

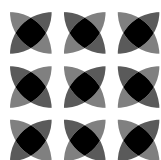
EVALUATION OF THE  
PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST  
**WOMEN** AND THEIR  
CHILDREN

IN CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES PROJECT

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**CENTRE**  
*for* **SOCIAL**  
**IMPACT**



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# Executive summary

This project aimed to support culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the development of primary prevention strategies to address violence against women and children. A community development approach which involved high levels of participation from the priority communities was employed. The approach taken was informed by existing evidence on violence against women work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009; Yoshihama et al., 2012).

Two community level projects were conducted, one with an Iranian community and the other with an Indian community. Strengthening Healthier Indian Families Together (SHIFT) was facilitated by cohealth, while the Hamdel Project with the Iranian community was facilitated by Whittlesea Community Connections, The Salvation Army Crossroads and Women's Health in the North. These projects were conducted with the aim of developing a primary prevention model for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, promoting community-led capacity building, and establishing supportive community-service sector partnerships for long-term sustainability. During the course of the year both primary prevention and early intervention strategies were employed based on the expressed needs of the community members.

Our Watch commissioned the Centre for Social Impact, Swinburne University, to conduct an independent evaluation of this project. The evaluation aimed to provide specific insights into the key drivers and barriers encountered in addressing violence against women in culturally diverse communities. Qualitative evaluation methods were employed, including key informant interviews, and staff and community focus groups. Evaluation questions focused on the process of implementation to ultimately inform the development of the violence prevention framework within culturally diverse communities.

Participant feedback indicated that this project has had a positive impact across both implementation sites. In the Hamdel project, discussions with the Iranian women indicated a marked increase in understanding of violence against women, largely attributed to awareness education, which was embedded into a Persian women's group. Young male participants in the respectful relationship/soccer program also demonstrated increased knowledge and awareness. Several Iranian women also discussed their intention to disseminate this knowledge more broadly in their communities.

Throughout the implementation phase (February, 2015 to November, 2015), the SHIFT project focused on identifying and building the capacity of champions within the Indian community with the aim of running specific group and community activities in 2016 and beyond. Several Indian community leaders have demonstrated strong commitment to the implementation of these strategies.

Furthermore, evaluation findings indicated increased capacity of partner organisations (cohealth, Whittlesea Community Connections, The Salvation Army Crossroads and Women's Health in the North) to undertake work to prevent violence against women within culturally and linguistically diverse communities. A range of implementation challenges were noted; these related to shifting social norms, competing priorities, and a restrictive program timeline of less than 12 months.

The results of this project have been used to inform a number of best practice directives for future work to prevent violence against women within culturally and linguistically diverse communities. By the conclusion of the project, staff had also compiled a toolkit for practitioners, which was directly informed by the evaluation findings, a comprehensive literature review, and staff reflections.

Recommendations stemming from the evaluation include:

- Great care needs to be taken to ensure that strategies do not put people at increased risk of harm;
- Strong community development principles need to be followed. i.e. empowerment and a strengths based approach;
- A flexible approach that acknowledges both variation within and between culturally and linguistically diverse communities is essential.

Community development strategies are time intensive; strongly dependent on establishing relationships and building capacities within communities. Therefore, when selecting communities to work with it is important to consider both the level of need and the level of readiness for change. Longer funding periods are also recommended to ensure greater opportunity to build capacity and enhance the prospect of sustainability. Finally, further work is required to consider how to address the broader social, economic, and environmental factors that contribute towards violence in culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

# 1.0 Background and context

## 1.1 Project background

Our Watch received funding from the State Government of Victoria, Department of Premier and Cabinet to work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to prevent violence against women and children. Two community agencies were selected to work with two different communities, an established community and a newly-arrived emerging community:

- cohealth, in partnership with the Jagriti Forum, aimed to work with a cross section of the established Indian community in Brimbank and Wyndham.
- Whittlesea Community Connections, in partnership with The Salvation Army Crossroads and Women's Health in the North, aimed to work with the newly-arrived Iranian community.

The overall purpose of the project was to develop a model of primary prevention for working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities allowing for evaluation of the strengths and challenges of each community. A key outcome of the work was to ensure the transferability of lessons learned as this can help support other community efforts in this area, contribute to the growing evidence base, and guide future strategies aiming to prevent violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. To achieve these aims, agencies worked towards the development of a violence against women primary prevention model, inclusive of tools and resources, for working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

In addition to the overall aim, there were specific aims for the community initiatives. These included:

- Increase awareness of both universal and community specific factors contributing to violence against women and their children;
- Identify and develop violence prevention strategies that are supported by the community;
- Build the capacity of the community to undertake and promote primary prevention activities;
- Develop a range of local and community service sector partnerships to support ongoing implementation of primary prevention initiatives;
- Integrate violence prevention activities into existing programs that support community and cultural diversity.



## 1.2 Project strategies and outputs

These initiatives provided an opportunity to build the capacity of culturally and linguistically diverse community leaders, develop community implementation plans through a participatory approach, and empower the community to undertake prevention activities and address violence against women and their children in their communities. An overarching project advisory committee, which met quarterly, was established to support the two organisations selected to implement their projects.

This evaluation report will focus primarily on the main aim of the project; to inform the development of the prevention model. The report will thus provide some background evidence from the relevant literature on how to work effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The evaluation methods have been designed to elicit feedback from project staff and community members on their perspectives of the most appropriate ways to address primary prevention of violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The report will describe the preliminary impacts achieved through the community initiatives, acknowledging that the intent of the evaluation was not to gauge the effectiveness per se of specific community strategies, many of which are still in planning stages.

## 1.3 Key terms and definitions

(Taken from *Community based prevention of violence against women and their children – a toolkit for practitioners*<sup>1</sup>)

**Family violence** – a broader term than domestic violence, referring not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members. This includes for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful. In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.

**Violence against women** – any act of gender based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life. This definition encompasses all *forms* of violence that women experience (including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial, and others) that are gender based. See also gender based violence.

**Gender based violence** – violence that is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately'.

**Violence prevention** - Prevention approaches aim to stop violence against women before it occurs, in contrast to early intervention or response efforts, which intervene once some form of violence has already happened. Prevention involves working not only with those directly affected by violence, but with whole communities, to address the kinds of entrenched attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive and reinforce violence against women.

**Sex** – the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as male or female.

**Gender** – the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.

**Gender roles** – functions and responsibilities expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys in a given society. These are based on prescriptive standards applied to men and women, which influence individuals' everyday actions and experiences.

**Gender stereotyping** - a form of sexism. Gender stereotypes are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills and **gender roles** of women and men. While these attributes are often perceived as natural or innate they are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive (for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing') or negative, (for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well'), but they are usually narrow, rigid and based on problematic and generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at, or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

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<sup>1</sup> This resource is being compiled by Our Watch and will be released in early 2016

**Gender equality** – involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between men and women and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all, and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

**Gender inequality** – the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity, and value afforded to men and women in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

**Respectful relationships** - refers to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners etc., characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

**Community capacity building** - the process of increasing people's knowledge and abilities in a way that helps to empower them to be able to achieve the outcomes they want for themselves.

## 1.4 Violence against women and culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Violence against women occurs across all socio-economic, cultural, and religious groups, and research suggests that immigrant and refugee women report similar forms of violence against women as women from non-immigrant backgrounds (Vaughan et al., 2015). However, determinants such as cultural norms, immigration policy, social isolation, and visa status, may influence the progression of violence against women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Vaughan et al., 2015).

Several factors have been identified as contributing towards low levels of reporting of violence, and limited uptake of services and programs among women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Low levels of knowledge related to women's rights and entitlement, reporting processes, and support services have been identified as barriers to reporting and service access, particularly amongst newly arrived communities (Ethics Committee Council of Victoria, 2009; Poljski, 2011; VicHealth, 2006). There is also evidence that even when culturally and linguistically diverse women do access services, they are may be less likely to engage long-term, and more likely to return to a male partner who uses violence than other women (Nesci, 2006).

Cultural barriers have also been found to hinder reporting and service access. For example, some people find it intimidating to seek help from someone unfamiliar to them due to a cultural norm of seeking help within a close network of friends and family (Nesci, 2006). Additionally, some individuals and families experience a lack of trust in authority due to negative encounters with government agencies or representatives within their country of origin. For women, child-minding duties have also been identified as a barrier to participation in primary prevention programs (inTouch Multicultural Centre against Family Violence, 2011). Such factors must be considered in the formulation of violence against women prevention and intervention approaches with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

### 1.4.1 Immigration and violence against women

The factors impacting lower levels of violence reporting and help seeking among culturally and linguistically diverse women can be compounded by immigration status (Poljski, 2011). Consideration of issues related to visa and immigration is crucial as these broader structural factors potentially influence both the occurrence of violence, and help seeking behaviours.

**EXAMPLE 1:** Women who arrive in Australia under the skilled migration program are not entitled to social security payments until two years post arrival. This may lead to a high level of reliance on their partner throughout this period, which may mean women are more likely to endure violence out of fear of jeopardising their access to permanent residency (Poljski, 2011).

**EXAMPLE 2:** A female student may be the primary visa holder, and their partner the secondary applicant. This perceived power imbalance can challenge men's assumptions about their status in the relationship, and consequently, they may try to demonstrate their authority through acts of gender-based violence (Poljski, 2011).

Considering the broader social and cultural context in which people live is paramount to determining appropriate strategies that adequately assess the risks and benefits for participants.

