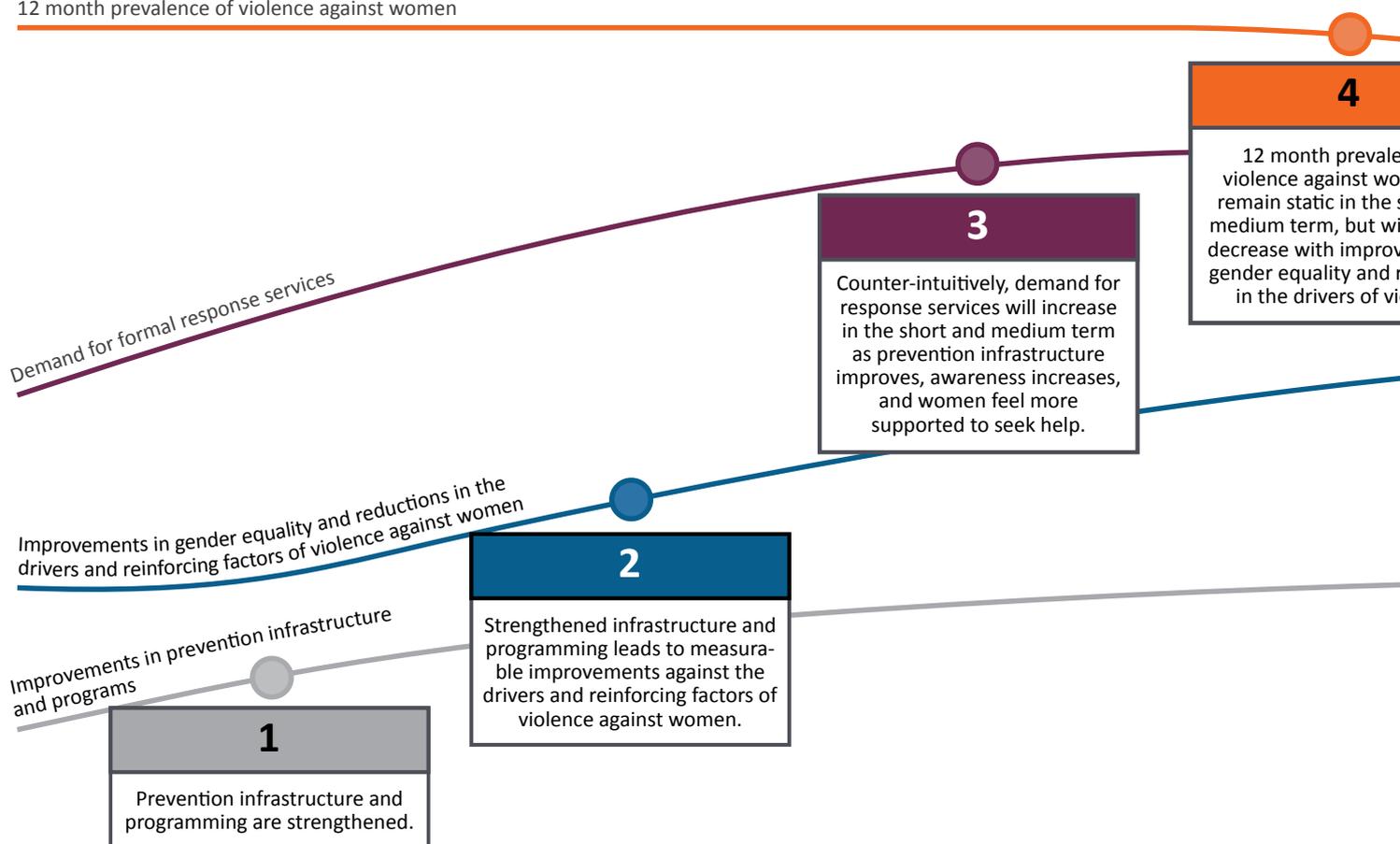
While it may seem counter-intuitive, demand for formal response services (represented by the purple line) is expected to increase in the medium-term as prevention infrastructure and programming improves. These improvements will raise community awareness, challenge violence-condoning attitudes and encourage reporting of incidents. As a result, women experiencing violence will be more likely to seek help from formal services.

