



Department of Family and Community Services

**Evaluation of the Family Violence Regional
Activities Program (FVRAP)**

FINAL REPORT

May 2005

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The background to the evaluation

1.1.1. Purpose of the evaluation

The Family Violence Regional Activities Program (FVRAP) was transferred to the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS) on July 2004. In taking on this responsibility FaCS commissioned an evaluation because the Program had not yet been evaluated, and because there was a major restructuring of the Australian Government's approach to Indigenous Affairs. In its early years what became known, as FVRAP was a series of predominantly local, community-driven activities, intended to address local priorities relating to family violence. These were funded and sometimes involved the ATSIC Regional Councils (RCs). With the Regional Councils being phased out and new arrangements such as Indigenous Co-ordination Centres (ICCs) being established, combined with the fact that this funding program is not the only one seeking to address family violence or the related and causal factors, some clarification and development of arrangements for this program was timely. Accordingly this was, in large part, a formative evaluation.

The agreed purpose of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of the program to date and the best means by which any future program might support local communities to address family violence issues in their community.

1.1.2. The consultants

FaCS commissioned Courage Partners to undertake the evaluation. Courage Partners teamed with Morgan Disney & Associates and Success Works for this project. The companies wish to acknowledge the fundamental importance of the contribution made by the Aboriginal consultants who contracted to them for this project: Tracey Whetnall, Pam Greer and Jim Everett.

1.2. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference (ToR) provided by FaCS for this evaluation were:

ToR 1. Examine the overall operation of the program and report on a suggested program delivery framework that will best allow the program to effectively support Indigenous communities to:

- a. assess their needs for family violence intervention programs and propose / produce successful submissions for funding that allows local answers to be developed;
- b. effectively deliver activities that are culturally relevant, appropriate, and that will actively contribute in a sustainable manner to deliver outcomes that produce a decrease in family / community violence;

ToR 2. Investigate and make relevant recommendations regarding FVRAP outcomes in terms of:

- a. accessibility and acceptability for the target population (including cultural relevance);
- b. availability (including targeting and timeliness);
- c. initiatives that effectively target causal effects of family violence (including how to better ensure the development of projects targeted at sustainable causal change);
- d. effectiveness for those who have accessed the program (including increased awareness that family violence is against the law and lore, and has no acceptable place within culture; changed or altered attitudes; understanding of the effects, the acquisition of knowledge, or the development of strategies / interventions / life skills that may stop or mitigate family / community violence);
- e. recognition and promotion of the importance of violence free families and communities among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- f. promotion of culturally appropriate, quality family / community support mechanisms that recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander families, and support families to break the intergenerational cycle of family violence; and

- g. best practice and lessons learned.

ToR 3. Identify options by which FVRAP programs could be better supported to provide appropriate services by using a strengths-based approach to build management and financial capacity, provide high quality, holistic, culturally appropriate services which are responsive to local community needs and accountable to FaCS for their funding.

ToR 4. Identify program strategies / options to best ensure the inclusion / development of projects that will contribute to targeting causal issues such as the continuum of welfare dependence, and the lack of viable, sustainable, and in terms of personal dignity, meaningful welfare alternatives, particularly in remote and rural communities.

ToR 5. Develop an evaluative reporting framework, including:

- a. criteria for collecting baseline statistics for the Indigenous population and participation rates in each state and territory to guide program targeting; and
- b. a series of performance indicators that could be applied across all elements of the program and reported on annually.

ToR 6. Identify and present alternative options for the distribution of FVRAP funding allocations, including the identification of the pros and cons of:

- a. the existing funding allocation method; measured against
- b. a formula based method (i.e. total Indigenous population per state and territory used to calculate indicative percentage of total FVRAP funding allocations distributed to each state and territory),
- c. a core program funding allocation method (i.e. core program funding allocation divided equally per each state and territory and distributed for project expenditure, assessment and management); and
- d. a submission based funding method (i.e. state and territory funding allocations determined by assessment, recommendation and endorsement of quality project submissions).

1.3. Methodology

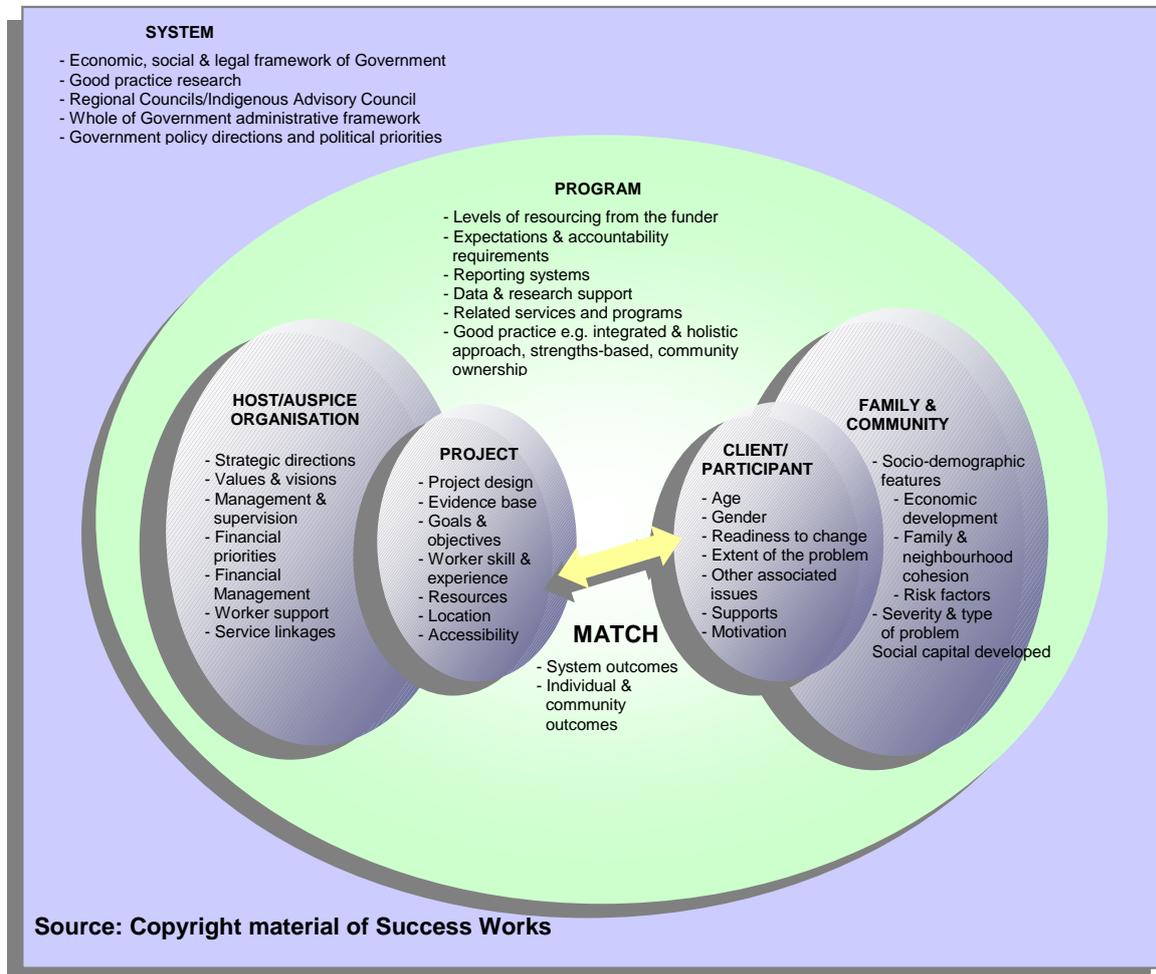
1.3.1. Evaluation framework

In order to obtain the information about how FVRAP was operating and performing the consultants developed a Conceptual Model (illustrated overleaf in Figure 1) that shows the components of the Program, their interrelationships and the complexity of the task being undertaken. These components, and how they interact, influence how the Program and the projects perform. Therefore, this model indicated the components and relationships that need to be examined to assess the performance – i.e. what was to be evaluated.

The overall approach was to collect data (qualitative and quantitative) from participants, workers, service provider organisations, funding decision makers, and other key stakeholders and informants.

The evaluation framework is described in more detail in Appendix 1.

Figure 1: Evaluation framework - components of program performance



1.3.2. Evaluation methodology

The evaluation methodology included a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection. The evaluation was conducted in three phases.

Phase 1: Planning and design included developing a detailed project plan, agreed to by FaCS, a consultation strategy with key stakeholders in government and with project sites, development of data collection tools, selection of sites to be visited and projects to be profiled, and a review of the literature to assemble the findings from the latest research on successful interventions in family violence and use of strengths-based approaches to family violence interventions.

Phase 2: Data review and collection had three key streams, in order to ensure coverage of the range of projects funded in FVRAP in 2004/5:

Program overview, which included:

- preparation of a description and analysis of FVRAP over time but with a main emphasis on the projects funded for the current financial year (2004-2005)
- desktop review, document analysis and some key stakeholder interviews which were used to understand funding decision-making processes and other programs relevant to family violence running at commonwealth and state levels of government;
- basic information on all projects funded in 2003/04 and 2004/05 was extracted from the Grants Management System (GMS) and put into a database.

Site visits to a sample of projects:

- detailed visits were made to 10 current projects;
- an Aboriginal Consultant led each of the site visits;
- the site visit included visits to the project and service provider organisation, interviews with 3 –5 key stakeholders, including key community leaders and related service providers, interviews and/or focus groups with local community people and, where possible, with participants in the project.

Project Profiles of a sample of projects:

- individual project profiles were compiled for a10 projects, additional to the 10 site visits above;
- projects were selected to give more information on the range of projects, how they work and what has been achieved;
- projects selected included current year and previous years projects;
- data collection for these profiles included desk review, and telephone interviews with service providers and 2 to 3 key stakeholders. In some cases it was possible to make a site visit, if the project was located in the same place as projects being given more detailed site visits.

Phase 3: Analysis and reporting included compiling data from site visits and profiling interviews into a database which was then used to identify common themes and issues across the projects. A verbal briefing was provided to FaCS on the initial findings from the site visits and the possible directions for the program for the future were discussed. A draft report was prepared and in the course of its preparation material was provided to FaCS to assist in the preparation of the 2005/6 program guidelines. FACS provided feedback on the draft report which was taken into account in the preparation of the final report.

In the preparation of this report, care has been taken to protect the identity of projects, auspice organisations, project staff and community members interviewed, and communities.

1.4 This report

Throughout this report we use the term family violence to cover not only domestic violence in couple relationships but violence in families including child abuse and sexual assault.

This report follows, broadly, the conceptual model evaluation framework.

Chapter 2 sets down the background to FVRAP program.

Chapter 3 looks at the system level components influencing FVRAP, including the factors contributing to family violence, the national policy context and the range of strategies and programs relating to family violence.

Chapter 4 looks at the program level of the design of the program, how the funding has been used and how the program has been managed.

Chapter 5 looks at the project level of FVRAP and reports on the lessons that can be learned from site visits and project profiles about eh selection, set-up and operation of projects themselves.

Chapter 6 provides a summary of findings and makes recommendations for the future years of FVRAP.

The table overleaf summarises where in this report the issues raised in the ToRs are discussed and the recommendations that are made to address those ToRs.

Term of Reference	ToR issues discussed in:	Recommendations made to address ToR
TOR 1 Examine the overall operation of the program and report on a suggested framework to: a) assess needs for family violence intervention programs b) effectively deliver activities that are culturally relevant	Chapters 3, 4 & 5	Recommendations Nos. 1, 2, 3, 8
TOR 2 Investigate and make relevant recommendations regarding outcomes in terms of: accessibility and acceptability; availability; initiatives; effectiveness; recognition and promotion; cultural appropriateness; good practice	Chapters 3, 4 & 5	Models provided in Chapter 3. Recommendation Nos. 2,3, 4, 7, 8, 9.
TOR3 Identify options by which the program could be better supported to provide appropriate services	Chapters 4 & 5	Recommendations 8, 10 & 11
TOR4 Identify program strategies/options to best ensure inclusion/development of projects	Chapters 3, 4 & 5	Models provided in Chapter 3. Recommendation Nos. 1, 2, 9, 10, & 11.
TOR5 Develop an evaluative reporting framework including criteria for collecting baseline statistics and a series of performance indicators	Chapter 4	Recommendation No 4
TOR6 Identify and present alternative options for the distribution of funding allocations	Chapter 4	Recommendations Nos. 1,5, 6, 7.

Figure 2: Terms of reference addressed in the report

2. BACKGROUND TO THE FAMILY VIOLENCE REGIONAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

2.1 .The ATSIC Policy Statement of Family Violence

In March 2003 the Board of ATSIC endorsed an ATSIC Policy Statement on Indigenous Family Violence and in June of 2003, and endorsed an Action Plan. In August of 2003, the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs attended a formal launch of the Policy and Action Plan under the banner *Our Family*.

Our Family looked at family violence in the context of a complex of issues related to safe and sustainable communities and the wellbeing of Indigenous women and children. The policy statement read as follows:

“Family violence has a deep and lasting effect on us physically, mentally and spiritually.

All Indigenous people have the right to enjoy life and security in our own country, free from violence, fear and conflict. Our extended family as the basis of our culture is entitled to the widest possible protection and assistance in relation to family violence.

Indigenous people hold the key to stop family violence through self-determination, ownership and empowerment at the local, community and family level.

Urgent interventions must take place to ensure the well-being and safety of our children so that they can take their rightful place in Indigenous society.”

2.2 ATSIC Family Violence Action Plan and Programs

The ATSIC Family Violence Action plan pointed to many of the issues which are raised later in this report. It covered the factors which give rise to family violence in the following way:

“•overcrowded and inadequate housing and environmental health infrastructure;

• unemployment;

• low income;

• a lack of life choices and opportunities;

• the loss of individual and community identity, purpose and self-esteem; and

• a breakdown of traditional social structures.

The traumatic impact of colonisation, dispossession, marginalisation and the stolen generations is fundamental to the breakdown of Indigenous families and community dysfunction.”

The Action Plan enunciated some important principles about the way in which family violence might be approached as set out here:

“This Action Plan is guided by the following principles:

- *Interventions must focus on children and young people and provide protection.*
- *Women and children have the same rights as men before the law and their interests must be represented equally in public policy.*
- *Adults deserve to be supported to break the pattern of violence by working with victims and perpetrators to prevent and reduce family violence.*

These principles encompass the broader view that:

- *all individuals have the right to be free from violence.*
- *all forms of family violence are unacceptable.*
- *most forms of family violence are against the law and must be dealt with accordingly.*
- *the safety and wellbeing of those subjected to family violence must be the first priority of any response.*
- *those who commit family violence must be held accountable for their behaviour.*
- *those who commit family violence are in need of appropriate interventions.*
- *the community has a responsibility to work toward the prevention of family violence and to demonstrate the unacceptability of all forms of family violence.”*

The main actions proposed in the Plan were to:

- integrate the family violence goals and strategies with other elements of the broader Family policy framework;
- work in partnership with other Commonwealth and State/Territory government agencies, non-government agencies and communities on family violence strategies;
- mobilise local actions in communities by working through the Regional Councils;
- encourage mainstream agencies to work through Regional Council plans; and
- develop a sound research and information base on family violence.

In July of 2003, the Prime Minister invited a group of Indigenous leaders to a summit in Canberra to discuss strategies against family violence, and in August of 2003, shortly before a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting, the Prime Minister announced extra funding of some \$20m for strategies against family violence.

At the August 2003 COAG meeting the *National Framework for preventing Family Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities* was endorsed and this framework listed generational disadvantage, poverty, unemployment and drug and alcohol abuse as factors contributing to family violence.

The main strategies coupled with *Our Family* and the *Action Plan* were¹:

- additional Community Development and Employment Program (CDEP) places for remote communities to train participants to deal with family violence, substance abuse and other symptoms of community dysfunction;
- strengthening legal protection through additional funding for 13 Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS) program and to train and employ an additional 13 sexual assault workers;
- a Regional Family Violence Awareness Program which helped Regional Councils personally and actively engage with their communities in raising awareness and identify ways to overcome and prevent family violence and substance abuse. Mostly this took the form of awareness initiatives for regional councillors themselves and funding to carry out the research, consultation and thinking work necessary to put together a regional action plan; and
- other Regional Projects on family violence (now called FVRAP) which were to be locally initiated projects which communities identified and which were consistent with the Regional Councils family violence plans.

A new program was funded in the budget for 2004/5, termed the Family Violence Partnerships Program (FVPP) which was to focus on building capacity to address family violence through partnerships between the Commonwealth and state and territory level governments.

2.3 The transfer of ATSIC Functions and Programs

The Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs announced a formal review of ATSIC in November 2002, and this review reported in November 2003. In April 2003, the Minister announced that on 1 July 2003 a separation of powers would occur through the establishment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS) as an executive agency to carry out the broad policy decisions of ATSIC. ATSIS began operation on 1 July 2003 and was responsible for the administration of programs, supporting ATSIC with a strategic policy capacity and advancing the Government's own agenda for innovation and "best practice" reforms including co-ordination with other agencies, the

¹ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission *Annual Report 2003-2004*: pp.71-72.

provision of funding based on need and outcomes and the development of new methods of service delivery.²

On 15 April 2004 the Australian Government announced new arrangements in Indigenous Affairs which included the intention to abolish both ATSIC and ATSIIS. This was intended to take effect for ATSIIS on 1 July 2004. At that time all the programs administered by ATSIIS were transferred to other 'mainstream' departments and the Office of Indigenous Policy Co-ordination was set up in the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) to co-ordinate across agencies the policy processes underpinning delivery of Indigenous specific programs

The programs that were part of ATSIC's *Our Family* strategy were transferred as follows:

- Family Violence Prevention Legal Service (FVPLS) to Attorney General's Department (AGD);
- FVPP and FVRAP to the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS);
and
- CDEP to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

² Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services *Annual Report 2003-2004*. Page 2

3. THE SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE

3.1 Introduction

A funding program such as FVRAP exists to contribute to implementation of an area of social policy – in this case an issue that is recognised as important on a national scale. In the case of FVRAP the social policy relates to the problem of family violence as it occurs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Australia.

Family violence is the term that has been widely used in Indigenous policy to cover not only domestic violence in couple relationships but violence in extended families and also to include child abuse and sexual assault in the extended family.

FaCS have provided the following definition of family violence. "Family violence" is seen within the context of violence generally. It includes all forms of violence in intimate relationships and also covers a broad range of family relationships. Perpetrators and victims of family violence can include, for example, aunts, uncles, cousins and children of previous relationships. "Family" covers a diverse range of reciprocal ties of obligation and mutual support, often extending through and/or across communities.

In Chapter 2 we have outlined the ATSIC Commissioners Family Violence Policy Statement adopted in 2003 which underpinned the Family Violence Activities Program. In this Chapter, we examine the wider social policy framework of which the ATSIC Commissioners' Statement is a part. Given the multiple factors contributing to family violence, the wider social policy framework has been identified as including many parts that contribute to a policy and service response to this issue. This issue is explored further in this chapter as a vital underpinning for development of a coherent policy approach to addressing family violence.

3.1.1 Program management framework

In evaluating the social policy context of the program we have used a Program Management Framework as the conceptual frame of reference. The full framework is provided in Appendix 2. In this section of the report we are reporting on the aspects covered in Section 1 of that framework - the overall social policy framework. In the next Chapter on program management the other sections of the program management framework are covered.

