EVALUATION OF THE NORTHERN REGION PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN STRATEGY

Evaluation Report
NOVEMBER 2013

ACCESS TO SERVICES ASPECTS OF LIFE CONDITIONS CONTEXT CONTROL DISCRIMINATION DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT EQUAL RIGHTS EQUAL STATUS EQUAL TREATMENT EXIST FEAR GENDER HUMAN RIGHTS IMBALANCE OPPORTUNITIES PAID EQUALLY REGARDLESS OF SEX RELATIONSHIP SOCIAL SUPPORT TREATED WOMEN DESERVE WORK PLACE

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WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN THE NORTH

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
GLASS	Gender, Leadership and Social Sustainability Research Unit (Monash University)
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
NMR	Northern Metropolitan Region
NIFVS	Northern Integrated Family Violence Services
PCP	Primary Care Partnership
PVAW	Preventing Violence against Women
WHIN	Women's Health In the North

Executive Summary

This project has undertaken an evaluation of the strategies and processes used by Women's Health In the North (WHIN) in the regional approach to the prevention of violence against women in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne. This regional approach is guided by *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women – A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016*. Monash University's Gender, Leadership and Social Sustainability Research Unit conducted the evaluation and prepared this report.

This Evaluation Report details the processes and findings of Phase 1 of the evaluation. Two key evaluation questions directed the evaluation:

1. In what ways have the different approaches and activities employed in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* achieved their aims?

2. How successful is a regional approach to a preventing violence against women strategy where regional partners are included in the activities? In what ways is it successful?

Data from WHIN's partner organisations and other stakeholders was collected through a web-based organisational survey, focus groups and interviews. A total of 650 people participated in the evaluation, drawn from seven councils, seven community health services, three primary care partnerships and the Northern Integrated Family Violence Services (NIFVS) Strategic Network. Baseline information regarding knowledge about, and attitudes to, violence against women was established, and was also made available to each organisation for use in their own evaluation processes.

Baseline information regarding the effectiveness of a regional preventing violence against women strategy and the effectiveness of the approaches and activities within this strategy was obtained. The effectiveness of the strategy and of the regional approach was described in relation to five major themes:

Theme 1:   Preventing Violence against Women Work.

Theme 2:   Implementation of Preventing Violence against Women Work and Activities.

Theme 3:   The Role of WHIN.

Theme 4:   Barriers and Challenges.

Theme 5:   Future Work and Directions.

The evaluation found that many activities and actions in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* have achieved, or are progressing toward achieving, their aims. The integrated partnership approach has proven an effective method for engaging diverse sectors and organisations to commit to and to undertake prevention of violence against women work throughout the northern metropolitan region. The opportunities for communication and for regional networks, partners, organisations and professionals to share information and work together have been key to the success of the regional approach to date.

Since the introduction of the regional *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*, changes in the development and implementation of preventing violence against women work throughout the region have occurred:

- a greater awareness of preventing violence against women and the Strategy across different services;

- improved coordination and collaboration between organisations to facilitate a regional approach; and

- a higher priority being given to preventing violence against women activities through the delivery of training and the inclusion in organisational strategic directions.

The Strategy and the associated Action Plan have facilitated a consistent and shared regional understanding of the nature and importance of preventing violence against women. The Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network have provided crucial venues for communication, community leadership, training and involvement in the Strategy's ongoing development and implementation throughout the region.

The importance of a strong, knowledgeable and respected lead organisation in the implementation of the Strategy was crucial. WHIN's leadership, coordination, facilitation and consultancy roles contributed to the acceptance and effectiveness of WHIN as the lead organisation.

Various barriers and challenges for preventing violence against women work and the implementation of the Strategy, particularly as a regional approach, were identified. One of the most obvious challenges was the nature of the region itself, characterised by myriad differences ranging from geographical locations and organisational reach; the levels of knowledge of violence against women and prevention work; cultural, political and philosophical beliefs about gender equity, violence against women and prevention work; and organisational 'readiness' and willingness to engage in preventing violence against women. A regional strategy needs to be flexible enough and allow a staged approach with its activities and in its implementation to meet the diversity of needs throughout the region. However, care must be taken to ensure that activities and approaches do not become fragmented and piecemeal, thus preventing sustainable structural change.

A further significant challenge, inherent in preventing violence against women work, has been initiating, consolidating and then sustaining attitudinal and behavioural change in relation to acceptance and tolerance of violence against women.

An understanding of the complexity of preventing violence against women is an ever-present, and necessary, consideration in the implementation of the Strategy. Responding to complexity and difference is a challenge, but it also contributes to a sound foundation for the Strategy and its approaches and activities.

The final chapter of the report details 38 ideas and suggestions for future work and directions that have emerged from this research, covering general practice principles and Action Plan areas from the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*.

WHIN will use the evaluation findings and recommendations to build on, inform and influence current practice in the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*, and the direction and practices of the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group.

Introduction to the Evaluation Report

This Evaluation Report outlines the processes and outcomes involved in the practical component of the evaluation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*.

WHIN is the regional women's health service for the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne, and has identified violence against women as a priority work area since its formation in 1991. An increasing focus on preventing violence before it occurs, led WHIN to develop *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women – A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016*. This Strategy provides framework, context and evidence-based actions to guide primary prevention work in the region. WHIN has committed to monitor and evaluate the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* as well as any prevention initiatives that are developed by WHIN in response to the action plan.

To undertake this evaluation, WHIN formed a partnership with Monash University's Gender, Leadership and Social Sustainability (GLASS) Research Unit. Phase 1 of the evaluation (the WHIN-GLASS partnership) was conducted from November 2012 to November 2013, and involved the development of an evaluation framework; development and administration of a workplace survey, focus groups and interviews; and the data analysis, findings and recommendations contained in this Evaluation Report.

This Evaluation Report is intended to be read in conjunction with the *Evaluation of the Northern Region Prevention of Violence against Women Strategy: Evaluation Framework*, which includes an overview of the theoretical influences, understandings and foundations on which the evaluation framework is built.

The Evaluation Report provides a brief recap about the evaluation scope, the Evaluation Framework and the evaluation questions. Prior to presenting the results from the evaluation and the ideas for future work and directions, the processes involved in the data collection and data analysis are described and explained.

The results are presented in three separate sections. The first section provides the results from Section One of the survey. These are the results from the general questions about participants' knowledge about the nature and extent of violence against women. These results contribute to the establishment of baseline information regarding knowledge about, and attitudes to, violence against women in WHIN's partner organisations in the Strategy, one of the aims of the Phase 1 evaluation.

The second section provides the results from Section Two of the survey. These are the results from the questions that were specific to staff who had been involved in preventing violence against women work in the region. These results contribute to the establishment of baseline information regarding the effectiveness of a regional preventing violence against women strategy. They also contribute to the overall evaluation of the strategies and processes utilised in the regional approach to the prevention of violence against women in the northern metropolitan region; the two other aims of the Phase 1 evaluation.

The third section contains the results from the focus groups and the interviews.

In meeting the aims of Phase 1 of the evaluation, these results also successfully answer the two key evaluation questions. The results are analysed and discussed further in the Findings and Discussion section of the Report. Finally, ideas for future work and directions within the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* are offered.

Evaluation Scope: An Overview

Project Title:
Evaluation of the Northern Region Prevention of Violence against Women Strategy

Project Partners:
Women's Health In the North, and Monash University's Gender, Leadership and Social Sustainability Research Unit. The Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group supports this project.

Project Description:
The project will undertake an evaluation of the strategies and processes used by WHIN in the regional approach to the prevention of violence against women in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne. This regional approach is guided by *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women – A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016.*

Key Evaluation Questions:
- 2.1 In what ways have the different approaches and activities employed in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* achieved their aims?

- 2.2 How successful is a regional approach to a preventing violence against women strategy where regional partners are included in the activities? In what ways is it successful?

Geographic Area:
The northern metropolitan region of Melbourne includes the local government areas of Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra.

Stakeholders and Participants:
The stakeholders for this research are the partner organisations identified in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy.* They include local government, community health services, primary care partnerships and the NIFVS Strategic Network. Participants in the project include staff at these partner organisations, in particular members of the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group (see page 15 for more detail).

Time Frame:
Phase 1 of the evaluation covers the period from November 2012 to November 2013 (WHIN-GLASS partnership). The Evaluation Framework guides Phase 1 of the evaluation and also provides a long-term framework for ongoing evaluation of this work, including an anticipated Phase 2 in 2016/2017.

Phase 1 Aims to:
- Establish baseline information regarding knowledge about, and attitudes to, violence against women in WHIN's partner organisations in the Strategy.

- Undertake an evaluation of the strategies and processes utilised in the regional approach to the prevention of violence against women in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne.

- Establish baseline information regarding the effectiveness of a regional preventing violence against women strategy.

Phase 1 Data Collection:
Data collection methods for Phase 1 of the evaluation (WHIN-GLASS partnership) include: a workplace survey, focus groups and interviews. (See page 16 for more detail).

Ongoing and Future Evaluation:

In addition to the evaluation undertaken by the WHIN-GLASS partnership, WHIN will conduct ongoing evaluation of its preventing violence against women work, and the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*, throughout the life of the strategy (2011–2016). Data collection includes mapping of practice, policy and programs across the region; evaluation of all training, events and forums and written resources; partnership evaluations; and reflective practice sessions. This evaluation will be used to influence, and adapt, strategies and action within the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* and will contribute to a final evaluation of the Strategy.

Phase 2 of the evaluation is anticipated for 2016-2017, at which point the GLASS Research Unit may be engaged to complete another round of surveys, focus groups and interviews (pending funding).

The Evaluation Framework

This Evaluation Report is intended to be read together with *Evaluation of the Northern Region Prevention of Violence against Women Strategy: Evaluation Framework*. The Evaluation Framework, developed by GLASS and WHIN, serves two purposes:

- To guide the evaluation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* now and in the future; and

- To provide a structure and context for the evaluation of other regional approaches to preventing violence against women.

The Evaluation Framework includes an overview of the theoretical influences, understandings and foundations on which the evaluation framework is built. Information is also provided about the evaluation methods, the development of the program logic and the evaluation plan. The Framework considers both short and long term outcomes and applies an ecological approach, which looks at outcomes for individuals, organisations, communities and societies. The Evaluation Plan (page 33 in the Framework) details process and impact indicators, data collection methods, responsibilities and timelines.

The theoretical background, methods, templates and tools employed in the Evaluation Framework and Plan are designed to be transferable to other contexts. Consequently they can be used in – or may inform – the evaluation of prevention of violence against women strategies and processes in WHIN's partner organisations and other organisations undertaking similar work.

Diagram 1 (overleaf) shows the different components within the Evaluation Framework and the links and connections between these components. Each component and each step is informed by, and itself informs, other components. In this way, the process of evaluation is represented as one of continual monitoring, review and development; that is, evaluation is a continuous and ongoing practice.

Diagram 1: Components of the Evaluation Framework

BUILDING A RESPECTFUL COMMUNITY – PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN STRATEGY

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING A RESPECTFUL COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT:

- A FEMINIST CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
- KEY TERMS, CONCEPTS, CONTEXTS
- LITERATURE, RESEARCH, THEORIES, POLICIES
- METHODOLOGIES

EVALUATION PLAN:

- OBJECTIVES
- PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL & ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT CHANGE
- PROCESS & IMPACT MEASURES
- METHODS
- RESPONSIBILITIES & TIMELINE

EVALUATION DATA:

- COLLECTION
- COLLATION
- ANALYSIS

EVALUATION REPORT:

- FINDINGS
- OUTCOMES
- IDEAS FOR FUTURE WORK

FUTURE WORK & CONTINUING MONITORING & EVALUATION:

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:
- PRACTICE;
- STRATEGIES;
- POLICY;
- RESEARCH; AND
- PROGRAMS.

The Evaluation Questions

The two overarching evaluation questions were identified at the commencement of this project and were developed from the aims of the project. They inform this evaluation report, and the ongoing and future evaluation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*. The questions are outlined below, with further detail and clarification.

1. **In what ways have the different approaches and activities employed in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* achieved their aims?**

The overarching approaches employed in the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* are:

- An integrated partnership approach with a shared regional understanding and partnerships across sectors and settings.

- An Action Plan which outlines actions that organisations can undertake.

- The Strategy as a tool for advocacy and engagement, including endorsement.

The activities in the Strategy are organised under the following action areas:

1. Partnerships and Structures.
2. Community Leadership.
3. Capacity and Tools.
4. Communications, Advocacy and Champions.
5. Skills, Attitudes and Social Norms.
6. Planning, Research and Evaluation.
7. Embedding.

2. **How successful is a regional approach to a preventing violence against women strategy, where regional partners are included in the activities? In what ways is it successful?**

The regional approach can be assessed looking at two key areas:

- WHIN's regional leadership role and associated actions, including the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group, events, resources and advocacy.

- The impact on individual organisations – how has the regional approach furthered the work of individual organisations?

Stakeholders and Participants

The organisations that WHIN works with to prevent violence against women across the region were chosen as stakeholders for the evaluation. These organisations include local government, community health, primary care partnerships and the NIFVS Strategic Network. With their large community reach, local government, community health and primary care partnerships are considered to play an important role in primary prevention of violence against women.

Nineteen organisations and two networks were invited to participate in the research project. All seven councils, three primary care partnerships, and seven of the nine community health services in the region participated. Two community health services declined to participate.

The organisations and networks that participated in this research project were:

Local government:
Banyule City Council
Darebin City Council
Hume City Council
Moreland City Council
Nillumbik Shire Council
City of Whittlesea
City of Yarra

Community health services:
Darebin Community Health
Banyule Community Health
Dianella Community Health
Plenty Valley Community Health
North Yarra Community Health
Merri Community Health Services
Sunbury Community Health Centre

Primary care partnerships:
Inner North West Primary Care Partnership
North East Primary Care Partnership
Hume Whittlesea Primary Care Partnership

Regional networks/organisations:
Building a Respectful Community
    Implementation Advisory Group
NIFVS Strategic Network

Participants for Phase 1 of the evaluation (which includes the workplace survey, focus groups and interviews) were drawn from the partner organisations listed above.

The two key networks engaged in the research were the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network. The Advisory Group is a regional network, with representatives from local government, community health, primary care partnerships and response services. Its focus is on **prevention** and on the implementation of the Strategy. The Advisory Group is therefore the focus of much of this evaluation, and was engaged both through the survey and focus groups.

The other network consulted was the NIFVS Strategic Network. This regional network brings together organisations that have a role in family violence **response**. It has also chosen 'prevention' as one of its five priorities in the NIFVS Regional Action Plan 2011-2017. This network is considered to have a key role in informing the prevention work in the Strategy, as part of the Strategy's commitment to be informed by response services. Membership crossover exists between the Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network.

Data Collection

A variety of data collection methods and measures strengthen the capacity of an evaluation framework to take into account the many factors influencing the likelihood and extent of changes – in knowledge, attitude and/or behaviour – in relation to prevention of violence against women. Similarly, collecting a range of different data, both qualitative and quantitative, provides an array of information that can be used to answer the questions that are specific to a particular evaluation project.

Data collection methods vary depending upon the type of information that is sought; the resources available; the nature of the evaluation and of the questions to be explored; the purposes of the evaluation; and the theoretical approaches and perspectives held by those involved in the evaluation project.

The data collection methods employed in this evaluation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* are described below. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used: qualitative where broad, open, expressive and experiential, narrative-type information was sought, and quantitative where more precise, specific, defined and measurable information was required. Please see page 15 for more information about the participants who were involved in the data collection processes.

Appendix 1 includes the questions that were employed in the workplace survey, the focus groups and the interviews.

Data Collection in Phase 1 of the Evaluation

Electronic and Hard Copy Surveys

Participants were regional partners: local governments, primary care partnerships and community health services.

Surveys are often quantitative in nature because respondents are typically tied to answering set questions. Some surveys provide opportunities for greater flexibility in use and response. For example, surveys may be facilitated face-to-face rather than online, and some surveys include open-ended questions such as, 'What other comments would you like to add?'

The electronic survey, developed through Survey Monkey, was used in this evaluation to develop a baseline for the type and amount of knowledge about violence against women that was held by employees in WHIN's regional partner organisations. The survey comprised two sections: all employees were invited to complete the first section, which looked at collecting the baseline-type data. Employees who had worked in preventing violence against women work could also choose to complete the second section within the survey, which explored their ideas about the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*, and its implementation in more detail. Finally, at the end of the survey, these employees were also invited to indicate if they were interested in participating in a focus group or interview.

The aim of providing a number of different participation options was to encourage as many employees as possible to participate in the evaluation so that they had a sense of contributing to and owning the process and the findings. Moreover, the extra options of focus groups and/or interviews encouraged employees to share their thoughts and ideas in a more detailed fashion. Questions for the survey were based on, and adapted from, WHIN's existing knowledge about prevention of violence against women initiatives and strategies, recent research and literature, input

from the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group, and from questions in the National Survey on Community Attitudes To Violence Against Women (VicHealth 2010).

Focus Groups

Participants included members of the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group or NIFVS Strategic Network, or those otherwise involved in work to prevent violence against women.

