

**International Conference on Practice and Policy  
in the Prevention of Violence against Women  
and their Children**

**Adelaide, 19-22 September, 2016**



Issued  
December 2016

# Conference Reflections



**Prevalent &  
Preventable**

Violence against Women & their Children

This report was prepared by Our Watch with support from Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand's Women's Research Advocacy & Policy (WRAP) Centre and the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA).

Suggested citation:

Our Watch (2016) *Prevalent and Preventable: Conference reflections*, Our Watch, Melbourne, Australia.



# Contents

---

Acknowledgements .....	4
Introduction .....	8
Scope and Terminology .....	9
Theme 1 <i>A deeper understanding of intersectionality in practice</i> .....	10
Theme 2 <i>Critical reflection: 'sitting with discomfort'</i> .....	13
Theme 3 <i>Tailoring to context: there is no one size that fits all</i> .....	16
Theme 4 <i>Accountability: for perpetrators and the state</i> .....	18
Theme 5 <i>Community first: grassroots engagement</i> .....	20
Theme 6 <i>Privilege: whose voices are heard?</i> .....	22
Theme 7 <i>Resources: funding for sustainability and impact</i> .....	24
Theme 8 <i>Clarity of vision: Who are 'we'? Where are 'we' going?</i> .....	27
Theme 9 <i>Within and cross sector collaboration</i> .....	30
Theme 10 <i>We've come a long way; there's a long way to go!</i> .....	33
Conclusion .....	36

# Acknowledgements

---

This report was prepared by Our Watch with support from Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand's Women's Research Advocacy and Policy (WRAP) Centre, the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA), and conference conveners (see Figure 1). The lead authors were Sarah Kearney and Yvonne Lay with contributions from Dr Regina Quiazon, Adele Murdolo, Merrindahl Andrew and the Our Watch Policy and Evaluation team. The report does not necessarily represent the opinions of our organisations or the conference conveners, but rather attempts to capture some of the key discussion points from the conference.

In terms of conference organisation and delivery, the Prevalent and Preventable Conference would not have been possible without the assistance, support and efforts of many people.

The conference was held on the traditional lands of the Kaurna people and we respect the Kaurna people's ongoing spiritual relationship with their country. We also acknowledge the Kaurna people as the traditional custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still important to the living Kaurna people today. We express our sincere gratitude to Aunty Georgina Williams for her warm welcome at the start of the conference.

We would like to thank the following organisations and groups for their support, encouragement, and commitment to ensuring the conference's success:

- The conference sponsors whose generous financial support made the conference possible. These included:
  - South Australia Government
  - Victorian Government
  - Northern Territory Government
  - Australian Government Department of Employment
  - Australian Government Department of Social Services
  - New South Wales Government, Women NSW
  - PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)
- Organisations who provided financial support to conference speakers and participants, including by not limited to: the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; the Department of Social Services; the Australian Human Rights Commission; White Ribbon Australia; and Interchange Gippsland.
- The Conference Governance Committee, including:
  - Julie Oberin, Chair, AWAVA
  - Lara Fergus, Director, Policy and Evaluation, Our Watch
  - Emma Partridge, Manager, Policy, Our Watch
  - Merrindahl Andrew, Program Manager, AWAVA
  - Beverley Atkins, InSync Public Relations and Event Management

- The Boards of Our Watch and WESNET, and the AWAVA Advisory Group, for their support and guidance.
- All our speakers, and particularly our keynote speakers:
  - Natasha Stott Despoja AM, Chair of Our Watch and Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls
  - Hon Zoe Bettison MP, Minister for Status of Women, South Australia
  - Antoinette Braybrook, CEO, Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria
  - Marai Larasi, Executive Director, Imkaan
  - Professor Rashida Manjoo, University of Cape Town
  - Mary Barry, CEO, Our Watch
  - Tania Farha, Director, Office for Prevention and Women's Equality, Victoria
  - Julie Oberin, Chair, AWAVA
  - Merrindahl Andrew, Program Manager, AWAVA
- Stream Convenors (see Figure 1) and all who contributed to the design of the conference program.
- The Conference Advisory Group, including:
  - Mayet Costello, Research Manager, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS)
  - Anne Goldsbrough, Magistrate, Victoria
  - Erin Gillen, Senior Policy and Project Officer, Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia
  - Katrina Dee, Manager, Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service, representing the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV)
  - Bonnie Millen, Women With Disabilities Australia
  - Rayna Lamb, Women With Disabilities Australia
  - Libby Davies, CEO, White Ribbon Australia
  - Ellen Poyner, National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)
  - Rani Kumar, National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)
  - Maria Delaney, consultant, Social Change Agency
  - Tracey Currie-Dillon, CEO, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alliance (NATSIWA)
  - Karen Tully, Program Manager, National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC)
  - Helen Dalley-Fisher, Program Manager, Equality Rights Alliance (ERA)
  - Carol Shaw and Judith van Unen, Joint CEOs, JERA International, representing Economic Security 4 Women (ES4W)
  - Pasanna Mutha-Merrennege, National Law Reform Coordinator, Women's Legal Services Australia

## Conference Reflections

### Acknowledgements

Thank you to AWAVA, Our Watch, and WESNET staff, especially Lisa Thomas, Karen Bentley, Cara Gleeson, Loren Days, Loksee Leung, Sarah Kearney, Anna Stewart, Nicola Weston, Jane Torney, and Hannah Grant, and all our conference volunteers, who chaired, hosted sessions and assisted in many other ways.

Thank you to Justin Tumilaar who was commissioned by Our Watch to design the report and to Karen Bentley who created the Prevalent and Preventable conference logo and design.

Figure 1: Stream convenors and working group members



Finally, thank you to all conference attendees, particularly those that travelled from the Pacific and beyond to attend the conference. Thank you for sharing your ideas, energy, and enthusiasm.

# Introduction

---

The Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA) and Our Watch, supported by the Women's Service Network (WESNET), held a three day conference on violence against women at the Adelaide Convention Centre, in September 2016. *Prevalent and Preventable: International Conference on Practice and Policy in the Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children* aimed to:

- Explore the challenges for responding to violence against women in rural, regional, and metro areas and in communities with limited services;
- Engage in conversation and knowledge-sharing from the Asia-Pacific, Australia and beyond;
- Learn from overseas and local examples of improving capacity in challenging situations;
- Explore community-driven approaches to prevent and respond to men's violence against women and children;
- Identify ways to ensure women's safety and perpetrator accountability;
- Examine coordinated and integrated approaches; and
- Strengthen strategies for building local and international movements for change.

The conference organisers structured the conference around four concurrent thematic streams (see Figure 1). This structure was intended to promote issues-focussed presentations and participatory workshop-style discussions. The four streams were complemented by plenary presentations and a number of key note speeches.

The ten key themes outlined in this reflection report emerged from analysis of participant feedback both within and across streams. Conference participants were invited to provide their reflections and feedback via Twitter and an evaluation survey. The value of the conference was not only in the speakers' presentations and the panels that were held, but also in the conversations generated, both during and after the conference.

While we acknowledge that it is difficult to faithfully capture the full depth and breadth of the discussions that were had over the three days, we hope these reflections provide a taste of the complex ideas, challenges, and opportunities that were raised.



# Scope and Terminology

---

## A note on the distinction - and the links - between primary prevention of violence against women and early intervention and/or response.

