



NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE

*First Action Plan 2010–2013*

**Building a Strong Foundation**

*safe and free from violence*

AN INITIATIVE OF THE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS



# Foreword

On 15 February 2011, the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (the National Plan) was announced by the Minister for the Status of Women, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, and the Attorney-General, the Hon Robert McClelland MP.

The 12 year National Plan was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and brings together the efforts of all Australian governments to ensure that women and their children are safe and free from violence now and in the future.

The National Plan is supported by a series of four, three-year Action Plans. These Action Plans identify actions, responsibilities and timeframes, allowing all governments to work together to develop, implement and report progress within a coordinated national framework.

The Action Plans are guided by the National Plan's vision that *Australian women and their children live free from violence in safe communities*. To measure the success of this vision, all governments are working collaboratively to make a *significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children*.

This document is the National Implementation Plan for the *First Action Plan 2010–2013 Building a Strong Foundation*. This document outlines how the Commonwealth Government, along with all state and territory governments and the community, will work together to lay the groundwork for the future and deliver on the key national priorities under the National Plan.

This National Implementation Plan has been developed by all Australian governments and was released by the Select Council on Women's Issues in September 2012\*.

\*Please note, at the time of printing, the Implementation Plan is pending final endorsement by the Queensland Cabinet.



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*Introduction*

# Introduction

All Australian governments have committed to the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (the National Plan). The creation of a national platform to address violence against women and their children at a systemic level is designed to achieve sustainable long-term change so that *Australian women and their children live free from violence in safe communities*.

The National Plan elevates our response to violence against women and their children to a national scale by:

- facilitating greater understanding;
- directing efforts to solve complex problems;
- providing greater opportunities to share knowledge and experience; and
- increasing consistency to ensure equality for all Australian women and their children.

The National Plan reflects a long-term approach, involving all Australians to bring about tangible and positive change. The 12 year National Plan will be driven by a series of four, three-year action plans. Action Plans provide a staged approach to achieving the necessary reforms identified in the National Plan. Each Action Plan will be supported by a National Implementation Plan and Jurisdictional Implementation Plans.

This National Implementation Plan, for the first three years, outlines how all Australian governments and the community will work together to lay the groundwork for the future and sets the scene for the life of the National Plan. With a strong focus on primary prevention, attitudinal change and building a solid evidence base, this Implementation Plan will put in place strategic projects and actions which will provide the foundations to drive long-term results while also implementing priority actions in the short-term.

A focus on primary prevention is considered key to addressing violence against women in the long-term. With the longer term goal of a sustained and significant reduction in violence against women, we need to increase our understanding of why violence occurs in the first place. International evidence suggests that primary prevention strategies that work across many levels (such as the attitudes and behaviours of individuals, the way people operate in relationships and families, the way they engage as communities, and how social structures and institutions are regulated) and across many settings (such as education, workplaces, community, sport, arts, media and local government) are the most effective. The Crime Research Centre (*Young People and Domestic Violence 2001*), reported that a consistent and large body of research into young people and domestic violence suggests that intervention during adolescence is pivotal in the overall task of domestic violence prevention, to challenge traditional gender roles and prevent violent behaviours from becoming normalised.

Therefore, the National Plan is the first national plan to focus strongly on prevention. It is the first to look to the long-term, building respectful relationships and working to increase gender equality to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. It is the first to focus on holding perpetrators accountable and encourage behaviour change.

Implementing the National Plan requires integrated governance arrangements that cut across traditional government boundaries and engage people across the community and private sectors. In order to achieve this, a *National Plan Implementation Panel* (NPIP) will be established to advise governments on the implementation of the National Plan, including key national priorities.

# Background

The development of a National Plan followed the Australian Government's receipt of the report, *Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children* in April 2009 and recognition by COAG that a whole of government and community response was required to achieve a reduction in violence against women in Australia. The National Plan takes into account *Time for Action's* strategic vision that sustained action across generations and on multiple levels is more likely to achieve long-term change than ad hoc, generalised solutions.

The National Plan is a first in a number of respects. It is the first to coordinate action across jurisdictions, the first to focus strongly on primary prevention, and the first to focus on both holding perpetrators accountable, and transforming behaviours. It looks to the long-term—focusing on building respectful relationships and changing attitudes and behaviours that enable this to happen. It also recognises that broader social policy initiatives that address gender inequality and improve the status of women are critical to reducing violence against women and their children.

The National Plan acknowledges that no government or group can address this problem alone. A unified approach to engagement is critical if we are to make real progress. Therefore, the National Plan is underpinned by the belief that involving all governments and the wider community is pivotal to reducing violence in the short and longer terms.

Since many of the actions in the *Time for Action* report relate to state and territory responsibilities, the Commonwealth and state and territory governments have worked in partnership to develop the National Plan and build on the comprehensive work already being undertaken by all governments.

# Foundations for Change

It is not easy to create the type of long lasting change that is needed to reduce violence against women and their children. All Australian governments have agreed that certain changes need to be made across jurisdictions to implement the National Plan effectively.

Specifically, governments have also agreed that each Action Plan will be supported by the following 'foundations for change':

1. strengthen the workforce;
2. integrate systems and share information;
3. improve the evidence base; and
4. track performance and report publicly.

## **1. STRENGTHEN THE WORKFORCE**

Preventing and responding to violence against women and their children requires a workforce that has the right training and support. This includes both the specialist and mainstream workforce, people who work with victims, including men, and with perpetrators.

A number of actions in the First Action Plan are specifically focused on strengthening the workforce. These actions provide key measures to assess progress in this area. Workforce issues will also be considered in the following initiatives:

- national standards for perpetrator programs;
- national benchmarks for work on primary prevention; and
- support for frontline staff who have an interest in supporting women who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault such as health professionals, educators, and family assistance officers.

All Australian governments have committed to work together to support a sustainable and skilled workforce through the development of a National Workforce Agenda under the National Plan.

## 2. INTEGRATE SYSTEMS AND SHARE INFORMATION

National and international evidence demonstrates the critical role of integrated service delivery for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. For example, the non-government support system working closely with government and justice agencies to ensure the needs of individuals who have experienced violence are effectively met. Integrated service systems which share information, coordinate responses and track results have demonstrated improved outcomes for victims.

A further aim is that the integrated service system is focused on the needs of the individual and is able to share information to ensure these needs are met. The National Plan also seeks to foster information sharing between and within governments.

To measure success in this area, the evaluation framework will look at some of the key actions which rely on an integrated approach including, social marketing campaigns; the online presence and helpline response, and the interface between Commonwealth and state legal systems.