Put simply, focus groups are developed by bringing a group of people together with the purpose of talking about a particular topic. The topic provides the focus for the group, and the conversations, ideas, opinions, beliefs and concerns that are shared amongst group members become the data for the evaluation project. The interaction between members within a focus group is important because when members converse with each other, share their views, challenge each other, affirm each other and respond to each other, in-depth and considered insights, ideas and information can be gathered as data. The facilitator of the focus group is as unobtrusive as possible and is there to encourage, rather than lead, discussion. Differing viewpoints amongst group members are valued because they can generate further thinking and discussion, as well as demonstrate a broad understanding or response to the topic of focus. Having said that, the facilitator does need to ensure that discussions do not become overly conflictive or abusive, and that participants are safe and do not become stressed. Confidentiality of the discussions needs to be respected when members leave the group, and it is an ethical guideline that must apply to the facilitation of focus groups.

Targeted Interviews

Participants included members of Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group or NIFVS Strategic Network, or those otherwise involved in work to prevent violence against women.

As with focus groups, the interviewer needs to hold an awareness of their presence and involvement in the interview. This helps ensure that the interview is not about the interviewer's thoughts, and that the focus is on learning about the experiences, ideas and opinions of the person being interviewed. Feminist evaluation and research principles also remind us of the importance of interviewers taking the time to reflect on the ways in which they may influence the content and direction of interviews. This consideration may be important to include in later processes of data analysis and the reflections on the strengths and limitations of evaluation processes.

In this evaluation, the interviews were qualitative and semi-structured in nature. This meant that the questions were open-ended and asked in a way that encouraged participants to speak about their ideas and experiences without any limitations or 'yes/no' answers. Introductory and prompt questions were asked of participants in order to open the interviews and provide an initial, broad direction. The prompt questions were the same questions that were used in the focus groups and these were all developed from the questions used in the survey. The interviews provided participants with an opportunity to speak in-depth about the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*. Given participants' familiarity with preventing violence against women work, the interviews resembled a conversation rather than a question/answer format.

Table I (overleaf) shows the numbers of participants sought, the numbers of people who participated and the evaluation activity in which they participated.

Table 1: Participant Numbers and Response Rates

	Participants	Data collection activity	Participant numbers sought	Actual participant numbers	Gender participation rate
Group 1	Staff members of WHIN's regional partners in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* (see list page 15)	Survey: electronic and hard copy	Approx. numbers of available staff: Councils = 7 x 800 staff; Community health = 9 x 100 staff; Primary care partnerships = 3 x 5 staff; TOTAL up to 6,500	Estimated numbers of staff who received the survey: Approx. 4300 Responses: 631 An approximate response rate of 15%. (That is, approximately 1 out of every 7 surveys sent out were answered).	Female: 77% Male: 22% Did not specify: 1%
Group 2	Members of the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group	Focus groups / interviews	Up to 20	Focus group: 6 Focus group: 4 Interview: 1 Total: 11	Female:100%
Group 3	Members of the NIFVS Strategic Network	Focus groups / interviews	Up to 40	Focus group: 4 Interview: 2 Total: 6	Female:100%
Group 4	Other workers who have been directly involved in PVAW work in the NMR (and not included in Groups 2 or 3)	Focus group	Up to 20	Focus group: 2 Total: 2	Female: 100%
Total				**650**	

Response Rates

Estimating the response rate for a survey can be helpful because it gives some indication of how many people in a particular population grouping have provided information about the topic(s) of the survey. This provides an estimation of how thoroughly the population has been canvassed and how representative of that particular population grouping the responses are likely to be. However, estimating and using response rates are not necessarily helpful as what is considered an 'acceptable' response rate varies. Response rates will vary according to the context of the research, the nature of the survey topic and the characteristics of the population grouping that is being considered.

The response rate of approximately 15% can initially seem quite low for this evaluation. However, the total number of people who received the survey is not known, as some organisations were not sure of final numbers, nor can we tell how many staff opened the survey email. Open rates and response rates are also dependent on how the survey was promoted to staff and how many reminders were emailed to people (outside of the control of WHIN or GLASS). These factors will impact on a response rate and our ability to estimate it. Furthermore, although the survey was emailed to people with an explanatory statement about the purpose of the survey, people may not

have read this statement and may not even have opened the email. People who do not like to complete surveys, irrespective of the topic, may not have opened the email. Likewise, people who may have seen the survey as work-based and therefore not relevant to them, may also have simply ignored the email. Or people may have been sick or on annual leave during the survey period.

The survey was one of three ways for people to participate in this evaluation. The responses provided a solid amount of data that will be relevant in setting an initial baseline with regard to knowledge and attitudes about violence against women among WHIN's partners in the northern metropolitan region.

Another way of using response rates is to calculate the percentage response to each question in a survey. This can give some interesting information although, again, needs to be used with caution given the influence of contextual factors.

Table 2 (below) shows the percentage of respondents that answered each of the survey questions in section one. The highest response rate is highlighted in yellow; the lowest response rate is highlighted in blue. The survey questions that were answered most often were the questions that asked about who commits violence against women and the severity of different types of violent actions. It may be that these questions were most often answered because people are, or feel, most knowledgeable about these topics; they are topics that have high visibility in training sessions, in the media and in day-day conversations. Compare the nature of these questions with the questions that received responses the least often. People may have less confidence in their knowledge about the main causes of violence against women and concepts such as 'gender equity'. Looking at responses from this perspective provides another indication of the areas in which further professional and public education and awareness-raising activities could be undertaken.

Table 2: Response Rates to Questions in Survey Section 1

Survey: Section One (total respondents=631)		
Question	**Subject**	**% of all respondents who answered**
1	Organisation	N/A
2	Gender	N/A
3	Knowledge of violence against women	92
4	Forms of violence	89
5	Severity of violent actions	97
6	Who commits violence	98
7	How common is violence	95
8	Main causes	84
9	Respondents reactions to violence against women scenario	89
10	Understanding of gender equity & preventing violence against women	83
11	Responses to sexist comments/jokes at work	87
12	Organisational activities to prevent violence against women & promote gender equity	91
13	Participation in preventing violence against women & gender equity work	88
14	End of Section One of the survey	N/A

Data Collection for Ongoing and Future Evaluation

WHIN will continue to collect data to inform an ongoing evaluation process and a final evaluation (Phase 2) in 2017. All monitoring and evaluation will continually feed into and influence WHIN's practice, strategies and actions in an ongoing cycle.

Data collection being undertaken by WHIN includes:

- mapping of practice, policy and programs to prevent violence against women;
- evaluation of training, workshops and forums;
- evaluation of the 'Endorsement Event' (held in May 2013) and other events;
- evaluation of written resources;
- partnerships evaluation;
- media monitoring; and
- reflective sessions and reflective project journals.

Phase 2 of the evaluation will be conducted by an external evaluator and will include similar data collection and processes as Phase 1, including administration of a survey, focus groups and interviews. This final evaluation will re-examine the key evaluation questions and seek to assess outcomes based on the program logic (see page 32 in the Evaluation Framework). It will result in a Final Evaluation Report.

Data Analysis Processes

A significant amount of data was generated from the workplace surveys, the four focus groups, the three interviews and the evaluator's observations and field notes.

Basic quantitative statistical analysis was employed with the survey questions that required responses to single and multiple choice questions and to ratings on Likert scales. This statistical analysis provided numbers of responses to given questions enabling some general level of comparison between respondents.

Overall thematic analysis procedures were employed with the qualitative-type data from the interviews and focus groups, and from the survey questions where there was opportunity for participants to respond in an open-ended manner. Thematic analysis examines the themes that emerge from the data; the patterns or topics, for example, those that are mentioned repeatedly or by different people in the survey, focus groups and interviews.

The thematic analysis was undertaken in three intersecting steps. The initial step, referred to as descriptive coding, was undertaken with the evaluation questions in mind, and on a broad, general level. The second level of coding was interpretive coding. The descriptive codes were grouped into clusters based on their themes. The meanings of the clusters were interpreted in relation to the evaluation questions. Finally, the more specific overarching themes were identified. See King and Horrocks (2010) for more information.

The data collected from the workplace surveys, the focus groups and the interviews was analysed in order to answer the two evaluation questions.

The data was analysed in relation to:

- content, topics, themes and patterns; and
- gender of respondents and their responses.

Data Analysis: Results

This section presents the results that were obtained following the data analysis processes. The results are provided for each question in the survey and are shown via a selection of graphs and other diagrams. Some quotations from respondents are also included in the results. Quotations can illustrate and bring life to the results, making them more meaningful for the reader.

The data from the focus groups and interviews is presented in a slightly different way. The content, topics, themes and patterns that came out of the discussions and conversations have been summarised. The results are presented in summary descriptions in the Findings and Discussion chapter, and also include quotations from participants.

The data and results are analysed and presented in the following order:

Survey Section 1: This includes the general questions – knowledge about, and attitudes to, violence against women in WHIN's partner organisations in the Strategy. There was a total of 631 respondents to the survey. Of these, 474 (77%) identified as female, 135 (22%) identified as male, eight (1%) chose 'prefer not to specify', and ten did not answer the question.

Survey Section 2: This includes questions specific to staff involved in preventing violence against women work. Sixty-eight (11%) of the all survey respondents identified having being directly involved in work to prevent violence against women and completed Section 2 of the survey. Fifty-four (79%) of these respondents were female, fourteen (21%) were male and one person chose not to answer.

The workplace survey data in section one was also categorised according to organisation. Each organisation that participated in the workplace surveys was then provided with its own data. The data categorised in this way is not presented in this evaluation report, as organisational results are confidential to each organisation.

Focus Groups and Interviews: These questions were based on the survey but focussed on questions specifically about preventing violence against women and the implementation of the Strategy (19 participants, all female).

Survey Section 1: The General Questions

Section 1 in the survey aimed to assess knowledge about, and attitudes to, violence against women and prevention work in WHIN's partner organisations in the Strategy.

The data in this section are the responses to survey questions 1–14 from all the respondents who participated in the survey. This data was analysed three times to give the following results:

- results from all respondents;
- results from staff involved in preventing violence against women work; and
- results from all respondents by gender.

Question 1: Organisations to which Respondents Belonged

This data is not presented in this report in order to retain confidentiality of participants and organisations.

Question 2: Gender of the Survey Respondents

Question 2 asked respondents to indicate their gender. This information enabled the gender analysis of the overall survey data to be undertaken).

- 474 (77%) of the survey respondents identified as female
- 135 (22%) of the survey respondents identified as male
- 8 (1%) of the survey respondents preferred not to specify
- 10 respondents did not answer this question

Figure 1: The Gender of Survey Respondents
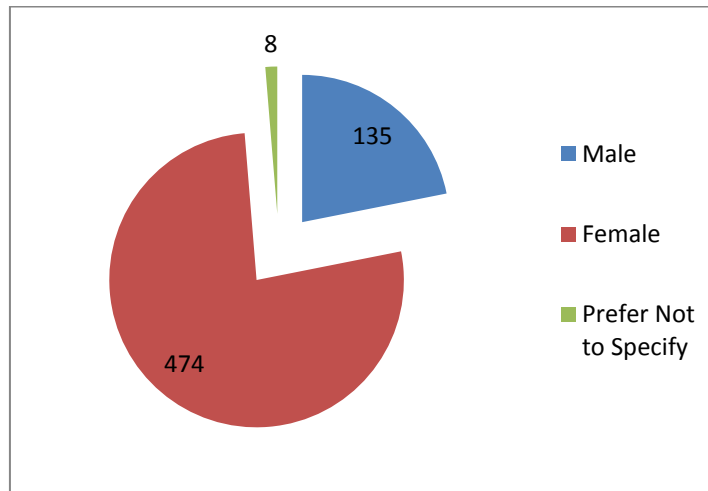
Question 3: Knowledge of Violence against Women

All Respondents

Respondents were asked to rate their knowledge of violence against women (on a scale of 0-10). Ninety-two per cent (92%) of respondents answered this question. This question was asked in order to gain a baseline indication of the extent of participants' knowledge about violence against women. Figure 2 shows participants' own assessments of the extent of their knowledge about violence against women.

Figure 2: Self-Assessments of their Knowledge about Violence against Women – All Respondents
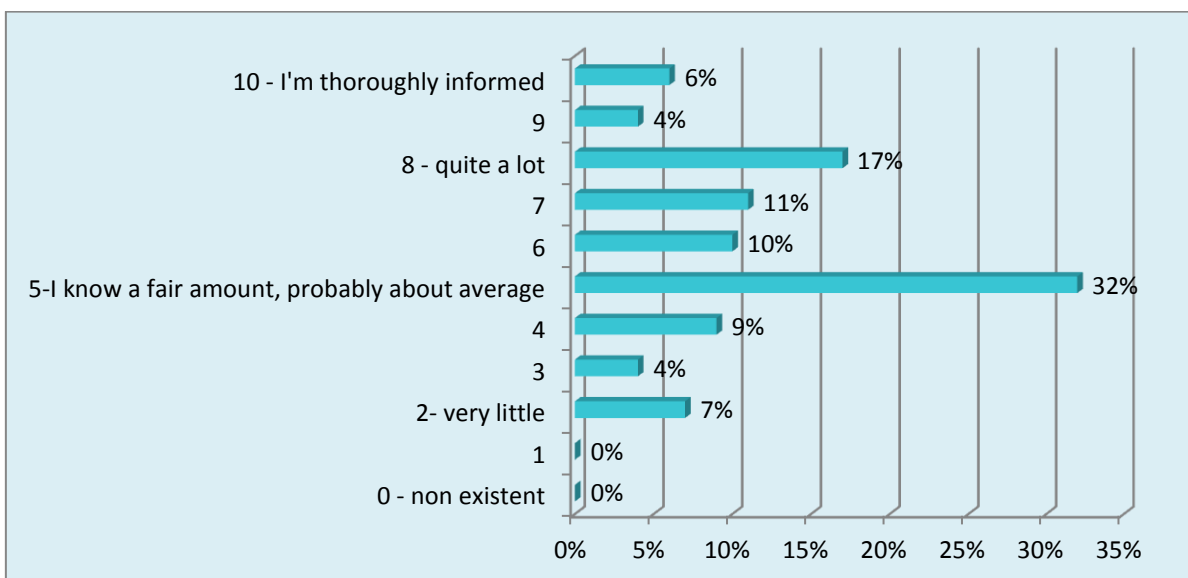
Approximately one third of respondents considered that they knew 'a fair amount, probably about average' about violence against women. In other words, they thought they had about the same amount of knowledge as most other people in the community would have. In total, nearly 50% of respondents considered they knew more than the average amount of knowledge about violence against women with 6% of respondents believing they were thoroughly informed.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

Approximately 52% of respondents involved in preventing violence against women work rated their knowledge of violence against women as 8/10 or higher, compared with approximately 27% of all respondents. The most frequent response was that staff involved in preventing violence against women work thought they knew 'quite a lot' about violence against women.

Figure 3: Self Assessments of Knowledge about Violence against Women – Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work
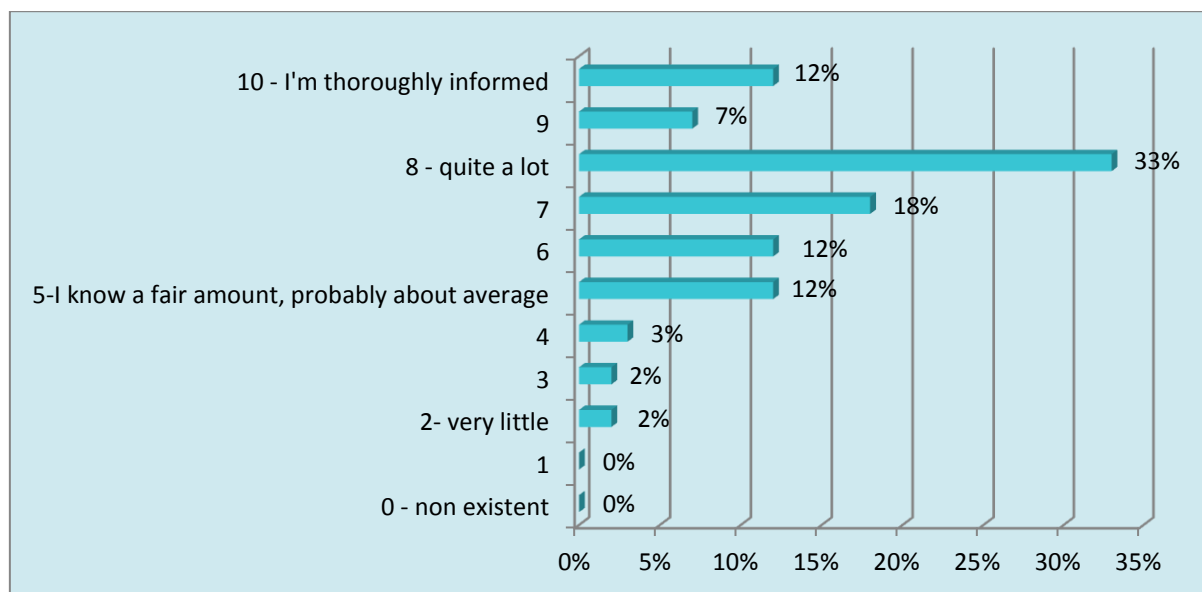
Responses by Gender

The most common response for women (about one third of women) and for men (just under one third) was that they knew a 'fair amount' about violence against women. Women, rather than men, were more likely to indicate they had quite a lot of knowledge or were thoroughly informed, (rating themselves 8/10 – 10/10), whereas more men than women thought they had a fair amount or quite a lot of knowledge, (rating themselves between 6/10-7/10). Figure 4 (overleaf) shows male and female participants' assessments of the extent of their knowledge about violence against women.

