
Preventing Violence Together

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Preventing Violence Together:
A Strategy for the
Southern Metropolitan Region

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An electronic version of this document can be found at
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Bayside Peninsula Integrated Family Violence Partnership

Bentleigh Bayside Community Health

Cardinia Shire Council

Central Bayside Community Health Service

City of Casey

City of Greater Dandenong

City of Port Phillip

City of Stonnington

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enliven

Family Life

Frankston/Mornington Peninsula Primary Care Partnership

Glen Eira City Council

Indigenous Family Violence Regional Coordinator Bayside Peninsula/Southern Melbourne Area

Inner South Community Health Service

inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence Kingston City Council

Kooweerup Regional Health Service

Mornington Peninsula Shire

Peninsula Health

The Salvation Army

South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault

Southern Melbourne Integrated Family Violence Partnership

South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network

Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership

WAYSS

Windermere

Women's Health in the South East

Women with Disabilities Victoria

We also acknowledge the authors from Our Watch of the 'Change the Story' framework, which has been referenced throughout the Strategy.

1 Executive Summary

WHISE (Women's Health in the South East) has adopted a Regional Strategy and Action Plan to effectively coordinate internal efforts and cooperative engagements with strategic partners in the implementation of our programs. WHISE adopted the strategy - 'Preventing Violence Together – A Strategy for the Southern Metropolitan Region' in its capacity as a leading voice in the campaign to combat violence against women and their children. The five-year primary prevention Strategy has the vision of creating a region where women have equality and respect – and where women and their children live free from violence. The term Prevention of Violence Against Women and their Children (PVAW&C) reflects the gendered nature of the violence women face. The goal of the Strategy is to prevent violence against women, with consideration of the additional impact on their children.

WHISE employs a primary prevention approach to the Strategy, intending to prevent violence preemptively, before it occurs, by employing public health mechanisms that are designed to address the underlying causes of violence against women and their children. Effective primary prevention approaches to PVAW&C are approaches that utilise whole-of-population strategies. We also incorporate approaches that are tailored to the needs of particular communities and groups. Primary preventive strategies differ from responses to existing violence, which include crisis counselling, police protection and men's behaviour change programs, as well as from early intervention activities such as working with 'at risk' young people or families.

The Strategy was developed through a process of consultation among 31 organisations in the Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR). Eliminating men's violence against women requires a long-term cultural change, and creating such a change necessitates a consistent, collaborative and long-term approach. The Strategy recognises that successful primary prevention initiatives rely on mutually reinforcing strategies across an array of sectors and settings. Hence, WHISE's Strategy is designed to coordinate consistent activity across all participating organisations in the region, promote mutually reinforcing messaging and practice and ensure enhanced reach across systems and sectors, as opposed to being limited to single communities, organisations or contexts.

The Strategy is designed to co-ordinate advocacy efforts that take full advantage of the collective influence and expertise of the signatory organisations so as to enable all parties to access the benefits of increased coordination and collaboration, new funding opportunities to further expand and integrate PVAW&C work across the region and enhanced capacity building. Significantly, the Strategy ensures that WHISE is able to coordinate initiatives and campaigns to accomplish mutually reinforcing region-wide PVAW&C outcomes.

Commitments of the Steering Committee and/or CoP

A fully coordinated and evidence-based approach is required to properly implement the Strategy and as WHISE is charged with the responsibility of leading the health agenda for women across the SMR of Melbourne, we are positioned to provide leadership for the Strategy. Pursuant to our leadership remit, WHISE has established a senior Steering Committee (SC) to oversee the Strategy, chaired by the CEO of WHISE. The SC meets quarterly. Membership of the SC comprises senior management representatives from signatory organisations throughout the region, including Community and Women's Health Services, Local Government, Primary Care Partnerships, Integrated Family Violence Partnerships and other key agencies in the SMR.

The purpose of the Steering Committee (SC), chaired by the WHISE CEO, is to:

- Provide high-level leadership of the Strategy implementation
- Reduce duplication of PVAW&C work
- Optimise resources across the region to maximise the collective PVAW&C action
- Coordinate the provision of tailored training in a systems-based approach to the implementation of PVAW&C and gender equity across participating organisations
- Identification and co-ordination of funding opportunities to further extend and integrate PVAW&C work across the region
- Co-ordinate advocacy efforts that harness the influence and expertise with partnership organisations to be added to a national and unified voice on PVAW&C
- Reporting PVAW&C actions to all stakeholders

The CEO of WHISE chairs the SC and WHISE staff provide strategic and administrative support, maintain the action plan, provide support to organisations and oversee Strategy communications. The Community of Practice (CoP), comprising SMR practitioners working in PVAW&C at their respective organisations, is responsible for implementing and operationalising the Strategy, providing a unique opportunity to back the implementation of the Strategy and ample capacity building opportunities and PVAW&C workforce development. Out of either the SC or the CoP, working groups are established in accordance with needs determined by the SC.

Why organisations have committed to the Action Plan (AP)

The Strategy was created and designed as an inclusive and collaborative process, undertaken between WHISE and key regional partners. Partner organisations across the region demonstrated high levels of commitment during the consultative development process, and clearly articulated the need for a consistent regional approach to tackling the challenge of preventing violence against women and their children. In order to ensure we adequately addressed the needs of specific population groups, such as CALD women, Indigenous women and women with a disability, consultative engagements with local and state-wide services were also undertaken.

As a mechanism to coordinate combined and consistent activity across all participating organisations in the region, the Strategy is designed to promote mutually reinforcing messaging and practice that spans a range of systems and sectors, without the limitations of being targeted solely to single communities, organisations or contexts.

The signatory organisations to this Strategy have made a formal commitment to work to prevent violence against women, agreeing also to engage in the development, oversight and implementation of a regional Action Plan.

Subsequent to the Strategy development, the WHISE Action Plan garnered support and commitment from all partner organisations in the region from 2016. Signatory organisations have agreed that the goal of this Strategy is to create *'a region where women have equality and respect – and where women and children live free from violence'*. This is an achievable goal, and reaching it will require sustained effort over the long term.

Following the publication of this Strategy, the Steering Committee began the process of developing an Action Plan to accompany the Strategy.

Implementing the Action Plan in 2016 was the first step to achieving our goals. It is a dynamic plan subject to annual updates and amendments in response to changing circumstances and with annual targeted areas of focus. The Action Plan is based on regional needs and references the broader political environment as well as the results of ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The Action Plan also highlights leadership opportunities and drivers of change and offers organisations very clear objectives and actions to create change.

The Action Plan recognises existing work being undertaken across the SMR, highlighting practical work that can be incorporated in existing programs and policies, and other programs, policies and work that needs further input. It also serves as a catalyst to increase coordination of PVAW&C activity and grow collaboration in the community. This complements current approaches, prevents any unnecessary duplication and most importantly, guarantees that coordinated initiatives achieve mutually reinforcing positive impact towards PVAW&C in the region

The Action Plan

The Action Plan evolves over time to reflect lessons learned through the campaign and to make sure that attention is paid to emerging issues. The Action Plan reflects the needs of the region and the broader political environment, as well as ongoing monitoring and evaluation findings. It highlights leadership opportunities, drivers of significant change and suitable objectives to pursue and actions for organisations to undertake. Importantly the Plan celebrates success and recognises achievements already enjoyed by the SMR, embracing those actions into our plan that have resulted in positive outcomes, and helping develop those requiring complementary input.

2 Background to WHISE

Who are WHISE

WHISE, a not for profit, community based Women's Health Service run by and for women and funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, is the regional women's health service for the Southern Metropolitan Region. It is WHISE's vision to improve the health and wellbeing of women in the SMR through the prism of a Social Model of Health and within the context of a feminist perspective. Our mission is:

- To provide a range of services that acknowledges the diversity of women and their total wellbeing
- To be accessible to all women in a safe and women-friendly environment
- To promote best practice in health service delivery for marginalised women, both in specialised and in mainstream service providers

The goals of WHISE are to achieve both system and policy change, achieve best practice in Health Promotion, (especially to marginalised women), and to improve community participation and social connectedness.

Where is WHISE

Women's Health in the South East was established in the Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR) in 1992 out of a need identified by a group of women's health workers. The SMR is located in the South East of Melbourne and is based on Department of Health and Human Services boundaries. The SMR consists of 10 local government areas and has an estimated population of just over 1.4 million people.ⁱ

The women's health workers identified common problems in the delivery of health services to women in the southern region and in response formed the basis of the Southern Women's Health Action Group (SWHAG), who led the way in advocating for the establishment of a regional women's health service.

In early 1992 funding was granted for the establishment of WHISE, which opened its doors in Frankston in September 1992 thanks to the fruitful efforts of SWHAG members, community members and consumers. WHISE was located in Frankston until its move to Dandenong in late 2007, where the work of many committed women continues today.

What does WHISE do

- WHISE works with key State, Commonwealth and regional groups to inform and advocate government on policy improvements and service system changes.
- WHISE provides services directly to women in the community, using our expertise in equity and access for women from the most marginalised groups in society.
- WHISE works directly with women to promote health and wellbeing via the provision of information, education, self-help and women's inclusion in decision-making processes.
- WHISE provides services to 'mainstream' service providers to help them more effectively meet the needs of women most at risk.
- WHISE maintains the staff, resources, and infrastructure at the level necessary to achieve the goals we have established.

3 Our vision for PVAW&C

What is VAW

The term 'Violence Against Women' (VAW) covers a range of forms of violence, including both criminal and non-criminal in nature. For the most part, violence against women is regarded as behaviours intended to exercise power and control over women and/or instil fear. This violence includes physical, emotional, economic, social, sexual and spiritual violence. In addition to the physical, emotional and social harms that are the product of gender-based violence, victims also face multiple, serious and long-term effects.

WHISE's five-year primary prevention Strategy uses the following definition of VAW, which is shared with *Change the Story, the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022* and the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993).

"Any act of gender based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life."ⁱⁱⁱ

Violence against women has clear links to mental illness. Women who are victims of violence suffer an elevated risk of developing mental health problems including, but not limited to, depression, anxiety and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder.^{iiiiiv} Women who experience violence also exhibit higher rates of attempted suicide. As a result, WHISE's main priority is the prevention of violence against women.

Consider the following statistics:

1 in 3 women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15.^v

1 in 5 women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.^{vi}

At least 1 woman in Australia is killed each week by a current or former partner.^{vii}

Intimate partner violence is the leading contributor of death, disability and illness amongst women aged 15 – 44.

WHISE considers gender-based violence to be one of the most urgent public and social health issues affecting Australian women and is therefore committed to addressing the root causes of violence against women.

Prevalence and cost of VAW in the SMR

The Southern Metropolitan Region has some of the highest rates of violence in Victoria.^{viii} Research shows that less than one third of women contact the police following an incident of violence^{ix}. Data from Victoria Police delivers the most localised statistics in relation to VAW in the SMR.

Over the last decade, police callouts to family violence incidents in the SMR have doubled. In the 2013/14 period alone, there were more than 15,000 callouts to family violence incidents in the South-East region. This represents 1,097 callouts per 100,000 residents – slightly higher than the metropolitan rate. Of the 15,244 reported family violence incidents in 2013/14:

- Children were present at 2,880 cases (360.7 per 100,000, compared to the Victorian rate of 387.6 per 100,000);
- Charges were laid in 2,845 cases (458.4 per 100,000, in contrast to the overall Victorian rate of 507.7 per 100,000); and
- 2,421 Intervention Orders and Family Violence Safety Notices were issued, a rate of 274.9 per 100,000 in the SMR compared to a rate of 295.3 per 100,000 in Victoria.^x

Economic, Health and Social Impact of VAW in Australia

One in 4 Australian women have experienced violence at the hands of a current or ex-partner since the age of 15. The economic costs of violence against women and their children are vast and are estimated to cost the Australian economy \$21.7 billion each year. Almost half of this cost is attributed to the pain, suffering and premature mortality of women who have experienced violence.^{xi}

Violence against women and their children (VAW&C) has far-reaching social, economic and health impacts. The health burden is related to increased mental health issues for women who have experienced violence – specifically depression and anxiety.^{xii} Further, violence from a current or ex-partner is the most commonly cited reason for homelessness for women with their children,^{xiii} accounting for 55% of female clients presenting to homelessness services.

This issue affects all communities, regardless of culture, class, sexuality and religion. However, it is important to recognise or understand how different social positions that women occupy can impact upon women's experiences of violence. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have been found to experience higher rates, and more severe forms, of violence than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.^{xiv}

While large population studies of women with disabilities are lacking, evidence strongly suggests that they are more likely to experience violence; and young women (18-24 years) experience higher rates of violence than older women.^{xv} While there is no evidence to suggest that levels of violence are higher in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, research indicates that the experiences of migration and settlement have a profound effect on the experience of violence and women's ability to access and receive support.^{xvi}

The WHISE vision for PVAW&C (information about Primary Prevention) - why we have a Strategy and Action Plan

'Preventing Violence Together – A Strategy for the Southern Metropolitan Region', launched in April 2016, is a region-wide strategy for the Prevention of Violence Against Women and their Children (PVAW&C). Seeking to prevent violence before it occurs by addressing the underlying causes of violence against women and their children, the Strategy takes a primary prevention approach. The effectiveness of primary prevention approaches to PVAW&C relies on strategies that engage the entire population, in addition to incorporating more targeted activities for those in specific communities and groups. Examples of primary prevention activities include schools-based programs to create gender-equitable environments and build students' relationship skills, efforts to reduce the disrespectful portrayal of women in the media, comprehensive public education and social marketing campaigns, and workplace initiatives promoting positive bystander responses.^{xvii}

These approaches are distinct from approaches that are activated in response to existing violence, such as crisis counselling, police protection or men's behaviour change programs, as well as from early intervention activities such as working with 'at risk' young people or families.^{xviii}

The role and purpose of the Strategy is to give voice to the causes of violence against women and argue to collective action in the region. The Strategy has been developed by a Steering Committee, comprised of senior representatives of a number of the partner organisations, and the Community of Practice, comprised of practitioners in the region charged with the PVAW&C. Furthermore, the

Strategy has been designed to align with the Our Watch 'Change the Story' framework to ensure that our Regional Strategy reflects a coordinated and integrated approach with the National Framework to prevent violence against women and their children.

Partnerships for PVAW&C

WHISE coordinated and combined consistent activities preventing violence against women and their children throughout the SMR, in order to promote mutually reinforcing messaging and practice and ensure reach across systems and sectors.

