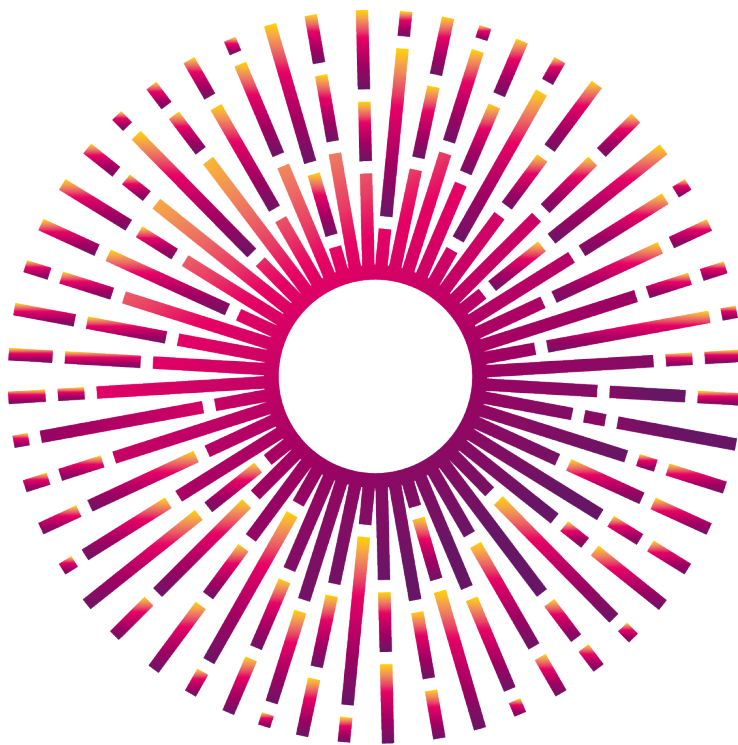




# Process evaluation of the Third Action Plan 2016–19

## Final report

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Views expressed in this report are those of the individual authors and may not reflect the views of the Australian Government.

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## Abbreviations

Term	Description
1AP	First Action Plan
2AP	Second Action Plan
3AP	Third Action Plan
A&TSI	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIFS	Australian Institute of Family Studies
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ANROWS	Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety
AuSSA	Australian Survey of Social Attitudes
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CASVAWS	Community Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women Scale
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CP	Child Protection
DPMC	Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet
DSS	Department of Social Services
FaCts	Family and Community Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
FASS	Family Advocacy Support Services
FDSV	Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence
FDV	Family Violence
FL	Family Law
FV	Family Violence
FVPLS	Family Violence Prevention Legal Services
ImpEG	Implementation Expert Group
JSS	Jesuit Social Services
KWSITH	Keeping Women Safe In Their Homes
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer
MBC	Men's Behaviour Change
MCWH	Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
National Plan	National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children
NATSIHS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NCAS	National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NOSPI	National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions

NP	National Plan
NPY	Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Women's Council
NRAP	National Risk Assessment Principles
NSOI	National Sporting Organisation Initiative
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
NTV	No To Violence
PSS	Personal Safety Survey
Qld	Queensland
RAMPS	Risk Assessment Management Panels
SA	South Australia
SXA	Sexual Assault
SXV	Sexual Violence
Tas.	Tasmania
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UVAWS	Understanding Violence Against Women Scale
VAW	Violence Against Women
Vic.	Victoria
WA	Western Australia
WSA	Women's Safety Package
WWDA	Women With Disabilities Australia

# Executive summary

## Background

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) undertook a process evaluation of the Third Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children. The evaluation was commissioned by the Department of Social Services. The key aims of the evaluation were to:

- explore progress in the implementation of the six Priority Areas that constitute the program of work under the Third Action Plan
- identify the main successes, challenges and lessons arising from the implementation of the Third Action Plan.

The evaluation also reviewed existing data on the contribution of the Third Action Plan to the National Outcomes' Measures of Success and the Indicators of Change.

The evaluation drew on a range of research methods and data sources, in order to gain insight into progress on the National Plan. Methods included analysis of government documentation, a review of relevant evaluation literature, consultations with a range of key stakeholders via in-person interviews and an online consultation tool, and a review of existing published survey data (from sources such as the Personal Safety Survey) relevant to the six stated National Outcomes of the National Plan.

## Evaluation challenges and limitations

- The National Plan and the Third Action Plan are complex and long-term frameworks for social change that are implemented across multiple jurisdictions and parts of government. Assessing the implementation of such a complex program of work was challenging, particularly in the absence of a central, comprehensive source of information about what actions have been implemented.
- During the period of the Third Action Plan, several other significant inquiries and reviews were completed or underway. These resulted in reforms and initiatives that overlapped with the Third Action Plan. This presented challenges in assessing which activities or outcomes were attributable to the Third Action Plan and which were part of broader responses to violence against women and their children.
- There were limited opportunities to assess whether the program of work under the Third Action Plan is making a concrete contribution to the National Plan's Measures of Success or Indicators of Change. There were two main reasons for this:
  - There were limited relevant data on which to base assessments of the contribution of the Third Action Plan to the National Plan's Outcomes. Although data sources such as the Personal Safety Survey provide valuable population-level data, they were not designed to monitor the outcomes of the National Plan and could provide only indicative data on long-term trends.
  - The implementation of the Third Action Plan was concurrent with a range of overlapping initiatives and efforts at a national and jurisdictional level. This made it difficult to directly attribute changes in the findings of such surveys to actions undertaken under the Third Action Plan.
- The lack of available or relevant outcomes data pertaining to individual actions or programs undertaken under the Third Action Plan also hindered assessment of the effectiveness of specific actions or of the Priority Areas as a whole.



## Main evaluation findings

### Progress in the Priority Areas and in the Third Action Plan

- The review of government reports and analysis of data from the stakeholder consultations indicated that a significant program of work was implemented under each of the Priority Areas, particularly under Priority Area 1 (Prevention and Early Intervention), Priority Area 3 (Greater Support and Choice) and Priority Area 6 (Keeping Perpetrators Accountable).
- Across Priority Areas 1 and 3, there was a shared focus on fostering community-led strategies to prevent and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence.
- Priority Area 6 comprised targeted actions to build on the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (NOSPI) through data collection, benchmarking and monitoring and, secondly, to build a practice-informed evidence base of effective interventions for diverse cohorts that can inform efforts across the jurisdictions.
- There was a more mixed picture of implementation and progress across Priority Area 2 (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children), Priority Area 4 (Sexual Violence) and Priority Area 5 (Responding to Children Living with Violence). That is, there were fewer initiatives (or funding allocations) that were specific to Priority Areas 2, 4 and 5; however, some initiatives listed under Priority Areas 1, 3 and 6 also addressed Priority Areas 2, 4 and 5.
- Analysis of the government documentation and consultation with stakeholders indicated that further effort in Priority Areas 2, 4 and 5 was required to fully address the issues identified in the Third Action Plan. It was also noted that addressing these issues was challenging because of the complexity of the issues and the many different agencies or parts of government that could be involved.
- Progress of the Third Action Plan (and the National Plan) was also assessed in terms of its contribution to embedding a national approach to responding to violence against women and their children. Analysis of the correspondence between the Third Action Plan and state and territory policy frameworks indicated that there were significant shared features and increasing alignment in definitional understandings and policy priorities.

### Stakeholder views on key successes and learnings

- Stakeholder views on the progress and value of the Third Action Plan often focused on the benefits of having an explicitly national approach rather than on progress under specific Priority Areas or on specific outcomes under the 3AP. This focus was in part due to the small number of stakeholders with an overarching view of what had been delivered under the Third Action Plan and a widespread perception that there was insufficient public data on which to base assessments of progress under the 3AP.
- Stakeholders generally viewed the Third Action Plan as successfully progressing the broader body of work achieved under the First and Second Action Plans. In particular, the Third Action Plan was seen as an evolution from a 'reactive' to a 'proactive' policy focus that shifted the emphasis towards prevention and early intervention.
- There was a general consensus that the Third Action Plan had been broadly successful in creating a more consistent and coordinated policy response to violence against women and their children across different levels of government.
- A consistently cited theme in stakeholder discussions was the role of the Third Action Plan in facilitating conversation among and between different levels of government. The 3AP was also

seen to have strategic value as a visible shared commitment and, as such, could provide support for policy and funding decisions and help keep violence against women on the national agenda.

- Stakeholders indicated that the national approach inherent in the Third Action Plan provided important opportunities for cross organisational and jurisdictional learning. Stakeholders also noted that formal committees and policy venues associated with the Third Action Plan could enable more coordinated discussion and other strategic, collaborative work.
- The Third Action Plan was also viewed as relatively successful in increasing the visibility of certain issues. In particular, the inclusion in the plan of sexual violence, the interface of child protection and family and domestic violence, and the issues facing services in addressing clients with complex needs was seen as important recognition of the importance of these issues. However, this increased visibility was not necessarily seen to have yet resulted in improved services or outcomes.
- Despite the perceived value of the Third Action Plan as a means for creating a more coordinated national approach, stakeholders also suggested that more coordination and systematic information sharing was required. Increased coordination and information sharing were deemed to be necessary in order to overcome sector fragmentation, to avoid duplication of effort and to enable more effective sharing of insights.
- Increased coordination of efforts to address violence against women and their children was seen as both necessary and as an ongoing challenge, due to perceived 'siloing' or 'fragmentation' of government agencies and services. Stakeholders did not necessarily see this as a failing of the Third Action Plan but rather as a result of the multifaceted nature of the issues and of the complex allocation of responsibilities across different levels of government.
- Stakeholders commonly expressed a desire for more Commonwealth guidance and national leadership in the implementation of actions under the Third Action Plan. It was noted that there were challenges in implementing a high-level national agreement at different levels of government, particularly when there was a range of other factors influencing policy and service delivery at a jurisdictional or local level. Hence, it was suggested that the Commonwealth could have a role in facilitating a more structured approach to implementation planning; this, in turn, could help build shared understanding and knowledge sharing across jurisdictions.
- Although the Third Action Plan was seen to have enabled a more inclusive policy discourse, many stakeholders also perceived a missed opportunity for even greater inclusion of diverse communities in the 3AP and for increased actions to address the issues faced by such communities. In particular, it was suggested that the 3AP could have been more inclusive of people who identify as LGBTIQI+ and gender diverse as well as women with disabilities.
- Stakeholders indicated that although women from CALD communities and from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities were recognised as priority populations in the Third Action Plan, more work was required to engage these women, to deliver culturally responsive and safe programs and to recognise and meet their specific circumstances and needs. Stakeholders did not necessarily see these areas for improvement as a failing of the 3AP but rather as a reflection of the need for continued effort and funding required for progress.
- Corresponding with the challenges experienced by the evaluators in obtaining relevant data, stakeholders also commonly noted the lack of publicly available data on the outcomes of specific activities. In particular, they noted the absence of a national monitoring and evaluation framework for *activities* funded under the Third Action Plan and National Plan (as opposed to the evaluation framework for the National Plan as a whole). This was seen as a missed opportunity that could be remedied in future national actions.

## Contribution of the Third Action Plan to the National Outcomes and Measures of Success

- In a broad sense, the program of work under the Third Action Plan was seen to have contributed to the National Outcomes of the National Plan by:
  - providing national leadership and coordination on primary prevention (Outcomes 1, 2 and 3)
  - building leadership and capacity within communities to develop solutions and approaches for addressing violence (Outcomes 1, 3 and 4)
  - supporting integrated systems and service responses for women and their children experiencing violence (Outcomes 4 and 5)
  - providing national leadership and coordination on strengthening a practice-informed evidence base on perpetrator interventions (Outcome 6).
- As noted, there were limited relevant data on which to assess progress against the National Plan's 'Measures of Success' and 'Indicators of Change'. However, data from the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and the Personal Safety Survey (PSS) were reviewed in order to gain a picture of the high-level trends most relevant to the 'Measures of Success' and 'Indicators of Change'. For the reasons noted above, it was not possible to attribute changes in trends in these data to the actions undertaken under the Third Action Plan or the National Plan.
- Overall, the available data from the national surveys showed improvement in a limited number of the measures most closely related to the National Plan's Measures of Success. The summary of the available data findings is as follows:
  - **Measure of Success 1: Increased intolerance of violence against women.** The results from the 2017 NCAS report showed a relatively small but statistically significant reduction in attitudes supporting violence against women (VAW) in both men and women between 2013 and 2017.
  - **Measure of Success 2: Improved knowledge, skills and behaviour of respectful relationships by young people.** Results from the NCAS 'Understanding Violence Against Women Scale' (UVAWS) indicated that there was a statistically significant improvement in young people's understanding of what constitutes violence against women. However, there remains a significantly lower level of overall understanding of VAW among young men.
  - **Measure of Success 3: Reduced proportion of Indigenous women who consider that family violence, assault and sexual assault are problems for their communities and neighbourhoods.** Findings from the NATSISS indicated that the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who consider family violence, assault and sexual assault to be community and neighbourhood problems was relatively stable between 2008 and 2014–15.
  - **Measure of Success 4: Increased proportion of Indigenous women who are able to have their say within their communities on important issues, including violence.** NATSISS data indicated that the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who felt able to have their say within community on important issues (including violence) remained stable between 2008 and 2014–15.
  - **Measure of Success 5: Increased access to and responsiveness of services for victims of domestic/family violence and sexual assault.** PSS data indicated that there was little change in the proportion of female victims of partner violence seeking advice or support. It had remained relatively stable between 2012 and 2016. However, there was a statistically significant decrease in the proportion of women seeking advice or support after their most recent incident of physical assault by a partner.

- **Measure of Success 6: Rates of women reporting their most recent incident of violence to police, all perpetrator types.** Data from the 2016 PSS indicated that rates of women in Australia reporting physical assault and sexual assault to police remained relatively stable between 2005 and 2016.
- **Measure of Success 7: A decrease in repeated partner victimisation.** Data from the 2016 PSS indicated that between 2012 and 2016, there was a decrease in the proportion of women who experienced repeated violence by a previous partner. However, there was no recorded change for violence perpetrated by a current partner.
- Data from the national surveys also indicated relatively limited movement in measures relevant to the National Plan's Indicators of Change. The summary of the available data findings is as follows:
  - **Indicator of Change 1: Reduced prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault.** Data from the PSS and Police Recorded Crime data show that trends in violence towards women and children are on a slight upward trajectory. There was a slight increase in partner violence against women between 2012 and 2016 but this was not statistically significant. However, there was a statistically significant increase in sexual assault against women between 2012 and 2016. Police Recorded Crime data suggested a slight decline in sexual assault against children aged 0–9.
  - **Indicator of Change 2: Increased proportion of women who feel safe in their communities.** Data from the PSS indicated some increase in the proportion of Australian women who feel safe alone at home after dark. Results from 2012–16 also indicated an increase in the proportion of women who feel safe using and waiting for public transport at night.
  - **Indicator of Change 3: Reduced deaths related to domestic violence and sexual assault.** Data from the Australian Institute of Criminology's National Homicide Monitoring Program showed an increase in the number of female deaths in Australia related to family and domestic violence and sexual assault between 2010–12 and 2012–14.
  - **Indicator of Change 4: Reduced proportion of children exposed to their mother's or carer's experience of domestic violence:** Data from the PSS indicated that there was little change (between 2012 and 2016) in the proportion of children exposed to their mother's or carer's experience of violence.
- Stakeholders rarely perceived major improvement against the National Plan's National Outcomes, Measures of Success or Indicators of Change (when they felt able to comment on these at all). However, these measures and outcomes were also perceived as aspirational goals that would likely require significant effort, over an extended time frame, to be achieved. As such, the lack of visible progress against these measures was not seen as a failing of the National Plan but rather as a consequence of the long-term work necessary to achieve change at a population level.

## Key implications and learnings

- **The National Plan is a long-term change effort:** The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children is a complex social change initiative, with time horizons that are generational in nature. Stakeholders acknowledged the scale of change, and that identifying 'progress' against the National Outcomes as a consequence of the Third Action Plan was challenging. The challenge relates not only to the long-term nature of reducing violence against women, but also to the non-linear relationships between activity and outcome that characterise complex systems change. This recognition presents an opportunity to think more broadly and holistically about appropriate 'outcomes' and measures of success that mark the pathway to the desired outcomes.

- **The importance of coordinated evaluation activity:** Stakeholders identified the lack of a coordinated approach to evaluating or monitoring initiatives undertaken under the National Plan or the Third Action Plan – and a subsequent lack of data about progress or program effectiveness – as a missed opportunity that could be addressed in the next stages of the National Plan. It was suggested that a monitoring and evaluation framework for individual activities or initiatives, and more effective and coordinated communication about evaluation findings would provide better understanding of the progress of the National Plan and more useable information about ‘what works’. If an evaluation and monitoring plan were to be developed, consideration could also be given to mechanisms that enable iterative learning, monitoring, documentation, and ‘course correction’ during the life of a framework.
- **Identifying intersecting systemic and legislative dependencies that enable or inhibit implementing actions:** A number of actions require the commitment of policy areas and systems that extend beyond the community, family law and family violence service systems. The intersections between the drivers of violence against women, barriers to service access and broader structural/systemic issues are becoming better understood, and these policy portfolios increasingly realise the role they can play. However, implementing changes to policy, practice or legislation can take time. It may be useful to map the dependencies and interactions between systems and policy arenas to maximise the possibility of implementing agreed actions.
- **Understanding the roles and needs different players have within the ‘ecosystem’ of the National Plan and each rolling plan:** All interviewees noted the importance and value of a national approach to address violence against women and children, but felt that more leadership and guidance were required to understand the part they played in a national framework. Different players involved in the National Plan also have different roles and needs. For example, advocacy and non-government organisations often used the simple fact of an action having been agreed as leverage and influence because of the kind of brokerage roles they play. In contrast, agencies within governments seemed to require more explicit objectives to help drive their work within and across departments. Strategies such as using the best fit levers available to departments and different levels of government seemed to assist progress, as did having a non-government national partner or national-level driver to broker Commonwealth/state and territory connections, coordinate action, and develop and share emerging evidence.
- These key learnings do not constitute a negative assessment of the Third Action Plan. Rather, they reflect the increasing maturity and sophistication in Australia’s approach to preventing violence against women. They are also a measure of the deepening infrastructure of expertise and capability linking governments, community services, specialist providers, researchers, peak agencies and change agents together to tackle violence against women and their children at the whole-of-population level.



# 1. Introduction

This report contains the findings of a process evaluation of the Third Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children (the National Plan). The evaluation focused on compiling information on what activities have been delivered under the Third Action Plan and identifying significant issues and learnings in the implementation of the Third Action Plan.

The Australian Government's Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioned the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) to conduct this process evaluation in late 2018. The evaluation itself was undertaken between January and September 2019.

## 1.1. Background: The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children

The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children 2010–2022 represents Australia's first long-term strategy to address violence against women. The National Plan arose out of the work of a government-appointed advisory council tasked with developing an evidence-based plan to reduce violence against women and their children.<sup>1</sup> Their report, *Time for Action*, was released in 2009. It recommended that 'all governments, through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), agree to a long-term plan to reduce violence with the Commonwealth taking a leadership role' (COAG, 2011, p. 3). *Time for Action* was referred to COAG, laying the ground work for what would become the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children.

The National Plan is endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). It provides a platform for Commonwealth, state and territory governments, non-government organisations, businesses and communities to take action to address violence against women and their children. Its key objective is to achieve a significant and sustained reduction in the prevalence of violence against women and their children. Six National Outcomes support this:

1. Communities are safe and free from violence.
2. Relationships are respectful.
3. Indigenous communities are strengthened.
4. Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence.
5. Justice responses are effective.
6. Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account.

Each National Outcome has an accompanying 'Measure of Success', as well as targets for all governments in the period 2010–22. The National Plan also includes four high-level 'indicators of change' intended to serve as markers of progress against the National Outcomes. Four three-year Action Plans identify Priority Areas for action and focus collective effort towards the National Outcomes. These plans are developed through sector, jurisdiction and community consultation.<sup>2</sup>

Several key supports underpin the National Plan, as a whole, and the accompanying Action Plans. These are:

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<sup>1</sup> This was the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children. The resulting report, *Time for Action*, was informed by community consultation, existing Australian and international research and research on the economic costs of violence (National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Summaries of consultations can be found on the Plan4Women website: [plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au](http://plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au)

- **Four Foundations for Change** that outline high-level structural or system goals that would support each Action Plan. These are to:
  - improve the evidence base
  - strengthen the workforce
  - integrate systems and share information
  - track performance.
- **Five flagship initiatives**, referred to as National Plan partners (or national partners), which were established to support the implementation of the National Plan: 1800RESPECT, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), DV-Alert (Lifeline Australia), Our Watch and the White Ribbon Foundation.
- **Governance and accountability arrangements**, namely governance structures, collaboration, links with civil society, and the alignment of Action Plans to targets.

Unlike the National Outcomes, there were no specific measures associated with the Foundations for Change in the National Plan. Rather, each Action Plan was to embody a different stage of the Foundations for Change.

The National Plan was designed to be implemented through four three-year action plans, each of which sets out the key priorities for the period of the Action Plan and the agenda of actions and initiatives. In the original development of the National Plan, the action plans were envisaged as moving from building a strong foundation in the first three years of operation through to demonstrable change in the fourth and final tranche of work (2019–22).

The architecture of the National Plan, and the location of the Third Action Plan within it, is represented in Figure 1 overleaf.

## The Third Action Plan

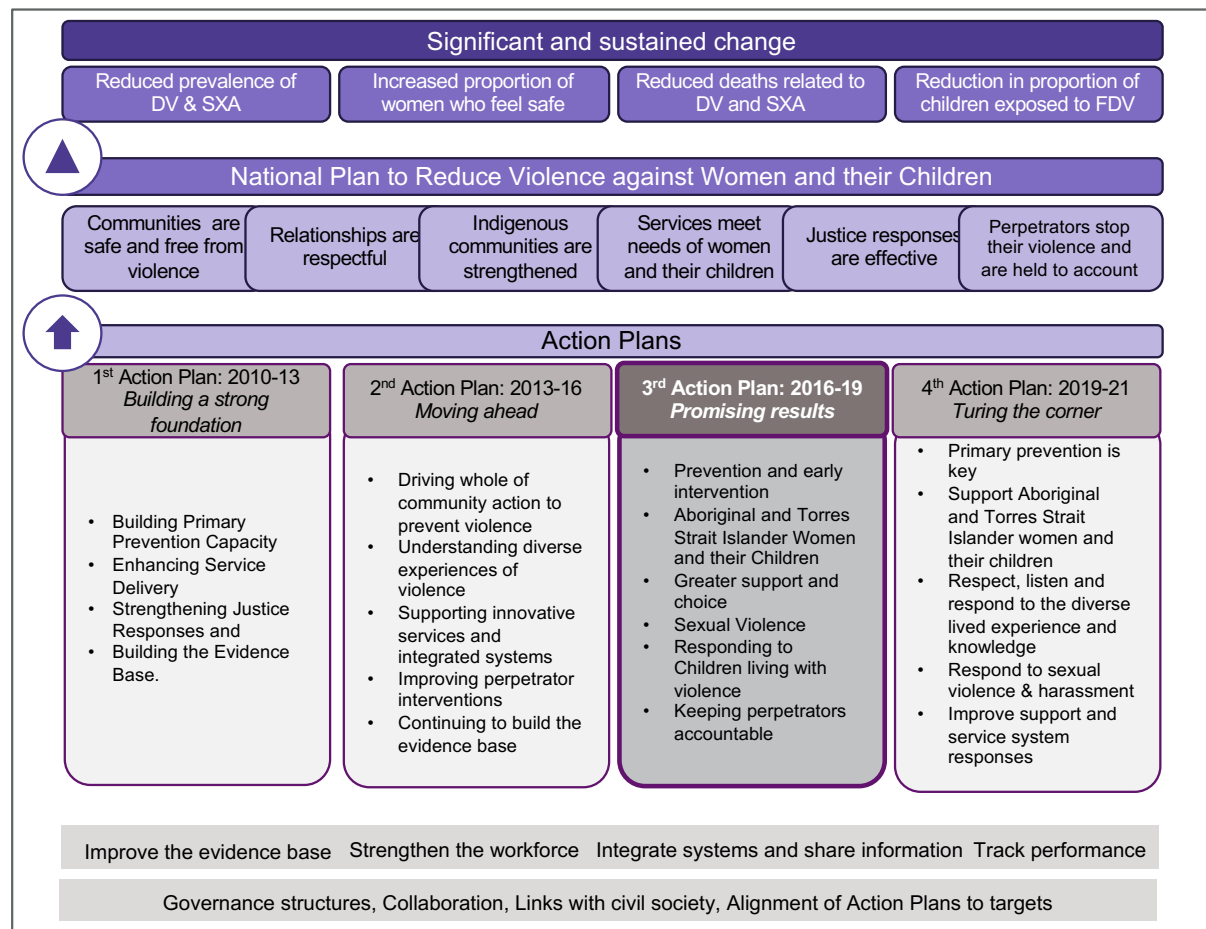
The Third Action Plan, launched on 28 October 2016, represents the mid-point in the National Plan's implementation. In particular, in the National Plan it was envisaged that the Third Action Plan would:

- demonstrate solid and continuing progress in best practice policies, with governments using data of greater detail, accuracy and depth due to the improvements in data collection and analysis
- build on the long-term initiatives put in place during the first two Action Plans
- foster the engagement of groups across the community in supporting and being involved in strategies to reduce violence against women (COAG, 2011, p. 13).

The Third Action Plan was developed following extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders and set out six national Priority Areas for the period 2016–19. The Priority Areas are:

- Priority 1: Prevention and early intervention
- Priority 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children
- Priority 3: Greater support and choice
- Priority 4: Sexual violence
- Priority 5: Responding to children living with violence
- Priority 6: Keeping perpetrators accountable across all systems.

Sitting under these six Priority Areas are 36 proposed areas for action, most with suggested initiatives intended to further these actions.