3.1.2 Elements of the overall social policy framework

For this program the overall social policy framework covers:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy in general
- The Australian Government structural arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs
- Family Violence policy in a number of Australian Government, and State and Territory Government departments with responsibilities in relation to aspects of a holistic government policy and service response to family violence.

Material in this section draws on the Literature Review provided in Appendix 3, an informal contextual scan prepared from background research and a series of interviews with key informants in FaCS, the Office of Indigenous Policy Co-ordination (OIPC), and the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

3.2 Factors contributing to family violence

It is well established that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience family violence at a rate substantially higher than any other community in Australia. In some areas of Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 45 times more likely to experience violence, and ten times more likely to die as a result than non-Indigenous Australians. [Apunipima, 1999: p.11]. Indigenous children are six times as likely to be on care and protection orders or in out of home care than non-Indigenous children in Australia³ According to the Australian Institute of Criminology after adjusting for age differences between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, comparisons from the ABS General Social Survey indicate that Indigenous people aged 18 years or over experienced double the physical or threatened violence victimisation rate of non-Indigenous people. The levels of reported victimisation were higher among Indigenous young people, with young men aged 15-24 years having the highest levels of reported victimisation (36%)⁴.

While violence existed in Indigenous communities prior to colonisation, traditional lore ensured accountability (Quayle, 2002:207). As indicated by the Queensland *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence Report* (1999) Indigenous people

³ SNAICC website data on child protection – www.snaicc.asn.au

⁴ Australian institute of Criminology *Crime Facts Info* no 79, July 2004 – www.aic.gov.au

were diverse and dynamic before colonisation. Prior to colonisation, Indigenous people lived under a justice system closely regulated by community Elders and healers. As the Task Force notes,

...the lives of Indigenous people were governed by principles and values that determined their cultural and social responsibilities through a process of socialisation. A breach of responsibilities was frowned upon and led to admonishment or more severe penalties. (ATSIWTFV Report, p.60).

With colonisation Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were dispossessed of land, and control was imposed through implementation of a different economic, social and legal system brought by the colonisers. As a result the purpose, structure, culture and economy of Aboriginal society broke down. Where there had been a place for people in their communities, now many people and communities struggle to find a purpose and place. This loss of a sense of future has been compounded by the effects of alcohol and other substances that have been introduced into Aboriginal communities and families.

While there are places where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities are managing the effects of colonisation, government policies of assimilation and removal and consequent breakdown of culture, many other people and communities experience ongoing trauma and grief and the loss of self-esteem that is the legacy of colonisation (Memmott, 2001, Success Works, 2003). Judy Atkinson argues that the violence must be viewed within the context of interconnected high rates of incarceration, harm, suicides and homicides (Atkinson 2002, p234). Suicides, premature deaths and high infant mortality rates compound the despair and depression.

Further information and discussion of the historical context of family violence is given in the literature review in Appendix 3.

3.2.1 Implications for policy

Given the situation facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities it is therefore believed that the factors contributing to the high levels of family violence relate to economy, culture and health. The COAG *National Framework for Preventing Family Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities* lists generational disadvantage, poverty, unemployment and drug and alcohol abuse. The ATSIC Family Violence policy statement adds overcrowded and inadequate housing and environmental health infrastructure, lack of life choices and opportunities, loss of individual and community identity, purpose and self-esteem and breakdown of traditional social structures.

The World Health Organisation's definition of health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, is a sound basis for an holistic approach to dealing with family violence. This definition acknowledges that social factors contribute to health and illness, particularly in the area of family violence.

An holistic approach encompasses a social model of health and wellbeing that develops links to strategies which address issues of social disadvantage such as unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, housing and education.

There is a further field of thinking that provides an overarching framework that brings together the factors explored above and can provide coherence for policy in Indigenous affairs and that is social capital. Social capital refers to the sum of relationships and networks that make up a society and which if there is a good level of social capital leads to a community that is empowered and able to be self-reliant. The implication made by this line of thinking is that the current cultural breakdown in Indigenous communities has meant that there is a low level of social capital and that intervention is needed to increase the level of social capital to make a difference. The challenge for government policy is for intervention to facilitate and empower community strength rather than provide solutions from above. The Department's Policy Research Series Paper on this topic states that

The importance of prevention and early intervention derives from the way in which they are a means to empowering communities to exercise greater independence and self-reliance. (Policy Research Paper no 11)

Understanding the nature and complexity of Indigenous family violence and its relationships to increasing social capital is imperative to understanding the need for diverse approaches. In the figures on the next few pages we have therefore shown how the concepts relate to building social capital. Understanding the range of possible approaches and how they fit into an overall conceptual model for policy is also vital. There is no one-size fits all model for responding to Indigenous family violence, but there is a need for a coherent collaborative framework and therefore for the separate policy and service response programs to be linked in their planning and implementation.

.3.2.2 Models that assist with building a coherent coordinated approach

For the purposes of this evaluation we have developed three useful models which assist in showing and assessing a coordinated approach to family violence in policy, services and interventions.

The first model is a continuum that maps the relationship between the responses to family violence and shows the coherence of role and relationship that is needed and how this relates to increasing social capital in communities. By relationship we are referring to the need for collaborative approaches, partnerships and related types of linkages.

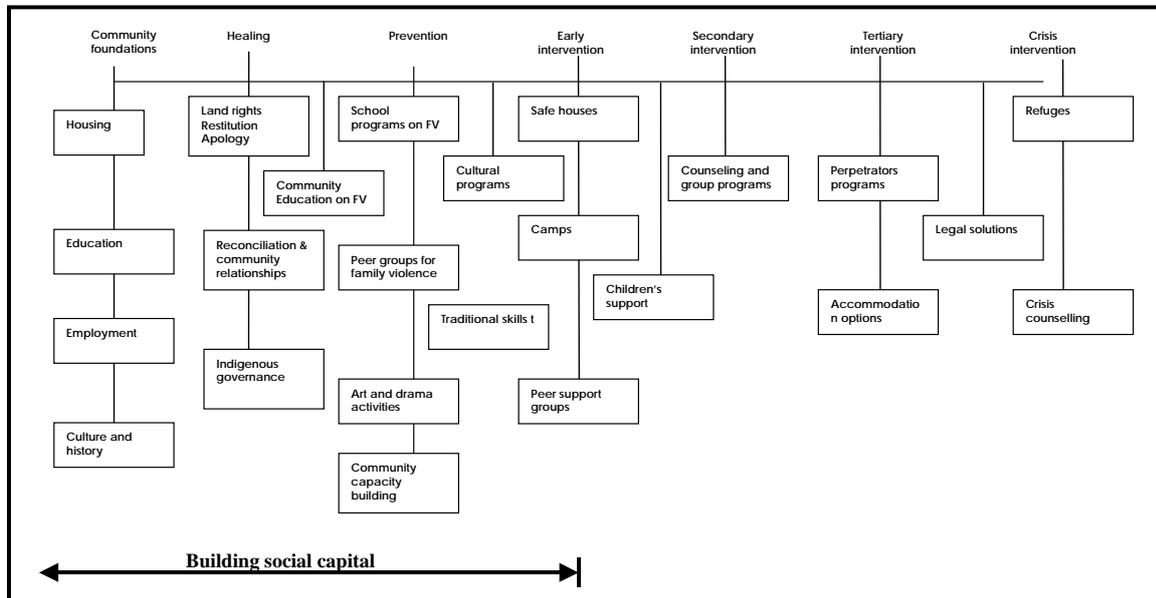


Figure 3: Continuum of responses to family violence

This continuum builds on an original schema developed by Success Works that can be found in Appendix 4. The continuum can be used to map the location and interrelation of both:

- funding programs and other government activities – mainstream and well as those specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and
- individual projects within funding programs – e.g. within FVRAP.

We have also used the Intervention Map developed by Success Works which is the second of our three models. The types of intervention are mapped below around two axes: Prevention-Crisis and Individual-Community. Clearly all services on the map are necessary aspects of community responses to family violence. Those around the “prevention” and “community” will contribute to developing social capital. The evidence from the research into family violence programs suggests that it is increasingly important to move the effort to initiatives that prevent violence rather than just respond to crisis. As will be argued throughout the report, we believe that, given that FVRAP is one of a range of family violence programs that exist, a focus for FVRAP on prevention is very pertinent FVRAP.

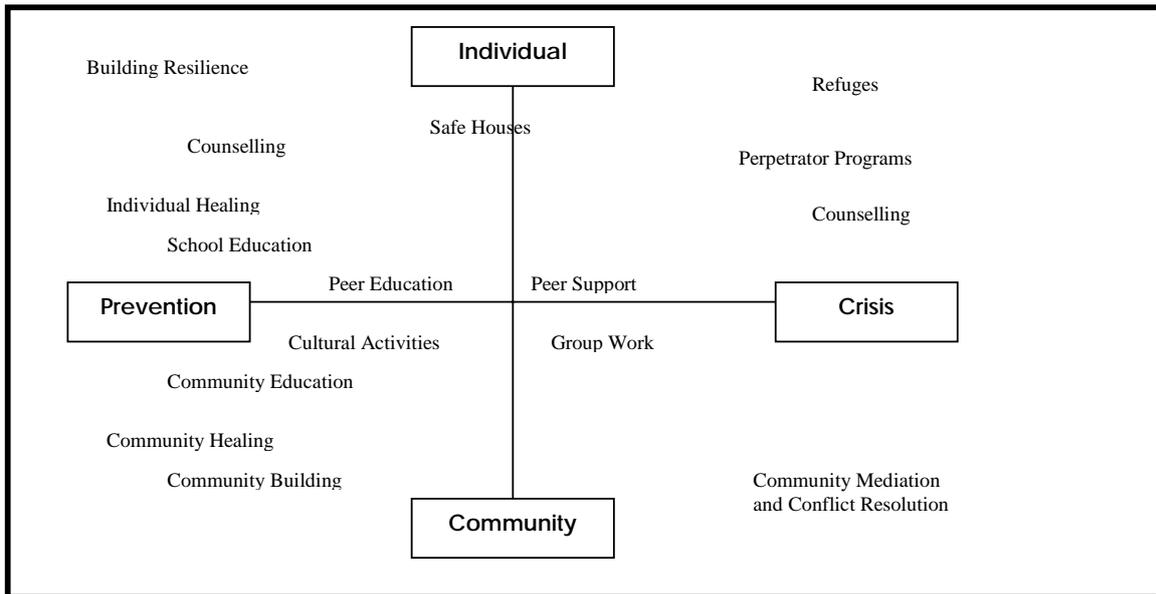


Figure 4: Intervention map - Success Works 2003

The third model is a valuable analytical tool for assessing the role and relationships of a program like FVRAP to identify approaches that are long, medium or short term in their focus. This links to long, medium and short term outcomes that can be identified and set. In this way the policy logic can be built from short term through to long-term outcomes where it is clear that the issue will need action over the longer term and across a range of initiatives. Given the nature of some of the factors contributing to family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families, for example recreating viable culture, community and economy, and redressing major health deficits, it is clear that a long term commitment is needed. In Chapter 4 we provide a program logic for FVRAP that shows short, medium and long-term outcomes in a hierarchy that demonstrates the logic of the various activities leading to an outcome of reduced family violence.

Understanding and building the progress towards long-term outcomes needs to be based on building the cumulative and mutually reinforcing improvements from the results of the different parts of the overall approach. The various kinds of strategies, activities and approaches fall into long term, medium term and short term as shown below.

Long-Term

- Increasing social capital
- Community Capacity Building
- Community and Individual Healing
- Structural issues such as employment, housing, education
- Building resilience

Medium Term

- Cultural awareness
- Family Violence Legal Services
- Children's programs
- Counselling
- Group work
- Sporting programs
- Protocol development

Short Term

- Peer education
- Community education
- Individual capacity building
- Traditional activities
- Parenting programs
- Camps
- Educating Child Protection Workers

In various parts of this report the three models, the continuum, the map and the typology of approaches by long, medium and short term, are referred to or used to assess the role and relationships of various programs and projects in a holistic approach to addressing family violence.

The implications of this section of the report for FVRAP are:

- the overall government approach to family violence needs to be based on a holistic understanding of the challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and not simply seen as an isolated issue. Family violence is one of the symptoms of the breakdown of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society more broadly, and by addressing the underlying structural causes, a number of issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be addressed and the improvement will have a cumulative effect;
- the specific approach to family violence in government policy needs to have a coherent holistic framework which then drives and shapes the role and interrelationships of government activity at national, state and territory, and regional/local level in the same cumulative, mutually reinforcing way as for the overall framework for Indigenous Affairs; and
- the role and relationship of funding of non-government strategies and activities in programs such as FVRAP must also be located within the overall coherent framework for family violence, to ensure the achievement of cumulative improvement.

3.3 The national policy context

The following diagram shows visually the context in which FVRAP sits because of the range of programs relevant to an effective holistic approach to family violence. This is not necessarily complete but covers most of the key areas in which policies, strategies and programs have a significant role in relation to family violence given the multiple factors already established in this Chapter.

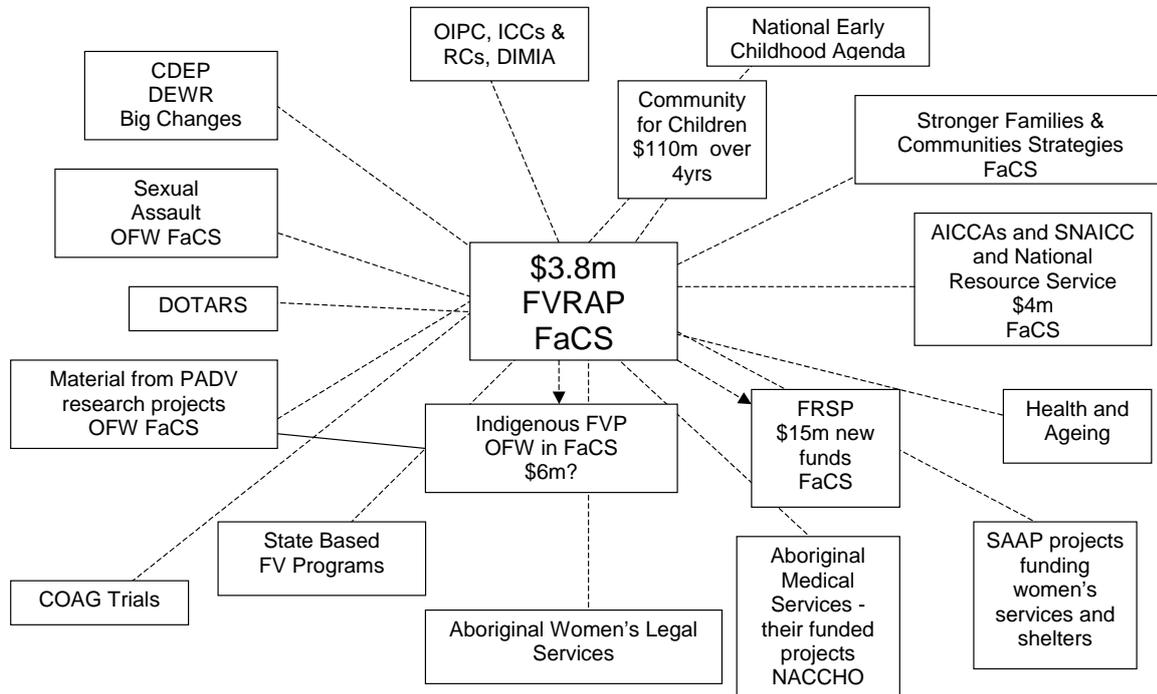


Figure 5: Scan of the policy context for FVRAP

The various areas identified in this diagram are parts of the focus of the following organisations:

- Commonwealth Departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet, FaCS, DIMIA, DEWR, the Attorney-General, DEST, DOTARS, and Health and Ageing;
- a wide range of State and Territory government departments and strategies that match the areas of the Commonwealth Departments and include Indigenous specific units and family violence specific strategies and units; and
- Indigenous peak organisations – SNAICC and NACHO and their member organisations that are service providers.

The effort in Australia to address family violence requires the coordination and cumulative outcomes of the work of these entities.

3.3.1 Legislative Framework and the role of Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV)

Legislative jurisdiction for Family Violence is the shared responsibility of two levels of Government in Australia, with Family Law and Marriage under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth, and Domestic Violence and Child Protection under the jurisdiction of the State and Territory Governments. Legislative jurisdiction for Indigenous affairs, particularly in relation to service provision, is complex, with a current focus on “whole of government” approaches and bilateral agreements. This legislative overlap and complexity clearly demonstrates a need for strong partnerships between the states/territories and federal government to avoid overlap and duplication and this is managed through the work of COAG. It is clear also that these partnerships and whole of government approach must incorporate vertical - through levels of government, as well as horizontal – between government agencies in each level, coordination.

In relation to domestic and family violence, PADV was a very significant partnership of the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments from 1998 to 2005 to develop a national framework for addressing domestic violence across Australia. It is founded on cooperation, collaboration and coordinated action between the Australian Government, State and Territory governments, business and the community sector. The aim of PADV has been to develop knowledge about what actually works best - testing and researching new ways of addressing domestic violence, enhancing and sharing knowledge, developing and documenting good practice and educating the community. A wide range of innovative research and development projects designed to stimulate new activities and enhance existing work were conducted which targeted a wide range of groups: women, children, young people and men; people living in rural and remote communities; people with disabilities; older people; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and non-English speaking background communities. PADV also worked across health, community services, education, justice, child welfare and housing.

PADV produced major research on Indigenous family violence which should be reflected in policy at all levels of government and in the work to address family violence of the community organisations and non-government service provider organisations which are funded through the various funding programs including particularly FVRAP. Much of this work is explored in the literature review prepared for this report which is provided in Appendix 3.

3.3.2 Overall and family violence specific Indigenous policy context

For several years COAG has been releasing National Indigenous Policy Statements on various issues. These Statements provide an overarching policy framework embracing Commonwealth and State and Territory government roles and responsibilities. In this

context there are two key policy statements, one on delivering services and one on Family Violence and Child Protection.

The COAG *National Framework of Principles for Delivering Services to Indigenous Australians* emphasises the principles of “sharing responsibility, harnessing the mainstream, streamlining service delivery, establishing transparency and accountability, developing a learning framework and focussing on priority areas [including] functional and resilient families and communities” (COAG, 2004). These principles are important for FVRAP projects. The COAG *National Framework on Indigenous Family Violence and Child Protection* recommends action based on the principles of safety, partnerships, support, strong, resilient families, local solutions, and addressing the cause with a strong emphasises on bi-lateral agreements. There are inter-departmental working parties implementing this framework, namely the Safer Communities Working Group and the Early Childhood Intervention Working Group.

The overall coordinating body for Commonwealth Government Indigenous Policy will now be the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC). As OIPC develops its role, work is occurring to identify the activities and expenditure across government to create a whole of government accountability, performance monitoring and evaluation framework which will support the OIPC role. OIPC will be looking at activities across all Commonwealth Departments that relate to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people: departments responsible for example for law and justice, communications, information technology, education, heritage, employment, health, ageing, education science, technology and as well as for family and community services. A number of these departments have policies in areas of direct relationship to projects to address family violence specifically, namely Family and Community Services, Attorney-General’s Department, and Health.