## 1.5 Approaches to preventing violence against women

**Primary prevention** initiatives are concerned with addressing violence before it occurs and include addressing the social conditions that promote violence against women and children such as addressing gender inequality (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015). Primary prevention strategies which aim to prevent violence from occurring are distinct from response approaches that intervene after violence has occurred, such as crisis counseling or behavior change programs targeted at men who are identified offenders (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015).

**Early intervention** is concerned with targeting individuals or groups who indicate an increased likelihood of using violence or being subject to violence. Early intervention may intend to change behaviour or increase skills within high-risk population groups. Responding to violence against women earlier in its trajectory reduces future health and economic costs (Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, 2000; Mrazek and Haggerty, 1994). Primary prevention and early intervention strategies may be undertaken simultaneously without any clear distinction between these approaches.

## 1.6 Preventing violence in culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Although evidence indicates that both immigrant and refugee background women and non-immigrant women experience similar forms of violence, there are a range of determinants of violence that can exacerbate the experience of immigrant and refugee background women in unique ways (Vaughan et al., 2015). For example, social and cultural isolation, precarious immigration and/or visa status, existing traumas experienced in country of origin, and migration associated stresses experienced by women and their families, may not be factors normally explored in traditional violence prevention approaches. There are few violence against women prevention frameworks specifically for culturally diverse communities, to inform best practice in this area (Poljski, 2011; Pottie et al., 2011). Whilst drawing on the extensive body of general literature on the prevention of violence against women is valuable, it does not always consider the unique and varied needs of specific groups.

Violence against women prevention and early intervention initiatives were reviewed to draw out key learnings pertinent to working with culturally diverse groups. It is important to recognise that prevention and early intervention are not discrete categories and that strategies employed with culturally and linguistically diverse communities often span both these domains.

### *1.6.1 Community-based participatory approaches*

Existing evidence highlights the importance of community based participatory approaches in the development of violence against women prevention strategies with culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009; Yoshihama et al., 2012). This approach is founded on high levels of community engagement and involvement at each stage. Authentic community engagement ensures that strategies are developed with the community, and therefore align with their cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, interests, and needs (Maciak et al., 1999; Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009; White et al., 2013; Yoshihama et al., 2012). Strong partnership between organisations and cultural groups has been found to yield valuable strategies which extend beyond information dissemination, to challenge dominant cultural norms (Ben-Porat, 2010; Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009; Yoshihama et al., 2012).

Engaging local knowledge and collaborating closely with the priority community in the development of programs to prevent violence against women has also been found to increase community empowerment, capacity building, and, importantly, sustainability (Ben-Porat, 2010; Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009; Yoshihama et al., 2012). This approach ensures that family violence prevention strategies are contextually relevant to their priority population, thereby optimising their impact (Kugel et al., 2009).

### *1.6.2 Multi-strategy approach*

The literature documents the benefits of applying a multi-strategy approach to address the prevention of violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. In particular, studies have reported on the benefits of combining a participatory model with other strategies, such as social marketing and capacity building to form a comprehensive, integrated, multi-level intervention (Ben-Porat, 2010; Yoshihama et al., 2012).

### *1.6.3 Cultural awareness, sensitivity, and responsiveness*

There is a need to consider diverse cultural beliefs, gender norms and gender relations when developing strategies to prevent violence against women within culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Magnussen et al., 2011). In addition, several studies have identified the importance of developing strategies to prevent violence against women which are religiously/spiritually sensitive and inclusive. Studies highlighting this imperative have been founded on work within African American faith communities (Brade Stennis et al., 2015) and rural Latino church leaders (Hancock, Ames & Behnke, 2014). There are also programs in Australia addressing these issues (City of Greater Dandenong Interfaith Network, 2015).

These studies provided examples of working with religious organisations and leaders to develop considerate and sensitive materials. Several examples within the literature focus on the engagement of faith-based leaders in violence against women prevention initiatives. Whilst working with religious leaders has been determined as a positive strategy within some studies (City of Greater Dandenong Interfaith Network, 2015), others have suggested that this may be counterproductive and increase women's vulnerability to violence due to the cultural values and structures present in organised religions that historically and in some cases still today are inequitable (Poljski, 2011).

### *1.6.4 Cross-sectorial partnership and collaboration*

Several studies have identified the value of cross-sectoral collaboration in the development of effective interventions to prevent violence against women in post-migration contexts (Matsuoka et al., 2012). This is in close alignment with community development and health promotion principles. Cross-sectoral collaboration is known to be an important consideration within the development of initiatives, and extending focus to engage with other domains, such as media, community, and government is recommended (Murdolo & Quiazon, 2015).

## **1.7 Challenges and considerations**

Challenges related to working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities on the issue of violence against women have been identified in the literature. Two of these challenges will be described below and the evaluation findings will also present more detailed analysis of these challenges.

**Limited consideration of structural determinants** has been identified as a concern in literature discussing the prevention of violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Within this, the use of 'geographically scattered' programs has been critiqued due to their focus on cultural norms and beliefs at the exclusion of structural factors (Murdolo & Quiazon, 2015).

**Scaling up** refers to the process of increasing the reach of an initiative that has proven to be effective (Edwards, 2010). This is a critical component of expanding the benefit of public health initiatives. However, primary prevention strategies within culturally and linguistically diverse communities have not devoted much attention to this issue. This may be due to the nature of working with diverse communities, which frequently involves a community-based approach that requires a high level of resources to scale up. In addition, this approach promotes developing strategies in close collaboration with the community of interest, and therefore, such interventions may not be transferable to a broader population or another community. In this case, it is recommended that the *process* of change is documented rather than the content of the program (Bond & Butler, 2010; Hawe et al., 2009; Hawe et al., 2015; Leykum, et al., 2009). Nevertheless, it is recommended that future research and evaluation considers how prevention of violence against women can be scaled up to reach the widest possible section of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

## 1.8 Summary of literature

Women from culturally diverse backgrounds may encounter a range of barriers to accessing violence prevention, intervention, and support services, including limited English proficiency, limited knowledge of reporting processes and their rights and entitlements, social isolation, lack of trust for authority, and cultural and religious barriers (Magnussen et al., 2011; Nesci, 2006; Ethics Committee Council of Victoria, 2009). These issues may be exacerbated for women who are newly arrived or concerned about their visa status, entitlements, and financial security.

Existing research supports the use of community based participatory approaches to work with culturally diverse communities to prevent violence against women (Nolan, Schultz, Cialdini, Goldstein, & Griskevicius, 2008). For example, Stepping Stones, a community focused group program for young men and women in South Africa, yielded positive shifts in gender attitudes and relationship behavior (Jewkes et al., 2014). While research is less clear on behavioural outcomes at a population level, high levels of community engagement have been shown to promote capacity building, empowerment, and sustainable change (Ben-Porat, 2010; Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009). In addition, cultural awareness and sensitivity, a multi-strategy approach, and cross-sectional partnerships and collaboration should be considered in the development of violence against women prevention strategies with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The prevention of violence against women and children in culturally and linguistically diverse settings is a highly complex and nuanced issue which requires flexible and culturally adaptive frameworks. Understanding the unique needs of culturally diverse groups is integral to developing culturally competent, meaningful, effective approaches to working with communities on this important issue.

*“The prevention of violence against women and children in culturally and linguistically diverse settings is a highly complex and nuanced issue which requires flexible and culturally adaptive frameworks.”*

## 2.0 Evaluation method

### 2.1 Evaluation purpose and approach

The main purpose of the evaluation was to inform the development of the primary prevention model and resources; *Community based prevention of violence against women and their children – a toolkit for practitioners* that Our Watch were developing. The growing evidence base for prevention of violence against women and their children indicates that, while a universal or whole-of-population approach is essential to effective prevention, this must include initiatives that are tailored to the specific context, circumstances and needs of different communities. Much is yet to be learned about how to tailor initiatives for particular groups, and this project aimed to build that evidence base by trialing two separate community initiatives, for a newly arrived community and an established community, allowing for evaluation of the strengths and challenges of each.

Given the requirement to gain a thorough understanding and learn from the implementation of these projects, a strong participatory methodology was appropriate. Strong participatory processes are essential for understanding the achievements and progress of projects that seek to prevent violence against women (Kwok, 2013). This requires that stakeholders are actively engaged in all stages of the evaluation process: evaluation planning (key questions etc.), evaluation design (methodology, tools), data collection, analysis, and decision-making (Bryson et al., 2011).

In this project, staff and community members were consulted about the data collection, analysis and reporting methods they thought were appropriate. The consensus was that qualitative methodologies, focus groups and interviews, were the preferred methods as these enable a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of implementation which would be important in formulating the toolkit. Those leading the community initiatives also undertook evaluation of selected strategies and a range of survey and focus group discussion techniques were used. Given the toolkit was being developed throughout the life of the project, the findings from the data collection and literature review were analysed and sent to Our Watch throughout the year. Thus, this report represents the culmination of a number of interim reports, all of which informed the development of the toolkit.

### 2.2 Logic models

A program logic aims to describe how a program or project works; what its key components are, what its outcomes are, and how it achieves these outcomes. Logic models were developed for the overall project (appendix A) and for the two community initiatives (appendices B and C). These models were developed in collaboration with the evaluation team, project staff, and community leaders. They were used to gain a shared understanding of the project upon which an evaluation framework and questions were built.

### 2.3 Evaluation framework and main questions

The evaluation framework is based on a systems science perspective. A systems evaluation requires that multiple perspectives are sought and examines the broader context in which the project is taking place (Cabrera, Colosi, & Lobdell, 2008). This means examining how the overall project is enabling partnerships and influence across different system levels in addition to the aims of the two community initiatives of influencing the attitudes and knowledge of participating community groups. The table below outlines the different system levels, evaluation questions at each level, and methods being used to answer those questions.