**Figure 1: National Plan architecture**

## Defining the scope of the Third Action Plan

As described above, the National Plan and each Action Plan have been endorsed by COAG. That is, state, territory and Commonwealth governments have jointly agreed on the overall direction, outcomes and strategies in the National Plan, and to the Priority Areas and actions in each three-year action plan. The responsibility for delivering on the National Plan and underpinning Action Plans is thus a shared endeavour. Whether and how specific initiatives are implemented is determined by individual jurisdictions, likely based on the priorities and features of the jurisdictional context and on the types of policy mechanisms actually available to them. Indeed, various inquiries and reviews into family and domestic violence, child protection and sexual abuse, since 2015, have resulted in a range of new policy reform packages and strategies that link with – but are not equivalent to – the Third Action Plan.

For the purposes of this evaluation the Third Action Plan refers primarily to:

- the agreed suite of Priority Areas, actions and principles outlined in the Third Action Plan document
- the initiatives committed to under the Third Action Plan budget measures.

We note that several other national initiatives correspond to the Priority Areas such as the Women's Safety Package (announced in 2015) and the Women's Leadership and Development Program. In addition, states and territories have implemented numerous reforms and initiatives that also correspond to the Third Action Plan. Where clear links can be made, we have included these efforts in our mapping of activity to the Priority Areas.



## 1.2. Scope and purpose of the evaluation

This report contains the findings of a **process evaluation** of the Third Action plan. The key aims of this research were to:

- explore progress in the implementation of the six Priority Areas that constitute the program of work under the Third Action Plan
- identify the main successes, challenges and lessons arising from the implementation of the Third Action Plan.

Given the broad-scale and generational change intended by the National Plan, and the iterative and cumulative nature of the actions arising out of each three-year action plan, we consider progress for the purposes of this evaluation in terms of:

- the initiatives and actions that have been implemented through the Third Action Plan
- how initiatives and actions align with the Third Action Plan's aims and Priority Areas
- the results and outcomes arising as a consequence of actions undertaken under the Third Action Plan
- how key stakeholders described progress related to the Third Action Plan.

The analyses for the evaluation are structured around the Third Action Plan's six Priority Areas. Specifically, the evaluation assessed the funding distribution and/or program delivery that addressed the Priority Areas. This was supplemented by the collection of key stakeholder views on progress against the Priority Areas (and the Third Action Plan as a whole). The evaluation also aimed to identify the main successes, challenges and emerging issues that could inform future planning of national actions designed to address violence against women and their children through, for example, implementation of the future action plans.

As a process evaluation, assessment of the **outcomes** or **impacts** of actions taken under the Third Action Plan were out of scope. Instead, the focus was on assessing how the Third Action Plan has been implemented and its contribution to the National Outcomes' Measures of Success and the Indicators of Change. This involved trend analysis of key data sources (such as the Personal Safety Survey) and, where possible, existing survey and program evaluation data.

## 1.3. Report structure

This report comprises the following chapters:

- Chapter 2 describes the evaluation methodology, including research limitations.
- Chapter 3 summarises the program of work that has been implemented in each of the Priority Areas of the Third Action Plan.
- Chapter 4 synthesises the insights arising from our stakeholder consultations.
- Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the relevant data against the National Outcomes and Measures of Success.
- Chapter 6 presents the evaluation conclusions and any arising implications.

## 2. Evaluation methodology

This evaluation drew on a range of research methods and data sources in order to gain insight into progress on the National Plan. The methods were designed to address each of the research questions and were intended to provide the most rigorous findings within the available resourcing and timelines while also minimising burden on participants. The methods therefore prioritised secondary analysis of existing data and administrative documentation where this was possible.

### 2.1. Data sources

The use of multiple data sources enabled an examination of what activities have been delivered under the Third Action Plan, an analysis of key stakeholder views on how the Third Action Plan (and its constituent parts) has been implemented, and a review of what the existing data says about progress against the National Plan's proposed Outcomes and Measures of Success.

See Table 1 for a breakdown of the data sources used in this evaluation and the key areas of enquiry that they addressed. Further detail on the research methods and data sources used in this evaluation are outlined in the sections that follow.

**Table 1: Data sources and their purpose**

Data type/research method	Key purpose
Primary data collection	
Qualitative interviews with key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To obtain a range of insights, from different perspectives, into progress in the Priority Areas</li> <li>To obtain insight into what's working well, lessons learnt, challenges and successes, etc.</li> </ul>
Online consultation survey with key sector stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To obtain a range of insights, from different perspectives, into progress in the Priority Areas</li> <li>To obtain insight into what's working well, lessons learnt, challenges and successes, etc.</li> <li>To obtain a broader breadth of perspectives from relevant stakeholders than is possible in the qualitative interviews</li> </ul>
Secondary data sources	
Analysis of policy and government documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To obtain data on what actions or initiatives have been undertaken at the state, territory and Commonwealth levels</li> <li>To understand how funding under the Third Action Plan has been allocated</li> <li>To understand the degree of alignment between the Third Action Plan and other Commonwealth, state and territory frameworks or initiatives that address violence against women and their children</li> </ul>
Review of relevant research and evaluation data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To obtain insight into the impact of key initiatives under the Third Action Plan or National Plan</li> <li>To understand challenges and opportunities arising in the delivery of key initiatives under the Third Action Plan or National Plan</li> </ul>
Review of existing survey data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trend analyses of published data to assess progress towards National Outcomes and Indicators of Change</li> </ul>

## Key research questions

The following evaluation questions guided the overall approach to the evaluation. These questions were informed by the National Plan Evaluation framework (2014), the background documentation to the Third Action Plan and consultation with DSS.

The key areas for exploration in the **process evaluation** included:

- What actions, programs, or reforms have been implemented under each Priority Area?
- Has there been more progress or activity in some Priority Areas than others? If so, why?
- What are the key factors that have influenced implementation or progress in each Priority Area?
- How has the Third Action Plan connected to, and supported, other Commonwealth and state and territory policy agendas?
- Are there areas of need that may need to be prioritised in future?
- What parts of the implementation of the Third Action Plan (including each Priority Area) have worked well, and what has not worked as well?

The component of the evaluation that reviewed data pertaining to the National Outcomes and Indicators of Change was guided by the following research questions:

- Is there any evidence of positive or negative change in relation to the National Outcomes?
- Is there any evidence of positive or negative change in relation to the Indicators of Change?
- To what extent can actions undertaken as part of the Third Action Plan be said to contribute to any observed changes in the National Outcomes or Indicators of Change?

## 2.2. Primary data collection

### Key stakeholder interviews

A total of 32 qualitative, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with Commonwealth, state and territory stakeholders, representatives of peak bodies for family, domestic and sexual violence practitioners (and, in particular, community groups), and representatives of national partners of the National Plan. Interviews were conducted via telephone and, when possible, face to face, and took place between May and August 2019.

These interviews aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the way in which the Third Action Plan has been implemented. Additionally, they aimed to gain the different perspectives of key stakeholders and experts on how the Third Action Plan has progressed (and what 'progress' means to different stakeholders), what has worked well, what challenges have been experienced and what lessons have been learned.

### Sampling and recruitment for key stakeholder interviews

Participants in the interviews were initially identified using a list of key stakeholders provided by DSS. The sampling of key stakeholders aimed to include representatives of each of the different jurisdictions, relevant Commonwealth agencies, the National Partners of the National Plan and organisations such as national peak bodies. Particular emphasis was placed on interviewing representatives of organisations and peak bodies representing ethnic minorities and migrants; in part because addressing issues concerning this population were included as a key Priority Area in the Third Action Plan.

DSS contacted the identified stakeholders on behalf of the research team to provide information about the evaluation and to notify them that they may be invited to participate in an interview. AIFS then

contacted potential interview participants by telephone or email and invited them to complete an interview. During the interview phase, some participating stakeholders identified further relevant participants with significant knowledge of and/or involvement in planning the Third Action Plan more broadly. These additional stakeholders were also approached for interview.

This sample is disaggregated by organisation type in Table 2.

**Table 2: Interviewees per organisation type<sup>3</sup>**

Organisation type	Number of interviewees ( <i>n</i> = 32)
National partners of the National Plan	5
State and territory governments	7
Commonwealth government agencies	12
Peak bodies and national sector organisations	8

Stakeholders were interviewed by researchers with extensive research experience in family, domestic and sexual violence. Interviews were conducted over the telephone, at the participant's workplace or at AIFS. Interviews lasted between one and two hours. The interviews were recorded (except where participants declined this option) and transcribed. Transcripts were saved to AIFS' protected server and subsequent hard copies were stored securely in locked filing cabinets on AIFS' premises.

Researchers used a semi-structured interview guide that allowed for certain themes to be explored in detail and for questions to be adapted to particular participants. The interviews were structured around three main themes:

- key aims, priorities and progress of the Third Action Plan
- the connection between the Third Action Plan and the National Plan
- key learnings, developments and challenges throughout the lifespan of the Third Action Plan.

The interview data were analysed using a framework approach; this was a multi-stage process that included familiarisation with the data, development of a thematic framework, indexing, charting, mapping and interpretation (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002). During the first and second steps of this process, individual research-team members familiarised themselves with the data by reading through a sample of the transcripts and developing descriptive and thematic codes. This was followed by cross-checking initial and final thematic codes between team members to ensure rigour and accountability.

## Key stakeholders: online consultation

To augment the stakeholder interviews, an online consultation tool was developed in order to obtain the perspectives of a wider group of stakeholders; in particular, to obtain the professional views of individuals working within organisations funded under the Third Action Plan. The online consultation tool was designed to collect a range of views and professional opinions from key individuals or organisations involved in the delivery of actions or services under the Third Action Plan. As such, the online tool was not intended to collect quantitative data; however, some demographic information and responses to a small number of quantitative measures were included. In most instances in this report, the findings from the online consultation have been aggregated with the in-person consultations.

The online consultation tool focused on stakeholder perspectives on the role of the Third Action Plan in their organisation and in their sector. In particular, the online consultation contained questions on:

- demographic and organisational information

<sup>3</sup> Representatives from all jurisdictions were approached to participate in the consultation process; however, some were unable to participate in the time frame available.

- the role of the Third Action Plan, and constituent Priority Areas, within the respondent's organisation
- the role of the Third Action Plan, and constituent Priority Areas, within the respondent's sector
- significant successes, challenges or missed opportunities
- the perceived contribution of the Third Action Plan and National Plan in meeting the National Plan's key Outcomes.

The online consultation was programmed on the Lime Survey platform and hosted on AIFS' secure servers. The tool took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Potential participants in the online consultation were identified from a sampling frame of key organisations and/or stakeholders provided to AIFS by DSS.

## Online consultation response rate and analysis

Information about the evaluation and an invitation to complete the online consultation tool (via an attached link) were emailed to 71 individuals who were identified as key organisational representatives or stakeholders in the sampling frame provided by DSS. These individuals were invited to participate in the online consultation form themselves and to forward the email to other relevant members of their organisations. The invitations were forwarded on 14 August and the online consultation was held open for four weeks (until 13 September). Email reminders were posted to invited participants at the midpoint and in the final week of the online data collection.

A total of 59 individuals responded to the invitation to participate in the online consultation; of these, 26 completed the full consultation form. Because the majority of incomplete responses did not provide responses to the substantive consultation topics, reporting of the online consultation in this report refers only to the complete responses.

Individuals from non-government service providers comprised the largest group of respondents to the online consultation (see Table 3). Respondents came from most Australian states and territories. Sixteen of the 26 who completed the online consultation received funding under the Third Action Plan and 15 of the 26 indicated that the first Priority Area, 'Prevention and Early Intervention', was the most relevant to their work.

**Table 3: Online consultation participants by organisation type and role**

Stakeholder org. type	Stakeholder's organisation role				
	Service provider	Policy	Research	Peak/advocacy agency	Other
NGO	9	0	2	1	4
Australian government	0	0	1	0	0
State government	1	1	0	0	0
Local government	0	3	0	0	0
Other	1	0	2	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

## 2.3. Secondary data sources

### Analysis of policy and government documentation

A desktop review of key program documents and state and territory reports was undertaken in order to inform the assessment of the implementation of the Third Action Plan. Background consultation documents for the National Plans, the Third Action Plan and the previous action plans were reviewed in order to gain a better understanding of the context for the Third Action Plan's goals and implementation. Internal documents from DSS, as well as state and territory program reports, were reviewed in order to obtain information about:

- the nature and extent of activity under each Priority Area
- the nature and extent of activity occurring in each jurisdiction
- emerging gaps either in terms of the Priority Area or at the jurisdictional level.

The document review focused on activities specifically funded under the Third Action Plan. However, activities that had other sources of funding, but that were explicitly linked in government reporting to the Third Action Plan's goals or Priority Areas, were also reviewed or noted in order to gain a wider perspective on the influence of the Third Action Plan and/or trends in addressing violence against women and their children.

Although each jurisdiction was involved in the development of the Third Action Plan, and had made a commitment to implementing the plan, each jurisdiction also has its own policy frameworks and response strategies that address violence against women and children in the jurisdictional context. Hence, the desktop review also included state and territory policy documents, reports and frameworks in order to explore the role of the Third Action Plan in informing local responses to violence against women and children and/or supporting consistent approaches and language across jurisdictional boundaries. Analysis of these documents focused on identifying common features and areas of correspondence across key jurisdictional policies, the National Plan and the Third Action Plan.

### Review of relevant evaluation and research reports

The evaluation included a search for publicly available information and/or evaluation reports for programs funded under the Third Action Plan. A preliminary search and review was also undertaken in relation to evaluations of programs that were not specifically funded under the Third Action Plan but had been included as part of general programming under the National Plan (and previous action plans) and listed as 'continuing activities' under the Third Action Plan in internal Commonwealth Government documents.

The purpose of the evaluation review was to investigate any existing data that could indicate whether activities or programs funded under the Third Action Plan or National Plan contained any relevant outcomes data. The evaluation review also examined evaluation materials and other data sources for noted enablers or barriers to the successful implementation of funded programs and other activities.

### Review of existing survey data

The evaluation did not collect primary data on the outcomes of actions under the Third Action Plan or on progress towards meeting the National Plan's main Outcomes or 'Measures of Success'. However, there are several periodic national surveys that collect data on community attitudes towards family violence, gender attitudes and the prevalence of violence against women and their children. Such surveys do not contain measures that directly correlate with the National Outcomes but can provide some indicative trend data.

In this evaluation, existing survey data from the following periodic surveys were explored for data relevant to the National Outcomes:

- The Personal Safety Survey (PSS) provides population-level data on the prevalence of sexual violence, physical violence, partner violence, harassment and stalking, relationship to perpetrator, gender of perpetrator, feelings of safety, and reporting to police. There are three time series available: 2006, 2012 and 2016.
- The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) surveys Australians over the age of 16 about their: knowledge of violence against women; attitudes towards violence and gender equality; and intentions if they were to witness abuse or disrespect towards women. This survey has been run in 2009, 2013 and 2017.
- The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSSIS) collects detailed information on the socio-economic circumstance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people every six years. Relevant survey areas include: social networks; self-assessed health; long-term health conditions; disability; housing; education; employment; and law and justice. Survey data from 2013 are currently available.

The evaluation team used data from PSS, NCAS, and NATSISS to explore key trends in relation to:

- the prevalence of family violence and sexual violence
- the proportion of women who say they feel safe
- the proportion of children exposed to family and domestic violence
- the levels of intolerance for VAW
- knowledge of, and skills and behaviours for, respectful relationships by young people
- the proportion of Indigenous women who see family violence, assault and sexual violence as problems for their communities
- the proportion of Indigenous women able to have a say within their communities
- the rates of women reporting family violence and sexual violence
- rates of repeat partner victimisation.

## 2.4. Challenges and limitations

### Challenges

The National Plan, and the Third Action Plan under it, are complex social change efforts. Their aim is generational change at the whole-of-population level, the time horizons are long and many moving parts are involved. Such complex social-change efforts present a number of challenges to conventional program evaluation methodologies that generally consider whether interventions were implemented as intended, with what results or outcomes and the reasons for this.

The first challenge relates to the dynamic context in which the Third Action Plan was developed and implemented. During the same period, several other significant inquiries and reviews were also underway across a number of jurisdictions.<sup>4</sup> The resulting recommendations, reform strategies and initiatives largely support and, at times, intersect with the Priority Actions.

<sup>4</sup> For example: Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2013–2017); Families with Complex Needs & the Intersection of the Family Law and Child Protection Systems (2015); Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence (2015) and subsequent Reform Strategy; Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland and subsequent Reform Strategy; Roadmap for Reform (Vic.); the Child Protection Roadmap and Their Futures Matter (NSW).



However, this broader context presents challenges in assessing which activities are attributable to the Third Action Plan specifically and which constitute part of the broader responses to family and domestic violence and sexual violence. Specifically:

- There are other initiatives referenced as the Third Action Plan, which were not originally part of the Third Action Plan's actions and that had other sources of funding (e.g. Women's Safety Package).
- There are initiatives that arose explicitly from the recommendations of inquiries/reviews outside the Third Action Plan (or the National Plan).

Where possible these activities have been included in this evaluation (e.g. see chapter 3 and Appendix B). However, it was not always clear if they were directly influenced by, or a consequence of, the Third Action Plan. Hence, the latter activities are largely not referenced in this report. Where they have been referenced, it is to indicate a general convergence or agreement on the most pressing issues in addressing violence against women and their children; however, the list of such related or aligned activities is not intended to be definitive or exhaustive. In short, we have endeavoured to strike a balance between focusing on what the Third Action Plan *per se* intended and delivered, while also acknowledging the broader suite of efforts to address violence against women and their children.

A second challenge relates to how to assess whether and how the program of work under the Third Action Plan is contributing to the Measures of Success and Indicators of Change. The evaluation aimed to consider whether there was evidence of change (positive or negative) in relation to the Measures of Success and the Indicators of Change. Two factors affected our ability to do this.

The first is drawing a causal connection between Third Action Plan initiatives and the National Outcomes/Success measures. Drawing a path of attribution from actions in the Third Action Plan to the Measures of Success in the National Outcomes is fraught. In part, this is due to the contextual factors described above. Further, the rolling Action Plans of the National Plan are cumulative and build on each other. This makes it difficult – if not problematic – to isolate the effect of the Third Action Plan. And, as we outline below, data limitations add to this.

A second factor is the measures and indicators themselves. While useful, these measures and indicators should be used cautiously. At one level, they provide high-level benchmarks to monitor trends. However, they measure long-term, generational change. In the absence of interim and proxy measures that signal change along the way, there is the risk of, for example, no reduction in prevalence rates.

Also worth noting is that the data sources were not specifically designed as monitoring data for the National Plan; they predate it and were designed to provide nationally representative, robust, population-level survey data. To maintain their representativeness and provide long-term trend analysis, there are limits on, for example: the range of specific issues that can be asked about from one survey to the next or the extent of analysis on specific community populations.

## Limitations

As is the case for most research, the evaluation of the Third Action Plan has several limitations. Data availability was the most important constraint. The analysis of what activities have been undertaken under the Third Action Plan was largely reliant on analysis of publicly available reports from Commonwealth, state and territory governments. However, there is no single document listing all activities funded by, or addressing, the Third Action Plan. This meant that although a range of sources were reviewed to gain a picture of activities under the Third Action Plan (and these were supplemented with advice from key stakeholders), the lists of activities contained in this report (and in Appendix B and C) are not exhaustive. Rather, they are indicative of the general nature of activity, and the major initiatives, under each Priority Area.



Further, the reviewed documentation did not always specify what Priority Areas particular activities were intended to address. As such, the researchers sometimes had to infer which Priority Areas an activity addressed. Moreover, some of the activity areas under the Third Action Plan related to changes in professional practice or attitudes rather than funded projects – for example, actions under the Priority Area ‘Responding to children living with violence’ – and, as such, were not necessarily visible in government reporting on funded activities. Reporting on what activities had been delivered under each Priority Area also lacked information on whether such activities were successful or were enough to adequately address the Priority Area and the main objectives of the Third Action Plan. Hence, the evaluation had to rely on the professional opinions of experts and key stakeholders to assess how adequately each Priority Area had been addressed.

Data availability was also an issue when assessing the contribution of the Third Action Plan to the National Plan’s Outcomes or ‘Measures of Success’. There was little publicly available data on the outcomes of specific activities funded under any of the three action plans under the National Plan. The desktop review also found relatively limited evaluation data on the outcomes of funded programs and activities, especially as they related to the overarching Outcomes of the National Plan. This meant that there were limited opportunities for assessing how specific components of the Third Action Plan contributed to the National Plan’s Outcomes.

### 3. Progress of the Third Action Plan

This purpose of this chapter is to describe the progress that has been made under the Third Action Plan. We consider:

- what has been delivered in the Priority Areas and how this program of work reflects their intended aims (as described in the Third Action Plan document)
- outcomes and results arising from long-term initiatives established through the National Plan itself
- alignment between the Third Action Plan and state and territory policy frameworks.

We begin with a brief overview of the Third Action Plan.

#### 3.1. The Third Action Plan: Overview

The Third Action Plan was released in October 2016. Its development was informed by:

- national consultations held in April–May 2016 (see summary report, WestWood Spice, 2016)
- the Final Report by the COAG Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children (COAG Advisory Panel, 2016), which had the purpose of informing the Third Action Plan
- work completed under the First and Second Action Plans.

In the Evaluation Plan for the National Plan overall (Health Outcomes International, 2014), it was envisaged that the Third Action Plan would deliver ‘promising results’ by building on the work of the First and Second Action Plans. Promising results were described as: delivering solid and continuing progress; harnessing greater community awareness and support; and the realisation of results from longer-term initiatives.

The Final Report by the COAG Advisory Panel recommended six areas for action:

- **National leadership to challenge gender inequality** and transform community attitudes, particularly by governments and the corporate sector
- **Empowering women who experience violence** to make informed choices on the support and safety needs through greater choice, more information and autonomy

- **Children and young people recognised as victims of violence** against women across prevention and early intervention, service responses and in developing the evidence base
- **Perpetrators held to account for their actions and supported to change**, particularly by building a world class perpetrator intervention system
- **Trauma-informed responses to violence experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities** by developing a trauma-informed conceptual framework for understanding violence, through workforce development and evaluation
- **Integrated responses to keep women and their children safe**, particularly removing barriers to cross-agency and cross-sector collaboration and integration.

The Third Action Plan is strongly linked with the Advisory Panel's Report, and the Third Action Plan's Priority Areas reflect these six recommendations, which are:

- Priority 1: Prevention and early intervention
- Priority 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children
- Priority 3: Greater support and choice
- Priority 4: Sexual violence
- Priority 5: Responding to children living with violence
- Priority 6: Keeping perpetrators accountable across all systems.

A number of actions supports each priority area. In most cases, there are sub-actions that support individual actions. Four principles would inform the design and implementation of actions:

- Specific barriers and challenges of women and children from diverse groups are addressed in implementing all actions.
- Innovative solutions are explored, including integration and co-location of services and harnessing new and emerging technology.
- Systems, services and agencies intervene effectively.
- Research, evidence and data are used to underpin practice when developing supports, services and the overarching system.

In addition to the Priority Actions and underpinning principles, the Third Action Plan also endeavoured to:

- leverage other significant plans, research and strategies such as the Third Action Plan under the National Framework and the National Disability Strategy
- establish working groups to progress and monitor key actions.

While the Priority Areas reflect the COAG Advisory Panel report, it was also acknowledged that the report's objectives were 'much broader than can be achieved solely through the Third Action Plan (COAG, 2016, p. 5), and that other policy mechanisms could help to progress these objectives, such as the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 and the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children.

## 3.2. Progress under the Third Action Plan

### Progress in the Priority Areas

As outlined in chapter 2, the evaluation considers progress at the level of the Priority Areas rather than the implementation and progress of the 36 individual actions within each Priority Area.

The key question in this section is: *What does the program of initiatives implemented in each Priority Area suggest about progress in that Priority Area?* To consider this question, it was necessary to put some boundaries around what could be considered the Third Action Plan. In this section we have focused on projects and initiatives explicitly named or funded as 3AP measures. We recognise that this presents a partial window onto the progress – and achievements – of the Third Action Plan. The 3AP, and the National Plan more broadly, is a COAG effort. This means that the efforts of all jurisdictions are part of understanding the 3AP's progress. However, documenting and aligning all relevant initiatives is beyond the scope of this project. Further, there are initiatives occurring under a range of policy frameworks and reform agendas that, while not part of the 3AP, do articulate with and support its aims. We endeavoured to capture these broader efforts in section 3.3.

As such, the discussion directly following is not intended to provide an exhaustive description of actions and initiatives themselves; rather actions (and where relevant sub-actions) are 'indicators' of progress in terms of: the extent of activity; whether this activity reflects the overall aims of the priority area; and what the balance of effort has been across the Priority Areas. This analysis is largely descriptive in order to provide an overall summary of what has been implemented under the Third Action Plan. We draw on a range of secondary documentation in order to do this. Appendix A provides a summary of specific initiatives and their correspondence to the actions and sub-actions. Chapter 4 provides more in-depth analysis based on stakeholder consultations.

## Summary of progress by Priority Area

### Priority Area 1: Prevention and early intervention

The main focus areas of Priority Area 1 were to: address deep-seated attitudes and practices that condone or promote violence against women; support local communities to develop their own prevention response; and support early intervention efforts with at-risk populations. Six actions supported this priority area:

- 1.1 Drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and attitudes that lead to violence against women and their children.
- 1.2 Support local communities to take effective action to reduce violence against women and their children.
- 1.3 Support schools and teachers to deliver age-appropriate and evidence-based respectful relationships education to all school children covering sexual violence, gender equality issues and a range of other relationship issues, and tailored to vulnerable cohorts.
- 1.4 Increase men's involvement in gender equality and reducing violence, including through the use of influences and role models.
- 1.5 Embed gender equality in workplace culture and increase women's workforce participation and economic security.
- 1.6 Improve financial literacy and competency for women who are experiencing or at risk of violence.

Our mapping of what has been implemented under these actions suggests that the main areas of effort have been on 1) changing the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that underpin violence against women and 2) supporting local communities to drive this change.