This conference report, uses the following terms, outlined in in [Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia](#)<sup>1</sup> to categorise the different types of initiatives used to address violence against women:

**Prevention** – Whole-of-population initiatives that address the underlying drivers of violence (also known as ‘primary prevention’).

**Early Intervention** – Approaches aiming to ‘change the trajectory’ for individuals at higher-than-average risk of perpetrating or experiencing of violence (sometimes known as ‘secondary prevention’).

**Response** – Approaches supporting survivors and holding perpetrators to account, such as provision of crisis counselling, legal assistance and police services, longer-term support to lessen trauma and re-empower victim/survivors, and justice responses. Also includes approaches aiming to prevent the *recurrence* of violence (such as men’s behaviour change or perpetrator programs – sometimes known as tertiary prevention).

The *Prevalent and Preventable* conference was largely focussed on primary prevention. However, it recognised that a comprehensive approach to eliminating violence against women must account for the entire continuum of addressing violence - from primary prevention, to early intervention, through to response. Prevention activities can result in increased numbers of women being able to name and identify violence in their own lives, and a robust and effective response system is critical to appropriately address disclosures and meet the needs of victim/survivors. An effective response system is also a fundamental ‘building block’ for societal-level prevention – it sends a message that violence is not acceptable, establishes the notion of perpetrator accountability, and protects women and their children from further violence.

By the same token, it was widely acknowledged at the conference that prevention activities can also help improve our responses to violence against women, by challenging beliefs and behaviours that condone, tolerate, justify or downplay violence against women – beliefs and behaviours that may well be reflected and reinforced through our legal, institutional and organisational structures involved in responding to existing violence.

To address the prevalent and preventable issue of violence against women, a holistic approach is required that builds primary prevention, early intervention, and response initiatives as a robust and integrated system.

---

<sup>1</sup> Our Watch, VicHealth and ANROWS (2015) *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*, Our Watch, Melbourne.

# Theme 1

## *A deeper understanding of intersectionality in practice*

In order to address and prevent violence against *all* women, conference participants were in agreement that *all* women's voices and experiences need to be heard, considered, and valued. It is a relatively simple message, yet it became increasingly apparent during the *Prevalent and Preventable Conference* that this was viewed as something that needs to be improved in the prevention of violence against women sector.

Conference participants and speakers reflected upon the various groups of women who have been 'minoritised' by those with power and privilege. Representatives of the violence against women sector advocated for a way forward in which shared and inclusive processes were central. This inclusive approach included ensuring that any work with specific communities be conducted with the active involvement and ownership of that community, their representative organisations, and the appropriate community leaders, in order to appropriately identify the problems, discuss the issues, and develop solutions.

Figure 2: Panellists on Understanding Intersectionality - Maggie Walter, Regina Quiazon, Marai Larasi, Jen Hargrave and Cathy Vaughan

 **Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 19  
The first session on intersectionality kicks off with a great line up of speakers  
#PPVAW2016



← ↻ 6 ♥ 5 ...

The question 'who has agency?' was a sensitive topic across all streams as it challenged delegates to consider whether current or previous prevention work had allowed space for 'all women's voices and

### A note on intersectionality...

From keynote speaker, the former UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences, Professor Rashida Manjoo:

*"Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination have contributed to and exacerbated violence against women. [...] the lack of recognition of intra-gender inequality and discrimination has led to the privileging of experiences of urban middle-class women [...] The consequence is that programme designs and goals advanced in the interest of women may only reach the rights violations experienced by some women."*

['Special Rapporteur Violence against Women, Multiple and Intersecting forms of Discrimination and Violence against Women'](#)

(2 May 2011) A/HRC/ 17/26, 9  
(SRVAW 2011 Report).

## Conference Reflections

Theme 1 A deeper understanding of intersectionality in practice

experiences to be heard'. At a practical level, it was suggested that this requires practitioners to allow adequate time and resourcing for genuine engagement. In the words of one expert from the education sector 'this means going slow and working at all levels, identifying and building on existing knowledge and relationships, and frameworks and practices in this area'.

In a similar vein, Dixie Link-Gordon and Ashlee Donohue from the NSW-based 'Hey Sis' program provided invaluable advice for non-Indigenous services and workers who seek to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on the issue of violence against women:

*You can't just rush in, you have to [have] slow conversations before you get to the point. If you rush in and try to just help us with this or that, you're not actually listening. That's why we say work with us, not for us – do that and you'll be on the right track.*

Conference participants considered that the same principle should be applied when addressing violence perpetrated against other groups of women facing particular forms of discrimination and disadvantage, such as women with disabilities, women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, migrant and refugee women, various faith groups, young women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) people, and older women.

Jen Hargraves from Women with Disabilities Victoria, Dr Jess Caldwell from People with Disabilities Australia, and the Hon. Kelly Vincent (member of the South Australian Legislative Council) emphasised that when working to address and prevent violence against women with disabilities, it is critical to acknowledge that these women face structural barriers on a daily basis, particularly at the institutional level.

Figure 3: Panellists Jasmin Chen and Lara Fergus

 **Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 20  
"Disability doesn't make you more vulnerable to violence- ableism does, & the system does." Lara Fergus #PPVAW2016



← 1 ↻ 31 📌 34 ...

Structural discrimination and inequality plays a fundamental role in the way women with disabilities experience violence. The same can be said for all women who do not neatly fit within what one conference participant called the 'ideal victim' category – defined as a white, heterosexual, upper/middle-class, able-bodied, English speaking, educated, financially secure woman.

Through the conference discussions, it emerged that there is a need to understand how women simultaneously experience bias, oppression, discrimination and disadvantage along multiple dimensions. Panellists also explored the challenges of discussing the concept of identity in relation to an intersectional approach.

Amidst such challenging and often personal discussions, Marai Larasi, Executive Director of UK-based Imkaan, reminded conference participants that 'we don't have all the answers, nor do we have the whole truth'.

One of the key conclusions drawn by participants was that to successfully put intersectionality into practice, critical reflection on who holds power and privilege in this area of work, including ongoing self-assessment, is required. Keynote speakers, each in their own way, challenged the conference delegates to interrogate sites of power and privilege, including their own. One speaker pointed out that, while everyone leads intersectional lives, it is important to remember that women who have been marginalised due to racism and other forms of discrimination will experience privilege and oppression differently and simultaneously depending on their specific contexts and circumstances. For some, the aim of intersectionality in practice was understood as creating and facilitating opportunities for those who have been denied space to have their voices and experiences heard.

## Theme 2

### *Critical reflection: 'sitting with discomfort'*

---

Many conference speakers, particularly those in the dedicated *Putting intersectionality into practice* stream, explained that within feminist theory, intersectionality has become the predominant way of conceptualising power and privilege. An intersectional approach emphasises that for many women, their experiences of violence intersect with their experiences of discrimination and oppression – therefore not every woman experiences violence in the same way.

As discussed in Theme 1, to properly engage with the topic of intersectionality often requires a significant degree of critical reflection – both of societal structures, and of ourselves as agents within society. Conference panellists discussed how this type of critical reflection can be 'messy' and 'uncomfortable'. Critical reflection, as Dr Regina Quiazon from the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health put it, 'is an exercise in identifying, negotiating, facilitating or relinquishing power and control'. Critical reflection requires acknowledgement and recognition that there is a need to actively respond to the inequalities between groups of women.