**Table 1.****Evaluation perspectives, questions, and methods**

System Levels	Evaluation Question	Data Collection Method
Societal	Can other community groups learn from this project and implement PVAW activities?	Focus groups at project completion with culturally and linguistically diverse communities and staff not directly involved in the project.
Organisational	Are other organisations more motivated to address PVAW? And do they feel more confident to address PVAW?  Are organisations involved in the project more able to work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities?	Interviews at mid-year and end of year with key stakeholders (project managers and steering committee members).  Document analysis.
Community	Do community leaders have increased knowledge of PVAW?  Has community capacity increased to the extent where they could implement strategies post project?	Focus groups and interviews mid-year and end of year with working groups and community members.  Surveys for participants of professional development.
Individual	Is there increased knowledge of the characteristics of respectful relationships, decreased social isolation and increased communication skills in people attending the group programs?*	Surveys and focus groups at the end of the year with program participants.

*\*questions slightly differ for each group*

## 2.4 Data collection methods and participants

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups took place with the following groups of people:

- Staff involved in delivering the projects and strategies;
- Staff from partner agencies that were either involved in supporting implementation or on an advisory committee;
- Community members involved either as participants of strategies or acting in an advisory capacity;
- Community members from culturally and linguistically diverse communities that did not take part in the project;
- Staff from other organisations not involved in the project.

Staff and community members not involved in the project were recruited through existing programs being run by Women's Health in the East and Women's Health in the South East. Given the toolkit was being developed for community work in this area, it was important that a range of people were consulted about what it should include, not just those involved in the funded projects. All other participants were purposively selected due to their participation in the Our Watch project. There were 14 interviews that took place and 6 focus groups involving 32 people (there were some people that participated in interviews and focus groups at the halfway point and completion point of the project).

The research questions (see appendix D) were deliberately broad to elicit the views, perceptions, and experiences of the participants (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1990) and were adapted as necessary for the different groups. This reflected a phenomenological approach to qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 1998). This approach proceeds with collection of data on people's experiences and perceptions on those experiences, and generates themes and meanings from their specific comments.

After the interviews and focus groups were completed at the half way point of the year, they were transcribed and a thematic content analysis was undertaken to collate and condense the information gathered into distinct and succinct themes (Neuendorf, 2002, Boyatzis, 1998). An initial summary was conducted for the staff and community members separately. These summary reports were provided to Our Watch, together with the findings of the literature review. The aim of the analysis and reports was to produce a thematic content analysis that was succinct and reliable and that could help inform the development of the toolkit.

Data collection and analysis was undertaken again in October and November and this evaluation report provides a summary of all the data collected throughout the project. It was clear from the mid-point evaluation that the projects were addressing both early intervention and primary prevention. As such, questions and thematic analysis also focused on early intervention strategies. The results are presented based on the key themes that emerged from this analysis. All data collection and analysis of this data was conducted by the Centre for Social Impact Swinburne.

*“There were 14  
interviews that took  
place and 6 focus  
groups involving  
32 people...”*

## 3.0 Evaluation findings and discussion

The analysis process provided unique insights into the experiences and perceptions of staff and participants in relation to the process of addressing violence against women within culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The themes presented in this report have been selected due to their ability to contribute towards the evidence base, and inform future work in this area. These themes and issues are not discrete, but rather overlapping and interrelated.

There are three sections to the results. The first provides an overview of the strategies undertaken and the achievements of the projects throughout the ten month implementation period. The second section outlines some of the challenges that were faced. The third section of the results provides an analysis of some of the key considerations for working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities on this topic. This analysis is drawn both from the community members and staff involved in the Our Watch project and staff and community members that were not involved in this project but have experience of relevance to the prevention of violence against women.

### 3.1 Project strategies and achievements

This section provides an overview of some of the key strategies undertaken in the two projects. This is not an exhaustive account of all that took place, as the primary purpose of this evaluation was to explore the process of implementation to inform a toolkit for practitioners being developed, rather than a specific evaluation of each strategy. The list of strategies presented here is intended to provide sufficient context to enable the rest of the evaluation section to be understood.

#### *3.1.1 Strengthening Healthier Indian Families Together (SHIFT) led by cohealth*

The focus of the SHIFT project during the year was on building community capacity to undertake primary prevention work. The first task was to identify members of the community that could take part in a working group to plan strategies for the year. This proved a challenging task as will be outlined later due to the heterogeneity of the Indian community and competing commitments meant that regular participation was difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, there was commitment from the group and in addition to monthly meetings they participated in a 1.5 hour session facilitated by Women's Health West on the gendered nature of violence. There were 10 community members from the working group that attended this training and it was co-facilitated by a member of the Indian community.

The next stage of building capacity was two training workshops for participants of the working group and other members of the community that were interested in participating. These were well attended with 27 at the first workshop and 24 at the second workshop. These workshops covered the gendered nature of violence, what primary prevention is, and how to plan and implement activities for their own community. The sessions were co-facilitated by people from a South Asian background who helped to tailor the content to the audience. Through these two workshops, community members volunteered to lead the following activities, and others volunteered to be part of the working group (there are 2 to 3 people for each action area listed below):

- **Education and information:** Linking into existing groups and festivals. The Information and Education group provided information booths and performances at festivals in October/November 2015 and some members plan to establish a playgroup and begin working with students in 2016, both aiming to promote gender equality and discussion forums that help participants to develop their understanding of the causes of violence against women.
- **Two wings same bird:** Spiritual practice that promotes gender equality and affection. Two Wings of the Same Bird brings couples together to share the Havan ritual and then socialise together. The group leader and her husband model equality by sharing food preparation and childcare throughout the event.
- **Heaven on Earth:** Strengthening an existing local Footscray women's social enterprise group. Heaven on Earth project focuses on creating social enterprises that provide women with independent incomes.
- **Primary school education:** Linked with White Ribbon Curriculum. The schools group plans to link with White Ribbon's Breaking the Silence program in local language schools, which encourages younger children to challenge gender stereotypes for such things as sport, cooking and career choices.
- **1800 social support:** To establish social support groups for Indian women in the west. Social Support Group is working towards creating supportive networks for women in Tarneit in 2016 and will foster discussions around gender equality.
- **Social media group:** To highlight, profile and connect groups working in the western suburbs of Melbourne. The social media group is developing a coordinated strategy to spread prevention messages across a network of proposed Facebook and Twitter pages that reach over 25,000 people.
- **Whatsapp group:** The social media group established a Whatsapp group, which exchanges ideas, shares links to articles and provides group comment. This is a valuable tool to gauge the attitudes and understanding of the SHIFT Champions. It has demonstrated the need for additional input and activities that will increase participants' understanding of the drivers of violence against women and the extent of work that is needed to influence these attitudes. A number of skilled leaders in the Indian community contribute to the Whatsapp group and add their wisdom and commentary to the Whatsapp discussions.

Each of these groups is in the process of planning strategies for 2016. Mentors have been connected to each of the groups to support this planning. Mentors will also support the development of strong prevention messages and the initial set up of activities. Mentors were sourced from the Health West partnerships and through prevention of violence against women and children networks. Professionals with expertise in community development and violence against women prevention volunteered to connect with SHIFT Champions to support their work. Women's Health West provided a two hour training workshop for people interested in becoming mentors. This was well attended, with 10 participants in total, and provided great training resources and materials for mentors and the project leads. One of the important features of this project that aims to ensure sustainability is to link SHIFT Champions with these mentors who will:

- Provide input and advice for project planning;
- Offer ongoing input and review of the project's relevance to prevention, and
- Link people to established networks for ongoing support and advice.

The mentor match up process and ongoing relationships was more informal than originally proposed. At the conclusion of the implementation period, the mentor roles were still forming and developing and may not become active until 2016. Some have provided short term advice so that the group is now ready to move forward independently. Some mentors may provide a longer term, less intensive support role, while some will restrict their time to 8 hours of establishment support. There is a clear sense of momentum for 2016 based on the development work that has taken place this year. As will be described later in the evaluation, there is significant enthusiasm from community members about the potential of the planned strategies.

### 3.1.2 Hamdel Project, Whittlesea Community Connections with The Salvation Army Crossroads and Women's Health In the North

Two working groups supported this project; one consisting of organisational representatives that provided guidance, and another, established Persian woman's group consisting of women from the Iranian community, that had primary responsibility for strategy selection. The first working group met monthly, combining regular updates from community consultations with their own expertise to support the design and implementation of the project. The group undertook two training sessions at the start of the project: an Iranian community profile was developed by the bilingual project worker and presented to the working group, and the health promotion worker ran an introductory session on primary prevention of violence against women to ensure all working group members had a shared understanding and approach to gender equality and prevention work.