In terms of attitude and behavioural change, key initiatives have been:

- community education campaigns to address the drivers of violence and change behaviour; for example:

- raising awareness about non-physical forms of violence through the No Excuse for Abuse campaign (Our Watch)
- empowering people to undertake action to challenge behaviours and attitudes that underpin violence against women through the *Doing Nothing Does Harm: Bystander Project* (Our Watch)
- empowering adults as influencers in shaping young people’s (10–17 years) attitudes, beliefs and behaviours about respectful relationships through the *Stop it at the Start* campaign (Phase 2).
- prevention activities targeting different settings or populations; for example:
  - the media, through the National Media Engagement Project and Our Watch Award for violence against women reporting
  - sports settings, through the National Sporting Organisation Initiative (NSOI) project (Our Watch)
  - young men from migrant and refugee backgrounds and young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, through Phase 2 of ‘The Line – Never Follow’ social media campaign
  - men as role models through the Supporting Men as New Parents initiative, which provides new fathers with information and resources to model respectful behaviours and relationships.

The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) and the addition of family and domestic violence questions in the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) provide a supporting evidence base to help inform – and in the longer term, monitor – the cumulative effect of these efforts.

A number of initiatives have focused on supporting local communities to drive and implement strategies to prevent violence against women as demonstrated through:

- the development of a Local Government Toolkit that has been trialled in five locations across five jurisdictions
- the CALD – Communities Leading Prevention project, in which 18 projects to support organisations in prevention efforts have been funded across six jurisdictions.

Action 1.3 ‘Supporting schools and teachers to deliver respectful relationships education’ does not have a corresponding specific measure from the Third Action Plan. However, a key program of work under Our Watch is related to creating accessible resources and information on implementing respectful relationships education and working with schools to develop a respectful relationships curriculum. For example, the Queensland Department of Education partnered with Our Watch to develop and trial a transferable whole-school approach to respectful relationships education in a primary school setting. Ten state primary schools in South East Queensland opted to be part of this project.

Action 1.5(b) related to the provision of a ‘one-stop shop’ for resources on effective workplace responses to violence against women and their children to support employers and employees. Our Watch was engaged by one jurisdiction to develop workplace resources for primary prevention, and these are available for use by any workplace. Queensland also developed a DFV workplace package to strengthen support for affected employees. However, it is not clear whether these actions are intended to form a one-stop shop.

Overall, the funded initiatives largely reflect and align with the intent of Priority Area 1, and with the broader aim of the Third Action Plan, to build on the work undertaken in primary prevention through Action Plans 1 and 2 and drive cultural change from the community level.

## Priority Area 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children

A key aim in this Priority Area was to support existing leadership and knowledge bases of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to guide the development and implementation of culturally appropriate initiatives in their communities. A second aim was addressing trauma for children and young people exposed to domestic, family and sexual violence. Four actions comprised this Priority Area:

2.1 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to prevent and respond to violence against women and their children.

2.2 Conduct a study in remote, regional and urban communities to improve our understanding of what it will take to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

2.3 Co-design and develop primary prevention activities with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men.

2.4 Establish improved community-driven, trauma-informed supports that give choice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children who have experienced domestic, family or sexual violence.

A key area of focus has been in Action 2.1, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop local, community-led initiatives to prevent and respond to violence against women. Relevant initiatives that have been implemented include:

- the development of *Changing the Picture*, a national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children, which sits alongside the Change the Story prevention framework
- co-design and implementation of Indigenous-specific initiatives to address family violence, including:
  - trauma-informed therapeutic services for Indigenous children affected by family violence
  - men's behaviour change services (especially for perpetrators)
  - case-managed crisis support (including intensive family-focused case management to address behaviours that can lead to family violence)
  - trauma-informed training to all Family Violence Prevention Legal Services in order to increase capacity to deliver case-managed crisis support.

A second area of focus has been on prevention activities with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men (Action 2.3). The relevant initiatives here are:

- the development of *Changing the Picture*
- Phase 2 of The Line, which focused on young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men
- the White Ribbon Australia Diversity program, which delivered training and forums to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men on family violence.

These areas of community-led prevention and prevention work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men augment the work implemented in Priority Area 1.

A third key focus has been on working at the level of local community to understand the dynamics and impacts of violence, local service needs and appropriate service supports, as demonstrated through:

- the Family and Community Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Study (FaCts), which explores: the services and supports available to people and families affected by violence; community insight into what would improve safety; and the impacts of violence. Eighteen communities are participating in this research.

- wraparound and case management service design approaches adopted to address the needs of women, their children and men who use violence.

As detailed in Appendix B, a number of initiatives are being driven at the state and territory level that support this Priority Area and particularly Action 2.1. This possibly reflects local priorities, context and community needs. Mapping these initiatives against the agreed sub-actions of the Third Action Plan indicates that there is a fair degree of alignment between the purpose of the sub-action and the specific initiatives. However, it appears that there are a relatively small number of initiatives that are specifically intended to address these actions.

### Priority 3: Greater support and choice

The overall aim of this Priority Area was to improve the options and pathways available for women and children leaving or attempting to leave violence. Key areas of focus were improving: accessibility of information; service access for women from CALD backgrounds; crisis and housing options; integration of systems and jurisdictions. Ten actions comprise this Priority Area:

- 3.1 Develop and implement national principles for risk assessment for victims and perpetrators of violence, based on evidence, including the risks that are present for children and other family members who experience or are exposed to violence.
- 3.2 Develop an evidence-based national workforce agenda to support frontline services and improve responses to violence against women and their children.
- 3.3 Strengthen safe and appropriate accommodation options and supports for women and their children escaping violence, including specialist women's services.
- 3.4 Develop integrated post-crisis planning information and resources for use by general service providers and individuals to help women and their children who have experienced violence to recover and move forward.
- 3.5 Improve support to women with disability who experience or are at risk of violence by working with them, the disability sector, specialist family and domestic violence services and mainstream services.
- 3.6 Improve the quality and accessibility of services for women from CALD backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
- 3.7 Use technology to support women who have experienced violence.
- 3.8 Ensure migration rules and eligibility requirements for support services do not disempower victims of violence or discourage them from leaving violent relationships.
- 3.9 Support community-driven initiatives to prevent and respond to diverse and complex forms of violence against women and improve community awareness of these forms of violence.
- 3.10 Enhance services in the family law system for families experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, violence.

The main areas of focus in Priority Area 3 have been on developing integrated, holistic service systems generally and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women from CALD backgrounds – that is, Actions 3.3, 3.4, 3.6 and 3.10, which relate to:

- safe and appropriate accommodation options and supports for women escaping violence
- integrated post-crisis planning information and resources
- improved quality and accessibility of services for women from CALD backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.



While the mapping undertaken of what has been implemented under the action item indicates that these have been the main areas of focus, there appear to be gaps in more specific sub-actions, including:

- 3.6(a) Provide high-quality, professional translating and interpreting services and improve the cultural appropriateness of services and information.
- 3.7(c) Provide technology in courts to allow women to participate safely in judicial processes and expand the use of technology to gather evidence for legal processes.
- 3.8(a) Develop appropriate visa arrangements for temporary residents who are experiencing violence.
- 3.8(b) Revise eligibility requirements to enable more victims of violence to access support.

#### Priority 4: Sexual violence

The Third Action Plan aimed to increase focus on sexual violence as a key component of reducing violence against women and their children. This Priority Area focused on addressing the impact of pornography and its role in objectifying women and fostering sexual violence. Under Priority 4, there are six actions:

4.1 Governments consider giving the same priority and support in relevant policies and programs to victims/survivors of sexual violence as to those who have experienced domestic or family violence.

4.2 Provide improved training and resources to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who are working to respond to and prevent sexual violence in their communities.

4.3 Support frontline services to better recognise and respond to women and their children who have experienced sexual violence, including the knowledge and confidence to refer to specialist sexual violence services.

4.4 Deliver an evidence-based community initiative to understand and counter the impact of pervasive pornography and promote positive, healthy behaviours in young people negotiating sexual relationships.

4.5 State and territory governments to support women and children in rural, remote and isolated communities who have experienced sexual violence to have improved access to the collection of forensic evidence.

4.6 Respond to the distribution of intimate material without consent, including what is known as 'revenge pornography'.

Initiatives implemented under Priority 4 have focused on increasing the priority of sexual violence in relevant policies and programs, addressing the impact of pornography on young people, and addressing image-based abuse. Corresponding with Action 4.1, a number of jurisdictions have also developed sexual violence specific policy frameworks. The two gaps in terms of initiatives under the action relate to:

- supporting frontline services to better recognise and respond to women and their children who have experienced sexual violence
- improving access to the collection of forensic evidence for women and children in rural, remote and isolated communities.

#### Priority 5: Responding to children living with violence

Acknowledging the impact of exposure to family domestic and sexual violence on children, this priority area focused on strengthening the interactions and intersections between systems that are responding to family and domestic violence. It aimed to contribute to implementing supporting recommendations

from the Family Law Council to improve systems intersections and to link with early intervention work under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children.

There are five actions in Priority 5:

5.1 Commonwealth, state and territory agencies to work together to implement supported recommendations for the Family Law Council's Families with Complex Needs and the Intersection of the Family Law and Child Protection Systems interim and final reports.

5.2 The child protection system will recognise that a non-abusive parent is not responsible for a perpetrator's violence against the children.

5.3 Identify and address service gaps and build capacity of specialist and mainstream service providers to recognise and respond to the impacts of violence on children.

5.4 Trial mechanisms to enable sharing of information that is already collected by states and territories about children's exposure to domestic, family and sexual violence and the associated risks between the family law courts, child protection systems and state courts.

5.5 Improve children's safety through the development and dissemination of emerging technology such as interactive games and digital learning activities to give age-appropriate information to children who are exposed to or are at risk of violence.

Specific actions under this priority area have focused primarily on the family law/family violence/child protection interface, with a number of these actions also supporting Priority Area 3; for example, the Attorney-General's Department (AGD):

- funded the development of the National Domestic and Family Violence Bench Book (the Bench Book)
- funded the National Judicial College of Australia to develop and deliver family violence training for judicial officers in all Australian jurisdictions (federal, state and territory) presiding over matters involving family violence. This program was delivered 13 times to 323 judicial officers from 12 different courts, with the rollout commencing in April 2017 and finishing in 2018.

Through the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, a synthesis of the evidence was undertaken to identify a range of strategies (i.e. home visitation programs, behavioural, psychosocial and other programs, collaborative approaches, workforce development and screening and assessment processes) to address the needs of expectant parents, their babies and families in which young children may be exposed to violence and other forms of risk.

Although there appear to be a limited number of initiatives specifically under the Third Action Plan that address Priority 5, we note that there is a significant amount of policy reform and systems redesign that aims to more holistically support women experiencing violence and their children, including across the child protection, family law and family violence domains. As these are initiatives occurring at the intersection of state-based family violence and child safety reform agendas, they are not included here as Third Action Plan initiatives.

### Priority 6: Keeping perpetrators accountable across all systems

A key aim of this priority was to drive the implementation of the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions. A second area of focus was to address service gaps for adolescents perpetrating violence. There are five action items in this area. The key actions were to:

6.1 Work closely with ANROWS to support the implementation of its Perpetrator Interventions Research Stream to improve perpetrator interventions.



6.2 Improve targeted perpetrator interventions, including police, courts, corrections, child protection, legal services and support, behaviour change programs, offender programs and clinical services.

6.3 Improve the quality and consistency of behaviour change programs throughout Australia.

6.4 Improve mechanisms to refer perpetrators to appropriate interventions early based on individual risk factors.

6.5 Progressively design, trial and evaluate innovative models of perpetrator interventions across community and correctional settings to understand what works for different groups.

The main focus of initiatives in this priority area has been on: strengthening the evidence base on perpetrator interventions by designing, trialling and evaluating perpetrator interventions for diverse cohorts including adolescents, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, men from CALD backgrounds, and men in rural and remote locations.

Benchmark reporting by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) supports the relevance of National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions. A number of jurisdictions refer to the Outcome Standards in their policy and guidance documentation for perpetrator interventions (e.g. WA) and in funding/grant applications (e.g. NT).

## Findings from other evaluations on initiatives delivered under the Priority Areas or the National Plan

The achievement of stated goals or outcomes at the program level – provided enough such program evaluation data are available – is also potentially an indicator of how well the Third Action Plan was implemented or achieved its stated goals. Of the 66 discrete Third Action Plan initiatives noted for this report,<sup>5</sup> we found 37 where there was evidence that evaluation or other research was planned (see Appendix B and D). However, little of this evaluation data was available for this review.

The main reasons why evaluation data were not available relate to the evaluations not having been publicly released or not having been completed (with some scheduled for delivery after the end of the Third Action Plan). The lack of relevant outcomes data means that there are limited opportunities for assessing what the outcomes or successful components of the Third Action Plan and the National Plan are.

The available evaluation data (interim campaign results) regarding public prevention campaigns such as Doing Nothing Does Harm, No Excuse for Abuse indicate that these campaigns have had good reach, are reaching the right audiences and have campaign messages that are clear and affecting attitudes. The evaluation of 1800RESPECT (KPMG, 2016) has informed the redesign of the operating model in order to improve call wait times and call abandonment rates.

## Summary of progress across Priority Areas

The previous sections aimed to summarise what had been implemented in each Priority Area and what the main areas' focus had been. In this section we look across the Priority Areas to consider the balance of effort across the Priority Areas.

Based on our review of the secondary data, it is clear that a significant program of work has been implemented under each of the Priority Areas, particularly under Priorities 1, 3 and 6, corresponding to the Prevention and Early Intervention, Greater Support and Choice, and Keeping Perpetrators Accountable respectively.

<sup>5</sup> This excludes research initiatives under the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework.

Across Priorities 1 and 3, there has been a shared focus on fostering community-led initiatives to prevent and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence. These actions have taken the form of:

- working at the local government level to develop and trial toolkits for prevention
- working with, and building the capacity of, organisations servicing CALD communities to drive long-term changes in community awareness, attitudes and behaviours
- training and building the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and men from CALD communities to represent the White Ribbon campaign in their communities
- co-designing Indigenous-specific initiatives to improve the accessibility of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities responding to family violence
- supporting CALD women living in regional areas who are experiencing, or are at risk of, family and domestic violence or sexual assault to access support services.

Priority Area 6 comprises fairly targeted actions to firstly build on the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (NOSPI) through data collection, benchmarking and monitoring, and secondly, to build a practice-informed evidence base of effective interventions for diverse cohorts that can inform efforts across the jurisdictions.

In relation to Priority Areas 2, 4 and 5, the available information suggests a more mixed picture. A number of actions have been implemented under Priority Area 2. Several of these actions also address Priority Areas 1, 3 and 6. This suggests some integration of initiatives addressing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

The need to more explicitly address sexual violence – within and beyond intimate relationships – was a key message in the consultations. To an extent, primary prevention efforts in Priority 1 address the underlying determinants associated with sexual violence. In Priority Area 4, initiatives have focused on addressing: the impacts of pornography on young people; and responding to forms of image-based abuse. Gaps in this Priority Area remain, particularly in relation to:

- supporting frontline services to better recognise and respond to women and their children who have experienced sexual violence
- improving access to the collection of forensic evidence in rural, remote and isolated communities.

Possible reasons for these gaps relate to:

- the many forms that sexual violence can take over the life course, with the result that key mechanisms for responding to sexual violence rest with diverse agencies and policy areas (e.g. statutory child protection, law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, human services)
- identifying the diversity of non-specialist frontline services and workers likely to be key touch points for survivors of sexual violence
- how the intersections between sexual assault services, forensic examiners (i.e. who can collect forensic evidence and in what settings), police, and criminal justice have been configured by the jurisdictions.

These factors are likely to present challenges to implementing actions at the state and territory levels.

The majority of initiatives identified as relevant to Priority Area 5 are also initiatives under Priority Area 3. That is, there are limited initiatives under the Third Action Plan that are specific to Priority Area 5. Further, it is unclear what actions have been taken to address the original aim of linking with early intervention work under Strategy 1 of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children.

However, we note that significant investments have been made by jurisdictional governments to better integrate child safety and family violence interventions in response not only to the National Plan but also in response to the many family law and state and territory level inquiries into systems responses

to domestic violence and child safety. A number of jurisdictions are implementing child and family reform strategies that are consistent with Action 5.2

### 3.3. Broader measures of progress under the Third Action Plan

In addition to the initiatives that were delivered and/or directly funded under the Third Action Plan, progress can also be assessed via the examination of activities that continued the work of previous Action Plans. The Third Action Plan also potentially had reach beyond funded initiatives by helping to shape or influence the policy frameworks of state and territory governments across Australia; this, in turn, can show the extent to which this national approach has facilitated a more cohesive and consistent approach to addressing violence against women and their children (while still taking local concerns and contexts into account). Further, the states and territories have undertaken a broad range of specific initiatives to address family and domestic violence that, although not necessarily directly funded under the Third Action plan, did address or correspond to the National Plan/s main outcomes and/or the Priority Areas of the National Plan. These broader aspects of the Third Action Plan are discussed in the sections that follow.

#### Outcomes arising from long-term initiatives

It was envisaged that the benefits of long-term initiatives put into place during the first two Action Plans would be realised through the Third Action Plan, specifically that the Third Action Plan would ‘deliver solid and continuing progress’ in best practice policies and in growing the data and evidence base. Long-term initiatives established through the First and Second Action Plans include:

- continued investment in the development of the evidence base on the dynamics and drivers of violence against women
- building knowledge and capacity in primary prevention
- enhancing frontline service responses to domestic violence and sexual assault.

The results emerging from these long-term initiatives are briefly described in the sections below.

#### Strengthening the evidence base

Significant investment has been made in developing the research and evidence relating to violence against women and their children. The key initiatives are briefly described below.

**National research leadership and coordination** through ANROWS. ANROWS was established to provide national leadership on the production and communication of research on family, domestic violence, and sexual violence. Since the first action plan, it has developed a National Research Agenda, and oversees five streams of research (core research, perpetrator interventions, action research and evaluation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, and community attitudes).

**Rigorous, nationally representative data about the extent of violence against women** in Australia through the Personal Safety Survey (PSS). First conducted in 2005 the National Plan has funded the PSS 2012, 2016, 2020 (in development). The PSS is a comprehensive victimisation survey, providing detailed, nationally representative data on the prevalence and dynamics of violence. The rigor in its design and delivery means that the PSS is regarded as a credible and trusted source of information about how many women (and men) in the Australian community have experienced violence, in what kinds of relationships and what some of the impacts of this violence are. ANROWS was funded to undertake additional analysis of the 2012 survey, which provided deeper insight into the dynamics of violence against women in Australia. Three – and soon to be four – series of the survey enable important

trend analysis on key measures such as the changes in the proportion of women experiencing different forms of violence, and help-seeking and reporting behaviours.

**Rigorous, nationally representative data about community attitudes** that underpin violence against women through the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS). NCAS was initially undertaken in 1995. Commonwealth funding was made available for a second NCAS survey, which was conducted in 2009, and subsequently for surveys to be run in 2013 and 2017. This makes NCAS the longest-running international survey on community attitudes on violence against women. Again, multiple series of the survey enable important trend analysis to be undertaken on attitudes to violence against women, influences on these attitudes, such as the role that attitudes to gender equity plays, and bystander intentions.

**Strengthening administrative data collections across systems and jurisdictions** through the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework. The Third Action Plan has built on prior investment in strengthening and harmonising data collected via a range of administrative data sources that record information about victims and perpetrators, their experiences and their service engagement (e.g. recorded crime, health systems data, justice/court data). Significant work was undertaken in the previous Action Plans to define the data gaps and challenges across a range of agencies that are touch points for both victims and perpetrators of family domestic and sexual violence, and to work with jurisdictions to systematise and standardise how information is collected and categorised. The Third Action Plan built on this by: adding FDSV flags to a number of data collections (e.g. emergency department data, ABS Recorded Crime, Victims Collection and Criminal Courts Collection); updating the Directory of FDSV statistics; and assessing the nature, quality and coverage of the family and domestic violence data collected and recorded in the legal assistance sector.

The Third Action Plan also funded a range of other projects that:

- build on existing research (such as additional analysis of data collected through the Australian Longitudinal Women's Health Survey)
- test the feasibility of adding specific family violence questions to existing surveys (e.g. the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS))
- or
- harness particular expertise and research capability (such as ANUs FaCts research project).

## Building knowledge, leadership and capacity in primary prevention

A key focus of the National Plan – and each Action Plan under it – has been to address the underlying factors that enable FDSV to occur in the first instance (i.e. primary prevention). The Second Action Plan 2013–2016 established Our Watch as the national organisation to drive primary prevention efforts. In that period, Our Watch developed *Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Australia*. The framework is an evidence-informed national resource that: provides an explanatory model of violence against women; identifies key actions and strategies diverse organisations can take as primary prevention agents; and outlines what kind of 'prevention infrastructure' is required to drive sustainable change.

Under the Third Action Plan, Our Watch built on this work with *Changing the Picture*, a resource to support prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, it is a companion guide to *Change the Story*. Our Watch also developed *Counting on Change*, which is a comprehensive resource on how to monitor and measure progress in primary prevention in the medium and longer term. Other results arising from the investment in Our Watch include:

- The Line social media campaign for 12–17 year olds, which has been evaluated, increasingly refined and adapted for different cohorts through the Third Action Plan
- resources, toolkits and guidance material built on specific projects Our Watch has been involved in (e.g. Respectful Relationships Education in Schools).

In addition to continued national leadership on primary prevention, the Third Action Plan enabled the White Ribbon Foundation to: build leadership capacity with young people in CALD communities; deliver awareness raising and bystander training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men; and evaluate and strengthen the Workplace Accreditation Program.

## Enhancing frontline service responses to domestic violence and sexual assault

Two flagship initiatives established at the outset of the National Plan addressed the provision of specialist services for women experiencing violence:

- the establishment of a national telephone helpline, 1800RESPECT
- DV-Alert, which offers free, national training to frontline community workers.

Since its establishment, calls to 1800RESPECT have steadily increased. In addition to making operational changes to the service model to accommodate these increases, the service has:

- provided support for frontline workers through online resources such as digital frontline workers toolkit, resources and webinars
- innovated with technology such as the DAISY app (providing local information on family and domestic violence and sexual assault services) and the SUNNY app (which supports women with a disability)
- developed web content on a range of issues relating to family, domestic and sexual violence aimed at the general public.

Under the Third Action Plan, DV-Alert expanded its training package to develop and rollout accredited training for workers from the disability sector. This training is now part of the overall suite of training available to workers. Building on this, DV-Alert adapted the face-to-face training into an eLearning module.

## Shared policy alignment and language across jurisdictions

This section explores some of the ways in which the national approach embodied by the National Plan, and by the Third Action Plan, has facilitated (or influenced) shared understandings and priorities when addressing violence against women and their children. It does so by exploring the shared features of the Third Action Plan and jurisdictional policies and policy frameworks. As such, it attempts to assess the role of the Third Action Plan as a framing device for efforts to address violence (and to move beyond solely looking at what programs or activities were delivered under the Third Action Plan).

The National Plan and the four associated Action Plans were jointly developed and endorsed by the Commonwealth and state and territory governments through COAG; ownership of this national approach is shared by all jurisdictions and facilitated by ImpEG. However, state and territory governments also develop policies and fund initiatives within their individual jurisdictions that reflect state and territory specific issues, existing state or territory policy frameworks and the needs of local service sectors and population groups. This approach is appropriate as each state and territory (a) develops its own legal and justice responses to violence against women and children as well as sharing Commonwealth legislation and policies; and (b) is best placed to address state and territory specific issues. However, it also means that there is the possibility for divergence between nationally agreed



priorities and those of different state and territory levels as well as differences arising as a result of different definitions of violence against women and different ways of responding to violence.

Nonetheless, our analysis of jurisdictional policies (i.e. the policies developed by state and territory governments to address jurisdictional needs and issues) showed a number of common features with the Third Action Plan in terms of a common policy model (i.e. overarching long-term policy framework punctuated by action plans), definitional understandings and policy priorities. The descriptive analysis found these commonalities indicated a mutual understanding of the significance of violence against women as a national priority as well as the recent advent of definitional consistency between many jurisdictional policies and Commonwealth policy. This can be attributed to the level of coordination involved in the development of a national approach and the ongoing contact between jurisdictions in communication about violence against women and children through policy venues such as COAG summits and ImpEG meetings.

The sections below provide a descriptive analysis of state and territory level policy documents and the common features of the jurisdiction-specific policies and the Third Action Plan and the National Plan. See Appendix A for a list of the jurisdictional policy documents analysed as part of this review.

## Common features

The descriptive analysis of state and territory government policy documents found several common features across key jurisdictional policies and the National Plan. For example, there was evidence of a common policy model – that is, the adopted form of policy was common to many states and territories (even where there was variation in the content of the policy) – a number of shared outcomes across states and territories, and correspondence between all jurisdictions and the National Plan. It was clear that a national approach has facilitated a shared understanding of the need for jurisdictional policies about violence against women and children, and their projected outcomes. These common features indicated that the National Plan, and the Third Action Plan, work to facilitate and frame a relatively coordinated and cohesive approach to the policy management of violence against women and their children across Australia.

The two common features – common policy model and shared outcome areas – are discussed in more detail below.

### Common policy model

Broadly speaking, the analysis found evidence that Commonwealth, state and territory government policy models shared the general form of the National Plan; that is, most had an overarching policy strategy or framework that outlined the policy goals and described the anticipated short, medium and long-term outcomes guiding actions over a discrete time period. Also, in common with the policy model applied in the 12-year National Plan, most state and territory plans showed a series of action or implementation plans that outlined funding details and the activities intended to achieve the overarching strategy goals.

While some states and territories adopted the policy model common to the National Plan, other jurisdictional policies have a slightly different form. For example, some jurisdictional policies included a multi-year policy framework with no specified implementation/action plans. Further, not all policies had a specified time frame and/or specified implementation or action plans to direct policy activity. However, these differences in form do not necessarily indicate that there is inconsistency in policy content or projected outcomes. See below and for more details.

## Shared outcome areas

More substantively, there was a relatively high (but not universal) degree of correspondence between the goals of the National Plan and those of the different jurisdictions. The six National Outcomes of the National Plan are aspirational, long-term goals used to measure substantive progress in the reduction of violence against women and their children, derived from extensive consultation and shared by the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. As a result of this shared national approach, the National Outcomes mirror the general issues faced in communities and system responses to violence against women in the states and territories.