The efforts of the partners of the strategy are committed to taking primary prevention action to address violence against women and their children across the SMR to maximise wide positive impact- to end violence and to change the way the community understands gender inequality. Collectively, the partners goal is to ensure that women and their children have improved health outcomes, organisations will be more inclusive and equal, and our communities and families will support personal development and social wellbeing.

By working together, organisations in the SMR will benefit from increased coordination and collaboration, capacity building, and in their ability to coordinate advocacy efforts that benefit from collective influence and expertise.

Our vision is for the SMR to be a region where women have equality and respect – and where women and children live free from violence. Organisations from across the SMR recognise that no single organisation can work alone to eliminate violence against women and their children. A community-wide approach to VAW is vital to affecting the magnitude of the change we all want to see.

PVAW&C strategy within an international, national, state and local context

The development of this Strategy has been informed by the current policy context, and has been designed to align with National, State-wide and regional policies and structures.

Australia is a signatory to the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW).^{xix} CEDAW signatories must be seen to take all necessary measures to end discrimination against women. The CEDAW acts as a mechanism holding governments to account for upholding these rights. The CEDAW is a global convention that shifts the locus of discourse in relation to violence against women from an issue of personal responsibility, to violence against women being rightly viewed as a violation of social, political and human rights.

Both National and State-wide plans to address violence against women present the prevention of violence against women as an urgent public health issue, and prioritise primary prevention policies and initiatives. With the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children* (2010 – 2022), the Australian Government demonstrated its commitment to ending violence against women.^{xx} Currently in its *Third Action Plan; Moving Ahead* (2016-2019), the National Plan clearly outlines the need to engage in primary prevention, with a specific focus in national priority area one: driving whole-of-community action to prevent violence.

In November 2015, Our Watch, VicHealth and ANROWS released *Change the Story, a National Framework* designed to achieve a consistent and integrated approach to the primary prevention of violence against women and their children.^{xxi} Australia is the first country in the world to have

adopted such an evidence-based framework to address and prevent violence against women and their children. The WHISE Strategy for the SMR aligns with the national OurWatch framework.

The Victorian Government launched the *Victorian Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women (2012-2015)*,^{xxii} an action plan designed to prevent violence against women and their children through education intended to change attitudes and behaviours and promote respectful and non-violent relationships. The *Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019* clearly articulates the prevention of violence against women and their children as a public health responsibility.

A number of plans and strategies exist at the regional level that complement, strengthen and support our Regional Strategy. These include two Integrated Family Violence Partnership Governance Bodies established to pursue the prevention of violence against women and their children in the region, with each having participated in the development of this Strategy. These two governance bodies are formed by local partnerships in the region who are working together to implement the Government family violence reform agenda: *Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence against Women and Children*. These bodies are:

- Bayside Peninsula Integrated Family Violence Partnership
- Southern Melbourne Integrated Family Violence Partnership

Further, the Kangoo Bambadin Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group operates throughout the SMR, working with the community to prevent and respond to Indigenous family violence. In 2014 the Southern Metropolitan Regional Management Forum^{xxiii} (RMF) identified Family Violence as one of its key priority projects and, as such, upholds its mandate to educate and increase the public awareness of violence against women within the SMR. As leaders, employers and procurers, RMF members have strong collective community reach. The RMF's interest in changing the negative cultural underpinnings that help family violence to occur and persist promotes the idea that confronting the issue of Family Violence is a community-wide responsibility.

4 Our PVAW&C Action Plan

The Action Plan (Table 1) was established as a 12-month program of work.

Partner organisations collaborated during the development phase of the Regional PVAW&C Strategy to articulate how the five Strategic Pillars and associated objectives would underpin the Strategy. The Strategic Pillars reflect current best practice in primary prevention work, promote innovation within the region and are reflective and responsive to the needs of partners and the community. The Strategic Pillars have been designed to complement and reinforce one another, and provide the strategic focus for work across the region, guiding action in each of the five areas.

Strategic Pillar 1 – Leadership through Partnership

Strategic Pillar 2 – Organisational Transformation

Strategic Pillar 3 – Community Change

Strategic Pillar 4 – Evidence Informed

Strategic Pillar 5 – Sustaining Momentum

Table 1: Preventing Violence Together- PVAW&C Action Plan



Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children in the Southern Metropolitan Region
Action Plan 2016-2017 - page 1 of 2

Strategic Pillar	Goal	Regional Objectives	Proposed Actions	Owner	Timescale	Update	Status
Leadership through strengthening partnerships	Organisations in the region are working from a shared understanding of PVAW and demonstrating collective leadership and advocacy in preventing violence against women and their children.	At the completion of the strategy there will be increased leadership commitment within partner organisations to PVAW&C across the SMR. The implementation of the Strategy will maximise collaborative partnership opportunities between partner organisations across the SMR.	1. Partner organisations sign a statement of commitment towards preventing violence against women and their children, WHISE will add pledge and partner logos to WHISE Website.	All	Jun-16	Stage 1: 29 organisations formally signed-on to the Strategy. Stage 2: WHISE to include partner logos and photo of the pledge to the website. Additional Activity- Development of new PVT Partnership Logo	Complete
			2. Partner organisations commit to high-level participation in Strategy Steering Committee (SC) and ensure the participation of relevant staff members in the Community of Practice.	All	Jun-16	Very good representation and participation at all meetings to date.	Complete
			3. Partner organisations contribute to the development a of region-wide action plan to deliver against the Strategy by creating shared resources and ensuring consistent messaging through the SC and Community of Practice.	All	Jun-16	Strategy action plan approved and signed off.	Complete
Organisational transformation	Organisations will work within a gender equity framework, creating cultural and organisational change through policy, education and advocacy.	To foster partner organisational cultures that recognise and respect the value of women and the roles they play in all settings. To embed gender equity principles across partner organisations in the SMR.	4. Development of a training plan to enable organisations to take a systematic approach to delivering gender equity and PVAW&C training to their staff, which identifies: - The range of training options that are available for different groups of staff; - Suitable training packages and providers; - Joint training opportunities between partner organisations across the region; Identification of training delivery method (e.g. face to face, online e-modules etc) and implications for reach and levels of staff engagement.	Natasha Moshinsky - City of Port Phillip, WHISE	Q3-4, 2016	Training mapping document completed; MAV grant applications submitted and approved. Mapping of training already undertaken or currently being undertaken by partner organisations to take place. Document circulated to CoP on 3/10.	Complete
			5. Development of a guidance document to: - enable organisations to undertake gender equity audits that can be tailored for them to examine organisational culture, policy and practices; - embed gender equity principles into their policies and practices; - benefit from the sharing of expertise from other organisations who have already undertaken a gender equity audit.	WHISE Enliven, Connect Health and Community, Salvation Army	Q-4, 2017	A guidance doc draft in progress. Screened previous Gender Audits as a framework. Will be available free fo charge to all partners and orgs across SMR. Capacity building (instruction) tool to enable workplaces to conduct their own internal audits	Complete
Community change	Organisations will support, promote and contribute to community change through consultation and collaboration.	To ignite community change through awareness of PVAW across the SMR. To strengthen SMR community capacity to prevent violence against women and their children.	6. Development of an events plan and schedule for PVAW&C campaigns, conferences and other relevant events and forums, for example '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence'.	Megan Bugden - WHISE, Cher Twe - SMPCP	Q3-4, 16	Events schedule completed. Working group developed key messages for this year's 16 days campaign. 16 days campaign is underway.	Complete
			7. Identify, monitor and explore opportunities to deliver collaborative PVAW&C education programs to community groups across a range of settings including schools, faith, sporting organisations etc.	WHISE	Q-4, 2017	Identified faith groups to work with. Identified faith needs analysis across SMR region (where appropriate and active). As part of the TWC initiative formed part of the working group to engage sporting communities in gender equity training and education.	Complete
			8. Utilise the 'Promoting Equality and Respect: An Interfaith collaboration on prevention family violence' resource and link in to community initiatives- E.g. 16 days of activism- links to Action 6	WHISE- City of Kingston	Q-4, 2017	Run 2x faith events across 16 Days Activism - Kingston and Dandenong. Stall at White Ribbon event, CGD	Complete



Strategic Pillar	Goal	Regional Objectives	Proposed Actions	Owner	Timescale	Update	Status
Evidence informed	Organisations will work from an evidence-based framework promoting best practice approaches and contributing to collection, translation and dissemination of evidence.	To strengthen evidence based PVAW&C across the SMR. To ignite PVAW&C innovation in partner organisations in the SMR.	9. Development of an information sharing hub/portal for Strategy information, resources, news and latest PVAW&C research.	RICs/WHISE	Q3, 16	The new Southern Regional Family Violence website has been identified as a suitable place for the PVAW Regional Strategy resources, documents etc. It is planned to go live late September.	Complete
			10. Development of an evidence-based framework and evaluation plan for Strategy initiatives.	WHISE	Q-4, 2017	Action plan reporting template developed, designed to tie in with key evaluation components. Examples of completed template presented to SC on 29/8.	Complete
			11. Development of an external communications strategy to showcase and celebrate effective action from across the region on an ongoing basis.	WHISE	Q-4, 2017	Need to consider existing communications strategy and plans on PVAW and gender equity (e.g., Eleven Ways to Boost Your Work with News Media - Domestic Violence Victoria; Speaking Publicly about Men's Violence Against Women - Women's Health West). Comms strategy (highlighting external communications) developed. Template circulated to S/C and CoP	Complete
Sustaining momentum	Organisations will demonstrate an ongoing commitment to a long-term regional approach to preventing violence against women and their children.	To sustain commitment to a long-term regional approach to PVAW across the SMR	12. Development of an internal communication plan for partner organisations to safely share learnings and experiences, and promote successes and achievements. (Linked to Action 9 - information sharing portal)	WHISE	Q-4, 2017	Need to consider existing communications strategy and plans on PVAW and gender equity (e.g., Eleven Ways to Boost Your Work with News Media - Domestic Violence Victoria; Speaking Publicly about Men's Violence Against Women - Women's Health West) Comms strategy (highlighting internal communications) developed.	Complete
			13. Identify opportunities to promote the leadership, expertise and collective influence of the Strategy partner organisations in PVAW&C.	ALL	Q-4, 2017	Template circulated to CoP and Steering Committee to complete. Once completed by partners, this should be added to South Safe website	Complete
			14. Proactively identify joint funding opportunities to implement or scale up regional projects related to PVAW&C.	All	Ongoing	3 MAV grant applications submitted, expected to be announced Sept/Oct 16. VicHealth Active Club Grants (\$3-\$10K) open until 23 Sep. CPPP Grant application	Complete

5 Review of the Action Plan

In the table below, the accompanying objectives, proposed actions, owners and timelines to the Strategic Pillars are outlined.

Strategic Pillar 1: Leadership through Strengthening Partnerships

Goal: Organisations in the region are referencing a shared understanding of PVAW&C and demonstrating collective leadership and advocacy in preventing violence against women and their children.

Objective	Action	Owner	Timeline
Increased PVAW&C leadership commitment within partner organisations across the SMR by Strategy completion The implementation of the Strategy will maximise collaborative partnership opportunities between partner organisations across the SMR.	1. Partner organisations sign a statement of commitment towards preventing violence against women and their children.	All	June '16
	2. Partner organisations commit to high-level participation in the Strategy Steering Committee (SC) and ensure the participation of relevant staff members in the Community of Practice (CoP).	All	June '16
	3. Partner organisations contribute to the development of a region-wide Action Plan, deliverable against the Strategy, by creating shared resources and ensuring consistent messaging through the SC and CoP.	All	June '16

Strategy Achievements

Action 1:

A strategy for the Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR) was developed to enable organisations in the region to collectively prevent violence against women and their children. The role and purpose of the strategy is to explain the causes of violence against women and their children, and make a clear case for collective action. It was developed using a collaborative and consultative approach, ensuring all organisations in the Southern Metropolitan Region who committed to this strategy would make a meaningful impact on the prevention of violence against women and their children.

Action 2:

Both Steering Committee and Community of Practice (CoP) meetings were very well represented by Governance group and their CoP delegates.

Action 3:

Following the publication of the strategy, WHISE in collaboration with strategy partners consulted extensively on the development of the 12-month Action Plan. This consultation process (which takes place annually) reflected the needs of the region, the political environments, and the alignment of our priority areas as a collective. The Action Plan highlighted leadership opportunities and the drivers of change, as well as providing a clear set of objectives and actions for organisations to work towards. As

part of the ongoing commitment, all partners agreed to pool and share resources for the collective good. Steering Committee members aligned themselves against actions specific to their organisational priorities.

Outcomes

Action 1:

- In April 2016 an official launch of the strategy was held, and a pledge was developed and signed by partners on our regional strategy.
- The PVT strategy was uploaded to the WHISE website and submitted to the Regional Integration Family Violence Co-ordinator to incorporate into the South Safe website.
- To support the formal pledge, a signed copy – together with partner logos – was added to the WHISE website in September 2017.
- An additional item of work was the development of a PVT partnership logo. WHISE designed four potential logos and presented all options to the Steering Committee for voting and approval. Once a decision was made, the new logo was circulated to all partners. The logo will be officially launched in January at the Regional Strategy forum.

Figure 1: PVT Logo



Action 2:

From May 2016 through to June 2017 an average of 16.8 committee members attended each Steering Committee meeting. At our final session in June 2017 (a strategy review session), we invited eight members, achieving an attendance rate of 87.5% (seven attendees).

From July 2016 through to May 2017 we held eight CoP meetings in total, with an overall average of 16.85 attendees (51%). In light of the relatively high frequency of the meetings, this was considered a reasonably solid attendance record.

Action 3:

Developed the Action Plan as a region-wide, collective effort in 2016.

Reflections

Action 2:

Meetings were generally very well attended with the exception of December 2016 (10 attendees), probably attributable to the annual winding down of workflow and professional commitments over the holiday period. In 2017, however, there was an unexpected disruption to the strategy. Despite high attendance, there was evidence of some misalignment with both the direction of the strategy and the partnership. A review meeting was called on 22nd June 2017 to discuss the future of the strategy with eight key partners invited, seven of which attended. Following the meeting, no clear direction was agreed upon and thus some of the key actions were temporarily suspended. However, in early September following new leadership, the Action Plan re-commenced, and significant partnership re-engagement occurred. However, due to the relatively brief period remaining to complete the Action Plan, there was little time to run and host Steering Committee and CoP meetings, so engagement was conducted primarily through email and various sub groups, providing progress reports along the way to ensure partners were kept abreast of all activity.

Action 3:

Despite being a collaborative Action Plan, partners indicated that they were at times unclear of the objective of each Action listed on the Action Plan. This was possibly due to a significant gap in the permanent role of a Project Coordinator. Nonetheless, this does indicate that despite signing on to the strategy, not all partners were entirely clear on the Action items.