The Persian women's group was the central aspect of this project. A community-centred planning model was used to guide the project and ensure it was relevant to the needs of the community. This meant that all planning and implementation decisions had to be based on the views of the women. The model started by consulting the women and using this to develop the project design and community implementation plan. Information gathered from the women was presented to the organisational working group, and, as the project was developed, fed back to the women for further input and advice. The women identified men and influential community leaders to work with, and advised on how and in what ways to do so. Across the life of the project, the women were continually consulted on adjustments and improvements to the design. As the women built capacity across the training program, this allowed them to refine their input and recommendations. The following activities were undertaken during the project:

**Table 2.**

#### Activities undertaken during the project

Activity	Aim	Description	Participants	Duration
Training and awareness raising for Persian women's group	Increase knowledge and awareness of preventing violence against women	Training program facilitated by Women's Health in the North	Ten women	Two sessions of approximately 1.5 hours each
Training and awareness raising for influential community members	Increase knowledge and awareness of preventing violence against women	Training program facilitated by Women's Health in the North	1 GP and 1 journalist	1 session approximately 1.5 hours in length
Translation and printing of men and women's Violence against women help cards into Farsi	Increase knowledge of service options to increase community access	Men's and women's violence against women help cards were translated into Farsi and distributed to key agencies across the local government area		
'Settled & Safe' legal education sessions delivered	Increase knowledge and awareness of violence against women, family law and child protection	Facilitated by the project workers the sessions enabled discussion and myths to be dispelled particularly around child protection	20 men and women	Four sessions

Activity	Aim	Description	Participants	Duration
Team Respect: respectful relationships / soccer program	Increase awareness of gender equality, respectful relationships, and violence against women. Increase social inclusion	Facilitated by 2 bicultural workers and a non-Iranian worker. Involved discussion and activities on respectful relationships adapted from government curriculum. Followed by a refereed game of soccer.	14 participants commenced and 10 completed the course. Aged 15 to 27 with the majority aged 18 – 20.	10 week program consisting of 1 hour of respectful relationship education and 2 hours of indoor soccer
Family activity days delivered to Iranian families	To encourage parents to think about the role that gender and social expectations play in parenting	Open discussion and play facilitated by 2 bicultural workers and a non-Iranian worker. Discussions centered on the role of gender and stereotypes and how they influence children's play and development	Approximately 30 participants attended three activity days.	Three sessions
Violence against women articles published in local Iranian newspaper, and interviews with Iranian radio	Increase knowledge and awareness of preventing violence against women	Articles and discussion on local radio to disseminate information to a wider audience.		3 articles published in Kooch (local Iranian newspaper) and coverage on Radio Neshat (local Iranian radio station)

The respectful relationship/soccer program was a considerable success and further detail on these impacts will be provided in this report about participants' views and experiences. Feedback from the final session included several participants explaining that originally they came for the soccer, but stayed because of the education sessions. The broader value of such programs during settlement was also emphasised because many of the young men who were previously quite socially isolated built friendships, and the group continues to meet beyond the timelines set by the project. It also highlighted the value of engaging male and female facilitators from both Iranian and non-Iranian backgrounds, because this meant there was also someone to challenge myths around rigid gender roles (such as the claim that 'it is our culture' or 'in Australia women have more rights than men').

The project also had success in building effective partnerships. This occurred both between the agencies engaged in the working group (sharing knowledge and expertise and building the capacity of others) as well as between these agencies and project participants. The Persian's women group in particular have now consolidated their relationships with a number of key services, including settlement, legal, violence against women programs, council, and police. A number of the women expressed interest in furthering their advocacy and involvement in the issue and staff are exploring what this could look like, including building work already undertaken to engage men in violence prevention activities. Some of the women will join the advisory group supporting the Whittlesea Communities Violence against Women Project in 2016, focusing on culturally diverse communities. This will allow them to utilise their violence prevention skills and knowledge further in new projects.

The following sections will now outline some of the feedback sought directly from community members and staff about their perceptions of expectations and achievements. Expectations were diverse, and included desired outcomes for communities and organisations alike. Towards the end of the initiative, staff and participants reflected on what was achieved throughout the project.

### 3.1.3 Increase in community awareness

In the mid-term evaluation, staff from a number of organisations working with the Iranian community anticipated that among other aspects, the initiative would increase women's understanding of violence against women and begin to shift cultural discourse around assumed gender roles. Staff commented that they wanted women to feel empowered to create change within their communities, and reflected positively on how this was progressing for their work with the Iranian community.

*"My general expectation of this project is to really break down that whole idea of gender roles, which I think this project is doing really well."*

Discussions with the Iranian women indicated that they had greatly increased their understanding of violence against women; suggesting that the program has fulfilled this desired outcome. Women confidently discussed the importance of gender equality, and indicated knowledge related to their rights, various forms of violence, and available support services.

*"...family violence is not just about physical violence. I now know that family violence is also when I'm stressed and nervous and I'm scared of going home and being worried as to what my husband will tell me...Family violence is also the jokes and words that are used against women and also girls..."*

*"...now we know where to go and how to ask for help and that there are services out there to assist us...I now have no fear that if I contact an organisation for family violence that my children will be taken from me."*

The young male participants of the respectful relationship/soccer program were also able to express their increase in knowledge and awareness. As the sessions progressed, the participants demonstrated a strong understanding that respect is important in all relationships. They explored the impact of disrespectful or violent relationships and discussed healthy conflict resolution skills. They compared public and private relationships, talking about the consequences of unhealthy intimate relationships. The young men became more confident to challenge each other and discuss various viewpoints. By the end, all agreed that violence against women was not a private issue, but rather that it is the responsibility of the whole community.

*"It [the sessions] changed my mind because before I thought it was a private matter for the family."*

Increasing violence against women knowledge within culturally and linguistically diverse communities is of pivotal importance given that limited awareness and fear of authority figures has previously been identified as a barrier to incident reporting and service access (Poljski, 2011). This indicates that women now saw the issue as something beyond the immediate family and that they could seek help and support as well as the broader role of prevention within the community.

Furthermore, women reflected on how they are already using this knowledge within their important relationships. For some women this has been very positive.

*"Through this knowledge, I'm learning more about my husband and this is helping me in mending my relationship rather than breaking it."*



*“...my husband’s attitude has changed a lot by attending these groups. His tone of voice has changed with me and when he wants to raise his voice now, he pauses and thinks about it and he has stopped screaming at me.”*

Some women also discussed their intention to disseminate this knowledge more broadly in the community through their friendship networks.

*“For myself, I think the outcome of this project will be that I will start to look out for others and teach others from what I have learned...”*

While the groups with the Indian community were not at the same stage of implementing their strategies, the community members interviewed also expressed how they had learned a great deal about violence against women prevention throughout this project, and were excited about the possibility of disseminating this information through various forums in 2016 and beyond. What was positive about these interviews was how the project staff and mentors had been able to support these community members to utilise their particular skills and interests, whether that be IT related or social work, for the cause of violence against women prevention within their communities. These findings are valuable as they indicate that community members are receptive to information related to violence against women, and that increasing their knowledge has the potential to positively impact their relationships, help seeking, and wellbeing more broadly. The projects were able to very quickly achieve a strong level of connection with the community, and raise awareness about the importance of violence against women prevention within a very short period of time.

### *3.1.4 Increase in organisational capacity*

Staff from partner organisations also expressed an expectation that their organisations would increase their capacity to work with diverse communities across all areas of practice. They expressed a perception that staff and organisational cultural competency would be enhanced through this experience of working with the community, further nurtured through the collaboration with the bicultural worker.

*“Being involved with this will help our whole organisation to think and have a better idea...about how we, as an organisation, work with different cultural groups in our prevention work...how that would influence our practice in all other areas”*

Staff consistently indicated a range of cultural awareness and competency learnings gained through this experience of working with the community and the bicultural workers, suggesting that indeed their capacity to understand and respond to the needs of diverse communities has been enhanced.

### 3.1.5 Resource development

In the mid-term data collection, staff discussed the development of a toolkit for practitioners to share project learnings with other organisations. Their expectations of the resource were tempered with consideration of what was achievable within the given timeframe. In doing such, expectations were set on developing a toolkit for practitioners that reflects the process and implementation learnings of the initiative.

*“...any kind of toolkit that we produce is going to be looking at process, and a lot of what we've been doing is process in terms of working out what do we, as a working group, need to do? How do we support the community?...I think it will be interesting to see what we produce as a toolkit for practitioners that is not so much going 'here is the magic formula'...but more so around that approach that you take to working with communities so that you can get the best outcomes and the best process.”*

*“We want to have some tools and resources that will be useful for other organisations wanting to do this work...but we know that you can't just pull a pack off the shelf and go this is how you do it...”*

Towards the end of the project period, staff had successfully drafted a toolkit for practitioners which was informed by preliminary evaluation findings, a comprehensive review of the literature, and staff reflections. This is a notable and key outcome of the initiative, as vital learnings begin to address the paucity of existing knowledge in this area, and provide evidence to inform further practice. It was, however, cautioned that in applying this information it is important that practitioners are not burdened by following a strict process and that flexibility is required and the central importance of relationship development prioritised. It was noted as a strong risk that overemphasising planning and frameworks initially might stifle time spent required on developing the relationships and allowing community ownership.

*“... you have to have a model. You have to have a program logic. You have to have an evaluation framework. You have to have a risk strategy. You have to have an implementation plan. I can just see this dying and [practitioners] just being totally overwhelmed by it.”*

This will be covered further in the recommendations section.

## 3.2 Project challenges

Staff and participants identified a broad range of challenges encountered throughout the implementation of the initiative. Generally, staff were optimistic about overcoming these difficulties, rather than perceiving them to be absolute barriers to achieving desired outcomes. In this way, challenges were not presented as being discrete from opportunities; rather, there was overlap and interconnection between these as staff indicated responsiveness and flexibility as required. In their discussions, staff often reframed challenges, and identified what could be gained through that occurrence or experience.

*“Project workers always seem to find a way to fix things...like, ‘well this is not working, let’s go onto something else.’ And usually the things that you...go onto end up being better.”*

Anticipating the potential challenges will enable the difficulties they pose to be reduced or eliminated in future initiatives.

### 3.2.1 Timeframe

The 12-month timeframe was consistently identified as a barrier within the project. Staff discussed how this undermined the organic nature of community development, which is inherently a steady, ongoing, longer-term process.