Figure 4: Self-Assessments of Knowledge about Violence against Women – Response by Gender
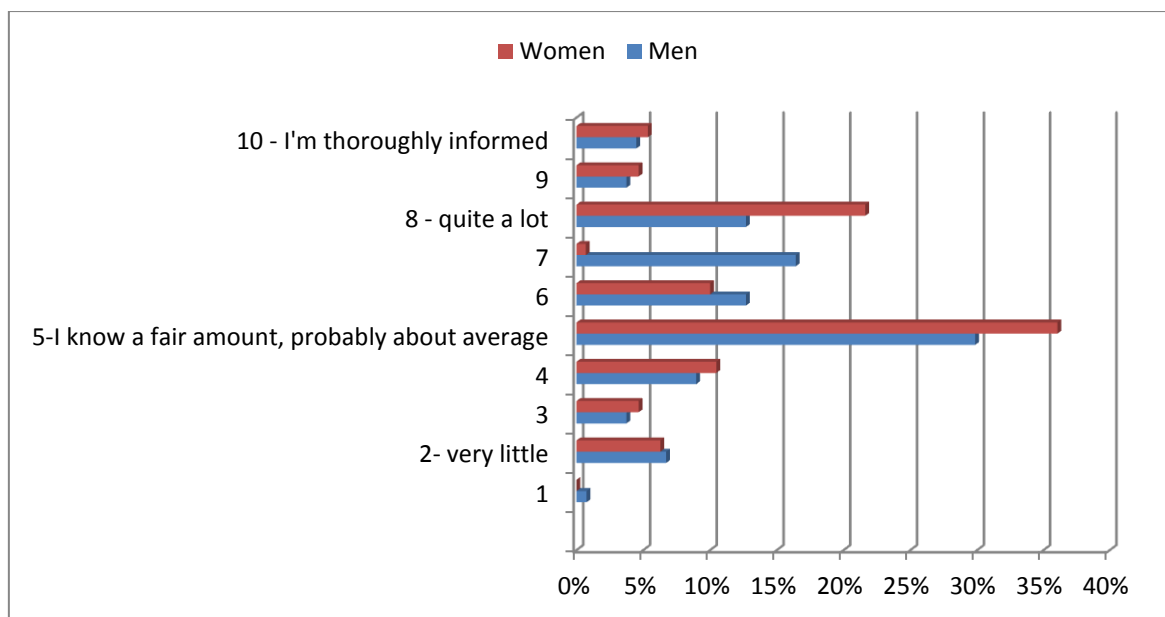
Question 4: Forms of Violence against Women

All Respondents

Respondents were asked to list all the forms of violence against women of which they were aware. Eighty-nine per cent (89%) of all respondents answered this question. This question was left open-ended with no potential answers provided. The aim was to encourage respondents to come up with their own knowledge, without being influenced by examples. The responses then provide a solid baseline indicator of this knowledge. The responses were themed into the following categories:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Mental/emotional
- Mental/psychological
- Sexual
- Financial
- Racial/cultural (including restriction from family)
- Social (restriction on activity, contact from friends, exclusion from social activities)
- Spiritual/religious

The violence identified most often by respondents was physical violence with 87% of respondents identifying this. Physical violence was followed by the identification of emotional violence (51% of respondents) and psychological violence (45% of respondents). The violence that was least often identified was spiritual violence and cultural violence.

Many respondents provided detailed and descriptive information about what they understood constituted violence against women. In addition to the overt physical and sexual violence, the use of threats, control, coercion and humiliation were identified. Comments from respondents included:

> Controlling women's and female children's movements, e.g. not allowing social interaction, verbal abuse, physical violence, threatening behaviour, intimidating behaviour, cultural limitations and consequences. E.g. female circumcision, pornographic depictions of violent attitudes towards women,

video game role modelling of violence against women, cultural attitudes of blaming and punishment of women for men's actions, domestic violence by male figures, including children perpetrating violence against females in the house, knowledge of violence in the home and condoning it, anonymous texting/abusive online communication.

Physical, financial, emotional/psychological, sexual, verbal threats, manipulation/coercion by emotional withdrawal to obtain an outcome, use of personal information as jokes to cause public embarrassment, constant texting/phone calls to check on whereabouts.

Sexual violence, physical violence (including family violence), financial abuse, emotional abuse, threats to harm others (including children and pets).

Physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, emotional, drug-induced long-term abuse, domestic sexual harassment (verbal, physical, psychological, power play), workplace general abuse by those in a position of power, bullying.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

Ninety-four per cent (94%) of respondents involved in preventing violence against women work answered this question. As with all respondents, the form of violence against women most often identified was physical violence (95% of this group, compared with 87% of all respondents). Interestingly, financial violence was strongly identified by this group –

following this was emotional violence. Respondents involved in preventing violence against women work generally identified a wider array of forms of violence against women although cultural and spiritual violence was, again, the least identified form of violence.

Responses by Gender

Again, the most common form of violence against women identified by women and men was physical violence. About 88% of women and men identified this violence. The next most common form of violence identified was emotional violence – by 53% of women. Men tended to most often identify the most obvious and most well known forms of violence against women, whereas women were more likely to identify less obvious forms of violence such as social, financial and emotional violence. More women than men identified sexual violence.

The forms of violence most often identified by women were:

1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Sexual
4. Financial

The forms of violence most often identified by men were:

1. Physical
2. Psychological
3. Verbal

In summary, all respondents identified physical violence most often, and most obviously, across all categories. Emotional violence was identified about half the time, and this is perhaps slightly higher than might have been expected. This might reflect the increased attention being given to emotional violence through training and in the media for example, because it accompanies most other forms of violence.

Of particular interest, is the very low identification of sexual violence, even by staff involved in preventing violence against women.

Social violence also rates quite low in people's awareness, particularly for men. This may well reflect the less overt nature of this violence and that often only the person subject to the violence feels the full force, intention and control of it.

Spiritual and cultural violence was rarely identified. This suggests that activities to raise awareness of this violence, the ways in which it can occur and its consequences are required in prevention work.

Table 3: Forms of Violence Identified by the Different Respondents and Percentage who Identified each Form

Forms of violence	% of all respondents	% of respondents involved in preventing violence against women work	% of women (approx.)	% of men (approx.)
Physical	87	95	85	88
Verbal	40	31	35	39
Emotional	51	66	53	43
Psychological	45	47	41	44
Financial	42	75	45	31
Sexual	44	56	45	37
Social	16	28	18	8
Spiritual	3	9	4	2
Cultural	4	3	4	4

Question 5: Severity of Violent Actions and Behaviours

All Respondents

Respondents were asked about the severity of eight different violent actions and behaviours, an adaptation from the National Survey on Community Attitudes to Violence Against Women (VicHealth 2010). Nearly all respondents answered this question – 97%. The aim of this question was to establish baseline data about respondents' knowledge of the severity of different types of actions and behaviours that constitute violence against women. Figure 5 shows eight different violent actions and the level of severity (from 'not at all serious' to 'absolutely dangerous') that respondents attributed to these actions.

Figure 5: Level of Severity of Violent Actions and Behaviours - All Respondents

How serious do you think the following actions/behaviours are?

A	Hitting a partner because they are nagging, annoying or won't leave you alone	
B	Having sex with a partner even when they have said 'No'	
C	Ringing or texting a partner every couple of hours to see what they are doing or where they are	
D	Holding sole access to finances and providing a partner a limited amount of money to do the grocery shopping	
E	Making jokes about a partner's appearance or abilities in front of other people, especially mates	
F	Acting in a way, physically or emotionally, to cause fear or harm to a partner	
G	Threatening a partner: e.g. to 'get rid' of a pet or to hurt a family member knowing this will frighten and control a partner	
H	Posting private and/or embarrassing pictures of a partner on Facebook	

The actions and behaviours most often considered to be 'absolutely dangerous' were:

1. Threatening a partner, e.g. to 'get rid' of a pet or to hurt a family member knowing this will frighten and control a partner (81% of respondents).

2. Acting in a way, physically or emotionally, to cause fear or harm to a partner (80% of respondents).

3. Having sex with a partner even when they have said 'No' (77% of respondents).

4. Hitting a partner because they are nagging, annoying or won't leave you alone (75% of respondents).

These four actions formed a cluster of violent behaviours that most respondents considered absolutely dangerous, with little difference between them as to their level of severity. In addition, there was little variation in the responses to these actions – that is, most respondents clearly considered these actions absolutely dangerous rather than very serious or mildly serious. This pattern of responses indicated that the participants' knowledge of threatening behaviour, physical, emotional and some sexual violence was strong and well informed.

There was a sizeable difference between the level of severity attributed to this cluster of behaviours and the next behaviour that was considered absolutely dangerous – this being posting private and/or embarrassing pictures of a partner on Facebook. Fifty-nine per cent (59%) of respondents considered this behaviour as absolutely dangerous.

The action that was considered least serious and mildly concerning was ringing or texting a partner every couple of hours to see what they are doing, where they are. Twenty-six per cent (26%) of respondents thought this action was absolutely dangerous, and nearly 50% of respondents

considered it very serious. The remainder of respondents, that is about a quarter of people, thought this action was mildly serious through to a little concerning or not serious at all. There was considerable variation in responses to the severity of this action, which suggests that it is a behaviour that is not consistently recognised, by these respondents at least, as a behaviour that constitutes violence against women.

Making jokes about a partner's appearance or abilities in front of other people, especially mates was considered very serious by half of the respondents, and holding sole access to finances and providing a partner a limited amount of money to do the grocery shopping was considered very serious by nearly half of the respondents. Like the texting and ringing behaviours, these actions were generally viewed by the respondents as less serious and were less often regarded as violent behaviours against women.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

The actions considered most serious by the respondents involved in preventing violence against women work were:

1. Hitting a partner because they are nagging, annoying or won't leave you alone (88% of this group, compared with 75% of all respondents). In comparison, the behaviour that was considered most serious most often by <u>all</u> respondents was threatening a partner, e.g. to 'get rid' of a pet or to hurt a family member knowing this will frighten and control a partner (81% of all respondents).

2. Acting in a way, physically or emotionally, to cause fear or harm to a partner (84% of this group, compared with 80% of all respondents).

3. Having sex with a partner even when they have said No (84% of this group, compared with 77% of all respondents).

As was seen with responses to this question by all respondents, these same four behaviours formed a cluster of violent behaviours that most staff involved in preventing violence against women work considered absolutely dangerous. These behaviours stood out from the behaviours that were considered less serious. The behaviour considered as least serious by this group was ringing or texting a partner every couple of hours to see what they are doing or where they are (38% compared with 26% of all respondents). Interestingly, given their roles and knowledge, 10% of respondents from this group thought that frequent ringing or texting a partner and making jokes about a partner's appearance or abilities in front of other people, especially mates, constituted only mildly serious behaviour. A small number described three of the behaviours as not at all serious. Figure 6 (overleaf) shows their thoughts about the level of severity of the violent actions and behaviours.

Figure 6: The Level of Severity of Violent Actions and Behaviours – Staff involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

A	Hitting a partner because they are nagging, annoying or won't leave you alone
B	Having sex with a partner even when they have said 'No'
C	Ringing or texting a partner every couple of hours to see what they are doing or where they are
D	Holding sole access to finances and providing a partner a limited amount of money to do the grocery shopping
E	Making jokes about a partner's appearance or abilities in front of other people, especially mates
F	Acting in a way, physically or emotionally, to cause fear or harm to a partner
G	Threatening a partner, e.g. to 'get rid' of a pet or to hurt a family member knowing this will frighten and control a partner
H	Posting private and/or embarrassing pictures of a partner on Facebook

Responses by Gender

Responses from Men

The behaviour most often thought as absolutely dangerous by most males was having sex with a partner even when they have said 'No' (80%). This is interesting given that, in the previous question about what behaviours constituted violence against women, fewer than 50% of male respondents identified sexual violence.

Hitting a partner was viewed as absolutely dangerous by 77% of males, and this reflected the responses in the previous question that most men named physical violence as the most common form of violence against women. Threatening a partner was considered as absolutely dangerous by nearly a quarter of the men. The behaviour that generated the widest array of responses from men was constantly ringing or texting a partner with 20% of men viewing this behaviour as very serious and just over a third of men respondents viewed this behaviour as mildly serious or a little concerning. Figure 7 shows eight different violent actions and the level of severity (from 'not at all serious' to 'absolutely dangerous') that male respondents attributed to these actions.

Figure 7: The Level of Severity of Violent Actions and Behaviours identified by Males
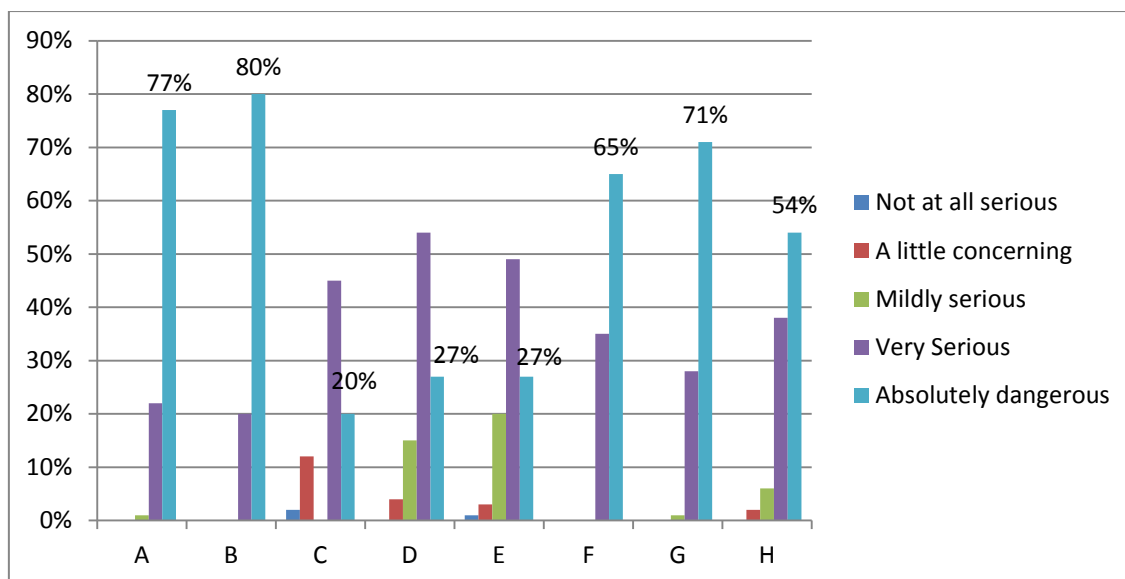
Figure 8: The Level of Severity of Violent Actions and Behaviours identified by Females

A	Hitting a partner because they are nagging, annoying or won't leave you alone
B	Having sex with a partner even when they have said 'No'
C	Ringing or texting a partner every couple of hours to see what they are doing or where they are
D	Holding sole access to finances and providing a partner a limited amount of money to do the grocery shopping
E	Making jokes about a partner's appearance or abilities in front of other people, especially mates
F	Acting in a way, physically or emotionally, to cause fear or harm to a partner
G	Threatening a partner, e.g. to 'get rid' of a pet or to hurt a family member knowing this will frighten and control a partner
H	Posting private and/or embarrassing pictures of a partner on Facebook

Responses from Women

The behaviours most often thought as absolutely dangerous by most women were acting in a way physically or emotionally to cause fear or harm to a partner and threatening a partner; both of these behaviours were viewed as absolutely dangerous by 84% of women with very little variation in response to this assessment. Women also identified having sex with a partner without consent (77%)

and hitting a partner (75%) as absolutely dangerous. These four responses reflected the forms of behaviours that women most often identified as forms of violence in the previous question about what behaviours constituted violence against women. There is more congruence in the responses of women than in the responses of men when they considered forms of violence and the severity of different behaviours that might constitute these different forms of violence.

This may indicate that, compared with men, the women in this survey have a more detailed and in-depth knowledge of the forms of violence experienced by women, and the different consequences and implications experienced by women as a result of this violence. This is not surprising given that the majority of people working in the violence against women sector are female, whether this be in response, early intervention and/or prevention.

As with men's responses, women thought the least serious behaviour was constantly ringing or texting a partner (28%) followed by making jokes about a partner's appearance or abilities in front of other people, especially mates (38%). Figure 8 (previous page) shows the level of severity of violent actions and behaviours identified by females.

Question 6: Who Commits Violence against Women?

All Respondents

Respondents were asked who, in their opinion, commits violence against women. Respondents were asked to choose from five options. Ninety-eight per cent (98%) of respondents answered this question. Eighty-two per cent (82%) of respondents believed that violence against women was committed by mainly men. One per cent (1%) of respondents thought violence against women was committed by men only, and 17% thought both men and women, in equal numbers, committed violence against women. Figure 9 shows respondents' thoughts about who commits violence against women.