## 3. IMPROVE THE EVIDENCE BASE

The National Plan has a strong focus on improving and coordinating the evidence base in the areas of domestic violence and sexual assault. The *Time for Action* report recommended the development of a coordinated national research agenda under the auspice of a National Centre of Excellence (the Centre).

Measuring success on improving the evidence base will be two fold. Firstly, the establishment of the Centre to:

- lead national efforts to enhance the research base in the areas of domestic violence and sexual assault across research, education and service delivery organisations, to support the National Plan;
- focus on translating evidence into information to support ongoing improvements in the work of practitioners; and
- help inform policy development and service delivery responses.

Secondly, influence the broader national research agenda across affiliated areas of study such as homelessness and child protection. The Centre will prioritise, coordinate and focus research efforts across the different outcomes of the National Plan, as well as taking account of priorities identified in other national research agendas.

## 4. TRACK PERFORMANCE

The National Plan includes measures of success which are high level indicators of change. Measuring progress against these indicators presents significant challenges as there is currently no nationally consistent dataset on which to build a robust and reliable evidence base. In the long-term, the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework will create nationally consistent data definitions and collection methods. Further, the Commonwealth has committed to repeat the Personal Safety Survey and the National Community Attitudes Survey every four years.

# Action Plans

Each three-year Action Plan is built around a key theme which, over time, will drive the changes needed to achieve the target of a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children.

The four Action Plan stages of the National Plan are:



Each Action Plan will be tailored to meet priorities but will also allow sufficient flexibility for jurisdictions to develop and implement the programs they consider will work best. This balance enables jurisdictions, depending on their relative size and priorities, to select actions which will work best in their jurisdiction, taking account of local characteristics, needs and issues. Importantly, each Action Plan will build the skills, systems and data for governments to improve policy making and service delivery. This is essential to governments having the capacity to work together and support lasting change.

In addition, there are a number of actions at the national level which all governments have agreed to work on together. The National Implementation Plan reflects these actions.

## **FIRST ACTION PLAN: BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION (2010–2013)**

The First Action Plan establishes the groundwork for the National Plan. It establishes the strategic projects and actions that will drive results over the longer term while implementing high-priority actions in the short-term.

Improving the safety of women and their children is a complex issue. National actions identified in the First Action Plan build on existing work and are joint undertakings between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments.

States and territories will develop their own implementation plans that will reflect their priorities. In addition all jurisdictions will work together on the following priorities identified for the First Action Plan:

- Building Primary Prevention Capacity;
- Enhancing Service Delivery;
- Strengthening Justice Responses; and
- Building the Evidence Base.

## **SECOND ACTION PLAN (2013–2016) – MOVING AHEAD**

The Second Action Plan will take stock of what has worked well in the first three years and consolidate the evidence base for the effectiveness of strategies and actions implemented to date. National priorities for this Action Plan will be identified in 2013.

## **THIRD ACTION PLAN (2016–2019) – PROMISING RESULTS**

The Third Action Plan will deliver solid and continuing progress in best practice policies, with governments using data of far greater detail, accuracy and depth due to the improvements made in data collection and analysis. National priorities for this Action Plan will be identified in 2016.

## **FOURTH ACTION PLAN (2019–2022) – TURNING THE CORNER**

The Fourth Action Plan is expected to see the delivery of tangible results in terms of reduced prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault, reduced proportions of children witnessing violence, and an increased proportion of women who feel safe in their communities. National priorities for this Action Plan will be identified in 2019.

# *Implementing the First Action Plan*

The First Action Plan puts in place strategic projects and actions which will provide a basis from which to drive results over time. The First Action Plan involves more than 60 broad actions and provides a framework that enables the Commonwealth, states and territories to implement initiatives in their own jurisdictions in a flexible and responsive way.

Actions in the First Action Plan are at a high level and will be implemented in different ways by each jurisdiction depending on local conditions and current directions of their state or territory. Jurisdictions will indicate which actions they commit to in their individual implementation plans as part of the implementation process.

Jurisdictions will share information about emerging and good practice programs that can enrich the evidence base and reduce inefficiencies by identifying and avoiding duplication of processes.

## **NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS**

A National Implementation Plan will be developed for each of the three-year Action Plans. Each Implementation Plan will identify key national priorities specific to the theme of the Action Plan. These priorities will align with one or more of the National Outcomes in the National Plan.

The National Outcomes set out in the National Plan are:

- Communities are safe and free from violence;
- Relationships are respectful;
- Indigenous communities are strengthened;
- Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence;
- Justice responses are effective; and
- Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account.

This National Implementation Plan has a particular focus on laying the foundations to strengthen the sharing of information and provides the vehicle for working across jurisdictions.

While it is recognised that attitudinal change can take a long time, evidence about the impact and effectiveness of the First Action Plan will begin to emerge through improving the evidence base including the collection of data through the Personal Safety Survey and the National Community Attitude Survey.

## JURISDICTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

The National Plan recognises that each state and territory has its own initiatives and activities that will contribute to delivering on outcomes under the National Plan.

This new national approach will ensure that jurisdictions can share learning, resources and provide valuable sources of information to each other, in turn enhancing the national response to violence against women and their children.

Alongside the National Implementation Plan, each state and territory will develop and publish its own jurisdictional implementation plan outlining the actions being undertaken locally. These implementation plans will reflect best practice reforms already underway in each jurisdiction or new initiatives being undertaken. In addition, the jurisdictional implementation plans will reflect on the initiatives being undertaken by states and territories that support key national priorities. States and territories will be undertaking initiatives that are tailored and responsive to local needs.

State and territory implementation plans will be available through the relevant departments' websites. The actions identified in these plans will form part of the reporting against the National Plan as a whole.

## REPORTING

Each year a report will be prepared for Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers on progress against the National and Jurisdictional Implementation Plans. This report will be provided to COAG to demonstrate both progress and ongoing commitment by governments to the National Plan. More information on the reporting arrangements for the National Plan is provided on page 34.

## WORKING TOGETHER AND THE IMMEDIATE NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Not all of the immediate national initiatives identified in the National Plan will be managed through this National Implementation Plan. Many relate to broader social reform agendas, such as Closing the Gap, mental health reform, Protecting Australia's Children, housing and homelessness. These reform agendas are the responsibility of many portfolios across all jurisdictions, and while the National Plan Implementation Panel will have a role in both informing work in these areas and monitoring progress of actions identified in the First Action Plan, specific responsibility for implementing these actions falls under a number of other strategies, programs or reforms.