*“...it takes [time] to link into the community, you know, for the community to trust you and for you to kind of feel like you’re working with them...”*

*“I think probably you’ll hear from absolutely everybody that it’s just ridiculous to try and do a project like this in 11 months. It’s crazy.”*

To overcome this challenge, organisations engaged communities and groups that they had a pre-existing connection with. This proved to be particularly effective with the Iranian community. However engaging the Indian community was a continuing challenge throughout the term of the project. It was noted by members of the Indian community that time restrictions did not allow for connection with people that do not normally take part in these types of programs, and that was a missed opportunity. Further, there was some frustration of being involved in yet another short term pilot project where sustainability is threatened consequently:

*“The issues that I’m facing is that these projects start and then once it is finished then nothing will happen. The duration of the project is too small. More consultation with the Indian community is needed and time is always the issue.”*

This reflection was provided by a community member mid-term of the project and the staff and community members involved strived very hard to ensure that there would be something sustainable beyond this year. Indeed, there was some very positive feedback from community members about their planned involvement in strategies throughout 2016.

Staff working with the Iranian community commented that time restraints also meant that violence against women information sessions were not able to explore the issues in as much detail as was considered ideal. Finally, given the short timeframe, staff discussed placing value on the process of community development, thereby capitalising on opportunities for community empowerment, capacity building, and implementation learnings. This finding demonstrates the need to consistently consider what is feasible within the time and resource constraints of the project, so there are realistic expectations about outcomes.

### 3.2.2 Challenging cultural norms

Some women in the Iranian community indicated that their involvement within the program has emerged as a source of tension within their home and intimate relationships.

*"For me, the hardest thing has been that now I know about my rights and when I speak at home about all this... my husband has said to me that don't you dare think that one day you will put all of this into practice...I really want to request that this information is given to men as well so they know that we are not learning to break the marriage, we want to mend the relationship."*

*"My husband has started telling me that my views have changed and that from coming to these group I will learn new information and I will break the marriage."*

*"If I had informed my husband and brought him to these group, he will also stop me and whatever trust he has in me will stop. I will have no freedom so I do not want to tell him."*

Despite women emphasising their understanding that the initiative intended to improve their relationships, their challenge in negotiating this new knowledge within the context of their relationships and the beliefs and norms of their culture emerged as a source of tension. This reiterates the need for very careful consideration to be given to the potential risks to participants of addressing sensitive issues, in order to avoid adverse and unintended impacts.

Gender expectations were identified as a difficult, albeit important, topic to navigate. Staff indicated a perception that core issues related to historical and cultural gender roles perpetuated gender inequality, and that addressing such issues was integral to preventing violence within these communities. However, despite the communities indicating enthusiasm to tackle violence against women, according to some community members there were some deeply held cultural beliefs that were 'untouchable'. This was particularly challenging with the Indian community, for example, the particular relationship an Indian woman has with her in-laws.

*"There are lots of people in the community who are still very much connected with and attached to Indian culture, particularly around family and gender, and shifting that is difficult."*

*"...the Indian community have said we want this prevention of violence against women...then when you start talking to them about gender equality and possibly the dowry system...oh, they're no go areas. They're not areas to be discussed. So there's often those kind of blocks...while they purport to be ready for more upstream work, when it comes down to it they're actually pretty entrenched...it is slow work "*

Staff spoke about the pivotal importance of delicately instigating and navigating discussions related to these culturally sensitive areas. They identified how critical it was to keep these communities in the conversation; reframing and modifying the language and the approach used to maintain engagement.

Some women described how their husbands were open to changing their behaviours and attitudes. However, others believed that their husbands' attitudes and behaviours were fixed, and would not change.

*"I can say that my husband always thinks that whatever he does or says is correct and he will not accept any other views."*

These findings reinforce the challenge of negotiating diverse cultural beliefs and values when working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The challenge of addressing cultural norms will also be addressed later in this report when discussing recommended approaches for working in this area. The thoughts provided in this section on challenges were also echoed by staff and community members working on similar projects in other areas of Victoria.

### 3.2.3 Competing priorities

Competing priorities emerged as a challenge to addressing violence against women within culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Staff spoke about the complicated experience of settlement, which is compounded for the Iranian community due to their precarious visa status. The early stage of settlement among the Iranian community presented both challenges and opportunities. Whilst it was found to enhance engagement due to their enthusiasm to establish social networks in Australia, some staff continued to express concern that their capacity to address violence against women was limited due to competing priorities within the community.

*"...there's so much unpredictability for them...even though they're willing to work on stuff, there's only so much they can do because at the end of the day their priority is their settlement process..."*

Iranian women also described frustration associated with their uncertain residency, confirming the significance of this issue within the community:

*"I'm tired of living a life in limbo and now I have been here for 3.5 years and my family and I have no future."*

*"How many more years will my family and I be homeless? We are tired, exhausted. What can I do for my children? How can I give my children a good future?"*

Staff attempted to address this by applying a 'settlement overlay' or 'lens' to the activities undertaken in the group sessions. This aimed to ensure that key messages were relevant, meaningful, and accessible to the respective community. In addition, staff discussed that not having permanent residency was a barrier to Iranian women taking an active stance against violence against women within their own relationships.

*"They will say, 'put me on a permanent visa and then we can leave', because they're too worried. They don't know what's going to happen with their visas. They don't want to do anything that might negatively impact that process"*

*"The visa is hanging...over their head all the time. One of them mentioned that they ...know someone who went to the police and they took the husband back to detention and everybody's blaming her for them."*

Structural barriers related to immigration status have been identified as a contributing factor towards violence against women in prior studies. The current evaluation is consistent with this, verifying that insecurity related to residency can lead women to endure violent situations due to fear of jeopardising their resettlement prospects. It is a significant challenge to address violence against women within the context of such structural barriers and concerns. However, some Iranian participants described that the group was a key support throughout resettlement, rather than a competing priority.

*"We are stressed at the moment. We have visa issues, no family, no work, no education, and no other activities. For us this program has become an important part of our lives and we are like a family now and we look forward to attending and learning."*

Furthermore, staff discussed a range of competing social and emotional wellbeing issues experienced by program participants.

*"...the struggle that we had with the boys' group was that the majority of them are depressed...they don't feel welcomed [in Australia], they feel bullied."*

*"...[we noticed] attachment issues with younger children due to their boat and also detention experience. They would not attend play time with other workers and wanted to stay with their mother."*

*"Most of [Iranian women] grew [up] during the wartime...I realised that they still struggled with Persian, with the writing and reading, even their first language."*

Staff described the broader issues impacting the Iranian community: visa restrictions and uncertainty; depression; social exclusion; difficult journeys in search of safety; experiences of war; child attachment; and low levels of literacy. Past and current situations must inform the approach taken to work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, particularly those experiencing heightened vulnerabilities. This resonates with a social model of health, which considers the way that social, political, and environmental structures impact health and wellbeing (VicHealth, 2009).

In addition, staff reflected on how competing priorities of community leaders impacted their ability to engage them in the program, particularly in relation to the Indian community.

*"It's a nice idea to work with community leaders. But, if they're a leader because of their professional position, it often means that they're just super busy and really hard to engage".*

*"I send emails and phone calls, it's actually really hard to keep people engaged..."*

Staff identified a further challenge related to the competing paradigms of 'prevention' and 'treatment' approaches. This initiative was conceived within a preventative framework, and differing priorities were found to compromise partnership engagement and impede on the progress of the project.

*"I don't think [the General Practitioner] really saw the value of doing that kind of work...I don't think [she] necessarily saw her role in prevention."*

The challenge encountered in relation to engaging the GP is common within partnerships and collaboration. Competing paradigms also hindered community engagement within the Indian community.

*"[the Indian community is] primarily interested in intervention, not prevention. I think partly because it's quicker and it looks like you're doing something and they can tick it off..."*

### 3.2.4 Cohesion within communities

The social cohesion of the Iranian and the Indian community emerged as a challenge. Within the Iranian community, the issue of social cohesion pertained to their recent arrival. They are relatively unestablished in the area, and staff noted that this made it difficult to identify obvious role models or community leaders.

This contrasted with issues identified within the Indian community, in which longer-term settlement was associated with internal conflict within the community. The suggestion that tensions were perpetuated by high rates of ethnic and religious diversity within the Indian community was also put forward. Staff found this to be a barrier to engaging community leaders in a project advisory group.

*"...there's lots of politics within the community which means that some people won't come, even though they're a key player, because they don't like another person."*

### 3.3 Reflections on ‘best practice’ approaches for preventing of violence against women within culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Staff and community members identified a range of factors that set a strong foundation for this work. Opportunities that did emerge were capitalised upon throughout this process and are recognised as contributing to project success. These features are important to acknowledge and explore as they provide insight into effective approaches to work with culturally diverse communities. Evaluators also sought input from a range of external experts that were experienced at facilitating prevention of violence against women projects for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in other areas, who were not directly involved in the current project, so as to provide a broad range of opinions from which to develop a toolkit for practitioners. While an attempt has been made to present a thematic analysis of some of the key ideas, it will be clearly apparent that each of the following sections overlap considerably and relate to two overarching, or main themes. These are ‘taking a strong community development approach with communities’ and ‘the importance of collaboration to address some of the broader determinants influencing vulnerability to violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities.’

#### 3.3.1 Community engagement and connection

Staff discussed the benefit of building the initiatives on existing relationships with communities. Staff working with the Iranian community consistently acknowledged that the violence against women prevention strategies progressed more quickly and effectively because they were embedded in and around an existing Iranian women’s group. Trust and rapport had been established within the group context, and this set a strong foundation for violence against women prevention strategies to evolve.