Figure 9: Respondents' Thoughts about Who Commits Violence against Women – All Respondents
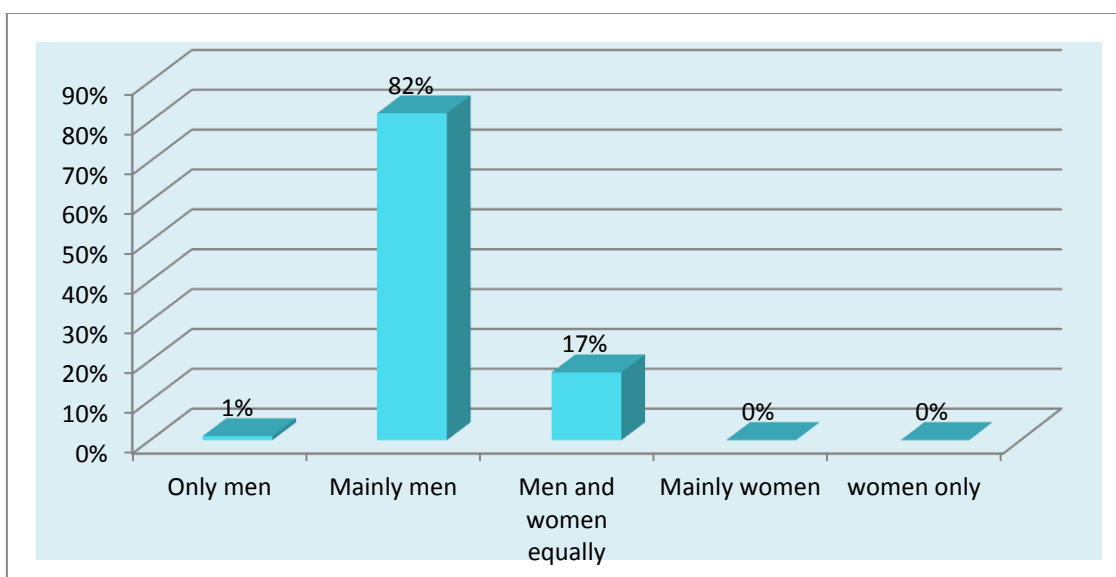
Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

Ninety-one per cent (91%) of respondents involved in preventing violence against women, compared with 82% of all respondents, considered that mainly men commit violence against women. Nine per cent (9%) of this group, compared with 17% of all respondents, believed that violence against women is committed by men and women equally.

Figure 10: Respondents' Thoughts about Who Commits Violence against Women – Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work
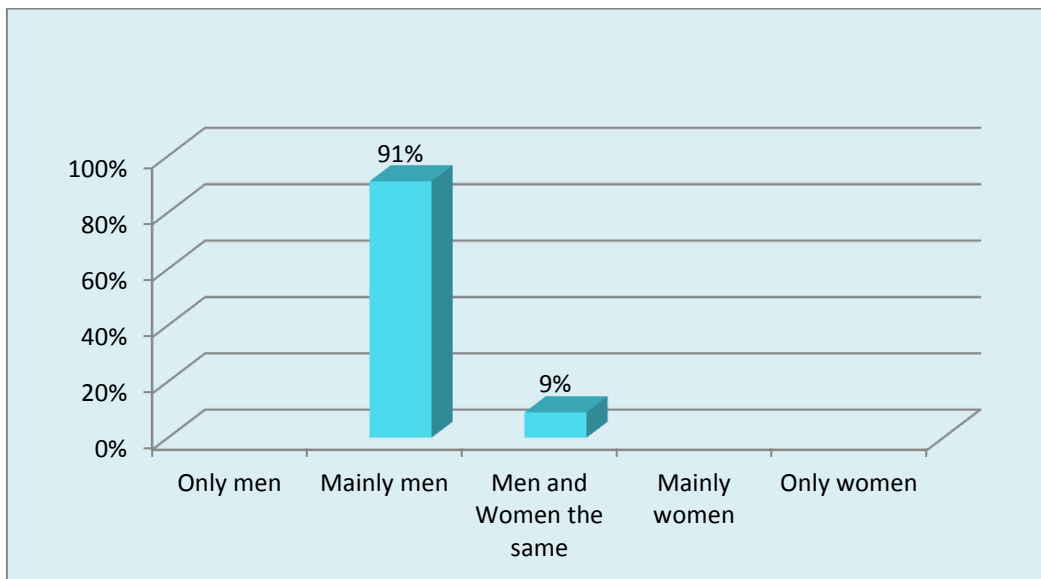
Responses by Gender

Most men (about 95%) and most women (about 90%) believed that mainly men commit violence against women. These percentages were higher than the 82% of all respondents when gender is not accounted for. Slightly more women (about 13%) than men (about 11%) believed that equal numbers of men and women commit violence against women.

Figure 11: Respondents' Thoughts about Who Commits Violence against Women – Response by Gender
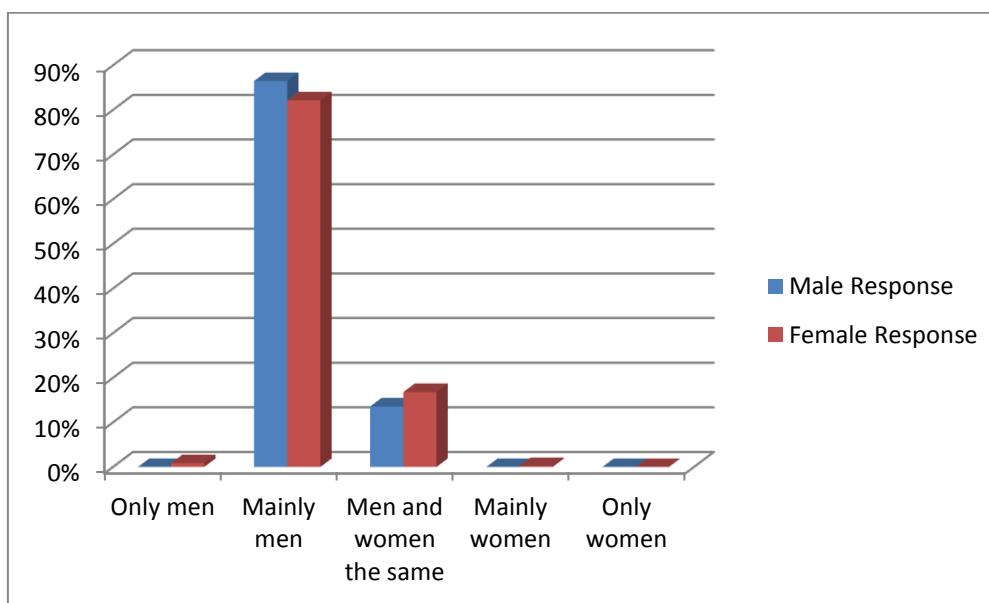
Question 7: How Common is Violence against Women?

All Respondents

Respondents were asked (on a scale 0-10) how common they thought violence against women was – 95% of respondents answered this question. The highest percentage of responses (28%) indicated that respondents thought violence against women happened 'quite often' and that 'many women

experience violence'. Nearly a quarter of respondents thought that violence against women was very common. Three per cent (3%) of respondents thought violence against women was a rare occurrence.

Figure 12: How Common is Violence against Women – All Respondents
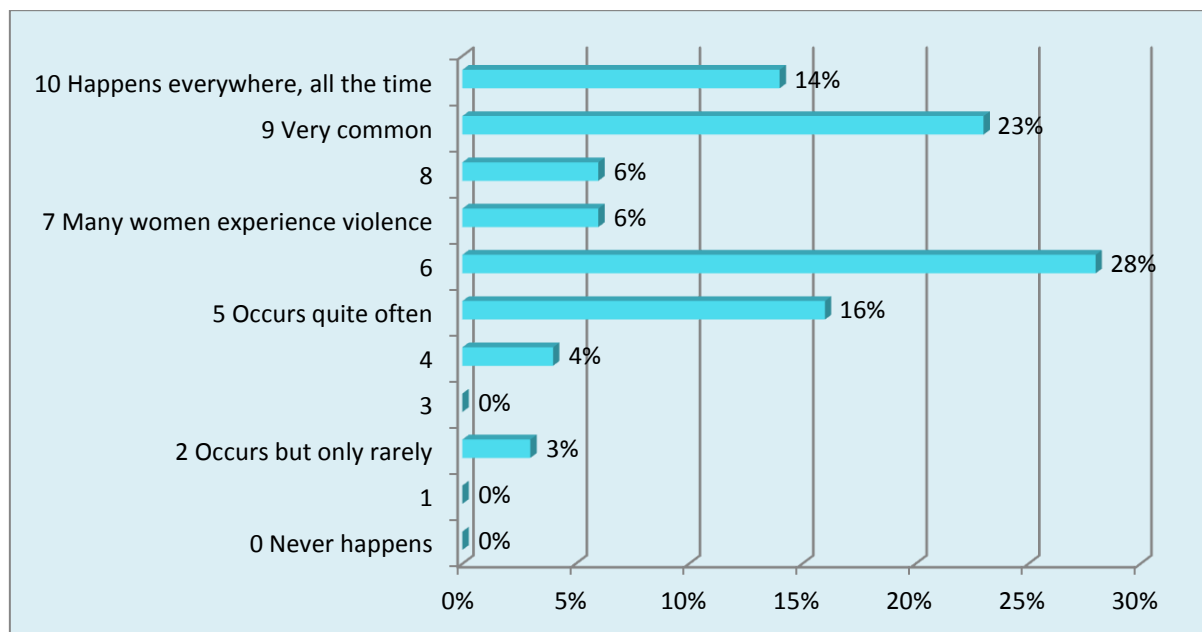
In addition to the ranking scale, this question provided an open space for respondents to add their thoughts and comments about the frequency of violence against women. There was variation in the responses in relation to attitudes toward and knowledge about violence against women. Many respondents thought that violence against women occurs more often than is known due to under-reporting and the ways in which violence is defined. Some comments referred to violence experienced by men and that this needed to be recognised equally with violence against women. Most respondents noted the presence of various contributing and intersecting influences on violence against women. Examples of comments included:

I think there are a number of multiplying factors, increasingly poor role models in and outside the family, drugs and alcohol, spoilt children and single parents.

I presume it's more common than the community may believe as a lot would not be reported due to fear of reprisal from the perpetrator.

I think a lot of violence against women is unreported due to women fearing for their lives. Threats made against them, the opinion that the law will not believe them and the gruelling process of having to go through legal channels to formally charge someone.

The majority of women don't experience violence, however a minority experience it often.

One in three women experience violence at some time in their lives. It is across all cultures and social brackets.

I believe 90% of women experience violence and it is very important to have a respectful relationship, especially to be role model to our future kids.

It depends how you define 'violence'. Also, many of the things listed on the previous page are things that women can do to men also. Regardless of who they are being done to, they are equally evil.

I think it is very important that the public is aware of and does not support acts of violence towards women. From my experience, the public is unaware of the amount of violence men experience, and I feel that that this issue is deeply important and should be highlighted. No one, man or woman, should

experience violence. It is important to work together and provide adequate supports to ensure no violence is acceptable.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

Just over a third (34%) of respondents involved in preventing violence against women work, compared with 23% of all respondents, thought that violence against women was very common. This group generally indicated that violence against women occurred quite often or even more often than that. Twenty-one per cent (21%) of this group, compared with 14% of all respondents, thought that violence occurred everywhere, all the time. Staff involved in preventing violence against women work generally thought that violence against women was more common than did respondents overall.

Figure 13: How Common is Violence against Women – Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work
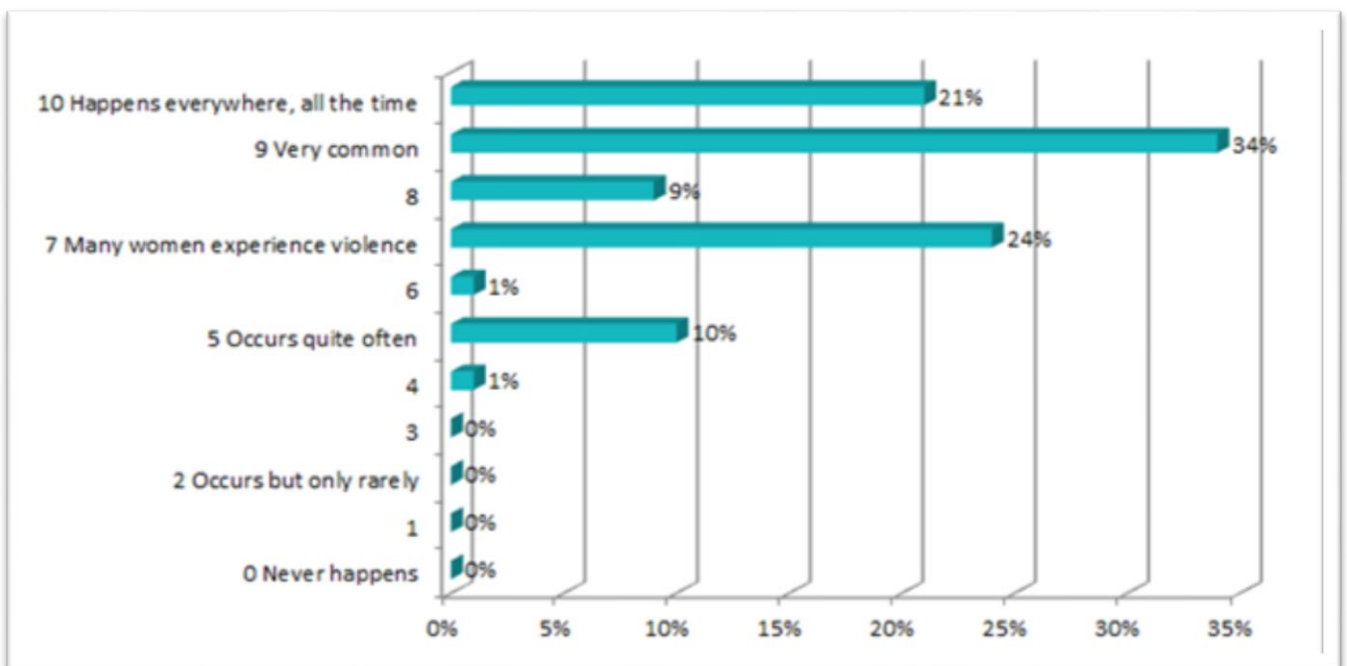
Responses by Gender

Almost a third of women and just on a third of men thought that many women experience violence. Women, rather than men, tended to think that violence against women was frequent and widespread with 26% of women thinking violence was very common and 17% thinking that violence happens everywhere, all the time. These responses varied substantially from men's responses where about 15% of men thought violence against women was very common, and about 4% of men thought it happened everywhere all the time. Men were more likely than women to think that violence against women occurred quite often (nearly a quarter of men) or less often than that.

This question highlighted the highly gendered nature of violence against women in terms of women's understanding of violence as frequent and prevalent. This would seem to reflect women's experiences of violence, personal and/or professional, and their knowledge of the dynamics of men's violence against women.

Figure 14 overleaf shows female and male respondents' thoughts about the commonality of violence against women.

Figure 14: How Common is Violence against Women – Responses by Gender

Figure 14: How Common is Violence against Women – Responses by Gender

Horizontal bar chart (Female, Male) showing responses:
- 10 - happens everywhere all the time: 17%
- 9 - very common: 26%
- 8: 6%
- 7 - many women experience violence: 30%
- 6: 5%
- 5 - occurs quite often: 14%
- 4: 1%
- 3: 1%
- 2 - occurs but only rarely: 0%
- 1: 0%
- 0 - never happens: 0%
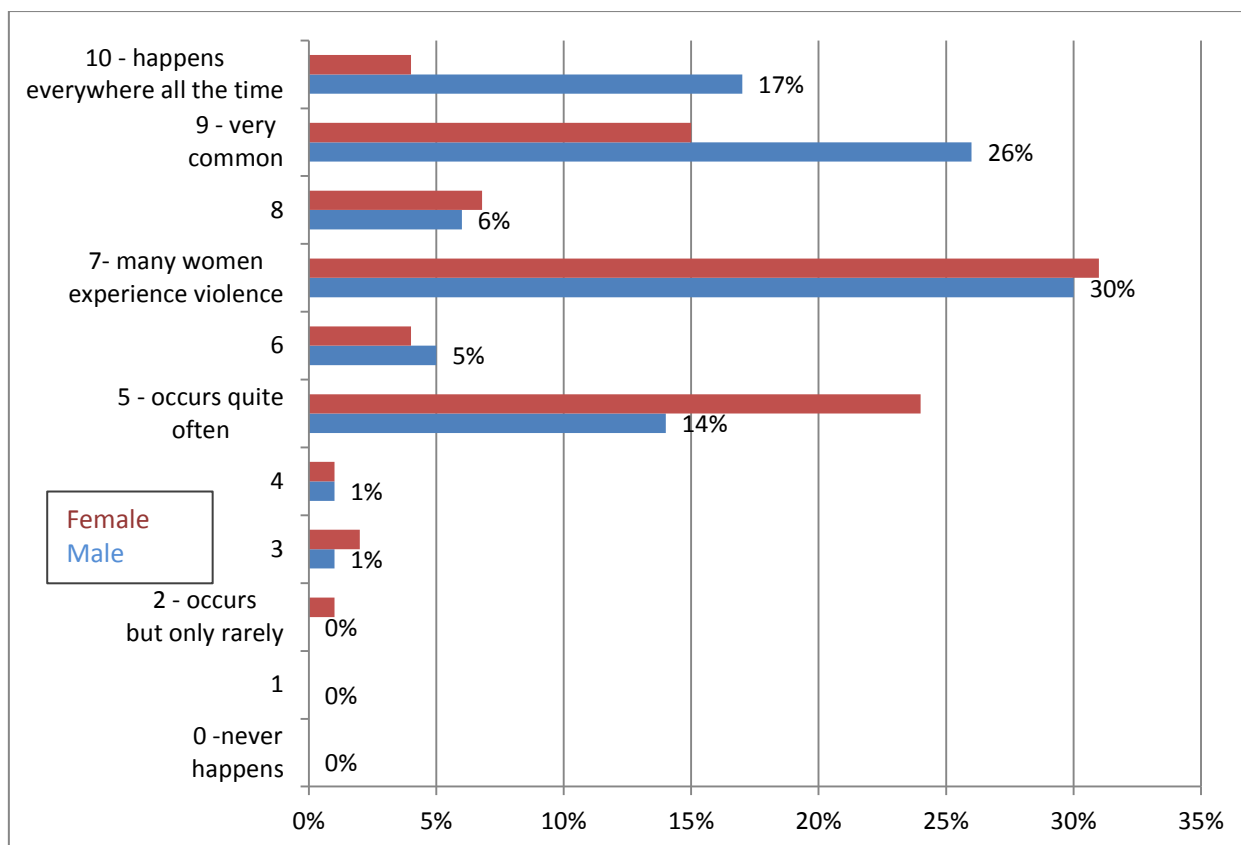
Question 8: The Main Causes of Violence against Women

All Respondents

This question asked respondents what they thought were the main causes of violence against women – 84% of people answered this question. The question was open-ended in order to encourage respondents to note their own responses without being influenced by examples. The responses then provide a solid baseline indicator of respondents' knowledge.