While different jurisdictions prioritise some of these shared outcome areas over others, analysis of jurisdictional policy outcomes suggested policies largely addressed priority issues and populations specific to their states and territories while maintaining shared understandings of the aims and Priority Areas of the Third Action Plan. For example, jurisdictional policies included outcomes such as increased support for children and vulnerable communities, the need for safer service pathways and greater consistency in perpetrator programs.

It was unclear from our analysis of policy documentation, if state and territory governments have intentionally adopted similar policy outcomes to the National Plan's six outcome areas or whether the similarities are the result of each jurisdiction identifying similar issues and gaps in system responses (and/or their role in developing the National Plan and subsequent Action Plans). However, the commonalities in this regard indicate that there is an emergent national approach and shared understandings and priorities in jurisdictional policies about violence against women. See Appendix B, Table A for an overview of the outcome areas noted in key jurisdictional policy across the states and territories.

## Other initiatives to address violence against women and their children

In addition to the long-term initiatives of the National Plan overall, the Commonwealth and states and territories have implemented a range of initiatives that connect with the aims and Priority Areas of the Third Action Plan. Appendix C provides a detailed listing of these (noting that again, this is not an exhaustive documentation).

Additional Commonwealth initiatives that articulate with the Third Action Plan include:

- The Women's Safety Package, which has enabled the delivery of:
  - Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes (KWSITH): this is funding to establish or expand state and territory's Safe at Home programs; Salvation Army to conduct risk assessment and basic security upgrades in women's homes; Audit to assess the effectiveness of services offered under the KWISTH funding stream and then develop a cross-jurisdictional operational framework and best practice principles (this is due 2020, UNSW).
  - Local Support Coordinators (all states and territories): this supports local caseworkers to coordinate and tailor support responses for women experiencing domestic violence.
  - Piloting of Specialist Domestic Violence Units (DVUs) and Health Justice Partnerships (HJPs). Evaluations of both pilot programs have been completed.
- The Women's Leadership and Development Program:
  - National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness (MCWH, Vic.) Penda App translation (WLS, Qld)
  - From DV to Trade (SALT)
  - Identifying and responding to intimate partner violence and reproductive coercion (SHQ)

- ‘Let’s have a conversation’, Respect 101 (Parenting Guides)
- Buddy Run (Alannah and Madeline Foundation)
- Voices Against Violence (Girl Guides)
- Advocacy and education programs (Luke Batty Foundation).
- Initiatives that aim to improve legal and paralegal responses to family and domestic violence, such as:
  - Pilots of legally assisted and culturally appropriate family dispute resolution services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and CALD communities who have experienced family and domestic violence in NSW (Tamworth; Bankstown), Victoria (Sunshine; Broadmeadows), Queensland (Toowoomba; Upper Mt Gravatt), Western Australia (Perth), and the Northern Territory (Darwin). The National Centre for Indigenous Studies (ANU) is conducting an independent evaluation of the pilots – final report due June 2020.
  - The development of the National Domestic and Family Violence Bench Book (the Bench Book). The Bench Book is an online educational resource for judicial officers in all Australian jurisdictions, delivered by the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration, in partnership with the University of Queensland. The AGD also funded updates to the Bench Book’s content in 2018 and 2019.
  - Funding for the National Judicial College of Australia to develop and deliver family and domestic violence training for judicial officers in all Australian jurisdictions (federal, state and territory), presiding over matters involving family and domestic violence. This program was delivered 13 times to 323 judicial officers from 12 different courts (April 2017–18).

As described earlier, the National Plan and Third Action Plan have had an influencing role on aligning state and territory policy and service responses to violence against women and their children. This can be seen in the establishment of ministerial roles dedicated to preventing violence against women. It can also be seen in the range of locally driven initiatives to address domestic, family and sexual violence, and to improve service systems responses to women and their children experiencing such violence.

For instance, in the priority area of primary prevention and early intervention, jurisdictions have implemented initiatives to support respectful relationships education (RRE) in education settings, including:

- Queensland’s partnership with Our Watch to develop and trial whole-of-school RRE in primary school settings (10 schools participating in pilot)
- Tasmania’s development of RRE resources for K-12 settings
- establishment of the Respectful Relationships Teaching Support program in WA primary and secondary schools statewide
- the provision of Respectful Relationships education within the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabus for K-10 across all NSW schools.

Another prevention-focused effort is the Northern Territory’s Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Fund to support localised projects to challenge and change social and cultural attitudes, values and structures that underpin domestic, family and sexual violence.

Corresponding with Priority Area 2, a range of initiatives and projects have been implemented, including:

- NSW’s Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy
- Funding and support to Tangentyere Family Safety Group in the Northern Territory



- Queensland's Safe at Home Solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children, an action research and codesign to enable community-led solutions
- The NPY Women's Council sexual violence research project (SA and NT)
- Aboriginal Family Violence Worker Initiative in Tasmania, including an action research-based evaluation.

To support and improve women and their children's experiences of service systems responses (Priority Area 3), jurisdictions have implemented initiatives such as:

- NSW's DFV Service System Redesign – evidence-informed recommendations for improving system responses for victims and perpetrators, including a common risk assessment framework
- NSW Health's Integrated Prevention and Response to Violence Abuse and Neglect (IPARVAN) Framework (Aug. 2019)
- Development of Responding to Family Violence: A guide for service providers and practitioners (Tas.)
- the ACT government working with local communities to co-design, prototype, deliver and scale Family Safety Hubs (Safer Families Reforms)
- legislative reform to strengthen systems' responses to family violence (ACT, Tas., WA).
- Support and Safety Hubs (Orange Door) for a continuum of responses for women and their children experiencing family violence (Vic.).

Addressing sexual violence (Priority Area 4), additional efforts include NSW's #MakeNoDoubt sexual consent awareness-raising social media campaign; and The NPY Women's Council sexual violence research project (SA and NT).

A range of initiatives have been implemented that correspond to Priority Area 5, which aims to strengthen service and systems responses to both FDV and child safety issues. In addition to relevant initiatives for Priority Area 3, these include:

- Their Futures Matter cross-government reform to better support vulnerable children and families. Their Futures Matter is undertaking the design of reforms to the child wellbeing and protection system (System Transformation).
- WA's amendment to The Children and Community Services Act (CCS Act) 2004, in January 2016 to include enhanced information-sharing provisions. The CCS Act is the legislative basis for child protection responses in Western Australia.
- initiatives arising from Victoria's *Roadmap for Reform: strong families, safe children*
- initiatives arising from the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland.

Corresponding to Priority Area 6, which relates to perpetrator accountability, initiatives include:

- NSW's implementation of:
  - Men's Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) Practice Standards and Compliance Framework
  - an accredited Graduate Certificate in Men's Behaviour Change supporting workforce skills development, including cultural competency training for facilitators
  - support for community-based men's behaviour change programs to engage local Aboriginal staff to deliver culturally appropriate services.
- South Australia's development of a safe practice standard for DF&SV interventions
- in Tasmania, the delivery of: a Men's Referral Service; community-based behaviour change programs and programs in a corrections setting; and the evaluation of perpetrator programs delivered under Safe Homes, Safe Families policy.

- Western Australia launching the Practice Standards for Perpetrator Intervention: Engaging and Responding to Men who are Perpetrators of Family and Domestic Violence.

## Summary of broader efforts

Based on the preceding discussion, it is evident that there are three key dimensions of progress under the Third Action Plan:

1. That, with specific regard to the Third Action Plan, a significant program of work has been implemented under each of the Priority Areas, particularly in relation to the Prevention and Early Intervention, Greater Support and Choice, and Keeping Perpetrators Accountable (Priorities 1, 3 and 6, respectively).
2. That the Third Action Plan has helped to consolidate and build on earlier investments in:
  - the development of the evidence base on the dynamics and drivers of violence against women
  - building knowledge and capacity in primary prevention
  - enhancing frontline service responses to domestic violence and sexual assault.
3. That the Third Action Plan, and the National Plan more broadly, have helped to influence jurisdictional policy frameworks, as well as specific initiatives corresponding to specific Priority Areas.

## 4. Aims, achievements and key learnings of the Third Action Plan

This section draws on data from the online consultation and research interviews (see section 2.1) in order to explore stakeholder views about the aims and context of the Third Action Plan, opinions on how the implementation of the plan accorded with the aims and progress made under the plan as well as their perspectives on key learnings and missed opportunities. As noted in section 2.1, stakeholders were selected for participation due to their association with the design or implementation of Third Action Plan initiatives and/or experience and knowledge about violence against women and children. The key themes arising from these consultations are described in the sections that follow.

### 4.1 Stakeholder views on the purpose and aims of the Third Action Plan

Stakeholder views on the purpose and aims of the Third Action Plan commonly focused more on the value of having an explicitly national approach that could frame their work than on the specific Priority Areas (although there was general agreement about the appropriateness of these). Stakeholders noted the importance of viewing the Third Action Plan as a product of a particular context; a time in which high levels of work to address violence against women were taking place in Australia. The key themes emerging from the discussion of the plan's aims, as drawn from the interviews and the online consultation, are outlined below.

### Context of the Third Action Plan

Overall, the Third Action Plan was seen to play an important role in developing the structures, relationships, service systems and evidence base necessary to achieve the goals of the National Plan. However, when discussing the specific aims of the Third Action Plan, many stakeholders emphasised the importance of understanding the specific context in which the Third Action Plan was designed and

enacted; specifically, this was seen to be a dynamic time (2016–19), when a number of factors were affecting the national conversation about violence against women and children. The Third Action Plan was developed and launched in the context of rapidly changing service sectors around Australia, as well as highly publicised incidents of violence against women and children that demanded political action.

Stakeholders attributed the ambitious and inclusive approach adopted by the Third Action Plan to the high levels of activity generally taking place across Australia. The increased national consciousness about violence against women and children led to high expectations at the launch of the Third Action Plan about what could be achieved under its remit. In particular, the momentum spurred in other Commonwealth and jurisdictional initiatives such as high levels of policy activity regarding violence against women and children (e.g. the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence (2015–16), the Senate Inquiry into Domestic Violence (2014–15) and the roll out of the Commonwealth Government's Women's Safety Package funding across Australia) added to that energy and sense of expectation. The aspirational and ambitious policy agenda of the Third Action Plan was also seen as important for ensuring national momentum and attention.

At the same time, the rapid rate of change in national consciousness and policy discourse about violence against women and children was seen as one of the challenges facing the Third Action Plan and National Plan, in that the aims and goals set out at the beginning had, to some extent, been overtaken by events. Many interviewees noted the rapid rate of change in national consciousness and policy discourse about violence against women as another dimension to the challenges facing the Third Action Plan and National Plan; the Third Action Plan was described in terms of a work in progress that indicated a commitment to diversity and a 'maturation' of the National Plan.

*I think it would be easy to look back and criticise the 3AP for a range of reasons ... But it's also not very helpful to apply today's knowledge to yesterday's decision. We couldn't have predicted that in the three years of the [3AP], that so much has bubbled up and so much has moved. (National partner, 2019)*

As a policy instrument, stakeholders noted that the extensive consultations between Commonwealth and state and territory governments, community groups, advocates, service providers and policy makers contributed to the aspirational and progressive thinking associated with the Third Action Plan. This level of activity and coordination between service sectors and Commonwealth and state and territory governments has continued, and stakeholders described the value of building on past work and applying what is now known about violence against women and children to future policy action.

There was agreement among stakeholders that the Third Action Plan made an important contribution to the knowledge and evidence base, and to Australian service sectors and population groups affected by violence. Stakeholders felt that because the Third Action Plan was the product of high-level agreement between a range of stakeholders, it had less relevance to service-level practice and/or that there was a limited understanding of how to incorporate the plan (and its recommended actions or sub-actions) into practice. Instead, the Third Action Plan was seen as primarily focused on directing policy initiatives and funding decisions.

## Proactive and inclusive approach

There was a sense that stakeholders viewed the Third Action Plan as progressing the broader body of work achieved under the First and Second Action Plans in the National Plan framework. In particular, the Third Action Plan was seen as an evolution or shift from a 'reactive' to a 'proactive' policy focus and actions and, in particular, as shifting the emphasis towards prevention and early intervention.

This emphasis on prevention and early intervention was reflected in the range of activities funded under Priority Area 1 (see chapter 3). But stakeholders also saw it reflected in the Third Action Plan funding for national organisations, such as Our Watch and Lifeline Australia (delivering DV-Alert), that do not have a frontline crisis or service focus *per se*. Rather than engage directly with those who have used and/or experienced violence, these organisations work to develop workforce capacity and raise community awareness about gender inequality and violence against women. Another national partner, ANROWS, was also described by interviewed stakeholders as playing an important role in proactive responses to violence by building the evidence base, and thus contributing to workforce development, knowledge about violence against women, and national primary prevention strategies. Participants in the online consultation also viewed the Third Action Plan as making a positive contribution to service and workforce capacity at an organisational level. In particular, they described the plan as providing focus, support and framing of pertinent policy issues, rationalising funding decisions and supporting pilot programs.

## 4.2 Stakeholder views on the progress and main successes of the Third Action Plan

Relatively few stakeholders had an overarching view of the Third Action Plan and the implementation of initiatives under the Plan; instead, stakeholder views about the implementation, progress and key successes of the National Plan and the Third Action Plan tended to be influenced and delimited by their organisation type, jurisdiction, their own personal roles and the specific target populations that their organisation addressed. Nonetheless, some common themes emerged in the stakeholder consultations and there was a general consensus that the Third Action Plan (and the National Plan) had been broadly successful in creating the conditions, and building the infrastructure, for a more consistent and coordinated policy response to violence against women and their children across different levels of government. In particular, the plans were seen to have helped build a shared set of priorities, to provide practical tools for organisations and government to address these priorities, and had made specific issues more visible.

Stakeholder discussions of ‘progress’ or ‘success’ less often focused on whether specific actions in the Third Action Plan had been delivered or on the achievement of the National Plan’s main goals and Indicators of Success. In part, this reflected individuals’ lack of knowledge about programs or activities outside their own sphere of activity. Stakeholders also noted that there was a lack of publicly available in-depth monitoring and evaluation data that they could use to make an assessment of progress toward the National Plan’s goals (also see section 4.3). However, stakeholders also pointed to the long-term nature of work required to reduce rates of violence and the time that would likely be required to see a significant shift in outcomes. As such, the relatively long-term approach intrinsic to the National Plan (and the constituent action plans) was often seen as an important success in itself because it provided an enduring framework for addressing violence against women and their children and because it was not tied to electoral cycles.

The key themes emerging from consultations with key stakeholders are described in more detail below.

### Facilitating conversation and a shared approach

One of the most consistently cited themes in discussions of the Third Action Plan’s progress and success was the role the plan played in facilitating conversation among and between different levels of government. Stakeholders commonly conceptualised the Third Action Plan (and by extension the National Plan) in terms of its strategic value as a visible shared commitment to respond effectively to violence against women and children (and ultimately to prevent experiences of violence from taking

place). As such, the plan was described as providing support for policy and funding decisions at all levels of government, as helping to build the foundations for a more consistent national approach and as putting violence against women on the national agenda. This shared commitment was also understood as reflecting a shared problem; all government departments, states and territories faced similar challenges beyond the focus of their own jurisdictions or specific remits; as such stakeholders perceived the Third Action Plan as a rallying point for states and territories (in particular) to address these issues. This commitment, and the utility of having such a visible national commitment, was perceived to be one of the key successes of the Third Action Plan (and of the National Plan as a whole).

**I think the Third Action Plan really was a centrepiece in making family violence part of the conversation in the community and in government. (Commonwealth government, 2019)**

As noted above, the analysis of different government and jurisdictional policies showed some variance in the degree to which the Third Action Plan or National Plan were explicitly referenced or drawn on in policy making. However, in the stakeholder consultations, the Third Action Plan was widely described as having practical value as a tool, reference point and source of shared language for policy development at a government and organisational level. Some government stakeholders also indicated that the Third Action Plan and the National Plan provided 'leverage'; that is, because the plans embodied a national approach that all jurisdictions had signed up to, it could help individual policy makers in the jurisdictions to keep attention on particular issues and could also explain and substantiate the need for specific actions or spending.

That said, many stakeholders also pointed out that the National Plan or Third Action Plan were not necessarily the major drivers of decision-making or investment in specific jurisdictions or agencies. Instead, state and territory-specific priorities, including the recommendations of state-level inquiries or royal commissions, were described as key drivers of policy and decision making at a state and territory level. As a result, at least some stakeholders indicated that state or territory initiatives to address family and domestic violence were either largely independent of the Third Action Plan or were aligned with the 3AP's general goals but not specifically guided by it. This was not necessarily seen as a failing of the 3AP, or as a comment on its usefulness, but rather as a reflection of the jurisdictions' need to address local priorities. It was also described as, in part, a reflection of the status of the Third Action Plan as a high-level agreement about national priorities (that incorporated the perspectives and priorities of different stakeholders) rather than a device to compel specific actions.

Stakeholders from the national partners and from peak bodies also observed a heightened level of awareness and evidence of changing attitudes towards violence against women and children throughout the duration of the Third Action Plan. In particular, stakeholders referred to Our Watch as a key organisation working in prevention and early intervention that was helping to build momentum in addressing violence against women and their children. National partner, DV-Alert (delivered by Lifeline Australia) also noted that they had experienced 'exponential' growth in sector demand for their training programs, this was attributed to an increased demand for (and awareness of) the expertise required to work effectively in the area of family and domestic violence.

The Third Action Plan was also thought to have laid foundations for future action through expanding the evidence base and clarifying organisational roles via the development of comprehensive models of practice. Progress, in this sense, was exemplified through the establishment of bodies such as the National Sector Advisory Group convened by 1800RESPECT, which brought together individuals from diverse backgrounds to share their experiences and build sector capacity.



## Cross-jurisdictional learning

The national approach inherent in the Third Action Plan was also valued for the opportunities it provided for cross-organisational and cross-jurisdictional learning. Stakeholders noted that formal committees and policy venues associated with the Third Action Plan could enable more coordinated discussion and other strategic, collaborative work. In particular, the spaces created by ImpEG meetings and COAG summits were described as integral to national collaboration. For example, COAG summits were noted as opportunities for galvanising awareness of the work being undertaken as part of the Third Action Plan. Similarly, several stakeholders indicated that the ImpEG meetings were valued for their potential for cross-jurisdictional learning and discussion. Such meetings were seen as opportunities for the Action Plans to provide greater guidance to jurisdictions in addressing their own distinct policy challenges as well as enabling the ‘efficiencies’ achieved by building on shared models and strategies rather than duplicating work. One stakeholder from a national partner organisation described the ImpEG meetings as a forum for ‘more joint reflection and joint sharing on a more frequent basis’ (National partner, 2019). Participants in the online consultations, in particular, indicated that information sharing could facilitate the development and/or adoption of best-practice models for research and program delivery. However, as we note in section 4.3, not all stakeholders believed that the overall potential for coordination and collaboration had been fully realised in practice.

## Making issues visible

A third theme in stakeholder discussions about the Third Action Plan’s progress was the role it played in increasing the visibility of particular issues and of the needs of different communities. In particular, the inclusion in the plan of sexual violence, the interface of child protection and family and domestic violence, and the issues facing services in addressing clients with complex needs was seen as important recognition of the importance of these issues and of the need for coordinated and multi-sector and multi-agency responses. The Third Action Plan’s focus on women with disabilities, women from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, and women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was seen as demonstrating a willingness on the part of all governments to address the diversity of victims’ experiences. Further, their inclusion was suggested as being valuable because it could help ‘map’ the gaps or deficiencies in service provision and thus could facilitate a shift in jurisdictional policy and actions.

This inclusion of these issues in the Third Action Plan, and the recognition of the specific needs of women from different cultural or social backgrounds, was seen as part of the continuing evolution of the National Plan and as, in part, the result of the extensive community and service consultations that had informed the Third Action Plan’s development. Although this increased visibility was not necessarily seen to have resulted in improved services or outcomes (see section 4.3), there was a perception that it could help keep such issues on the public and policy agenda, enable more focused policy action in the future and facilitate workforce capacity building (e.g. in order to create more culturally appropriate services).

Some of the work undertaken under the Third Action Plan and/or by the National Partners was also seen to have helped build workforce capacity to address the needs of particular populations. For example, under the Third Action Plan, DV-Alert had tailored their training programs to suit the needs of services working with women with disability, women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Similarly, the expansion of the evidence base for ‘what works’ in service provision for different populations, such as research into violence against women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or CALD backgrounds, was described as building the sector’s capacity to prevent and respond to violence in those communities.

## 4.3 Key learnings

Despite the general consensus on the value and importance of the Third Action Plan, stakeholders also identified areas in which there were ongoing challenges or where there was scope for improvement. In many respects, these paralleled what were seen as the key successes of the Third Action Plan; that is, although the Third Action Plan was valued for the role it played in facilitating a coordinated national response to, and language about, violence against women and their children, stakeholders also noted that more could be done in this area. Similarly, although stakeholders had noted the increased inclusiveness of the text of the Third Action Plan (in comparison to previous policy frameworks), stakeholders working with women from diverse backgrounds also suggested that concrete action and funding to address these issues had not always followed. Stakeholders also identified the lack of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework for activities under the Third Action Plan (as opposed to the evaluation framework for the National Plan as a whole) as something of a missed opportunity. These themes are summarised below.

### Coordination, information sharing and governance

As noted above, the Third Action Plan itself was seen as an important mechanism for creating a more coordinated national approach to addressing violence against women and their children. Forums such as ImpEG were also described as facilitating greater coordination and information sharing across different jurisdictions, government agencies and the service sector. Nonetheless, there was also a widely held view that more coordination and more systematic information sharing – between services and between different levels of government – was required in order to overcome sector fragmentation, to avoid duplication of effort and to enable more effective sharing of insights into what was working. It was acknowledged that there was some cross-sector and cross-government communication and that ANROWS and Our Watch performed a valuable function in bringing together research on a range of issues. Stakeholders from nationally significant community organisations also noted that some informal collaboration took place within states and territories. However, there was also a widespread perception that there was insufficient, or inconsistent, information sharing about ‘what works’ or about what different sectors or jurisdictions were doing. Hence, there was a perception that an inclusive mechanism for regular and systematic information sharing would be valuable.

I know there's so much great work that's going on here, so much that states and territories and wider sector services are doing, and it seems to be a shame that we're not actually hearing about as much as we could be. We also can't easily share insights that we have from our service that may actually impact on some of these areas. (National partner, 2019)

There was also a recognition that responses to many issues required a coordinated response across different levels of government and across different service sectors. This was seen as an ongoing challenge that the Third Action Plan had not yet been able to overcome; in part because not all service sectors or parts of government were fully engaged with the Third Action Plan or because there was a lack of inter-sector or inter-governmental communication. For example, there was a perception that government and service ‘silos’ or ‘fragmentation’ hindered the effectiveness of responses to the interface between child protection and family violence issues as well as issues concerning migrant women. Stakeholders did not necessarily see this as a failing of the Third Action Plan or National Plan but rather as a result of the complex nature of the issue, of the many sectors that could be involved, and of the complex allocation of responsibilities across different levels of government.



[The action plans] are national and multi-jurisdictional in their nature and that creates a lot of complexity around trying to implement it. So we appreciate that and the fact that various systems and services are very much sort of jurisdictionally based and require buy-in from all jurisdictions to be progressed at an equal rate. (National organisation/Peak body 1, 2019)

Stakeholders commonly noted the challenges of implementing a national approach when much of the effort to address family and domestic violence necessarily takes place at a jurisdictional level. At this level there could be a number of other local factors that influenced the development and delivery of policy to address family and domestic violence. Such challenges were described as being related to a lack of clarity about the respective roles of the Commonwealth and the jurisdictions in implementing the Third Action Plan. This, in turn, had hindered the development of a holistic and coordinated response to violence against women and their children.

We really need to clearly articulate what a national approach is. To try to get people to understand that there are things that the Commonwealth is responsible for, there's things that the states and territories are responsible for; and this is where we come together to drive it together for these reasons. (State and territory government, 2019)

Although existing governance structures such as COAG and ImpEG were clearly valued by many stakeholders, it was also suggested that these high-level forums provided limited guidance on implementation of the actions under the Third Action Plan. The most commonly raised issues in this respect were a lack of shared understanding about how to implement specific actions and limited scope to assess whether or not specific actions were being addressed at a jurisdictional level. This was seen as a particular issue when there was no specific funding attached to the delivery of a proposed action and thus limited mechanisms to ensure that it was addressed or to enable consistency in delivery. Stakeholders thus indicated that, despite the high-level agreement on the overarching priorities of the 3AP, the lack of guidance or planning around implementation had resulted in some inconsistency across jurisdictions and agencies.

The working groups that had been established under the Third Action Plan were seen as a governance mechanism with the potential to facilitate the joint development of implementation plans. However, stakeholders also suggested that this potential had largely been unrealised because the practical role of the working groups had been unclear and they had ceased operation without clear communication about what they had achieved.

More generally, and most commonly, stakeholders indicated that the Commonwealth could provide more guidance and leadership in coordinating the implementation of the Third Action Plan and its constituent Priority Areas. It was recognised that the implementation of the National Plan and Third Action Plan was a shared responsibility, but it was also noted that because the jurisdictions often had a range of other policy drivers or competing priorities in addressing family and domestic violence, the Commonwealth was best-placed to coordinate more structured implementation planning – such as implementation plans for each Priority Area or action – and to facilitate the development of shared reporting mechanisms on progress against the 3AP.

Stakeholders also suggested that governance structures for the Third Action Plan could have done more to reflect the goals of the National Plan. In particular, the text of the Third Action Plan notes that funded programs require community buy-in and leadership in order to be effective. However, although there was general acknowledgement that extensive community consultation was undertaken to develop the Third Action Plan, it was felt that not enough had been done to ensure that community leaders were engaged in 3AP-funded programs over time.

## Greater inclusion of diverse communities

As stated in section 4.2, stakeholders noted that the Third Action Plan enabled a more inclusive policy discourse that acknowledged the needs of women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as women from CALD backgrounds (among others). However, many stakeholders also perceived a missed opportunity for even greater inclusion of diverse communities in the Third Action Plan.