**ANROWS** @ANROWS · Sep 20  
 ANROWS **White women want to help #Indigenous** Australian women experiencing #VAW but only in ways that make sense to them. Tracey Currie #PPVAW2016

👤 2 ❤️ 1 ...

Some participants noted that the issues raised by such critical reflection can risk having a 'chilling' effect, explained as individuals feeling they were unable to act due to the overwhelming complexity and level of entrenched inequality faced by many women, the fear of saying or doing the wrong thing, and/or feeling uncertain about how to be an effective ally. How workers and organisations position themselves in this work can be critical to success. As Marai Larasi asserted, 'only when we are honest and brave enough to identify, assess and interrupt our own privilege on a moment to moment basis will we achieve the ultimate goal of preventing violence against all women'.

Marai also suggested that we need to stop thinking about violence against women as an issue that only occurs at an individual level, and begin to incorporate the 'everyday violence' of racism, homophobia, ableism and state sanctioned violence into our thinking (see Theme 4 for a further discussion). Similarly, Dr Quiazon warned that to ignore colonisation, and without consideration and application of critical race theory, we will only continue to reinforce misogyny and racism.

**ANROWS** @ANROWS · Sep 20  
 ANROWS **#Intersectionality is a framework** for analysis. It's only useful if willing to use it critically. @erincgillen #PPVAW2016

👤 6 ❤️ 4 ...

The introduction of various 'isms' (i.e. the structural factors such as racism, ableism etc.) into the violence against women discourse comes with inherent tensions. The conference discussions highlighted the personal challenges that can come from looking at ways some groups of women have been systematically excluded from positions of authority and decision-making processes. Conference attendees were all encouraged to 'get comfortable with this discomfort' as this is an essential part of the social change required to achieve an inclusive form of gender equality. Dr Tracey Castellino encouraged attendees to 'get to know your own sites of power, privilege and oppression. Don't erase yourself or present as a benign subject'.



**Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 21

#PPVAW2016 @MaraiLarasi **We can't do anti-violence** against women work without doing anti-racist and decolonisation work

14 20

With specific reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Dorinda Cox, Director of Inspire Change Consulting Group further argued that the categorisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's experiences of violence within the 'culturally and linguistically diverse' cohort is unhelpful, disrespectful, and fundamentally ignores the unique historical and present-day experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.



**MCWH** @MCWH1978 · Sep 19

**As First Nations people, we do not sit under labels of multiculturalism or CALD:** Dorinda Cox #PPVAW2016

1 2

During the conference, Our Watch held one of several consultations to inform the development a [Guide to the Prevention of Violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women](#). Feedback gathered from the consultation sessions emphasised that the victimisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children was and continues to be perpetrated within a context shaped by a history of racism, oppression, and discrimination.



**Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 21

**A gendered lens is not enough.** We must consider collectivism & cultural determinants to prevent violence against aboriginal women #PPVAW2016

10 21

Dr Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, founding member of the Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council highlighted the intersecting forms of discrimination faced by many LGBTQI people. According to Dr Pallotta-Chiarolli, the multiple forms of oppression LGBTQI people encounter are fundamentally premised on colonial and Christian understandings of sexuality. Similarly, Dr Philomena Horsley from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, advocated that we move beyond an essentialist gender binary in order to make room for the inclusion of LGBTQI diversities.



## Conference Reflections

Theme 2 Critical reflection: 'sitting with discomfort'

There was general agreement among conference attendees that there is a need for further exploration of how racism, ableism, and homophobia can be tackled by the movement to end violence against women. As many of our keynote speakers attested, we need be inclusive of other forms of discrimination and not only focus on gender-based inequalities, if we are to achieve gender equality for all women.



**Dr Anastasia Powell**

@Dr\_AnastasiaP



Follow

[@MaraiLarasi](#) This will be a richer, braver, stronger country if we work together against violence and against racism [#PPVAW2016](#)

RETWEETS

13

LIKES

12



11:27 PM - 21 Sep 2016



13



12



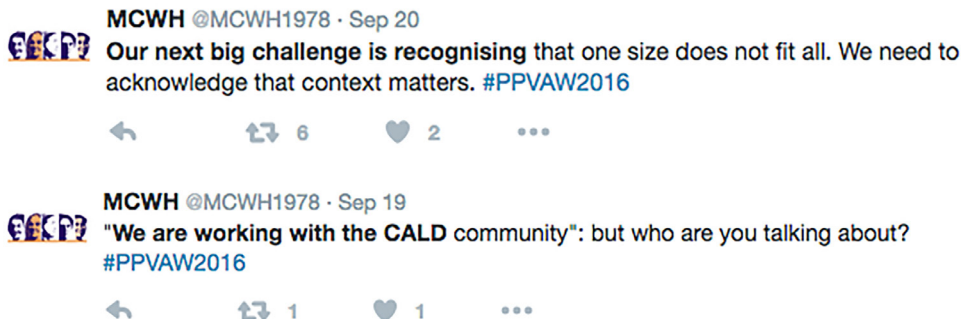
# Theme 3

## *Tailoring to context: there is no one size that fits all*

---

The conference raised a long standing criticism of the ‘universal approach’ to preventing violence against women and responding to victim/survivors of violence. A universal approach (sometimes referred to as ‘one size fits all’) was highlighted by a number of speakers as being inappropriate as it denies and fails to consider factors such as race and culture, effectively treating all women as the same. A recurring message from across all conference streams was that context and women’s individual experiences are critical, and there is no universally-effective approach or solution.

The recognition and acknowledgement of context – including culture, race, history, ableism, age, sexuality and gender – were identified as the first steps in improving the current approach to addressing violence against women. However, when taking these steps, several conference speakers warned that there is a risk of ‘essentialising’ groups of women (and men) – drawing universal conclusions about the experiences of a certain group of people, due to a shared trait. Instead, the conference delegates were asked to ensure that there is sufficient room for the accommodation of multiple identities and diversity.



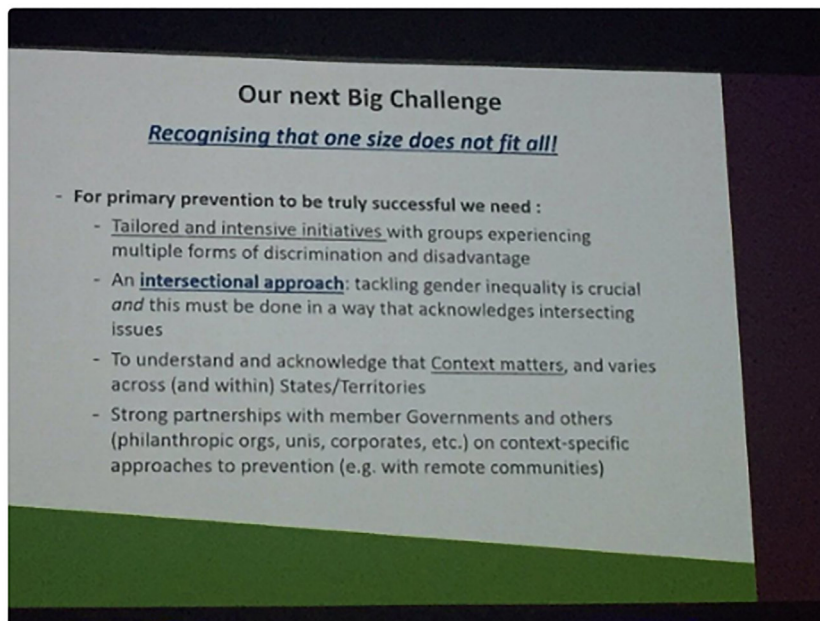
Tailoring initiatives to a diverse range of contexts was identified as an essential part of responding to survivors of violence. For example, as a number of front line workers at the conference reminded us, not all women who are experiencing intimate partner violence *want* to leave their partners. Service providers spoke of their experiences with many women who wanted the violence to stop, but who wanted to stay in their relationships. Within this context, there is a need to acknowledge that women themselves are the experts in their own lives, which requires all of us to listen more critically to one another.