Recommendations:

Action 1:

Consider having MoU's in place for each partner organisation to formalise their partnership.
Consider inviting more organisations to officially partner to the strategy.

Action 2:

Both Steering Committee and CoP should have clear and distinct terms of reference to ensure that members are clear of their purpose and outcomes. Common updates across the CoP and Steering Committee should regularly be provided to ensure consistency of understanding and messaging. If required and on specific ad hoc matters, sub committees from the CoP can be formed to resolve particular issues.

Action 3:

In the development of the 2018 Action Plan, WHISE must ensure that all partners are adequately consulted, aware of and involved in the creation and structure of the Action Plan. One way to ensure this is by aligning the Action Plan as best as possible to the priorities of each partner organisation, as well as ensuring constant communication throughout the planning and development phase of the 2018 Action Plan.

Strategic Pillar 2: Organisational Transformation

Goal: Organisations will work within a gender equity framework, creating cultural and organisational change through policy, education and advocacy.

Objective	Proposed Action	Owner	Timeline
To foster partner organisational cultures that recognise and respect the value of women and the roles they play in all settings	<p>4. Development of a training plan to enable organisations to take a systematic approach to delivering gender equity and PVAW&C training to their staff, which identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of training options that are available for different groups among staff • Suitable training packages and providers • Joint training opportunities between partner organisations across the SMR • Identification of training delivery methods (e.g. face-to-face, online e-modules, etc.) and implications for reach and levels of staff engagement 	Natasha Moshinsky – City of Port Phillip	Q3-Q4 '16
To embed gender equity principles across partner organisations in the SMR	<p>5. Development of a guidance document to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable organisations to undertake tailored gender equity audits to examine organisational culture, policy and practices • Embed gender equity principles into their policies and practices • Benefit from the sharing of expertise from other organisations who have already undertaken a gender equity audit 	<p>WHISE</p> <p>Enliven</p> <p>Connect Health and Community</p> <p>Salvation Army</p>	Q4 '17

Strategy Achievements:

Action 4:

This project has generated many key achievements. These include:

- Strengthened partnerships between all project partners, including the working group, as well as the South Melbourne Primary Care Partnership, which has received regular updates throughout the planning process. These relationships will improve the implementation phase of the project, as the module has benefitted from considerable exposure to a range of partners through regular updates, promotion and engagement opportunities.
- The benefits of working with multiple partners on the project include the sharing of a broad range of ideas, viewpoints and knowledge, providing greater depth to the work that has increased its application to a number of different audiences. At times it was challenging to fully engage all partners and encourage them to provide feedback, as the timelines for the project were extremely tight. Email correspondence and regular meetings were used as means by which we were able to increase opportunities for input from all partners, despite restrictive deadlines.

- The eLearning module has also provided a platform to advocate to senior leadership to incorporate PVAW&C work into Council business. Participating Councils and partners on the project working group have held discussions with the Executive Leadership Teams throughout the development process to keep them up to date and on board with the roll out of the module. This has not only increased the exposure of the module but also cemented PVAW&C as a priority area that the Executive Leadership is committed to actioning.
- The eLearning module has also opened up conversations with Council Organisational Development teams by reinforcing the importance of all staff members having a strong foundation of knowledge in gender equity and family violence. It has also highlighted the role that a broad range of Council departments can have in either preventing or responding to family violence, through applying a gendered lens to their core business. This engagement been advantageous, as these teams are in an optimal position to ensure that the module is embedded across the organisation.
- The eLearning module has also raised opportunities for it to be applied to settings outside of local government. Promotion of the module has led to discussions about its application in neighbourhood houses, community facilities and community grants programs, for example. There is also scope for it to be used and adapted for interstate audiences as well as the corporate sector.
- However, applying the module to broader settings may present some challenges, as some of the content is more aligned to a Victorian local government setting. These challenges have been overcome through adopting principles that can be applied to many workplaces and case studies that are based in both government and non-government settings.

Action 5:

WHISE established a small working group to create the framework for the guidance document. A draft version was developed and circulated to the sub-working group for review, and was sent to both the Steering Committee and CoP for final feedback. Following a review process, the guidance document was completed and circulated to all strategy partners. The document was also made available on the WHISE website, promoted via various partner networks and sent to the Regional Integration Family Violence Coordinator for inclusion on the South Safe website.

Outcomes

Action 4:

The training objectives were to:

- Provide an understanding of family violence and the role that Councils and broader organisations can play
- Identify ways to challenge gender stereotypes and current cultural norms which impact on family violence
- Provide an understanding of how and why gender must be considered at an internal and external level
- Identify challenges and opportunities for increasing organisational gender equity and to create gender action planning
- Provide an understanding of how to implement a gendered lens into practice
- Identify areas for improvement and generate organisational collective action

The outcomes of the e-learning training package were as follows:

- Increases in workplaces understanding the link between gender equality and family violence and why gender must be considered in an internal and external workplace setting
- Increased capacity for workplaces to incorporate specific gender-based action plans within their organisational policies, practices and planning
- Increased capacity for workplaces to embed a gendered lens across the organisation's internal and external processes and outputs

Action 5:

The guidance documented was completed and circulated to all PVT regional partners at both the Steering Committee and CoP level. The document is available on the WHISE website as a free resource for any organisation wishing to develop their own gender equity audit within their workplace.

Reflections

Action 4:

Initially, the Steering Committee did not endorse the development of the training program, instead placing an emphasis on the need to identify what the sector wanted. To address this, a mapping exercise was undertaken in February to identify the training needs of partner organisations across the Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR). A total of 19 organisations participated in the mapping exercise. The results were separated into three levels of family violence prevention – primary, secondary and tertiary.

Tertiary prevention training was a common training program delivered across the SMR. 15 partner organisations undertook training on identifying and responding to family violence and/or the common risk assessment framework.

At the secondary prevention level, 8 partner organisations engaged in training around white ribbon day, an awareness raising campaign.

At the primary prevention level, training was broken down into two components – prevention of violence training and gender equity training. A total of 16 partners had received or would be receiving training on family violence in the workplace, violence against women, prevention of violence against women or gender equity.

Therefore, the regional needs based on our needs analysis of training conducted across the Southern Metropolitan Region shows a strong interest in family violence training, specifically within the Primary Prevention space.

Thus, following the successful MAV funding, an e-learning training package was developed. This project involved the development of an eLearning module that focused on building knowledge and understanding around the prevention of family violence against women. This includes the capacity to identify and respond to the key drivers of family violence. The training will be delivered across a number of different workplace settings, including local government and partner organisations belonging to the Southern Metropolitan Primary Care Partnership. It is also hoped that this resource will be made available to a wider selection of organisations both within Victorian and across Australia (depending on interest levels).

The project involved the following partners:

Lead council: City of Port Phillip

Project partners: City of Bayside, City of Kingston, City of Stonington, City of Monash, City of Glen Eira, Women's Health in the South East, Southern Metropolitan Primary Care Partnership

The biggest challenge in implementing this project was operating it in a tight timeline. This was largely due to the nature of the project, as building the module had several key milestones that needed to be achieved in a timely and sequential manner. The technical nature of the work also meant that we were waiting for edits and production to occur externally and were therefore not in control of when this would happen. The working group was asked to review each stage of the process in a short timeframe, which often put pressure on the group to respond quickly. There were times when members were not able to respond to these deadlines due to having competing priorities. This was anticipated from the outset as being a challenge, as the digital design company did present us with a timeline in advance. The lead Council worked closely with the design company to create more realistic timelines that would enable the project working group to have a greater opportunity to review the content. An extension for the delivery of the final eLearning module was also sought from the MAV in order to allow more time for consultation and tweaking of the module. This has ensured that the quality of the final product has not been compromised and is aligned effectively with the working group's vision.

These short timelines also restricted opportunities for detailed engagement with management teams across the Council in the lead up to the roll out of the module. It would have been useful to spend more time with these teams to promote the module and brief them on the advantages of their staff participating in the early phases of the project. This work can, however, be conducted after the module has been finalised, rather than in the lead up to its release. If done comprehensively, this will still produce the same impact and level of engagement, resulting in effective staff engagement.

A period of pre-testing with the target audience to ascertain existing knowledge and attitudes towards family violence would also have been beneficial to the project. This was not possible due to the short project timelines faced.

Action 5:

Due to the complex nature of gender equity and the knowledge required to develop such a robust document appropriate for practical use within workplace settings, the write up was primarily accomplished by the lead agency WHISE. This was by no means reflective of the skill set of the working group, but with competing priorities and partners whose expertise was not solely in the PVAW&C space, the responsibility for the development of the content sat with the lead agency, WHISE. This additional workload – inclusive of time spent waiting for feedback and review from partners – created even tighter timeframes for the delivery of the document, necessitating a two-week extension for delivery.

Recommendations:

Action 4:

Allow ample time for revisions, as while the content may be straightforward, the manner in which it is represented visually can alter its impact and meaning. Several test runs of the module are required to ensure that the technical components not only work effectively, but also flow and are fully comprehensible.

Engage and promote the module prior to its development to build momentum and gather feedback from a range of stakeholders. This includes consulting with key stakeholders prior to developing the module in order to assess the level of knowledge and attitudes towards family violence and gender equality. This can provide valuable information that can subsequently inform the content of the module and ensure that it is relevant to its audience. The tight timelines for this project meant that pre-development consultation was not possible.

Allocate time to promote the eLearning module to Councillors, Executive Leadership and Management teams to promote ownership early on in the development of the module. Ensure that a comprehensive

communications plan that both targets key stakeholders and sells the module as an important element of the professional development of staff is in place.

Ensure that the module is relatable and engaging. Appeal to an individual's real-life experience rather than just presenting a technical overview of key concepts relating to gender equality and family violence. We attempted to achieve this through providing case studies based on real life events and the reported experiences of staff. It is important to reflect the voice of a diverse range of staff through the stories presented in the module. The more that people can identify with the issues, the more likely they will be able to engage more fully in the content.

Action 5:

Ensure that the workload for the sub-working group is evenly shared and distributed so that the final document reflects appropriate contributory breadth and is a genuine product of effective working partnerships.

Strategic Pillar 3: Community Change

Goal: Organisations will support, promote and contribute to community change through consultation and collaboration.

Objective	Proposed Action	Owner	Timeline
To ignite community change through awareness of PVAW&C across the SMR	6. Development of an events plan and schedule for PVAW&C campaigns, conferences and other relevant events and forums. For example, '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence'	Megan Bugden - WHISE Cher Twe - SMPCP	Q3-Q4 '16
To strengthen SMR community capacity to prevent violence against women and their children	7. Identify, monitor and explore opportunities to deliver collaborative PVAW&C education programs to community groups across a range of settings, including schools, faiths, sporting organisations, etc.	Michelle Jones - WHISE	Q4 '17
	8. Utilise the 'Promoting Equality and Respect: An Interfaith collaboration on prevention of family violence' resource and link to community initiatives such as '16 Days of Activism' (link to action 1 of this objective).	Michelle Jones - WHISE	Q4 '17

Strategy Achievements

Action 6:

An events plan/schedule was developed and then hosted on the WHISE Website under 'Our Work' > 'Campaigns'. Working group developed key messages for this year's 16 days campaign.

Action 7:

Sporting Communities:

As part of the *Together We Can* Prevention of Violence Initiative, WHISE established a working group to engage sporting communities within the Cardinia Shire. We identified the Emerald, Gembrook & Beaconsfield Football Clubs as prospective partners. These sporting clubs were considered potentially quite receptive to working with us, as they were already engaged with gender equity work. All three football clubs have been contacted and the working group is currently awaiting their responses.

The group identified the project objectives as:

To increase awareness on Family Violence & promote gender equity through education, beginning with definitions & explanations of what FV & GE are and the impact they have on the local community.

Potential opportunities identified as:

- Gender Equity Training
- Train the Trainer Model
- Gender Equity Audits of sporting facilities

The working group has developed an early action plan in the first and only meeting to date.

Faith communities:

Strategy partners identified faith settings as important settings with which to engage. As a sub-working group, we explored the best avenues through which we could engage with faith communities. The two avenues identified were:

1. Interfaith Networks across the region
2. Faith events – this is linked to **Action 8** as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, linking in to the Promoting Equality and Respect resource as a community initiative. This will be explained further under Action 8.

1a. On the 11th of July, WHISE delivered a 90-minute primary prevention education session to 16 Interfaith community members from the City of Greater Dandenong, with the aim of increasing knowledge of the drivers of gender based violence.

1b. On the 8th August in a follow-up session WHISE gave attendees the opportunity to discuss in more detail the challenges facing their faith from a violence prevention perspective.

1c. On the 19th of October, WHISE delivered a 90-minute primary prevention education session to nine Interfaith community members from the City of Port Phillip, with the aim of increasing knowledge of the drivers of gender based violence.

1d. On the 17th of November, WHISE delivered a 90-minute primary prevention education session to 14 Interfaith community members from the City of Casey, with the aim of increasing knowledge of the drivers of gender based violence.

Action 8: Two faith events run over the 16 Days of Activism:

- Event one: City of Greater Dandenong – Afghan Muslim Community - 25th November
- Event two: City of Kingston – Muslim Community (Multicultural) - 9th December

Outcomes:

Action 6:

As Above

Action 7:

- Interfaith evaluations -City of Greater Dandenong – Dandenong Interfaith Network

On the 11th of July 2017 WHISE facilitated a multi-faith focus group gathering within the City of Greater Dandenong to discuss ways in which local health service providers can work with community groups from within a faith setting to reduce the health burden of gender-based violence. Sixteen members from across the community, representing various faith groups, attended.

Included within that collaboration was a 90-minute primary prevention education session presented by WHISE, with the aim of increasing knowledge of the drivers of gender-based violence towards the prevention of violence against women.