But as more people stand up against violence and the behaviours and attitudes that support it, as women have greater independence and decision-making power, as gender roles are less rigidly enforced, and as more people have the skills and desire to create positive, equal and respectful relationships, then – and only then – will we start to see a decrease in rates of violence against women. Twelve month prevalence rates will demonstrate the earliest
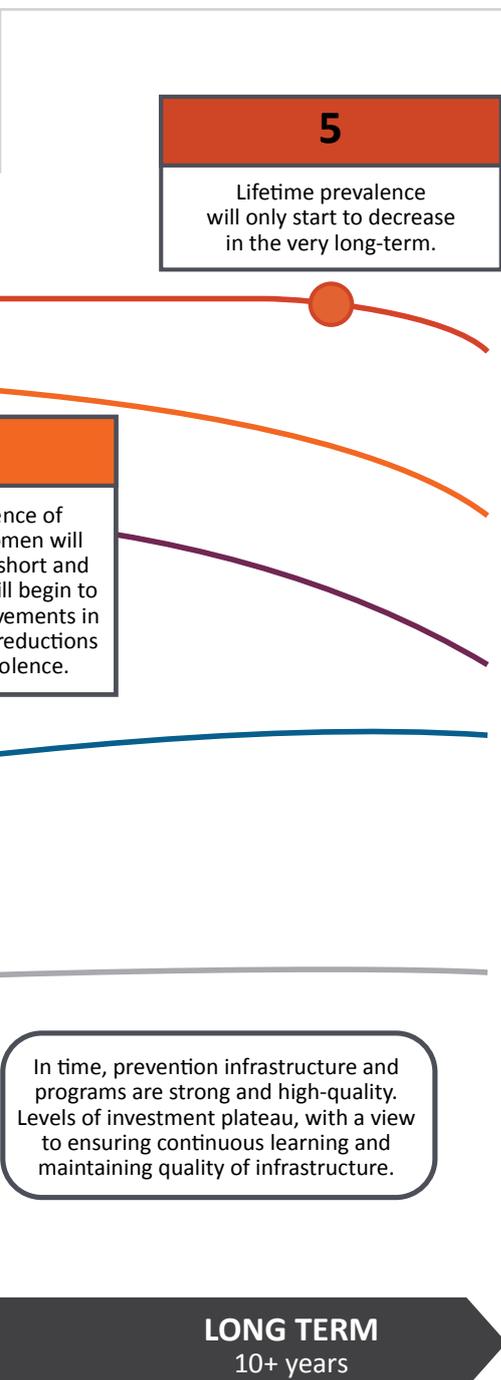
Lifetime prevalence of violence against women

12 month prevalence of violence against women

Demand for formal response services

Improvements in gender equality and reductions in the drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women

Improvements in prevention infrastructure and programs

4

12 month prevale
violence against wo
remain static in the s
medium term, but wi
decrease with improv
gender equality and r
in the drivers of vi

3

Counter-intuitively, demand for response services will increase in the short and medium term as prevention infrastructure improves, awareness increases, and women feel more supported to seek help.

2

Strengthened infrastructure and programming leads to measura-ble improvements against the drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women.

1

Prevention infrastructure and programming are strengthened.

MEDIUM TERM
6-10 years

positive impacts (shown in orange below).

Lifetime prevalence rates (red) will take much longer to improve, because incidents experienced earlier in people's lives will continue to be included in this measure, long after any prevention strategies have been introduced. However, as subsequent generations of girls grow up in an Australia where gender equality, respect and non-violence is the norm, then lifetime prevalence rates will start to fall.

5

Lifetime prevalence will only start to decrease in the very long-term.

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...men will
...short and
...ill begin to
...vements in
...reductions
...olence.

In time, prevention infrastructure and programs are strong and high-quality. Levels of investment plateau, with a view to ensuring continuous learning and maintaining quality of infrastructure.

LONG TERM
10+ years

An intersectional approach to measuring prevention

The gendered drivers, and reinforcing factors, of violence against women should always be considered together with other forms of social, political and economic discrimination and inequality (such as racism or ableism), as these influence and intersect with gender inequality. This is called an intersectional approach, and needs to inform the way we track population-level progress toward prevention.