Figure 4: Slide from Our Watch CEO, Mary Barry's key note address- 'Recognising that one size does not fit all'



**Michael Flood** @MichaelGLFlood · Sep 20  
#PPVAW2016 Our Watch: what's next ?



← ↺ 8 ✓ ❤ 17 ...

The need to understand local contexts in developing and implementing prevention interventions was highlighted in the 'Prevention in the Pacific' concurrent session. Practitioners and funders working in the Pacific region - and in international development more broadly - highlighted the importance of programming which focused on solutions *led* by local women and women's rights organisations and firmly rooted in local communities, contexts and needs, rather than programmatic approaches with little or no understanding of local community contexts.

A similar point was made in relation to the process of 'scaling up' prevention programs. In the *Children and Young People* stream there was discussion regarding how the prevention sector can support large scale roll-outs of respectful relationships education, while also being sensitive to local dynamics and shaping respectful relationships education to suit the specific school context. Several school based practitioners emphasised that a tailored approach was critical to best practice.

# Theme 4

## *Accountability: for perpetrators and the state*

---

In keeping with one of the conference aims, to ‘*identify ways to ensure women’s safety and perpetrator accountability*’, holding perpetrators accountable for their violence was discussed across a number of conference streams. Holding those who use violence to account is often viewed as a necessary foundation to primary prevention, sending a society-wide message that violence is not acceptable.

In her presentation on Technology Safety, Karen Bentley from WESNET outlined multiple forms of technology-facilitated abuse. This presentation also showed how frontline workers can support their clients to use technology to gather evidence against their perpetrators, holding them to account. Evaluation feedback indicated that practitioners in the response sector found this session provided them with ‘...up to date information and clear practice implications’.

Craig Rigney and Todd Stokes from Kornar Winmil Yunti spoke about their work with Aboriginal men and the importance of being an Aboriginal specific service, for self-referred or court-mandated men. They were adamant that there was never any excuse for violence, and that this should always be the message given to men regardless of the context:

*A lot of our guys will use colonisation as an excuse for violence ... Or others will try to use culture as an excuse. They say ‘ahh we’re just a violent mob’. And we say well no, that’s not right, that’s not true. We challenge that. And that’s the importance of being an Aboriginal organisation, it means men can’t pull the cultural wool over our eyes – we can call them on it and we will call them on it. They can’t talk cultural bullshit to us because we will call them on it.*

In the *Learning from prevention work in our region* stream, a reported lack of perpetrator accountability resulting from (and exacerbated by) weak and under-resourced law enforcement and judicial systems, was a common challenge raised by practitioners from the Pacific region and other developing country contexts.

According to Professor Rashida Manjoo, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences, a crucial component of prevention is an acknowledgment that there is a correlation between prevalence rates and effective and responsive accountability measures, but not in terms of responding to individual perpetrators of violence. In her keynote speech, Professor Manjoo broadened this traditional concept of accountability which focused only on perpetrators and asked us to also consider the ‘accountability of the state.’ According to Professor Manjoo, governments have the

responsibility to act with due diligence in the protection, prevention and effective redress of violence against women. This includes governments' obligations to assist victim/survivors to rebuild their lives, as well as to provide holistic redress and punishment to those who perpetrate violence against women and girls. When governments fail to do this, Professor Manjoo argued, they ought to be held accountable.

The *Learning from prevention work in our region* stream explored how international frameworks could be used within local spaces to prevent violence against women. The opportunities presented by a number of mechanisms to hold governments accountable when it comes to preventing violence against women were discussed – including the Universal Periodic Review, the Commission on the Status of Women, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants were encouraged to engage with these mechanisms and participate in the many processes which exist to hold governments accountable to human rights. These mechanisms not only help ensure that Australia is meeting its international human rights obligations but also provide a useful connection between prevention work in Australia and our region.

Pointing to the absence of a legally binding UN instrument on violence against women and girls, Professor Manjoo also called for a comprehensive UN treaty, with its own specialised monitoring body, the aim of which would be to create a global standard that could form an educative function for those countries that have not yet taken a firm position committing to the elimination of violence against women. Professor Manjoo concluded her keynote speech with her original premise that the acceptance of violence against women is due to lack of accountability of perpetrators *and* state authorities:

*A human rights approach relates to the state's responsibility to act with 'due diligence' at individual and systemic levels.*

## Theme 5

# *Community first: grassroots engagement*

---

Following on from Theme 3, the issue of genuine community inclusion and engagement was prominent throughout the Conference. As Marai Larasi suggested, there is no one group who has all the answers; which necessitates engagement with a diverse range of women.

The idea of grassroots engagement in the prevention of violence against women received considerable attention throughout the Conference and in the evaluation survey feedback. Several evaluation survey participants explained that in order to do this work ‘correctly’, grassroots program design and development and whole-of-community engagement are critical. This is related to adequate training, funding and support for local communities and organisations (as will be discussed in Theme 7). One survey participant expressed their belief that it is only through grassroots advocacy that the violence against women sector will effectively ‘bring in people from the margins’.

**ANROWS** @ANROWS · Sep 20

**Comment from the floor: would be good to have focus on community development to support voices & leadership from communities. #PPVAW2016**

🔁 4 ❤️ 1 ⋮

Fiona McCormack, CEO of Domestic Violence Victoria, provided an insightful reflection that her background in community development had been instrumental in her current work. She reported that one of the pieces missing from some prevention and response initiatives was facilitating genuine grassroots community engagement, *and* community capacity building.



**DV Vic** @dvvic · Sep 20

**In fact, Fiona McCormack (CEO) says her education in community development led her to her own work today #PPVAW2016**

**WDV** @WDVtweet

#PPVAW2016 @dvvic explain how affordable, accessible community development empowers women & is part of preventing violence against women

🔁 4 📌 ❤️ 4 ⋮

Across the evaluation feedback, delegates frequently cited *community development* and *supporting community leadership* were important opportunities for the prevention movement. In the words of one participant, these strategies go hand in hand: ‘community development is critical in order to empower women in their everyday lives and within

their local communities'. Similarly, Professor Rashida Manjoo emphasised in her keynote address that 'women need tools to become agents in their own lives. They do not need us to rescue them'.



**Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 21

**True words and observations at #PPVAW2016**

**bonney corbin** @bonneycorbin

"It's time for women who have experienced violence to be our leaders and agenda setters." @WHEast #PPVAW2016 #SurvivorCentredPractice

← ↻ 9 📌 8 ...



**WRAP Centre** @GoodAdvocacy · Sep 21

**Voices of women who have lived through #VAW** put face behind stats - up to sector to support women survivors as advocates #PPVAW2016

← ↻ 5 📌 1 ...

It was noted by several speakers and panellists that women's rights and women's health organisations have played a key role in grass-roots community advocacy on prevention in Australia. In order to support greater advocacy influence, the conversations towards the end of the Conference focused on the need to support and adequately resource independent women's rights organisations and movements across domestic, regional and international spaces to mobilise governments to end violence against women.



**Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 20

**Lara Fergus: We need active** independent women's organisations! #PPVAW2016 #intersectionality

← ↻ 24 📌 36 ...

# Theme 6

## *Privilege: whose voices are heard?*

---

A recurring message that was quoted by several conference participants and presenters was ‘nothing about us, without us’. This relates to the question of ‘whose voices are heard?’, and whose voices are privileged in discussions of violence against women. The way violence is understood and framed will change how we act to prevent it, and with this in mind Marai Larasi asked conference participants to consider which types of violence are usually privileged and which are ignored. Several conference participants believed that within the discussion of violence against women and gender issues more broadly certain voices are privileged. Most perceived that the dominant voices in Australia are white, heteronormative, upper/middle-class, adult (i.e. excluding young people) and able-bodied.

In recognition of this, the conference program was purposefully structured around four streams designed to provide space for voices that are often marginalised in the discussion of violence against women. Panel members and presenters were selected to represent a diverse range of backgrounds, whose expertise was informed by their lived experience, prevention practice, research/academia or a combination of these backgrounds. While these efforts provided a platform for some diversity of voices, the evaluation feedback indicated that some participants felt that the conference could have been more representative:

*I’ve learnt a lot from [the Learning from our Region] stream but would be great to have more presentations from other Pacific Islanders.*

*It was excellent. I became aware that there were not many women with disabilities attending or speaking at the conference and so I would hope that this is taken into consideration at the next conference. I am also aware (and understand) criticisms that the cost was a huge barrier for many women, and already marginalised women would not be able to attend.*

*Fantastic discussion from panellists, key note speakers, and participants. I think that further emphasis could have been placed on women with disabilities, and women who identify as LGBTQI.*

*This Conference excluded a lot of Aboriginal Women because of the cost so it was not useful in that respect, however I guess it’s aimed at workers?*

-Quotes from conference evaluation survey

Overall, there was praise for the inclusion and representation of young people:

*Engaging with young people and supporting initiatives run by young people. The conference emphasised the importance of seeing young people as agents of change and leaders NOW, not just leaders in the future. Young people are doing incredible work in this space and need to be supported with funding, resources, and mentoring.*

*Inspirational hearing what young people are doing in their communities and how this can be directly related to their thoughts/ attitudes/beliefs/ideas being accepted as 'awesome' by the change makers.*

– Quotes from evaluation survey

The question of 'whose voices are privileged?' was raised not only in relation to the representation of conference attendees but was discussed as a broader issue that may impact working relationships. For example, Tracey Currie-Dillon, CEO of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance, identified that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be part of the solutions and need to participate in the development and design of programs and services for their people. This has implications for all levels of program and policy design and decision-making. To do this, as discussed in Theme 1, there is a need to acknowledge the structures and processes that have positioned particular groups of women with greater privilege and power while excluding or marginalising other groups of women.

The question of 'whose voices are privileged?' also resulted in some very challenging discussions regarding power and privilege in terms of what work is funded, who is represented in the workforce leading primary prevention and response initiatives, who does the work and who communicates the findings of prevention activities. For many this was a welcome conversation that emerged from the conference. For some conference participants, feedback suggested that these conversations were, at times, too focused on 'identity politics'<sup>2</sup> and were not constructive.

While these conversations were challenging, they also sparked a related discussion of what it means to be an 'ally' and challenging traditional approaches to community partnerships. As Marai Larasi explained, if an individual can sit with the rage, injustice and upset that many women feel and experience on a daily basis as a result of their deliberate exclusion, then you earn the right to be an ally of those women who have been relegated to the margins (indirect quote). As discussed in Theme 2, self-reflexivity is crucial.

---

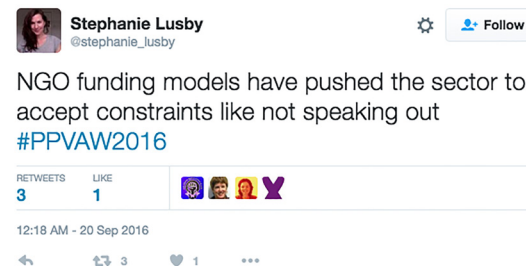
<sup>2</sup> Identity politics refers to: political positions based on the interests and perspectives of social groups with which people identify. Identity politics includes the ways in which people's politics may be shaped by aspects of their identity through loosely correlated social organizations. Examples include social organizations based on race, gender identity, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, religion, culture, language and dialect. Not all members of any given group are involved in identity politics.



# Theme 7

## *Resources: funding for sustainability and impact*

According to Professor Manjoo, building programmatic responses to prevent violence against women requires two things: 1) political will, and 2) adequate resources. The need for appropriate, long term funding was repeated throughout the conference and the conference twitter feed.



Some discussions emphasised that funding, although essential, was just one form of resourcing required for a sustained and meaningful reduction in violence against women. In the words of one conference participant:

*[The main challenge that emerged was] assuming, or believing too many times that funding is a barrier or restriction. If we believe it is lack of funding, then it stops us in our tracks, or stops the conversation. We might seek to keep in mind further ways of seeing what are the perceived barriers, and thus find other types of solutions or steps that can move us forward.*

However, the majority of evaluation survey participants responded that the main challenge for prevention of violence against women that emerged from the conference related to funding. Participants commented on the limited funding available at a state and federal level, short funding cycles, defunding of community and setting specific services and competitive tendering processes that were not conducive to genuine collaboration between sectors and services.



Several presenters also touched on this:

*We want politicians to fund us in ways that are transformative - not to in ways that ask us to constantly evidence why we need to exist – Marai Larasi*

Inadequate resourcing for both the prevention and response to violence against women was highlighted in Australia and in low resource settings. CEO of Our Watch, Mary Barry, highlighted that this was not just a 'perceived' lack of funds, with Australia spending less on prevention and public health services than most other OECD countries (see slide, Figure 5: Percentage of total health budget allocated to primary prevention).<sup>3</sup>

Lack of resourcing was a particularly strong theme in the *Preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women* stream, with many speakers and participants referring to communities in which even the most essential crisis services were missing or highly inadequate.

As will be discussed in Theme 9, a number of conference attendees expressed a desire for more and stronger cross-sector collaboration. However, it was also discussed that as a result of current funding structures and systems, organisations are often competing against each other for resources. Prevention and response practitioners alike emphasised that this impacts on their ability to do their work and threatens sustainability. Advocates for organisations representing marginalised women and groups reported that many dedicated services had lost funding. Abigail Erikson from UN Women urged delegates to advocate collectively to ensure that funding and support for both response and prevention do not become isolated from each other.

On a positive note, several conference participants commented that they felt encouraged by the investments in prevention by the Victorian Government. Since the release of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence report, the Victorian Government has made unprecedented financial commitments to supporting state-wide primary prevention (and response) initiatives. Many participants felt that this commitment of resources signalled a shift towards investment which is more commensurate with the scale and severity of the problem. Similarly, on the first day of the conference, delegates were addressed by the Hon Zoe Bettison (Minister for Women, South Australia) who described several new commitments responding to violence against women and their children in South Australia.