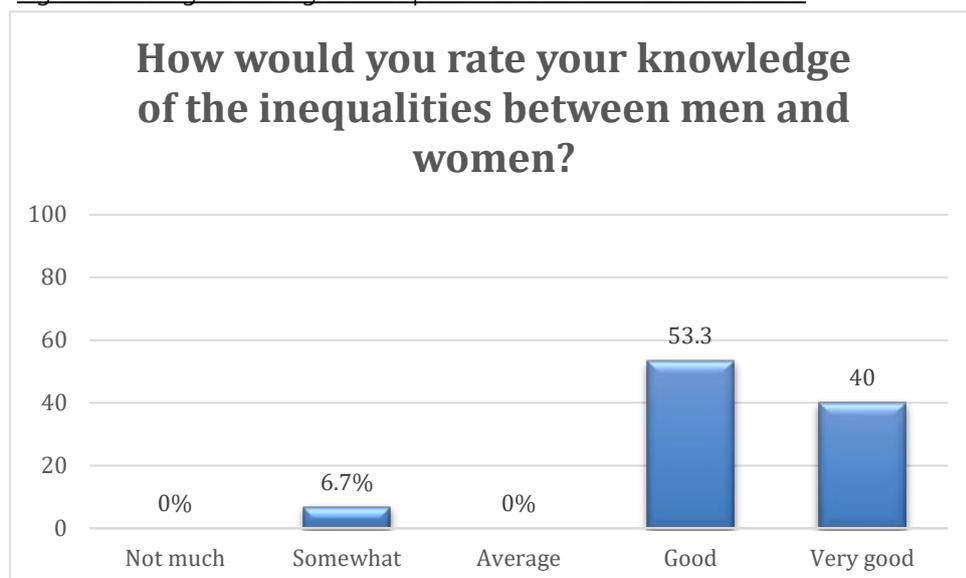
The objectives of the session were:

- To increase participant knowledge of the inequalities between men and women
- To increase participant knowledge and understanding of how gender inequity leads to gender-based violence
- To increase participant knowledge of the gendered drivers of gender-based violence
- To increase participant knowledge of ways to challenge gender-based violence

Following the presentation, attendees were asked to rate their understanding and knowledge pertaining to gender equality, the link between gender inequality and gender-based violence, primary prevention strategies and their satisfaction with the education session. Feedback was received via a post-session survey from all 16 attendees. Their responses are represented below.

Measure of Effectiveness 1: Following the presentation, how did the attendees rate their knowledge of the inequalities between men and women?

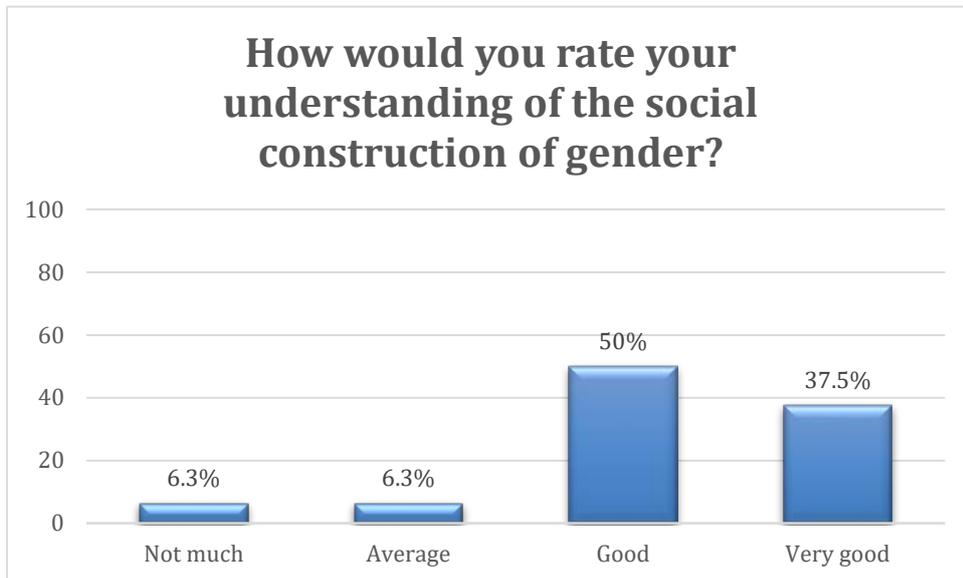
Figure 2: Rating knowledge of inequalities between men and women



Objective 1 was successfully met. Following the presentation, over 93% of attendees rated their knowledge of the inequalities between men and women as either 'good' or 'very good'.

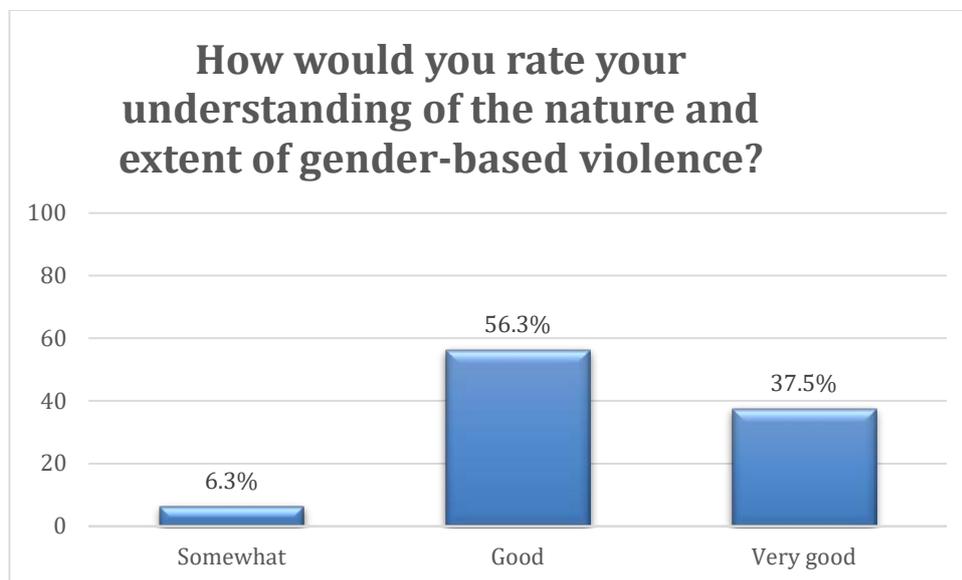
Measure of Effectiveness 2: Following the presentation, how did the attendees rate their knowledge and understanding of how gender inequality leads to gender-based violence?

Figure 3: Rating understanding of social construction of gender



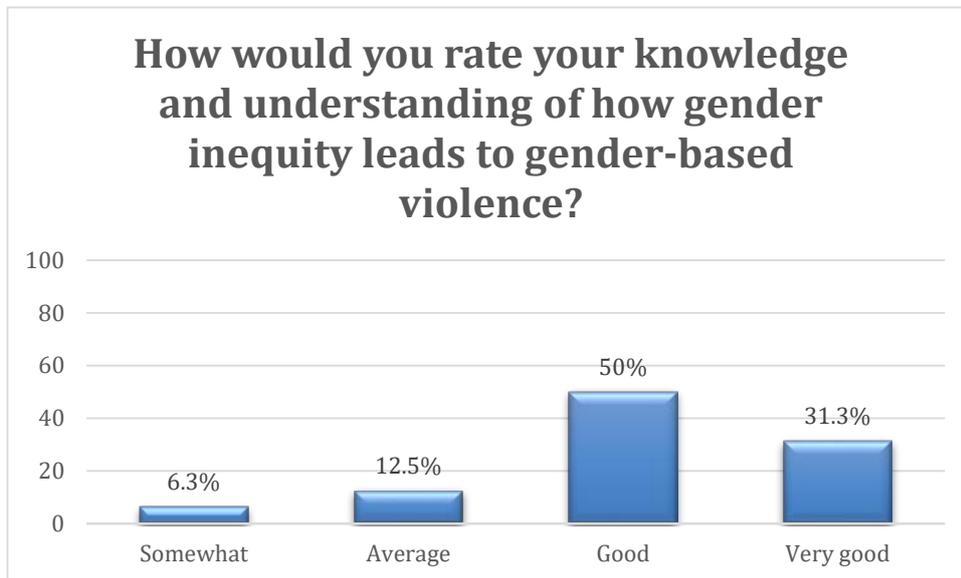
Objective 2 was successfully met. Following the presentation, over 87% of attendees rated their understanding of the social construction of gender as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Figure 4: Rating understanding of the nature and extent of gender-based violence



Over 93% of attendees rated their understanding of the nature and extent of gender-based violence as either 'good' or 'very good'.

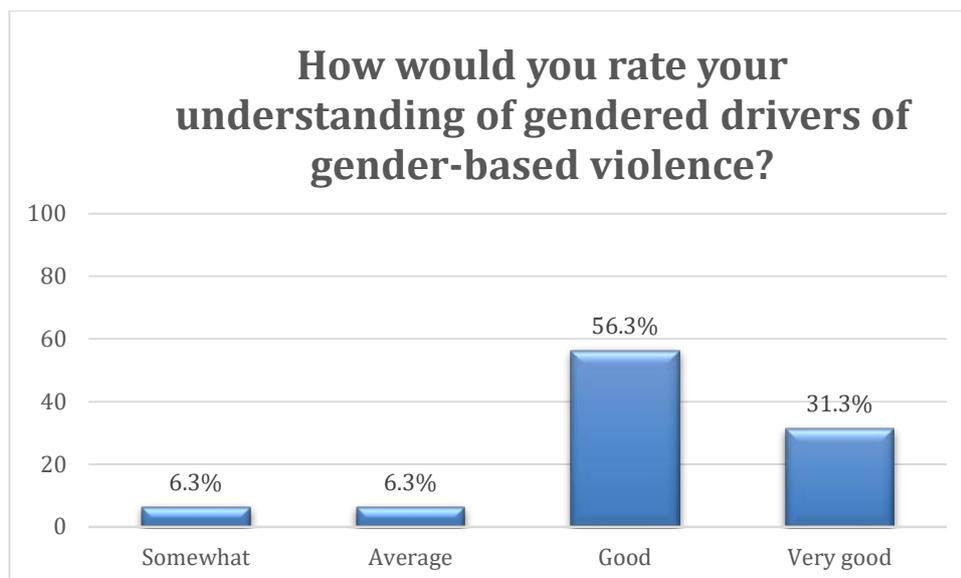
Figure 5: Rating knowledge of community understanding of how gender inequality leads to gender-based violence



Over 81% of attendees rated their understanding and knowledge of how gender inequality leads to gender-based violence as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Measure of Effectiveness 3: Following the presentation, how did the attendees rate their understanding of the gendered drivers of gender-based violence?

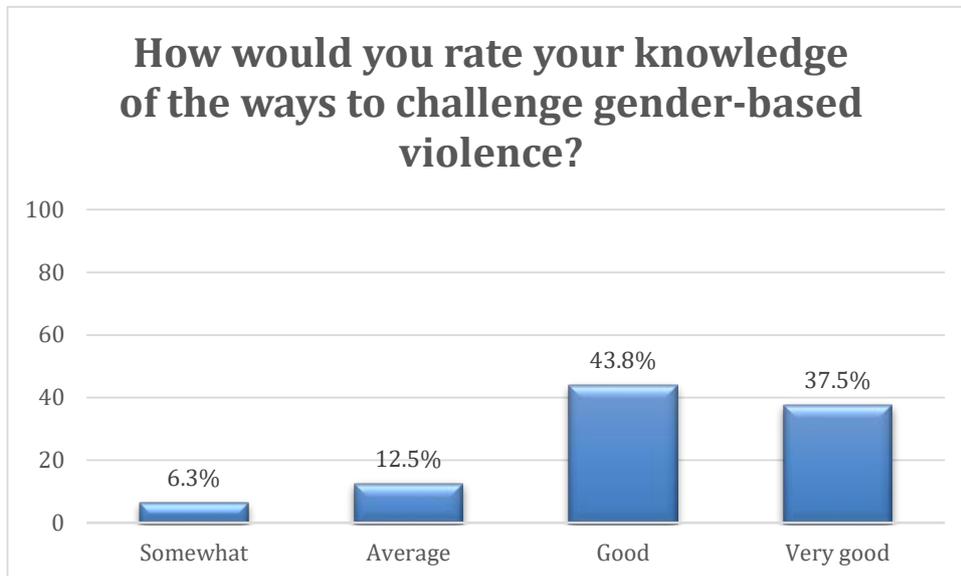
Figure 6: Rating understanding of gendered drivers of gender-based violence



Objective 3 was successfully met. Following the presentation, over 87% of attendees rated their understanding of the gendered drivers of gender-based violence as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Measure of Effectiveness 4: Following the presentation, how did the attendees rate their knowledge of the ways to challenge gender-based violence?

Figure 7: Rating knowledge of the ways to challenge gender-based violence



Objective 4 was successfully met. Following the presentation, over 81% of attendees rated their knowledge of the ways to challenge gender-based violence as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Measure of Satisfaction: To what extent were attendees satisfied with the delivery of the session?

Figure 8: Satisfaction with the delivery of the session



Of those who responded, 100% of attendees rated their satisfaction as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees was received on the day:

- *"Very structured and systematically done. Some more unpacking of what is being done to address the situation would be empowering."*
- *"I felt the information was informative and well-presented."*
- *"It's a difficult and sobering topic of discussion but the presenters did a good job in ensuring our attention through discussion and activities."*
- *"Great presentation and discussion"*

And constructive feedback from attendees provided valuable insight for future sessions:

- *"More involvement from participants"*
- *"A short break in the middle would be appreciated."*
- *"More activity-based work"*

1.2 Feedback Survey

For two weeks immediately following the Gender Equity Community Education presentation, all community members who attended the session were given the opportunity to complete a Survey Monkey questionnaire, inviting feedback on the Gender Equity presentation from a faith-sensitive and faith-appropriate perspective.

The survey comprised 12 qualitative questions, tabled below.

Table 2: Feedback Survey

Q1	Are there any examples of norms, practices and structures that either promote or do not promote gender equality WHISE should make reference to in the GE presentation?
Q2	The video included on gendered norms showing how children understand the differences between boys and girls – was this faith-appropriate?
Q3	Were the questions about beliefs, values and expectations on the roles of men and women faith-appropriate?
Q4	Was our use of visual examples and videos faith-appropriate?
Q5	Should we include additional content on beliefs, values and expectations about the roles of men and women specific to your faith communities?
Q6	Did you find the Google definitions of masculinity and femininity faith-appropriate?
Q7	Are there media examples of masculinity and femininity from your culture we could include?
Q8	Is there anything that stood out to you as being faith-inappropriate?
Q8	Where there any significant gaps in our presentation you would like us to address?
Q10	Do we need to discuss specific ways gender inequity manifests itself across various faith groups?
Q11	Would you be interested in providing additional feedback to WHISE on how to construct the content to make this faith specific and appropriate?
Q12	Do you have any other feedback you wish to offer?

Key findings from the survey are included below:

- Due to most faith leaders being male, unconscious bias can impede modern interpretation of norms, practices and structures in terms of gender equality.
- Presentation examples used, such as videos, visuals, Google definitions, and questions on beliefs, values and expectations were considered faith-appropriate.