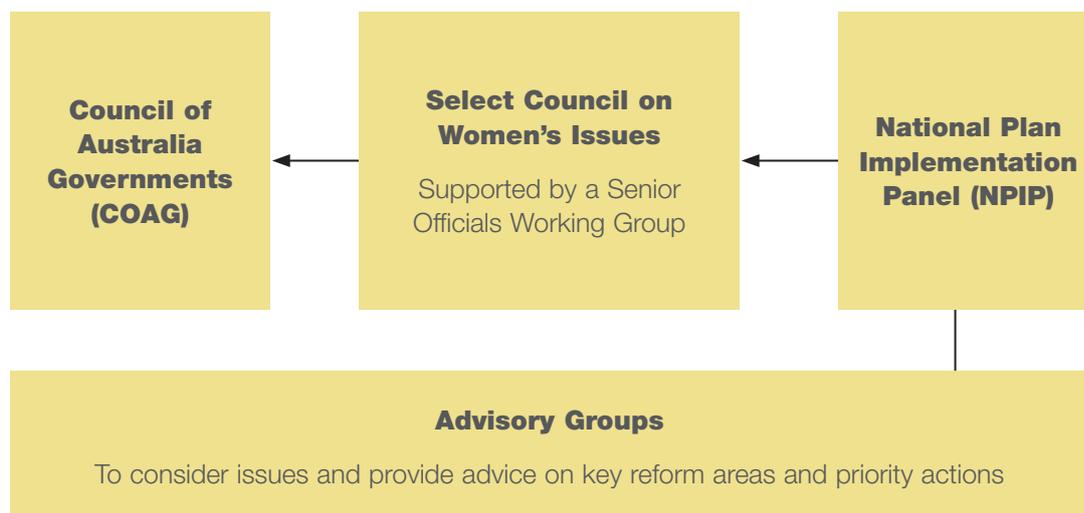
The following are examples of national reform agendas that will contribute to the success of the National Plan:

- National Binge Drinking Strategy, given the role alcohol plays in violence against women;
- Domestic Violence—Workplace Rights and Entitlements Project, recognising the need to assist women who are victims of violence remain engaged with the workforce;
- Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage, many of the actions under Outcome Three of the National Plan will be delivered under this reform agenda; and
- National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, recognising the significant interaction between women's homelessness and domestic violence.

# Governance Arrangements

The National Plan requires integrated governance arrangements that cut across traditional government boundaries and engage the community and private sectors. Work under the National Plan will engage diverse government portfolios and services. The National Plan is underpinned by the understanding that involving all governments and the wider community is necessary to reducing violence in the short and longer terms. No government or group can tackle this problem alone.

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



## COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS (COAG)

COAG will perform an oversight role, and keep watch over progress through annual reports for at least the first three years. COAG is also responsible for overseeing other major reforms relevant to the National Plan:

- Closing the Gap;
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020;
- The Road Home—a National Approach to Reducing Homelessness;
- National Health Reform; and
- The Social Inclusion Agenda.

## COMMONWEALTH, STATE AND TERRITORY MINISTERS

Relevant Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers, through the Select Council on Women's Issues, will provide strategic direction and will oversee the implementation of the first three year Action Plan of the National Plan and the development of the second and later Action Plans.

In addition, the Select Council will develop and recommend a national framework for gender equality and develop a national approach to promote the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. These actions are important in the context of violence against women as gender inequalities have a profound influence on violence against women and their children. Progress on these actions will provide a positive contribution to achieving of the aims of the National Plan.

A cross jurisdictional Senior Women's Officials Group will support Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers.

Ministers across different portfolios of all governments will be involved, as reducing violence against women requires action in many areas, as well as consistent action across portfolios that include housing, children, community services, policing and justice.

Linking up with other Ministerial Councils will connect the National Plan to broader social reform and recognises that not all policy solutions to address domestic violence and sexual assault lie in the one subject area. Using the National Plan to influence the broader policy setting and agendas driven by other Ministerial Councils increases the potential to deliver on the National Plan's vision that Australian women and their children live free from violence in safe communities.

The work of the Select Council on Women's Issues will help support its engagement with other portfolio areas. This work will develop and recommend a national framework for considering gender equality with a focus on reporting and analysis at a national level of equality of outcomes between women and men, including by the COAG Reform Council and across the Council System.

## NATIONAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PANEL

A tripartite National Plan Implementation Panel (NPIP) will be established to provide advice on the National Implementation Plan for the First Action Plan for consideration by the Senior Women's Officials Group. Importantly, the NPIP involves non-government representation, with each state and territory nominating one non-government representative. By involving the non-government sector through the implementation process, governments will be able to partner with the community.

The non-government representatives are responsible for providing advice to government in their key areas of expertise. They will provide information back to the community sector and engage more broadly across the community. Non-government representation covers the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, justice issues, academia, communications and other key areas to provide advice and guidance.

NPIP provides strategic direction to the advisory groups for the duration of the First Action Plan. It is anticipated NPIP will meet at least twice a year.

The NPIP has been established for the 12 years of the National Plan in order to ensure it also identifies emerging issues and future priorities and provides advice for subsequent Action Plans. Membership on the NPIP will be reviewed at the end of each three year cycle to take into account the priorities of each new Action Plan.

## ADVISORY GROUPS

Advisory Groups will establish linkages, share ideas and exchange information on specific key priority areas of the National Plan. Membership will be drawn from the government and non-government sectors in each state and territory. The Groups will meet as soon as practical following the agreement of this National Implementation Plan. Their discussions will be facilitated so that linkages across the different priority areas can be identified and acted upon.



The background is a vibrant blue with a dynamic, textured pattern of diagonal brushstrokes. In the center, two stylized human figures are depicted in a darker shade of blue. Each figure has a circular head and a triangular body, with their arms extended to hold hands. The overall composition is clean and modern, with a strong sense of unity and forward movement.

*Implementation of the  
National Priorities*

# *National Priorities*

The actions identified as National Priorities are key areas of joint work for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments over the first three years of the National Plan. They cover the full range of policy, program and service delivery issues. National Priorities have been selected from across all the supporting outcomes and the measures of success of the National Plan and some encompass more than one outcome area in the First Action Plan.

Some of the actions within the national priorities are the foundation for future work, designed to build the evidence base with regard to effective program and policy approaches to an issue in the First Action Plan so it can be rolled out in the Second Action Plan. Priorities such as enhancing the evidence base and developing national standards for perpetrator intervention responses are important because they set the foundation for the longer term.

Other national priorities involve improvements in services and programs. They are areas where it has been agreed immediate action is necessary for example improving service responses for children exposed to domestic violence.