As the guidelines for the 2005/6 funding for FVRAP were being developed early in 2005 these COAG National Statements were being reflected in the approach and principles provided to organisations wishing to apply for funding. This ‘vertical’ consistency between the COAG National Statements, the policy of FaCS and the guidelines for specific programs falling within their overarching framework (e.g FVRAP) is a key step towards a coherent holistic policy and service delivery frame. If the other programs that are relevant to addressing family violence in the other Commonwealth Departments, such as the Attorney General’s Department, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), and Health also are consistent with the COAG National Statements, this will assist ‘horizontal’ consistency to support coordination within the holistic approach.

It is important to remember that there are key Indigenous specific non-government stakeholders that make important contributions to the development of national policies and programs for family violence. Two key organisations in this category are the Secretariat for Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO). SNAICC and NACCHO are both peak bodies of some of the main service providers throughout Australia and play a significant role on development of policy, good practice and evidence building.

3.3.3 State government policies

Most state governments have policy-related documents referring to general domestic violence and in some cases specifically targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence with a variety of departments, offices or units responsible for implementing them. Many of these have a whole of government approach and some have stemmed from PADV. However not all are specifically targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Violence, being focused on domestic violence more generally.

Issues covered by these policies can range across the Continuum of Responses, which we presented earlier in this report, and there is a clear need for strong coordination between the Commonwealth and State government initiatives to avoid duplication and strengthen partnerships. Such coordination will be greatly assisted by the common commitment across all governments to a whole-of-government approach, a general understanding of the range of issues involved with family violence and the need for policy and service coordination.

A key linkage will be the relationship between the program management area in FaCS National Office – i.e. the Indigenous Family and Child Wellbeing Branch – and the State government bodies, and also between the FaCS State and Territory offices and the State government bodies.

3.3.4 Structural context

In 2004 the structural framework for the provision of Family Violence programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as for all programs and policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, changed with the abolition of ATSIC and subsequent dismantling of ATSIIS. Prior to this change the Australian government had an approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, which involved:

- Indigenous specific policy and programs or sub programs delivered through its various Departments and bodies; and

- governance of policy and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the representative structure of ATSIC and the administrative arm through AT SIS.

In relation to family violence, as an example, there was overarching policy from the Government through the Office of the Status of Women and the COAG *National Framework for Preventing Family Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities*. Parallel to this was the ATSIC Commissioners *Family Violence Policy Statement*.

Since the changes in 2004, programs previously provided through ATSIC / AT SIS are now provided through mainstream departments, such as FaCS, DEWR, DEST, Health and Ageing and the Attorney General's Department, with over-arching policy direction provided by the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC) within the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA).

A move to localised whole-of-government service coordination has been made through the establishment of thirty regional Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICCs) in which staff from various departments, who have responsibility for administering these departments' specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs, are co-located and managed by the OIPC. There are also eight sites across Australia at which a pilot initiative is occurring through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) which involves State/Territory and Commonwealth Government Departments developing shared funding and responsibility for program provision. The OIPC also describe a similar initiative in their Regional Partnership Agreements (RPAs).

These changed structural mechanisms are very new and it is not yet clear how well they will achieve the aim of coordination. It was commented during our interviews and visits, that silos are being created where there were none in the way ATSIC and AT SIS operated. The new arrangements have potential to enable the holistic delivery of FVRAP, and therefore it is essential that there is an effective the whole-of-government approach in the ICCs. There is a related key challenge to find an appropriate balance between regional delegation, allowing for flexible timely responses to whole-of-government provision at the local level, and central management with Ministerial decisions about funding.

Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRAs) are another Australian Government initiative being developed through the ICCs. These are agreements negotiated directly between Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, where the provision of a service is dependent on the achievement of particular outcomes within those communities. The impact of SRAs on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence

programs remains unclear. Should the provision of funding for family violence programs become dependent on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups offering commitment to certain activities which “benefit the community” (OIPC, 2004, p.18), key challenges will include effective representation of community groups and the capacity of the ICC staff to conduct the process of negotiating these SRAs.

With the dismantling of ATSiS, different aspects of its programs were moved into different Australian Government Departments and this includes the move of FVRAP to FaCS. This brought the structure of FaCS into the picture with the National Office and State and Territory Offices (STOs) involved in management of this funding program, and the FaCS officers in the ICCs being linked through the STOs. The FaCS officers in the ICCs seem to be expected to work in a matrix management structure in that they are officers of both the ICC and FaCS. This model requires extremely good management in both the agencies, very good skills in the officers, and a consistent message supporting the model from the leadership in both FaCS and DIMIA in support of the ICC model. At present Australian Government Departments have a very strong focus on the Minister as the client and the Department as the first focus of the attention of staff. If the ICC model is to work, support will be essential from Ministers, from Secretaries, and throughout Departments, for the demanding balance of a matrix management model.

In summary **the implications for FVRAP** of the new administrative and structural arrangements in Indigenous affairs are:

- the recognition of the structural levels that will need to be managed to ensure that FVRAP is an effective funding program contributing to a coordinated holistic approach to family violence – the levels are the program area in the FaCS National Office, the STOs and the ICCs; and
- the ICCs provide a potential structure for a coherent holistic plan to address family violence in an area but there is an imperative for the ICCs to have effective matrix management to support this localised whole of government approach. The program management of FVRAP can contribute to achieving this balance by the way it is supported.

3.4 The range of strategies and programs relating to family violence

At the beginning of the Section 3.3 in this Chapter there is a diagram showing the very complex policy and program context of FVRAP. In this section some of the main Commonwealth programs are outlined and their contribution along the continuum of

interventions is indicated leading to a summary diagram that indicates, we believe, that FVRAP should have a particular focus on the healing, prevention and early intervention end of the continuum. The State programs are equally varied but too numerous to identify and describe specifically. In general we have classified them as providing secondary and tertiary interventions in relation to family violence because this is their specific responsibility. However there are State and Territory projects across the continuum and this confirms that in each state and territory and region it is vital to map the existing services to find the most appropriate projects for FVRAP to fund.

The key programs and strategies which will be briefly outlined below are:

- Family Violence Partnership Program (FVPP);
- Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS);
- Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies (AICCAs);
- Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS);
- Community Development Employment Program (CDEP);
- Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP);
- Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP);
- Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV) and Office for Women (OFW) formerly the Office for the Status of Women (OSW);
- Stronger Families and Communities including Communities for Children;
- National Early Childhood Agenda; and
- Some examples of State government initiatives.

Programs relating to the full continuum of interventions to address family violence make up an enormously broad range of services, and vary hugely from region to region in response to local need. It is difficult for a contextual scan for the program to contain a fully comprehensive nation-wide list of services available.

This highlights also the significant challenge for the ICC workers who need to be fully informed, not only of the regional services that are being provided, and of the capacity of the community to develop more or different services according to community need, but also of the funding programs available across both the Commonwealth and State/Territory governments to support these services as they work to address community need.

A well developed region specific strategic plan would need to incorporate a 'mapping' of the local services provided, community capacity, and funding programs available.

Community participation and representation in the development of these regional plans will assist with information gathering. The capacity of the ICC staff to facilitate this process may be another challenge of the ICC structure.

Examples of programs and services are described below and will be presented in summary against the Continuum of Interventions framework (presented already in this Chapter), which classifies services on a continuum from healing to crisis intervention. The programs are separated into Indigenous family violence specific, Indigenous specific and Mainstream.

3.4.1 Specific Indigenous family violence programs - Commonwealth

Family Violence Partnership Program (FVPP)

The most recent initiative, stemming from the commitment to bi-lateral whole-of-government approaches to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Violence is the *Family Violence Partnership Program* (\$37.3 million over four years). The FVPP will support bilateral initiatives in relation to family violence and child abuse with a focus on local solutions to issues that contribute to family violence such as substance abuse and causal factors such as socio-economic and participatory issues. Examples of proposals in this program include "community patrols and anti-violence education for Indigenous young people" in the Northern Territory and "family healing centres and men's time-out facilities" in Victoria (COAG, 2004). This program is, like FVRAP, managed in the Indigenous Family and Child Wellbeing Branch of FaCS and the context, differentiation and complementarity of these programs are important in developing a clear focus for FVRAP.

Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS)

Family violence related legal support is now funded under the Attorney-General's Department. The Operational Framework released in December 2004 clearly states the order of priority by which services will be funded are: 1) Legal advice and casework assistance; 2) Counseling to victims of family violence and sexual assault; 3) Assistance and support to victims of sexual assault; 4) Child protection and support; 5) Information, support and referral services; 6) Community awareness and prevention initiatives; 7) Referral to mediation services, and; 8) Referral to perpetrator programs. The services work with women and children in order to avoid a legal conflict of interest in working with both the perpetrator and victim. Despite a thorough and informative review of FVPLS conducted

by Success Works only one year prior to the release of these Operational Framework, they make no reference to key issues or literature in the field, an omission which may be rectified upon the release of the policy framework in which these guidelines exist.

Prevention, Diversion, Rehabilitation and Restorative Justice (PDRR)

This program, funded by the Attorney General's Department, aims to fund activities that will divert Indigenous Australians away from adverse contact with the legal system. It seeks to lessen the need for legal aid through early resolution of disputes including restorative justice practices, and to encourage greater involvement of agencies, victims, offenders and Indigenous communities in resolution of disputes. It funds four main component activities, namely night patrols, youth initiatives especially where youth are at risk, prisoner support and rehabilitation activities which will assist in reducing recidivism and restorative justice initiatives, including appropriate alternatives to conventional sentencing procedures such as conferencing and circle sentencing.

3.4.2 Specific Indigenous family violence programs – State and Territory examples

Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Strategy

Documented planning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Violence Services seems to have occurred primarily at a state and regional level. The Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Taskforce engaged Indigenous communities throughout the State in the development of “community led” strategies for addressing Indigenous family violence issues and provided a final report making recommendations for a state-wide strategy (Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Taskforce Final Report, December 2003). This was achieved through the provision of support officer positions to establish regional Indigenous Family Violence Action Groups; increase awareness about family violence; and develop community-based responses. There is the potential for there to be regional plans through ICCs and through the Victorian strategy, and the ICC will need to manage the coordination of these to achieve the best cumulative outcomes across the two approaches.

Perpetrator programs

These programs seek to work with men to engage them in taking responsibility for their behaviour and working to change it. Examples are South Australia's *Young men choosing wisely* program for Anangu men who are offenders/prisoners; or Western Australia's *Strong*

Men, Strong Families program (Success Works, December 2003). The research shows that these are difficult programs, which require very skilled workers. They are tertiary interventions because they address violence that is happening. Any proposals to undertake this type of program in many small communities would need to be very soundly based.

3.4.3 Indigenous specific programs to address general Indigenous issues

Given the range factors contributing to family violence, as we have already outlined in Section 3.2 of this Chapter, programs which address this range of issues but not specifically to address family violence are nevertheless relevant to:

- the positioning of FVRAP within overall policy; and
- coordination of FVRAP within programs at all levels local, regional, state/territory and national.

Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies (AICCA)

This Commonwealth program administered now through the Indigenous Family and Child Wellbeing Branch of FaCS, along with FVRAP, provides funding for Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies and Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services (MACS) across Australia. Most of these agencies also receive state/territory funding. AICCA provide foster care placements, early intervention, intensive family support for at risk families, parenting skills training, budgeting classes, brokerage, community capacity building, advocacy, training indigenous foster carers, and playgroups. MACS provide flexible services to meet social and developmental needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children including long day care, playgroups, outside school hours care, school holiday care and cultural programs.

This is a significant program in Indigenous family and child welfare with a major peak body in the Secretariat for Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC). The programs represent major infrastructure to support families and children and are very relevant to a regional plan to address factors contributing to family violence such as family breakdown.

Parenting and family support

Examples in the States and Territories:

- NSW: \$13.9 million over 4 years to 2005/06 has been allocated to a new initiative, the *Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy* (Success Works, December 2003):
- Victoria: Aboriginal Family Preservation Programs (Success Works, December 2003):

- ACT: Aboriginal outreach worker to help victims of sexual assault and violence for 12 months (Success works, December 2003); and
- WA: Building Blocks Program – supporting Indigenous newborns and their parents through a range of strategic and practical services (Success Works, December 2003).

The Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Initiative also included funding for projects which span a number of the categories but the majority “fit” into secondary and early intervention (Family Violence Taskforce Final Report, December 2003), such as, for example:

- Yaperra Children’s Services developing FV programs and workshops for staff, children and families;
- Enmaraleek Association Incorporated– providing sporting activities, camps, education.
- Ngwala Willumbong Cooperative Limited establishment of a self-sustaining state-wide network of support groups for Aboriginal men; and
- Portland-Mara Indigenous Women’s Council - rent, utilities and phone line for a house for 12 months.

Some of these are similar to projects that have been funded in other places through FVRAP.

Indigenous Parenting and Family Wellbeing

Indigenous Parenting and Family Wellbeing Program is part of the Commonwealth Government’s response to the *Bringing them home* report and is another program managed through the Indigenous Family and Child Wellbeing Branch of FaCS. Its aims relate to promoting the importance of strong families among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, increasing understanding, knowledge and skills about parenting and family well being, promoting culturally appropriate quality family support mechanisms that recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, providing support and assistance for the younger generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate in family life and build strong families and communities for the future. These aims are very relevant to building purpose, identity and self-esteem, all of which are key issues in addressing the range of factors contributing to family violence. Examples of projects in this program are similar to other Indigenous specific programs to address general Indigenous issues, for example, increase linkages between Indigenous families and family support services; increase families’ understanding, knowledge and skills about parenting leading to improved family well-being; a family support worker doing individual work and school liaison and running camps; playgroups, family relationships skills training, men’s group, a domestic violence program; counselling and mediation; storytelling at

school, campfire nights, drop-in centre, cultural ceremonies, holiday care programs; family mentoring program.

NSW Aboriginal Family Health Strategy,

A program to improve family health services (Success Works, December 2003).

3.4.4 Mainstream programs which address issues related to family violence

Just as there are Indigenous programs that are not family violence specific but address contributing factors, there are mainstream services which address these factors and include a focus on services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the overall program.

Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV) - Office for Women -

This initiative was described in Section 3.1.1. It is an intergovernmental partnership to build strategies to address domestic violence which has included a stream of activity in relation to research and development on Indigenous family violence and targeted funding to the Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme. The work is being continued now in the Office for Women in FaCS.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

Refuges and crisis accommodation options are funded by Commonwealth and State governments through SAAP. FaCS is responsible for SAAP at the Commonwealth level. Women escaping domestic violence make up a significant proportion of SAAP consumers, and 1.9% of all SAAP consumers are Indigenous Australians (SAAP Annual Report, 2000-2001). SAAP services provide infrastructure on which FVRAP funded projects can build and funding has been provided through FVRAP for outreach workers in Aboriginal specific refuges.

Family Relationships Services Program (FRSP):

FRSP “is a national program under which approximately 100 non-Government organisations across Australia provide services such as family relationships counselling, education, dispute resolution and other relationships support services” (Urbis Keys Young 2004). The FRSP has eleven sub-programs including Specialised Family Violence Initiatives, Regional Primary Dispute Resolution, and Family Relationships Counselling and Mediation. The 2004 review of this program identified services for Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander People to be one area of significant unmet need not adequately addressed by the FRSP – 1.6% of FRSP clients identifying as Indigenous. There was a major expansion of funding for this program in 2004 and this presents an opportunity to increase the Indigenous specific services or services which include a focus on the relationship and family violence counselling needs of Indigenous people in the overall service. ICCs may be a key conduit for this funding since it is a FaCS administered program. There are some counselling programs in FVRAP and the balance between provision through FRSP and FVRAP is an issue, which could be taken up in regional planning.

Stronger Families and Communities (SF&C)

Early intervention and prevention approaches that can help families and communities deal with issues before they become serious problems are the focus of this major Commonwealth government initiative which commenced in 2000 including early childhood programs; playgroups; parenting skills programs; relationship skills programs; mentoring and leadership programs; community building programs; volunteering programs. In the new four year phase the main streams are Communities for Children, Early Childhood - Invest to Grow, and Local Answers. These are all early childhood initiatives. Information on the this strategy explains that the underlying philosophy is

'Strong families with healthy, well-adjusted children require strong, stable communities in which to grow. To this end, the Strategy also continues to support communities and initiatives building capacity, leadership and mentoring. (FaCS website www.facs.gov.au)

State funded mainstream programs

Examples are:

- broad early intervention and parenting support initiatives aiming to contribute to children's optimal development e.g. Families First Initiative in NSW, Best Start in Victoria, Every Chance for Every Child in South Australia, Our Kids in Tasmania, Queensland's Putting Families First, The ACT Children's Plan, NT's Caring for Our Children and WA's the Early Years Strategy or the Building Solid Families. (Urbis Keys Young, 2004);
- information campaigns and strategies on parenting, parenting centres, parent and family 24-hour telephone help lines, parenting education/family skills education programs, education and resource services for family support workers, residential and in-home support in the form of professional home visiting, volunteer home visiting, residential programs for families experiencing particular difficulties, playgroups, self help groups and networks, etc. (Urbis Keys Young, 2004); and

- In South Australia, the *Homemaker Program* – assisting parents with budgeting, parenting & house management (Success Works, December 2003).

3.5 Programs on the continuum

The following diagram shows the programs plotted against the Continuum of responses. This assists in locating FVRAP to be an effective element of the overall policy and program context for family violence.

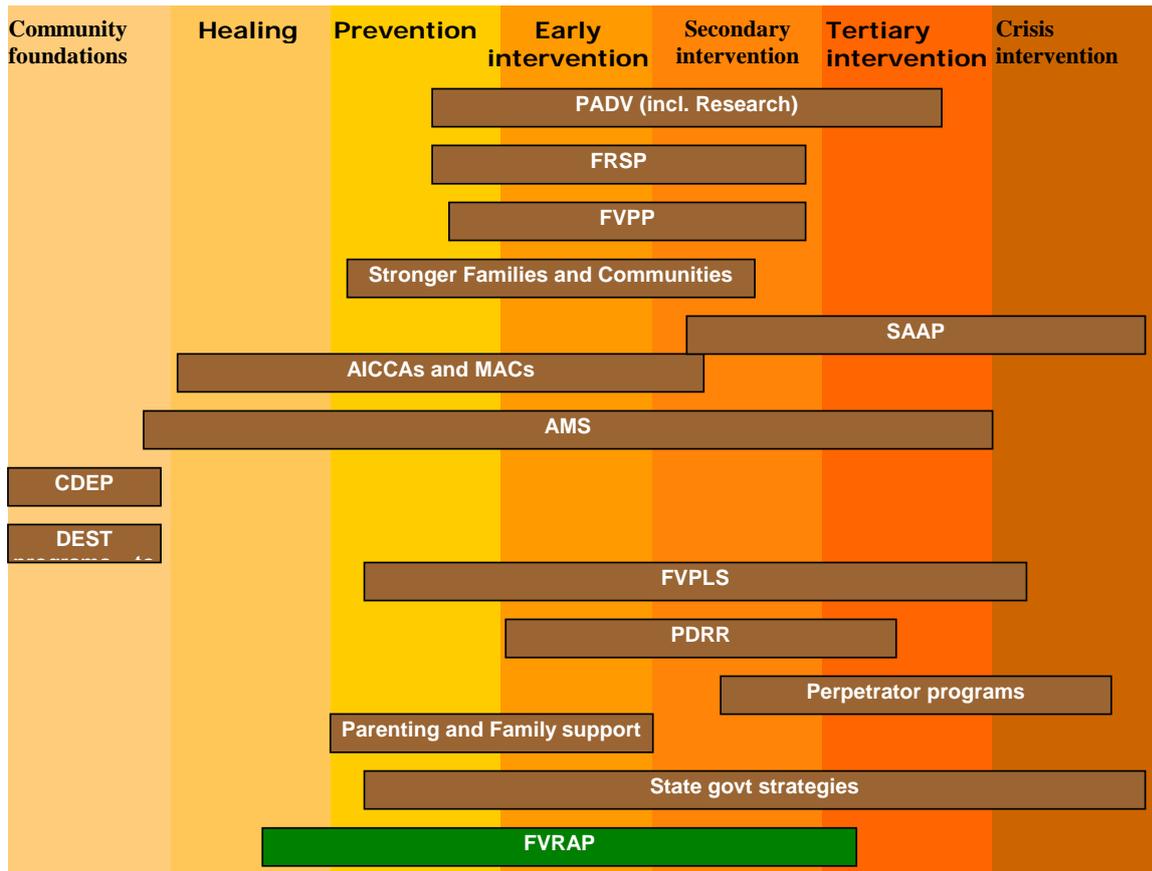


Figure 6: Family violence programs mapped to Continuum of responses

The implications for FVRAP which this mapping of family violence programs highlights are:

- the number and range of programs and strategies operating just at the Commonwealth level show the potential for an effective holistic approach to be taken to addressing the multiple factors that contribute to family violence;
- the complexity of the co-ordination task that is required to achieve the policy and program co-ordination necessary to a achieve a holistic approach; and

-
- there are relatively few programs focussed at the community foundations, healing and prevention end of the continuum, where social capital is most likely to be developed from family violence focussed projects

The co-ordination task may be, to some extent, easiest to effect at ICC level, where all portfolios are represented. At the FaCS State Office level the task becomes more demanding as the state and territory levels of government activities and programs need to be brought into a coherent approach.