In particular, it was noted that people who identify as LGBTQIA+ and gender diverse, as well as women with disabilities, could have been included to a greater extent in the Third Action Plan. Participants in the online consultation also indicated that although the Third Action Plan provided an inclusive platform for addressing the issues faced by women from diverse communities (particularly CALD communities); in practice, more needed to be done to engage these communities and to deliver culturally safe programming. That is, although policy *discourse* was felt to be aligned with community needs, stakeholders who worked with women from CALD backgrounds or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds indicated that there remained structural and funding issues that made it difficult for the Third Action Plan to fully address the complex needs of these communities.

For example, some key stakeholders suggested that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family structures, family dynamics and living arrangements were not always well understood by service providers and that programs needed to incorporate greater cultural sensitivity (through community consultation) in order to provide more effective service responses and better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. Although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are included as a priority population in the National Plan, and the Third Action Plan, stakeholders working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities also felt that the unique drivers of violence against women and children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, such as the impacts of colonisation, dispossession and the Stolen Generation, were not always fully recognised in either the wording of the plan or in the actions designed to address violence. However, most stakeholders did not see these areas for improvement as a failing of the Third Action Plan necessarily but rather as a reflection of the continuing work and funding required for progress in these areas.

## Funding cycles

The duration of funding cycles was an issue that emerged from the online consultation with stakeholders. In particular, they identified the short-term funding for most programs and initiatives associated with the Third Action Plan as a hindrance to addressing long-term and complex problems. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, in particular, were perceived as receiving insufficient funding or attention, despite their prominence in the Third Action Plan documentation and agreements. Hence, there was general agreement in the data that effectively addressing Priority Areas was long-term work, and a continuity of funding and attention was needed to ensure the momentum necessary for improvement in those areas.

## Monitoring and evaluation

Stakeholders commonly expressed difficulty in assessing the Third Action Plan's contribution to achieving the National Plan's stated National Outcomes, in part because of the lack of publicly available data on the outcomes of specific activities. In particular, they noted the absence of a national monitoring and evaluation framework for *activities* funded under the Third Action Plan and National Plan (as opposed to the evaluation framework for the National Plan as a whole).

Stakeholders noted that in order to provide more effective services, more needed to be done to build the evidence base about 'what works' in service responses to violence against women and children.

Although ANROWS' work in building the evidence base and in translating knowledge to the sector was seen as highly significant, there was still a noted lack of evaluation evidence or data about projects funded under the Third Action Plan. Such data were seen as potentially valuable in progressing the work in reducing rates of violence against women and children. Further, what project data did exist was not always pertinent to all the communities or populations served by specific stakeholder organisations.

One thing that has come up a lot across all of the projects is people want more examples of what is working and there's kind of a disconnect between states in terms of the work that everybody's doing. But I think ANROWS does a really good job of consolidating a lot of that action research. There should be more coordination and consolidation, especially for projects with migrant and refugee communities. (Nationally organisation/Peak body 2, 2019)

There was also an expressed need for more guidance on how to monitor and evaluate programs and services. In particular, stakeholders noted that there was not yet general consensus on what should be measured, as well as a general lack of clarity about how to measure outcomes or even what constituted an 'outcome' (as opposed to an 'output' or action), in the violence against women space. Stakeholders from government and from nationally significant organisations also described a 'struggle to measure' that was affected by under-developed instruments, the lack of systematic monitoring mechanisms and by the general lack of an evaluation culture in the community and not-for-profit sector. As such, stakeholders from some of the National Partners (in particular) identified the need for future funding cycles to include a stronger evaluation and monitoring framework that could also include more evaluation and monitoring activities throughout a funding cycle and not only at the end of a program or activity.

As was noted in section 4.2, there was also a widespread sense that because of the time needed for significant change to occur, the three years of the Third Action Plan (or even the 10 years of the National Plan) were unlikely to be long enough to see major advances towards achieving the National Plan's overarching National Outcomes. Although this was often stated in reference to the need for ongoing effort and commitment, and in recognition of the necessarily aspirational nature of the National Outcomes, some stakeholders suggested that additional short- or medium-term goals would be useful.

## 5. Contribution of the Third Action Plan to the National Plan

This section considers:

- what the contribution of the Third Action Plan has been to the aims of the National Plan and the Outcome areas
- how the Third Action Plan is contributing to progress in achieving the Indicators of Change.

In this section, we draw on the secondary document analysis and the secondary data analysis.

### 5.1. Contribution to the National Outcomes

As detailed in the table below, there are six National Outcomes of the National Plan, which are supported by specific strategies. Each Outcome has an accompanying Measure of Success.

The program of work under the Third Action Plan contributes to the National Outcomes in the following ways:

- national leadership and coordination on primary prevention (Outcomes 1, 2 and 3) through:
  - the role of Our Watch, which is maturing and recognised as the national prevention organisation
  - developing prevention resources to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (i.e. *Changing the Picture*)
  - public education campaigns that target multiple issues (bystander intervention; non-physical forms of violence) and diverse settings and populations (e.g. material and services to support men as new parents)
  - supporting community-led prevention strategies
- building leadership and capacity within communities to develop solutions and approaches for addressing violence (Outcomes 1, 3 and 4)
- supporting integrated systems and service responses for women and their children experiencing violence (Outcomes 4 and 5), for example:
  - the interface between family violence, child protection and family law systems (e.g. through the Family and Support Services initiative in 23 service locations that integrated duty lawyer and family violence support services for families with family law and family violence matters)
  - integrated specialist family violence and legal service models that provided wraparound support and case management for women experiencing family violence and a range of other complex issues (through the Domestic Violence Unit/Health Justice Partnerships in multiple jurisdictions)
  - the Local Support Coordinator measure funding family and domestic violence workers in each state and territory to assist women experiencing violence and complex needs in their access and navigation of a range of support services. The funding reflects broader efforts across Australia to address the often complex and fragmented service systems that victims of family and domestic violence must negotiate in order to have their needs and the needs of their children met.
- national leadership and coordination on strengthening a practice-informed evidence base on perpetrator interventions, which is being used to inform policy development by the jurisdictions (Outcome 6), specifically through:
  - benchmarking and monitoring indicators to measure outcomes of the NOSPI
  - driving research and evaluation in effective perpetrator interventions with diverse groups of adolescents and adults using violence
  - ANROWS research streams.

Respondents to the online consultation indicated that the National Plan's Outcome areas were seen as important and aspirational; in part, because they helped maintain a focus on the long-term goals of the National Plan. Although stakeholders perceived little progress against the National Plan's Outcomes, this was not viewed as a failing of the National Plan but rather as a consequence of the long-term work necessary to achieve these high-level outcomes.

**Table 4: National Outcomes, Measures of Success and Indicators of Change**

National Outcome	Strategies	Measures of Success	Indicators of Change
1. Communities are safe and free from violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting community involvement</li> <li>Focus on primary prevention</li> <li>Advancing gender equality</li> </ul>	Increase in the community's intolerance of violence against women	Reduced prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault
2. Relationships are respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on young people's capacity to develop respectful relationships</li> <li>Support adults to model respectful relationships <a href="https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/lgbtiq-communitiesnships">https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/lgbtiq-communitiesnships</a></li> <li>Promote positive male attitudes and behaviours</li> </ul>	Improved knowledge of, and the skills and behaviour for, respectful relationships by young people	
3. Indigenous communities are strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster leadership of Indigenous women within communities and broader Australian society</li> <li>Build community capacity at the local level</li> <li>Improve access to appropriate services</li> </ul>	<p>Reduction in proportion of Indigenous women who consider family violence, assault and sexual assault as problems for their communities and neighbourhoods</p> <p>Increase in proportion of Indigenous women able to have their say within their communities on key issues, including violence</p>	<p>Increased proportion of women who feel safe in their communities</p> <p>Reduced deaths related to domestic violence and sexual assault</p>
4. Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the first point of contact to identify and respond to needs</li> <li>Support specialist domestic violence and sexual assault services to deliver responses that meet needs</li> <li>Support mainstream services to identify and respond to needs</li> </ul>	Increase in the access to, and responsiveness of, services for victims of domestic and family violence and sexual assault	Reduction in proportion of children exposed to their mother's or carer's experience of domestic violence
5. Justice responses are effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to justice for women and their children</li> <li>Strengthen leadership across justice systems</li> <li>Justice systems work better together and with other systems</li> </ul>	Increase in the rate of women reporting domestic violence and sexual assault	Decrease in repeated partner victimisation
6. Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold perpetrators accountable</li> <li>Reduce the risk of recidivism</li> <li>Intervene early to prevent violence</li> </ul>		

Source: Adapted from *The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009)

## 5.2. Contribution to progress in achieving the Measures of Success & Indicators of Change

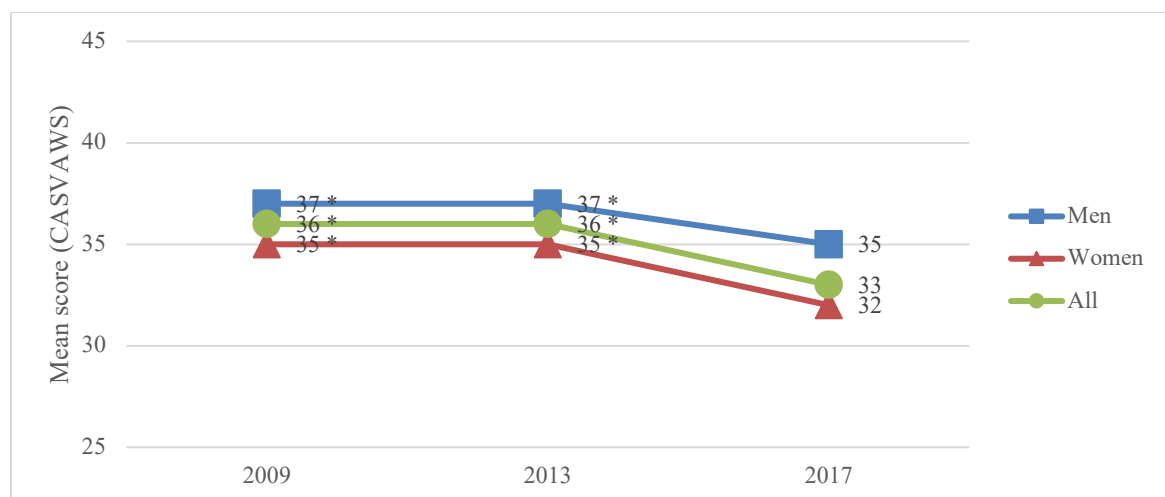
High-level indicators of progress against the National Plan's 'Measures of Success' and 'Indicators of Change' were explored using data from the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and the Personal Safety Survey (PSS). The results from these surveys that *most closely align*<sup>6</sup> with the measures and indicators of the National Plan are summarised below.

### Measure of Success 1: Increased intolerance of violence against women

**Summary findings:** The results from the 2017 NCAS report show a statistically significant reduction in attitudes supporting violence against women (VAW) in both men and women between 2013 and 2017.

**Interpretation notes:** The Community Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women Scale (CASVAWS) was developed to measure the overall concept of 'condoning violence against women' in the Change the Story framework. It includes 32 questions across four themes: excusing perpetrators and holding women responsible, minimising violence against women, mistrusting women's reports of violence, and disregarding the need to gain consent. Please note that there were adjustments made to the themes used in the CASVAWS in 2017; hence, caution should be exercised in interpreting the most recent results.

**Figure 2: Changes in attitudinal support for violence against women over time, 2009, 2013, 2017**



Note: \* Denotes a difference between survey year and 2017 is statistically significant,  $p \leq 0.01$

Source: National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) (Politoff et al., 2019)

### Measure of Success 2: Improved knowledge, skills and behaviour of respectful relationships by young people

**Summary findings:** Young people's understanding of what constitutes VAW has significantly improved (both in young women and men, 16–25 years). Between 2009 and 2017, the proportion of young people

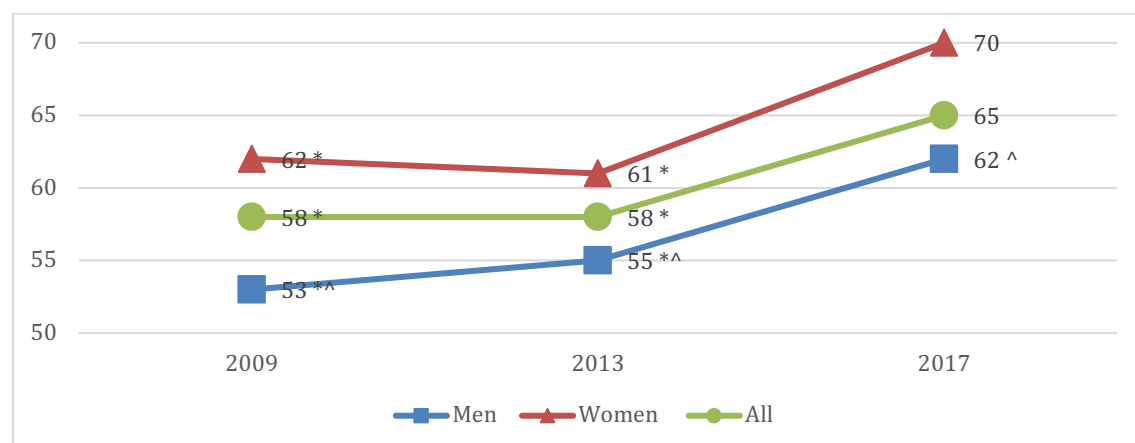
<sup>6</sup> These surveys were not designed to provide data on the Measures of Success and Indicators of Change under the National Plan, specifically. These high-level indicators may be used to provide some indication of changes that have occurred during the life of the National Plan; however, it is not possible to establish a causal relationship between the results of these surveys and the impact of the National Plan.



able to identify behaviours and consequences of violence against women went from 58% to 65%. However, there remains a significantly lower level of overall understanding of VAW among young men compared to young women.

**Interpretation notes:** The NCAS uses the Understanding Violence Against Women Scale (UVAWS) to measure success in this area. These questions are designed to assess the extent to which people understand violence against women as a continuum of behaviours. The questions are across five themes: definition/nature of the problem, violence and the law, patterns and consequences, contributing factors, knowledge of resources. High scores indicate a stronger understanding across these themes.

**Figure 3: Changes in understanding of violence against women over time (mean score), 2009, 2013, 2017**



Notes: \* Difference between survey year and 2017 is statistically significant  $p \leq 0.05$ . ^ Difference between men and women is statistically significant  $p \leq 0.05$ .

Source: National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey, youth cohort analysis (Politoff et al., 2019)

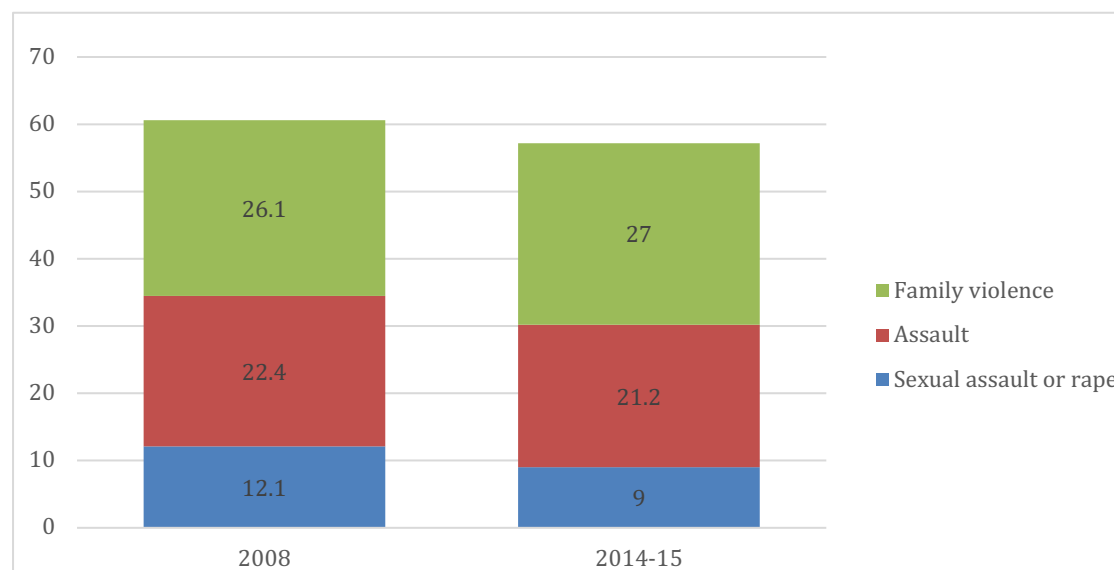
## Measure of Success 3: Reduced proportion of Indigenous women who consider that family violence, assault and sexual assault are problems for their communities and neighbourhoods

**Summary findings:** The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who consider family violence, assault and sexual assault to be community and neighbourhood problems remained mostly stable between 2008 and 2014–15.

**Interpretation notes:** Figure 4 draws on data from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS). The NATSISS was conducted from September 2014 to June 2015 with a sample of 11,178 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in private dwellings across Australia. Each column includes three separate measures (for 'sexual assault or rape', 'assault', 'family violence'). Measures should not be added together.



**Figure 4: Proportion of Indigenous women who consider family violence, assault and sexual assault to be community and neighbourhood problems, Australia**



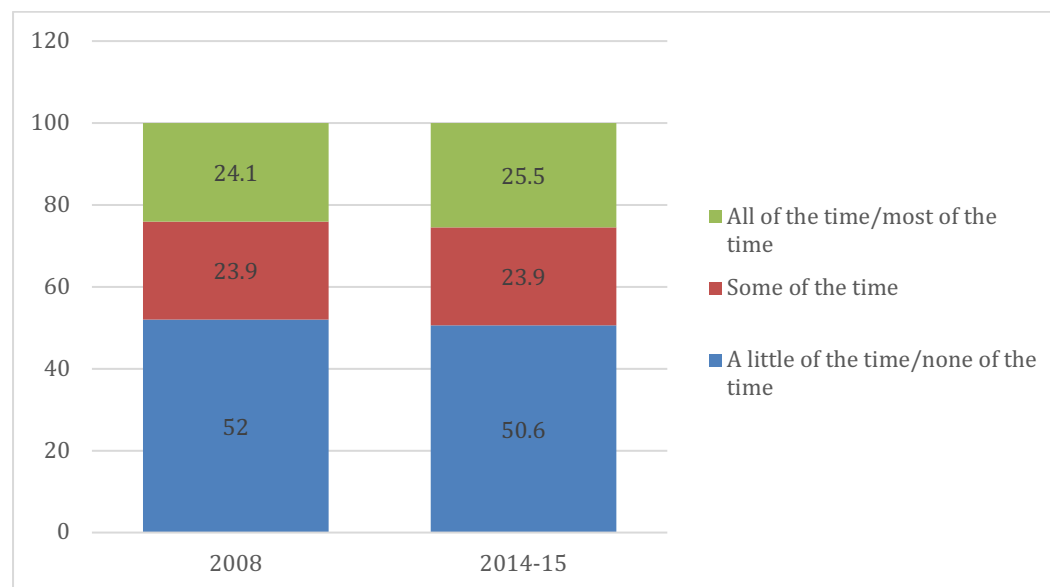
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2017, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)

## Measure of Success 4: Increased proportion of Indigenous women who are able to have their say within their communities on important issues, including violence

**Summary findings:** The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who feel able to have their say within community on important issues including violence all of the time or most of the time remained mostly stable between 2008 and 2014–15.

**Interpretation notes:** Figure 5 also draws on data from the NATSISS. Each column includes 100% of responses, divided into three separate categories ('a little of the time/none of the time', 'some of the time', 'all of the time/most of the time'). There were no statistically significant differences between the 2008 and 2014–15 data.

**Figure 5: How often feels able to have a say within community on important issues, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Australia (%)**



Source: ABS, 2016, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)

## Measure of Success 5: Increased access to and responsiveness of services for victims of domestic and family violence and sexual assault

**Summary findings:** Compared to data from 2012, less female victims sought advice about their most recent experience of physical or sexual violence by a male in 2016. The decrease in advice sought following an incident of 'physical threat by a male' was not significant. The proportion of female victims of partner violence seeking advice or support remained relatively stable between 2012 and 2016.

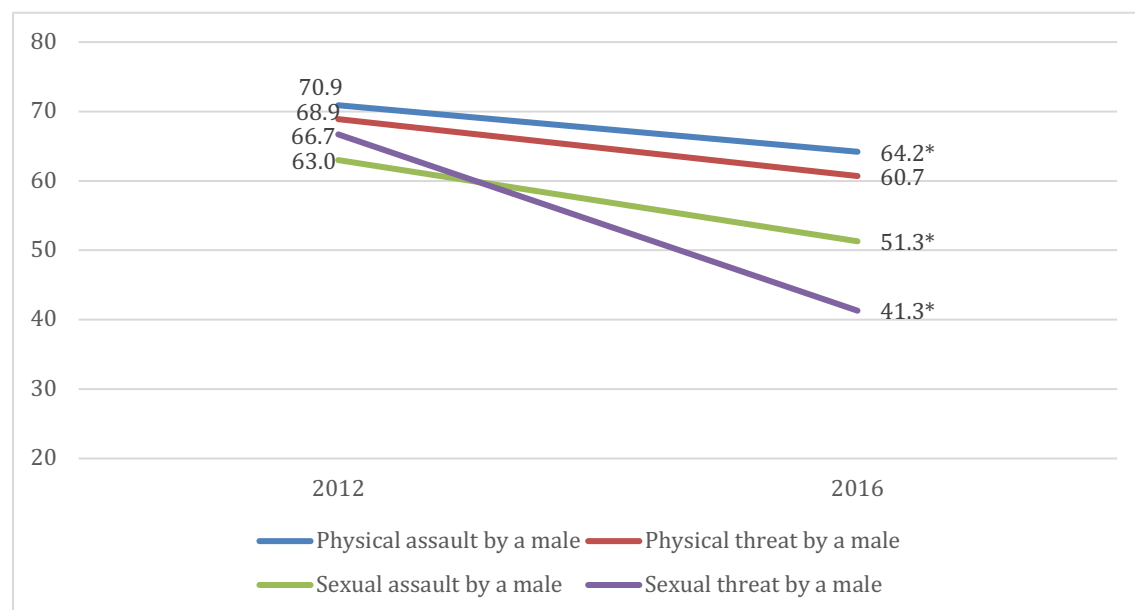
### Interpretation notes:

Figure 6: The PSS asks victims to indicate whether or not they sought advice or support following their most recent incident of violence. 'Sought advice or support' includes both formal and informal sources of support.<sup>7</sup> The PSS asks about whether they have sought advice from any of these services, and not about the responsiveness of each. In addition, the majority of respondents seek support from a friend or family member. Thus, there are limitations with the PSS data being used as a measure of the *responsiveness of services*. These data may, however, be useful indicators of willingness to seek support or advice.

Figure 7: The PSS collects data on whether female victims ever sought advice or support about a partner, rather than most recent incident data. This means it is not possible to get a true indication of changes over time. There was no significant change in the proportion of female victims of partner violence seeking support or advice between 2012 and 2016.

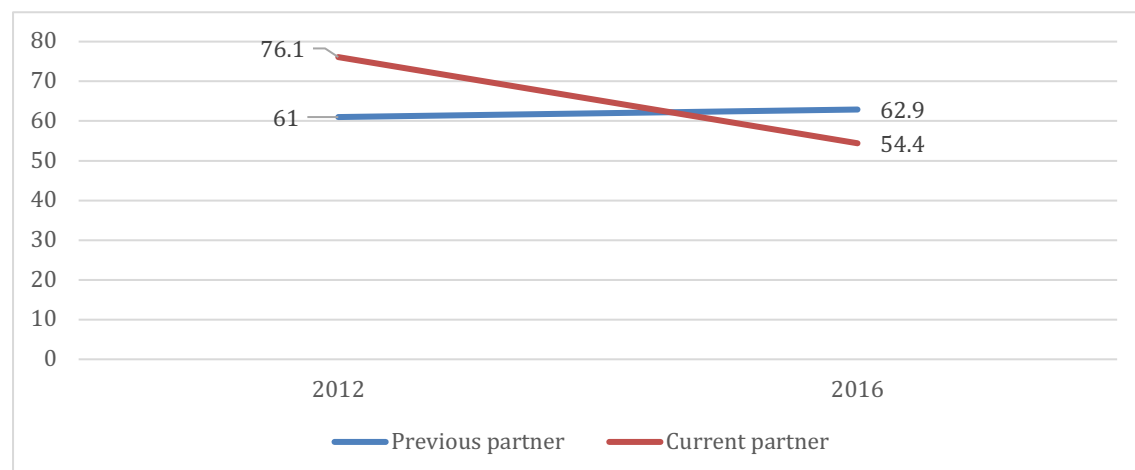
<sup>7</sup> The response categories include: General practitioner; Other health professional; Counsellor or support worker; Telephone helpline; Refuge or shelter; Police; Legal service; Financial service; Government housing or community services; Friend or family member; Work colleague or boss; Priest/minister/rabbi/other spiritual adviser; Other.