- In terms of beliefs, values and expectations in relation to gendered roles, clarifying the confusion that exists in terms of faith and culture would be beneficial in presenting within faith contexts on equality and equity.
- There were no aspects within the presentation that were considered inappropriate from a faith perspective.
- There were no identified gaps in the presentation in terms of addressing gender equity from a faith perspective.
- Participants welcomed further collaboration on future faith-specific presentations.

1.3 Focus Group

In a follow-up session on the 8th of August WHISE gave attendees the opportunity to discuss in more detail the challenges facing their faith from a violence prevention perspective. One of the most distinguishing themes to emerge from these discussions surrounds the blurring of lines between pure religion and cultural practices. Structural gender inequalities within some faiths, particularly in terms of the allocation of leadership positions, has led to an entrenched cultural practice of viewing men as superior to women. In fact, religious texts do not dictate this inequality.

Key points from those discussions follow:

- Men and women are valued equally within our faith.
- In Hinduism, the body is not identified. It is the soul that earns merit (good or bad) – so in a sense, gender is irrelevant.
- Men and women have different roles to play. There are things only a woman can do; there are things only a man can do.
- Men are given lots of responsibilities, and as a result, he has more opportunity to gain merits, than women. Because of the roles, the only way that women can be treated equally is by getting more merits from her husband. There is always imbalance.
- Core concepts get lost in translation.
- I came through my mother therefore I am indebted to her.
- No one has more power than the other because faith means everyone earns merits equally. How well this is being practiced is the question.
- Traditional division of labour in Hinduism was split into four sections based on religious activity, business activity, protection of people, and helpers. Modern day, this has been misused.
- I try not to put my own thoughts because I'm scared of [community] withdrawal.
- In Buddhism, concentrating on your own self-awareness means you will not harm others or yourself.
- In Buddhism, men are superior to women. Parents are delighted to have a boy child. More valued just by being born a male.
- Women cannot be monks. A woman's voice is not believed over a monk's.
- Buddhist nuns are not as highly regarded as monks.
- Being born a woman, it is difficult for you to go to enlightenment. You cannot because you cannot be the monk. The gap between a woman and a holy man is very far. This has put the gap between men and women.
- I cannot differentiate between pure religion and culture. It's a difficult distinction.
- There is fear in bystander action.

1. City of Port Phillip Interfaith Group

As part of the Community Change strategic pillar of the “Preventing Violence Together” strategy, WHISE sought to explore opportunities in which to deliver collaborative PVAW&C education programs within communities of the SMR. In recognition of the significant role faith-based settings play in influencing community attitudes, norms and behaviours, WHISE identified various faith groups within the SMR seeking to work collaboratively with WHISE within the PVAW&C prevention space.

A faith needs analysis was conducted to determine where the key issues lie with respect to family violence and family violence services; to identify any gaps that may exist, from an access point or otherwise; and to receive invaluable insight into the family violence prevention needs of individual faith communities across the SMR.

In line with WHISE core practice within the primary prevention space, a 90-minute Gender Equity community education session was delivered to nine interfaith community members from the City of Port Phillip on the 19th of October 2017, with the aim to increase knowledge on the drivers of gender-based violence.

The objectives of the session were:

- To increase attendee knowledge of the inequalities between men and women
- To increase attendee knowledge of the gendered drivers of gender-based violence
- To increase attendee knowledge and understanding on how gender inequity leads to gender-based violence
- To increase attendee knowledge on the ways to challenge gender-based violence

WHISE captured a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data to determine reach (see table 1) and program efficacy against the objectives (see table 2).

Table 3. Evaluation Measures for the City of Port Phillip Interfaith Session

Evaluation Measures			
Process Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people attended the focus group session? • How many people responded to the feedback survey? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 people attended • 6 people responded to the survey
Impact Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Was there an understanding of gender inequities within their faith? 2. Was there an acknowledgment of drivers that contribute to gender inequalities and gender-based violence? 	Ob 1 Q1, Q3 Ob 2, 3 Q2	

	3. Was there a knowledge of community-based primary prevention strategies?	Ob 4 Q4	
	4. Was there an understanding of individually-led prevention strategies?	Ob 4 Q5	

Following the presentation, WHISE invited attendees to share their thoughts from a faith perspective on the values and expectations of men and women; gender equality; primary prevention and service provision within their community; and ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home.

Responses from six attendees across four faiths groups were captured. Amalgamated responses from the attendees were measured against our session objectives to determine program efficacy. Results from this evaluation are detailed in table 2. Key points provided by attendees from a faith-segregated perspective are provided in table 3.

Table 4: Measures of Efficacy

Objective 1: To increase attendee knowledge of the inequalities between men and women.	
Measure 1: Was there a demonstrated understanding of how gender inequities exist within their faith?	In all faiths represented there was the statement that men and women are created equal, however most faiths acknowledged this is not always manifested in daily practice. For example, one faith believes woman was created from the rib of man, and that women are weaker because historically, biblically, woman succumbed to temptation and influenced man. All faiths acknowledged the different roles expected of men and women, and the strong gendered stereotypes in terms of behaviours and attitudes. Inequality was acknowledged by most faiths, particularly in terms of decision-making. Men have more power than women, even in terms of women's lives.
Objective Met/Not Met	Met. Most faiths acknowledged the presence of gender inequalities present within their faith.
Objective 2: To increase attendee knowledge of the gendered drivers of gender-based violence.	
Measure 2:	Spiritual leadership being exclusively the domain of men across all faiths represented was identified as the most significant structural barrier to gender

<p>Was there a demonstrated acknowledgment of the drivers that contribute to gender inequalities?</p>	<p>equality, and alongside that, the variations in the interpretations of scripture (by men) a concomitant barrier.</p> <p>The deeply entrenched gendered roles assigned to men and women still impacted gender equality in some faiths. In some faiths there is evidence this is beginning to change, however change is stated to be slow.</p>
<p>Objective Met/Not Met</p>	<p>Met. There was a good demonstration of knowledge in the ways in which structural barriers within their faith contribute towards gender inequalities.</p>
<p>Objective 3: To increase attendee knowledge and understanding on how gender inequity leads to gender-based violence.</p>	
<p>Measure 2: Was there a demonstrated acknowledgment of the drivers that contribute to gender inequalities?</p>	<p>Spiritual leadership being exclusively the domain of men across all faiths represented was identified as the most significant structural barrier to gender equality, and alongside that, the variations in the interpretations of scripture (by men) a concomitant barrier.</p> <p>The deeply entrenched gendered roles assigned to men and women still impacted gender equality in some faiths. In some faiths there is evidence this is beginning to change, however change is stated to be slow.</p> <p>One faith group discussed the belief that womanhood was a punishment to work though. This belief system may potentially condone the use of violence, however this was not expressly stated.</p>
<p>Objective Met/Not Met</p>	<p>Not met. All faith groups who responded indicated an acknowledgement of structures in place that lead to inequalities, but no direct link was made by any group between gender inequalities and gender-based violence.</p>
<p>Objective 4: To increase attendee knowledge on the ways to challenge gender-based violence.</p>	
<p>Measure 3: Was there a demonstrated knowledge of community-based primary prevention strategies?</p>	<p>Most faith groups identified the importance of a settings-based approach for primary prevention in the PVAW space. Education programs within schools and community spaces were discussed as being beneficial and much needed.</p> <p>Structural changes in terms of institutional policies and procedures, and refocusing resources were also identified as important for challenging current norms and practices that support violence culture.</p>

Measure 4: Was there a demonstrated understanding of individually-led prevention strategies?	At an individual level, all faith groups who responded talked about the importance of leading by example through healthy role modelling, fostering respectful relationships and challenging violence-condoning and enabling attitudes, behaviours and beliefs when they encounter them.
Objective Met/Not Met	Partially met. There was a good demonstration of knowledge in ways to challenge gender inequities at both a community level and at an individual level, but no specific knowledge of any community-based primary prevention strategies was demonstrated.

Table 5. Faith-segregated responses to the questionnaire

Attendees from the Buddhist faith	
On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone who is able to work with their minds has the ability to move from suffering to happiness. Subject to starting point, access to means and opportunity to positive role-models. • All beings are equal. To care and be compassionate. All beings have the potential to be self-actualised and compassionate.
On structures in place the prescribe different roles for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes they do exist, depending on school/tradition/path. Culturally, everyone has a contribution to play within the household based on skills/habits/age. • Some roles are assigned based on context. The highest breadwinner works, the other stays home (gender non-specific). • There are male and female traditional roles. There are many monks and nuns, but I don't know of any female Lamas, nor any pathways for women to reach higher ranks. • Buddhism believes human rise in rank according to Karma. Once all beings have reached full self-actualisation and the optimum stage of nirvana, then all things are truly equal.
On gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those who can work with their minds can liberate themselves from suffering • Some dogma exists within some groups: women are subservient to men; women being ordained shorted Buddha's teachings; Female form was a regressed male and a "punishment" to work though.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality is accessible to all. Buddhism is non-judgemental. Compassionate equally regardless of gender. • There are no promotional opportunities for women to become Lama, in spite of her length of service or how knowledgeable or insightful to may have evolved to become. • There are female deities with equal qualities, if not more or greater power and qualities as the Buddha himself.
On primary prevention and service provision within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact/write/editorial/advertorial in language-specific local press. • Teaching all individuals to be compassionate. The foundation of this value and focus is on the pathway to being fully self-actualised. Removal of the EGO to consider that all actions are to benefit all sentient beings. • Each individual is able to contribute by setting wholesome, intelligent, respectful examples in society.
On ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build healthy communities via emotional intelligence training through schools, programs at post-school level. More services for behaviour change. Suicide prevention programs. More provision for attitude shifts in schools, TAFEs, etc. • Listen, discuss, reflect, transform. Share surpluses. • Maintain leading by example, challenging sexist views, comments that are inappropriate.
Attendees from the Christian faith	
On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men are the protectors, leaders, bearers of responsibility, made in the image of God. Responsible and accountable to God for the life and wellbeing of the family. Carers of children. Warriors, healers, prophets, tillers of the land, shepherds of the herds. • Women are child-bearers, companions to men, run the household, can be the breadwinner along with the man, heals, child protectors and rearers. • Men and women are created equal, but this is not practiced in terms of ordained ministry – women are excluded. • There is a strong patriarchal lineage and interpretation in regard to scripture. Historically, women represented as virginal/mother. • Men are unemotional, detached, 'blokeish', sporty. Women are nurturing, caring, more interested in social matters.

<p>On structures in place the prescribe different roles for men and women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures are changing within some aspects of Christianity, but there's no consistency. There is considerable diversity. Ordination of women to the priesthood and to be Bishops is still opposed in some sectors of Christianity. Major structure preventing full equality is the issue of ordination of women into priesthood and beyond.
<p>On gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretation of scripture varies within our faith. Genesis 1 can be interpreted as pro-equality, and 2 can be interpreted as pro-inequality. Tradition is biased towards men in being challenged and changed, but it is inconsistent and has some wealthy and powerful opposition. Both genders are equal but there is a Biblical tradition/myth that woman was made from the rib of a man. Women are weaker because Eve succumbed to temptation and then influenced Adam. In Biblical times women were secondary to men and either stayed at home or only went out if with a man. This has changed in contemporary times – women have been made vicars/bishops/archbishops.
<p>On primary prevention and service provision within the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education programs, changing of canons/policies. Restructuring institutional systems/structures. Women can now take up positions and roles once confined to men. Refocusing resources, including financial/economic. Building healthy relationships.
<p>On ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home and community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It takes time to change social, cultural and theological thinking and teaching. Create discussion groups. Create support groups for men, women and children. In the home, determination to sustain relationships.
<p>Attendees from the Judaism faith</p>	
<p>On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Orthodox Judaism, men are the Torah learners, can be Rabbis, lead religious organisations, determine religious matters, including women's health, obtains a wife, can grant a divorce. Women are home makers, child rearers, subservient to men, modest in dress, voice and ideas, bought in marriage, can't give/obtain a divorce.
<p>On structures in place the prescribe different roles for men and women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orthodox Judaism only men can become religious leaders (slowly changing). Only men wear religious garb. In Progressive Judaism, women can and do become religious leaders and wear religious garb.
<p>On gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orthodox would say equal, but different roles. Progressive promotes gender equality. Only difference is that girls do not get circumcised.

On primary prevention and service provision within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judaism fails in this regard, although things are changing slowly. Too slowly in some communities.
Attendees identifying as Agnostic	
On structures in place the prescribe different roles for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel most organised religion perpetuates gender inequalities
On gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In my family, my husband works full-time and I work part-time, take care of household duties and tend the children. It is important to both of us that I am available for the children's needs. I would love to earn more money and have greater mental challenges but my primary priority is the children's wellbeing. They will bring about change.
On primary prevention and service provision within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My home life is about chasing our dreams, working hard and enjoying each other. I speak openly against mass media's portrayal of women as sexual beings. I raise questions with the family surrounding gender stereotypes and point out the judgements we make.

2. City of Casey Interfaith Group

As part of the Community Change strategic pillar of the "Preventing Violence Together" strategy, WHISE sought to explore opportunities in which to deliver collaborative PVAW&C education programs within communities of the SMR. In recognition of the significant role faith-based settings play in influencing community attitudes, norms and behaviours, WHISE identified various faith groups within the SMR seeking to work collaboratively with WHISE within the PVAW&C prevention space.

A faith needs analysis was conducted to determine where the key issues lie with respect to family violence and family violence services; to identify any gaps that may exist, from an access point perspective or otherwise; and to receive invaluable insights into the family violence prevention needs of individual faith communities across the SMR.

In line with WHISE core practice within the primary prevention space, a 90-minute Gender Equity community education session was delivered to 16 interfaith community members from the City of Casey on the 16th of November 2017, with the aim of increasing knowledge of the drivers of gender-based violence.

The objectives of the session were:

- To increase attendee knowledge of the inequalities between men and women
- To increase attendee knowledge of the gendered drivers of gender-based violence
- To increase attendee knowledge and understanding of how gender inequity leads to gender-based violence
- To increase attendee knowledge of the ways to challenge gender-based violence

WHISE captured a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data to determine reach (see table 1) and program efficacy against the objectives (see table 7).

Table 6. Evaluation Measures for the City of Casey Interfaith Session

Evaluation Measures			
Process Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many people attended the focus group session? How many people responded to the feedback survey? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 people attended 14 people responded to the survey
Impact Indicators	1. Was there an understanding of gender inequities within their faith?	Ob 1, Q1, Q3	
	2. Was there an acknowledgment of drivers that contribute to gender inequalities and gender-based violence?	Ob 2, 3, Q2	
	3. Was there a knowledge of community-based primary prevention strategies?	Ob 4, Q4	
	4. Was there an understanding of individually-led prevention strategies?	Ob 4, Q5	

Following the presentation, WHISE invited attendees to share their thoughts from a faith perspective on the values and expectations of men and women; gender equality; primary prevention and service provision within their community; and ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home.