As some participants pointed out, it was unfortunate that funders were not well represented at the conference. Several keynote speakers, in particular Our Watch CEO, Mary Barry and Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls, Natasha Stott Despoja AM argued that the prevention of violence against women and their children makes good economic sense. As illustrated by a recent report by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC, produced in partnership with Our Watch and VicHealth), conservative estimates suggest that in addition to the untold human cost, violence against women and their children costs the Australian economy \$21.7 billion a year. Mary Barry explained that such figures offer prevention

---

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2014, *Australia's health*, Australia's health series no. 14, Cat. No. AUS178.

practitioners and advocates a strong economic case for prevention. Through international examples, the report shows that the benefits of prevention programs far outweighs their cost. However, as some practitioners noted in their evaluation feedback, this economic argument needs to be more strongly communicated to funders.

Figure 5: Slides from Our Watch CEO, Mary Barry keynote address - Percentage of total health budget allocated to primary prevention

## We know primary prevention is cost effective

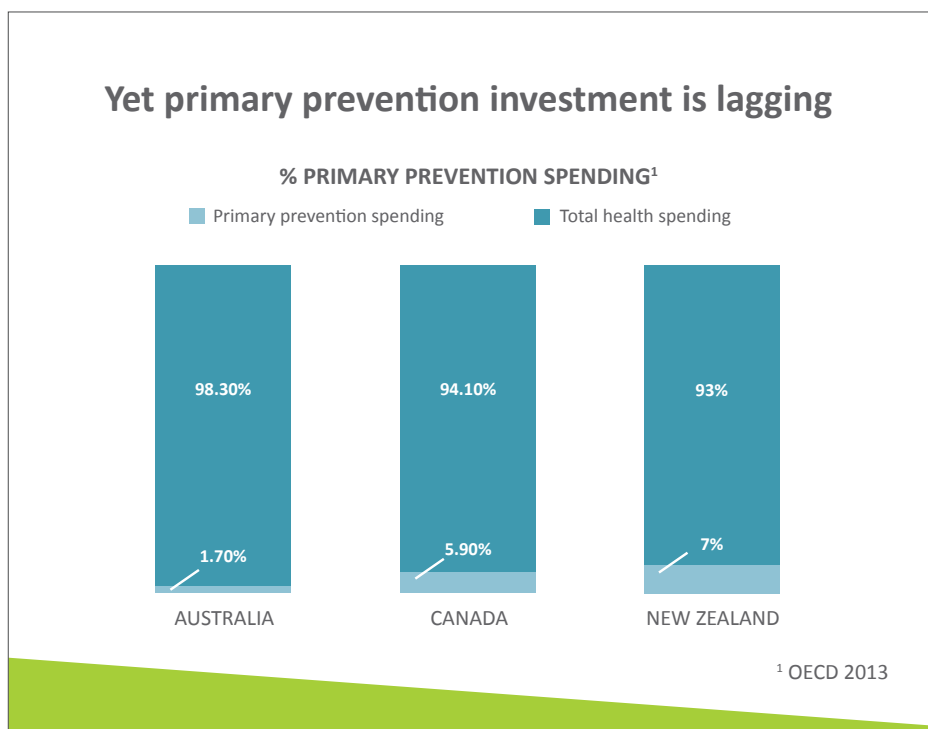
Violence against women and their children costs Australia **\$21.7 billion per year**.

If we don't take action to prevent violence against women, it will cost Australia **\$320 billion by 2045**.

The benefits of primary prevention programs and strategies far outweigh their cost.



1. PWC (2015) *A high price to pay: the economic case for preventing violence against women*



# Theme 8

## *Clarity of vision: Who are 'we'? Where are 'we' going?*

---

Towards the end of the conference, there was an overall sense that momentum was building, but this also led some participants to question where the movement is headed. In the opening remarks of her presentation on day three, Merrindahl Andrew, Program Manager of AWAVA, said:

*I want to address how to build on the momentum we have at the moment, and keep it going: how to push for the social change that is required to meet our shared goal.*

Merrindahl unpacked this question throughout her address, with three themes emerging.

### 1. Who are we?

The conference participants were diverse, representing a range of backgrounds (although predominantly women) from diverse sectors and ideologies. This raised the following questions: who is part of this movement towards social change? Are 'we' the women's movement? The feminist movement? The prevention of violence against women movement? Is it appropriate to assume who is (or is not) part of this collective 'we'? As Merrindahl put it, 'we' may be a term that can't be defined: the movement is a heterogeneous and fluid collective. What unites this group is a desire to change the story around violence against women and gender inequality.

### 2. Where are we headed?

Mixed opinions on the 'collective vision' or understanding of primary prevention emerged from the conference. Many attendees reported that they felt the conference built a collective understanding of primary prevention and its key messages. However others said they were concerned the movement did not have a defined 'shared vision' and needed to improve its messaging and communication. Evaluation feedback on this included:

*We need a clearer vision of prevention that will bring people with us. At the moment we are very confused between tertiary, secondary and primary prevention and are trying to call all this action prevention.*

*We need a shared vision that is not focused on the problem.... we also have to stop thinking we have the silver bullet... we don't...*

[The key challenge emerging from conference was] *The NGO's negative / deficit perspective of teachers and schools ... No culture*

*change occurs from telling people what to do. We need multiple perspectives, a recognition of our strengths and a shared vision to move towards...*

-Quotes from conference evaluation survey

There was an overall consensus that consistent, nuanced messaging about the drivers of violence against women and mechanisms for preventing it would advance the primary prevention effort. Several speakers noted that a united prevention movement does not preclude the necessary debate, discussion and critical reflection on our work. Primary prevention is an emerging area, and opposing views are to be expected and embraced, as Marai Larasi reflected in her [post-conference blog](#):

*Actually we shouldn't even have to always get it right. Everyone else seems to have permission to absolutely mess it up, and still not be scrutinised, labelled and dismissed. We do not all get along, and why should we? Does every white feminist agree with each other? Erm...no! Does every other equality activist agree with each other? Erm....no! So some Black feminists disagree...well boohoo!!!!*

### 3. How will we get there?

For many participants, the real question to emerge from the conference was not *who* (does the work) or *what* (the work will entail) but *how* to take the knowledge and theory into practice?

*There was a real feeling of having 'turned a corner', or taken a 'giant leap' in interrogating what intersectionality means for the prevention of violence against women, and for developing a more sophisticated appreciation of how multiple oppressions affect women's lives. The critical task now is for the prevention of violence against women sector, developing as it is, to find practical ways to apply and embed this analysis in its practice.*

*At times it [the conference] was too theory-driven and didn't move onto practical strategies to take action.*

*[The key challenge emerging from conference was] how to move beyond lip service to intersectionality and put in place real and practical steps to include ALL women and children in delivery of prevention, services and justice in a way that improves outcomes for these marginalised groups.*

-Quotes from conference evaluation survey

While there was no agreed 'path' forward identified through the conference, there was agreement that the necessary social change will require multiple, combined efforts.

*The other thing is that it all adds up. We don't have to do it all ourselves - we can't.*

— Merrindahl Andrew

It was very clear that conference participants felt there was a need for ongoing discussion and collaboration after this conference. This is something that conference participants indicated that they were very keen to engage in.