While intersectional methodologies for collecting and analysing population data are still evolving, *Counting on change* has identified ways in which a process of tracking prevention progress at a population-level can be informed by an intersectional approach:

1. Establish an Intersectionality Advisory Group

2. Seek out population group disaggregated data sets and analyse and report on these in a comprehensive way

3. Highlight gaps in data on intersectionality

4. Ask the tough 'intersectionality questions.' For example: Who is missing from this data? Is this statistic accurate for *all* women?

Key elements of prevention monitoring

Counting on change outlines the key elements needed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the status of the drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women, at a national and state/territory level. The four elements below are needed to effectively collect data, report on findings, and reduce gaps in the current body of knowledge:

1. A coordination mechanism

2. A process for data collection and analysis

3. A process for reporting and communicating the findings

4. A research strategy to reduce data gaps.

Our WATCh
End violence against
Women And Their Children

Measuring population-level progress towards the prevention

ULTIMATE GOAL ▶
Australian women and their children live free
from violence in safe communities

LONGER-TERM MEASURES ▶
What will be the outcomes in the longer-term?

REDUCED VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN BY
INTIMATE PARTNER

REDUCED
AGAINST W
NON-INTIMA

**MEDIUM-TERM
MEASURES** ▶
What changes should we aim for
and measure in the medium-term?

REDUCED ACCEPTANCE
OF VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN

WOMEN HAVE GREATER
DECISION-MAKING POWER

MORE POSIT
AND RES
RELATIO

MORE POSITIVE
EXPRESSIONS OF
MASCULINITY

GENDER ROLES
ARE LESS RIGID

REDUC
OF OT

**PROCESS
MEASURES** ▶
What is being done
to support change?

LEADERSHIP FROM
GOVERNMENT
& CIVIL SOCIETY

POSITIVE REFORMS IN
POLICIES AND LAWS

A GROWING EXPERT
WORKFORCE FOR
PREVENTION

of violence against women

VIOLENCE
WOMEN BY
ATE PARTNER

REDUCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ONLINE TROLLING

TIVE, EQUAL,
SPECTFUL
ONSHIPS

REDUCED ACCEPTANCE OF VIOLENCE IN GENERAL

MEN & BOYS ARE ENGAGED AND BACKLASH IS REDUCED

ED EXPERIENCES
HER FORMS OF
VIOLENCE

REDUCED HARMFUL USE OF ALCOHOL

GREATER SOCIAL & ECONOMIC EQUALITY

SETTING STANDARDS & WORKING TOGETHER

SHARED WAYS OF EVALUATING AND COMMUNICATING FINDINGS

DELIVERING QUALITY PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Indicators and data sources

Counting on change sets out a total of 5 long-term indicators, 33 medium-term indicators, and 43 suggested measures for prevention infrastructure and programs. Select examples of indicators and suggested measures identified in the Guide are outlined below. For a full list of the proposed indictors and suggested measures, please visit the Our Watch website www.ourwatch.org.au for a copy of *Counting on change.*

PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (5 INDICATORS IN TOTAL)

INDICATOR: Proportion of women subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence, by a current or former intimate partner in the last 12 months.
SOURCE: Personal Safety Survey.

INDICATOR: Proportion of women subjected to sexual violence, by persons partner other than an intimate partner in their lifetime.
SOURCE: Personal Safety Survey.

DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (23 INDICATORS IN TOTAL)

INDICATOR: Community attitudes towards violence against women.
SOURCE: National Community Attitudes Survey (NCAS).

INDICATOR: Proportion of time women spend in unpaid care work compared to men.
SOURCE: Household Income and Labour Dynamics Australia.

REINFORCING FACTORS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (10 INDICATORS IN TOTAL)

INDICATOR: Percentage of women who experienced violence reporting that children heard or saw the violence.
SOURCE: Personal Safety Survey.

INDICATOR: Percentage of population who express denial of continued gender inequality and hostility towards women.
SOURCE: National Community Attitudes Survey (NCAS).

PREVENTION INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROGRAMS (43 SUGGESTED MEASURES)

POSSIBLE MEASURE: An increasing number of university/TAFE courses include preservice qualification standards and competencies on prevention.

POSSIBLE MEASURE: Governments (federal, state/territory, and local) have a dedicated policy for primary prevention, aligned with *Change the story*.

LONG TERM

MEDIUM TERM

PROCESS MEASURES