Responses from 14 attendees across six faith groups were captured. Amalgamated responses from the attendees were measured against our session objectives to determine program efficacy. Results from this evaluation are detailed in table 2. Key points provided by attendees from a faith-segregated perspective are provided in table 3.

Table 7: Measures of Efficacy

Objective 1: To increase attendee knowledge of the inequalities between men and women	
<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>Was there a demonstrated understanding of how gender inequities exist within their faith?</p>	<p>Equality and respect for all (men, women, children, all living things) was a tenet shared by all faiths represented in the discussion. There was universal agreement in a stance against violence of any kind. Most faiths reiterated the position that men are responsible for taking care of their wives and children, to protect them, and to be kind and loving.</p> <p>Gender inequality was acknowledged by four of the six groups. One response stated that sacred texts can be conflicting, and sometimes taken out of context. Misinterpretation of texts can infer that the male sex is superior. There was acknowledgment from one faith that scripture is written from a patriarchal perspective as women were unable to put their views into writing. Inequalities in one group were indicated by the expectation women will kneel and obey their</p>

	husbands (but not the other way around). One non-faith group stated women are valued less (as exemplified by the gender pay gap).
Objective Met/Not Met	Partially met. Four out of six faith groups who responded acknowledged the existence of gender inequalities within their belief system. Two groups stipulated equality exists between the genders.
Objective 2: To increase attendee knowledge of the gendered drivers of gender-based violence	
Measure 2: Was there a demonstrated acknowledgment of the drivers that contribute to gender inequalities?	All faith groups acknowledged structures in place that contribute to and sustain the differences in roles and rights available to men and women. Examples given were restrictions in the allocation of leadership positions to only the male sex; restrictions upon women during menstruation; entrenched regulations such as catechisms. One response discussed the practice of men being in charge of family decision-making and that traditionally women held no value, and were considered goods and chattels belonging to the male head of the family.
Objective Met/Not Met	Met. There was a good demonstration of knowledge in the ways in which structural barriers within their faith contribute towards gender inequalities.
Objective 3: To increase attendee knowledge and understanding of how gender inequity leads to gender-based violence	
Measure 2: Was there a demonstrated acknowledgment of the drivers that contribute to gender inequalities?	All faith groups acknowledged structures in place that contribute to and sustain the differences in roles and rights available to men and women. Examples given were restrictions in the allocation of leadership positions to only the male sex; restrictions upon women during menstruation; entrenched regulations such as catechisms. One response discussed the practice of men being in charge of family decision-making, and that traditionally women held no value, and were considered goods and chattels belonging to the male head of the family.
Objective Met/Not Met	Not met. All faith groups who responded indicated an acknowledgement of structures in place that lead to inequalities, but no link was made by any group between gender inequalities and gender-based violence.
Objective 4: To increase attendee knowledge of the ways to challenge gender-based violence	
Measure 3: Was there a demonstrated knowledge of community-based primary prevention strategies?	There was an acknowledged lack of knowledge on existing services. Settings-based approaches (schools, workplaces) were mentioned as possible places for primary prevention, but no programs were directly mentioned, indicating a lack of knowledge. One response mentioned the need for education that supports true teachings: to mix culture with faith teachings and to increase primary prevention training for school teachers, parents and guardians.
Measure 4: Was there a demonstrated	All faith groups indicated the importance of teaching equality and respect for children – both boys and girls. The importance of modelling

understanding of individually led prevention strategies?	respectful relationships, rather than simply preaching practice. The importance of sharing unpaid, domestic work between men and women, boys and girls. The importance of shared family time. One group stipulated the importance of personally exploring the difference between their core religious beliefs and common cultural practices, to ensure they mirror.
Objective Met/Not Met	Partially met. There was a good demonstration of knowledge in ways to challenge gender inequities at an individual level, but no knowledge of community-based primary prevention strategies demonstrated.

Table 8. Faith-segregated responses to the questionnaire

Attendees from the Islam faith	
On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam promotes equality and respect for all. • Islam specifies different roles for men and women, but does not condone disrespect to individuals or tasks assigned to individual roles. • Men are responsible for taking care of his wife and children. • Women take care of the family.
On gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of the Islamic faith are considered equal, and are expected to follow the same rules. They will also be judged equally. • There are inequalities: women are expected to kneel, and obey their husbands.
On primary prevention and service provision within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the true teachings of Islam would result in no violence. • Community teachings of service to all, of meeting mental health care needs, of men and teachers leading by example, of providing a home environment that supports true teachings, of men teaching children how to treat women. • There is a lack of knowledge about existing services. • Need education within our religion – to mix culture with faith teachings • Our teachers need training in primary prevention.
On ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach our children, both boys and girls, to treat each other with respect. • Follow the teachings of the Quran – everything is clear. • Teach our sons to cook and change nappies. • Educate • Change attitudes. • Call out in appropriate behaviour. • Increase self-esteem.
Attendees from the Christian faith	
On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men and women are equal, however sacred texts can be conflicting, especially if taken out of context. For example, some texts seem to say that the male gender is superior. • Scripture is written from a patriarchal perspective, as historically, women were unable to put their views into writing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men and women together reflect the image of God. • Men are in charge of major family decision-making; women make decisions about children's activities. • Women and children hold no value – they are considered 'goods and chattels' belonging to the male head of the family. • Ten commandments hold the main permissive and restrictive behaviours.
On structures in place that prescribe different roles for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic catechisms • Deep seated rules and regulations that differentiate roles afforded to men and women. For example, only men can become Priests. • Priests themselves • Yes, the order of relationships: God, then men, then women. Equal – but not subservient. Equal in giving care. • Women have only recently been allowed to read scriptures, but are still unable to conduct rites. • There are no seats of power in the hierarchy for women.
On gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no gender equality. Roles are separate. Women are unable to be 'top of the pack'. • Both genders are equal, but complementary. • It's difficult to get the male power dominance to shift. • Men and women together reflect the image of God. Different rules for each – but equal.
On primary prevention and service provision within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly charitable activities? Homes, possibly schools – but most are likely to continue the dogma and doctrine of the pushback on marriage equality. • Early education for both boys and girls. • Adult faith education to empower parents and guardians to be correctly informed.
On ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show respect. Listen rather than dogmatic talk. • Lead by example. I am a self-supporting professional woman who speaks her mind and travels the world. I have been seen as a role model to younger women, of what is possible.
Attendees from the Buddhist faith	
On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhist teaching is in the treatment of equality to both sexes.
On gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhists believe strongly in gender equality. There is no restriction for men and women to come to temples.
Attendees from the Judaism faith	

On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are directions about men treating women in a respectful, kind, loving manner. Women are the queens of the household.
On structures in place that prescribe different roles for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women have restrictions placed on them during times of menstruation: in the synagogue and during prayer times in general.
On gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no gender equality.
On primary prevention and service provision within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are probably gaps that exist in the provision of services within our faith community. • I suppose the way of life is supposed to be gentle.
On ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can make an effort with your grandchildren, if you are permitted to.
Attendees from the Mormon faith	
On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We as the Children of God practice charity, the 'pure love of Christ' – to be kind to every living thing. • The gospel teaches us to respect all genders and to live peacefully and to love one another. • Mormons respect men and women equally and abhor violence.
On structures in place that prescribe different roles for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only men hold the Priesthood but women have strong leadership roles and it is not the problem society makes it out to be. • Husbands and wives respect each other in all aspects of our lives. • Women are capable of being highly evolved – sometimes more than men. • The Bible gives guidelines for men and women.
On gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husbands and wives are equal. Men and women are all precious children of God. • It does not matter whether a person is male or female – all are loved by God. • God made men and women equal. We have our purposes but we are not more important than another. • We need to be equal and respect and love each other *equally to stop violence.
On ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show examples of love, respect and create a peaceful environment at home and our children can learn from their parents good behaviour. • Parents be good role models in displaying respect for their children. • Housework at home should be equally shared, to be done between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family evening to be held every Monday night to teach decisions, enjoy and value families. • Sunday talks on good values • General conference from headquarters each year, held 6 monthly, teach directly on this subject. • Sunday services where people come to learn and are offered counseling and healing • Lead by example.
Attendees identifying as Atheist	
On beliefs, values and expectations of men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are valued less (equal pay for equal work, for example).
On ways in which individuals can act to promote gender equality within the home and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my work in teaching English to migrants and refugees from many faiths, I make a point of introducing gender equality and how it exists within an Australian context, where possible. I help students consider what is a cultural practice and what is a core belief of their religion.

Action 8:

Promoting Equality and Respect Community Forum - Kingston

On the 9th of December, in partnership with key stakeholders, WHISE presented the "Promoting Equality and Respect in the Muslim Community in Kingston – 16 Days of Activism" forum event engaging leaders and members from the Muslim faith community within the Kingston area, to discuss ways in which gender-based violence can be challenged at a community level, from within a faith setting.

The objectives of the session were:

- To increase attendee understanding of the drivers of gender-based violence, including challenging rigid stereotypes and gender roles
- To increase attendee knowledge of the significance of faith settings in support of gender equity and violence prevention
- To build capacity of attendees to challenge gendered structures, practices and beliefs within their faith communities, towards violence prevention
- To increase attendee commitment and engagement in violence prevention strategies within faith settings and faith communities
- To promote community collaboration and strengthen local council, faith group and service provider partnerships to appropriately address and prevent family violence

The event was presented over a three-hour period and attracted 33 attendees and eight children. Five guest speakers were invited to present, with their talks covering five separate themes:

Gender inequality, gender stereotypes, and the impact on Muslim women.

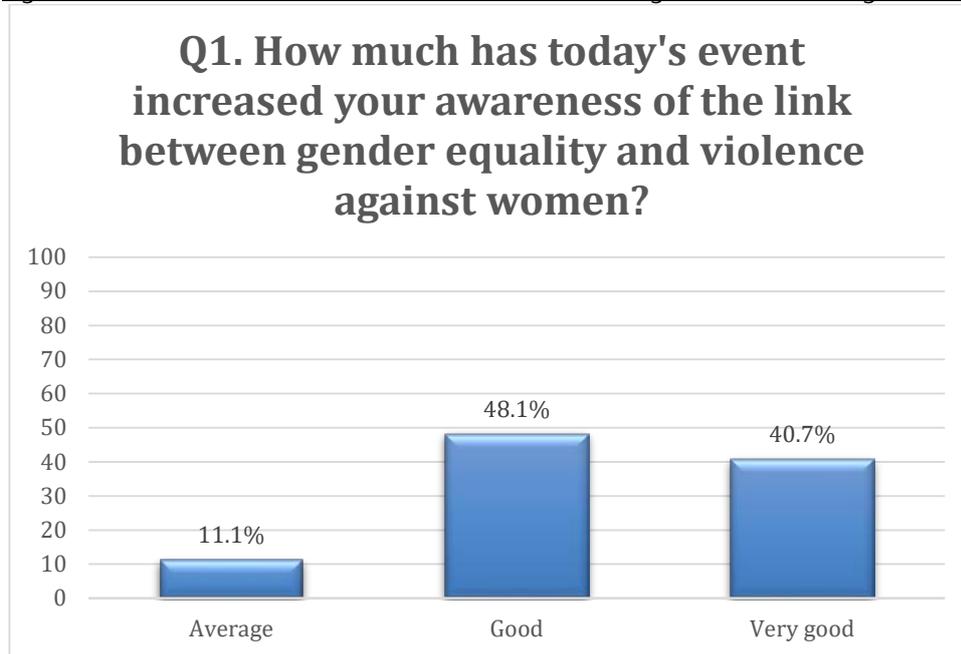
They included:

- Addressing and strategising against the negative beliefs and practices that are condoned or justified on the basis of religion
- Highlighting the positive aspects of Islam in women's lives, and the potential to empower women
- Local action – what has been done to impact change
- Bystander action – how we can all become Upstanders

After the event, a five-question survey was distributed to all attendees inviting their feedback on the event. We sought to measure any changes the event may have brought about in their knowledge and awareness of gender equality and family violence drivers, and their confidence in committing to community action towards the elimination of family violence. We also sought to measure attendee enjoyment of the event's content and delivery, to provide context for future event planning. Feedback was received from 26 attendees, and their responses are summarised below.

Measure of Effectiveness 1: To what extent did the event increase attendees' understanding of the drivers of gender-based violence?

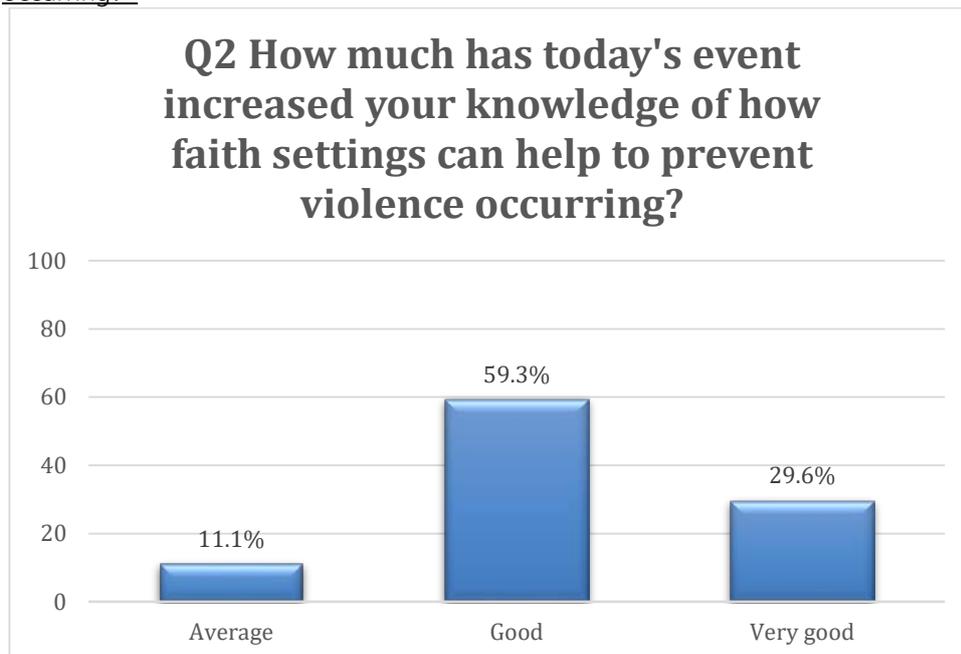
Figure 9: Did the event increase attendees' understanding of the drivers of gender-based violence



Objective 1 was successfully met. Over 88% of attendees who responded rated the event as having increased their awareness of the link between gender equality and violence against women either 'good' or 'very good'.