There were many and varied responses to this question. Responses were themed into the following categories:

- Anger/jealousy/power/control over partner
- Money
- Drug/alcohol
- Pressure of social determinants – for example: housing, unemployment, food and the stress of dealing with these, large families with small children
- Mental health issues
- Past personal experience, especially having experienced violence within the family of origin
- Social role models/cultural norms – for example: learnt behaviour, religious beliefs and traditions
- Lack of respect – particularly for women, but also for property, human rights, relationships
- Education – lack of understanding of violence and gender equality, lack of skills to manage frustration

- Systemic – for example: lack of legal repercussions, sexism, depiction of women in the media, normalisation and acceptance of violence in the community, male dominance and control
- Gender inequity – for example: gender inequity in relationships, patriarchy, the loss of traditional roles for men.

Respondents involved in preventing violence against women work identified two main causes or contributing factors to violence against women. They both related to social role models and gender inequity:

- How women are portrayed in society, both factually and in the media and entertainment
- How women are treated at home, at work and culturally.

Other themes included:

- Power – also linked to jealousy/anger/fear
- Systemic causes – also relates to role models and gender inequity
- Drug and alcohol use.

Compared with the responses from all respondents, this group identified fewer causes, or contributors, to violence against women. The contributors were more closely grouped together and generally reflected systemic and structural issues rather than a focus on individualised causes, which was more common in comments from all respondents combined. Compared with all respondents, staff involved in preventing violence against women appeared to have a more in-depth, nuanced and analytical understanding of violence against women. Some of the comments from this group of respondents were:

> Gender inequality. A lack of understanding (or experience) of what a respectful relationship should look like. Also there is a general unspoken acceptance of violence against women ... to me this is the systemic gender inequalities that exist in our society (i.e. patriarchy).

> Long held societal values as to the place and role of women, and in many social groups, the frailty and stress of men and other women if they were exposed as children and are coping with changing gender roles and unemployment or settling in new society.

Some specific causes of, or contributors to, violence against women were cited by both men and women. These were power, social role models and systemic causes. However, responses to this question tended to be gendered in that women often focused more on structural and systemic causes whereas men seemed to focus more strongly on a combination of these and individual causes. This gendered response may be accounted for, at least in part, by the higher proportion of women (relative to men) working in preventing violence against women roles and programs. It is also surmised that the gendered response reflects, as it has in other survey questions, the higher likelihood that women, rather than men, have had first-hand experience and knowledge of violence against women – personal and/or professional experience. This gendered attribution of the causes of violence against women also paralleled the pattern of responses from respondents involved in preventing violence against women work compared with the responses from all respondents overall.

The top five reasons for the occurrence of violence against women given by women were:

1. Power
2. Social role models
3. Systemic causes

4. Gender inequity

5. Anger.

Examples of some comments from women were:

Attitudes of control by men over women. Lack of inhibition caused by alcohol or drug use. Belief that it is right to be violent against women. Depiction of women in media. The need for power and control by some men.

Societal and/or cultural perceptions of how women should behave or be treated. Insecurity/poor self-esteem of people who need to control/hurt women.

Gender inequity - the way society perceives women (i.e. expectations of women to be subservient, act in certain ways etc.) – the way society perceives men (i.e. ok for men to be dominant, strong, and in control) – sexualisation of women – the fact our culture holds these perceptions and beliefs allows violence against women to occur in subconscious shapes or forms.

The top five reasons for the occurrence of violence against women given by men were:

1. Social role models

2. Drug/alcohol issues

3. Power

4. Mental health issues

5. Systemic causes.

Examples of comments from men included:

Male perception of dominance and have 'the right' to do it. Cultural or religious beliefs. Men lacking emotional intelligence. Men with drug or alcohol issues. Men suffering depression/low self-esteem.

A society that does not problematise violence in general, we see it regularly in sport, TV etc., indeed it is often celebrated and valorised. A privileging of machismo and a particular view of masculinity which posits 'might = right'. I would also imagine that issues like poverty, substance abuse, mental health issues, and obviously poor anger management are also causes.

Question 9: Respondents' Reactions to Violence against Women Scenario

All Respondents

This question asked respondents what they might do if they were told by someone that they were experiencing violence from another person close to them. Eighty-nine per cent (89%) of respondents answered this question. Again, the question was open-ended in order to encourage individual and authentic responses from participants. There was a range of responses and many indicated the uncertainties inherent in deciding what to do and how to support a person experiencing violence.

Some respondents thought they would actively intervene by, for example, reporting the violence or making a referral, while others would encourage the person to seek support and help. A very small number of respondents were unsure what they would do and many respondents commented that

their response would depend on the nature of the violence and/or the particular situation of the person making the disclosure. A few respondents thought they would speak to the perpetrator[1].

Six key actions were identified from the responses. These were:

1. Suggest the person leave/avoid the perpetrator – remove from immediate danger
2. Report the violence to police
3. Listen, empathise, let the person know you believe them
4. Provide information about services
5. Encourage the person to seek support
6. Refer the person to services.

Some examples of respondents' comments were:

> Ensure that the person was safe and had somewhere where they felt safe to be. Provide them with any help and assistance, encourage them to go to the police If needed, speak with the person committing the violence.

> Listen, Listen and Listen. Provide support, and support group information.

> Offer them immediate assistance if required. Encourage them to speak to police, leave situation, seek professional assistance.

> Support that person in the way they would like to be supported. If that involves reporting/responding, then I would. If they would prefer not to report it, I would support them into other services if wanted. I would encourage them to speak to someone who is perhaps more qualified than I am to respond, and I would reiterate that it wasn't their fault. I would respect their right to privacy above everything else. If it was in a professional/work context, I would need to be sure that I wasn't legally obligated to respond in some way.

> Speak to alleged violator, and/or report to authorities.

> A female family member was suffering physical and emotional abuse, told me about it and asked me not to tell anyone. In theory it is most important not to hide the abuse, because the abused person is often in physical danger and the abuse may continue. But in practice, emotionally supporting a person who is being abused sometimes takes priority and the abuser is not held to account for the abusive behaviour. The safety of the abused person is paramount, but if asked not to interfere, their decision is up to them, although it is difficult to allow them their right to make their own decisions.

> Listen non-judgementally, acknowledge ambivalence and discuss what person would ideally like to happen, assess dangerousness, provide advice re: services (emergency and non-emergency), make recommendations re: appropriate services to contact, make an emergency plan, if dangerousness assessed as imminent and serious, contact appropriate services (police, domestic violence services) even without permission informing person that you are doing this and why.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

The six key actions identified from the data were the same for respondents involved in preventing violence against women work as for all respondents together.

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[1] Please note: Speaking with a perpetrator is not advised. This is a potentially dangerous action for the woman and for the person speaking with the perpetrator. Moreover, it takes power and the right to make decisions away from the woman.

Comparing comments from all respondents and from the staff involved in preventing violence against women work, the latter indicated more concrete knowledge about how to respond in practical ways to a woman who disclosed violence. Some examples of comments from this group were:

> Listen, validate their experience, conduct risk assessment (victim and any children exposed to situation), put them in touch with resources such as DVRC, help them to develop safety plan.

> Be supportive. Do not further victimise. Create a safety plan. Empower the victim to make their own decisions, while informing them of their many options.

Responses by Gender

There was not a significant difference in the responses offered by men and women, although men suggested reporting the violence to authorities more frequently than did women.

Women responded that they would: Listen, help the person find support, report the violence, and ensure that the person was safe. One woman commented that she would, 'contact WIRE or friends who have worked in this field to advise the women of their possible courses of action and offer the woman somewhere safe to stay or store things or be a contact if she needs help'.

Men responded that they would: seek advice, support the person, report the violence, and assist the person. Some men commented that they would:

> Listen to them and advise them to speak to the police and/or a counsellor.

> Provide advice on seeking professional assistance. Report to authorities with approval.

Question 10: Gender Equity and Prevention of Violence against Women

All Respondents

The term 'gender equity' is often used when talking about prevention of violence against women work. This question asked respondents what they understood by the term 'gender equity'. This question was open-ended and 83% of respondents answered. Figure 15 shows the most common descriptions of gender equity from the respondents.

Figure 15: Understandings of the Term 'Gender Equity'

Access to services   Aspects of life   Control   Conditions
Context   Education   Discrimination   Distribution of
Resources   Employment   Equal Rights   Equal Status   Equal
Treatment   Exist   Fear   Gender   Human Rights
Imbalance   Opportunities   Paid Equally   Regardless of Sex
Relationship   Social Support   Women   Deserve   Work

For those respondents who were familiar with the term 'gender equity', the general themes were equality in all aspects of life – opportunities, respect, pay – regardless of gender. Some respondents were unsure about the concept and didn't respond. Others noted that it meant 'nothing'– that it was a term used when wanting to be 'politically correct'. Some examples of responses are:

Women being treated equally and being less likely to be dependent on their partner. E.g. equal pay/financial security.

Fairness between women and men.

All people having equal access to all things.

It means the day when men and women have equal roles and responsibilities in society, and that these roles are valued equally.

Treating everyone the same regardless of gender.

That men and women have equal rights, equal choices, equal options, equal respect.

Equal opportunity to live without fear. To be able to participate in any chosen activities/work available. To not be judged adversely due to gender.

Gender equity is about fairness between men and women. Fairness doesn't necessarily mean equal amount of the same things to both sexes, but fairness that is in the context of what expectations are set on being a man and a woman.

Gender equilibrium might better describe the concept as equity implies a static view of equality which in reality changes over time.

Too complex to go into here, but in terms of violence we are coming from a very unequal place - you only have to open a paper, switch on the TV, go to the movies etc. to see who has the power in this world, who has the money, who tells the stories, who calls the shots ... until this power structure changes you can forget gender equity.

I don't know what it is. I don't necessarily disagree with it but it sounds like sounds like some overly PC rubbish.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

Two respondents were unsure about the meaning of gender equity but otherwise, the respondents involved in preventing violence against women work showed clearer and more confident understandings of the concept than did respondents overall. The most common responses from this group were:

- Equality
- Fairness
- Respect
- Opportunity
- Rights.

Some of their comments included:

Gender equity is about fairness between men and women. Fairness doesn't necessarily mean equal amount of the same things to both sexes, but fairness that is in the context of what expectations are set on being a man and a woman.

> To me it means the process of being fair to everyone in the community, so both men and women have access and opportunity to the same things.

Responses by Gender

There were no major differences in the responses provided by women and men although the women's responses encapsulated slightly more detailed ideas about what could contribute to gender equity.

Women understood that 'gender equity' meant:

- Equal access
- Equal opportunities
- Equal rights
- Treated equally.

Some comments from women were:

> Men and women alike should be able to live their lives free of danger, abuse, harm, anxiety. Women and men should be able to have the same options and access to education, employment, social outlets.

> No discrimination against women (or men), fairness.

> Male and female to be treated as equal.

Men understood that 'gender equity' meant:

- Equal rights
- Decisions and treatment not based on/affected by gender.

Some comments from men were:

> Valuing the intelligence, and contribution of each gender into society.

> Equal opportunities.

> Equal treatment and access regardless of gender.

> Gender equity means men and women are treated equally and fairly. It means they have the same opportunities and rewards in work and in the home.

> Equal rights, access, power, control of life in all parts of life.

Question 11: Responses to Sexist Comments or Jokes about Women at Work

All Respondents

This question asked respondents what they would do if they heard a sexist comment or joke about women at work. Eighty-seven per cent (87%) of respondents answered this question. Respondents were given a choice of four possible options ranging from not doing anything, to taking some action, to being unsure about how they might feel and how they might respond.

Sixty-six per cent (66%) of respondents would say something to show it wasn't acceptable although 19% were unsure of how they might respond. Fifteen per cent (15%) of respondents wouldn't respond either because they wouldn't be concerned about the comment or because, although they felt some discomfort, wouldn't imagine the comment would warrant any intervention.

In addition to selecting one of the four responses, respondents were invited to include further explanations about their responses. Most of the explanations focussed on the context of the comment – what the situation was, who was present, whether it was truly inappropriate/offensive, or said as a joke and taken as a joke. Many respondents acknowledged that they may follow up with the person making the comment later, in a less public environment. Others noted that they would find it hard to speak up if a senior worker or manager made the comment, and some respondents expressed a concern that in speaking up that they might experience negative repercussions and criticism. As with the question about the commonality of violence against women, some respondents noted that women also make sexist comments or jokes about men and that these need to be taken seriously too.

Figure 16: Responses to a Sexist Comment or Joke about Women at Work – All Respondents
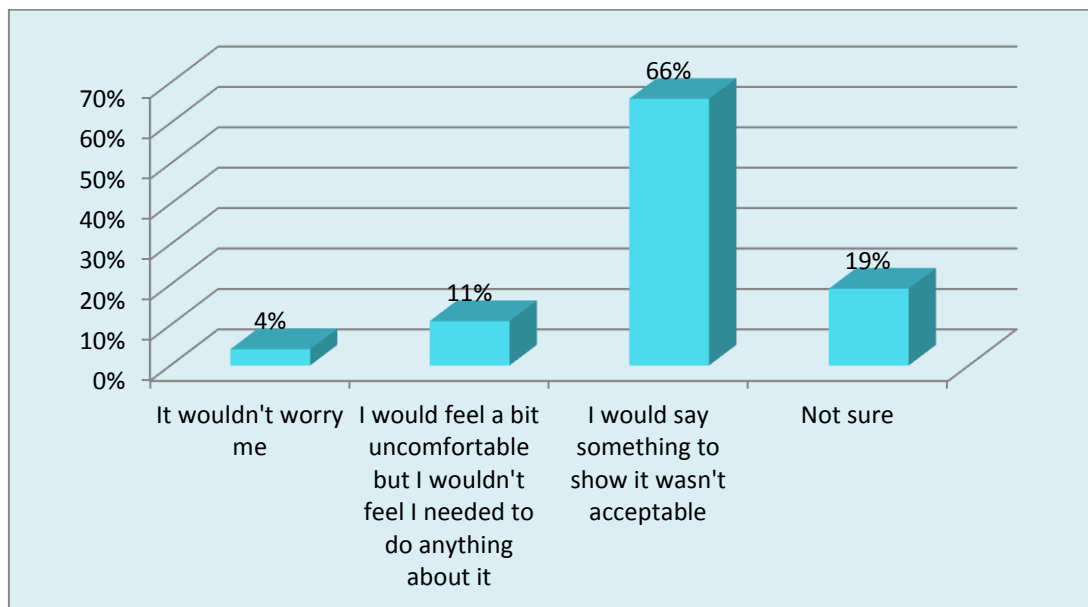
Some of the respondents' comments were:

> Laugh.

> I would feel a bit uncomfortable and I would like to say something, but I wouldn't feel sure what to say and how to say it.

> I would like to think I would say something, but in all honesty it would depend on the individual situation and how safe I felt about speaking up.

> Saying something is unacceptable to the person who has made a sexist comment/joke, the reply is often that Australia is becoming too politically correct or that I am too sensitive and over-reacting to a comment that means no harm.

> I would probably turn a blind eye. There are many comments and jokes that women and also men would find offensive, but often we can't do much about this. Ultimately it would depend on the severity of what was said. If it was completely unacceptable I would feel the need to bring it to my manager's attention rather than confront the person myself.

> Personally, I feel emotionally secure enough to be able to shrug off that sort of stuff, if I felt it was offensive. I'm also assertive enough to let the person know it's inappropriate.

> I am senior in HR so I would feel obligated to do something about it and refer to our EEO policy.

Sexist comments are made frequently in workplace and society. It is tedious and offensive and allows for a complacency that creates a minimisation of all but the most extreme versions of violence against women.

I actually hear more sexist comments at work from women about men - and the men have also said this, and they've talked about how they find it really awkward to address as they don't want to seem 'women bashing'. I'm a woman so I find this interesting - it's like women feel they have more ability to laugh at men, e.g. 'Well that's a man for ya'. So as a woman, if I heard a sexist comment about women I would feel very comfortable speaking up, however male colleagues have suggested they would not feel comfortable addressing sexist comments against men from women.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

In general, respondents involved in preventing violence against women work, compared with all respondents, were more likely to take action to show that sexist comments or jokes about women at work were not acceptable. A reasonably high 79% of this group, compared with 66% of all respondents, would say something to show it wasn't acceptable, although 12% of this group were unsure of how they might respond. This lack of certainty was not as high as it was for all respondents where 19% were unsure of how they would respond. Only 6% of the staff involved in preventing violence against women work, compared with 15% of all respondents, wouldn't respond despite feeling some discomfort about the comment or joke.