The complexity of the co-ordination task argues for some form of regional planning as the most practical and possible mechanism by which the programs and strategies might be brought into a coherent holistic approach to family violence for an area.

4. PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter draws on the FaCS Performance Management Framework and in particular on the *Practical Guide to Program Administration with FaCS Funded Service Providers: Policy Development and Program Design* and the Program Management Framework described fully at Appendix 2 as a further conceptual frame of reference.

The chapter examines:

- the program design and scope of FVRAP and its role in relation to the family violence policy and program context discussed in the last chapter;
- what the program aims to achieve;
- the program logic;
- the kinds of activities that have been funded in the program;
- how the allocation of funding has been managed;
- how the performance of individual projects and the program as a whole has been managed; and
- the effects of the transfer of programs from ATSI to FaCS and new arrangements for the administration of Indigenous Affairs by the Australian Government.

4.1 Program Design

The following sources have been used to provide information about the design of FVRAP:

- Program Guidelines for 2004/05
- draft and final program guidelines for 2005/06
- the Tender Brief provided for this evaluation
- a database of FVRAP project information developed for this evaluation.

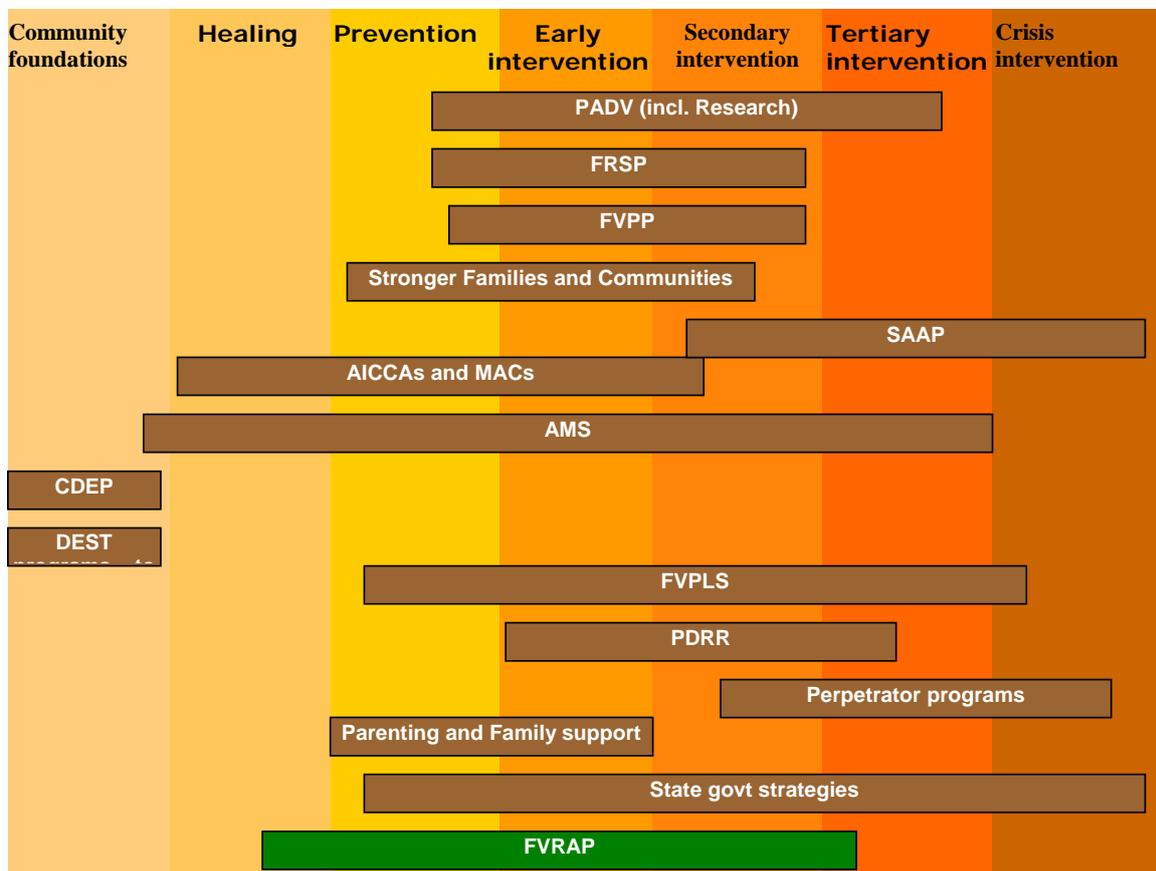
4.1.1. The scope of the program

The history of FVRAP program as discussed in Chapter 2 showed that FVRAP was part of an overall strategy developed by ATSI to address family violence at community level, and it would appear that in 2003-04 the program had developed to complement the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program (FVPLS), with the addition of CDEP places used by ATSI to provide training and skills development for people working in projects

and services which aimed to reduce family violence. Where the FVPLS focussed on the victims of family violence, FVRAP projects have worked with communities and with perpetrators as well as victims. FVRAP has not duplicated the CDEP places in developing skills in communities, but it has sometimes built on the CDEP by funding projects in those organisations that were using the additional CDEP places.

FVRAP has been, from its outset, community or locally focussed, although sitting within the broader context of the ATSI Family Violence Policy Statement and Action Plan. Communities seeking funds determined what was important in their community and Regional Councils' Family Violence Action Plans also focussed on local community priorities

In the previous chapter we presented a continuum showing that there are a number of points at which responses to family violence can occur. Projects funded from 2001-02 through to the current year show that the scope of the program has ranged from prevention through to crisis intervention. This is a very broad scope for a program of, now, \$3.8m annually, but perhaps inevitably so, given that the causes of family violence are many and that the priorities for action from this program are determined by the situation and stage of development at the community level. For ease of reference we have repeated here the diagram, which maps programs onto the continuum of responses.



This figure illustrates that the bulk of assistance from government is going into early interventions through to crisis intervention, with relatively little going to healing and capacity building and developing social capital at the community level so that they can begin to address the many factors contributing to of family violence.

By making FVRAP complementary to other programs, and focusing the program at the left hand end of the continuum of responses FaCS can ensure that the program adds a necessary, but currently missing, dimension to the program support for family violence from the Australian government. In the course of this evaluation FaCS redrafted the program guidelines as part of creating a strong program identity nationally; where previously the program had been defined on of the basis of local priorities. Future year program guidelines could include a focus at the left hand end of the continuum.

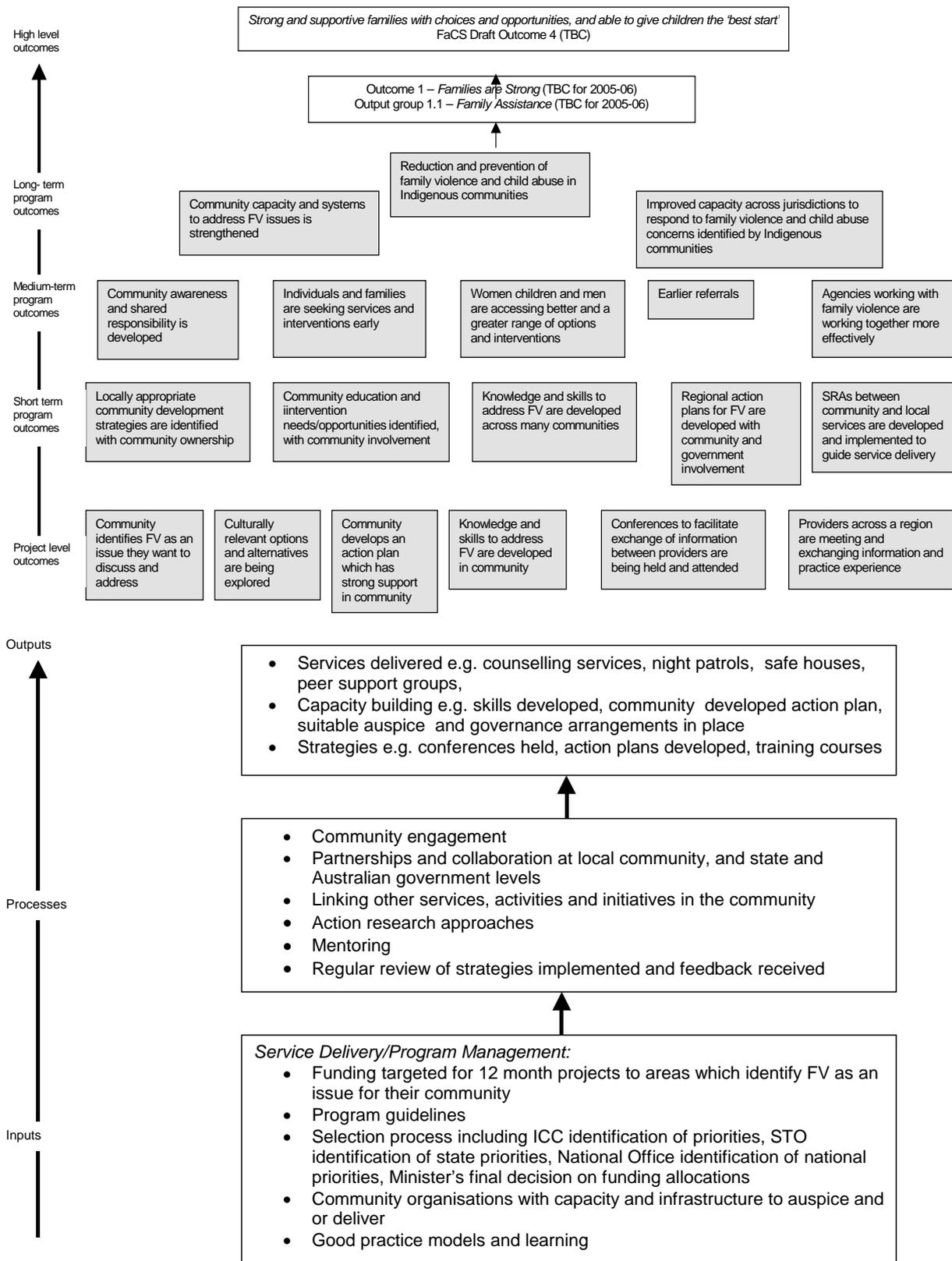
4.1.2 Program outcomes and program logic

The FaCS *Practical Guide to Program Administration with FaCS Service Providers: Policy Development and Program Design* advises FaCS staff that they should describe the planned outcomes for the program, taking care to ensure that these reflect the Government objectives as defined in the Program Budget Statements (PBS) and suggests a program logic be developed.

The Program Guidelines for 2005/06, as at 18 March, and available on the FaCS website, contain, in different places in the guidelines, a number of statements of objectives and outcomes, and while all pointing in the same broad direction, the proliferation of objectives and outcomes, if they were all to be measured, would lead to a plethora of performance indicators. As currently stated, the Program Guidelines do not distinguish between short, medium and long term outcomes, a distinction which the Practical Guide states to be an important part a program logic.

To assist in the refinement of the Program Guidelines for 2006/07 we have developed a program logic for FVRAP, which is shown at Figure 6 (overleaf). It is indicative only and should be the subject of debate and discussion at a Network Management Team meeting and with some program providers before being finalised and used in future program guidelines. The Departmental Outcome and Output Group shown on this indicative program logic was current at the time of the evaluation.

Figure 7: FVRAP Program Logic



Recognition of the complexity and deeply entrenched nature of the many causal factors of family violence suggests it is unrealistic to expect that FVRAP can achieve in one, or even several, years a program objective such as “reduction and prevention of family violence and child abuse in Indigenous communities”. We therefore have identified short term, medium term and long-term outcomes in the indicative program logic for FVRAP.

Achievement of medium and long-term outcomes will be dependent on activities to address family violence being maintained in a community over many years.

4.1.3. Principles

Although the FaCS *Practical Guide ...for Policy Development and Program Design* does not cover the notion of principles, as part of program design, we consider that sufficient is known about what constitutes good practice in Indigenous programs generally and in Indigenous Family Violence programs in particular that this knowledge should be distilled into a set of principles that can guide the style and philosophies adopted in project design and set-up, for projects that are funded under FVRAP.

Good practice in Indigenous programs generally

As part of our literature review (Appendix 3) we examined an emerging body of knowledge about good practice in Indigenous programs generally whether or not they are directed towards family violence. The material below is based on the learnings from PADV Indigenous projects as well as the evaluation of Government Responses to *Bringing them Home* (Success Works 2003)⁵ and other research (eg Memmott 2001)⁶.

While not every Indigenous program needs to demonstrate all aspects of good practice, the research shows that successful programs targeting Indigenous communities have identified the need to:

- involve Indigenous communities in all aspects of policy, planning, governance and service delivery;
- ensure local community ‘ownership’ of the project.
- recognise that the goal of service delivery should be to overcome disadvantage, rather than simply to manage it.

5 Success Works, 2003: Family Violence in Victoria: Literature review published by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

6 Memmott, P, Stacy, r, Chambers, C, Keys, C (2001): Violence in Indigenous Communities National Crime Prevention Report, Canberra.

- recognise the need for leadership and take time to support a leadership group when it is not already present.
- recognise that the process of fostering project ownership in communities is a lengthy one;
- have a budgeted capacity to pay local people for their services;
- include training budgets (and travel budgets in rural areas) and access to accredited training and skills development which enhance community capacity;
- be timed in years rather than months, to allow for community development and capacity building, and to allow for difficulties in recruiting skilled workers to be overcome;
- adopt an holistic and integrated approach across government services, service sectors and communities;
- ensure effective accountability and transparency in decision making;
- develop a shared vision and agreed priorities for action between government and community sectors;
- adopt sustainable approaches to tackling the many issues associated with continuing Indigenous disadvantage;
- ground action in evidence and focus on the achievement of outcomes; and
- build in appropriate systems for monitoring outcomes.

Indigenous Family Violence Programs

Good practice in family violence programs in Indigenous communities has been established principally through PADV and National Crime Prevention research.

Whilst not every family violence program needs to demonstrate all aspects of good practice, the research shows that successful programs targeting Indigenous family violence have identified the need to:

- recognise the impact of past trauma (loss of identity, independence and dignity) and the continuing effects of grief across whole communities;
- provide Indigenous-specific services as well as facilitating Indigenous people's access to relevant mainstream services;
- give serious consideration to Indigenous cultural imperatives in the setting of project time-lines;

- pay respect to community Elders, traditional owners and significant influencers and seek to engage them in communicating support for the program;
- recognise that premature introduction of family violence awareness in communities that are not ready to address this difficult issue may lay workers open to violence, make them the brunt of community anger, cause rifts in communities and will almost certainly lead to failed projects;
- engage the existing strong commitment that Indigenous men and women have to the well being of their own children to draw them into programs that address family violence issues;
- foster self-esteem and community capacity by offering accredited training to graduates of first-stage family violence awareness programs;
- showcase successful projects to other communities;
- establish training relationships between Indigenous communities;
- foster good relations between police and communities -recognising that fear of police (and child protection workers) is a legacy of history and learnt behaviours;
- acknowledge the desire in Indigenous communities to prevent the ongoing cycle of family breakdown;
- devolve policing (eg night patrols) and appropriate legal functions to customary law/Aboriginal restorative justice/dispute resolution authorities along with the simultaneous training of Indigenous community members in 'white law';
- provide early intervention in the cycle of family violence by enhancing the parenting skills, bonding relationships and self-esteem of young mothers – and fathers;
- ensure programs are funded to a degree that allows them to provide participants with the practical assistance that enable them to participate: such as meals, transport, child-care;
- encourage project workers to continuously evaluate projects and creatively redirect projects that are not effective (eg by adapting 'talking' approaches to include practically focussed activities (art, sport, drama, etc) where necessary as a means of creating and maintaining engagement and building self esteem, skills and trust); and
- recognise that directly addressing the difficult issue of family violence might be counter-productive and alienating. Many successful projects focus instead on enhancing self-esteem, building support networks and talking circles, rebuilding

relationships between parents and children through practical activities such as music, sport or camps. Family violence awareness can then be incorporated into such activities.

Poor practice

Interestingly, Memmott et al (2001) also identify areas of poor practice. In noting that program failings or difficulties are rarely included in the literature, the authors noted that the following poor practices in Indigenous family violence programs had a direct impact on program outcomes:

- lack of suitable sectoral partnerships for program delivery;
- lack of coordination at the local level;
- lack of training and skills amongst program staff;
- lack of funding or insufficient funding;
- unethical community politics interfering with program execution;
- programs not necessarily directly targeted at the worst forms of violence in a community which may appear too awesome to tackle;
- programs being predominantly reactive and not balanced with proactive components to reduce incidents of violence;
- lack of coordination or fragmentation between State and Commonwealth goals and programs;
- violence intervention staff themselves become threatened and/or assaulted by violence perpetrators; and
- over-stress ('burn out') amongst program staff through regularly dealing (both during and out of work hours) with the constant stress inducing occurrences of violence in the community.

Principles to guide FVRAP projects

From these learnings about good and poor practice in Indigenous and family violence programs and from our observations about projects, which we visited or profiled, we have developed a short set of principles, which we consider should underpin the Program and assist in the assessment of the relevance of proposals, including at the regional and local level.