*“There has been very little cold call approach to anything...it makes sense to start with the people you’ve got a relationship with, particularly for a 12 month project.”*

*“We’ve been working with the women longer...they’ve been providing a lot more of the guidance and the ideas for the other elements...I think because we’ve been working with an established group who know us, that’s been really useful.”*

Staff stated that both the Iranian and the Indian community demonstrated enthusiasm, motivation, and commitment to be involved in this initiative. Both communities confirmed a need for violence against women prevention within their cultural groups, and indicated a willingness to be involved within this process. Motivation and interest within the community was a significant enabling factor for the project.

*“There are some people in the [Indian] community who are very passionate about supporting their community around family violence.”*

*“It’s been a real delight and surprise seeing the [Iranian] group and how the women have really taken the bit between the teeth and really been keen and involved and engaged...”*



However, the Iranian community indicated higher levels of engagement within the strategy than the Indian community. A range of challenges existed to engaging the Indian community, and many of these were associated with their longer settlement period within Australia and being a more established community. Contrastingly, being newly arrived was recognised as an advantage to high levels of engagement within the Iranian community.

*"It's that they come to a new country and they're so isolated that they are willing to be part of something so they can build their networks within the community. So they can have that community feeling in a new country."*

The Iranian community who participated in this initiative were largely asylum seekers on bridging visas, many with limited employment and education entitlements. Whilst this is acknowledged as a stressful period of uncertainty for these people, staff suggested that their restricted opportunities increased their commitment to this program.

*"...it is a new community...people aren't working...People have the time to commit to the group because there's not a lot else happening. I suppose that also they're in that very newly arrived settlement period where they're learning everything about Australia...so why not learn about this too?"*

*"...particular opportunities for them to build their social connections and community connections have not been as ample as for other [communities]"*

Working with the Iranian community throughout this stage of transition and change presented this unexpected opportunity. This finding is unique as it contrasts with other research that describes challenges with engaging refugee groups due to competing priorities within the early stages of resettlement (Gifford et al., 2007). Rather, this evaluation has found that tapping into the community during this period of uncertainty offers them a desired safe place to connect and begin to rebuild their sense of community. Perhaps part of this reflects the uncertainty facing many of the Iranian families with respect to their asylum claims and that they appreciated the contact and support this project provided. More settled communities were perceived as difficult to access. There was unanimous support from Iranian women to integrate violence against women prevention education into the settlement process for newly arrived communities. Given the successful timing within the context of this project, this is a worthwhile consideration.

*"The more we know about our rights and what is right and wrong in this country, the less we will get hurt and the less it will have an impact on us and our families."*

### 3.3.2 Participatory community development

Staff consistently reflected on the strong community development principles driving this initiative. Staff identified the opportunity of achieving valuable outcomes through the process of working with the community.

*“...it's not so much what you're giving to people, it's about how you're working with them...”*

This notion aligns with a participatory framework, recognising that community capacity building and empowerment can be achieved through the development process. Staff spoke about empowering women and their partners to lead change in their communities.

*“Just being able to give this group [of women] and the young men an opportunity to have a bit of control over something and to have an opportunity to contribute something to their community and the wider community.”*

High levels of engagement with the Iranian community provided the opportunity for community-driven violence against women prevention strategies which enable men and women to be involved in the discussion about respectful relationships in a safe, empowering way.

*“...you and your husbands can also be part of those voices, those shared voices who are not condoning violence and who are speaking out against gender inequality...”*

*“We've got that information, but you guys are the experts on your communities and making that relevant. I think having bicultural workers means that you're really able to reinforce that that's the approach you're taking.”*

This finding is consistent with prior research highlighting the importance of an authentic participatory approach when working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009; Yoshihama et al., 2012). In both projects, participants suggested a sense of ownership over the initiative, and this strong connection with the project meant that they were overwhelmingly open and receptive to the information being presented. This was a key imperative of the staff leading these initiatives.

*“Spending time developing good trusting relationships with community members through being transparent, listening, acting appropriately on feedback/advice provided, and collaborating with the community at the beginning, and across the life, of the project will assist you to gain community input, involvement and engagement in the project and thus a more successful outcome. Alongside this, it is important to attend community events as invited and appropriate as a way of showing that you have genuine interest in the community.”*

### 3.3.3 Community needs and interests

Staff and group participants consistently indicated the importance of working with the needs and interests of the community. Most notably, this included targeted strategies for engagement, such as embedding education into social community activities. Importantly, ideas to promote engagement predominantly evolved from suggestions within the communities themselves. Staff discussed the strategy of engaging young men through the facilitation of the sporting activities. They embedded respectful relationship education and role modelling into and around the game of sport, and this was found to be successful.

*"It would be really hard to get these boys involved...if it didn't have a link to soccer. You would not get young guys there just for information sessions"*

*"The incentives for the young guys were real...the idea that they have to come to the education to get to meet with the Melbourne City players was a massive drawcard..."*

In addition to participants presenting a range of ideas to promote community engagement, staff described the women's ideas to engage their male partners and challenge gender stereotypes in safe, fun, and non-confronting ways. The eagerness of staff to draw on and action the knowledge and ideas of the women is a highly valuable strategy, promoting engagement, empowerment, and capacity building, whilst ensuring the approach is culturally relevant and aligns with the values and interests of the group. In addition, women discussed a range of activities that they believe would foster engagement within their community.

*"[we would like] art classes and music classes as we have never had opportunities to learn these skills..."*

*"I personally think that we should use sports activities for younger generation and...woodworks, gardening, pot work and other types of activities based on their interest..."*

These findings are valuable as they reiterate the worth of drawing on the knowledge and existing interests of the community to enhance engagement. Again, this is consistent with participatory community development principles which promote initiatives being driven by communities themselves. Additionally, the activities of interest to the community have additional benefits, as participation in sport, art, and music present opportunities for social inclusion, and indeed have the potential to improve health and wellbeing more broadly. These ideas may seem simple but they have arisen through extensive consultation and relationship development with the communities over the last 12 months. As a comparison, when a community group from African nations who were not currently engaged in a violence against women prevention initiative were asked (they were working on other issues with a health agency) how they would engage the community, particularly men, this was their response:

*"I have no idea."*

*"Everybody has to change but giving education to men I don't think that's a solution."*

*"No way they will listen."*

These quotes are emblematic of the time it takes to build understanding and ideas within the community to address violence against women prevention, something which was achieved rapidly within the project this year. The facilitator of this focus group was very well known to the women having worked with them for a number of years and experienced herself in facilitating projects with culturally and linguistically communities on the prevention of violence against women. When she suggested the use of religious leaders eventually some members of this focus group decided that this might be a possible mechanism through which to address some of the cultural norms that they felt were determinants of violence against women within their community. Of course, as mentioned in the literature, there are some potential drawbacks to using religious leaders and there are other means of developing leadership. Understanding and knowing how to connect in with different community interests and groups is a fundamental aspect of this work which can take considerable time.

### *3.3.4 Inclusive, whole of community approach*

Both staff and participants emphasised the importance of having a whole of community approach to address violence against women. This was considered crucial to maintaining cohesion within families and communities, and ensuring that men and women are working together to promote respectful relationships.

*"I think the purpose of these types of projects is to create better functioning families and not only make women aware of their rights. That is why it is very important that the entire family work together to make their family function well...these programs should include members of families of all ages."*

*"I hope [that by providing information to both men and women] it at least reduces that gap of just not knowing on both sides...because we see so many communities that suffer because they don't get that gap addressed at all...it causes so much damage."*

*"If we separate [the man and the women]...we are making this assumption and labelling that we don't want men involved because they're always perpetrators. But if we actually mix them together we are saying 'no, this is not a perpetrator and a victim issue, it's an issue that we have to solve together.'"*

### 3.3.5 Bicultural community development workers

Staff working with the Iranian community consistently highlighted the value of bicultural workers. Staff indicated that bicultural workers were invaluable in bridging language, cultural, and conceptual barriers. Bicultural workers were seen as vital in facilitating effective, free-flowing communication; enabling the staff and the community to establish mutual understandings, and work towards shared objectives.

*“It gives you an insight into how not to offend them and how to work better with them because sometime we just know how our practices might offend somebody...”*

*“She’s been able to facilitate two way-communication. So, she can take what we’re saying and make that accessible to the group. Then, she can take their experience and their understandings and bring that back to us...”*

Bicultural workers were perceived as a key factor in developing rapport with the community. One staff member discussed the value of the bicultural worker in fostering a trusting relationship that enabled women to discuss and address issues of violence against women.

*“...that was why that rate [of family violence] was particularly high for those groups, because it was someone they felt comfortable they could talk to in their own language, showing that understanding and it was accessible to them.”*

In addition to enhancing the relationship between the organisation and the Iranian community, collaborating with bicultural workers was recognised as an opportunity to build cultural competency among staff.

*“[the bicultural worker] has been able to capacity build [the working party] around how to work with the community...so we’re doing [our work] with an understanding of the community we’re working with.”*

In addition, bicultural workers were also valued for their capacity to role model positive behaviours. These findings reinforce the unique potential of bicultural workers within the community development process, particularly when addressing a sensitive issue such as violence against women. Bicultural workers were also employed in the capacity building work with the Indian community, which was also viewed as a strength of the project.

### 3.3.6 Social support and safe spaces

Iranian women consistently discussed the value of forming connections with other women who had experienced violence against women, and how the group context created a safe-space for them to feel understood.