Measure of Effectiveness 2: To what extent did the event increase attendees' knowledge of the significance of faith settings in support of gender equity and violence prevention?

Figure 10: Did the event increase knowledge of how faith settings can help to prevent violence from occurring?



Objective 2 was successfully met. Over 88% of attendees who responded rated the event as having increased their knowledge as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Measure of Effectiveness 3: To what extent did the event increase attendees' capacity to challenge gendered structures, practices and beliefs within their faith communities, towards violence prevention?

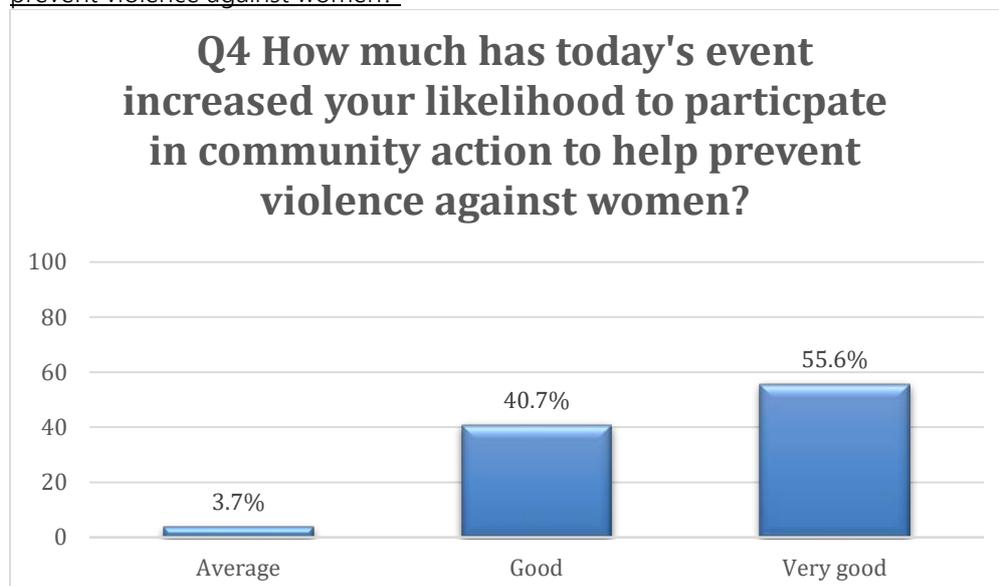
Figure 11: How much did the event increase confidence to promote respectful relationships within community?



Objective 3 was successfully met. Over 88% of attendees who responded rated the event as having increased their confidence in promoting respectful relationships within their community either 'good' or 'very good'.

Measure of Effectiveness 4: To what extent did the event increase attendees' commitment and engagement in violence prevention strategies within faith settings and faith communities?

Figure 12: Did the event increase the likelihood the community would participate in action to help prevent violence against women?



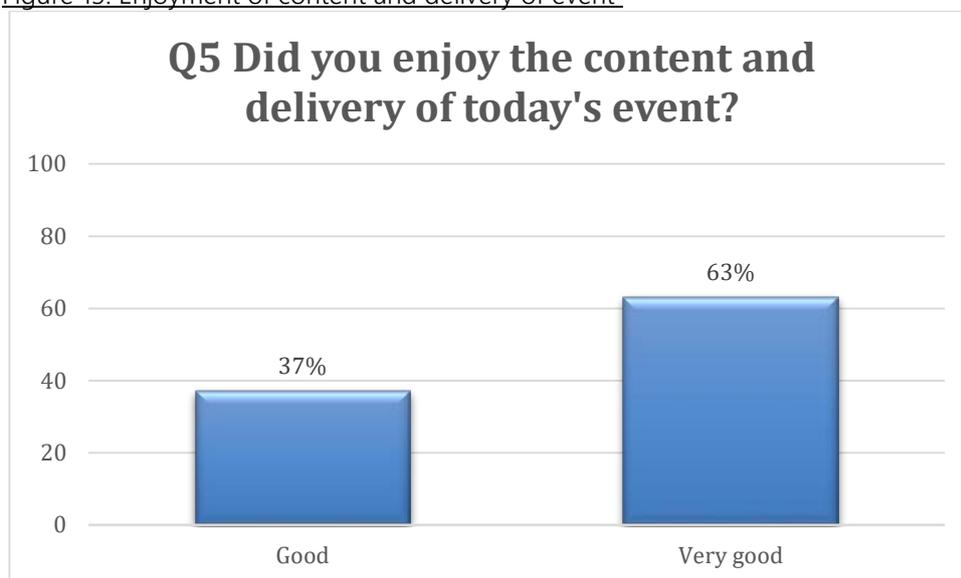
Objective 4 was successfully met. Over 95% of attendees who responded rated the event as having increased their likelihood of participating in community action in violence prevention either 'good' or 'very good'.

Measure of Effectiveness 5: To what extent did the event promote community collaboration and strengthen local council, faith group and service provider partnerships in violence prevention efforts?

The Muslim faith event at Kingston had representation from the Islamic Council of Victoria, City of Kingston Interfaith group, Indonesian Muslim Community of Victoria and the Centre for Empowerment and Research. We had some preliminary discussions with the Indonesian Muslim Community of Victoria who expressed an interest in working with us in the future. Partnerships such as these have the potential to amplify the messaging of the Prevention of Violence within community-specific settings and warrant strengthening.

Measure of Satisfaction: To what extent did attendees enjoy the content and delivery of the event?

Figure 13: Enjoyment of content and delivery of event



100% of attendees who responded rated how they enjoyed the event as either 'good' or 'very'.

Empowered and Respectful Communities Forum

25th of November 2017

Event Summary

In conjunction with 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence and International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, WHISE co-designed and delivered a forum to engage the Afghan community in Dandenong and surrounding suburbs. The forum aimed to support culturally appropriate community dialogue and awareness raising around the intersection of Islam, gender and violence against women (VAW), and provide a local platform to strategise against VAW and preventing family violence.

The forum was designed to address the following objectives within the Afghan community:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of gender equality and VAW
- Increase knowledge of the significance of faith settings in primary prevention of VAW
- Build capacity of faith leaders and communities to appropriately address and prevent family violence
- Increase commitment and confidence to prevent VAW within faith settings and faith communities

Through the engagement of local religious and community leaders, a panel discussion was facilitated in Dari language. Fifty Afghan men, women, elders and youth from the community came together to discuss the positive impact that Islam and faith settings can have in promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women and children with a focus on the following themes:

- Highlighting the positive aspect of Islam in women's lives and potential to empower women
- Addressing and strategising against the negative beliefs and practices that are being condoned or justified on the basis of Islam
- Local action: Identifying what has/is being done to address VAW in the Afghan community e.g. successes, challenges, recommendations
- Lived experience: An Afghan youth perspective on understanding the complexity of gender, religion and culture in an Australian context

An audience Q&A followed the panel discussion, which provided a further opportunity discuss the themes and direct questions to the panellists.

Background

Evidence-based practice has identified faith-based contexts as priority settings to prevent violence against women (VAW) (Our Watch 2016). Faith settings provide an important environment to reach the wider community, and where social and cultural values can be formed and transformed. These environments and faith leaders can be a powerful influence in driving change to support social norms and beliefs that promote gender equality. Intersecting factors such as race and faith also shape socially created stereotypes and expectations about gender. Discrimination or fear of racism may influence Muslim women's access to prevention programs, services, social opportunities and support (Multicultural

Centre for Women's Health 2017). Therefore, it is important to challenge harmful assumptions about Muslim communities as an essential component of preventing violence against Muslim women.

Extensive community consultation has revealed Islam and the local faith community as a strength and protective factor in preventing family violence within the Afghan community. Interviews with over 45 Afghan community members and 31 key stakeholders in the region revealed Afghan women and men identified a strong connection to their faith communities as an opportunity for social participation, promoting social inclusion and a sense of belonging. Practicing Islam was also identified as a helpful coping mechanism for Afghan women experiencing family violence. While many positive elements to faith communities and Islam were recognised, Afghan community members also acknowledged the adverse aspects. Negative experiences were recounted of faith leaders encouraging women to remain in abusive or violent relationships, or being pressured to become involved in resolving family violence situations. Men using misconstrued variations of Islam to justify or condone VAW were also cited. As a result of these consultations, the project has acknowledged the need and potential, for further engagement and support of Afghan Muslim communities to effectively and appropriately address and prevent VAW.

Evaluation Aim

This evaluation is intended to support other professionals and organisations who are engaging in primary prevention of VAW initiatives in local religious and faith communities. The results and reflections from the evaluation will also inform WHISE's future engagement and initiatives with the Afghan community to support evidence-based and best practice approaches.

The aim of this evaluation is to understand the impact of the 'Empowered & Respectful Communities' forum in increasing understanding and awareness of promoting gender equality within the Afghan community.

Evaluation Questions

Reach

- How many people attended the forum?

Satisfaction

- To what extent did participants enjoy the content and delivery of the forum?
- To what extent did the panellists and facilitators enjoy the experience of the forum?

Appropriateness

- To what extent was the forum valuable/meaningful for the Afghan community?

Effectiveness

- To what extent did the forum increase participant's knowledge of family violence and gender equality?
- To what extent did the forum increase participant's knowledge of the significance of faith settings in support of gender equity and violence prevention?
- To what extent did the forum increase participant's confidence to promote respectful relationships in their community?

The evaluation questions above informed the development of tools and evaluation activities to measure effectiveness and satisfaction impact indicators with the event panellists and facilitators:

Evaluation Methods & Indicators

Table 1. Evaluation questions, indicators and data collection methods utilised

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Collection Method
<i>Reach</i>		
How many people attended the forum?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants attending the forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance sheet
<i>Appropriateness</i>		
To what extent was the forum appropriate for the Afghan community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum delivered using trained bi-lingual facilitators • Planning input sought by Afghan community leaders • All content and presentation translated as appropriate • Perceived quality of the forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator feedback questionnaire • Panellist feedback questionnaire • Post-forum feedback survey • Observation
<i>Satisfaction</i>		
Measure 1: To what extent did participants enjoy the content and delivery of the forum?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants satisfied with the forum content • Rating in satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-forum feedback survey
Measure 2: To what extent did the panellists and facilitators enjoy the experience of the forum?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of panellists and facilitators satisfied with the forum content and delivery • Rating in satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-forum questionnaire
<i>Effectiveness</i>		
Measure 1: To what extent did the forum increase participant's knowledge of family violence and gender equality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants reporting increase in knowledge • Change in ratings of understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-forum feedback survey
Measure 2: To what extent did the forum increase participant's knowledge of the significance of faith settings in support of gender equity and violence prevention?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants reporting increase in knowledge • Change in ratings of understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-forum feedback survey
Measure 3: To what extent did the forum increase participant's confidence to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants reporting increase in confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-forum feedback survey

promote respectful relationships in their community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in ratings of confidence 	
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Reach

How many people attended the forum?

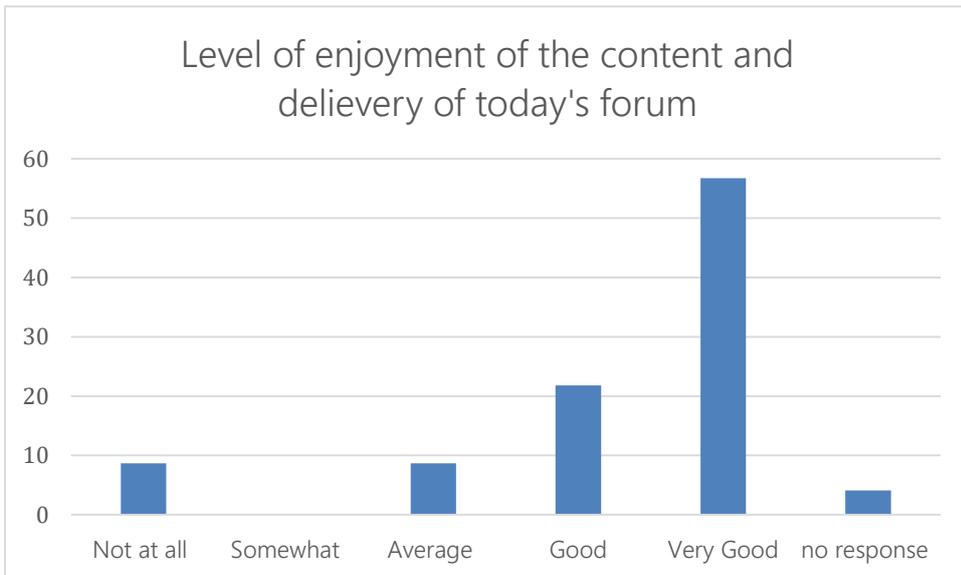
There was a total of 50 participants who attended the 'Empowered & Respectful Communities' forum.

- Of the fifty people that attended the forum,66% were female and 34% were male
- Participants ranged in age from 16 to over 60 years old
- Participants represented diverse ethnic backgrounds including Hazara, Tajik and Pashtun
- Participants varied in their time spent living in Australia from 4 months to over 28 years
- Participants represented residents from within City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire
- Note: Some participants who attended the forum did not complete the post-forum feedback survey. The results reflect partially and fully completed survey data.

Satisfaction

Measure 1: To what extent did participants enjoy the content and delivery of the forum?

Table 1. Participants responses to their level of enjoyment of the content and delivery of the forum



Seventy-eight percent of participants rated their enjoyment of the forum as 'good' or 'very good'.

Qualitative data from facilitator questionnaires received after the forum also highlighted high levels of satisfaction from the community.

'I personally received a lot of positive feedback where a few of the community members were asking for more of our event. In addition, food provided were Afghani food and everyone enjoyed the food too. They asked for WHISE's details from me. The event was very appreciated by all participants. Participants found the event very informative and useful...'
- Afghan facilitator

Measure 2: To what extent did the panellists and facilitators enjoy the experience of the forum?

All five speakers and both facilitators reported their involvement in the forum as a positive experience.