**Figure 6: Proportion of female victims who sought advice or support about their most recent experience of physical or sexual violence by a male within the last five years**



Note: \* Difference between 2012 and 2016 is statistically significant.  
Source: ABS, 2017, Personal Safety Survey

**Figure 7: Proportion of female victims who have ever sought advice or support about experience of violence by a current or previous partner**



Source: ABS, 2017, Personal Safety Survey

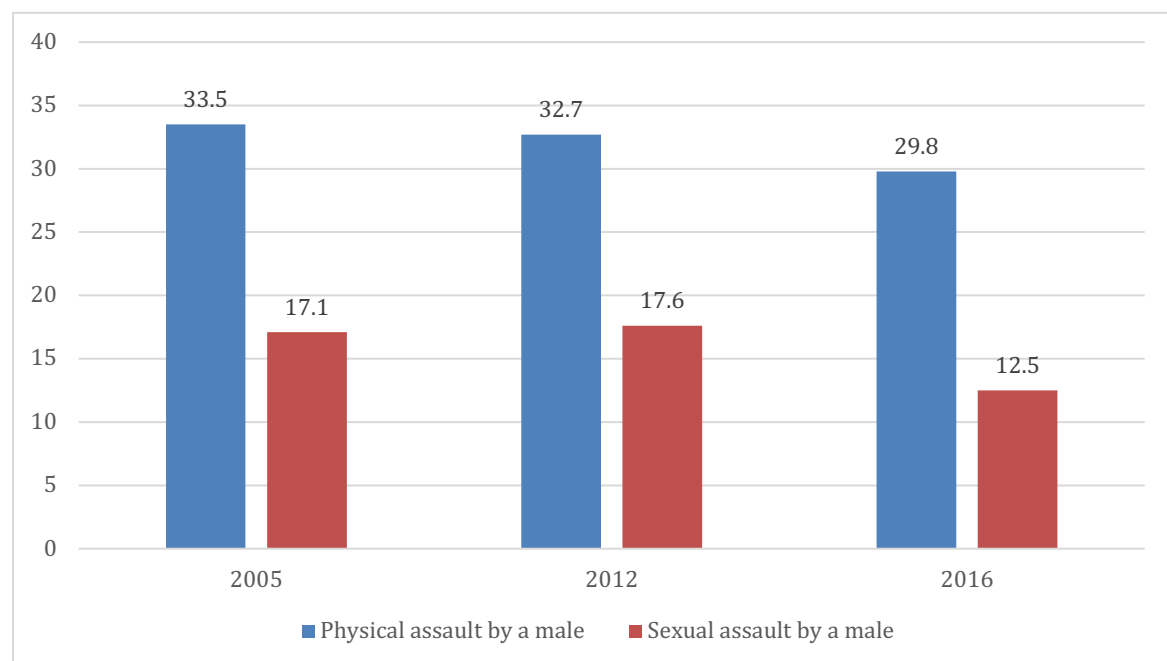
## Measure of Success 6: Rates of women reporting their most recent incident of violence to police, all perpetrator types

**Summary findings:** The results of the 2016 Personal Safety Survey indicate that rates of women in Australia reporting physical assault and sexual assault to police remained relatively stable between 2005 and 2016.

**Interpretation notes:** The PSS asks victims to indicate whether or not the police were contacted for their most recent incident of physical assault and sexual assault. Readers should also be aware that the chart includes police contact by the victim and police contact by someone else.

The time frame used was the most recent incident falling within the last five years, to enable changes over time comparisons. There were no statistically significant changes in rates of police contact between any of the years below, for either physical assault or sexual assault.

**Figure 8: Proportion of female victims who contacted the police after their most recent incident of violence in the last five years, all perpetrator types**



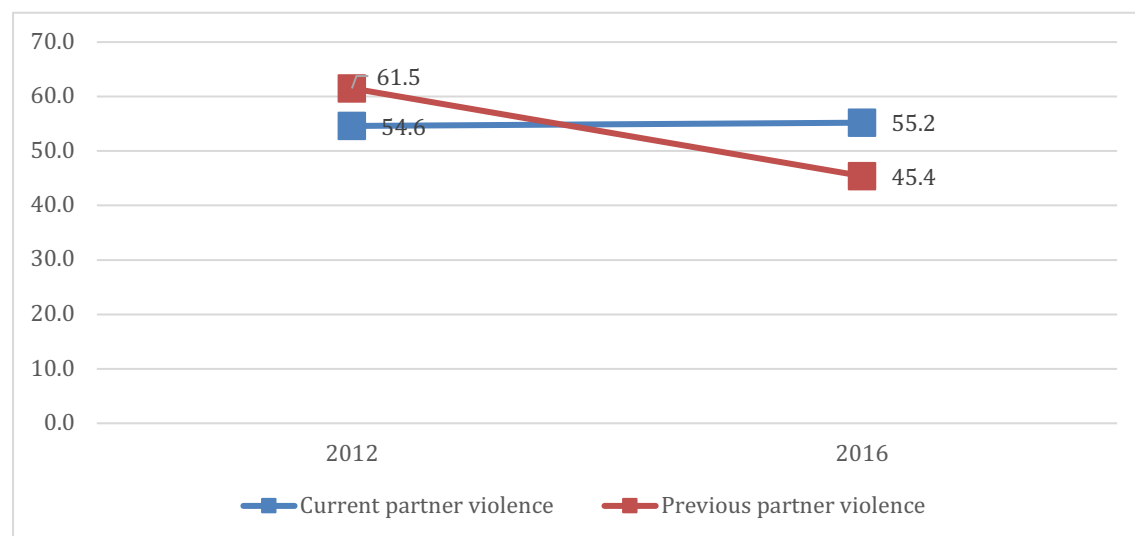
Source: ABS, 2017, Personal Safety Survey

## Measure of Success 7: A decrease in repeated partner victimisation

**Summary findings:** The results of the 2016 Personal Safety Survey have found a mixed result for tracking repeated partner victimisation. Between 2012 and 2016, there was a decrease in the proportion of women who experienced repeated violence by a previous partner. However, on the same measure there was no change observed for violence perpetrated by a current partner.

**Interpretation notes:** The PSS asks victims of partner violence whether they experienced 'more than one incident' or 'one incident only'. Readers should be mindful that there was no statistically significant decrease in the proportion of women who experienced repeated partner violence victimisation by a current partner.

**Figure 9: Of women who have experienced partner violence within the last 12 months, whether violence occurred more than once**



Source: ABS, 2017, Personal Safety Survey

The following section provides trend analysis in relation to the Indicators of Change.

## Indicator of Change 1: Reduced prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault

### Summary findings:

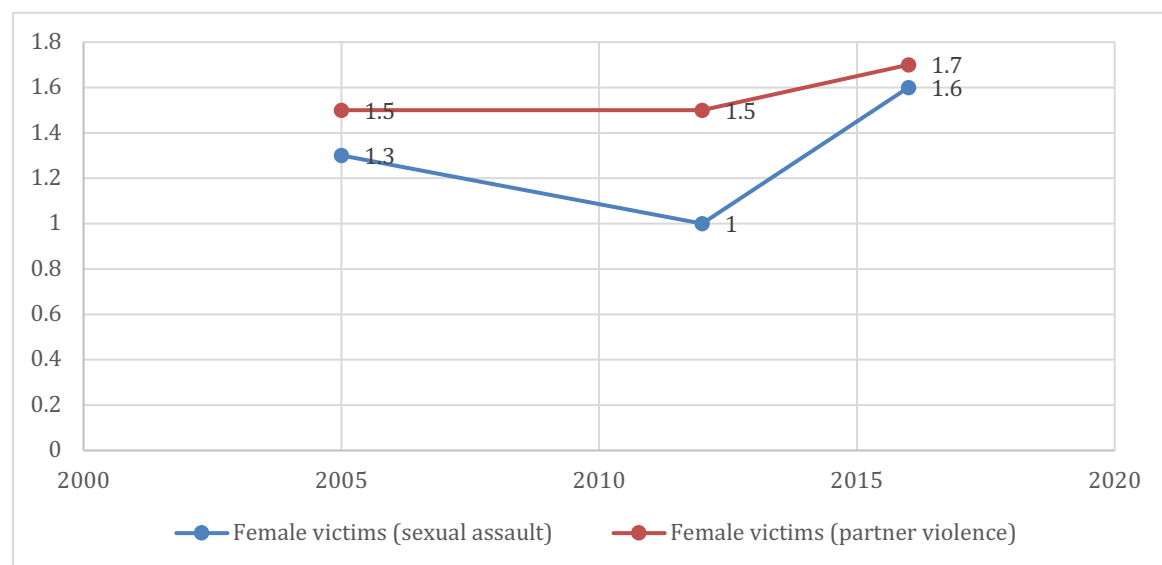
Figure 10: The Personal Safety Survey (PSS) asks about experiences of violence in the last 12 months. This provides a national estimate about the proportion of people who have experienced particular forms of violence. Data about female victims of partner violence and sexual assault are drawn from the 2005, 2012 and 2016 PSS. The data show no significant change in the proportion of females who have experienced partner violence in the last 12 months. However, the observed increase in sexual assault was significant between 2012 and 2016.

As there is no periodic prevalence study for child sexual abuse, Figure 11 uses data from Recorded Crime statistics.

### Interpretation notes:

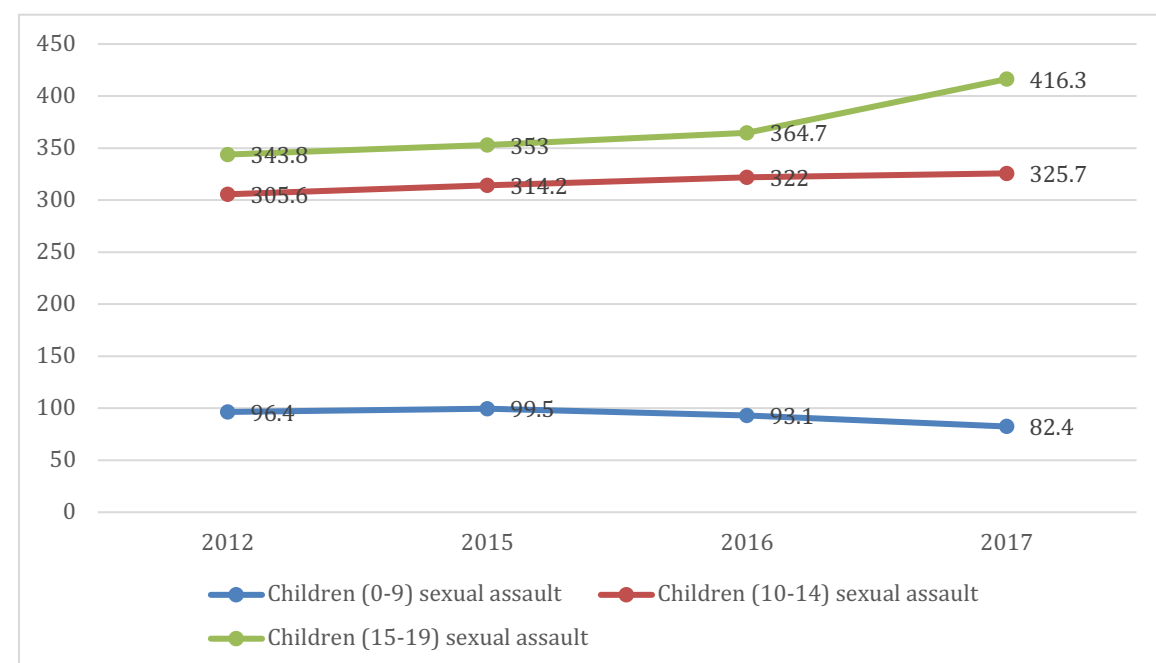
Figure 11: Data about child victims of sexual assault are drawn from Recorded Crime statistics. As such, the child data are not prevalence data, they are a police-recorded victimisation rate (per 100,000 population). Increased police reporting for the child data can be interpreted as either an improvement due to increased awareness and reporting or as a possible actual increase.

**Figure 10: Proportion of females aged 18 years and over who have experienced the given offence type within the last 12 months of the corresponding PSS year (2005, 2012, 2016)**



Source: Female victims' data from the ABS, 2017, Personal Safety Survey  
NB: Partner violence refers to cohabitating partners.

**Figure 11: The number of children per 100,000, who have been victims of sexual assault, by age group.**



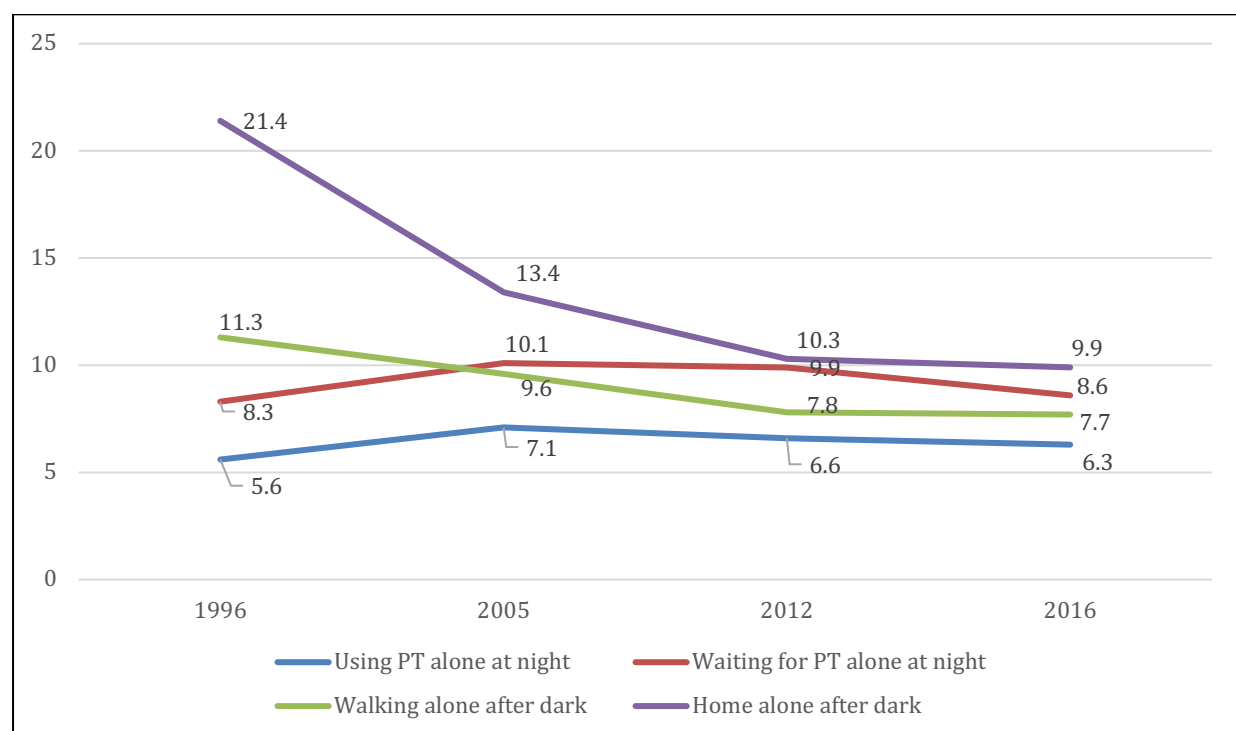
Source: ABS, 2018, *Recorded Crime – Victims Australia, 2017*

## Indicator of Change 2: Increased proportion of women who feel safe in their communities

**Summary findings:** Findings show that women in Australia are increasingly feeling safer alone at home after dark. Results from 2012–16 also show that women are beginning to feel safer using and waiting for public transport at night.

**Interpretation notes:** Readers should be aware in interpreting Figure 12 that no standard error is represented. However, significant changes were recorded between 2012 and 2016 for all measures except 'walking alone in the local area after dark in the last 12 months' (shown as 'Walking alone after dark' in Figure 12).

**Figure 12: Women's feelings of safety in the last 12 months in selected situations, proportion (%) who felt unsafe, Australia**



Note: PT = Public transport.

Source: ABS, 2017, Personal Safety Survey. 1996 data are drawn from the former Women's Safety Survey, also conducted by the ABS and comparable with the Personal Safety Survey.

## Indicator of Change 3: Reduced deaths related to domestic violence and sexual assault

**Summary findings:** The number of female deaths in Australia related to domestic violence and sexual assault increased between 2010–12 and 2012–14.<sup>8</sup>

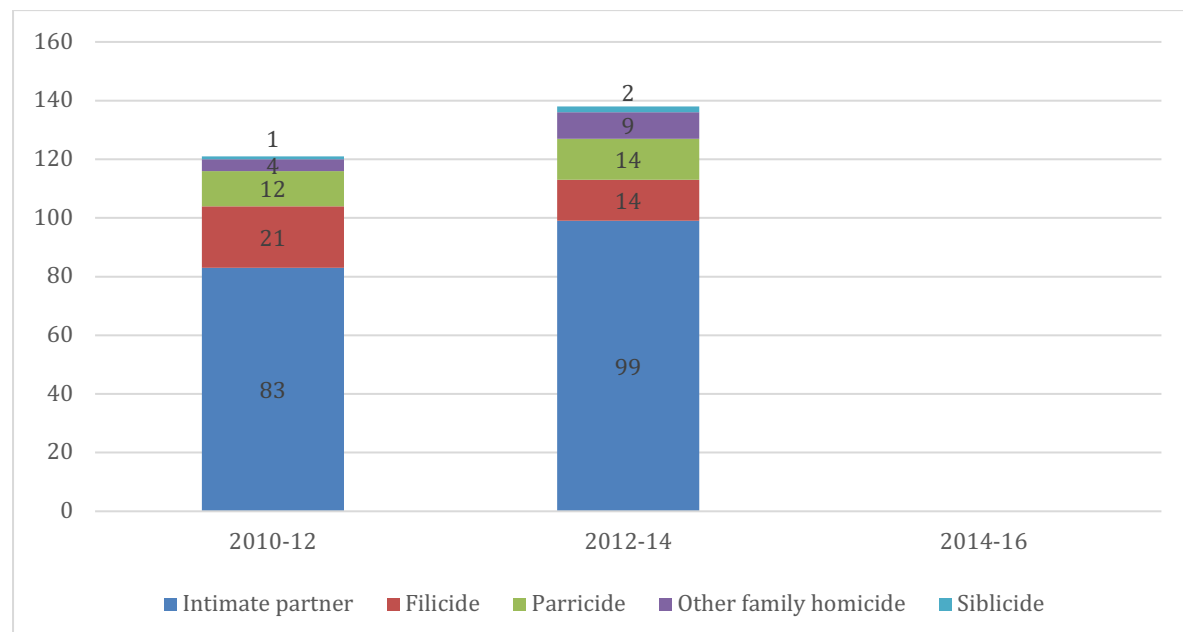
**Interpretation notes:** Readers should be aware in interpreting the chart that an explicit measure for 'domestic violence' is not available. Instead, Figure 13 provides information on domestic homicides

<sup>8</sup> The Australian Institute of Criminology is yet to publish the data from the National Homicide Monitoring Program for 2014–16. ABS 'Recorded Crime' data provides information about 'Female Victims of Homicide and Related Offences' by a family member between 2014–18; however, these data are only available for selected states (NSW, Vic., Qld, SA) [www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4510.0Main+Features12018?OpenDocument](http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4510.0Main+Features12018?OpenDocument)



against women by several family perpetrator types. This includes homicides by intimate partners, which likely fits into what most people would consider to be domestic violence.

**Figure 13: Female domestic homicide victims, by homicide type, Australia**



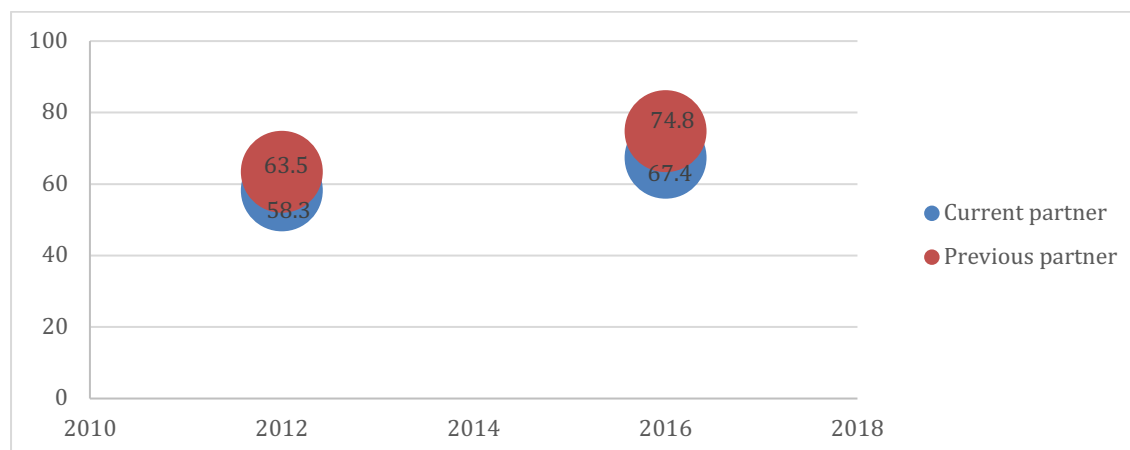
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, National Homicide Monitoring Program (Bryant & Bricknell, 2017)

## Indicator of Change 4: Reduced proportion of children exposed to their mother's or carer's experience of domestic violence

**Summary findings:** The trend of children exposed to their mother's or carer's experience of violence, by either a current partner or previous partner, remained relatively stable between 2012 and 2016.

**Interpretation notes:** Figure 14 draws on data from the 2012 and 2016 Personal Safety Surveys, conducted by the ABS. The survey asks victims of partner violence whether they had children in their care when their experience of violence occurred. It then asks whether the children in the victim's care saw or heard their experience of violence. In interpreting Figure 14, readers should be aware that the proportion (%) refers to those female victims who reported that their children saw or heard their experience of partner violence, with the denominator being the number of female victims who had children in their care when the violence occurred (not the total number of children in Australia). Readers should be mindful that no statistically significant changes were observed between 2012 and 2016. It can be concluded from this that there has not been a reduction in the proportion of children exposed to their mother's or female carer's experience of domestic violence.

**Figure 14: Partner violence within the last 12 months, proportion of female victims reporting their children saw or heard their experience of violence, Australia**



Source: ABS, 2017, Personal Safety Survey

## Challenges and limitations in measuring change

As noted earlier, the Third Action Plan is part of a long-term, social change endeavour (i.e. the National Plan). This endeavour extends across the continuum of prevention, from addressing the underlying drivers of violence through to ensuring that systems responses to women who have experienced violence address their needs, are not retraumatising, and provide holistic long-term support. This necessarily involves multiple interventions, targeting different levels of the social ecology (i.e. interpersonal, organisational, social) and across multiple settings (e.g. health, educational, workplaces, media).

The Measures of Success and Indicators of Change described above can be useful in providing high-level, nationally representative benchmarks and trends. Taken on their own, however, they have significant limitations that need to be acknowledged in any evaluation of the impact of having a National Plan. Specifically:

- The sources of data used were not specifically designed to monitor progress and outcomes and indeed precede the National Plan. This means that although they are robust data sources in their own right, they may not be the best fit to demonstrate the particular indicator or measure.
- The time horizon to see sustained reductions in the prevalence of family, domestic and sexual violence is at least generational (15+ years). The underlying attitudes, beliefs and social structures enabling violence against women are centuries old. It is only in the last 50 years that domestic and sexual violence have been explicitly acknowledged as social problems; criminal justice and other reforms started to take hold in the 1980s. Understanding the collective economic and social costs of violence against women and the need for prevention as well as response is more recent still, gaining momentum from the early 2000s. The measure of reduction in the prevalence of violence against women needs to be seen against this history. Further the barriers to disclosing and reporting family domestic and sexual violence have been significant; 12-month prevalence figures may still be a reflection of increasing awareness and disclosure.
- As very high-level indicators of broad changes, they are unable to tell us about changes and outcomes in relation to key aims of the National Plan; for example, service and systems' co-ordination; workforce capabilities; or the effectiveness of justice responses to perpetrators.

These limitations and challenges of measuring complex change efforts together with the insights from stakeholders signal an opportunity to think more holistically and systemically about measures and indicators for change. Consideration could be given to, for example:

- the degree of cross-portfolio investment and participation in the National Plan
- gender equity measures such as: women's economic participation; leadership roles; attitudes towards gender and decision-making (contained in NCAS)
- the inclusion of family and sexual violence in medical, psychology and social work degrees.

As noted in chapter 6, *Counting on Change* by OurWatch is a good example of working backwards from the key aims to identify a) what is required to enable that change and b) what can be used as useful measure.

## 6. Conclusion and key implications

In this final chapter, we synthesise the key findings from our analysis of progress in the Priority Areas, insights from stakeholders and the analysis of the Third Action Plan's contribution to the National Outcomes and the Indicators of Change. We then provide a discussion of the key learnings and implications these findings suggest for the next stages of the National Plan.

### 6.1. Synthesis of findings

The key findings arising from this evaluation are that:

- **Overall, initiatives implemented in each of the Priority Areas address the aims of the actions agreed at the outset of the Third Action Plan.** This was particularly the case where there were specified sub-actions, which outlined a more discrete project and/or explicitly identified an owner.
- **The implemented program of work largely aligns with the intended aims of the Third Action Plan** as envisaged at the beginning of the National Plan, particularly in relation to building the governance, leadership and research infrastructure needed to support generational change. At the same time, and as stakeholders described, the broader socio-cultural context of the Third Action Plan needs to be incorporated into understandings of how it has been implemented and the gains achieved. The period during which the plan was released and implemented was a time of heightened national awareness of family, domestic and sexual violence with significant reform agendas arising from a number of inquiries into family violence, child sexual abuse and child protection. The Third Action Plan endeavoured to harness the momentum of this increased salience regarding the issue of violence against women and be responsive to emerging issues.
- **Relatedly, key stakeholders in the Third Action Plan saw the plan as representing a significant and ambitious agenda** that was driven by – and aimed to capitalise on – major developments in the broader community context that raised the profile of violence against women. As such, progress or success was not seen as primarily resting on whether or not all the stated aims had been met or whether or not specific activities had been delivered. Indeed, stakeholders indicated that the fast pace of change – and the dynamic nature of responses to current conditions – meant that the Third Action Plan's initial aims, goals or promised actions were not necessarily as relevant now as they were at the time of the 3AP's development. Against this context, progress was instead largely seen as:
  - the increasing alignment of priorities across all governments

- increase in the involvement and investment of cross-government agencies and portfolios, indicating that the prevention of violence against women was seen as a whole-of-government responsibility
  - preventing violence against women and support for a long-term national approach having bipartisan support
  - the types of conversations occurring across governments, national partners and stakeholders (e.g. intersectionality, rigid forms of masculinity)
  - the prioritisation of primary prevention by governments (given its complex, long-term nature)
  - the maturing of the National Partners in their capacity for national leadership, guidance and influence.
- **Important gains have occurred in the areas of primary prevention and early intervention, the integration of key service systems and in holding perpetrators to account.** That gains were less readily apparent than in other areas should *not* be taken to mean that there has not been work done to address the priority or actions. The reasons why efforts appear differently distributed relate to the fact that the issues to be addressed are complex. Not only do they require cross-sector and cross-jurisdiction coordination, but the policy and legislative levers to effect change are differently distributed across these sectors and jurisdictions, for example:
- The division of responsibilities and powers between Commonwealth and state/territory governments to drive change or implement actions. For instance, while there is shared national aspiration to better meet the needs of children of women experiencing violence, often the mechanisms for change are located within the child protection portfolios of individual jurisdictions. Child welfare and child protection reform, themselves, involve a complex interplay of local legislation, procedures, protocol and workforce capability that has, until recently, been distinguished from reforms to address violence against women.
  - The division of responsibilities and powers *within* jurisdictions: The mechanisms to implement actions under a Priority Area may sit within other portfolios or agencies (e.g. changes to visa and migration regulations). This requires the relevant agencies to agree to and implement the required changes, which may not occur.
  - How different jurisdictions frame or locate particular issues within their policy arrangements. For example, how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy is framed and, therefore, the programs implemented, can make it difficult for initiatives that may be relevant to the Priority Area or National Outcome to have visibility.
  - The degree of fragmentation and siloing of systems, sectors and stakeholders in relation to particular issues (e.g. forensic medical evidence) can stymie shared action.
- One of the main successes of the Third Action Plan (including the processes associated with its development) appeared to be its role in facilitating conversation among and between different levels of government and in continuing to build the foundations of a significant policy and governance infrastructure across all levels of government and, to a lesser extent, across service systems. Although stakeholders suggested that there was still more work to be done in coordinating responses to violence against women, and in improving information sharing, this progress in building a national infrastructure suggests that the Third Action Plan made a particularly significant contribution to one of the National Plan's Foundations for Success: 'Integrate systems and share information'. This was evident in the increasing correspondence between state and territory policy frameworks, the development of shared priorities and a shared language, the use of the 3AP to provide leverage for allocating funding at a jurisdictional level, and the ongoing national discussion facilitated by forums such as ImpEG.