*"I did not want to talk about my family problems and the issues that I was having. But once I heard one or two of the women talking about their experiences, I also felt like I can talk and I can trust this group. It is hard when you are alone..."*

Staff working with the Iranian community also reflected on the benefit of building community connections between women, and the importance of these trusting relationships.

*"They're all in the same situation...so they trust [each other]...if they didn't know each other...it would be very difficult to just get them together and suddenly start with something that is probably so taboo to talk about."*

There is a large body of literature stating that group work is the preferred form of intervention for women affected by violence against women (Jordan, Nietzel, Walker, & Logan, 2004; Tutty, Bidgood, & Rothery, 1996). Support groups have been found to minimise feelings of self-blame, and provide a forum of support in which women can discuss their feelings and build social networks (Jordan et al., 2004; Tutty et al., 1996). However, this approach does not seem to have been thoroughly evaluated in working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities on prevention of violence against women, but should be considered for future practice. Furthermore, high levels of disclosure throughout the initiative highlights the overlap of prevention and early intervention approaches when working with population groups who are identified as being at increased risk. Having support groups in place was also something viewed as valuable by members of the African communities that participated in focus groups.

*"...we could support each other to deal with things instead of the frustration and letting the stress and frustration get ahead of us and push us into being in a violent community. Instead we can change that to more positive attitudes."*

### 3.3.7 Collaboration, partnerships and networking

This initiative provided the impetus for community organisations to collaborate through the formation of steering committees, working groups and multidisciplinary teams. Drawing together key stakeholders, including people from diverse backgrounds, was determined beneficial for propelling ideas and innovation for the project.

*"Another most important aspect of partnerships was the fact that the facilitators we had come from different experiences..."*

*"...it has so many agencies and it has people with different areas of expertise putting their heads around the table. So a lot of our thinking comes from this working group...I think it's really, really valuable for projects like this."*

The benefit of this networking was not contained to this specific project. Rather, it provided broader opportunities for staff involved related to stronger, interdisciplinary working relationships within the sector.

*"Not just for the project, but also for the learning of everybody in the group to be able to share everyone's different expertise amongst all the workers..."*

In addition, the enhanced relationship between organisations was identified as an opportunity to place the issue of violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities on the agenda of key stakeholders; advocating for increased and coordinated action at local, state, and national levels.

*"...it's kind of like providing the input within the organisation...across everything we're doing we should be keeping this in mind..."*

*"...it has actually put culturally and linguistically diverse [issues] - it's given [them] a firm footing within the organisation ... for example, I'm currently advocating for cultural competency training across the organisation."*

These findings corroborate existing evidence that supports partnerships and interagency collaboration in primary prevention strategies. Cross sector relationships were also established to address additional competing needs of the community.

*"We had links with settlement workers who would provide support in terms of the visa issues"*

*"It gives you a chance to expose the community members to other services and broadening the places that they can go to get support, especially for a community which is very isolated and it has been a benefit for the community"*

The project benefited not only the communities, but the organisations. Staff from the partner organisations highlighted that this project itself provided benefits in ways that were different from the past and expressed a desire that this continue into the future:

*"Usually there is a lot of competitiveness around applying for funding but this has been different as we have worked together instead of competing against each organisation."*

*"We have been able to think a lot more efficiently as we have brought many people from different areas. Rather than thinking that one organisation knows everything about all."*

This strategic relationship highlights that the current initiative was comprehensive in its approach, by addressing a number of issues simultaneously. Further to this, the project was found to have an important role in raising the issue of violence against women among many organisations as an important issue within culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Highlighting this priority area provided impetus for Our Watch and other state and national organisations to consider how to address this topic within their current programs (see appendix A). Therefore, the project has achieved benefits and learnings through the two community level initiatives, with broader value achieved through established networks and programs at a local, state, and national level.

## 4.0 Conclusion

Both the literature reviewed and the reflections of community members and staff were consistent on how to work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities in preventing violence against women. Existing studies have demonstrated the value of community based participatory approaches in violence against women work with culturally diverse communities (Oneha, Magnussen & Shoultz, 2009; Yoshihama et al., 2012), and this was reiterated throughout the consultation with staff and community members, both those involved directly in the Our Watch projects and those working on other projects across Victoria. The importance of building trusting relationships and ensuring that the community members led the selection and development of key strategies was evident in both projects.

Differences in contextual factors between the Iranian and Indian communities required a different approach to be taken for each group. The project with the Iranian community was more able to quickly generate a range of activities for community members which were viewed by participants as successful in enhancing their awareness and changing their attitudes towards gender related issues. Significant community and organisational capacity building also took place, ensuring that momentum can be carried forward next year.

The SHIFT project required a longer lead time in establishing working groups and community capacity building due to the increased number of stakeholders and different members of the community that needed to be consulted with and engaged prior to commencing activity. This was a very important developmental process to ensure that those involved did have capacity to lead activities and were respected within their community. However, the time taken to facilitate this process meant that specific activities were not undertaken. Nevertheless, there is significant enthusiasm about what can be achieved in subsequent years.

The results of this evaluation have been used to inform a range of best practice guidelines for the prevention of violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities (a toolkit for practitioners), which are detailed in the next section. Central to these recommendations is the need to prioritise the safety of community members when undertaking work of this sensitive nature, and that strong engagement and empowerment strategies are crucial when working with both newly arrived and more established communities; hence underscoring the importance of this approach generally in community level initiatives. Further consideration on how structural determinants influence vulnerability to violence against women among culturally and linguistically diverse communities is required, including further research on how this can be addressed.



*“The importance of building trusting relationships and ensuring that the community members led the selection and development of key strategies was evident in both projects.”*

## 5.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations are generally considered as key elements to include in the guidelines of a toolkit for practitioners. It is acknowledged that many of these points will relate generally to prevention of violence against women work with all communities.

### Project timelines

- One of the key findings from this project was that longer project timelines are necessary to allow effective community development to take place. A long term approach to project planning and funding is required to allow adequate time for:
  - > The development of trusting relationships with culturally and linguistically diverse communities around sensitive issues, such as violence against women;
  - > Building the skills and knowledge of community members so that they are more able to provide well-informed input into project planning;
  - > Facilitating the implementation of project plans and initiatives in a sensitive and timely way;
  - > Work with the pace, or level of readiness, of the community to appropriately carry out primary prevention initiatives.
- Further benefits of extended timelines (beyond the community development level) identified by this project included:
  - > Increased opportunity to develop relationships with partner organisations and build their capacity to enhance the likelihood of sustainability post the funding period;
  - > More in-depth evaluation of the project's reach and impact within a community, both in respect of how many people are exposed to the message and whether this is accompanied by knowledge and attitude change. In this one year funded project, where the focus was on establishing relationships with community leaders and commencing activities, this type of analysis would have been premature.

**It is recommended that all projects are designed with a long-term vision, approach and funding to ensure appropriate consultation, integration and sustainability.**

## Strong consultation processes

- Strong consultation processes are required to build rapport and identify risks so that strategies to mitigate these risks can be planned and built into prevention initiatives. It was consistently mentioned by both community members and staff that there are a number of risks in addressing violence against women among culturally and linguistically diverse communities and certain strategies do have the potential to increase the vulnerability of women and children.
- Closely related is the need for a community development approach, including the importance of community consultations and developing partnerships. This is considered as both an ethical requirement of undertaking this work, and also a pragmatic consideration for how to achieve the best results.

**Future initiatives in culturally and linguistically diverse communities should continue to emphasise the values and principles of engagement and empowerment.**

## Coordination with existing initiatives

- While this was not as commonly mentioned, the burden on communities of multiple pilot projects covering different topics each with short time-lines needs to be addressed. Mechanisms by which organisations and government can coordinate prevention initiatives to alleviate this burden and take a more streamlined approach need to be examined and implemented.

**Initiatives that target a particular community group will need to consider concurrent research, activities, and priorities which may detract from or complement the work.**

## Tailored to context

- There needs to be flexibility in the approach, and people/organisations should feel comfortable to adapt the toolkit to suit their circumstances. Assessing community readiness, and recognising there will be variation in readiness within members of a community, is a key aspect in addressing the prevention of violence against women among culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

**All prevention of violence against women initiatives must be informed by a thorough and participatory assessment of community context and readiness.**

## Mechanisms to address broader social determinants

- Primary prevention initiatives require complementary action to address the structural inequalities affecting newly arrived communities (particularly those on bridging visas). For instance, barriers that enshrine inequality for certain communities make it difficult to expect individual attitudinal/behavioural change if these things are not being supported at a structural level. These include: barriers such as visa restrictions that contribute to a lack of access to employment, English classes and tertiary education, inadequate Centrelink payments, and the ongoing trauma of having no security nor certainty about one's future. These structural barriers can often reinforce gender inequalities and contribute to increased stress, mental health issues, and conflict within families.