These actions will be a major focus of work across the jurisdictions and will involve the non-government sector in the first three years. Many will also involve working jointly with other relevant standing and select councils, such as the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services to better protect children exposed to violence and better responses for women with disabilities. The Standing Committee on Law and Justice (formerly the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General) has already commenced work on improving domestic violence orders across borders and this work will be continued by the Standing Council on Law and Justice.

These National Priorities will take considerable commitment and resources from all partners to deliver and will be a new way for jurisdictions to work collaboratively together. If successful, these priorities will set us on a firm path to improving the safety of Australian women and their children.

# Building Primary Prevention Capacity

## STOPPING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT OCCURS

Positive and respectful community attitudes are critical to Australian women and their children living free from violence in safe communities. While prevention at the community level is essential, governments will also support individuals to develop healthy respectful relationships. Broader social policy initiatives that address gender inequality are critical to reducing violence against women.

### Outcome Links:

Outcome One—*Communities are safe and free from violence*

Outcome Two—*Relationships are respectful*

Outcome Three—*Indigenous Communities are Strengthened*

## ACTIONS

1. Encourage the community to prevent, respond to and speak out against violence by implementing social marketing and awareness campaigns to encourage young people to develop healthy and respectful relationships, with the aim of changing attitudes that support violence.
2. Embed evidence-based best practice respectful relationships education in schools by working through the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, to support the inclusion of respectful relationships in phase three of the Australian Curriculum.
3. Promote positive media representations of women and develop media codes of practice for reporting sexual assault and domestic violence.
4. Advance gender equality through the development and utilisation of gender equality indicators.

## HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

### Setting the Foundation

In 2010, key actions under the National Plan were commenced. Some of these actions are detailed below and work continues to further expand and improve these activities under the First Action Plan. These key actions include implementation of *The Line* and Respectful Relationships education projects.

### Social Marketing

Because attitudinal change takes a long time, social marketing primary prevention campaigns have begun, both at the national level as well as in a number of states and territories. These include specific campaign strategies for Indigenous people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Over the life of the First Action Plan, foundations will be laid to determine the key elements that make the most difference in social marketing campaigns. This involves bringing together knowledge and

experience across jurisdictions and linking with other relevant social marketing campaigns, for example around alcohol and binge drinking.

Work in this area will begin with efforts to develop consistency across social marketing and awareness campaign strategies and messages. This will be achieved by sharing research, tracking and evaluation material on existing campaigns, and, wherever practical, linking or cross promoting campaigns to promote reach and avoid duplication.

Jurisdictions will determine their priorities and, where possible (or applicable), complement the successful Commonwealth campaign, *The Line*.

By making a joint commitment to sharing and learning from each other we can and will make a difference to reduce violence against women in the longer term.

The social marketing campaigns are also supported by a range of community engagement projects both at the national and jurisdictional level. Governments will continue to work together to help ensure consistent approaches to these projects as well as to share outcomes to inform future policy directions.

## **Respectful Relationships Education**

To prevent violence against women, the focus needs to be on changing what is seen as acceptable behaviour, based on gender equality and respectful relationships. Actions in this area will support young Australians to have the necessary knowledge and skills to have relationships that are free from violence.

In line with the commitment under the National Plan to support inclusion of Respectful Relationships in the National Curriculum, governments will build on their current work to create real and positive changes to the culture within schools to support and foster structural and individual change.

Governments will work together to develop and agree input to the Australian Curriculum. Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to support the development of this curriculum. This will draw on evidence from existing projects or trials, and through undertaking and sharing evaluation outcomes in order to make long-term change.

Governments will continue to build the evidence to support long-term change by building the business case about the importance education plays in equipping children and young people with the knowledge and skills to develop and maintain non-violent, respectful and equitable relationships. Jurisdictions will continue to work at a local level with their relevant Departments responsible for education and children's services.

The evaluation of the Australian Government's Respectful Relationships Program, to be finalised in 2013–14, will provide information progressively from 2012. This work, together with the evidence provided by states and territories, will provide timely advice for ACARA.

The Select Council on Women's Issues will work with education ministers to influence change.

Further respectful relationships projects established during the life of the First Action Plan will be designed to draw on knowledge and expertise across governments to ensure governments actively support and promote the development of the Australian Curriculum.

## **Media**

Governments will continue to work together on broader issues of the portrayal of women in the media. This is an important part of improving the overall equality of women within the community.

Work will build on New South Wales' focus on education for journalists with respect to the broader representation of victims of violent crime and working with media stakeholders to examine possible improvements to reporting guidelines and codes. The development and provision of resources to support victims dealing with the media and journalists will also be investigated.

Work in this area will also help inform ongoing engagement with media stakeholders on the application of existing media codes of practice in relation to the reporting of sexual assault and domestic violence, including on-line media.

## **Australian Gender Indicators**

The value of gender equality indicators as a means of benchmarking women's progress has been recognised by a range of government and non-government organisations around the world. To provide tangible measures of progress and move Australia towards international best practice in reporting on and monitoring gender equality, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) developed the Australian Gender Indicators. This work was initiated by the former Commonwealth, State, Territory and New Zealand Ministers' Conference on the Status of Women (MINCO). Under the new COAG Council system the Select Council on Women's Issues will use the Australian Gender Indicators to inform and support its work. The first release of the Australian Gender Indicators, published on 26 August 2011, can be accessed through the "Topics @ a Glance—Gender" page on the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)).

COAG has tasked the Select Council on Women's Issues to develop a national approach to promote the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in governance and decision-making for communities and organisations by June 2013.

## **Primary Prevention Community Action Grants**

The Australian Government has committed \$3.75 million over three years for Community Action Grants to support communities in reducing violence against women. A total of 17 community and sporting organisations across Australia will be funded to implement innovative projects which prevent violence against women and encourage respectful relationships.

Funded projects encourage organisations to work to engage their community in acting to prevent violence against women and develop partnerships of local stakeholders for joint activities which are ongoing and sustainable. These projects take a whole community approach that is tailored to the needs of each community. Many of the projects aim to use community leaders to gain the trust of the local communities who will own the process of cultural and attitudinal change.

## **White Ribbon Workplaces Program**

White Ribbon is currently engaging Australian businesses and industrial organisations to establish a national workplace approach to prevent and reduce violence against women through the development of a pilot model for a National Workplace Program. This Program aims to create long-term sustainable change in attitudes to violence and to implementing prevention strategies through the workplace.

This Program, funded by the Commonwealth Government, will be designed as an awareness, early intervention and prevention program specifically for workplace settings. It will work to increase the knowledge and skills of staff and managers to address issues of violence against women in the workplace and will encompass large, medium and small-scale workplaces.