'...people said it was good and they need more of the these events so that the issue is raised more broadly in the Afghan community' – Afghan Facilitator

'This forum was excellent...the information was very beneficial and useful.' – Community Member

'This program is extraordinarily useful and educational' – Community Member

'This experience for me was not only a positive one but it truly gave young Afghan women like me who have been involved in the community and have grown up in the Australian way of life a chance to talk against the cultural stigma which is attached to some of our practices.' – Panellist

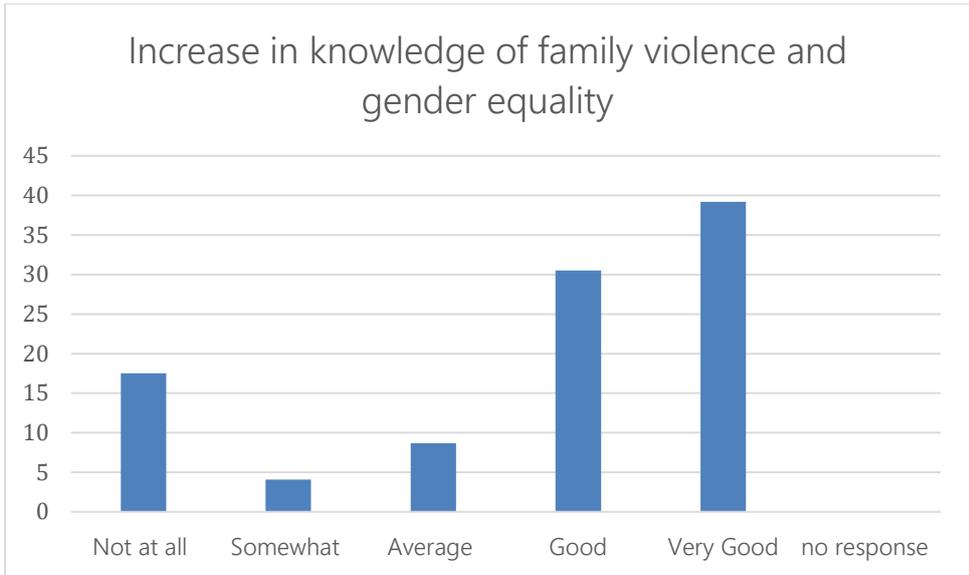
'I am thrilled to see people interested in the message that I delivered to them from the Islamic point of view. It is great that WHISE thinks on the important of the topic and the way how it should be delivered. I am sure that WHISE, have a good understanding of the Afghan community and therefore conducts such programs.' – Imam and keynote speaker

Effectiveness

Measure 1: To what extent did the forum increase participant's knowledge of family violence and gender equality?

- 70% of attendees responded that the event was 'good' or 'very good' at increasing their awareness of the link between gender equality and violence against women

Table 2. Participant responses to their increase in knowledge of family violence and gender equality



Measure 2: To what extent did the forum increase participant's knowledge of the significance of faith settings in support of gender equity and violence prevention?

Table 3. Participant responses to their increase in knowledge of the significance of faith settings in supporting gender equality and violence prevention



- 74% of attendees responded that there was an increase in their knowledge of how faith settings can help prevent violence

'...my uncle is part of the Afghan mosque and they said after this forum, the following week they held a lecture at the Afghan Mosque where there was a huge turn out and even women attended the religious talk!'

– Community Member

'The event was very clear about women's rights and it was informative to some women who did not have enough understanding/ misunderstanding about Islam and women's rights.'

- Afghan Community Leader

Measure 3: To what extent did the forum increase participant's confidence to promote respectful relationships in their community?

Table 4. Participant responses to their increase in confidence to promote respectful relationships in their community



- 82% of attendees responded as having increased their confidence in how to promote respectful relationships within their community.

Limitations

Limitations to the evaluation included the following:

- Due to many participants arriving late and the subsequent late finish of the event, many participants either missed the initial section of the event and/or left prior to the evaluation

surveys being conducted. Therefore, data collected from the participant surveys may be partially reflective of the experiences of the attendees.

- Despite translations being provided, low literacy levels in some participants meant that completion of the surveys was either avoided or needed assistance of project workers to complete which makes the results susceptible to bias and decreased validity.
- Electronic questionnaires were emailed to panellists and facilitators a week after the event, and some were not returned until two weeks after the event, which may have influenced the results due to recall limitations and social desirability factors

Summary

Analysis of the data collected from the forum indicates the event was well received by the community and achieved all of the desired objectives. Speakers, facilitators and community members reported an overall enthusiasm for the event and a desire for similar events to be coordinated in the future.

The following recommendations can be made to enhance meaningful and effective future engagement with faith communities:

- Consider cultural perceptions of time and allow sufficient time to account for late arrivals
- Provide visual or picture-based evaluation survey alternatives for participants with low-literacy levels
- Develop strong partnerships with local religious leaders to enhance engagement and credibility of events

Reflections

Action 6:

N/A

Action 7:

As part of our planning for future prevention activities, WHISE sought to explore our faith communities, where their key issues lie with respect to family violence and services, and any gaps that may exist – either from an access point perspective or otherwise. In doing so, WHISE hoped to gain insight into the needs of individual faith communities across the 10 LGAs in which we serve to improve outcomes when it comes to family violence prevention. WHISE recognises that faith settings:

- represent population groups across all life stages and a variety of cultural backgrounds
 - are important spaces in which people’s beliefs and behaviours around relationships, gender roles and norms are influenced
 - can support individuals to take action if they witness sexism or discrimination
- And faith leaders
- can play a key role in directly shaping respectful, non-violent attitudes and practices among members

The Gender Equity primary prevention community education session delivered to multi-faith community members from the City of Greater Dandenong was highly successful. The project aim – to increase knowledge of the drivers of gender-based violence towards the prevention of violence against women – was effectively met, as demonstrated by the achievement of the objectives of all four sessions. There was strong attendee satisfaction in terms of session delivery among those who responded. The high rate of non-responses to our satisfaction question is an acknowledged limitation. The position of this question on the reverse side of the questionnaire, and insufficient clarification to attendees of the existence of the final question may have contributed to the non-response rate. This design feature will be revised in future evaluation surveys.

City of Port Phillip and Casey

While the objectives of the City of Port Phillip and City of Casey were either not met or partially met, we can assume there are many reasons for this. Particularly salient was the fact that this was a first-ever approach to these particular communities and an opportunity to ask questions these groups have not been asked before within these settings. Having failed to meet our objectives, we might proffer the following explanations:

1. Levels of readiness to hear and embrace gender equity messages amongst Interfaith members varied considerably across the three LGAs.
2. Significant knowledge gaps may exist between members of Interfaith groups.
3. Delivery of information may not have been pitched at the appropriate level.

Action 8:

The “*Promoting Equality and Respect in the Muslim Community of Kingston*” event forum was a significant success, achieving a reach of 55 Eventbrite bookings and 41 attendees, including children. All five project objectives were met, and 100% of attendees responded favourably in terms of event enjoyment. The overarching purpose of the event was to raise awareness of family violence – particularly violence against women and their children, and how this impacts individuals, families and the broader community. We sought to facilitate a community conversation to discuss ways in which we can both individually and collectively work towards violence prevention, specifically from a faith perspective. This purpose was achieved with tremendous success.

Attendees at the event were enthusiastic and positive, embraced the importance of the conversations held, as well as the collaborative action currently in place, and to be undertaken. There was consensus among attendees and participants that collaboration will likely increase as a result of the event, and many were eager for the opportunity to join existing efforts within the Kingston community. WHISE looks forward to examining ways in which future action plans of the *Preventing Violence Together Strategy* can utilise and build upon this solid foundation of action within the Muslim community of the SMR.

Recommendations:

Action 6:

N/A

Action 7:

- Sporting communities:

The group asserted that most, if not all, sporting clubs are run exclusively by volunteers. Consequently, it is necessary to be mindful of the time constraints faced by volunteer football committee members.

- Faith/Interfaith work:

- Consider adopting a strategic approach to engagement in addition to employing a grassroots approach.
- Include the need to undertake an extensive regional approach to a needs analysis of each Interfaith Network (or various faith communities where no interfaith community exists) in the Action Plan in order to become fully cognisant of any gaps that may exist and the varying levels of readiness and knowledge bases across the Interfaith Networks.
- Modifying future programs within multi-faith communities to incorporate components that recognise the potential distinctions between purely *religious* practices and *cultural* beliefs may prove more effective in reducing gender-based violence, insofar as addressing this distinction may help deliver programs that better influence the norms that support gender inequities. Particularly in faiths that are less familiar to those delivering programs, there can be a number of almost entirely cultural practices that are often incorrectly assumed to be religious in origin. Being informed and mindful of any differences between religious and cultural traditions is likely to lend greater legitimacy to programs delivered to multi-faith communities.

Action 8:

These events demonstrate a fruitful platform to promote and empower equality and respect. In light of the positive levels of interest in the promotion of PVAW&C issues within these communities, continuing to engage with these communities will positively impact our efforts in the PVAW&C space and enable us to effectively harness the momentum already gathered and continue to empower communities to work towards gender equality. Further engagement by including work within faith settings to the 2018 Action Plan will similarly strengthen these communities' capacity to recognise and address gender inequity and drivers of family violence.

Strategic Pillar 4: Evidence Informed

Goal: Organisations will work from an evidence-based framework promoting best practice approaches and contributing to the collection, translation and dissemination of evidence.

Objective	Proposed Action	Owner	Timeline
To strengthen evidence-based PVAW&C across the SMR	9. Development of an information sharing hub/portal for Strategy information, resources, news and latest PVAW&C research	RICs/WHISE	Q3 '16
To ignite PVAW&C innovation in partner organisations in the SMR	10. Development of an evidence-based framework and evaluation plan for Strategy initiatives	WHISE	Q4 '17
	11. Development of an external communications strategy to showcase and celebrate effective action from across the region on an ongoing basis	WHISE	Q4 '17

Strategy Achievements

Action 9:

The South Safe portal/website was developed in 2016 and went live in late September. The SouthSafe website address is www.southsafe.com.au

Action 10:

The evaluation framework was developed and approved by the Steering Committee on 29th August 2016. This will guide the five-year evaluation of the strategy, due in 2021.

Action 11:

Communications strategy developed and circulated to PVT partners

Outcomes

Action 9:

Development of SouthSafe website

Action 10:

N/A

Action 11:

N/A

Reflections

Action 9:

SouthSafe intended as the main platform for promoting PVAW&C Regional Strategy resources, documents, etc.

Initially it enjoyed solid use among partners and networks before gradually becoming disused and suffering from a lack of promotion within and amongst the PVT partnership.

Action 10:

N/A

Action 11:

N/A

Recommendations:

Action 9:

There is a need to consider the importance of the SouthSafe website as the primary platform for regional activity and whether it should continue to be a priority in the 2018 Action Plan.

We believe that continuing to promote the SouthSafe portal would be advantageous to our efforts, as it remains an important platform to share our learnings and highlight the work that the partnership has done across the region in the PVAW&C space. If the group agrees to prioritise this, the SouthSafe portal should be continually promoted via:

- WHISE Website
- Partner websites
- Media Releases

Action 10:

N/A

Action 11:

N/A

Strategic Pillar 5: Sustaining Momentum

Goal: Organisations will demonstrate an ongoing commitment to a long-term regional approach to preventing violence against women and their children.

Objective	Proposed Action	Owner	Timeline
To sustain commitment to a long-term regional approach to PVAW&C across the SMR	12. Development of an internal communication plan for partner organisations to safely share learnings and experiences, and promote successes and achievements (Linked to Pillar 4, Action 1)	WHISE	Q4 '17
	13. Identify opportunities to promote the leadership, expertise and collective influence of the Strategy partner organisations in PVAW&C	WHISE	Q4 '17
	14. Proactively identify joint funding opportunities to implement or scale up regional projects related to PVAW&C	WHISE	Ongoing

Strategy Achievements

Action 12:

A Communications Strategy was developed to provide guidance as to how feedback needs to be looped and utilised by Steering Committee and CoP members. The Communications Strategy was sent to all partners.

Action 13:

Both the Steering Committee and CoP were provided a template to encourage all partners to update and highlight their key achievements over the last 12-18 months.

Action 14:

WHISE established a grant application working group formed by key members of the Steering Committee for the development of the Community Partnership for Primary Prevention (CPPP) grant. The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) grant application was led by Natasha Moshinsky, City of Port Phillip.

Outcomes

Action 12:

N/A

Action 13:

- WHISE developed a media release and Infographic to highlight key PVAW&C activities from across the region to increase the exposure of our regional partners and the leadership, expertise and collective influence of the Strategy partner organisations in PVAW&C. The Infographic was developed to reflect highlights from across the region and sent to the Regional Integration Family Violence Co-ordinator to add to SouthSafe website.

- Seven partners provided an update to the Regional Activity template.
- A media release was sent to all Local Leader Papers in December and will be added to the WHISE website once it is printed and partners are notified.

Figure 14: Regional Activity Infographic



Action 14:

Under the PVT Action Plan, we were successful in obtaining funding for the MAV grant to develop e-learning training, however unsuccessful for CPPP funding.

Reflections

Action 12:

In the first six months of the strategy, communication between Steering Committee members and CoP members was recognised as being an area requiring improvement. Messaging from the governance group was not necessarily filtering through to their organisational CoP delegates, resulting in a limited understanding of the work being done. Clarity of communication is a complex undertaking in an inter-institutional setting such as this and all parties recognised the need to prioritise accurate and timely messaging and communications across stakeholders and partner organisations.

Action 13:

As only seven partners participated in the regional activity highlights, it is evident that this activity failed to fully resonate as a priority among the partners, suggesting a review of this activity may be required.

Action 14:

We employed a workplace focus in our application for the CPPP funding, rather than a Regional Strategy and partnership focus. This was potentially the cause of our unsuccessful outcome in this funding application.

Recommendations:

Action 12:

- While a communications strategy helps articulate what needs to be communicated and how, it is vital that it is supplemented by a conduit capable of delivering messaging at meetings. One way to achieve this is to provide immediate feedback from Steering Committee to CoP members at CoP meetings, and then duplicate this process at Steering Committee meetings. Doing so will help ensure both Steering Committee and CoP members are kept abreast of major updates.
- Where relevant, Steering Committee leaders should be copied into all correspondence to CoP distribution lists and sub-working groups.
- CoP members should be copied into Quarterly Steering Committee reports.
- There is a need to ensure the distribution list is constantly maintained, as members are frequently updated.

Action 13:

Work done from across the Region should be reflected on either a quarterly or six-monthly basis to ensure momentum and to help ascertain that achievements are both current and relevant.

The publishing of an annual Infographic and media release highlighting all the work achieved over the year should continue, but be more aggressively promoted.

To ensure the maximum exposure of the work undertaken by all partners, SouthSafe should be promoted more proactively among partners and network groups from across the region.

Action 14:

Continue to apply for joint funding opportunities to ensure innovation and sustained commitment to a long-term regional approach to PVAW&C across the SMR.

WHISE

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MELWAY REF: 90 D6

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