Figure 17: Responses to a Sexist Comment or Joke about Women at Work – Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work
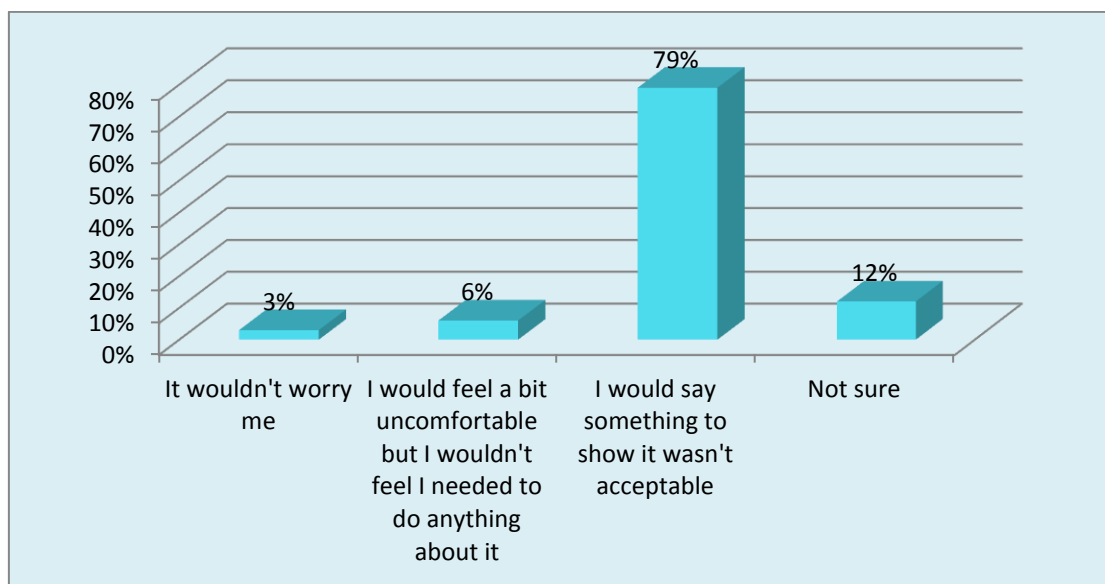
One comment was:

I would ask them not to speak like that in front of me.

Responses by Gender

Women, rather than men, were more likely to take action if they heard a sexist comment or joke about women at work. Most women (68%) and most men (58%) would say something to show the comment or joke was not acceptable. However, nearly a third of men and a quarter of women were unlikely to respond; about 18% of men and 10% of women would not do anything, and about 22% of men and 18% of women were not sure what they would do. As with all respondents answering this question, participants qualified their responses to this question by saying the context would strongly influence their decision to respond and the way in which they might respond. Twenty-five per cent

(25%) of men and 15% of women noted that their response would depend on the context of the joke and who made it.

Figure 18: Responses to a Sexist Comment or Joke about Women at Work – Responses by Gender
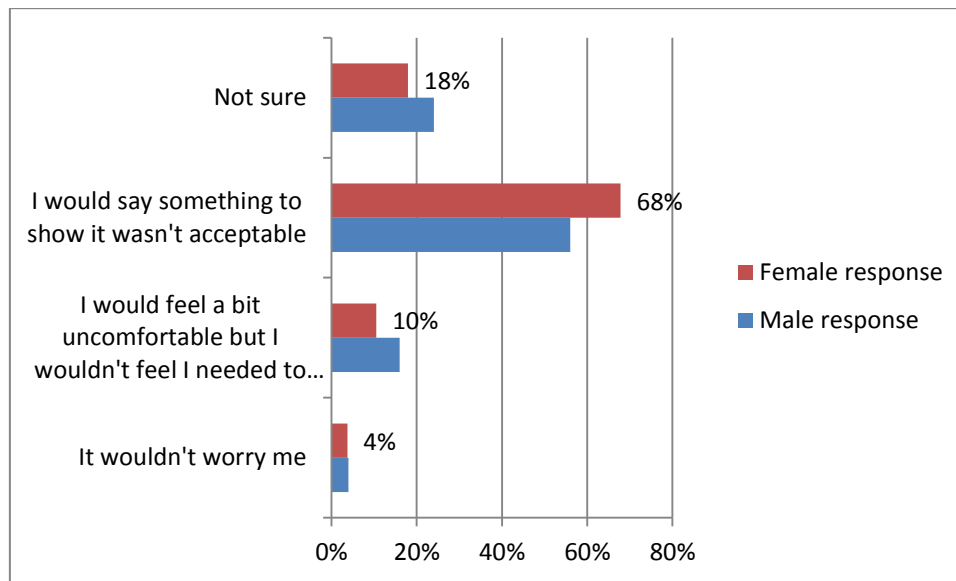
An example of a comment was:

> I would - by my knowledge of the person who told the joke - determine whether it was being said in a malicious or solely playful manner. I would also take into account whether the joke was directed at someone specifically or whether it was said in front of other people who promote sexist attitudes.

Question 12: Organisational Activities to Prevent Violence against Women and to Support and Increase Gender Equity

All Respondents

This question asked respondents about what their organisation or specific work area could do to prevent violence against women and to support and increase gender equity - either in their workplace or in the community. Respondents could choose more than one option from provided suggestions. There was also scope for respondents to provide their own comments. Ninety-one per cent (91%) of people answered this question.

The most common response was that organisations could promote gender equity (78% of respondents). There was also strong support for organisations modelling gender equity in day-to-day work and activities (74%), and providing community education (74%). The lowest amount of support was for organisations making changes to workplace practice and policy (49%), and undertaking risk identification and referral (50%). A small percentage of respondents either didn't know what organisations could do (3%) or thought there was nothing that organisations could do (1%). Figure 19 (overleaf) shows all respondents' thoughts about what their organisation or specific work area could do to prevent violence against women and to support and increase gender equity.

Figure 19: What could your Organisation or Specific Work Area could do to Prevent Violence against Women and Support and Increase Gender Equity? – All Respondents
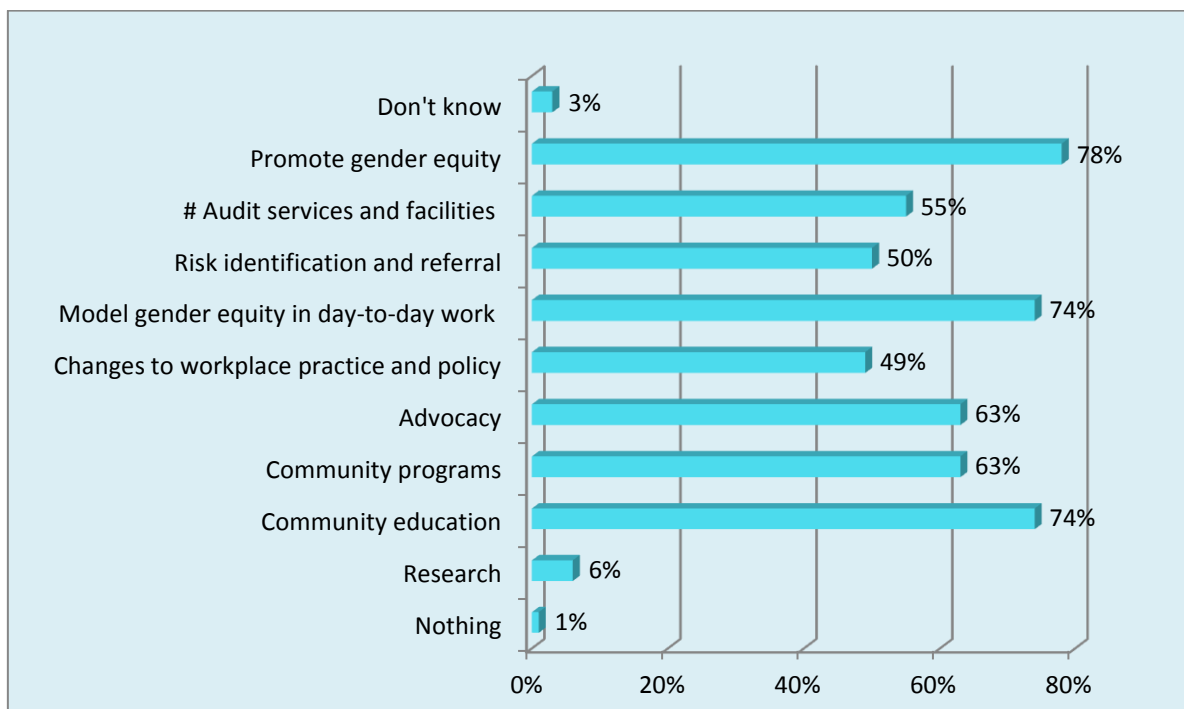
- Audit services and facilities to ensure they are safe, accessible and welcoming of women

Increasing the numbers of women in leadership and management positions was seen as an important contribution to achieving gender equity and to break stereotypes of what kinds of work women and men are capable. In recognising the value of even small-scale activities, attention was given to displaying posters and information about what constitutes violence against women, zero tolerance of this violence, and where to access support and information. Respondents considered that men, not only women, had a role to play in these activities, and that employees at all levels within organisations needed to be involved. Many comments referred to the amount of prevention of violence against women work that organisations were already doing and the White Ribbon Campaign was mentioned as one of these activities. Some comments indicated that more attention needed to be given to supporting and understanding preventing violence against women work in Indigenous communities and in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Preventing violence against women and gender equity work was needed in workplaces as well as in the community, although not all workplaces were identified as requiring action or change in these areas. The difficulties in achieving gender equity were also located at a broader structural level – for example, the existence of more women than men in part-time employment and the differentials in salaries between men and women.

Some examples of comments from respondents are:

> Celebrate the achievements of women and use them as role models to encourage other women to reach their full potential. Community programs should include leadership development for women.

> Build understanding amongst staff of what gender equity means and looks like.

> Promote increased domestic violence leave as part of our EBA. Also, psychological health in the workplace training incorporating domestic violence awareness and support services. Further promote employment assistance program.

> Our organisation already has a white ribbon team that informs our work place and the community and actively promotes non-violence to women.

As migrant with English as a second language, we are not encouraged to speak up. No one bother listening to us. It is all in the paper, but not in the practice. Our voices are not taken in to account and we are intimidated by the Anglos if we dare to disclose circumstances that doesn't benefit to them. Discrimination plays a big role in this topic.'

The most common response from staff involved in preventing violence against women work was that organisations could promote gender equity (88%). This was also the most common response for all respondents although their level of support for this activity was lower (78%).

Noteworthy differences between this group and all respondents existed in this group's higher levels of support for the organisational activities of research, changes to practice and policy, audits and advocacy (see Table 4 below).

Table 4: Organisational Activities that Received Notably Higher Support by Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

Activity	Staff involved in preventing violence against women work	All respondents
Research	50%	6%
Changes to workplace practice and policy	74%	49%
Audits of services and facilities to ensure organisations are safe, accessible and welcoming of women	77%	55%
Advocacy	79%	63%

The higher support from staff involved in preventing violence against women work for these activities may reflect their existing involvement in gender equity and preventing violence against women work, and a greater understanding of what is involved in each activity and what can be achieved through each activity.

Support for organisations to model gender equity in day-to-day work and activities was strong and essentially the same for this group (73%) and all respondents (74%). This was also the case for organisations to provide community education (this group – 73%, all 74%) and for the provision of community programs (this group – 68%, all 63%). Staff involved in preventing violence against women work saw risk identification and referral as the least useful of the possible organisational responses (56%), whereas research was considered the least useful activity by all respondents (6%).

Figure 20 (overleaf) shows this group's thoughts about what their organisation or specific work area could do to prevent violence against women and to support and increase gender equity.

An illustrative comment was:

> Celebrate the achievements of women and use them as role models to encourage other women to reach their full potential. Community programs should include leadership development for women.

Figure 20: What Could your Organisation or Specific Work Area do to Prevent Violence against Women and Support and Increase Gender Equity? – Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work
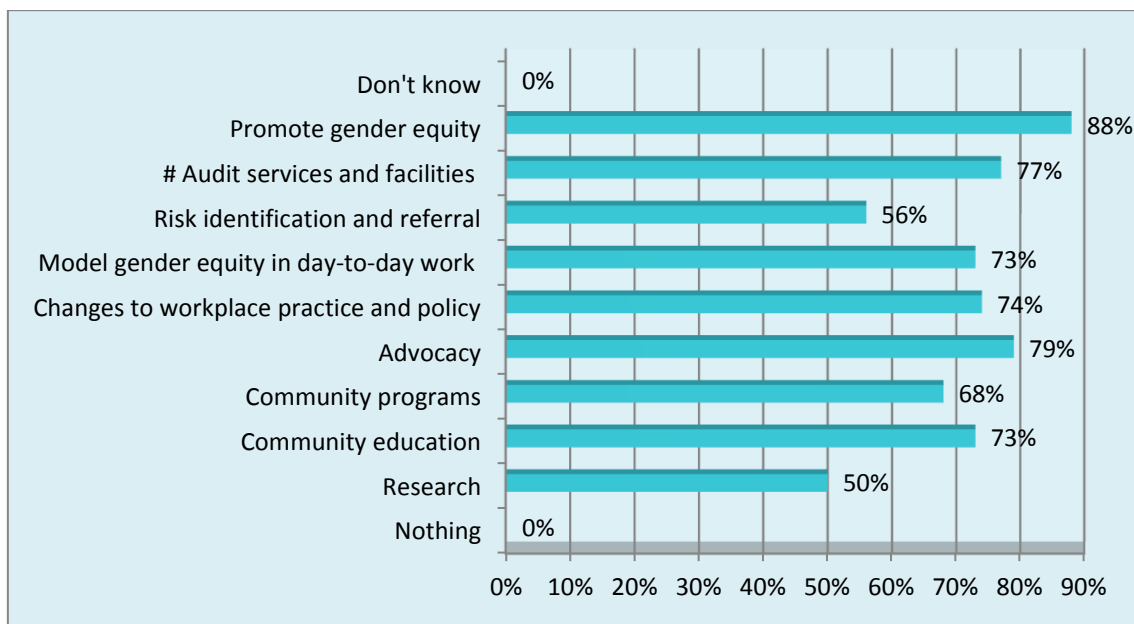
- Audit services and facilities to ensure they are safe, accessible and welcoming of women

Responses by Gender

The highest percentage of women (79%) and the highest percentage of men (77%) thought that promoting gender equity would be the most useful activity for their organisations to undertake. This was followed by modelling gender equity in day-to-day work and activities (women 76%, men 67%) and providing community education (women 75%, men 69%). Research was considered the least useful activity for organisations to undertake with 34% of women and men thinking this. The biggest difference in responses between women and men was in relation to undertaking an audit of services and facilities to ensure the organisation is safe, accessible and welcoming of women – 58% of women thought this would be helpful, whereas 45% of men thought this.

Further comments from respondents noted the importance of including men in activities that aim to prevent violence against women and to achieve gender equity. Women and men noted recognising the value of women in management and leadership positions.

Figure 21 (overleaf) shows female and male respondents' thoughts about what their organisation or specific work area could do to prevent violence against women and to support and increase gender equity.

Figure 21: What Could your Organisation or Specific Work Area do to Prevent Violence against Women and Support and Increase Gender Equity? – Responses by Gender

Don't know — Female 3%, Male 2%
Promote gender equity — Female 79%, Male 77%
Audit services and facilities to ensure we… — Female 58%, Male 45%
Risk identification and referral — Female 51%, Male 46%
Model gender equity in day-to-day work… — Female 76%, Male 67%
Changes to workplace practice and policy — Female 50%, Male 43%
Advocacy — Female 65%, Male 60%
Community programs — Female 61%, Male 51%
Community education — Female 75%, Male 69%
Research — Female 34%, Male 34%
Nothing — Female 0%, Male 2%

Legend: Female Responses, Male Responses

\# - Audit services and facilities to ensure they are safe, accessible and welcoming of women

Examples of some comments from **women** about organisational activities were:

> Celebrate the achievements of women and use them as role models to encourage other women to reach their full potential. Community programs should include leadership development for women.

> I think the more women who are in leadership roles, the more women can be at the forefront of changes to behaviour. We continue to have organisational structures in which women perform gender-stereotypes and remain at lower levels of leadership. Whilst we don't want to see the Margaret Thatcher syndrome, we do want to see our values changes. This organisation continues to have more men than women up the top of the tree. Women still tend to do the touchy-feely jobs and men the more 'logical' ones.

> These have to be long-term actions to achieve long-term cultural change. Most funding is short term which is a challenge.

> Needs to be part of strategic planning process and embedded from top to on-ground operational level. Include education as part of orientation.

Examples of some comments from **men** about organisational activities were:

> Management have to take this on as an issue.

> Employ more men in community services, employ more women in engineering, more women in exec., and ditch the conservative old men.

> Work specifically with sporting clubs as one of the key settings.

> I am not completely sold on the notion that gender equity and violence against women go hand in hand. Of course violence against women is an example of gender inequity. But gender equity is far broader. I accept the principle that there is inequity between the genders and we should work to address this. However, this view is not necessarily shared by all men. I am not convinced that addressing all the

inequities that women face will address violence against women. I think, particularly for men, going down the gender equity path creates confusion and makes it more difficult to address the core issue of violence against women.

Men make up 50% of the population. Violent men are a small minority of this. Men must be included in the healing process of female victims instead of being excluded as it reinforces damaging perceptions and stereotypes about men (based on the last experience a woman would have had, which is negative). Engaging men must be through reinforcing positive messages rather than negative messages, as research has shown consistently that positive messages help in changing social attitudes. However, putting collective responsibility on all men for the violent actions of a few leads to disengagement and detachment from the process.