Further information can be found on the White Ribbon Website: <http://www.whiteribbon.org.au>

## **Employment Related Policies and Guidelines**

Employment is a critical pathway to ensure women's financial security. Internationally, the links between economic independence, employment and the impact of domestic violence have been steadily developing. This evidence indicates that women with a history of domestic violence have a more disrupted work history, are consequently on lower personal incomes, have had to change jobs more often, and are employed at higher levels in casual and part-time work than women with no experience of violence. The National Plan will work to ensure that employment and occupational health and safety related policies and guidelines include reference to domestic violence and outline ways in which employers and fellow employees can support women who are victims.

## WORKING TOGETHER

A Primary Prevention Advisory Group will be established to facilitate a national approach to Respectful Relationships Programs including Respectful Relationships education in the National Curriculum, 1800 RESPECT, *The Line* marketing campaign, the development of the Media Code of Conduct and National Primary Prevention Standards. It will provide a forum for governments to meet with a range of representatives to share lessons learnt about primary prevention work around Australia.

The advisory group will draw on expertise from government and non-government organisations including seeking representatives from:

- the senior officials group supporting the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood;
- Commonwealth/state/territory officials responsible for primary prevention and social marketing campaigns targeting violence against women;
- the service sector including those working with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, people with disability, Indigenous people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse background, and young people; and
- academics and researchers.

Non-government representatives will also have the opportunity to provide a voice for victims of violence and the people who access domestic and family violence and sexual assault services.

All states and territories will be represented.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Increase in the community's intolerance of violence against women.
- Improved knowledge of, and the skills and behaviour for, respectful relationships by young people.

Governments have agreed on measures of success. More information is provided in Table 1: Measures of Success on page 35.

# Enhancing Service Delivery

## IMPROVING SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

Specialist and mainstream services best meet the needs of women and their children to help rebuild their lives following violence. Domestic violence and sexual assault sector services need to be well supported and funded to deliver specialist responses, and mainstream services need to be well trained and supported to deliver services to best meet the diverse needs of all women, including where they have experienced or are at risk of violence.

### Outcome Links:

Outcome Three—*Indigenous communities are strengthened*

Outcome Four—*Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence*

## ACTIONS

1. Deliver high quality telephone and online support services which meet nationally consistent standards through:
  - a. effective integration of new and existing services; and
  - b. the development of national standards.
2. Expand the availability of professional support and advice to front line workers.
3. Develop Community Safety Plans including in 29 Remote Service Delivery sites with a specific focus on violence against women.
4. Continue to support work in Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory on cross border issues.
5. Undertake key projects to drive further reforms across governments and sectors to:
  - a. improve responses to children exposed to domestic violence, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as a priority;
  - b. enhance service responses to help women reach more stable circumstances when they are seeking to leave violence;
  - c. improve service delivery for women with a disability who may have experienced, or are at risk of, violence;
  - d. undertake effective risk assessment across the health sector; and
  - e. develop a National Workforce Agenda.

## HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

### Setting the Foundation

During the first year of the First Action Plan, the 1800 RESPECT: the National Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Service<sup>1</sup> successfully commenced operation. The counselling service also provides back up support for frontline workers whose clients may disclose domestic violence and/or sexual assault and who are unsure of the next steps to take. Scoping of the reform projects has commenced.

### Closer integration of new and existing telephone and crisis services

There is strong evidence that to achieve successful outcomes in addressing violence against women there needs to be a shift away from silos of traditional service delivery towards joined-up, integrated service delivery. The aim is to create a system which 'joins-up' services between governments and other organisations and shares information, coordinates responses and tracks results.

Effort will also be focussed on the integration between the sexual assault and domestic violence specialist service systems.

Work in this area will continue to promote collaboration of services through the 'first door approach' to minimise the number of times people need to tell their story to various service providers. Focus will be on harnessing resources and expertise within the existing service system, with a view to beginning to identify existing gaps across jurisdictions and developing the building blocks in order to create a sustained joined-up service system in the long-term.

Governments will share tools and models to assist with identifying how systems can more effectively work together through establishing consistency in risk assessment and risk management responses. Actions in this area will draw on the existing evidence base and best practice.

Governments will support service providers to collaborate to better integrate their activities and identify more effective ways of working together. Opportunities to use existing or new forums to achieve this will be explored and promoted.

### National Standards for Telephone and Online Counselling services

In order for services to be truly effective, a level of consistency in operational and professional standards for telephone and online counselling services is required. Foundational work in this area will begin with scoping current domestic and international best practice standards for telephone and online counselling services for sexual assault and domestic and family violence and overlaying this with jurisdictional arrangements and standards currently operating. This will create the landscape for developing nationally consistent operational and professional standards which promote quality services for individuals and support their movement through the system. The standards will be provided for agreement by Ministers in 2012.

Work will then commence on the development of arrangements for how and when the Commonwealth, states and territories and the non-government sector will implement and monitor the national standards.

By the end of the First Action Plan the standards, the means of measurement and reporting, and implementation timeframes will be agreed.

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<sup>1</sup> 1800 RESPECT is a confidential service staffed by professional counsellors to assist any Australian who has experienced or is at risk of, domestic violence and/or sexual assault. The service offers: a 24/7 service; online and telephone counselling, information and warm referrals utilising best practice technology; an inclusive service of equitable standard to people with disabilities, Indigenous people, young people and callers from culturally diverse backgrounds; professional debriefing, supervision and advice to staff in services in isolated and remote areas; and integration and cooperation with existing services in all states and territories.

## Front Line Workers

It is recognised that a well supported workforce is more likely to provide targeted, high quality and joined-up services for women and their children who have experienced domestic and family violence and sexual assault. During the First Action Plan the Commonwealth, states and territories will undertake research to map existing support and training structures and programs for people working in services who are likely to come into contact with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This will include identifying gaps in the current provision of support and training, good practice and options for the provision of effective support for front line workers.

Utilising this research, work will continue to build and develop support, based on identified good practice and targeting identified gaps for implementation at the national level.

By the third year, work will commence to implement support in all jurisdictions. From the third year of the First Action Plan, states and territories will integrate their existing support and training with the national arrangements, including adopting identified good practice.

## Community Safety Plans in Remote Service Delivery Sites (RSD)

Through the National Plan and other COAG initiatives, governments are committed to working with Indigenous communities to develop community safety plans which include primary prevention of violence against women. The overall aim is to empower communities to create their own solutions through investment in initiatives which work with communities to develop local skills to prevent violence, train local leaders as community change agents and strengthen local governance. Through collaborative approaches it is envisaged communities will be able to sustain the solutions over the longer term.