## 6.2. Key learnings and implications

In this final section, we identify the key learnings arising from this evaluation and their implications for the next stages of the National Plan. These key learnings relate to:

- the long-term change effort that the National Plan represents and implications for how outcomes, impacts and success are understood
- the importance – and challenge – of coordinated evaluation activity across multiple Priority Areas
- identifying intersecting systemic and legislative dependencies that enable or inhibit implementing actions
- better articulating the roles and needs different players have within the ‘eco-system’ of the National Plan and each rolling plan.

We discuss these below.

**The National Plan as a long-term change effort:** As we noted in the introduction, the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children is a complex social change initiative, with time horizons that are generational in nature. These time horizons – and the role the Third Action Plan has within this – were well recognised by the stakeholders we spoke with. That is, stakeholders acknowledged the scale of change, and that identifying ‘progress’ against the National Outcomes as a consequence of the Third Action Plan was challenging. The challenge relates not only to the long-term nature of reducing violence against women, but also to the non-linear relationships between activity and outcome that characterise complex systems change (Cook & Tonurist, 2016). This recognition presents an opportunity to think more broadly and holistically about ‘outcomes’ and measures of success that mark the pathway to the desired outcomes. *Counting on Change* offers a good example of the anticipated change pathway in the area of primary prevention. The Third Action Plan has seen significant maturation in the organisations, structures, relationships, and collective knowledge that can be drawn on to develop, for example, theories of change for different types of outcome areas, what success looks like in the shorter and medium terms, and what range of data are available to help monitor progression.

**The importance of coordinated evaluation activity:** Evaluation is a key activity of the National Plan and the Third Action Plan at a high level – as demonstrated through the existing evaluation framework for the National Plan as a whole and the high-level evaluations of each Action Plan – and to a lesser extent in the program of completed or scheduled evaluations for specific initiatives. However, stakeholder comments (as well as the general dearth of publicly available outcomes data) indicated that the lack of a coordinated approach to evaluating or monitoring specific initiatives was a missed opportunity that could be addressed in the next stages of the National Plan. There were also issues identified with the communication and availability of existing evaluation data. It was further noted that, due to the complexity of some interventions, there had been delays in the commencement of evaluations and thus a further delay in publishing results. The lack of publicly available evaluation or outcomes data, as well as the absence of a coordinated approach to either undertaking or communicating the results of those evaluations that had taken place, meant there was a lack of visibility about how the Priority Areas were progressing overall. There was also a perceived loss of momentum in progressing programs of work due to this lack of knowledge about what activities were working well and what were not. This suggests that there would be value in developing a more coordinated approach to evaluation and monitoring by, for example, having a central or overarching coordinator of evaluations in terms of procurement, design, implementation and dissemination.

In addition to formal evaluations, consideration could be given to mechanisms that enable iterative learning, documentation, and ‘course correction’ such as communities of practice, mini-forums, or other

ways for governments, National Partners, key stakeholders and deliverers to learn about what is going well and to identify key learnings on a more frequent basis during the life of the Action Plan.

**Identifying intersecting systemic and legislative dependencies that enable or inhibit implementing actions:** A number of actions require the commitment of policy areas and systems that extend beyond the community, family law and family violence service systems. Examples include immigration, income support, and education. The intersections between the drivers of violence against women, barriers to service access and broader structural/systemic issues are becoming better understood, and these policy portfolios increasingly realise the role they can play. However, implementing changes to policy, practice or legislation can take time. It could be useful to make explicit or map out the dependencies and interactions between systems and policy arenas to maximise the possibility of implementing agreed actions.

**Understanding the roles and needs different players have within the ‘eco-system’ of the National Plan and each rolling plan:** All interviewees noted the importance and value of a national approach to address violence against women and children, but felt that more Commonwealth leadership and guidance were required to enable better understanding of the part that different agencies and different levels of government could play in a national framework. Different players involved in the National Plan have different roles and needs. For example, advocacy and non-government organisations often used the simple fact of an action having been agreed as leverage and influence because of the kind of brokerage roles they play. In contrast, agencies within governments seemed to require more explicit objectives to help drive their work within and across departments.

Stakeholders also identified the challenges of implementing a plan that had been agreed to at a national level but in a policy context where most efforts and investment to address family and domestic violence took place at a jurisdictional level. Hence, there was an expressed desire for more structured planning and guidance on implementation of specific actions, particularly when such actions were not directly funded under the National Plan. Strategies such as using the best fit levers available to departments and different levels of government seemed to assist progress, as did having a non-government National Partner or national-level driver to broker connections between the Commonwealth and states and territories, coordinate action, and develop and share emerging evidence. However, stakeholders made it clear that there was still more work to be done in facilitating effective coordination.

These key learnings should not be taken as a negative assessment of the Third Action Plan. On the contrary, they reflect the increasing maturity and sophistication in Australia’s approach to preventing violence against women. They are also a measure of the deepening infrastructure of expertise and capability linking governments, community services, specialist providers, researchers, peak agencies, and change agents together to tackle violence against women and their children at the whole-of-population level.



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## Appendix A: Actions in Priority Areas

PRIORITY AREA 1: PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION		
Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
1.1: Drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and attitudes that lead to violence against women and their children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Watch National Sporting Organisation Initiative (NSOI) project</li> <li>'The Line' (Our Watch) social media campaign</li> </ul>	(a) All jurisdictions commit to implementing Our Watch's Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stop it at the Start 2016; 2018 (COAG)</li> </ul>
	(b) Better targeting The Line campaign at diverse cohorts of young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research undertaken to better target The Line: engage young men (14–18 years old), including young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and migrant and refugee men, in considering the limitations of rigid masculine stereotypes. Launched 20 May 2019</li> <li>Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (FDV)</li> </ul>
	(c) Develop a bystander campaign to support people to intervene where safe to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doing Nothing Does Harm launch Oct 2018</li> </ul>
	(d) Continue collaboration with the media to improve reporting on and support for victims of domestic, family and sexual violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Media Engagement and Our Watch Awards; Resources development and curriculum developed</li> <li>No Excuse for Abuse campaign (Our Watch campaign)</li> </ul>
1.2: Support local communities to take effective action to reduce violence against women and their children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ANROWS Action Research on CALD projects covers eight Safer Pathways for CALD Women and 18 CALD Communities Leading Prevention projects.</li> </ul>	(a) Co-design tools and resources with local governments to engage with business, sporting organisations and community groups to promote action against violence and engage all levels of business to lead and collaborate on initiatives to drive a reduction in violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Sporting Organisations Initiative to build capacity of sporting organisations to take action to prevent violence</li> </ul> Research and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building Safe Communities for Women and Action Research Project (short-term funding to establish projects to prevent violence against women and their children in local communities, ANROWS)</li> <li>Local Government Toolkit Action Research</li> </ul> Toolkits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Government Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Prevention Toolkit: trialled in 5 local government areas in WA, SA, Vic., Qld, NSW</li> </ul>
	(b) Support culturally and linguistically diverse women, young people and communities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and elders, to lead efforts to reduce violence against women in their communities.	Research and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Violence in Newly Arrived and Refugee Communities study (Vic.)</li> <li>Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) questions on religion and FDV included</li> <li>CALD Communities Leading Prevention (one-off, non-ongoing funding to support organisations to drive long-term changes in community awareness, attitudes and behaviours) and action research (18 projects across 6 jurisdictions; ANROWS Action Research)</li> <li><i>Changing the Picture</i> – Indigenous Companion Guide</li> <li>Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting scoping project</li> </ul> Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AMES Australia Respect and Responsibility CALD Emerging Leaders Training (Vic.)</li> <li>White Ribbon Community Connections – Emerging Leaders; Diversity Liaison Officers</li> </ul>

PRIORITY AREA 1: PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
1.3: Support schools and teachers to deliver age-appropriate and evidence-based respectful relationships education to all school children covering sexual violence, gender equality issues and a range of other relationship issues and tailored to vulnerable cohorts.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Our Watch Respectful Relationships Resources</li> <li>– Partnership between Our Watch and the Queensland Department of Education to develop and trial a transferable, whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships education in a primary school setting. Ten state primary schools in the South East region of Queensland have opted to be part of this innovative project.</li> </ul>
1.4: Increase men's involvement in gender equality and reducing violence, including through the use of influencers and role models.	(a) Use a range of communication, ambassador and public relations activities to raise awareness about non-physical abuse and where to seek help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– No Excuse for Abuse, launched on 22 August 2018 (until June 2019)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Watch National Sporting Organisation Initiative (NSOI) project</li> </ul>	(b) Engage parenting services to incorporate primary prevention resources and advice on ways to equally share parenting into programs for first-time parents and fathers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supporting Men as New Fathers initiative (8 programs)</li> <li>– Mensline</li> </ul>
1.5: Embed gender equality in workplace culture and increase women's workforce participation and economic security.	(a) Build on work being done across the public and private sectors to embed greater gender equality in workplace culture and increase workforce participation and economic security for women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– White Ribbon – Evaluation and Expansion of the Workplace Accreditation Program and Strengthening Community Engagement Program</li> <li>– National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – Australian Human Rights Commission</li> </ul>
	(b) Support employers and employees when domestic and family violence impacts on workplaces by providing a 'one-stop shop' for resources on effective workplace responses to violence against women and their children.	
1.6: Improve financial literacy and competence for women who are experiencing or at risk of violence.	(a) Increase the availability of financial support and counselling and partner with corporate bodies and non-government organisations to improve women's access to microfinance products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Three E's to Freedom is a domestic and family violence prevention strategy based on the 'Three E's' – Education, Employment to Empowerment; and Trial Expansion</li> </ul>

## PRIORITY AREA 2: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AND THEIR CHILDREN

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
<p>2.1: Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to prevent and respond to violence against women and their children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – ABS – National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)</li> </ul>	(a) Establish culturally appropriate support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to lead community efforts against violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White Ribbon Community Connections Diversity Program, Diversity Liaison Officers</li> <li>Aboriginal Women's Engagement Project – Scotdesco, South Australia</li> </ul>
	(b) Foster the development of community-driven and place-based initiatives that respond to local needs and conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-design of Indigenous Specific Initiatives</li> <li>Cashless Debit Card Projects in Ceduna SA and East Kimberley regions</li> <li>Safe at Home solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children in remote areas (Qld)</li> <li>Safe at Home solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children (WA)</li> </ul>
	(c) Our Watch to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop an Indigenous-specific resource to sit alongside Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Changing the Picture</i> – Indigenous Companion Guide</li> </ul>
2.2: Conduct a study in remote, regional and urban communities to improve our understanding of what it will take to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	(a) Examine the extent of exposure to violence against women and their children; social impacts on relationships, health, wellbeing, education and workforce participation; availability, appropriateness and effectiveness of services and other supports; and identify what else is needed to reduce exposure to, and the effects of, violence in communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study in Urban, Regional and Remote ATSI Communities – Family and Community Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (FaCtS)</li> </ul>
2.3: Co-design and develop primary prevention activities with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men.	(a) Produce primary prevention resources specifically targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boys and men.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Changing the Picture</i> – Indigenous Companion Guide</li> </ul>
	(b) Promote respectful relationships, particularly for young men.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Line: engage young men (14–18 years old), including young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and migrant and refugee men, in considering the limitations of rigid masculine stereotypes.</li> </ul>
	(c) Engage male role models and community leaders to speak out against domestic, family and sexual violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Line: engage young men (14–18 years old), including young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and migrant and refugee men, in considering the limitations of rigid masculine stereotypes.</li> <li>'No More' educational program for Aboriginal men to raise awareness of the incidence of family violence, Ceduna</li> </ul>

## PRIORITY AREA 2: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AND THEIR CHILDREN

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
2.4: Establish improved community-driven, trauma-informed supports that give choice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children who have experienced domestic, family or sexual violence.	(a) Build the capacity of communities to respond to domestic, family and sexual violence through boosting local workforce development.	Co-design and delivery of Indigenous-specific initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Trauma-informed therapeutic services for children</li> <li>– Men's behaviour change</li> <li>– Case-managed crisis support and Trauma informed training to all FVPLS</li> </ul>
	(b) Develop and implement wraparound, case-managed support for families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Perpetrator Package – Rural and Remote Perpetrator Interventions</li> <li>– Safe at Home solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children in remote areas (Qld)</li> <li>– Safe at Home solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children (WA)</li> </ul>
	(c) Improve and expand on current services so they provide intensive, holistic, culturally sensitive responses.	
	(d) Support perpetrators of violence to engage in behaviour change programs to address the drivers of their violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Perpetrator Package – Rural and Remote Perpetrator Interventions</li> </ul>
	(e) Intervene early and support parents and carers to meet the needs of children and young people to reduce problem behaviours and connect them with the services they need.	



### PRIORITY AREA 3: GREATER CHOICE AND SUPPORT

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
<p>3.1: Develop and implement national principles for risk assessment for victims and perpetrators of violence, based on evidence, including the risks that are present for children and other family members who experience or are exposed to violence.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– National Risk Assessment Principles (NRAP) for services working with people who are victims or perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence</li> <li>– 3AP working group on children and parenting</li> <li>– Working with Children (ACU): To identify opportunities to improve service responses to women and their children experiencing violence by building the capacity of workers in specialist and mainstream services to work with and support children who have experienced and/or witnessed family and domestic violence</li> </ul>
<p>3.2: Develop an evidence-based national workforce agenda to support frontline services and improve responses to violence against women and their children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DV-Alert – free, nationally accredited training for health, allied health and community frontline workers</li> </ul>	<p>(a) Review specialist domestic, family and sexual violence workforce and frontline workforces that engage with women and their children who have experienced violence or with perpetrators. Identify gaps and challenges faced by these workforces and recommend actions that could be undertaken by employers and funding bodies to strengthen the workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Workforce Agenda – National Survey of the DV and SXV and development of Workforce Strategy</li> <li>– National Survey of Family and Relationship Services (FARS) and Specialised Family Violence Services (SFVS)</li> <li>– Workforce Agenda – Capacity building projects (4 trial projects with frontline staff working with women who have experienced FDV)</li> <li>– Working with Parents (STACY) (University of Melbourne): To improve service responses to parents experiencing violence by building the capacity of workers in specialist and mainstream services to provide parenting support where there is FDV intersecting with mental health issues and alcohol and other drug uses experiences by either mothers or fathers</li> <li>– Outcomes measurement: To improve service responses to women and their children experiencing violence by building the capacity of workers in specialist and mainstream services to implement evidence-based practice and use outcomes measurement to assess service effectiveness</li> <li>– Coronial Scoping Review Paper</li> </ul>
<p>3.3: Strengthen safe and appropriate accommodation options and supports for women and their children escaping violence, including specialist women's services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Spatial Mapping and Research Summaries to undertake spatial mapping of the distribution of violence across Australia using data from Australian Longitudinal Study of Women's Health.</li> </ul>	<p>(a) Assess and work to address the immediate, medium-term and long-term accommodation needs of women who are escaping violence.</p> <p>(b) Increase the stock of affordable, accessible and social housing and the support needed to enable women and their children, if they want to, to stay in their own homes through Safe at Home initiatives.</p> <p>(c) Improve the availability of accommodation for perpetrators who are removed from the home to ensure the safety of women and children in their homes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lighthouse Foundation innovation fund to establish a home for young women and girls who are in/at risk of forced marriage</li> </ul>



### PRIORITY AREA 3: GREATER CHOICE AND SUPPORT

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
	(d) Assess the effectiveness of Victoria's use of Individual Flexible Packages for women and their children who are escaping violence as the basis of a joint review of future funding models, including a possible broader rollout.	
	(e) Develop national principles for tenancy legislation to ensure consistency across jurisdictions for women who are experiencing violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 3AP Working Group: Housing and homelessness national survey on impact of tenancy laws on women and children escaping violence</li> </ul>
<p>3.4: Develop integrated post-crisis planning information and resources for use by general service providers and individuals to help women and their children who have experienced violence to recover and move forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3AP Working Group: Children and Parenting: research on service system responses to children and their families where there is domestic and family violence and the family is known to child protection authorities</li> <li>• 3AP Working Groups: Combined Project Research and develop resources to increase the capacity of services to build safety in families reunifying after experiencing FDV.</li> </ul>	<p>(a) Draw on the expertise of specialist women's services and work with women and their children post-crisis to set medium-term and long-term goals.</p> <p>(b) Provide advice to services and women about medium-term to long-term considerations when escaping violence, including economic security, post-crisis accommodation, ongoing physical and mental health, parenting after violence, healthy family functioning and future relationships support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Specialist Domestic Violence Units and Health Justice Partnership pilot interventions (14 in total)</li> <li>– Health Justice Partnerships</li> <li>– Local Support Coordinators</li> <li>– 1800RESPECT sector support</li> <li>– Financial Counsellors DV Training</li> <li>– Specialist Domestic Violence Units and Health Justice Partnership pilot interventions (14 in total)</li> </ul>
<p>3.5: Improve support to women with disability who experience or are at risk of violence by working with them, the disability sector, specialist family and domestic violence services and mainstream services.</p>	<p>(a) Engage with women with disability, researchers and the disability sector to better understand and address the diverse experience of violence against women with disability.</p> <p>(b) Develop accredited training for the disability workforce to improve capacity to identify and support women with disability who experience violence.</p> <p>(c) Foster innovative and collaborative service delivery and outreach to improve the quality and accessibility of services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 1800RESPECT Disability Research (to develop the SUNNY app and work under the disability pathways project)</li> <li>– DV-Alert – Disability Workforce Training</li> <li>– DV-Alert – Disability Research, eLearning and workshops</li> <li>– 1800RESPECT disability pathways project</li> </ul>

### PRIORITY AREA 3: GREATER CHOICE AND SUPPORT

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
<p>3.6: Improve the quality and accessibility of services for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIHW research into the practice of female genital mutilation in Australia FGM/C Fact Sheet</li> <li>• ANROWS Action Research Safer Pathways for CALD Women</li> <li>• Research – Family Violence in Newly Arrived and Refugee Communities and role of cultural understandings gender</li> <li>• ALSWH analysis on CALD and disability</li> </ul>	<p>(a) Provide high-quality, professional translating and interpreting services and improve the cultural appropriateness of services and information.</p> <p>(b) Improve training and resources for GPs and other health workers to assist them in supporting and appropriately referring patients who are experiencing violence.</p> <p>(c) Trial intensive, recovery-focused support programs for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who have experienced violence to help them to improve life skills and employment prospects.</p> <p>(d) Improve access to culturally appropriate family dispute resolution services and support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Harmony Project randomised controlled trial to test feasibility and effectiveness of a systems intervention to improve the capacity of primary care clinicians to screen for family and domestic violence</li> <li>– Three E's to Freedom (2AP) and Trial Expansion to build capacity and empower adult refugee women experiencing or at risk of violence, through an intensive education and employment program (NSW)</li> </ul> <p>Legally Assisted and Culturally Appropriate Family Dispute Resolution services (8 pilot sites; 2016/17–2019/20)</p> <p>Co-design and delivery of Indigenous-specific initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Trauma-informed therapeutic services for children</li> <li>– Men's behaviour change</li> <li>– Case managed crisis support and Trauma informed training to all FVPLS</li> </ul>
<p>3.7: Use technology to support women who have experienced violence.</p>	<p>(a) Enhance and expand video and online options for 'real-time' counselling and support, including through 1800RESPECT, and explore how technology can be harnessed to provide safe and relevant services for women in rural, remote and isolated communities and for women with disability.</p> <p>(b) Build on work currently being undertaken to share information about victims and perpetrators of violence between courts and service providers.</p> <p>(c) Provide technology in courts to allow women to participate safely in judicial processes and expand the use of technology to gather evidence for legal processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 1800RESPECT app</li> <li>– 1800RESPECT feasibility study on online video counselling</li> <li>– Technology Trials funding trials of innovative technologies to reduce violence against women and children and hold perpetrators accountable.</li> <li>– Safe Phones for Women</li> <li>– National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – Cross-Jurisdictional Data Sharing Project and National Reports</li> <li>– National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – Update of the Directory of Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Statistics</li> <li>– National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – ABS Legal Assistance</li> </ul>
<p>3.8: Ensure migration rules and eligibility requirements for support services do not</p>	<p>(a) Develop appropriate visa arrangements for temporary residents who are experiencing violence.</p>	

### PRIORITY AREA 3: GREATER CHOICE AND SUPPORT

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
disempower victims of violence or discourage them from leaving violent relationships.  <i>Migration Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Act 2018</i> (the Act) passed the Senate. The Act includes introduction of a sponsorship framework for the family visa program.	(b) Revise eligibility requirements to enable more victims of violence to access support.  (c) Work with service providers to improve access of temporary residents to available support services.	
3.9: Support community-driven initiatives to prevent and respond to diverse and complex forms of violence against women and improve community awareness of these forms of violence.	(a) Provide leadership training to young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to drive attitudinal change in their communities.  (b) Build the capacity of community and faith leaders to reject, prevent and respond to violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– CALD Communities Leading Prevention (one-off, non-ongoing funding to support organisations to drive long-term changes in community awareness, attitudes and behaviours) and action research</li> <li>– White Ribbon Community Connections – Emerging Leaders; Diversity Liaison Officers</li> <li>– AMES Australia Respect and Responsibility CALD Emerging Leaders Training (Vic.)</li> <li>– Faith and Community Leaders project</li> <li>– Safer Pathways for CALD Women program to assist women living in regional areas (8 activities)</li> </ul>
3.10: Enhance services in the family law system for families experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, violence.	(a) Integrate legal and social support services to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; assess risk and prepare safety plans</li> <li>&gt; deliver holistic services</li> <li>&gt; provide continuity of service for people moving between the state and federal systems</li> <li>&gt; better support groups that face additional barriers to accessing the family court system, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – Cross-Jurisdictional Data Sharing Project and National Reports</li> <li>– Financial Counsellors DV Training</li> <li>– Family Advocacy Support Services (FASS) integrated duty lawyer</li> <li>– ACU research on systems responses to children where family law, child protection and family and domestic violence intersect</li> <li>– Specialist Domestic Violence Units and Health Justice Partnership pilot interventions (14 in total)</li> </ul>

## PRIORITY AREA 4: SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
<p>4.1: Governments consider giving the same priority and support in relevant policies and programs to victims/survivors of sexual violence as to those who have experienced domestic or family violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office of the eSafety Commissioner — development and launch of national online portal on image-based abuse</li> <li>1800RESPECT</li> <li>4th wave of the National Sexual Harassment Survey conducted by AHRC</li> <li>Vic.: Lighthouse Foundation to establish a home for young women &amp; girls who are in/at risk of forced marriage</li> </ul>	<p>(a) Governments to review guidelines for programs, policies and information materials to ensure that victims of sexual violence receive the same level of support as those who experience domestic or family violence.</p>	
<p>4.2: Provide improved training and resources to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who are working to respond to and prevent sexual violence in their communities.</p>		<p>– <i>Changing the Picture</i></p>
<p>4.3: Support frontline services to better recognise and respond to women and their children who have experienced sexual violence, including the knowledge and confidence to refer to specialist sexual violence services.</p>	<p>(a) Ensure frontline services have the information they need to identify and refer all women who require specialist sexual violence services, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women; women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer women; older women; and women with disability.</p>	<p>– 1800RESPECT Frontline Workers Toolkit</p>
<p>4.4: Deliver an evidence-based community initiative to understand and counter the impact of pervasive pornography and promote positive, healthy behaviours in young people negotiating sexual relationships.</p>	<p>(a) Undertake developmental research to inform effective strategies and messages to engage young people and the broader community.</p> <p>(b) Develop a communication activity and support the development of resources and tools for influencers so they can have conversations with children and young people about healthy relationships, choice, respect, and pornography.</p>	<p>– Impacts of Pornography Campaign (Our Watch)</p> <p>– Impacts of Pornography Campaign (Our Watch)</p>

PRIORITY AREA 4: SEXUAL VIOLENCE		
Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
	(c) Provide resources for young women and men to enable them to have the information and confidence to make respectful and empowered sexual and relationship choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Respectful relationships resources</li> <li>– The Line</li> </ul>
4.5: State and territory governments to support women and children in rural, remote and isolated communities who have experienced sexual violence to have improved access to the collection of forensic evidence.	(a) Work with Attorney-General, Justice departments, health workers (doctors and nurses) and professional associations to broaden the categories of health workers who can collect forensic evidence.	
	(b) Trial different models for the appropriate collection of forensic evidence and victim support in rural and regional locations.	
4.6: Respond to the distribution of intimate material without consent, including what is known as 'revenge pornography'.	(a) Develop a national portal to assist women in the removal of intimate images that are distributed online without their consent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ESafety Commission Online Abuse portal</li> </ul>
	(b) Work with internet content hosts / services / telecommunication companies and social media services to facilitate consistent and responsive approaches for removal of intimate material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ESafety Commission Online Abuse portal</li> </ul>
	(c) Undertake a national legislative review of the adequacy of criminal legislation for those distributing intimate material without consent to identify any jurisdictional amendments that may be required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Enhancing Online Safety Act amendments to introduce civil penalty</li> </ul>
	(d) Provide information to the broader community that highlights the impacts and consequences of distributing intimate material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ESafety Commission Online Abuse portal</li> </ul>

## PRIORITY AREA 5: RESPONDING TO CHILDREN LIVING WITH VIOLENCE

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
5.1: Commonwealth, state and territory agencies to work together to implement supported recommendations of the Family Law Council's Families with Complex Needs and the Intersection of the Family Law and Child Protection Systems interim and final reports.	(a) Improve interactions between the family law and child protection systems and enhance the family law system's capacity to identify and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Specialist DVU and Health Justice Partnerships: 17 legal assistance providers</li> <li>– ACU research on systems responses to children where family law, child protection and family and domestic violence intersect</li> </ul>
5.2: The child protection system will recognise that a non-abusive parent is not responsible for a perpetrator's violence against the children.	<p>(a) Child protection agencies to assess the risk faced by non-abusive parents and children together, work with them as a family unit and ensure relevant agencies are engaged with perpetrators.</p> <p>(b) Child protection agencies to investigate the sharing of information across jurisdictions and between domestic, family and sexual violence services, family support services and child protection systems to enable services to better work together to support women and their children.</p>	
5.3: Identify and address service gaps and build capacity of specialist and mainstream service providers to recognise and respond to the impacts of violence on children.	<p>(a) Assess the workforce capacity of specialist and mainstream services systems, including the role of each and pathways between them.</p> <p>(b) Develop national principles for risk assessment that can be used in different sectors.</p> <p>(c) Provide training to the child care and family and children's services workforces about how to recognise, respond to and refer children and their mothers who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Workforce Agenda – Workforce Strategy</li> <li>– National Risk Assessment Principles (NRAP) for services working with people who are victims or perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence</li> <li>– Workforce Agenda – Capacity Building</li> <li>– DV-alert provides free, nationally accredited training for health, allied health and community frontline workers</li> <li>– Working with Children (ACU): To identify opportunities to improve service responses to women and their children experiencing violence by building the capacity of workers in specialist and mainstream services to work with and support children who have experienced and/or witnessed family and domestic violence</li> </ul>

PRIORITY AREA 5: RESPONDING TO CHILDREN LIVING WITH VIOLENCE		
Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
	(d) Identify and implement evidence-based programs and practices for victims, perpetrators and their families and evaluate the effectiveness of practices and programs by measuring outcomes for women and their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Outcomes measurement: To improve service responses to women and their children experiencing violence by building the capacity of workers in specialist and mainstream services to implement evidence-based practice and use outcomes measurement to assess service effectiveness.</li> </ul>
5.4: Trial mechanisms to enable sharing of information that is already collected by states and territories about children's exposure to domestic, family and sexual violence and the associated risks between the family law courts, child protection systems and state courts.		
5.5 Improve children's safety through the development and dissemination of emerging technology such as interactive games and digital learning activities to give age-appropriate information to children who are exposed to or are at risk of violence.		