Question 13: Participation in Gender Equity and in Preventing Violence against Women Work in Organisations

All Respondents

This question asked respondents about what would assist them to consider participating in gender equity and in preventing violence against women work in their organisations. Respondents could choose a number of provided options and also provide open comments. Eighty-eight per cent (88%) of respondents answered this question.

Just on two thirds of respondents thought that professional development or training would assist them to participate in gender equity and preventing violence against women work in their organisation. Reflecting some of the comments from the previous question about what organisations could do in the way of preventing violence against women work and achieving gender equity, more than half the respondents (56%) thought that support from management would encourage them to become involved in this work in their organisation. This links with the importance afforded the ideas of promoting and modelling gender equity and gender equitable behaviours in organisations that were noted in the previous question. The availability of informative resources was noted as helpful by 53% of respondents.

Many respondents noted that they were already involved in these activities either because it was their direct role and responsibility, or because it was a major area of interest and concern for them. People noted the existence of gender equity committees in workplaces and that they had sought support and information from colleagues with relevant knowledge, particularly when interacting with clients. Various respondents were interested in becoming involved and were keen for information about opportunities to do so.

Only 4% of respondents were not interested in participating in this work, and some people did not see this work as central to, or connected with, their work role. As a result, they could not justify spending time in meetings or in professional development in relation to gender equity or violence against women work. Figure 22 overleaf shows all respondents' thoughts about what would assist them to consider participating in gender equity and in preventing violence against women work in their organisations.

Figure 22: Activities that would Assist People to Consider Participating in Gender Equity and Preventing Violence against Women Work in their Organisations – All Respondents
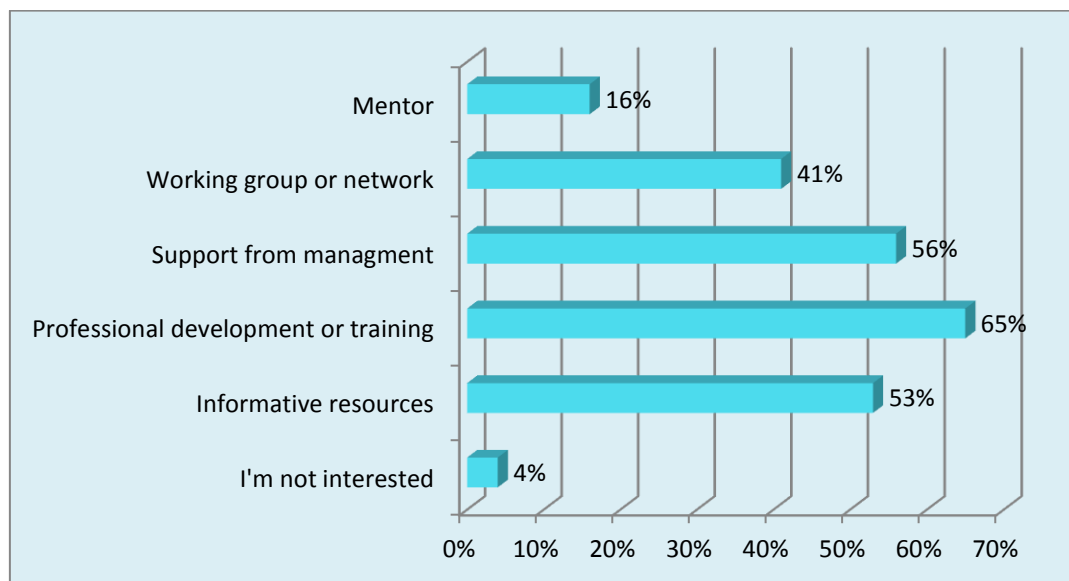
Some of the comments from respondents to this question were:

> A serious solution/training scheme regarding behavioural change, rather than tokenistic gestures just to look like they are doing something.

> Clear organisational values, principles and model behaviour from the exec. team.

> In 2012, we had a Women's Network lunch that ran over a lunch break (approx. 1 hour). We don't have that this year, but I would like something like that where women could be part of a group where they could be educated on such matters and those experiencing violence may start to see that someone's behaviour towards them is not acceptable or warranted.

> More time. As it's not part of our core business and we are really busy. I can't see how we could make time for it.

> Involvement in a working group or network would have to have relevance to my current role for me to provide a case to invest my work time in this activity.

Responses from Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

Two thirds of respondents involved in preventing violence against women work – and of all respondents - thought that professional development or training would assist them to participate. This had also been the most common response from all respondents. The least useful activity was considered to be mentoring for both this group (20%) and all respondents (16%). Staff involved in preventing violence against women work rated support from management quite highly (62%), perhaps reflecting their experiences in having worked in these areas and knowing the influence and importance of management in supporting initiatives and new policies in organisations. All respondents also rated support from management as important (56%), but at a lower level. Staff involved in preventing violence against women work thought that participation in working groups or networks was valuable (59%) and this level of support was somewhat higher than that given by all respondents (41%), again perhaps reflecting their involvement in existing networks. Figure 23 (overleaf) shows the activities that would assist staff involved in preventing violence against women work to consider participating in gender equity and preventing violence against women work in their organisations.

Figure 23: Activities that would Assist People to Consider Participating in Gender Equity and Preventing Violence against Women Work in their Organisations – Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women
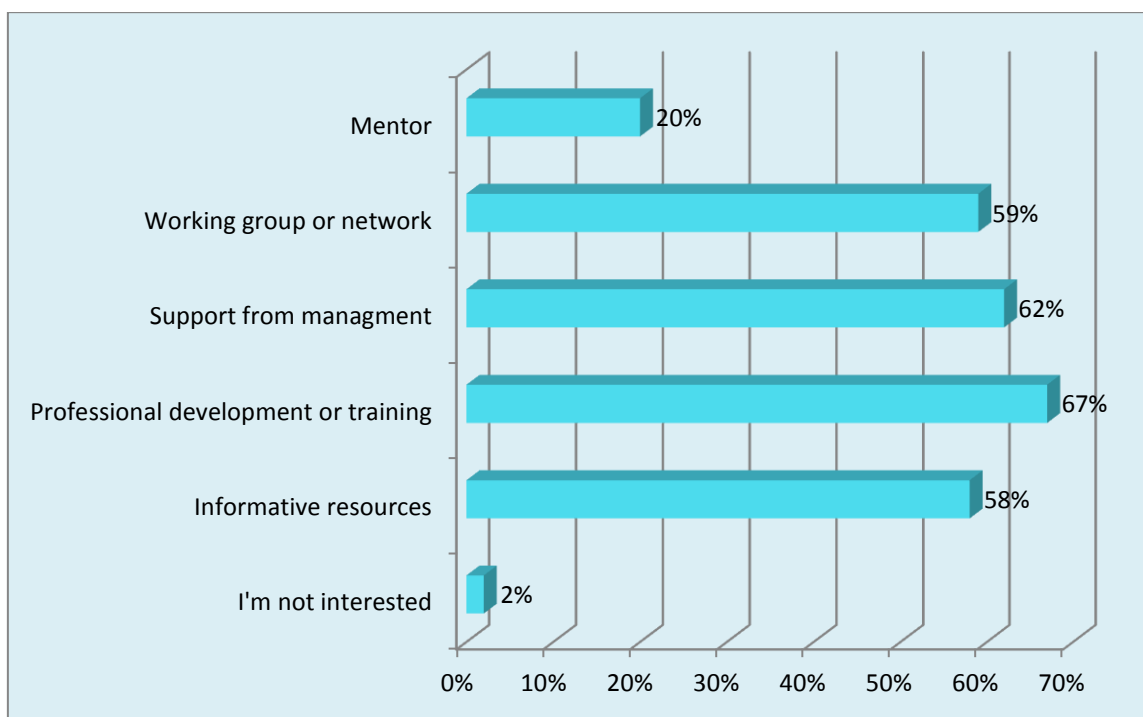
Responses by Gender

Again, the provision of professional development or training appealed most often to most people – women (68%) and men (53%). Women considered that support from management was the next most important activity (60%) followed by the provision of informative resources (54%). Men thought that the provision of informative resources would encourage their participation (48%) followed by support from management (43%). Women and men varied in the level of support they felt for these strategies with women in particular noting the importance of support from management for gender equity and preventing violence against women work. Women tended to rate interactive activities such as professional development, managerial support and participation in working groups or networks more highly than did men. Men's responses indicated a slight tendency to prefer activities that focused on activities in which they could engage on an individual basis. The least helpful activity to assist participation for both men and women was mentoring with 18% of women interested in the idea and only 11% of men. Nine per cent (9%) of men, compared with 3% of women, were not interested in participating in this work at all. Figure 24 overleaf shows the activities that would assist women and men to consider participating in gender equity and preventing violence against women work in their organisations.

Figure 24: Activities that would Assist People to Consider Participating in Gender Equity and Preventing Violence against Women Work in their Organisations – Responses by Gender
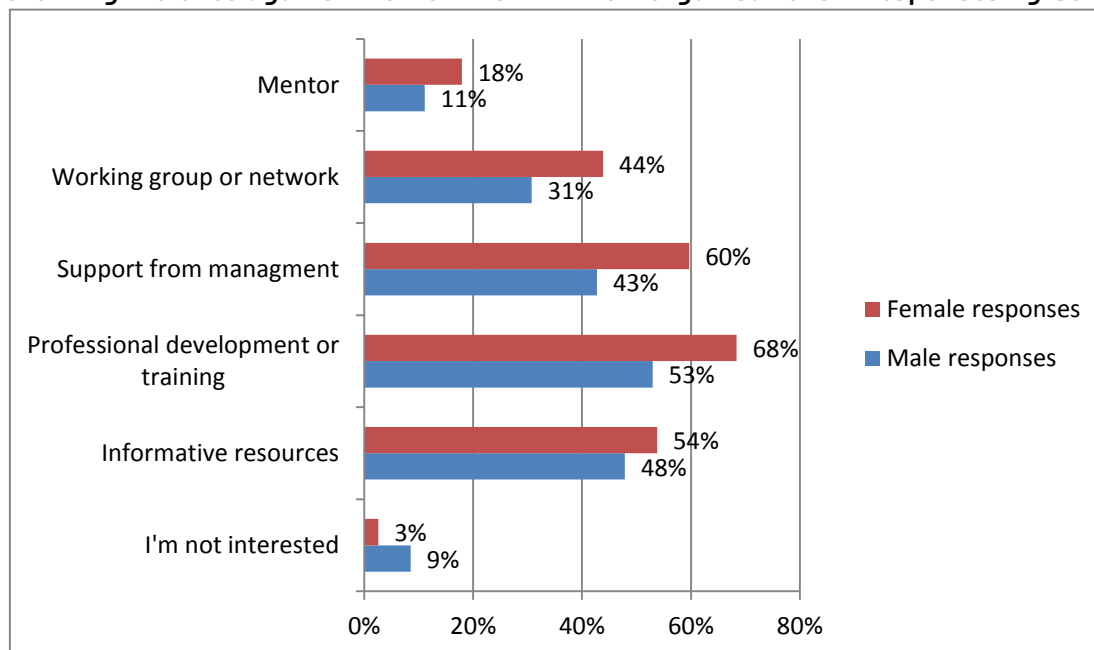
Some examples of comments from women were:

> Targeting training programs into schools - both primary and secondary. Teaching young people what constitutes violence against women and teaching preventive/behaviours for both boys and girls.

> I would like to be involved in primary prevention at a higher level. I attend one network and it would help to be able to attend other networks in the region to get a better picture of the work that is happening.

Some examples of comments from men were:

> Clear organisational values, principles and model behaviour from the exec. team.

> I'm already involved, but these [the activities listed above] would assist.

> Good information that encourages and doesn't disenfranchise.

Question 14: End of Section One of the Survey

Survey Section 2: Questions Specific to Staff Involved in Preventing Violence against Women Work

The data in this section are the responses to survey questions 15–26 from the respondents who have worked in the preventing violence against women field. Sixty-eight (11%) of the all survey respondents identified having being directly involved in work to prevent violence against women and completed Section 2 of the survey. Fifty-four (79%) of these respondents were female, fourteen (21%) were male and 1 person chose not to answer.

This data was analysed twice to give the following results:

- From the respondents involved in preventing violence against women work.
- From the respondents involved in preventing violence against women work by gender.

Sixty-five respondents completed Section 2 of the survey – the questions 15-26.

Table 5 (below) shows the percentage of respondents that answered each of the survey questions in Section 2. The highest response rate is highlighted in <mark>yellow</mark>; the lowest response rate is highlighted in <mark>blue</mark>. The survey questions that were answered most often were the two closed questions that asked about the frequency of use of the Strategy and the degree of importance of a regional approach to preventing violence against women. These questions were relatively straight-forward to answer because possible answers were already available, and the answers could be based on factual knowledge, not necessarily opinion. Compare the nature of these questions with the questions that received responses the least often. People may have less confidence in their knowledge about aspects of the Strategy that have not worked very well and about additional or alternative approaches to preventing violence against women – questions that require a solid overview and understanding of the implementation of the Strategy. It may be too early in the life of the Strategy to comment on these questions, and/or people may not be willing to think about possible negative aspects of the Strategy. Looking at responses from this perspective contributes to the baseline information this evaluation has provided in relation to the strategies and processes utilised in the regional approach, and the effectiveness of a regional preventing violence against women strategy.

Table 5: Response Rates to Questions in Survey Section 2

Survey: Section 2 (total respondents=68)		
Question	Subject	% of respondents who answered (staff involved in preventing violence against women only)
15	Use of the Strategy by WHIN's partners	100
16	How the Strategy has been used	94
17	Importance of a regional approach	100
18	Helpfulness of a regional approach to organisations	95
19	Helpful aspects of a regional approach	77
20	Preventing violence against women activities since the introduction of the Strategy	57
21	Communication about preventing violence against women work	66
22	Aspects that have not worked so well	49
23	Additional and/or alternative approaches	32
24	Organisational responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work	83
25	WHIN's role in leading preventing violence against women work	68
26	Final comments	1.5
27	End of Section 2 of the survey	N/A

The results in this section contribute to the establishment of baseline information regarding the effectiveness of a regional preventing violence against women strategy. The results also contribute to answering the two key evaluation questions:

1. In what ways have the different approaches and activities employed in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* achieved their aims?

2. How successful is a regional approach to a preventing violence against women strategy where regional partners are included in the activities? In what ways is it successful?

Question 15: The Extent to which the *Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy* is used by WHIN's partners

This question asked respondents about their use of *the Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* in their work. Respondents could choose between four options and all Section 2 respondents answered this question.

The Strategy is most often used on an 'occasional' basis with approximately 39% of respondents using it in this way. For 19% of respondents the Strategy 'frequently' informs and guides their work and 14% of respondents use and/or consult the Strategy 'quite often'. Twenty-nine per cent (29%) of respondents had 'not yet used' the Strategy. Figure 25 shows the extent to which the *Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy* is used by staff involved in preventing violence against women that answered Section 2 of the survey.

Figure 25: The Extent to which the *Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy* is used by WHIN's Partners

To what extent do you use and/or consult the 'Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence Against Women: A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016' in your work? (The name of this strategy is sometimes shortened to the Regional PVAW Strategy and it was developed by Women's Health in the North in 2011).

- 13.8 %
- 38.5 %
- 18.5 %
- 29.2 %

Legend:
- We haven't used it yet
- Occasionally
- Quite often
- It frequently informs and guides our work
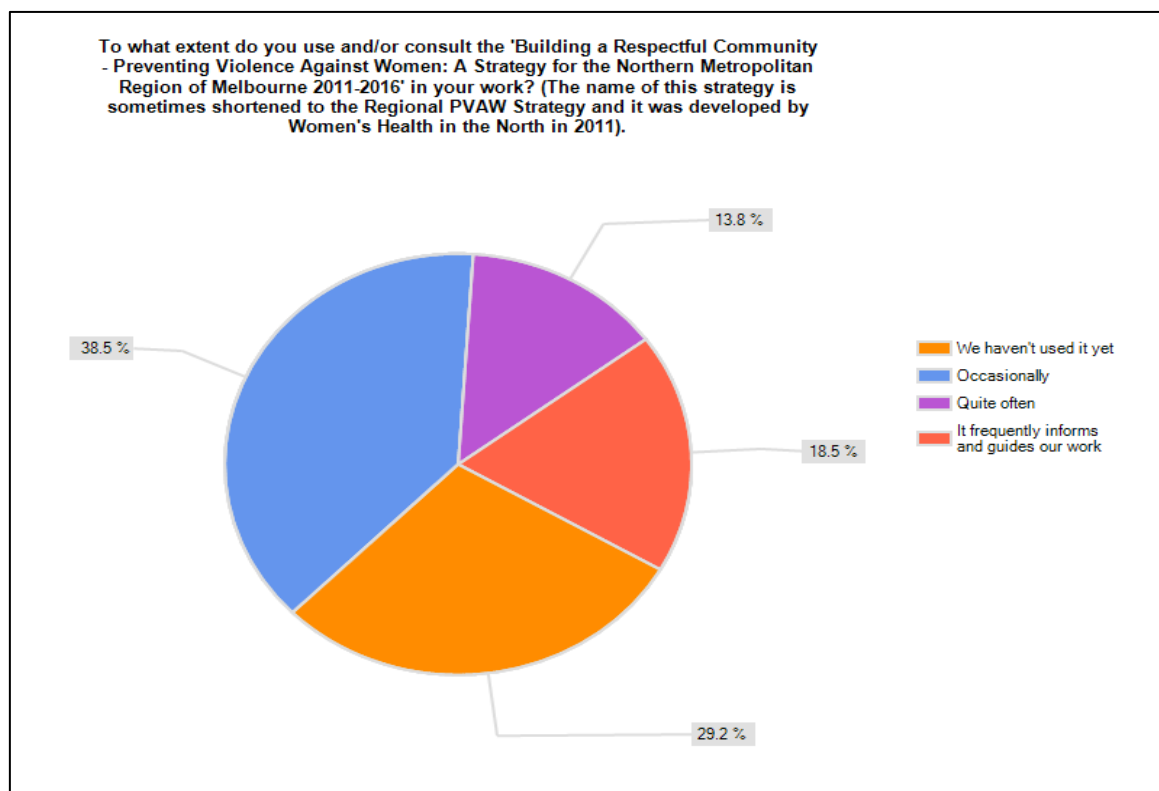
Responses by Gender

Over half of the men (54%) reported that they used the Strategy 'occasionally', whereas a third of the women (33%) used it 'occasionally'. The highest percentage of women (37%) said they had 'not yet used' the Strategy compared with only 11% of men reporting this. This is surprising given the overall higher numbers of women working in preventing violence against women work. A possible explanation is that men are more likely to be in managerial positions where documentation and policy feature in planning and reviewing of organisational programs and strategies. Perhaps women are more likely to be directly engaged in preventing violence against women work with individuals and communities, and are guided in their work by consultation and interaction with communities and other workers.