These principles are again, indicative and need discussion by the Network Management Team:

- the community accepts accountability for the safety of women and children and designs the project accordingly;
- the organisation is committed to gaining and holding support from key stakeholders and relevant agencies in the local community;
- the design of the project is based on an understanding of and evidence base in good practice in responding to family violence;
- the project designers and sponsors or auspice bodies must have an awareness of strategies which engage communities in openly talking about family violence and be committed to pursuing that engagement;
- the project encompasses strategies for encouraging men to take responsibility for family violence;
- the project encompasses strategies that ensure that family violence is recognised as a crime;
- flexible, integrated and collaborative approaches are considered in developing the project proposal and design;
- there is a recognition in the focussing of the project and its linkages with other projects and services in the local community that holistic services need to incorporate a range of responses, from healing to crisis interventions;
- in developing, assessing and prioritising projects for funding there is due recognition that not all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are in traditional environments;
- staff should be appropriately paid and trained, and the development of community skills (including in leadership) & capacity must be considered as one aspect of any project and
- project staff and governance bodies must show a willingness and capacity to be accountable to their communities.

We note that an earlier version of these principles which we provided to FaCS have been included in the final version of the FVRAP Program Guidelines as 'project objectives'⁷.

⁷ FVRAP Program Guidelines (for 2005/2006) Version 3. 18.3.05;pp 8-9.

Objectives should be about what is to be achieved, whereas these principles are more about the style or way in which an organisation running a FVRAP project might behave. We suggest that the principles be included as principles, not objectives, in future program guidelines.

4.1.4. Performance indicators

The sources of information for an assessment of the performance indicators being used for FVRAP and its funded projects were the project information contained in the Grants Management System (GMS) and the project reports for 2004/05 projects collected during site visits. GMS holds the data that is recorded by ATSiS/FaCS about projects and which can be drawn on to analyse the performance of the program overall. The project reports are generally produced for the governance boards for the projects and may be passed on to the ICC staff.

There are inherent difficulties in assessing the performance of a program, which is made up of a number of quite diverse one-year projects spread across the country. That difficulty is magnified by the complexity of causal factors of family violence and the necessarily long time that it takes to make an impact in seeking to address and reduce family violence. Because each project has its own quite specific objectives, with its own quite distinct performance indicators related to those objectives, it is unlikely that there will be a common set of indicators used across projects, the results from which could be accumulated to give a view of the progress or performance of the FRVAP overall.

It is not surprising therefore that we have found that three broad forms of indicators are used for projects in GMS and these are:

- description of how the initiative has assisted victims/and or contributed to reducing family violence/sexual assault in Indigenous communities;
- description of activities undertaken to improve community capacity to respond to family violence or undertaken to advocate for improved services for victims of family violence; and
- the numbers (and simple demographics) of people assisted or involved in the activity.

At the project level, in reports provided to governance boards, the reports focussed on similar indicators, namely activities undertaken, and numbers using the service or participating in the activity. We saw one instance where a client satisfaction sheet was

used to gather the views of clients and another where information had been gathered about the reasons why clients were using the service.

Some projects attached performance indicators to the strategies they were implementing, with the indicators or measures reported being activities done or not done, for example

- a strategy of supporting and maintaining resources on family violence and relevant services had an indicator of working in partnership with other service providers and the progress measurement was the activities done or not done.

This kind of indicator represents achievement of milestones, rather than success, and while achievement of milestones should lead to success, that achievement cannot be assumed.

The evaluative framework for FVRAP in future needs to be further developed once the program logic has been agreed within FaCS but could include the following:

- establish indicators for the short term, medium term and long term outcomes of the program as a whole;
- set up ways of gathering data and a timetable for reporting and analysing results appropriate to the realistic timescale for achievement of the respective types of outcome;
- at project set up stage, identify which outcome (short, medium and long term) each project will contribute to, and the approximate timescale in which it might make its contribution to that outcome;
- establish some indicators for the project related specifically to the project objectives, ensuring that these objectives do link through to the broader program outcomes, and to any regional plan for family violence that might exist;
- at program level, monitor and report on what proportion of projects have achieved their project objectives and thus contributed to broader program outcomes. (This is consistent with the Indicators, current at the time of the evaluation, for Indigenous Parenting and Family Wellbeing in the PBS for FaCS for 2004/05.)

4.2 FVRAP funding allocations

4.2.1. The basis for allocation of funds

In July 2003, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS) was formed to, among other things, administer funds, which were allocated to Regional Councils. In 2003/04 all funding decisions at regional level were made by staff of ATSIS, taking account of priorities set by the ATSIC Board of Commissioners and the Regional Councils. The basis on which funds were allocated between regions in 2003/04 was a process through which Regional Councils made proposals to ATSIC for expenditure in the region, based on their regional plans. A similar process had been completed by ATSIS before its abolition in July 2004. The budget allocation, distributed to Regional Councils, for FVRAP was \$1.1m in 2003/04. In addition to this amount, some Regional Councils/ATSIS Regional Offices reprioritised some of their other funds to allocate more to family violence projects, so that the total actually spent on FVRAP was close to \$1.5m. Regional Councils/ATSIS Regional Offices then allocated funds to projects in their region based on submissions from local communities about priorities in their community.

In February 2004, Regional Councils considered the priorities for their support and many decided to direct further funds to family violence projects in communities in their region. This resulted in there being of the order of \$3.8m available for FVRAP.

For the 2004/05 budget year, with the new arrangements for administration of Indigenous Affairs taking effect on 1 July 2004, the basis for allocation of funding used in 2003/04 was continued for 2004/05.

The basis for the broad allocation of funds in FVRAP up until 2005/06 could be summarised as largely historically based allocations to regions, with community submissions on locally identified priorities and regional plans, where they existed, influencing allocation to projects in a region or community.

For 2005/06 the method of allocation is to be a list of submissions ranked in priority order at the ICC level, with a second and subsequent priority ranking process occurring at the state level and a third at National Office, where a final priority list of recommendations for funding will be made to the Minister. The Minister will then make the final selections and approvals. The basis of prioritising is to be the extent that projects meet the FVRAP objectives, community need (which may mean locally identified priorities) and capacity of the service provider to deliver.

The terms of reference raised alternative methods of allocating funding and we have assessed their merits when applied to FVRAP. We have identified several important considerations for the basis of funding allocations for FVRAP and these relate to:

- the intent and aim of the program to support projects which come from priorities determined by the local community;
- the focus we have suggested on healing, community development, prevention and early intervention;
- having an evidence base for local need and appropriate response;
- the now well established learning about a community's readiness for tackling family violence as an essential precursor to any successful intervention; and
- having flexibility to fund region-wide or multiple community initiatives

We have therefore assessed how well each of the alternatives for funding allocations can accommodate these considerations in the table overleaf.

Method of funding allocation	Consideration for FVRAP about method:				
	Method is consistent with intent to support locally identified priorities?	Method is consistent with a capacity building approach?	Method takes account of evidence base for local need and appropriate response	Accommodates readiness of community for intervention	Provides flexibility to fund region-wide & multiple community initiatives
Formula e.g per capita	No. Relates to population not to identified or relative need	No. Allocated irrespective of community capacity	No.	No	No
<p>Comment</p> <p>A per capita formula has the advantage of being unarguable, largely because it requires no application of judgement. It is a fair basis for allocation only if size of population is directly proportionate to need or extent of a problem, capacity to use funds well, or readiness for intervention. In the case of family violence this is not the case.</p>					
Core program funding divided equally between defined units, in this case all communities or those communities identifying priorities	Yes, so long as every community has identified priorities, perhaps through a Family Violence plan or a community development plan. The disadvantage of the method is that it would not accommodate variable scale and cost of initiatives being put forward.	Yes, if the prerequisite for receiving an allocation is that the community has a community development plan, which includes addressing family violence.	Yes, if the defined units to which funds are allocated are eligible only because their plan has a strong evidence base	Yes, if the prerequisite for receiving an allocation is that the community has a community development plan that includes addressing family violence.	Yes, if the prerequisite for receiving such funds is that there is a regional or cross –community plan which includes addressing, family violence.
<p>The merits of this method as the basis for FVRAP funding depend entirely on how the units between which funds are equally divided are defined. If the units were defined as all communities, this method would have all the same advantages and disadvantages as the per capita formula described above. If the units are defined as communities identifying priorities for addressing family violence through some form of rigorous planning, then it has some merit. The method removes argument about how much should be allocated to whom because it becomes formulaic, once the eligibility for a share has been established. The major disadvantage is that this method cannot accommodate a good proposal that costs less than the equally divided amount or a similarly good proposal that costs substantially more than equally divided amount. It therefore is unlikely to achieve best effectiveness from the available program funds</p>					

Method of funding allocation	Consideration for FVRAP about method:				
	Method is consistent with intent to support locally identified priorities?	Method is consistent with a capacity building approach?	Method takes account of evidence base for local need and appropriate response	Accommodates readiness of community for intervention	Provides flexibility to fund region-wide & multiple community initiatives
Allocation to states, then submission based	Yes. There is some risk that equal treatment of geographic area may not recognise great disparity of need across the geographic boundaries.	Potentially	Potentially, depending on requirements set down for submissions.	Yes.	Yes
The basis of the allocation to states might be in proportion to the national Indigenous population in that state.					
Method up to 2004/05 i.e. largely historical allocation to an area or region with submissions from communities on locally determined priorities	Submission based funding has potential to respond to locally determined priorities but historical allocations to areas militates against shifting or newly emerging priorities being recognised	Only if historical pattern has been to take a capacity building approach with communities in that region.	Potentially, if the local submissions are rigorous in the formulation of their evidence base.	Yes, if submissions from the community were based on readiness of the community for an intervention. However Historical allocations make it difficult to meet the need of a community that is newly ready to embrace an intervention.	Yes, providing the historical allocation is sufficient to finance larger projects such as region-wide or multiple community initiatives.
2005/06 method	Maybe. Depends which set of FVRAP objectives are used and how they are weighted in assessment.	Maybe, depends whether this criteria in the checklist is given strong weighting.	Not amongst criteria in assessment checklist	No. Criteria look to capacity of provider organisation to deliver but not readiness of community for FV intervention	The absence of any references to regional, area or state plans makes funding of regional or cross community initiatives unlikely

Figure 8: Comparison of funding methods

We believe that the method being used for 2005/06 funding, as described in the FVRAP Appraisal Kit for 2005/06 FVRAP Project Funding Submissions, (provided to us on 21 April 2005 as part of the feedback on our draft report), will present a number of problems and these are:

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- the criteria which submissions should meet are not weighted in any way, leaving open the basis for recommending one submission over another;
 - the assessment kit introduces the notion of community need but does not address the evidence base for the need or the choice of strategy to address that need;
 - the multiple assessments could have the effect of multiple checks in any organisational process, namely that staff at each level in the process knowing that there is to be another check, or reprioritising, will leave the work of assessment to the next level, so that all the decisions are formulated at the national/Ministerial level with a consequential loss of focus and recognition in funding of locally determined priorities and readiness for intervention.

The assessment above shows that each of the methods is only partially suited to meeting the funding considerations for FVRAP identified above. We have already argued that the presence of some form of regional plan is essential as a tool for recording and assessing local needs and priorities. Our Recommendation 1 for the formulation of regional plans is important as a sound basis for future funding allocation, and ICCs and FaCS State Managers and FVOs will be critical to achieving some form of regional planning for addressing family violence.

We believe that FaCS should, over the next several years develop a method of funding which incorporates those elements of the models assessed above which are best suited to FVRAP and which will help promote holistic and integrated regional planning. This will be a model in which allocations are increasingly made, on a submission basis, to those areas or regions where regional, holistic and integrated plans have been developed in consultation with communities, and which build on community identified priorities for addressing family violence and building community capacity to prevent family violence.

Regional planning for family violence will take time to develop. In the meantime, FaCS could consider making provision within the total funding available through FVRAP for the Minister to allocate some funds to national projects or to initiatives developed as well-based regional or cross-community plans to address family violence which will also enhance community capacity and social capital.

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4.2.2. The allocation of funding to Regional Activities projects to date

The information in this section is based on project information provided to us by FaCS as at end January 2005. At that time there was \$2.8m of FVRAP funds for 2004/05 allocated, and since then we understand that in the order of a further \$0.6m has been allocated.

FVRAP funded 40 projects in 2003/04 and the same number have already (as at January 2005) been allocated funding for 2004/05; this includes two substantial research projects funded through the National Office of FaCS.

Funding to geographic areas

The numbers of projects in each state across the four budget years is illustrated below.

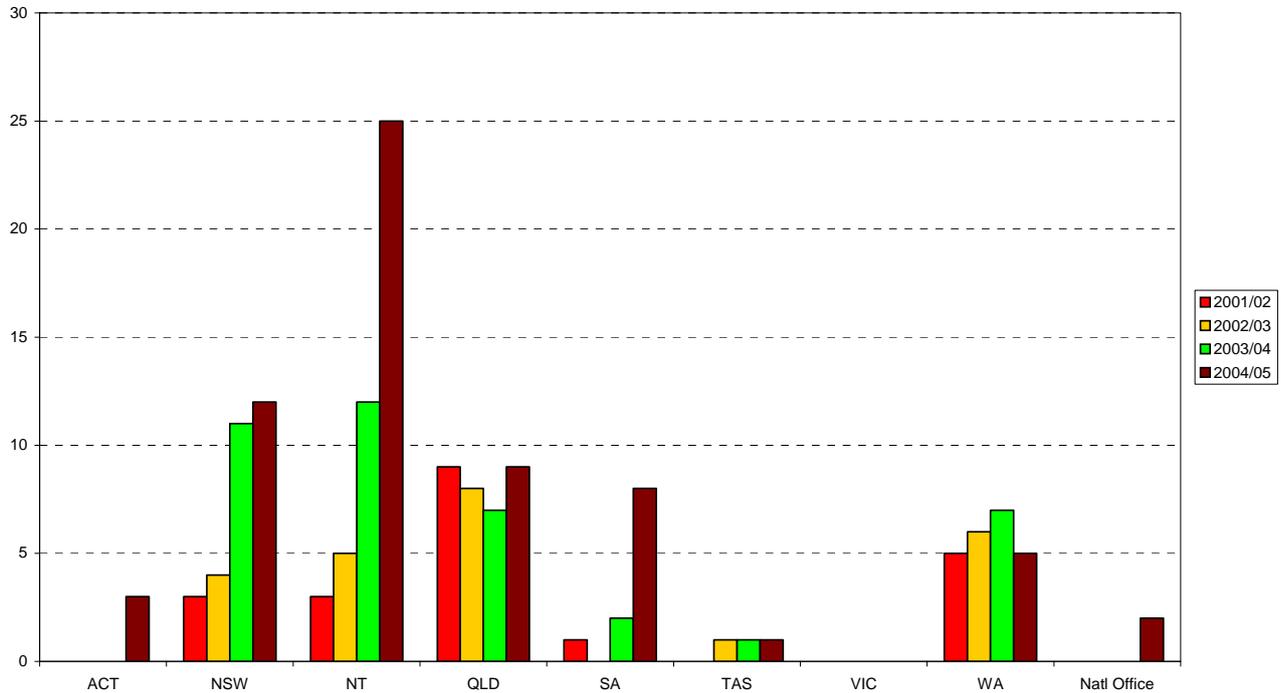


Figure 9: Numbers of projects funded in each state

In the early years Western Australia and Queensland had the greatest number of projects. In the last two years, the Northern Territory, followed by New South Wales had the largest number of projects. Queensland and Western Australia had only a few projects each of the last two years. There were no projects in Victoria and the ACT and only one each year in Tasmania. South Australia moved from 2 projects in the first year to 6 in the second year.

The funding allocations present a rather different view from that of project numbers. The following chart shows how the funds were allocated between states.

Taken together with the chart showing project numbers, these charts illustrate that Queensland had a small number of projects, but amongst these were some that received substantial amounts of funds.

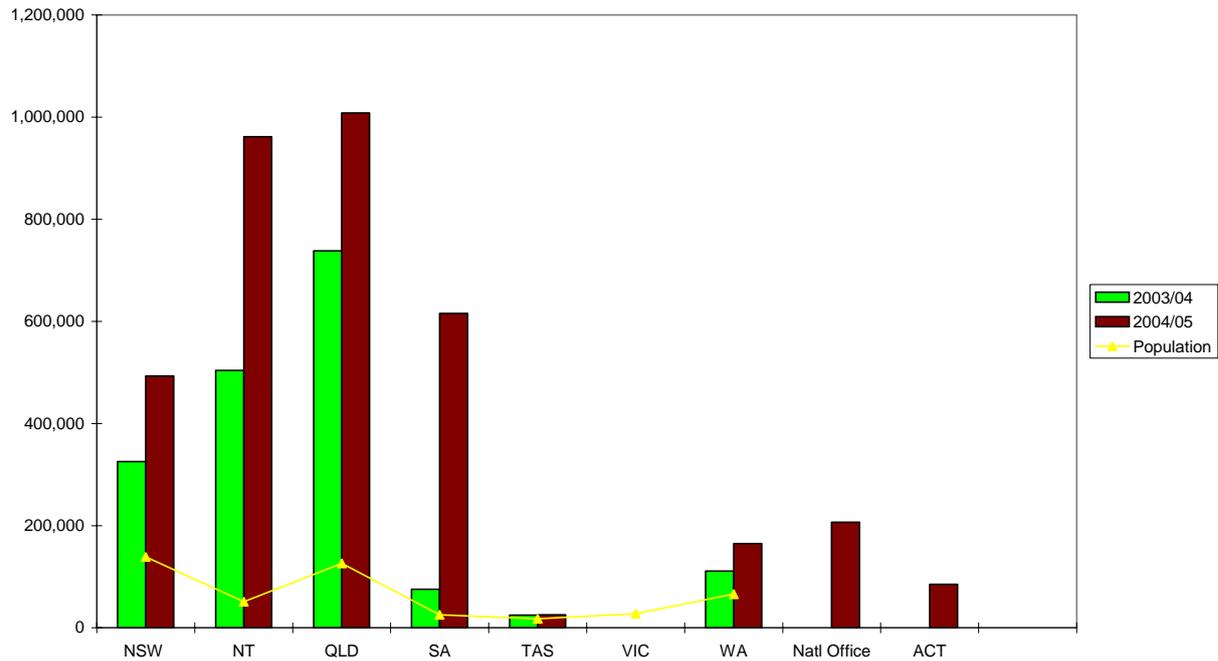


Figure 10: Funds allocated to each state and population of each state

By showing the estimated Indigenous population of each state⁸ against FVRAP funding allocated for the last two years, it is possible to see how different a result would be delivered by a per capita based allocation of funding. If we look at FVRAP 2004/05 funding allocated on a per capita basis, then New South Wales was funded approximately \$3.50 per capita, Northern Territory approximately \$18.70 per capita, Queensland approximately \$8, South Australia approximately \$24 per capita, Tasmania approximately \$1.50 per capita and Western Australia approximately \$2.50 per capita. This is a useful chart when considering what the impact might be if any of the funding methods, which involve elements of per capita allocations, as discussed above, were to be adopted for FVRAP in future years.

Viewing funding allocation by ATSI Regional Office (2003/04) or ICC office (2004/05) also highlights some interesting aspects of the FVRAP funding allocations in 2004/05.

Two regions stand out as having very substantial amounts of funding compared with other regions. In Cairns all the funds are going to one project and in Pt Augusta to five projects of which two have quite large amounts of funding. These larger projects involve setting up

⁸ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. *Annual Report 2003-2004*. Page 30

services and employing staff, raising a question about whether this is consistent with the FVRAP guideline that provides for projects to be funded for only one year.