## Conference Reflections

Theme 8 Clarity of vision: Who are 'we'? Where are 'we' going

[The key challenge emerging from conference was/will be] *maintaining and building upon exchanges between Our Watch/AWAVA/ANROWS and expertise located in the specialist or community based organisations; a key opportunity is that these conversations, or understanding of each other's needs or position has started, and needs to continue to be fostered, and lead to agreed actions, commitments and advocacy in our different spaces and levels of influence.*

– Quote from conference evaluation survey

## Theme 9

### *Within and cross sector collaboration*

The building of momentum over the course of the conference signalled a growing appetite and desire for greater collaboration, learning, and understanding. While encouraging and welcoming collaboration, Antoinette Braybrook, CEO of the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service, warned that true and genuine collaboration means that there be no room for competition between and amongst like-minded services:



Women's Policy Au @policyforwomen · Sep 19

**Clear message from @BraybrookA** mainstream services must work with us & not compete against us in addressing #VAW #PPVAW2016 @OurWatchAus



16



10

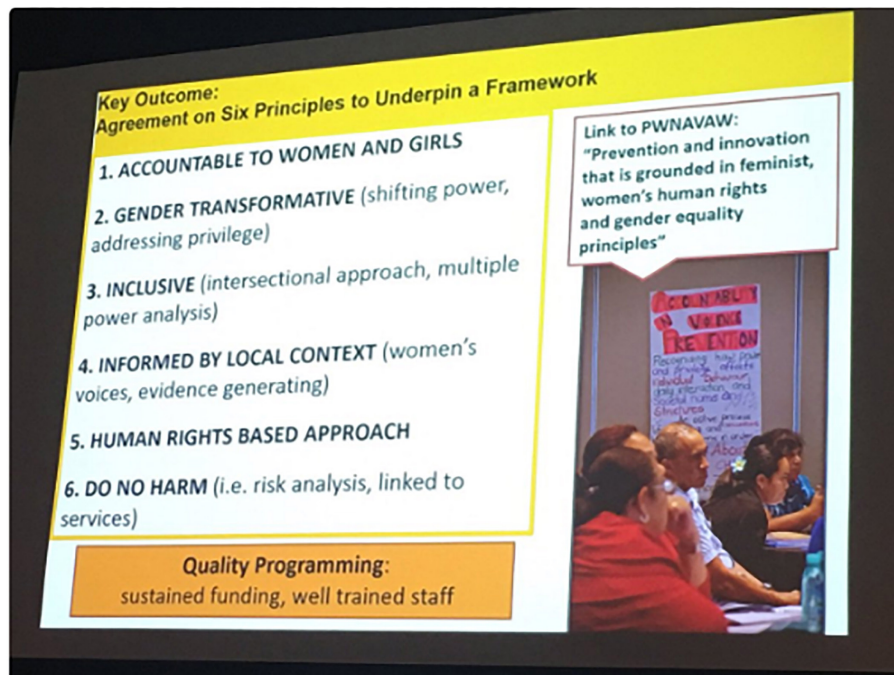


Echoing the need for cross sector collaboration was Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins. Commissioner Jenkins noted that given none of us have all the answers, 'working across paradigms takes courage'.



Women's Policy Au @policyforwomen · Sep 21

**Prevention Framework in the Pacific #PPVAW2016 @AWAVA\_women @OurWatchAus @UNWomenAust**



5



4



The 'Prevention in the Pacific Region' session highlighted just how successful cross sector collaboration can be in achieving a shared goal, particularly when there is a collective agreement on and commitment to principles underpinning the work. Tupou Vere, Gender Specialist at

House of Sarah from the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia in Fiji, spoke about how her organisation uses Christian principles and philosophies to raise awareness and gradually shift attitudes on violence against women. House of Sarah provides an example of the role that faith-based organisations can have in addressing violence against women and in generating high levels of community and key stakeholder engagement in some communities. The work of House of Sarah again highlights that there can be no one-size-fits all approach, and now it is essential that prevention programming take into account the local political and social context.

While the prevention work of a Christian-based organisation was highlighted in the *Learning from Our Region* stream, it was noted that the conference missed an opportunity by discussing a narrow range of faith-based work:

*I feel that there needed to be recognition of all faith communities. There was a Muslim speaker, however there was no acknowledgement of the roles those in the Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, etc. communities play in addressing violence against women. There are examples all over the world of all faiths committing acts of violence against women, but the focus only shone on one faith.*

-Quote from conference evaluation survey

This feedback relates to Theme 6, and was an important reminder to identify not only who is 'at the table', but also whose voices are absent. On a similar note, cross-sector collaboration was identified as a necessary step towards building a shared direction and clarity of vision:

*Change needs to come from so many more people and institutions... [A]s Our Watch has articulated so well in Change the Story, this involves working towards a situation where messages and influences about equality, respect and non-violence are coming from all directions and in all settings – reinforcing and multiple.*

-Quote from conference evaluation survey

Several conference attendees also identified the need to work with men, including perpetrators of violence. It was discussed that an intersectional approach to understanding men's violence against women has ramifications for perpetrator programs. For example, Dr Michael Flood highlighted that white men who perpetrate violence against women often benefit from the privileged position they hold in society, and are therefore less likely to be held accountable compared to non-white men who perpetrate violence.

While the conference highlighted a wide range of strategies and opportunities to enable these changes. Men's behaviour change experts emphasised that just as there is no 'one size fits all' approach when responding to women who are survivors of violence, there is no 'one size fits all' approach when working with abusive men.

While men were underrepresented at the conference (and made up only 5 percent of the 104 evaluation survey participants), several conference participants noted that it was essential for the prevention sector to



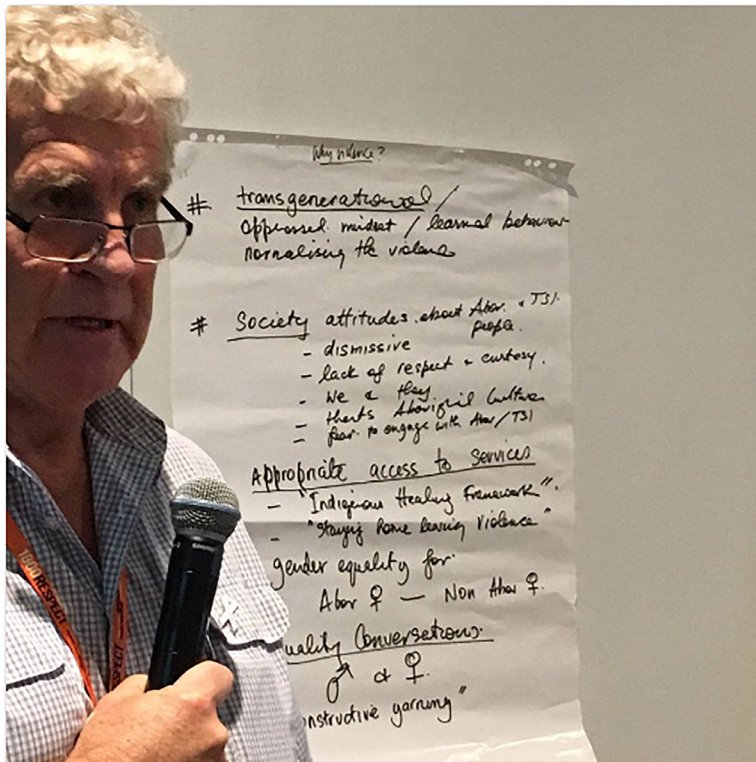
engage men to determine what resonates with men to shift harmful social norms, attitudes, behaviours towards women. As noted by several conference speakers, these norms, attitudes and subsequent behaviours are not intrinsic to individual men, but rather a destructive by-product of a culture that condones and allows violence against women to thrive.