Through the already established cross-government governance arrangements for RSD, work with RSD communities will continue to develop, improve and implement community safety plans.

Where appropriate, learnings in this area will be transferred to the development of other regional and urban community safety plans.

## Reform Projects

Over the life of the First Action Plan, governments will work together with non-government organisations to develop projects to support longer term improvements to service provision. The overall aim of these projects is to identify and/or test new practice approaches to provide the evidence to support reform of the service system into the future.

The reform projects will focus on:

- improving service delivery for women with disability who have experienced, or are at risk of, violence;
- risk assessment and risk management for the health sector;
- children exposed to domestic violence;
- helping women reach more stable circumstances when they are seeking to leave violence;
- the National Workforce Agenda;
- community policing best practice for working with Indigenous communities; and
- Indigenous community safety planning.

Commencing in 2011–12 governments will work together to scope and develop the projects including consultation with non-government organisations and subject experts, identifying existing good practice and gaps in service provision or capabilities. It is recognised a number of projects are already underway in a number of jurisdictions. These will contribute to sharing valuable information and lessons learnt. Likewise, engagement with other key COAG initiatives such as the National Disability Strategy and National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children will inform, and better target, efforts.

Projects will roll out over time with the project to address accessibility issues for women with a disability, starting from 2011. All projects identified will be completed during the life of this Implementation Plan.

## **WORKING TOGETHER**

An Enhancing Services Delivery Advisory Group will be responsible for facilitating the implementation of, and providing advice on, support for front line workers, the development of national standards for service delivery, the delivery of child-focused training and the improvement of access to services for women with disabilities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. It will provide a forum for governments to meet with a range of representatives to share lessons learnt about service delivery work around Australia.

The advisory group will draw on expertise from government and non-government organisations including:

- Commonwealth/state/territory officials responsible for enhancing service delivery;
- representatives from the service sector including those working with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, people with disability, Indigenous people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and young people; and
- representatives from other service sectors including housing, health and justice.

Non-government representatives will also have the opportunity to provide a voice for victims of violence and the people who access domestic and family violence and sexual assault services.

All states and territories will be represented.

## **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- Increase in the access to, and responsiveness of, services for victims of domestic and family violence and sexual assault.
- Reduction in the proportion of Indigenous women who consider family violence, assault and sexual assault are problems for their communities and neighbourhoods with particular reference to Remote Service Delivery communities.

Governments have agreed on measures of success. More information is provided in Table 1: Measures of Success on page 35.

# Strengthening Justice Responses

## IMPROVING LINKS BETWEEN CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESSES, SERVICES FOR VICTIMS AND PERPETRATOR INTERVENTIONS

While aiming to reduce violence, the First Action Plan will also drive more effective justice responses where violence has occurred. Under the National Plan, work will be undertaken to improve links between criminal justice processes, services for victims and prevention programs. Perpetrator interventions are now recognised as an essential part of an effective plan to reduce violence against women and their children. Research into effective perpetrator interventions is crucial and will guide work in future Action Plans.

### Outcome Links:

Outcome Four—*Indigenous communities are strengthened*

Outcome Five—*Justice responses are effective*

Outcome Six—*Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account*

## ACTIONS

1. Through the pooling of knowledge, governments will improve the library of perpetrator interventions, identify gaps and create best practice.
2. Set and monitor national minimum standards for domestic violence perpetrator programs and ensure programs for sex offenders continue to adhere to evidence-based best practice.
3. Improve cross-jurisdictional mechanisms for the protection of women and children through reforming how family and domestic violence orders are recognised and enforced across borders.
4. Improve the levels of understanding about the dynamics of family violence and the handling of family violence cases through the development of a multidisciplinary training package which targets professionals working in the family law system.

## HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

### Setting the Foundation

Work has commenced on providing an integrated response to ensure programs and interventions work together to support victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

In March 2011, the Attorney-General launched the “AVERT” Family Violence Training Package. The package targets lawyers, judicial officers, counsellors, and other professionals working in the family law system, to improve levels of understanding about the dynamics of family violence and the handling of family violence cases. The training package includes an online component of the multidisciplinary training package. The online component will allow professionals to access it, free of charge,

as a refresher resource while also providing an effective way to update materials, and potentially provide educators with the opportunity to share modifications and suggestions on the materials. It will also allow professionals to access their training flexibly, without needing to complete all aspects of training.

### **Library of Perpetrator Interventions**

Reducing the risk of recidivism among perpetrators of domestic and family violence and sexual assault must be based on sound evidence and best practice. An important starting point is expanding the evidence base through drawing together existing literature on perpetrator intervention responses, mapping current perpetrator interventions, and identifying future research priorities. These actions will help to inform the development of national standards for perpetrator interventions.

In order to build understanding of the effectiveness of perpetrator intervention to change attitudes and behaviours, research will be undertaken on existing perpetrator interventions, including all available evaluation data and outcomes.

The longer term research agenda and implementation approach will be presented to Ministers for agreement in the first half of 2012. This will be a joint Commonwealth, state and territory, and non-government/academia activity. Enhancing the evidence base sets the foundations for work in the Second Action Plan and feeds the future research agenda.

States and territories will use the resulting evidence to inform and improve future delivery of perpetrator intervention responses.

### **National Standards for Perpetrator Interventions**

In the second year of the First Action Plan, governments with the non-government sector will work together to draft national standards for perpetrator interventions, for presentation to Ministers. Once the national standards have been developed, work will commence on the associated measurement, reporting and implementation timeframes.

Also during the second year, governments will work together to draft criteria to determine eligibility for payment, by the Commonwealth, in 2014 to those states and territories who have expanded the number and standard of perpetrator interventions. These criteria could include demonstrating an overall increase in the number or accessibility of programs, demonstrating quality improvement through evaluation, and/or progress on adopting the national standards.

The progress made in this First Action Plan will enable states and territories to roll-out high quality interventions for perpetrators during the Second Action Plan.

### **Family and Domestic Violence Orders (DVO)**

In order to improve cross-jurisdictional mechanisms for the protection of family violence victims, governments, through the Standing Council for Law and Justice, are working together to implement a National DVO Scheme (agreed to by Attorneys-General in March 2011) for the automatic mutual recognition of domestic and family violence orders (DVOs) across Australia.

The Australian Government has been leading a Working Group to draft model automatic mutual recognition legislation to give effect to the National DVO Scheme.

The model legislation is expected to be finalised in the second year (2011–12) of the First Action Plan. Individual governments will then have responsibility for enacting the model legislation in their own jurisdictions.