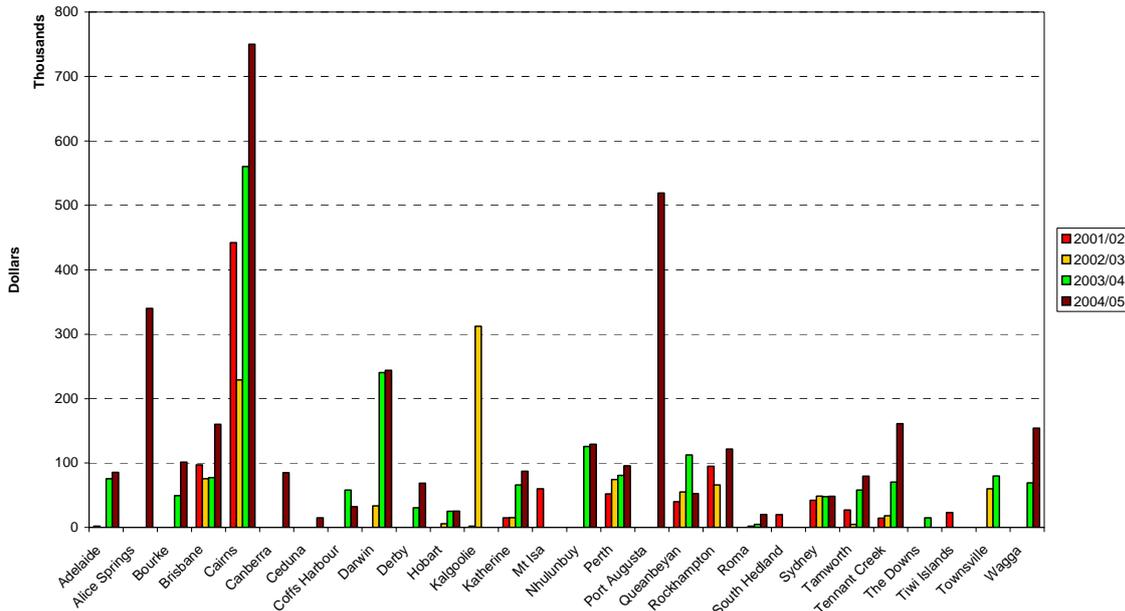


Figure 11: Funding allocations by ATSI Regional Office/ICC

In any funding program there is a choice about whether to fund small projects across a lot of communities or whether to fund a few large projects that may have a greater impact than the many small projects. In FVRAP, the risk associated with putting a large amount of funds to two or three organisations would appear to be well balanced by smaller amounts going to many projects in many regions, so long as the FaCS staff at the relevant ICC and the relevant FaCS Family Violence Office and State Manager stay in close contact with the large projects and their progress.

In the 2005/06 funding year FaCS will need to be mindful of the investment already made in these large projects, and the timescale that is needed to achieve the objectives the projects put forward when applying for funding. FaCS might consider whether it can give some form of in-principle agreement to a longer term of funding than one year in order to let these projects develop fully and achieve their longer term objectives.

Types of activity funded

The diagram below shows the funding that has been allocated to different types of activity.

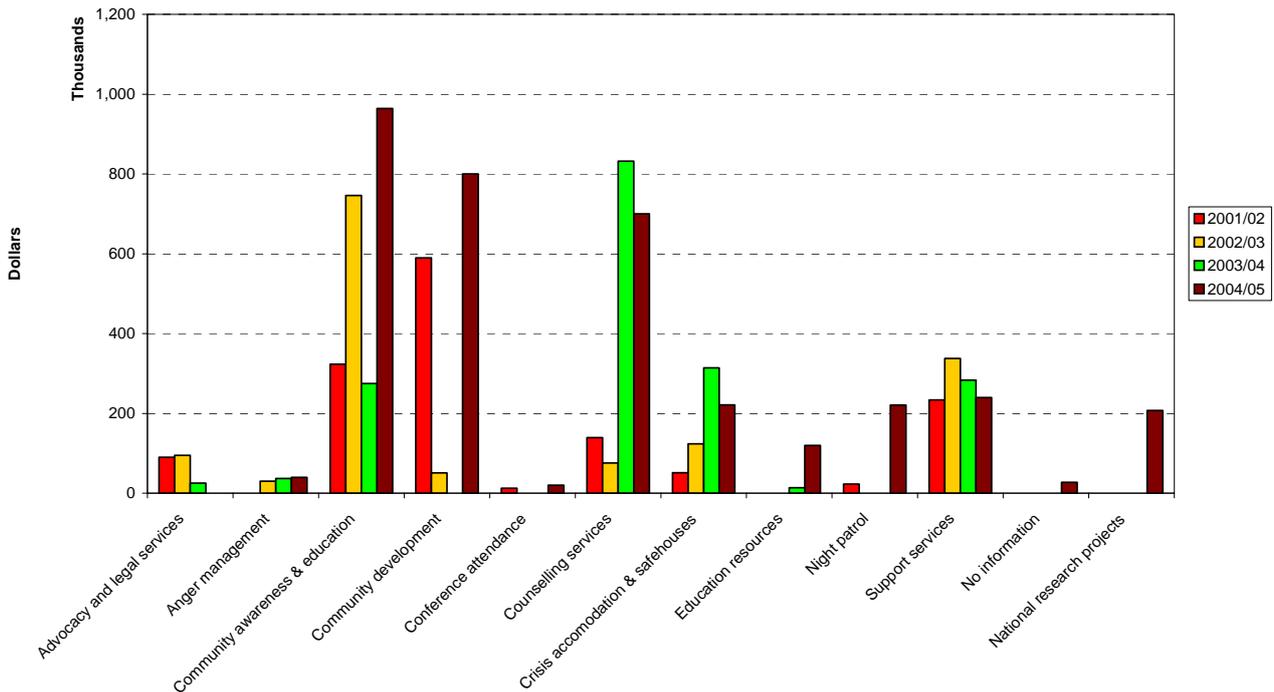


Figure 12: Funding types of activity in projects

The larger amount going to community development is in one project. This project also has some community awareness and education activities within it. The diagram shows a strong move towards community education and community development in the 2004/05 funding year, indicating that FVRAP has focussed on the healing and prevention end of the continuum of responses to family violence.

Size of grants to projects

The scatter diagram below illustrates that the great majority of projects in 2004/05 have been allocated less than \$100,000 and a little more than half the projects (26) have received an allocation of less than \$50,000.

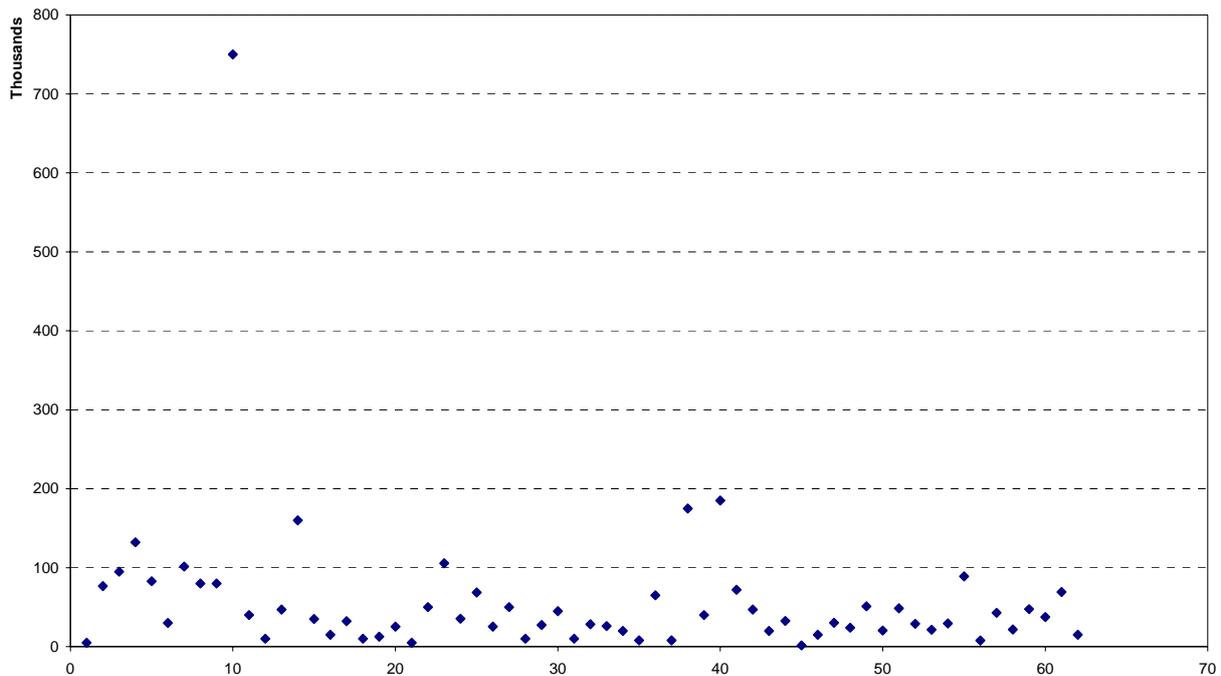


Figure 13: Size of grants allocated in 2004/05

The small size of the grants made under FVRAP gives emphasis to the merit of an approach in which the program is made complementary to other family violence programs. A grant of less than \$50,000 will not, by itself, be able to make a significant impact on reducing family violence in a community, but combined with other funds it can contribute to a more comprehensive strategy in that community.

4.3 Program management

This section examines how the program has been managed to date, namely the organisational responsibilities for management and decision-making about the program when the program was initially established under ATSIC and subsequent to the transfer of responsibility for the program to FaCS.

4.3.1. Program management arrangements for FVRAP

FVRAP operated for only one budget year under ATSIC/ATSIS and for the current budget year was transferred to FaCS in July 2004. This transfer was accompanied by substantial changes in the administrative arrangements for Indigenous affairs at Australian government level.

The table below shows the arrangements and responsibilities for the management of the FRVAP under ATSIC/ATSIS and following the transfer of the program to FaCS.

Program management role/responsibility	Arrangements under ATSIC/ATSIS (2003/04)	Arrangements in FaCS (2004/05 and 2005/06)
Policy context	<p>ATSIC Family Violence Policy Statement and Action Plan.</p> <p>ATSIC National Office undertook policy research</p>	<p>COAG Frameworks on Delivering Services to Indigenous Australians and on Indigenous Family Violence and Child Protection</p> <p>Status of ATSIC policy statement and Action Plan unclear.</p> <p>Clear policy context for FVRAP still to be articulated in new portfolio.</p>
Program logic, design and guidelines	<p>Family Violence Action Plan contained a suite of complementary programs of which FVRAP was one. National Office of ATSIC undertook design and negotiation of these programs.</p>	<p>Indigenous Family and Child Wellbeing Branch, National Office of FaCS</p>
Advertising and promoting availability of funding	<p>Regional Councils</p> <p>ATSIC/ATSIS Regional offices.</p>	<p>2004/05 was done by ATSIS Regional Offices prior to transfer.</p> <p>For 2005/06 a joint advertisement for a number of Indigenous programs has been handled by OIPC National Office.</p>
Assisting communities to develop proposals	<p>Regional Councils, assisted by ATSIS Regional Offices, through consultation on development of their Family Violence Action Plans</p>	<p>In some ATSIC regions former ATSIC/ATSIS staff transferred to ICC offices or FaCS state offices as FVOs and maintained contact with communities.</p> <p>In some regions there was no continuity of staffing for the transfer of the program and this assistance was not available to communities.</p> <p>In some regions the Regional Councils were still operating for the 2004/05 funding round and councillors continued some involvement in pointing communities to FVRAP as a source of funding for Family Violence projects.</p>

Program management role/responsibility	Arrangements under ATSI/ATSI (2003/04)	Arrangements in FaCS (2004/05 and 2005/06)
Selecting and recommending projects to fund	<p>Regional Councils had input to process through ATSI Regional Offices,</p> <p>ATSI formed a risk assessment panel in each Regional Office and the panel looked at all applications, taking account of Regional Council and Regional Office staff views, assessed each proposal against a detailed series of risk factors and produced a ranking order for projects to fund. This was then given to the Regional Manager for final decisions.</p>	<p>For 2004/05 some Regional Councils continued involvement in some regions and worked with former ATSI staff in ICCs to make recommendations for projects to be funded. In others they had lesser involvement.</p> <p>For 2004/05 one or two FaCS State Managers were involved in the assessment process for the funding. State office FVOs had input in some states.</p> <p>For 2005/06 round the process is to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FaCS staff in ICCs include cross agency staff in a risk assessment to compile a numerical (prioritised) list of recommendations, signed of the by the ICC Manager. • FVO and State/Territory Manager look at ICC recommendations from state-wide perspective and give a prioritised list of recommendations to National Office • National Office reviews across all states and makes recommendations to the Minister • The Minister approves the final allocations.
Approving allocation of funds and release of payments during year	ATSI/ATSI Regional Manager	<p>2004/05 – Allocation made on historical basis by ATSI Regional Managers.</p> <p>2005/06 – Final allocations made by Minister.</p> <p>National Office holds delegations for release of payments throughout the year.</p>
Monitoring project progress and assisting organisations in community development	ATSI/ATSI Regional Office staff	<p>FaCS staff in ICC, reporting to the ICC Manager and to State Manager. FVOs in state offices may also play a role in monitoring.</p> <p>State Manager, FaCS has critical role to respond to any early warning of problems and depends for that role on the ICC Manager.</p>

Figure 14: Responsibilities for program management before and after transfer to FaCS

The table above shows arrangements have changed in every aspect of program management since FVRAP was transferred to FaCS and new arrangements for the administration of Indigenous Affairs were put in place in July 2004. Given the scale of the change it is not surprising that in making site visits and compiling profiles of FVRAP projects in February and March 2005, we found a good deal of confusion and uncertainty about what the arrangements now are, and how the funding round for 2005/06 is to work.

Now that the Regional Councils are no longer operating, achieving FVRAP overall aim of providing practical and flexible support for projects that have been **identified by the community as a local priority** to address family violence will depend on the FaCS staff in ICCs providing the critical link with and contact point for communities. For the views about priorities for, and progress of, local communities in dealing with family violence to be communicated through to National Office, to inform policy development and program review and design, the relationship of the FaCS staff in ICCs with the FaCS State Managers and State Office Family Violence officers will be critical.

At the time of fieldwork, the FaCS staff in ICCs were not well supported to fulfil their role in relation to communities effectively. Nor were the communication processes for feeding information from communities to State Offices and National Office well formed. We understand that a number of steps have since been taken to address these issues.

Another area of weakness for future program management of FVRAP, apparent at the time of fieldwork, was that of co-ordination with other family violence related programs in the funding selection process to ensure that there is complementarity between all the programs in the way funds are directed. From discussions with ICC and State/Territory Offices staff during our field work, it was apparent that processes or mechanisms for co-ordination across portfolios to ensure that funds from all available programs are directed in pursuit of a planned and consistent direction, or broad strategy, to address family violence in any community or set of communities within a geographic area, had yet to be established. We understand that steps have also been taken in this area since we undertook fieldwork.

For FVRAP to be well managed over the next several years the following processes, some of which have already been established, to support program management must continue to be supported and resourced year on year:

- briefing/discussion sessions for FaCS National office staff and the Network Management Team and State Managers about how respective roles are developing, how the assessment process worked in the prior year and issues

around progress and scope for further improvement in program management and projects;

- briefing sessions for FaCS staff in ICCs about the selection process for each year. These might be run by National Office and co-ordinated through the Network Management Team;
- discussions, reaching agreement, at a local level between FaCS ICC staff and ICC staff from other portfolios about how they will co-operate in the 2005/06 and subsequent funding round(s) to ensure a co-ordinated and complementary use of program funds which can be used to address family violence and its causes.

National Office will be able to use these for a to check that messages and information are moving effectively to, and between, all three levels in the new arrangements.

We consider that a number of measures for continued support for FaCS ICC staff in carrying out their role in assisting communities to address family violence issues are needed such as:

- a training program to develop their understanding of the nature of family violence, the learnings from good practice about strategies and approaches to addressing family violence in Indigenous communities. Much of the material in this report, for example the literature Review at Appendix 3, could be used in such a program. A train the trainer approach could be taken with the FVOs being trained to then train ICC staff in their state/territory. The training could be opened up to relevant staff from other portfolios at the state/territory and ICC levels;
- a community development training program to develop staff skills in strengths based approaches to assisting communities to address family violence problems. Outside expertise may need to be brought in for this training, at least to begin with, from organisations such as AusAID, Australian Volunteers International or OXFAM.;
- conferences/workshops organised at least once a year to bring FaCS staff in ICCs together with Family Violence Officers and the State/Territory Managers from the State Offices together to exchange information about who is doing what, what approaches are being used with what success, and common problems and solutions that might have been found;
- budget resources for travel to enable ICC staff to visit each community at least once per year to look at projects in action and to be able to talk face to

face to project staff and community members about how FVRAP projects and other family violence projects are working, where successes are being had and where problems are still being encountered. The information about practice that can be gained from a visit will be a very useful form of reporting to add to written reports on projects

- annual or six monthly workshops with projects and FaCS/ICC staff at national or regional levels to share learnings, good practice and to problem solve.

Another issue for FaCS which emerges from closing the Regional Councils is that of the status and continued need for a regional level action plans for family violence. Some of the Regional Councils developed such plans in the last two years. Some had a solid evidence base around need and local capacity and others were closer to wish lists. Whatever the quality of the plans in planning terms, they were developed through consultations with local communities in the region and to that extent represented actions which the communities felt able to undertake and to be necessary. Some of the FaCS staff in ICCs had some involvement in the development of regional plans and are sufficiently familiar with them to use them as some sort of guidance on local needs for future FVRAP projects.

The issue for the future is how that same view of local needs and priorities consolidated at a regional level might be identified and recorded in future to give some clear and consistent direction for future allocation of funding. We see the FaCS FVOs and State Managers as critical to ensuring that the needs and priorities for family violence (amongst FaCS other policy responsibilities) are researched and planned for at ICC and State levels. While the FaCS ICC staff will be the link to communities, the FaCS FVOs and State Managers will have to take responsibility for pulling the information from the ICC staff into a broader state plan, working with the ICC Managers to ensure that the Family Violence programs are well integrated, that linkages are made to other federally funded programs which can help to build the community foundations which are essential to addressing the reduction of family violence in the long term, and for ensuring that the linkages to state government activities are made.

4.3.2. Monitoring and reporting in FVRAP Projects

Projects funded under FVRAP are required to report quarterly in writing against performance indicators agreed as part of the funding agreement. Funds are also released quarterly on receipt of a satisfactory report. When the project report is received by the

FaCS Family Violence Officer in the ICC (formerly the ATSI program staff in the Regional Office), the officer then assesses the report, putting information about achievements and progress into the GMS. If a report is not received on time, the project is “breached” in the GMS and funds are withheld until the report is received.

From interviews during fieldwork we found that ICC staff rely as much on their telephone or personal contact with projects to know how well they are progressing as they do on the written reports. Generally project staff do not spend time writing extensive qualitative comments into reports, chiefly because they find it time consuming and of no real benefit to their management of the project. A conversation is usually quicker and in many cases, a clearer preference of project staff than using written communication. We recognise that some written reporting would still need to be done so that the information collected from conversations can be accessed by staff in state/territory and national offices.