Figure 6: Graeme Pearce participating in consultation session



Our Watch @OurWatchAus · Sep 21

#PPVAW2016 what works when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men? Lots of good ideas generated at Our Watch consultation



1 9 11



## Theme 10

# *We've come a long way; there's a long way to go!*

---

The conference aimed to provide delegates with an opportunity to share and reflect on a range of local and international prevention initiatives, strategies and frameworks. Speakers included a number of highly experienced workers who have spent their careers contributing to the evidence base for how to prevent violence against women, supporting victims and survivors, or advocating for greater political support, funding and action to address this violation of human rights. As Merrindahl Andrew noted in her address, the prevention movement has come a long way and developed over many years:

*Actually – this kind of systemic change is something that the Australian feminist movement has always been working towards.*

However, for some attendees, there was a sense that things had gone backwards in Australia. For example, we were reminded that the education setting had a very strong feminist history, until quite recently:

*Since the late 1980s, with the rise of conservative lobby groups, neoliberal governance and corporate management practices, the education sector has experienced a backlash against the gains made for girls and the marginalisation of feminists in the education policy arena. This has resulted in a loss of gender and sociological analysis and approaches, regarding issues such as bullying and violence.*

–Conference reflection received via email

With this history in mind, there was a united call from many experienced prevention practitioners that we must not reinvent the wheel. There was also an acknowledgement that to avoid duplication, the sector required forums, such as the *Prevalent and Preventable* conference, to share and reflect on previous work. There was a sense that everyone - including programmers and policy makers - needed to be more familiar with what already exists:

*I would also like program writers/policy makers to find out what IS working and look at adapting/sharing successful techniques... rather than reinventing the wheel.*

–Quote from conference evaluation survey

Some conference attendees expressed frustration that work was often 'siloed', with limited opportunities for local, let alone international, cross sector collaboration. Looking at the evaluation feedback, there was a remarkable amount of overlap in the commentary from participants, despite their diverse professional backgrounds. The following quote illustrates this desire for greater cross-sector engagement:

*From the final session on the final day, it did give me confirmation, and want for much greater collaboration, synergy in practice and measurement of outcomes and techniques and approaches we*

*are all implementing, and the ability to share this. Cross sectors can greatly benefit from one another, and significantly support those involved - practitioners and communities. Universalises the issues and efforts we are actually all tackling and working hard to transform.*

– Quote from conference evaluation survey

Conference participants also discussed the need to respond to 'backlash', that is, the resistance or hostility that can be faced by gender equality or violence prevention workers<sup>4</sup>. For some, backlash was seen as an indication of how far we have to go in terms of social change. In some situations, backlash against violence prevention activities could manifest as violence itself. For example, conference attendees working in women's rights organisations across the Pacific region explained that challenging social norms could pose significant personal risks. *Within the Learning from Our Region* stream there was a session dedicated to discussing strategies to mitigate the risk of backlash. These included: conducting extensive community consultation (particularly with women's rights organisations and networks) early on in the process of program design; researching and understanding the target audience; engaging in constant and inclusive community dialogue; and establishing mechanisms for self-care, support, and counselling.

The retaliation experienced when challenging traditional forms of power, dominance or status was a common experience for many delegates. A panel session titled *The new advocacy: working with media and, through social media*, included a discussion of trolling. Trolling was defined as posting 'inflammatory or inappropriate messages or comments online for the purpose of upsetting other users and provoking a response'. Several comments from the audience related to the level of negative and often abusive feedback primary prevention practitioners and organisations receive via their social media streams. Nicola Weston from Our Watch, provided advice on dealing with online trolling and has shared the organisation's social media moderation and community management policy to help other moderators to effectively respond to and manage their social media audience<sup>5</sup>.



**drummond street** @DrummondStreet · Sep 21

Trolls 101 - ERWBR – Educate, remove, warn, ban, report - do not give trolls air time! Great thanks @OurWatchAus #PPVAW2016



1



On the other hand, many prevention workers at the conference viewed backlash as an encouraging sign that the prevention movement is 'pushing the right buttons' and effectively challenging the status quo. Many experienced prevention practitioners reported that backlash was 'an inevitable part of progress' that 'should be expected'.

<sup>4</sup> Our Watch, VicHealth and ANROWS (2015) Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia, Our Watch, Melbourne.

<sup>5</sup> The Our Watch social media resource is available from the Our Watch Website: <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/social-media>

## Conference Reflections

Theme 10 We've come a long way; there's a long way to go

Conference attendees were encouraged that their efforts would not be in vain if they collaborated to address and dismantle systems that uphold and protect power and privilege. Dorinda Cox reflected positively on how constructive discussions at the conference had been, saying:

*This is the first conference I've been to in 10 years where issues of race have been discussed like this – it's really a turning point. It's the uncomfortable conversations we need to have – and we are finally having it, that's really encouraging.*

Figure 7: Nicola Weston presenting on The new advocacy: Working with media and, through social media



**Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 21

**#PPVAW2016** Our Watch's Nicola Weston on how to deal with social media attacks: Don't feed the trolls-their whole aim is to waste our time!



# Conclusion

---

For many conference attendees (including the organising committee), there was a feeling that we left the conference in Adelaide with a better understanding of where we have come from, where we are now, and what challenges await us. There was also an acceptance that this work will be complex, and often messy. As Merrindahl Andrew articulated in her closing speech:

*Doing this kind of social change is like trying to stir a pot of hot custard with a spoon made of chocolate. It can be frustrating and messy, and you might end up holding nothing, but what we're making is pretty good.*



**Our Watch** @OurWatchAus · Sep 21

Marai: intersectional work should not close a space down, but open it up. You've achieved something here and you should be proud [#PPVAW2016](#)



11



17



There was evidence that this conference provided a much needed opportunity for an exchange of information and in depth discussions. From the post conference survey (n=104), 79 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the conference facilitated the sharing of knowledge and practice wisdom. Seventy-three percent agreed or strongly agreed that the conference stimulated in depth discussion, particularly around challenging questions. There were also a number of requests for the conference organisers to ensure that these conversations continued, perhaps with another conference in the near future.

**ANROWS** @ANROWS · Sep 21

ANROWS

We need to keep our voice loud and consistent. We can make progress together. Let's strengthen our bond from [#PPVAW2016](#). @OurWatchCEO



2



2



Looking forward from the conference, there was a sense that there will always be a range of challenges, critics and backlash factors that the prevention movement will face in efforts to end violence against women. One thing that workers in violence against women sector can be confident of is that genuine collaboration and listening will be essential:

*There are various ways to capture existing challenges as opportunities but before we begin exploring the landscape, we need to seek input from experienced stakeholders & acknowledge the need to sit with being uncomfortable. We need to begin the process of listening, accepting real diversity & together work out the best way forward.*

– Quote from conference evaluation survey

*On behalf of Our Watch and AWAVA, thank you again to all conference participants, organisers and speakers.*

*You have all contributed to in different ways to the conference and to this report.*

Figure 8: Panellists at closing session- Monique Hameed, Jess Cadwallader, Kate Jenkins, Rashida Manjoo, Craig Rigney, Marai Larasi, Bonney Corbin, Tracey Currie-Dillon, Maha Abdo, Mary Barry, Lara Fergus, Heather Nancarrow and Monique Hameed (not pictured). Photo credit: Teena Saulo (AWAVA)



**[ourwatch.org.au](http://ourwatch.org.au)**