Concurrently, the Working Group is also exploring the use of CrimTrac's National Police Reference System as an information sharing capability for DVOs.

## **WORKING TOGETHER**

A Justice Programs Advisory Group will be established to advise on a national approach to finalising the perpetrator research agenda and its implementation. It will also advise on the development and implementation of national standards for perpetrator interventions. It will provide a forum for governments to meet with a range of representatives to share lessons learnt about justice programs around Australia.

The advisory group will draw on expertise from government and non-government organisations including:

- Commonwealth/state/territory officials responsible for justice responses including Corrective Services, the Police, the Judiciary and Director of Public Prosecutions;
- representatives from legal organisations including Legal Aid and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services; and
- representatives from the service sector including academics and those working with perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual assault, people with disability, Indigenous people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and young people.

Non-government representatives will also have the opportunity to provide a voice for victims of violence and people who access domestic and family violence and sexual assault services.

All states and territories will be represented.

## **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- Increase in the rates of women reporting domestic violence and sexual assault.
- A decrease in repeated partner victimisation.

Governments have agreed on measures of success. More information is provided in Table 1: Measures of Success on page 35.

# Building the Evidence Base

## NEW WAYS OF WORKING TOGETHER

All governments recognise that outcomes for women and their children could be improved by governments working more collaboratively to build an effective evidence base. A priority of the National Plan is to build a strong and lasting evidence base. While established in the First Action Plan, these projects will be ongoing for the life of the 12-year National Plan.

### Outcome Links:

Outcome One—*Communities are safe and free from violence*

Outcome Two—*Relationships are respectful*

Outcome Three—*Indigenous communities are strengthened*

Outcome Four—*Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence*

Outcome Five—*Justice responses are effective*

Outcome Six—*Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account*

## ACTIONS

1. Establish a National Centre of Excellence (NCE) to bring together existing research, as well as undertake new research under an agreed National Research Agenda that will reflect the research priorities of the Commonwealth, states and territories. The NCE will also play a key role in influencing the broader research agenda.
2. Commence work on developing nationally consistent data definitions and collection methods as part of a National Data Collection and Reporting Framework to be operational by 2022, including mapping how data on violence against women and their children can be improved.
3. Continue to build the evidence base through conducting the Personal Safety Survey and the National Community Attitudes Survey on a four-yearly rolling basis.
4. Establish an evaluation framework for the life of the National Plan.

## HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

### Setting the Foundation

Activities such as national surveys require long lead times for development and testing and it was essential to start the process as soon as practicable. During the first year, significant work was undertaken on the development of the Personal Safety Survey (PSS). This included the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) working with Commonwealth, state and territory and non-government representatives to identify new content for the PSS. In addition survey instruments have been developed and tested with both survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and a broader community sample. Specific interviewer training has been developed and tested. In addition, governments worked together to agree the means to progress developing the NCE and the National Data collection and Reporting Framework.

## National Centre of Excellence

By the end of 2011, consult with stakeholders in the domestic violence and sexual assault sectors, researchers and academics to:

- define the role and possible models and governance arrangements for a National Centre of Excellence (NCE); and
- inform the future research agenda of the NCE.

This will be presented to Ministers in early 2012 to consider the model including shared funding arrangements and how governments can direct their research effort through the new NCE. Commonwealth, state and territory governments and community partners will work together to implement Ministers' decisions.

The aim is to establish the NCE during 2012 once detailed operational governance and funding and/or contribution arrangements have been agreed.

Once operational, and feeding into the Second Action Plan, the NCE will play a key role in influencing the broader research agenda across inter-linked subject matter areas such as homelessness and education. This involves establishing firm links with other research bodies including the Australian Research Council, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute and the National Health and Medical Research Council.

## National Data and Reporting Framework

To support the generation of nationally consistent data, which will assist in tracking progress against the National Plan over time, all jurisdictions have agreed to work collaboratively to develop and agree a comprehensive National Data Collection and Reporting Framework to be in place by 2022. A project plan for the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework will be developed by the end of 2011 for submission to Ministers in early 2012 and for inclusion in the annual report to COAG.

While agreement with the states and territories on a project plan will be achieved by 2011, it is unrealistic to expect consistent data within the first three to four years of the National Plan. However, work will still progress in this area. In the second year of the First Action Plan, governments will further refine and agree data definitions to support the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework, including agreement on implementation priorities and timeframes over the life of the National Plan.

In the third year of this Implementation Plan, the Commonwealth, states and territories will commence implementation of the project plan so that the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework will be fully operational by 2022. This work will continue to be a priority in subsequent Action Plans.

## Personal Safety Survey and National Community Attitudes Survey

As part of building the evidence base, the Commonwealth will fund a four year cycle of national surveys. These surveys will provide data about the rates of violence against women in Australia and community attitudes towards violence against women. Over time this will provide data on the scale of the problem and whether violence against women is reducing. It will also help inform areas for future action under the National Plan.

The Personal Safety Survey (PSS) provides information on people's experiences of domestic and family violence and sexual assault to help understand the nature and extent of violence against people in Australia. The next PSS will be conducted in 2012 with the data available in 2013. The Commonwealth and states and territories have representation on the ABS Survey Advisory Group which provides advice on the development of the PSS in relation to the content, implementation and dissemination.

Understanding community attitudes is important for shaping and influencing future initiatives to prevent violence against women. In 2011 work will commence on planning the National Community Attitudes Survey (NCAS) for 2014. This will build on the 2009 NCAS and provide the first opportunity to understand what, if any, changes in attitudes are occurring across the community. The results will guide the development and targeting of interventions that can build cultures of non-violence and value equal and respectful relationships between men and women. While the NCAS will be conducted during

the Second Action Plan, work will commence on content, implementation and dissemination during the First Action Plan.

Both surveys will be conducted on four-yearly cycles and be included in subsequent Action Plans.

## **National Plan Evaluation**

By mid-2012, governments and their community partners will agree a framework for the evaluation over the 12 years of the National Plan including agreement on the methodology, data and information requirements and timings.

The evaluation framework will include an assessment of the impact of the National Plan at the Commonwealth and state and territory level.

As part of the agreement to the evaluation framework, all governments will be asked to contribute data and information in line with the agreed evaluation framework and schedule. They will work together to progress the implementation and ongoing management of the evaluation with an evaluation of the First Action Plan, including the outcomes for Commonwealth and state and territory activities being undertaken.

This will inform the Second Action Plan.