The GMS project reports for 2004/05 projects provided to us in January 2005 show that no performance reporting data has yet been entered, and given the disruption caused by the changed administrative arrangements for FVRAP associated with the transfer to FaCS this is to be expected. Project reports for 2003/04 projects however show a considerable amount of data available for most projects and there is generally a record of payments and reasons for any withholding of payments.

The practice of “breaching” projects raises one issue for the future assessment of what projects or organisations to fund in subsequent funding rounds. If “breaches” are considered to be an indicator of a poorly performing organisation and thus a risk for future funding, how will this risk be compared with the risk of an organisation that has never been funded and therefore never had the opportunity to be “breached”? This assessment can only properly be made with good information about the capacity of the project organisations, both already funded and never funded, and the circumstances which lead to the “breach”, and that information may well not be contained in project reports. This issue illustrates again the critical importance of the FaCS staff in the ICC having regular and face to face contact with the projects and project staff, and recording and relaying the information to STOs and National Office, in order that they can properly assess the capacity of the organisation and how they can assist to strengthen its capacity to deliver a FVRAP project effectively.

5. FVRAP AT THE PROJECT LEVEL

5.1 The sample of project sites

In addition to the key informant interviews and documentary analysis at national, state and regional levels a sample of the projects funded through FVRAP in 2004/05 were selected for more detailed assessment as part of the review of the program. Information had been provided to us on projects funded through Regional Councils prior to 2004/5 to address family violence and in some cases the funding had continued over more than one year. When ATSISS was abolished and funding was transferred into a range of Commonwealth Government Departments, the record of projects that were recorded in the GMS as being part of FVRAP took some time to finalise – through to early 2005.

Selection of projects for further investigation in this evaluation was conducted in consultation with the Indigenous Family and Child Wellbeing Branch in FaCS National Office as well as the Family Violence Officers in the FaCS State offices.

The aim of the Evaluation Team was to ensure the sample was a spread of projects across jurisdictions, project types and levels of funding. This meant the sample included:

- large projects (more than \$100,000) in which staff positions were funded to provide
 - ongoing services – e.g. region wide community development and awareness raising, an aboriginal women’s resource centre,
 - a series of community awareness workshops to be provided across a region
- medium sized projects (\$50,000 – 100,000) including:
 - staff providing ongoing services or a range of activities, such as interventions for men, or night patrols
 - large scale conferences with travel budgets to enable people from regions covering many, many square kilometres to be brought together;
 - resources for a series of community capacity activities;
- smaller projects (up to \$50,000) where there was usually no funding for ongoing staffing, but funding provided for short term initiatives such as courses or ‘locally designed intervention strategies’, development of resources such as videos and radio programs.

Below we provide a table that indicates the geographic spread of projects.

5.2 Site visits and project profiles

Two methodologies were utilised to conduct the project level analysis - site visits and project profiles. As part of both processes, interviews were conducted where possible with:

- FaCS State Managers and state office coordinators for family violence,
- Indigenous Coordination Centre Managers and Family Violence Officers,
- Regional Council members and staff.

For the profiles, interviews were conducted most commonly with the auspice organisations and project staff - some face to face in a brief visit to the area and some by phone. In the case of site visits, team members visited the location and conducted face-to-face interviews with a number of people from a range of stakeholder groups which included members of governance bodies, senior staff of the auspice organisations, project staff, and where possible community members and/or participants in the project. The team were also able to see the onsite circumstances in which the project was conducted.

Whether from a profile process or a site visit the perspective from state, regional, and local levels were usually obtained by interviewing the FaCS staff member responsible for family violence programs in the relevant ICC and the Family Violence Officer in the respective FaCS State Office.

Details of the locations visited are included at Appendix 5. In summary they included:

	NSW	QLD	NT	WA	SA	VIC	TAS	ACT
Site Visits	3	1	3	1	1	No FVRAP projects	1	No FVRAP projects at time of evaluation
Profiles	2	2	3	3	2		-	
Totals	5	3	6	4	3		1	

Data collection tools were developed to obtain consistent information from each location and interviewee. Analysis of the findings from the data collection process is included throughout the report and is particularly covered later in this chapter.

5.3 Views from those involved in site visit and profiled projects

As part of the evaluation process, standardised data collection tools were developed for the Evaluation and the results entered into a database. This section provides an overview of the common themes about the sample of projects that have been identified through the analysis of the data collected. This sample is not numerically representative of the profile of projects in FVRAP. Instead, it was a sample that provided a cross section of the types of projects to enable us to examine in more detail the different types of projects that have been funded. The information that can be drawn from the database therefore can point to some issues but not to the frequency or incidence rate of the issues mentioned. This information has contributed to our findings about the program levels issues (Section 5.4), which should be addressed.

5.3.1 Projects aims

As would be expected most projects reported that the level of family violence in their community was ‘very high’ and most participants had ‘very little’ support within their family and community. The level of violence is an indicator of the need for the project and the low level of support is an important factor in family violence and an indicator of the need for strategies to address this as part of working with the individuals and families involved.

Project staff and staff of auspice organisations for site visit and profile projects were asked what they considered to be the priorities for FVRAP and the priorities rated by most respondents were community education, building community capacity and reducing family violence through working with men who use violence. The priorities rated least important were “addressing the impact of family violence through counselling” and “legal support”.

Projects/organisations were asked to indicate the aims of their projects. Some projects/organisations identified more than one aim. The most common aims were providing opportunities for communities to talk about violence and its impacts, community education and building community capacity. Consistent with these aims, the strategies most commonly identified as the key strategies were community awareness raising/discussion strategies.

5.3.2 Benefits from projects

Among the positives or benefits from the projects for the target groups and the communities in which the projects were running were:

- using a holistic approach, including working with the whole family rather than with individuals or men, women, or children only;
- being flexible in approach so that the project was able to change with changing circumstances and networks were able to be expanded as diverse approaches were tried;
- watching the organisation grow as Indigenous counsellors were brought on board and Indigenous people developed more knowledge about family violence
- improved linkages and referrals to other services that could help with some aspects of family violence causes.

5.3.3 Successful types of projects

Projects/organisations identified the following as the most successful types of projects and those which:

- provided culturally appropriate services;
- focussed on the whole family's needs; and
- were flexible in approach, using a range of responses such as indirect ways of awareness raising, or, for example, providing a vehicle if that was the best way of helping people to access services or make an outreach service work in a remote area.

5.3.4 Outcomes from projects

Some of the outcomes reported by the staff of the projects that we visited or profiled are tabled below with one box representing reported outcomes for one project.

Outcomes reported by projects staff from site visit and profile projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People becoming aware of the project. • Increased referrals to our other projects as a result.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth involvement and driven by them. • Support from Senior Women. • Youth wanting to get message to their parents about how they feel.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with own families "ripple effect". • Women finding better ways to communicate with their families, feeling empowered, being able to look after children. • Some have worked through issues and do not need to continue counselling.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis counselling and safe house has been provided. • Community attitudes marginally changed to accept FV is not acceptable. Fuller range of services is opened up to clients to address related problems stemming from FV.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are feeling safer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of people coming through. • Debriefing • Positive image service is being provided, in non threatening environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good networks built. • Better relationships

Figure 15: Outcomes from selected FVRAP projects - project staff views

Outcomes reported by the auspice organisations of the projects that we visited or profiled are set out below.

Outcomes reported by auspice organisations from site visit and profile projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation has reviewed its strategies of where to invest resources resulting in an approach that is putting needs of kids up high. • The development of a child centred approach. • Aiming to increase children's self esteem and cultural pride.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Committee working well in [Name withheld]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The women's Safe House is a vital community resource.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Organisation] have supplemented worker's salary and spent \$6000 on repairs and maintenance. • [Place] is a place for women and consists of a shed and kitchen. Aged women in particular go to escape family violence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are more focused. • All services are working together
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase people accessing service. • Increase activities being run by service.

Figure 16: Outcomes for selected FVRAP projects - auspice organisation views

Some Projects/organisations also said that it was too early to be sure what the benefits or successes were, and similarly to be able to demonstrate outcomes.

5.3.5 Opportunities for improvements and unmet needs

Asked to identify any activities the organisations involved might do differently if they had their time over again, the largest group of interviewees made comments around strengthening staff and community skills and organisation development. They also felt that they might facilitate more community discussion, given the chance again.

Asked about unmet needs remaining, the most commonly identified matter was around funding and resource issues, particularly the need for some certainty of funds to continue a project beyond one year. Perpetrator programs were seen as needing more emphasis. The need for more Indigenous people who are appropriately skilled to work in family violence projects was also commonly identified, with the view that Aboriginal people want to go to

Aboriginal staff and organisations rather than mainstream services being strongly argued. Long-term commitment to programs was also seen as still being needed.

5.4 Regional approaches

In three locations which we visited we also collected information to develop an overall regional profile.

Regional profiles 1, 2 and 3

In three regional centres, the Regional Council, and now the FaCS officers in the ICC have taken a proactive role in developing a coherent regional approach to the services that should be funded in relation to family violence, and to selection of the most appropriate organisations to approach to encourage to apply for the funding. They have also had organisational development and capacity building strategies with these organisations where that was needed.

Two years ago, one of the regions decided, on the basis of monitoring of the projects funded at that time, that the small amounts of money were not coordinated and not covering a large enough number of people in the communities across the region. A model for coordination was developed for the 2003/4 funding year but this model began to fail. An assessment and development strategy involving the engagement of a consultant led to the formulation of a region wide model for community development, community awareness raising, and some counselling and group programs. An established Aboriginal organisation was approached to apply for the funding. An application was submitted and approved and the consultant continued to support the organisation as the project was planned in more detail and implemented.

In the second region the Regional Council and now FaCS staff in the ICC, have developed a suite of projects covering working with women and men and establishing night patrols. They have worked to refocus the services clearly on family violence activities – the services had been in existence for some years and only addressing family violence in an ad hoc way. There is still organisation and project development work to be done to ensure the projects are well established and this is the work that the ICC staff are undertaking. The staff are also setting up networks of providers to increase and improve the shared understanding of family violence, develop coordinated activities and work together, and provide peer support.

In the third region the projects funded had all been identified as priorities by a Women's Conference funded through FVRAP. The Regional Council staff had excellent knowledge

of family violence, the services in their large town, and the projects identified by the Women's Conference.

These are examples where there was a mapping of existing services, an assessment of the need, development of a model, and support to the funded organisation. By following this approach they have a clear regional plan and a strategy to achieve it in partnership with key organisations in the region. In their work they have been contributing to community capacity building in what seems to have been an effective way. These three regions had reasonably well developed service systems, being larger populations, and the services were early to secondary interventions in relation to people and organisations because of the stage of development of the overall service system.

Regional profile 4

In a smaller more remote community the plan and priorities for funding of activities for family violence had also been developed with the Women's Conference but there had also been an invitation to organisations to proposed projects for funding. There was a coherence to the overall suite of projects with a strong focus on community awareness raising, and community education designed to support communities to begin to identify and develop local strategies, responses and interventions. The range of services in the area was limited and the communities were very widespread through the region, small and primarily Aboriginal language speakers. At the time of our visit some significant new services were being established. In the next stage of funding further coordination would be an advantage to maximise the value of the funding by linking it effectively to small number of other services and community activities

Implications from Regional Profiles

In the field of family violence with its complexity of causal factors, no one portfolio or level of government can effectively address family violence. Co-ordinated and integrated approaches are therefore necessary. A regional plan provides a mechanism for achieving that co-ordination and integration, on a scale where the co-ordination necessary is both manageable and achievable.

5.5 Project Related Findings about the Program

Based on the site visits and project profiles it is clear that projects are addressing a wide range of issues and have a range of antecedents demonstrating the flexibility with which FVRAP has been implemented, and the complexity of issues surrounding family violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

In analysing the findings from the site visits and profiles it has been possible to identify several key themes of relevance to development of FVRAP in the future.

Earlier in this report we examined the complex nature of family violence, the multiple factors that need to be addressed and the consequent need for an integrated, multiple stream approach of a continuum of strategies, activities and services over time. FVRAP therefore also needs to sit within coherent plans at the national, state, regional and local level. This is the context for assessing the projects funded through FVRAP.

5.5.1 Project set-up

It is apparent that some projects are well established, being undertaken by well established organisations, have a sound model for the project and are well linked with other related services - for example, a women's resource centre in an established Aboriginal community organisation in a large regional centre of the state in which it is located. This project had been funded prior to 2004/5.

All projects, even if well thought out and planned and run by an already well-established organisation, take time after funding is received to get well established. For example, a well thought out project, with support in the network of related services in the area was progressing well given that it had been funded for the first time in 2004/5 but it was having great difficulty finding one specific type of staff needed to complete the team. Difficulty in finding staff with suitable experience in the field of family violence, not just at set-up but also throughout the project when staff turned over, was a recurring theme in the site visits. These projects were suffering lack of training and skills amongst project staff, identified by Memmott et al (2001) as an area of poor practice.

Another example of a set up problem was that the construction of a building which was needed for the project had still not commenced after 18 months due to cost issues and difficulties in getting construction done in the area.

In a service that received only 1/6th of the funding requested another set-up problem was seen. It seemed that there had not been clear negotiation to assist the auspice organisation to understand what the funding body thought could be done with that amount of money. It was not apparent that the organisation had developed a sound alternative concept for their project and as a consequence they were struggling to implement a coherent project.

Some of the projects that had successfully carried out their work without set-up problems, were smaller projects with limited purpose (conferences, workshops, videos etc) and

working on community education, awareness raising and capacity building. These demonstrated that where communities, organisations, projects and workers have the necessary knowledge, awareness and skills to be part of initiatives to address family violence, success in projects is more likely.

The conceptual basis of the project

Amongst the projects visited we found some where the concept for the project was not well conceived and thus made successful outcomes unlikely. For example:

- safe houses that are not used and/or are seen as breaking the family up by some in the communities and especially the male perpetrators, demonstrating that the community may not yet be ready for and/or does not support the project addressing family violence;
- night patrol programs run by the men through the CDEP, where these men are some of the perpetrators;
- a project for men which was not well differentiated from another organisation in the same area and had a worker who was talking of family violence as a mental health issue; and
- small services for men which had very little basis in the vital evidence and good practice about what works in working with men.

The lack of a sound conceptual basis for some projects may be a symptom of the level of knowledge about family violence strategies that work and of the lack of evidence base for projects (discussed at 5.3.2. below)

Implications of findings on project set-up

The projects that presented the clearest picture of being established and achieving some success were the projects in which it was clear that:

- There had been selection of good models with a connection to both the Regional Plan and the multiple factors relevant to addressing family violence;
- The project had a coherent concept that is established in evidence even though the actual organisation may not be very aware of the research evidence;
- The project was located in an auspice organisation with an understanding of the issue of family violence, relevant expertise (or access to relevant expert advice) and was operating soundly in either governance or management or both.

As long as the project is part of an agreed plan for the community which includes a mapping of existing services and strategies, FVRAP projects could, perhaps should, include some short term, smaller projects that are contributing to building awareness, knowledge, skills and interventions.

Consideration could be given to FVRAP including a project that contributes to developing the pool of Aboriginal people with skills and understanding to work effectively in family violence projects. Some linkage with the leadership program being run through the OIPC may be a good way to develop and run such a training project.

5.5.2 Evidence Base

Based on interviews with project initiators and managers, it is apparent that very few projects are directly based on knowledge of documented evidence approaches to dealing with family violence. In general, projects have been developed based on local knowledge and experience and with some awareness that initiatives such as safe houses, night patrols, outreach workers, services for men are useful. In particular the people involved do not know that there are good practice elements that are essential for success and that there are some forms of these projects or services that are in fact counter productive. Examples of great importance are inappropriate approaches to working with men, and the risks of a safe house in communities that are not yet ready to manage the challenges such as how perpetrators respond to this public symbol of opposition to their behaviour.

Implications of the findings on the role of an evidence base on FVRAP

The vast array of knowledge accumulated by the Australian Government through initiatives like Partnerships Against Domestic Violence and previous evaluations of Indigenous Family Violence initiatives has not yet filtered through to those developing family violence service proposals and, in some cases, to those who are determining what projects are being funded.

To prevent mistakes being repeated, or worse abusive and dangerous practices being maintained, people involved at all levels of FVRAP need better support, including training, to be up to date on the evidence available about good practice approaches to family violence and about building evidence from their own work.

For the future, large conferences of providers/auspice organisations could be used as a forum and mechanism for developing broader understanding of, and knowledge about strategies for family violence that are appropriate for men, about working with children in

strengths-based approaches and about strategies to engage communities in discussion about family violence.

FaCS could also consider earmarking a proportion of FVRAP funds for such an annual conference.

Evaluation is another way to address the evidence base. Action research and reflective practice, better coordinated data collection on outcomes as well as participation rates, and small scale research projects should all be supported

5.5.3. A range of responses

Family violence and child abuse are significant issues requiring a range of responses. In many communities it is neither possible nor appropriate to tackle the issue directly. Communities need time to recognise the significance of these issues and may require a variety of approaches that deal with the consequences and/or tackle the causes of family violence and child abuse without necessarily naming it as such. For this reason some projects are not readily identifiable as family violence or child abuse related even though in their conception they may be related to achieving an outcome of healing or improved resilience in the community or increasing the capacity of the community to develop their own response to these issues (i.e. building social capital).

For example, in one project a craft activity was being run for the women in the community and one woman who was known by the staff to be a victim of violence was encouraged to attend. She enjoyed the craft activities and continued attending so that gradually the staff were able to introduce, during the craft sessions, a little counselling on how to handle her situation. The jealous husband, anxious to know what his wife was doing and who she was seeing when she spent time down at the community centre, went along to the craft activities to check on his wife. He became involved in activities, and again, over time the staff were able to introduce a little counselling for him about his behaviour. Neither the woman nor the man would have contemplated attending an activity labelled as, or dealing overtly with, family violence.

This example underlines the principle that a range of responses needs to be accommodated in a family violence program and that quick judgements should not be made about the relevance of a project that does not appear to directly address family violence.

Because communities need time to realise the significance of family violence in their community and to be ready to address the issues, it is important that FVRAP continues to give emphasis to community awareness programs to help foster that readiness.

5.5.4 Coordinated and integrated approaches to family violence programs

As explored earlier in this report, there is an increasing acknowledgement of the need for layers of government and for different government departments and organisations to work together in a collaborative, co-ordinated and sometimes integrated way to tackle the problems of family violence, sexual assault and child abuse. The development of co-ordinated or integrated approaches across layers of government and the non-government sectors was a feature of several projects and is an underlying theme in many jurisdictions. The ICCs and Network Management Team will clearly have a vital role in this regard and this is their intended role.

The expectation that specific outcomes will be attributable to small amounts of money within larger initiatives is another issue to be considered. This relates to the setting of realistic outcomes in general in FVRAP. For example FVRAP itself cannot really be expected to reduce family violence. It can contribute to an overall strategy and the outcomes that it will achieve as a contribution to that reduction can be stated in a program logic model as discussed earlier in this report. In the same way even small projects can show their place in the program logic: for example awareness raising is an acknowledged step on the way to addressing family violence and a short term project can do before and after measures of people's awareness of family violence and the factors that contribute to its incidence, to demonstrate outcomes.