## PRIORITY AREA 6: KEEPING PERPETRATORS ACCOUNTABLE ACROSS ALL SYSTEMS

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
6.1: Work closely with ANROWS to support the implementation of its Perpetrator Interventions Research Stream to improve perpetrator interventions.		<p>Referenced in AIJA DFV benchbook</p> <p>5 streams under the Perpetrator Package:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Research (4 projects)</li> <li>– Breaking the Cycle: addressing Adolescent family violence (4 projects)</li> <li>– Step Up (4 projects)</li> <li>– Rural and Remote Interventions (4 projects)</li> <li>– New Street (Adolescent harmful sexual behaviours, 4 projects)</li> </ul>
6.2: Improve targeted perpetrator interventions, including police, courts, corrections, child protection, legal services and support, behaviour change programs, offender programs and clinical services.	(a) Implement key performance indicators against the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions and develop an approach to report against these indicators annually to drive further refinements and improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (NOSPI) Benchmark reporting Baseline, second (2016–17 data) and third (2017–18 data)</li> <li>– Funding arrangements for FDSV-related statistics in ABS Recorded Crime, Victims and Offenders</li> <li>– Funding arrangements for FDSV-related statistics in ABS Criminal Courts.</li> <li>– DCRF – Corrective Services dataset</li> </ul> <p>National Data Collection and Reporting Framework Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cross-Jurisdictional Data Sharing Project and National Reports: progress of addition of FDSV flags to datasets</li> <li>– ABS feasibility study regarding data in legal sector</li> </ul>
6.3: Improve the quality and consistency of behaviour change programs throughout Australia.	(a) Develop, share and review principles, tools and practices for behaviour change programs and training programs, tools and practices for the workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Mensline funding increase</li> <li>– National Risk Assessment Principles (NRAP) for services working with people who are victims or perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence</li> </ul>
6.4: Improve mechanisms to refer perpetrators to appropriate interventions early based on individual risk factors.	<p>(a) Trial and evaluate the impact of early integrated case management and counselling prior to, and after, participation in men's behaviour change programs.</p> <p>(b) Improve efficiency of the police referral to services based on legislation and policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Perpetrator Package Research</li> <li>– Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Spatial Mapping and Research Summaries to undertake spatial mapping of the distribution of violence across Australia using data from Australian Longitudinal Study of Women's Health.</li> </ul>

## PRIORITY AREA 6: KEEPING PERPETRATORS ACCOUNTABLE ACROSS ALL SYSTEMS

Action	Sub-action	Third Action Plan Initiatives
6.5: Progressively design, trial and evaluate innovative models of perpetrator interventions across community and correctional settings to understand what works for different groups.	(a) Tailored initiatives to be targeted at young people and adolescents; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men; culturally and linguistically diverse men; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Perpetrator package – Female perpetrators (Women who use force)</li> <li>– Perpetrator Package – LGBTIQ</li> <li>– Coronial Scoping Review Paper</li> <li>– CALD and disability research: Secondary analyses of data from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health.</li> </ul> <p>Three ANROWS Building Capacity projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improving family violence legal and support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men who are perpetrators of family violence (Langton, University of Melbourne)</li> <li>– Development of a best practice guide to perpetrator program evaluation (Nicholas, University of Melbourne)</li> <li>– Extension to Improved accountability – role of perpetrator intervention systems (Chung, Curtin)</li> </ul>

## Appendix B: Jurisdictional policy frameworks

**Table A: Policy approach to jurisdictional policies about violence against women**

National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children 2010–2022	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Action Plan 2010–2013</li> <li>Second Action Plan 2013–2016</li> <li>Third Action Plan 2016–2019</li> <li>Fourth Action Plan 2019–2022</li> </ul>	
Key Jurisdictional Policy	
Key policy/policies	Applied approach
<p><i>ACT Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Strategy 2011–2017</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Implementation Plan 2011–2014</li> <li>Second Implementation Plan 2015–2017</li> </ul>	<p>Overarching six-year policy framework guided by two implementation plans, released every two to three years (approx.).</p> <p>New policy currently in development; no other available information.</p>
<p><i>NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016–2021: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSW Domestic and Family Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy 2017–2021</li> <li>NSW Sexual Assault Strategy 2018–2021</li> </ul>	<p>The Blueprint for Reform provided an overview of six action areas, and detailed how these will be implemented over the short term (12-month period) and medium/long term (2017/18 and beyond). An annual report provides the opportunity to assess progress, track outcomes, and establish ongoing priorities for the remaining years of the Blueprint.</p> <p>The Sexual Assault Strategy was developed to complement the National Plan and Third Action Plan, as well as other national and international frameworks. The Strategy detailed five priority areas and outlined how these will be addressed over the three years of the Strategy.</p>
<p><i>NT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018–2028: Safe, Respected and Free from Violence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action Plan 1: Changing Attitudes, Intervening Earlier and Responding Better 2018–2021</li> </ul>	<p>The Framework outlined five outcomes that will be addressed through action plans every two to three years (approx.) to focus on particular priority areas.</p>
<p><i>Queensland says: Not now, not ever: Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026</i></p> <p><i>Queensland Violence against Women Prevention Plan 2016–2021</i></p> <p><i>Queensland's Framework for Action – Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence</i></p> <p><i>Queensland's plan to respond to domestic and family violence against people with a disability (announced mid-2019)</i></p>	<p>The Prevention Strategy is a 10-year overarching policy framework implemented through rolling action plans to be released every two to three years (approx.).</p>
<p><i>Committed to Safety: A framework for addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia</i></p>	<p>The policy is 'action-driven' and has provided an overview of key actions to meet short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. There is no specified time frame for the policy, and no action or implementation plans associated with the policy strategy.</p>

National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children 2010–2022	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Action Plan 2010–2013</li> <li>▪ Second Action Plan 2013–2016</li> <li>▪ Third Action Plan 2016–2019</li> <li>▪ Fourth Action Plan 2019–2022</li> </ul>	
Key Jurisdictional Policy	
Key policy/policies	Applied approach
<p><i>Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015–2022</i></p>	<p>Tasmania developed implementation plans to support delivery of the First and Second Action plans in Tasmania, as well as a 10-year primary prevention strategy for the state.</p> <p>The Third Action Plan was implemented through Safe Homes, Safe Families. That policy outlined four key action areas, each with their own priority actions, to be addressed over five years.</p> <p>Safe Homes, Safe Families has now been superseded by Safe Homes, Safe Families, Safe Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence 2019–2022.</p>
<p><i>Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change 2016–2026</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2017–2020</li> </ul> <p><i>Free from Violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Action Plan 2018–2021: Free from violence</li> </ul> <p><i>Building from strength: 10-year Industry Plan for Family Violence Prevention and Response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhancing Safety: Family Violence Strategy for the Victorian Corrections system 2018–2020 and Action Plan (2018)</li> </ul>	<p>Ending Family Violence is a 10-year strategy supported by rolling action plans that will be released every three years (approx.).</p>
<p><i>Western Australia's Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022: Creating safe communities</i></p>	<p>Overarching policy rolled out in three phases over a 10-year period. Consistent with the National Plan, key state focus areas include: prevention and early intervention; victim safety; and accountability for perpetrators.</p> <p>A new 10-year strategy for reducing family and domestic violence is currently under development and is anticipated to be released in 2020.</p>

**Table B: Shared outcomes between jurisdictions and the National Plan**

National Plan Outcome Areas	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communities are safe and free from violence</b></li> <li>• <b>Relationships are respectful</b></li> <li>• <b>Indigenous communities are strengthened</b></li> <li>• <b>Services meet the needs of women and their children</b></li> <li>• <b>Justice responses are effective</b></li> <li>• <b>Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account</b></li> </ul>
Key Jurisdictional Policy Outcome Areas	
<b>ACT Strategy primary objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women and children are safe because an anti-violence culture exists in the ACT</li> <li>▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children are supported and safe in their communities</li> <li>▪ Women and children's needs are met through joined up services and systems</li> <li>▪ Men who use violence are held accountable and supported to change their behaviour</li> </ul>
<b>NSW Blueprint for Reform action areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preventing domestic and family violence</li> <li>▪ Intervening early with vulnerable communities</li> <li>▪ Supporting victims</li> <li>▪ Holding perpetrators accountable</li> <li>▪ Delivering quality services</li> <li>▪ Improving the system</li> </ul>
<b>NT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Domestic, family and sexual violence is prevented and not tolerated</li> <li>▪ Territorians at risk of experiencing violence are identified early and provided with effective interventions</li> <li>▪ People experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence are protected and helped to recover and thrive</li> <li>▪ Perpetrators are held accountable and connected early to responses that change their behaviours and reduce violence</li> <li>▪ Legislation, policy and funding models enable a responsive, high quality and accountable domestic, family and sexual violence service system</li> </ul>
<b>Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy supporting outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Queenslanders take a zero tolerance approach to domestic and family violence</li> <li>▪ Respectful relationships and non-violent behaviour are embedded in our community</li> <li>▪ Queensland community, business, religious, sporting and all government leaders are taking action and working together</li> <li>▪ Queensland's workplaces and workforce challenge attitudes contributing to violence and effectively support workers</li> <li>▪ Victims and their families are safe and supported</li> <li>▪ Perpetrators stop using violence and are held to account</li> <li>▪ The justice system deals affectively with domestic and family violence</li> </ul>
<b>SA Committed to Safety pillars of response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Primary prevention: Changing the social conditions, such as gender inequality, that excuse, justify or even promote violence against women and their children</li> <li>▪ Service and support: A coherent, family focused, integrated, supportive service system that addresses the complex needs of those experiencing or using violence</li> <li>▪ Justice: Legislative, statutory and community changes to ensure an ongoing focus on domestic, family and sexual assault</li> </ul>

<b>Tasmania Action Plan key action areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishing Safe Families Tasmania</li> <li>▪ Changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence</li> <li>▪ Supporting families affected by violence</li> <li>▪ Strengthening our legal responses</li> </ul>
<b>Victoria Ending Family Violence outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family violence and gender inequality are not tolerated</li> <li>▪ Victim survivors, vulnerable children and families, are safe and supported to recover and thrive</li> <li>▪ Perpetrators are held to account, engaged and connected</li> <li>▪ Preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring</li> </ul>
<b>WA Prevention Strategy primary outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prevention and early intervention: Individual attitudes and behaviours within the community reflect that family and domestic violence in any form is not acceptable</li> <li>▪ Safety for victims: Adult and child victims are safe and kept free from harm through timely and accessible services</li> <li>▪ Accountability for perpetrators: Perpetrators are held accountable for their actions and are actively supported to cease their violent behaviour</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: Examples of broader efforts to address violence against women and children

### Broader efforts to address violence against women: Examples

#### Commonwealth-funded initiatives

- National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey 2017 youth analysis (WSP/1AP)
- WRF Diversity Program; WRF Community Connections Diversity Liaison Officers (WSP/1AP)
- Carly Ryan Foundation: Carly Ryan Foundation education sessions nationally to children and young people, parents, teachers, counsellors, carers and organisations to address the social and legal impacts of pornography for young people (1AP)
- Kimberly Project to support the Kimberly Family Safety Plan; Kimberly Project coordinator positions; MBC program (WA)(WSP/1AP)
- Study in Urban, Regional and Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities – Family and Community Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (FaCtS)
- Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes (KWSITH): funding to establish or expand state and territory's Safe at Home programs; and to Salvation Army to conduct risk assessment and basic security upgrades in women's homes; Audit to assess the effectiveness of services offered under the KWISTH funding stream and then develop a cross-jurisdictional operational framework and best practice principles (due 2020, UNSW)
- Support for Trafficked People Program and Forced Marriage Trial (both under National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking)
- Women's Safety Package: Local Support Coordinators (all states and territories)
- Women's Safety Package: Piloting of Specialist Domestic Violence Units (DVUs) and Health Justice Partnerships (HJPs). Evaluations of both pilot programs have been completed.
- Business Research and Innovation Initiative (BRII) project undertaken on information sharing of child protection information between jurisdictions under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children.
- National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – Cross-Jurisdictional Data Sharing Project and National Reports
- Australian Institute for Health and Welfare: National Data Collection and Reporting Framework – Cross-jurisdictional data sharing project
- *Family Law Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Act 2016*
- Women's Leadership and Development Program: National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness (MCWH, Vic.) Penda App translation (WLS, Qld); From DV to Trade (SALT); Identifying and responding to intimate partner violence and reproductive coercion (SHQ); 'Let's have a conversation', Respect 101 (Parenting Guides); Buddy Run (Alannah and Madeline Foundation); Voices Against Violence (Girl Guides); Advocacy and education program (Luke Batty Foundation).
- Pilots of legally-assisted and culturally appropriate family dispute resolution services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and culturally and linguistically diverse communities who have experienced family and domestic violence in NSW (Tamworth; Bankstown), Victoria (Sunshine; Broadmeadows), Queensland (Toowoomba; Upper Mt Gravatt), Western Australia (Perth), and the Northern Territory (Darwin). The National Centre for Indigenous Studies (ANU) is conducting an independent evaluation of the pilots – final report due June 2020.
- Joint meetings of ImpEG and the National Forum for Protecting Australia's Children as an avenue to bring together the National Plan and National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children to better align and support each implementation process.
- The Attorney-General's Department (AGD) funded the development of the National Domestic and Family Violence Bench Book (the Bench Book). The Bench Book is an online educational resource for judicial officers in all Australian jurisdictions, delivered by the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration, in partnership with the University of Queensland. The AGD also funded updates to the Bench Book's content in 2018 and 2019.
- The AGD funded the National Judicial College of Australia to develop and deliver family and domestic violence training for judicial officers in all Australian jurisdictions (federal, state and territory), presiding over matters involving family and domestic violence. This program was delivered 13 times to 323 judicial officers from 12 different courts (April 2017–18).



## Broader efforts to address violence against women: Examples

### State and Territory funded initiatives<sup>9</sup>

#### General trends and common responses

State and territories are increasingly prioritising prevention in their policy frameworks

Appointments of Ministers for Family Violence Prevention in several jurisdictions

Government passed legislation to enable family violence restraining orders and police orders to be automatically recognised and enforced across all Australian jurisdictions.

#### Australian Capital Territory

- Co-design, prototyping, delivery and scaling of Family Safety Hub (Safer Families Reforms)
- ACT *Family Violence Act 2016*

#### New South Wales

- DFV Innovation Fund: two rounds of funding for total of 20 projects
- Provided Respectful Relationships education within the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabus for K-10 across all schools
- Engaged ANROWS to analyse NSW subsample of the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey.
- #MakeNoDoubt sexual consent awareness raising social media campaign
- Tackling Violence expanded to 40 rugby league clubs across NSW to change attitudes and behaviours that underpin DFV
- Integrated violence prevention into NSW Government workplaces by providing 10 days of paid DFV leave per year for NSW government sector employees from 1 January 2019
- Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy
- Their Futures Matter cross-government reform to better support vulnerable children and families. Their Futures Matter is undertaking the design of reforms to the child wellbeing and protection system (System Transformation).
- DFV Service System Redesign – evidence-informed recommendations for improving system responses for victims and perpetrators, including a common risk assessment framework.
- NSW Health's Integrated Prevention and Response to Violence Abuse and Neglect (IPARVAN) Framework (Aug 2019) acknowledges the NRAP and will seek to utilise these across NSW Health.
- Perpetrator initiatives under the Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform
- Men's Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) Practice Standards and Compliance Framework
- An accredited Graduate Certificate in Men's Behaviour Change supports workforce skills development, including cultural competency training for facilitators.
- Community-based men's behaviour change programs supported to engage local Aboriginal staff to deliver culturally appropriate services.
- Expanded men's behaviour change programs; commenced an automatic referral pathway from NSW Police to the Men's Telephone and Counselling Referral Service
- DV EQUIPS is a behaviour change program for perpetrators of DFV run in both correctional and community settings.
- NSW Health frontline services workforce development, including establishing a Violence, Abuse and Neglect Clinical Network, and a range of training initiatives through NSW Health's Education Centre Against Violence
- Provided early intervention support to vulnerable children, young people and families through the Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy; Child, Youth and Family Support; Families NSW and Getting It Together. These programs complement DFV-specific programs, such as Staying Home Leaving Violence, Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services, and Specialist Homelessness Services – Domestic Violence Response Enhancement.
- Staying Home Leaving Violence and Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services
- Piloted Domestic Violence Electronic Monitoring program (Technology Trials) and What's Your Plan?
- Phase 2 of NSW Health Violence, Abuse and Neglect Redesign Program will support improved coordination between mainstream services and specialist NSW Health Violence, Abuse and Neglect services including Sexual Assault Services.
- Adapt and promote the *See, Understand and Respond the Child Sexual Abuse Kit* to professions that work directly with children
- NSW Health have an activity in the SAS regarding delivering integrated medical, forensic and crisis counselling services for people who have experienced sexual assault.
- Six specialist High Risk Offender Teams are now operating across all police regions to target the highest risk offenders.
- Trialed initiatives to reduce apprehended domestic violence order breaches, including What's Your Plan? and ENGAGE
- NSW Police Force continued to monitor and deter reoffending behaviour, including through: statewide ADVO compliance checks; the use of Suspect Target Management Plans statewide to target serious repeat offenders; and establishment of six specialist High Risk Offender Teams operating across all police regions to target the highest risk offenders.

<sup>9</sup> Initiatives listed in this column are ones that have been reported by states and territories in the Annual Reports over the life of 3AP. This does not include policy frameworks.

## Northern Territory

- Safe, Respected and Free From Violence Prevention Fund
- Safe, Thriving and Connected Reform Strategy
- 2017 Inaugural Family Violence Policing Conference
- Funding and Support to Tangentyere Family Safety Group
- NPY Women's Council SV research Project
- Redevelopment of Alice Spring's Women's Shelter

## Queensland

- Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Engagement and Communication Strategy
- Qld partnered with Our Watch to develop and trial whole of school RRE in primary school settings (10 schools participating in pilot).
- Safe at Home Solutions for A&TSI women and their children: action research and codesign to enable community-led solutions
- DFV Prevention Engagement and Communication Strategy – co-design with Aboriginal & Torres Strait youth

## South Australia

- Roundtables metro and regional on DV held to inform policy design
- NPY Women's Council SV research Project
- Ceduna Building Resilience project
- Pilot Multiagency Hub
- Development of safe practice standard for DF&SV interventions

## Tasmania

- SASS Primary Prevention in Schools Program in high schools
- Respectful Relationships resources developed and launched for K-12.
- Aboriginal Family Violence Worker Initiative with action research-based evaluation
- Safe Families Coordination Unit
- Strong Families, Safe Kids project
- Membership of ANROWS; participation in NOSPI Working Group and trial of Step Up Program
- Training package developed for all Department of Education staff and Department accredited as White Ribbon Workplace.
- Supported Leprena project
- Joined Our Watch in August 2015
- All Tasmanian government departments undertake the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program.
- Developed Responding to Family Violence: A guide for service providers and practitioners
- Development of new Hobart Women's Shelter
- Rapid Rehousing program
- Ongoing legislative reform to strengthen legal responses to family violence, including:
  - provided for improved court processes and support for victim survivors to give evidence
  - expanded the definition of family violence to include property damage
  - provided protection for victim survivors against charges of aiding and abetting
  - introduced the new crime of 'persistent family violence' that recognises offences can occur over a lengthy period of time, and the impact this has on prosecuting offences.
- Forensic medical examinations for adult victim-survivors of family and sexual violence available in South, North and North West
- Promotion of eSafety resources
- Delivery of Men's Referral Service in Tasmania
- Delivery of community-based behaviour change programs and programs in a corrections setting
- Perpetrator programs delivered under Safe Homes, Safe Families policy will be evaluated
- Delivery of the Defendant Health Liaison Service

## Victoria

- Support and Safety Hubs (Orange Door) for a continuum of responses for women and their children experiencing FV
- Risk Assessment Management Panels (RAMPS) trial and rollout

## Western Australia

- WA Safe at Home solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children
- Pets in Crisis to support families affected by family and domestic violence
- Established the Respectful Relationships Teaching Support program in WA primary and secondary schools statewide.
- Development of the *WA Safer Families, Safer Communities Family Violence Kimberley Plan (2015–2020)*.
- Services to support Aboriginal and linguistically diverse victims of family and domestic violence commenced in WA.
- Established a new Breathing Space Residential Therapeutic Men's Behaviour Change Program
- Amended *WA Children and Community Services Act 2004*
- WA state government released its *Stopping Family Violence Policy*.
- Became a member of 'Our Watch'
- Launch of 16 Days of Activism in WA campaign
- Established the Stopping Family Violence Inc. peak body for perpetrator interventions
- WA State Parliament passed the *Restraining Orders and Related Legislation Amendment (Family Violence) Act 2016*.
- WA government passed the *Sentencing Legislation Amendment Act 2016*, including the potential use of GPS tracking device.
- WA government implemented 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave for 40,000 public servants.
- Phase One Economic Empowerment Pilot project, an evidence-based financial literacy program for women who have experienced family and domestic violence in WA commenced.
- WA government passed the *Residential 'Tenancies Act (Family Violence) Amendment Bill 2018* to provide greater options for victims of family and domestic violence.
- A new women's refuge commenced operation in Ellenbrook and the official opening of the redeveloped Wooree Miya women's refuge increased accommodation capacity..
- Services to support Aboriginal and linguistically diverse victims of family and domestic violence commenced
- In December 2015, WA launched the *Practice Standards for Perpetrator Intervention: Engaging and Responding to Men who are Perpetrators of Family and Domestic Violence*.
- In October 2016, the Stopping Family Violence Inc. was established to provide leadership and expertise and to address the lack of an independent entity in WA to represent the perpetrator intervention service system.
- Ellenbrook women's refuge commenced operations.
- A new family and domestic violence counselling service in the Peel region commenced operating.
- Services to support Aboriginal and linguistically diverse victims of family and domestic violence commenced.
- The *Children and Community Services Act (CCS Act) 2004* was amended in January 2016 to include enhanced information sharing provisions. The CCS Act is the legislative basis for child protection responses in Western Australia.
- The establishment of a Policy Consortium comprised of representatives from government, community sector services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations was convened to progress a comprehensive project plan for the development of the Family and Domestic Violence 10 Year Strategy.

## Appendix D: Online consultation results

**Table C: Use of 3AP to develop policy (by funding source)**

Is your organisation funded under the Third Action Plan?	Does your organisation use the Third Action Plan to develop policies?			
		Yes	No	Don't know
	Yes	13	3	0
	No	4	4	1
	Don't know	1	0	0

**Table D: Value of 3AP in guiding organisational initiatives or actions**

'The Third Action Plan has been useful for guiding initiatives'	
Strongly agree	3
Agree	14
Neither disagree or agree	8
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0

**Table E: Importance of the 3AP to stakeholders' organisation**

Importance of the Third Action Plan to your organisation	
Not important	1
A bit important	5
Moderately important	9
Very important	11

**Table F: Importance of the 3AP to stakeholders' sector**

Importance of the Third Action Plan to your local sector	
Not important	3
A bit important	6
Moderately important	6
Very important	11