## **WORKING TOGETHER**

A Building the Evidence Base Advisory Group will be established to advise and share information on the national projects helping to build the evidence base, including interactions between these projects and work being progressed under other priority action areas identified in the National Implementation Plan. They will also provide advice on the development of the evaluation framework for the National Plan. This will provide a forum for governments to meet with a range of representatives to share lessons learnt from other evidence building projects around Australia.

The advisory group will draw on expertise from government and non-government organisations including:

- Commonwealth/state/territory officials responsible for research;
- academics and researchers; and
- representatives from the service sector including those working with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual assault, people with disability, Indigenous people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and young people.

Non-government representatives will also have the opportunity to provide a voice for victims of violence and the people who access domestic and family violence and sexual assault services.

All states and territories will be represented.

## **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- Actions as identified completed during this Action Plan.

Governments have agreed on measures of success. More information is provided in Table 1: Measures of Success on page 35.

Three stylized human figures, rendered in a dark red color, are shown from the waist up, holding hands in a horizontal line. Each figure has a circular head and a simple, rounded body. The background is a textured, light red surface with circular and linear patterns.

*Communications and  
Community Engagement*

# Community Engagement

The National Plan is underpinned by the understanding that involving all governments and the wider community is necessary to reducing violence in the short and longer term. It is essential that there is active community support for the National Plan, especially in relation to creating safe communities, promoting and supporting gender equality and developing respectful relationships.

An important next step for the National Plan, and this Implementation Plan, is to generate discussion on domestic violence and sexual assault in Australia which raises awareness of this important issue and encourages communities to find local solutions to prevent violence. At every level, leadership is required to speak out against violence against women and their children. Government, business, non-government, community organisations, and individual champions all have a role.

It is critical the National Plan has a life beyond governments and community leaders, both individual and organisational, adopt and expand upon government leadership initiatives and feel a sense of ownership.

States and territories will have their own mechanisms for engaging the community in the National Plan and their jurisdictional implementation plan. In order to ensure engagement is as broad and covers as many sectors as possible, the Commonwealth, states and territories will also collaborate on engagement wherever possible.

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

A suite of products have been developed to support communication and encourage communities to understand and engage with the National Plan. These products include information sheets on the following topics:

- Indigenous Women;
- Women with Disability;
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Women;
- Rural and Remote Women;
- Older Women; and
- Primary Prevention.

The information sheets have also been translated into Vietnamese, Arabic and Chinese.

An Easy English version of the National Plan which aims to assist people with low literacy levels or as a summary or condensed version of the National Plan.

The National Plan and associated products are available on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) website at:

[www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children)

All communities are encouraged to use these products to assist in communicating about the National Plan. Social and community organisations such as sporting, political, spiritual, and specific-interest groups are just as important as government in shaping the attitudes and behaviours of Australians. Just as negative social norms and peer pressure may contribute to the pervasive problem of violence against women, positive discussions, modelling and action by peers can promote norms and conditions that reduce this violence and instil positive attitudes.

## **CURRENT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

The Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA) is working with the community sector to further promote the aims and objectives of the National Plan in the community.

AWAVA will hold a number of free promotional events in regional and remote parts of Australia. The objective of the events is to provide an overview to the community, in particular the domestic and family violence and sexual assault sectors, of the National Plan. The events are both a celebration of the achievements of the work in the area of elimination of violence against women and their children and, where possible, an opportunity to workshop how to raise awareness of the National Plan and its aims and objectives within the broader community.

Members of the Violence Against Women Advisory Group continue to actively engage with the community to promote and celebrate the National Plan at events, either as individuals or in collaboration with state governments.

The community sector has an essential role in engaging communities to work together in reducing violence against women. The National Plan is not just about the domestic and family violence and sexual assault sectors. There is a need to work across the whole service system, including justice, health, housing, disability, youth and education.

## **OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE**

All governments have committed to work with the community as actions under the National Plan are developed and implemented. The National Plan Implementation Panel and the Advisory Groups represent a key mechanism for this to happen. In addition, consultation is occurring as part of specific projects like the National Centre of Excellence and Frontline Workers Project. As actions are implemented, opportunities for the direct involvement of the non-government sector and the community will be identified more broadly.

Engagement in the National Plan by the community sector can range from a complex engagement strategy to something as simple as linking the organisation's website to the National Plan. Building awareness of the National Plan will go a long way in delivering the message that all forms of violence against women and their children are unacceptable—in any community—and it is the responsibility of all of us to reject and prevent violence.





*Reporting on Progress*

# Reporting on Progress

The National Plan will draw together work across Australia to drive national reform. A high level target for a *significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children* has been set for the 12 years of the National Plan. This is the long-term goal.

Overall reporting on the National Plan's effectiveness will also be done at the conclusion of the fourth Action Plan. As part of this reporting process, generic indicators and measures of success will be analysed, as well as progress against each of the actions.

In the long-term, until 2022, governments will report progress by:

- monitoring four high-level indicators of change;
- monitoring measures of success for each of the six National Outcomes; and
- drawing together each Action Plan's evaluation in a final report on the National Plan's achievements.

## REPORTING ON THE FIRST ACTION PLAN

This Implementation Plan outlines how success will be measured in the short-term—over the life of the First Action Plan.

In the short-term, until 2013, governments will report progress by:

- monitoring work on the National Priorities and the measures of success;
- working collaboratively to provide annual reports to COAG against the national priorities;
- evaluating key projects, such as *The Line* and Respectful Relationships education; and
- reporting on evaluation activities undertaken for the First Action Plan in 2013.

Annual reports on progress will be submitted to COAG by the Select Council on Women's Issues.

Evaluation activities will be reported at the conclusion of each of the four three-year Action Plans. These evaluations will be submitted to COAG and will inform the next Action Plan.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Governments have agreed on the following measures of success for each of the six National outcomes:

**Table 1: Measures of Success**

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS/ MEASURES OF SUCCESS	DATA SOURCES
Communities are safe and free from violence	Increased intolerance of violence against women	National Community Attitudes Survey
Relationships are respectful	Improved knowledge, skills and behaviour of respectful relationships by young people	National Community Attitudes Survey
Indigenous communities are strengthened	Reduced proportion of Indigenous women consider family violence, assault and sexual assault are community and neighbourhood problems	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Surveys
	Increased proportions of Indigenous women are able to have their say within community on important issues including violence	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Surveys
Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence	Increased access to and responsiveness of services for victims of domestic/family violence and sexual assault	Personal Safety Survey
Justice responses are effective	Increased rates of women reporting domestic violence and sexual assault to police	Personal Safety Survey
Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account	A decrease in repeated partner victimisation	Personal Safety Survey