**Future projects need to consider how structural inequalities intersect with gender inequality and how these can be influenced. Ongoing research is required on the mechanisms, such as collaborative partnerships, by which systemic issues can be addressed.**

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# 7.0 Appendices

## Appendix A. Overall Project Logic Model

<b>Inputs</b>	<p>Time and expertise - Our Watch Project Manager</p> <p>Time and expertise - Our Watch Comms/media support</p> <p>Oversight – Our Watch Evaluation coordinator</p> <p>Time – Project Advisory Group</p> <p>Resources for two projects</p> <p>Time and expertise -Evaluation consultant</p>
<b>Strategies</b>	<p>Expression of interest process for project</p> <p>Establish Advisory committee</p> <p>Develop two projects</p> <p>Develop Communication strategy</p> <p>Participate in White Ribbon Diversity Advisory group</p> <p>Explore work with Settlement Council of Australia</p> <p>Contribute to 'Understandings and actions to prevention of violence against women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities' National Document</p> <p>Contribute to Our Watch culturally and linguistically diverse youth strategy</p> <p>Advocate for Our Watch Cultural Competency training</p> <p>Relationship building with the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA)</p> <p>Promote prevention of violence against women culturally and linguistically diverse through speaking opportunities and advisory researchers (i.e. ANROWS)</p>
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>Model/Resource toolkit</p> <p>Media outputs – newspaper, Television and online prevention of violence against women initiatives implemented within two communities culturally and linguistically diverse</p> <p>Strategy documents (AMES/VicHealth)</p> <p>Relationship building with White Ribbon Aust, FECCA, ANROWS</p> <p>Established prevention of violence against women panel in bi-annual FECCA Conference</p> <p>Increased sector understanding of prevention of violence against women /culturally and linguistically diverse in communities (FECCA, ANROWS, LG)</p>
<b>Short Term Outcomes (12 months)</b>	<p>Increased capacity of culturally and linguistically diverse communities to address prevention of violence against women</p> <p>Increased capacity of services to address prevention of violence against women</p> <p>Increased community awareness of prevention of violence against women initiatives</p> <p>Improved collaboration Our Watch and the sector (FECCA, White Ribbon, Settlement Council of Australia, ANROWS etc.)</p> <p>Improved prevention of violence against women/culturally and linguistically diverse evidence base (Our Watch/ANROWS)</p>
<b>Medium Term Outcomes (2 to 5 years)</b>	<p>Increase in evidence based implementation of prevention of violence against women strategies among culturally and linguistically diverse communities</p>
<b>Longer Term Outcomes (5 years +)</b>	<p>Increased gender equality among culturally and linguistically diverse communities</p> <p>Reduced violence against women and children.</p>

## Appendix B. Logic Model for Whittlesea Project

<b>Inputs</b>	<p>Project Officer time</p> <p>Time of working group members</p>
<b>Strategies</b>	<p>Capacity building strategies with community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working group and training for women</li> <li>• Training for Iranian GPs</li> <li>• Sporting activities and RR education for young men</li> </ul> <p>Capacity building strategies with services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending networks</li> <li>• Increasing knowledge of prevention of violence against women and Iranian community through these networks</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>Training resource kits developed</p> <p>Number of trainings/activities that occurred</p> <p>New networks between services and Iranian community established</p> <p>prevention of violence against women tools (ie social marketing resources, brochures)</p>
<b>Short Term Outcomes (12 months)</b>	<p>Increased knowledge of prevention of violence against women among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working group</li> <li>• Iranian women's group</li> <li>• Iranian GPs</li> </ul> <p>Increased knowledge about respectful relationships among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young men involved in the sporting activities</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of violence against women and community legal education</li> <li>• Iranian community (women and men's groups)</li> </ul> <p>Service capacity increased through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge about Iranian community and prevention of violence against women among service providers</li> <li>• Increased community-service provider networks and relationships</li> </ul>
<b>Medium Term Outcomes (2 to 5 years)</b>	<p>Increase in implementation of prevention of violence against women activities within Iranian community</p> <p>Increased reporting of family violence and violence against women</p>
<b>Longer Term Outcomes (5 years +)</b>	<p>Increased gender equality among Iranian community in the area</p> <p>Reduced violence against women and children</p>

## Appendix C. Logic Model for cohealth Project

<b>Inputs</b>	<p>Community representatives energy and time</p> <p>Project Officer time</p>
<b>Strategies</b>	<p>Strengthening capacity building and skills of community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project planning and training for Indian working group members</li> <li>• Prevention of violence against women training for Indian community leaders/advocates</li> </ul> <p>Social and prevention of violence against women activities in the Indian community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mothers and daughters in law</li> <li>• Newly arrived couples</li> <li>• Wider Indian community</li> </ul> <p>Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciative - celebrating culture and identity</li> <li>• Coproduction – delivered with partners/community</li> <li>• Targeted – small groupings of specific and ready people</li> <li>• Educational – building knowledge in culturally sensitive ways</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>Strengthening capacity building sessions with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders and advocates in the community</li> <li>• Working group members</li> </ul> <p>Prevention of violence against women activities with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mothers and daughters-in-law</li> <li>• Newly arrived couples</li> <li>• Wider Indian community</li> </ul> <p>Prevention of violence against women Training resources</p> <p>Group facilitation resources</p> <p>Prevention of violence against women project development tools and resources</p>
<b>Short Term Outcomes (12 months)</b>	<p>Increase in knowledge of prevention of violence against women and capability to facilitate prevention of violence against women activities among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working group</li> <li>• Indian community leaders/advocates</li> </ul> <p>Reduced family tension and isolation, increased social bonds, respectful relationships and communication among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mothers and daughters-in-law</li> <li>• Newly arrived couples</li> <li>• Wider Indian community</li> </ul>
<b>Medium Term Outcomes (2 to 5 years)</b>	<p>Increase in implementation, practice and knowledge of prevention of violence against women amongst Indian community</p> <p>Increase in understanding about violence against women and respectful relationships in the Indian community</p>
<b>Longer Term Outcomes (5 years +)</b>	<p>Increased gender equality among Indian community</p> <p>Reduced violence against women and children</p>



## Appendix D. Semi-structured interview and focus group guidelines

*Evaluation of the culturally and linguistically diverse Communities Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children Project*

This semi-structured interview is focused on developing a preliminary understanding of the cultural and situational appropriateness of the new Our Watch culturally and linguistically diverse community violence prevention intervention. This evaluation seeks to explore the contextual suitability and efficaciousness of the culturally and linguistically diverse Communities Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children Project.

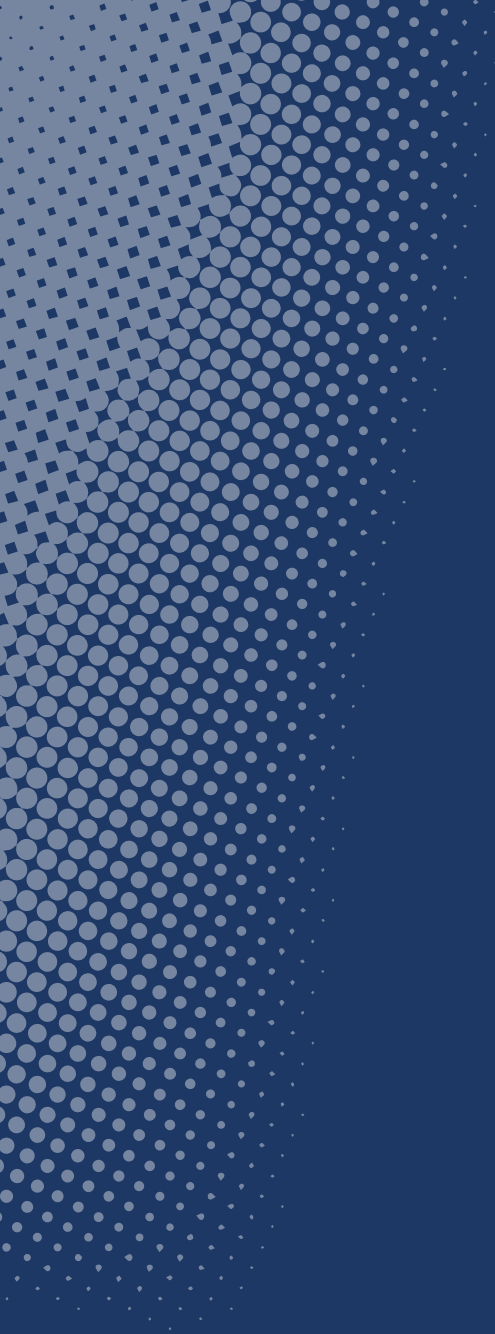
1. What has been your experience of program implementation?
2. Have there been specific challenges or opportunities that have arisen as a result of implementing/maintaining this program?
3. Have you needed to adapt any aspects of the program to suit the unique needs of your community groups/clients?
4. How has this program been used in conjunction with other programs?
5. Has this program influenced any local partnerships?
6. Has there been any development of partnership between settings and sectors?
  - a. Has this program influenced significant change within the context of the community you are working with?
  - b. (If yes) Which factors made this possible?
7. Conversely, has a lack of interest in this program inhibited adaptive change within the community group participating at your site?
8. Can you think of any changes in resources, programs and/or policies that have affected the implementation or maintenance of the program at your site?
9. Can you think of any changes in resources, policies or programs that have had a direct influence on or relationship to the program?
10. Have adaptive changes occurred to the program itself throughout the implementation stage or afterwards?
11. What has been your experience of communication and feedback loops between community groups/sites, health professionals and state and local governments?
12. Have there been particular barriers or facilitators in seeking to engage staff and clients in this prevention initiative?
13. In concluding this interview, are there any suggestions you have about changes or future directions for this program or other programs in this area?

### **Question for culturally and linguistically diverse communities that were not involved in the project:**

14. Do you think violence against women is an issue in your community?
15. In what ways?
16. What do you think are some possible ways that violence against women could be prevented (don't worry if they give random responses here that is helpful in knowing what type of support is required to assist communities)
17. What type of support do you think your community would require to undertake this type of work (e.g. funding, support from health professionals, etc.)
18. Would you be interested attending training on prevention of violence against women? What would you like this training to include?
19. What do you think of the resources produced? Will they help your community address the topic of preventing violence against women and children?







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Evaluation of the Preventing Violence Against  
Women and their Children in Culturally and  
Linguistically Diverse Communities Project

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