Examples of linked and integrated projects in FVRAP are:

- outreach workers operating from shelters/safe houses;
- region wide community development strategy linked to a major successful Aboriginal controlled community health service;
- a youth awareness program linked to parent awareness and community development;
- a women's centre convening a coordinating network of local services;

- two regions where there is a set of short-term projects developed from planning by women's conferences. Taken together, these projects are contributing to community development/ education and awareness on family violence; and
- projects selected to be consistent with the Regional Council plan and subsequently the ICC has been doing sound regional planning that focuses effective program development and support of the services, and well-grounded selection of projects to contribute to a strategic plan or approach.

In many cases the funding provided through FVRAP has supplemented funding from other sources: for example State/Territory and Commonwealth Government funding for counselling, health centres, crisis accommodation. However the accountability requirements have not been integrated or co-ordinated. Most Aboriginal organisations are running their initiatives and services from multiple funding sources and dealing with multiple reporting requirements and accountabilities is onerous and time-consuming, especially where requirements are applied uniformly to large or small amounts of funding. This is a very well established point in Indigenous and non-Indigenous funding which some governments are working to address. It will be important for this to be a major issue for FaCS, along with other departments, to address.

Implications from the findings on integrated approaches

There a number of implications from the need for approaches to family violence to be at least linked and coordinated and in some cases integrated:

- integration cannot be achieved without an agreed holistic plan for family violence for each region to guide how the many portfolios at the several levels of government direct their funding and effort. The role of the ICCs in developing plans will be vital. If there is an agreed regional plan based in integrated work across the departments in the ICC, then, individual projects can be expected, and supported, to relate their applications to the plan. Sharing properly developed program logic frameworks amongst all the key stakeholder groups involved in addressing family violence would contribute to developing an agreed plan;
- as already covered in Chapter 4, mechanisms to support the complementary use of related funding will be needed in the FVRAP structure at regional, state/territory (the state level of Commonwealth departments and State/Territory government departments) and national level;

- co-ordination of reporting, preferably to produce one reporting format, could be considered as a means of assisting the efficiency of reporting for funded organisations so that they can direct the maximum of staffing effort to service and project delivery to their community ;
- given the small total amount of money available currently through FVRAP there is a legitimate place for smaller projects with outcomes linked to a shared program logic.

5.5.5 One-Off Funding

Whilst FVRAP funding is accessible as a one-off grant on an annual basis, the Evaluation Team found that a majority of projects visited or profiled had an expectation of receiving recurrent funding or at least funding for a period greater than one year, particularly those involving the employment of staff. Some of these projects were funded for the first time in 2004/5.

For projects requiring staff, time is needed to recruit and train the staff member(s). Because of the delays in receiving the funding (see below), the recruitment process may not have been able to commence until almost half way through the year, leaving only six months to establish and deliver the service. A number of projects were very concerned about this issue having not been aware of the potential that even if they were successful with the project that they might not receive any further funding.

Clearly what can be achieved from one-off amounts that are not part of an overall strategy may be limited unless they are clearly directed at building local capacity (such as through staff or community training or the development of resource materials). One-off funding to address recurrent needs such as counselling, night patrols and safe houses create difficulties for staff, clients and the community overall when the funding runs out.

Delays in funding being released were experienced by most projects visited or profiled as part of this evaluation, mostly as a consequence of the upheaval to administrative processes and procedures caused by the changes to the administrative arrangements. In some cases, we understand, projects did not get their submissions in until after the due dates. Whatever the cause, most did not receive the funding for this financial year until November or December 2004. The consequence is that projects theoretically have only a little over 6 months to expend 12 months worth of funding and achieve the required performance indicators. In reality, of course, it means that projects have to continue

beyond the end of the financial year which, given so many are reliant on recurrent funding, allows the opportunity for program continuation.

Implications from the findings on one off funding

The main finding from the issue of the length of funding has been that the policy on this needs to be carefully worked out to set an appropriate policy for the future of the Program, which is suited to the timescale in which outcomes are likely to be achieved.

5.5.6 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance

There are a range of governance and auspice arrangements applying. Some involve governance by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals. Some are mainstream organisations with no Aboriginal representation at governance levels. It is difficult to determine a preferred model based on this evaluation. However the good practice literature would suggest that to be successful in the long-term, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community involvement in the governance, decision-making and management of Aboriginal initiatives is important. It is suggested on this basis, that organisations without Aboriginal involvement in governance, should identify strategies for this to be addressed in the future as part of the condition of funding.

In relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled organisations there were reported to be instances where there were conflict of interest problems such as perpetrators on the governance board of organisations which are providing family violence services, and alternatively of victims or clients of the service being on the governance board and seeking to direct resources to their own problems. As is the case in many Indigenous communities, Indigenous workers commented on the difficulties for them when members of the community do not understand the difference between their professional role and their personal place in the community. This situation has the potential to create the poor practice (Memmott et al, 2001) of overstress amongst project staff.

Implications from the findings on governance of project organisations

The capacity of organisations involved in family violence projects to properly manage these difficult projects without conflicts of interest arising is clearly of importance to the success of FVRAP projects. However it is debatable whether a small program such as FVRAP can tackle governance issues other than through its criteria for assessing the suitability of organisations for receiving FVRAP funding. The scale of FVRAP is too small to enable it to take on the task of building governance capability. The application of the principles we have suggested in Chapter 4 to the assessment of organisations' project proposals should

ensure that governance issues are identified before a project is funded. Consideration could be given by ICCs to development of a strategy to link organisations to resources and support on governance issues because this will be relevant to more than just FVRAP projects in their region.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. The social policy context and its implications for FVRAP (ToRs 1&4)

The factors contributing to family violence are many and complex and relate to economy, culture and health. The factors include generational disadvantage, poverty, unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse, overcrowded and inadequate housing, environmental health infrastructure, lack of choices and opportunities, loss of individual and community identity, purpose and self-esteem and breakdown of traditional social structures.

Recognising this in government policy formulation program design and administration means recognising also that no one portfolio can successfully address family violence and that there is no one-size-fits-all model for responding to family violence in Indigenous communities.

The **overall** government approach to family violence, therefore, needs to be set in its approach to the challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities *overall*. Family violence is one of the symptoms of the breakdown of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society more broadly, and by addressing the underlying structural causes, a number of issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be addressed and the improvement will have a cumulative effect.

The **specific** approach to family violence in government policy needs to have a **coherent holistic framework** which then drives and shapes the role and interrelationships of government activity at national, state and territory, and regional/local level in the same cumulative, mutually reinforcing way as for the overall framework for Indigenous Affairs. A holistic approach encompasses a social model of health that develops links to strategies that address issues of social disadvantage such as unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, housing and education

We have developed several models that will assist FaCs staff in both showing and assessing a co-ordinated approach to family violence in policy, services and interventions. Among these models, one (figure 3 in Chapter 3) is a continuum that maps the relationship between the responses to family violence and shows the coherence of role and collaborative approaches, partnerships and related linkages that are needed.

This continuum can be used by FaCS to assist in mapping the location and interrelation of both:

- funding programs and other government activities – mainstream and well as those specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and
- individual projects within funding programs – e.g. within FVRAP.

There is an increasing acknowledgement of the need for layers of government and for different government departments and organisations to work together in a collaborative, co-ordinated and sometimes integrated way to tackle the problems of family violence, sexual assault and child abuse. In the course of our site visits we saw several projects where the development of co-ordinated or integrated approaches across layers of government and the non-government sectors was a feature. It is also an underlying theme in many jurisdictions.

From examining and mapping the range of family violence program at Commonwealth and state level onto the Continuum of Responses to family violence we can see the great potential for a holistic approach to be taken to addressing the multiple factors that contribute to family violence.

The mapping can be used by FaCS to see the complexity of the policy and program co-ordination task required to achieve that holistic approach and to see that that do-ordination will need to occur at national state and local levels. The co-ordination task may be, to some extent, easiest to effect at ICC level, where all portfolios are represented. At the FaCS State Office level the task becomes more demanding as the state and territory levels of government activities and programs need to be brought into a coherent approach.

The complexity of the co-ordination task argues for some form of regional planning as the most practical and possible mechanism by which the programs and strategies might be brought into a coherent holistic approach to family violence for an area.

Following the abolition of Regional Councils, we see the FaCS FVOs and State Managers as critical to ensuring that the needs and priorities for family violence (amongst FaCS other policy responsibilities) are researched and planned for at ICC and State levels. While the FaCS ICC staff will be the link to communities, the FaCS FVOs and State Managers will have to take responsibility for pulling the information from the ICC staff into a broader state plan, working with the ICC Managers to ensure that the Family Violence programs are well integrated, that linkages are made to other federally funded programs which can help to build the community foundations which are essential to addressing the reduction of family violence in the long term and for ensuring that the linkages to state government activities are made.

Recommendation 1

We recommend that:

FaCS State managers work with State office FVOs and ICC staff to formulate regional plans which make provision for integration of programs and activities across all levels of government in that region so that a holistic approach to family violence, including FVRAP, is adopted in that region.

6.2 Program design and focus (ToRs 1-4)

There was a coherent policy framework for FVRAP under the ATSIIC *Our Family* platform but the recent transfer of responsibilities for Indigenous affairs around government has disrupted that coherence to some extent.

The mapping of programs on the Continuum or Responses that we have provided in this report will assist FaCS in reformulating a coherent policy framework.

The mapping shows that the bulk of assistance from government is going into early interventions through to crisis intervention, with relatively little going to healing and capacity building at the community level so that they can begin to address the many factors contributing to of family violence. FVRAP is a relatively small program, and provides relatively small amounts of funds to individual projects and these characteristics make it imperative that FVRAP is positioned to be complementary to other family related programs so that it can contribute to the best overall effect.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that for the future, FaCS use the models we have provided to focus FVRAP as:

- **complementary to other family violence programs: and**
- **aimed principally at the left hand end of the Continuum of Responses namely on healing, prevention and early intervention.**

In this way FaCS can ensure that the program adds a necessary, but currently missing, dimension to the program support for family violence from the Australian government and that over time the program contributes to building the social capital of Indigenous communities.

It is unrealistic to expect that FVRAP can achieve in one, or even several years its current program objective, namely “reduction and prevention of family violence and child abuse in Indigenous communities”. Because, at the start of this evaluation, we found that a clear program logic for FVRAP had not yet been developed, we developed an indicative program logic that identifies short-term, medium-term and long term objectives. We acknowledge that in the course of this evaluation, the Indigenous Family and Child Wellbeing Branch of FaCS has been progressing work on program guidelines and the program logic and performance framework. However the STOs and ICC staff and other departments with related programs need to be brought into the discussion.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that:

FaCS adopt and use the Program Logic shown in Chapter 4, section 4.1.2. of this report as indicative only, and as an adjunct to the work recently done in National Office:

- **hold a workshop of the Network Management Team and State Managers and key service providers at which the indicative Program Logic is discussed and debated:**
- **use the Program Logic as the basis for consultation with other areas of FaCS and other departments responsible for family violence related programs, as shown on the mapping of programs to the Continuum or Responses (Chapter 3, section 3.5) in order to develop agreement on the suggested focus for FVRAP and how complementarity between FVRAP and other programs can be achieved;**
- **once the program logic has been discussed and finalised, include it in the FVRAP Program Guidelines for 2006/07; and**
- **incorporate the program logic into future briefings and training for STO and ICC staff to prepare for future funding rounds.**

6.3 Evaluative framework for the program (ToR 5)

There are inherent difficulties in assessing the performance of a program that is made up of a number of quite diverse one-year projects spread across the country. That difficulty is magnified by the complexity of causal factors of family violence and the necessarily long time that it takes to make an impact in seeking to address and reduce family violence. Because each project has its own quite specific objectives, with its own quite distinct performance indicators related to those objectives, it is unlikely that there will be a common set of indicators used across projects, the results from which could be accumulated to give a view of the progress or performance of the FRVAP overall.

We found no performance indicators at the program level at the time of the evaluation but these have subsequently been developed in National Office. At the project level indicators were chiefly measuring activities completed (milestones) or levels of participation. While achievement of milestones should lead to success, that achievement could not be assumed.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that:

The future evaluative framework for FVRAP be developed along the following lines:

- **agree the final form of the indicative program logic provided in this report**
- **establish indicators for the short term, medium term and long term outcomes of the program as a whole;**
- **set up ways of gathering data and a timetable for reporting and analysing results appropriate to the realistic timescale for achievement of the respective types of outcome(s);**
- **at project set up stage, identify which outcome (short, medium and long term) each project will contribute to, and the approximate timescale in which it might make its contribution to that outcome(s)**(Continued next page)

- **establish some indicators for each project related specifically to the project objectives, ensuring that these objectives do link through to the broader program outcomes, and to any regional plan for family violence that might exist;**
- **at program level, monitor and report on what proportion of projects have achieved their project objectives and thus contributed to broader program outcomes; and**
- **annual workshops with projects and FaCS/ICC staff at national or regional levels to share learnings, good practice and to problem solve and to get feedback on the funding process from the past year. (See also recommendation 9)**

6.3 The basis for funding allocations (ToR 6)

We were asked to assess alternative funding methods, such as varying forms of per capita methods or historically based allocations, and assessed all methods to be only partially suited to take account of funding considerations such as

- the intent and aim of FVRAP being to support projects which come from priorities determined by the local community;
- its capacity to support a community development or capacity building approach;
- having an evidence base for local need and appropriate response; and
- the now well established learning about a community's readiness for tackling family violence as an essential precursor to any successful intervention.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that:

Over the next several years, FaCS develops a method of funding for FVRAP in which allocations are increasingly made, on a submission basis, to those areas or regions where regional, holistic and integrated plans have been developed in consultation with communities and which build on community identified priorities for addressing family violence and building community capacity to prevent family violence ; and

In the meantime, FaCS consider making provision within the total funding available for the Minister to allocate some funds to national projects or to initiatives developed as well-based regional or cross-community plans to address family violence which will also enhance community capacity and social capital.

We consider that the presence of some form of regional plan is essential as a tool for recording and assessing local needs and priorities. Our Recommendation 1 for the formulation of regional plans is important as a sound basis for future funding allocations.

We identified some issues that continue to need careful management by FaCS in the allocation of funding in future years.

When a few projects are allocated very large amounts, if they should not be successful, the failure could be spectacular for FVRAP.

Recommendation 6

To mitigate this risk we recommend that:

The FaCS staff at the relevant ICC and the relevant FaCS Family Violence Officers and State Managers continue to stay in close contact with the large projects and their progress, and that National Office periodically checks with the relevant State Manager that the project is on track.

Large projects and providers funded for services, rather than projects, create the expectation of ongoing funding. Similarly projects with mid or long-term outcomes need some continuity of funding.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that:

FaCS consider whether some form of in-principle agreement to a longer term of funding than one year can be given in order to let these projects develop fully and achieve their longer term objectives.

6.4 Managing the program (ToR 2-4)

We found, at the time of our field work in February/early March 2005, a deal of confusion in the aftermath of the July 2004 transfers of responsibilities for programs.

We have already argued that regional level plans are desirable and achievable as the means of providing for a holistic and integrated approach to family violence. We see that, now Regional Councils are no longer operating, the ICCs and the FaCS FVOs and State Managers will be critical to formulating such plans and communicating views of local communities about local needs and priorities and progress in projects through to National Office to inform policy development and program review.

The changes to administrative arrangements for Indigenous Affairs were large scale change and it will necessarily take some time for new and effective processes of co-ordination and communication to become well established and a part of the normal way in which program management occurs across all the agencies involved.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that :

FaCS continue to implement the following processes to support program management:

- a. briefing/discussion sessions for FaCS National office staff and the Network Management Team and State Managers about roles, and the selection process and issues;**
- b. briefing sessions for FaCS staff in ICCs about the selection process for 2005/06. These might be run by the Network Management Team;**
- c. discussions between FaCS ICC staff and ICC staff from other portfolios about how they will co-operate in the 2005/06 funding round to ensure a co-ordinated and complementary use of program funds to address family violence and its causes**

and that National Office uses these forums to check that messages and information are moving effectively to and between all three levels in the new arrangements.

The role played by the staff in the ICCs is, we believe, critical to the success of the new arrangements.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that:

FaCS National Office provide support for FaCS ICC staff in carrying out their role in assisting communities to address family violence issues of the following kind:

- a. a training program to develop their understanding of the nature of family violence, the learnings from good practice about strategies and approaches to addressing family violence in Indigenous communities;**
- b. a community development training program to develop staff skills in strengths based approaches to assisting communities to address family violence problems;**
- c. conferences or workshops organised at least once a year to bring FaCS staff in ICCs together with Family Violence Officers and the State/Territory Managers from the State Offices together to exchange information about who is doing what, what approaches are being used with what success, and common problems and solutions that might have been found.**

and also

- d. provide budget resources to enable ICC staff to travel to visit each community at least once per year to look at projects in action and to be able to talk face to face to project staff and community members about how FVRAP projects and other family violence projects are working, where successes are being had and where problems are still being encountered. The information about practice that can be gained from a visit will be a very useful form of reporting to add to written reports on projects**
- e. annual workshops with projects and FaCS/ICC staff at national or regional levels to share learnings, good practice and to problem solve.**

From visiting individual projects we found that some projects were well established, being undertaken by well-established organisations, had a sound model for the project and were well linked with other related services. Several projects however had encountered some set up problems such as delays in receiving funding, and difficulties in finding appropriately skilled staff. Others were poorly conceived of in the first place.

The projects that presented the strongest evidence of being established and achieving some success were the projects in which it was clear that:

- there had been selection of good models with a connection to both the Regional Plan and the multiple factors relevant to addressing family violence;
- the project had a coherent concept that is established in evidence even though the actual organisation may not be very aware of the research evidence;
- the project was located in an auspice organisation with an understanding of the issue of family violence, relevant expertise (or access to relevant expert advice) and was operating soundly in either governance or management or both.

We have used the good and bad practice identified in our literature review (Appendix 3) to help inform a set of principles that we believe could help to shape the style or kinds of approaches taken in future FVRAP funded projects.

Recommendation 10**We recommend that:**

The principles shown in Chapter 4 Section 4.1.3, drawn from good practice identified in our literature review, be used as the basis for decision-making about what projects to support.

However the principles should be discussed and debated by the Network Management Team before being finally agreed and included in the FVRAP Program Guidelines for 2006/07.

To increase, over time the availability of staff with the appropriate knowledge and skills to undertake family violence projects some investment in skills development will need to be made.

Recommendation 11**We recommend that:**

FaCS considers funding projects that are contributing to building awareness, knowledge, skills and interventions, so long as the project is part of an agreed plan for the community that includes a mapping of existing services and strategies,

Recommendation 12**We recommend that:**

A small amount of FVRAP funding be allocated to a national project that contributes to developing the pool of Aboriginal people with skills and understanding to work effectively in family violence projects.

Some linkage with the leadership program being run through the OIPC may be a good way to develop and run such a training project.

Future investment in FVRAP

If:

- FVRAP is focussed at the community foundations, healing and early intervention end of the Continuum of Responses we have modelled;
- FVRAP is made, in practice, complementary to other programs related to family violence;
- FaCS makes having an evidence base for strategies supported a prerequisite for funding;
- FaCS provides the ongoing support necessary for the ICCs to develop and sustain their critical role in working with other agencies and with communities on regional and cross community planning for addressing family violence; and
- FaCS not only monitors but analyses and uses performance information about the program;

then, we consider that the program will be well –founded, well focussed and well managed and accordingly:

the Government could be confident that a significant (say, at least 100%) increase in funding would be a warranted and well placed investment in addressing family violence and increasing the social capital of Indigenous communities.