Nineteen per cent (19%) of women and 15% of men used the Strategy 'frequently' to guide and inform their preventing violence against women work.

Figure 26: The Extent to which the *Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy* is used by WHIN's Partners – Responses by Gender
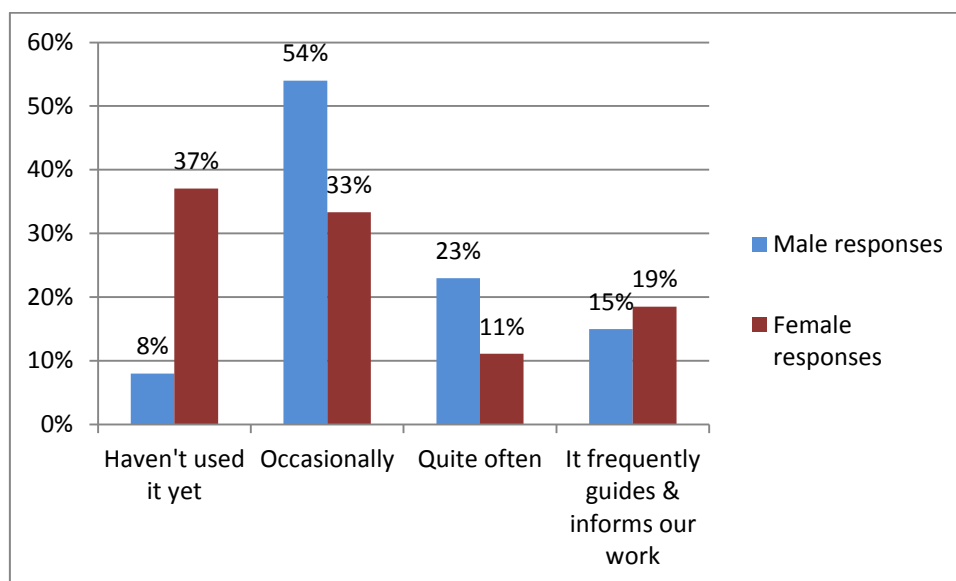
Question 16: The Ways in which Organisations have used the Strategy

This question asked respondents about how their organisation had used the Strategy in their work. Ninety-four per cent (94%) of Section 2 respondents answered this question. Respondents had a choice of six activities and an opportunity to provide further comments.

The Strategy was most often used to inform other major organisational policies/strategies and as an internal advocacy tool (39% of respondents in each case). Respondents (38%) also used the background section in the Strategy to increase their own understanding, and 36% used the Strategy with a working group or network. Thirty-four per cent (34%) of respondents used the Action Plan to develop their own organisational action plan. It appears that different respondents and organisations are at varying stages in the use of the Strategy and in their preventing violence against women work. Some organisations seem to be in the early stages where they are developing their understandings about preventing violence against women and are using the Strategy to provide background information and to structure their own work. In organisations that have already undertaken this initial work, the Strategy is used to inform broader activities such as work with partners and development of organisational action plans. Figure 27 overleaf summarises the ways in which organisations have used the Strategy.

Figure 27: The Ways in which Organisations have used the Strategy

Category	Percentage
Have used the Strategy with a working group or network	36%
Have used the Strategy as an internal advocacy tool	40%
Have used the Action Plan to develop own organisational action plan	34%
Have used the Strategy to inform other major organisational policies/strategies	40%
Have referred to the background section to increase own understanding	38%
Have not used it	23%
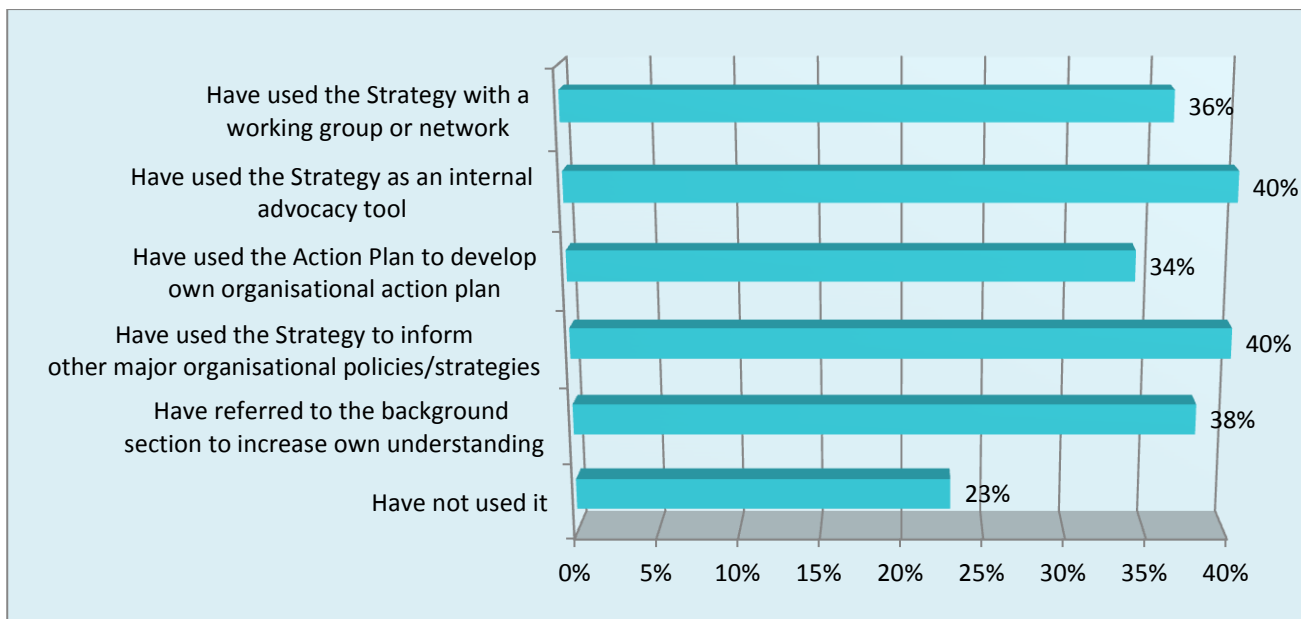
Responses by Gender

The highest percentage of women (41%) have used the Strategy as an internal advocacy tool, while the highest percentage of men (54%) had used the Strategy to inform other major organisational policies/strategies. This seems to reflect the possible explanation for the findings from the previous question, where more men than women reported they had used the Strategy in their work.

There was little variation in the percentage of responses for women across the activities in which the Strategy could be employed. This suggests that women use the Strategy for a range of reasons and in different ways including to increase their own knowledge, and in their work with groups and others. Men were least likely to use the Action Plan in the Strategy to develop their own organisational action plan (23%).

Figure 28: The Ways in which Organisations have used the Strategy – Responses by Gender

Category	Female responses	Male responses
Have used the Strategy with a working group or network	35%	31%
Have used the Strategy as an internal advocacy tool	41%	31%
Have used the Action Plan to develop own organisational action plan	35%	23%
Have used the Strategy to inform other major organisational policies/strategies	37%	54%
Have referred to the background section to increase own understanding	35%	46%
Have not used it	27%	23%

One woman commented that, 'This survey is part of what our organisation is doing to implement the strategy and show our commitment'. One of the men noted that the Strategy was, 'Used to create a culture of gender equity in Council'.

Question 17: The Importance of a Regional Approach to Preventing Violence against Women

This question asked respondents, on a scale of 1–10, about the importance of a regional approach to preventing violence against women. All Section 2 respondents answered this question. More than half of the respondents (55%) believed it was extremely important to have a regional approach. The remainder of respondents thought a regional approach was at least moderately important.

Figure 29: Respondents' Thoughts about the Importance of a Regional Approach to Preventing Violence against Women
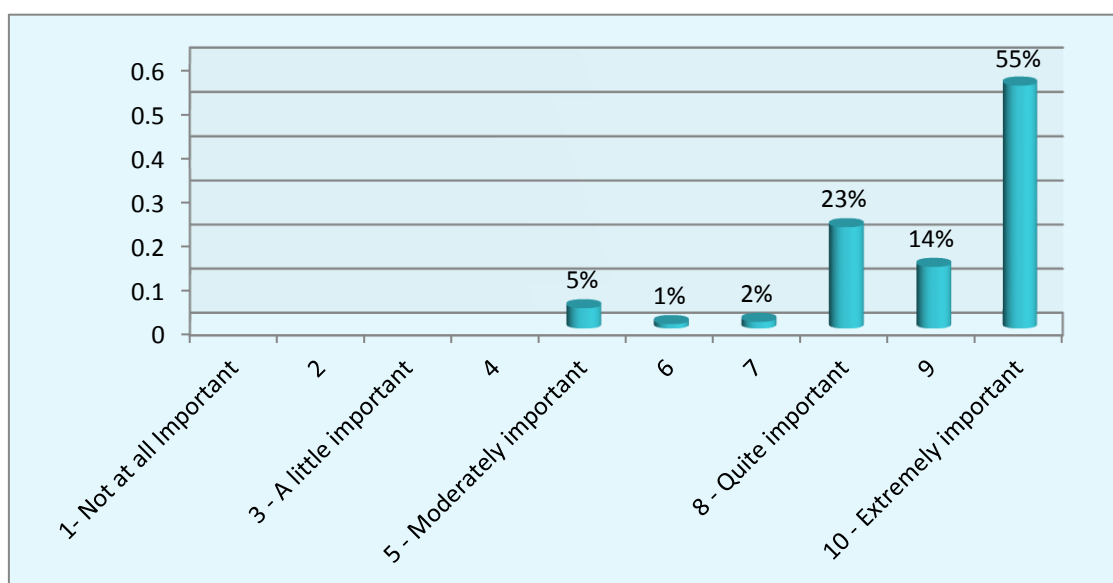
Responses by Gender

The highest percentage of responses from both women (54%) and men (46%) showed that they both thought a regional approach to preventing violence against women was 'extremely important'. Following that, 24% of women and 31% of men thought a regional approach was 'quite important'. Figure 30 (overleaf) shows women's and men's thoughts about the importance of a regional approach to preventing violence against women work.

Figure 30: Respondents' Thoughts about the Importance of a Regional Approach to Preventing Violence against Women – Responses by Gender
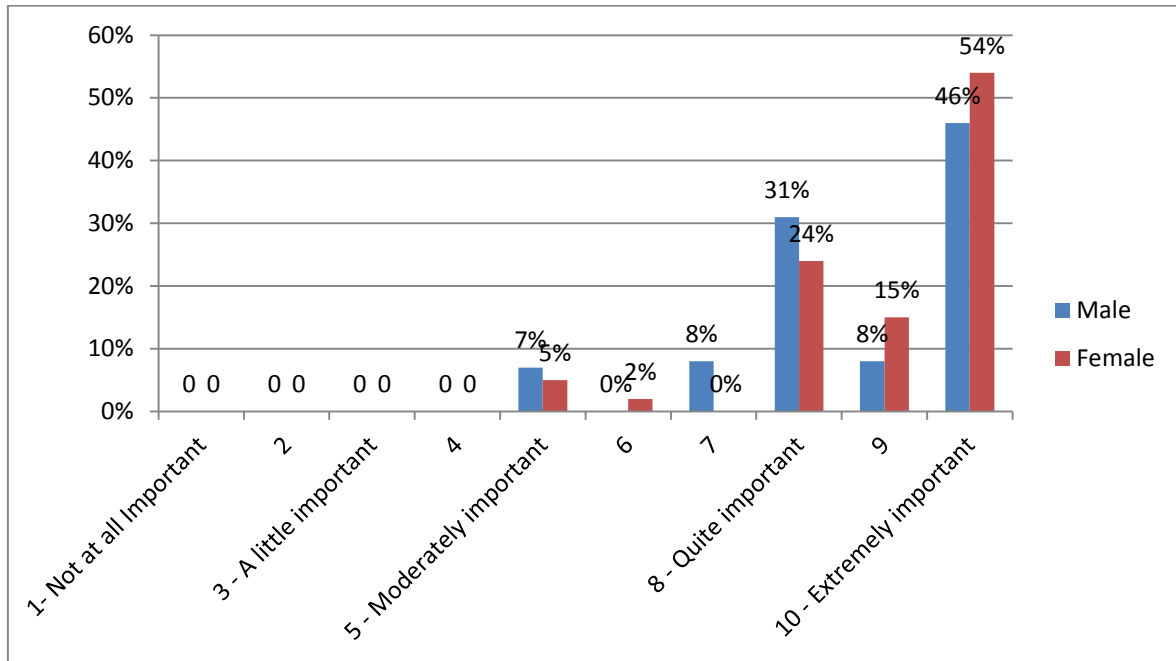
Question 18: The Regional Approach and its Helpfulness to Organisational Preventing Violence against Women Work

This question asked respondents, on a scale of 1-10, how helpful the regional approach to preventing violence against women has been to undertaking prevention work in their own organisations. Ninety-five per cent (95%) of Section 2 respondents answered this question. The most common response (36%) was that the regional approach had been 'quite helpful' to the respondents' in their organisations. Combined, 70% of respondents thought the regional approach had been 'quite' to 'extremely helpful' to their preventing violence against women work in their organisations. Only 3% of respondents had not found the regional approach helpful.

Figure 31: The Helpfulness of a Regional Approach to Individual Organisations
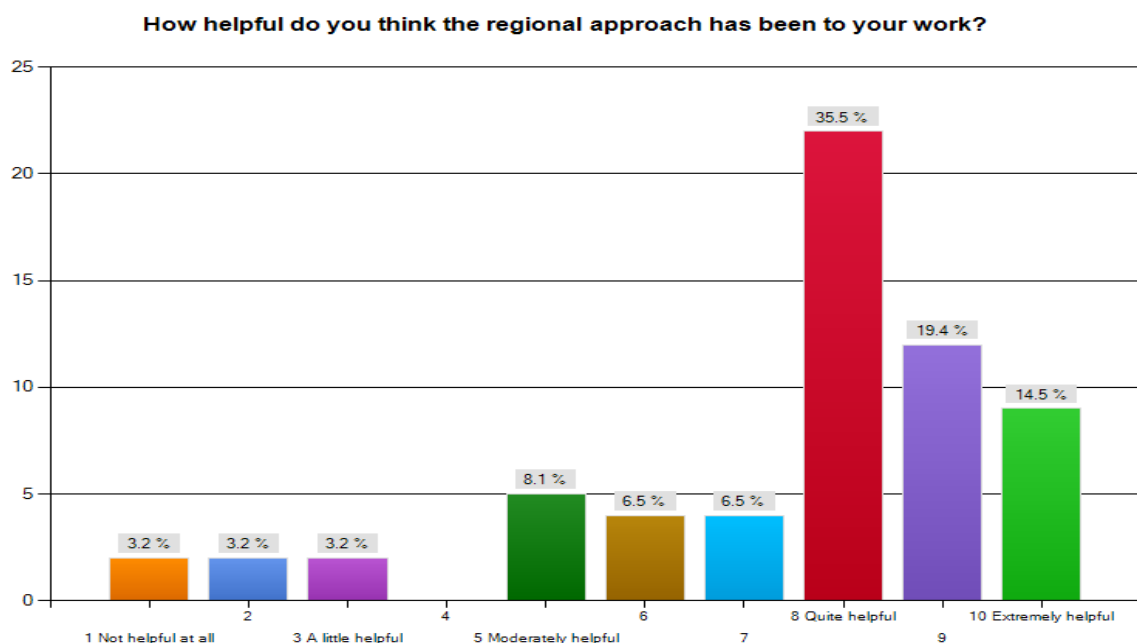
Both women (33%) and men (54%) thought the regional approach had been 'quite helpful' for preventing violence against women work in their organisation, although there was a notable discrepancy between women and men in their assessments of this. This discrepancy may be attributable, at least in part, to what has been observed in responses to previous questions – that is, the divergent responses may reflect the likelihood that men, rather than women, use the Strategy and are involved in preventing violence against women work at higher (managerial) levels within and across organisations, whereas women work in a wider number of roles and in a different capacity at a local and community level. Women's and men's responses were spread across the scale of helpfulness although more women than men rated the regional approach from 'quite' to 'extremely helpful'.

Figure 32: The Helpfulness of a Regional Approach to Individual Organisations – Responses by Gender
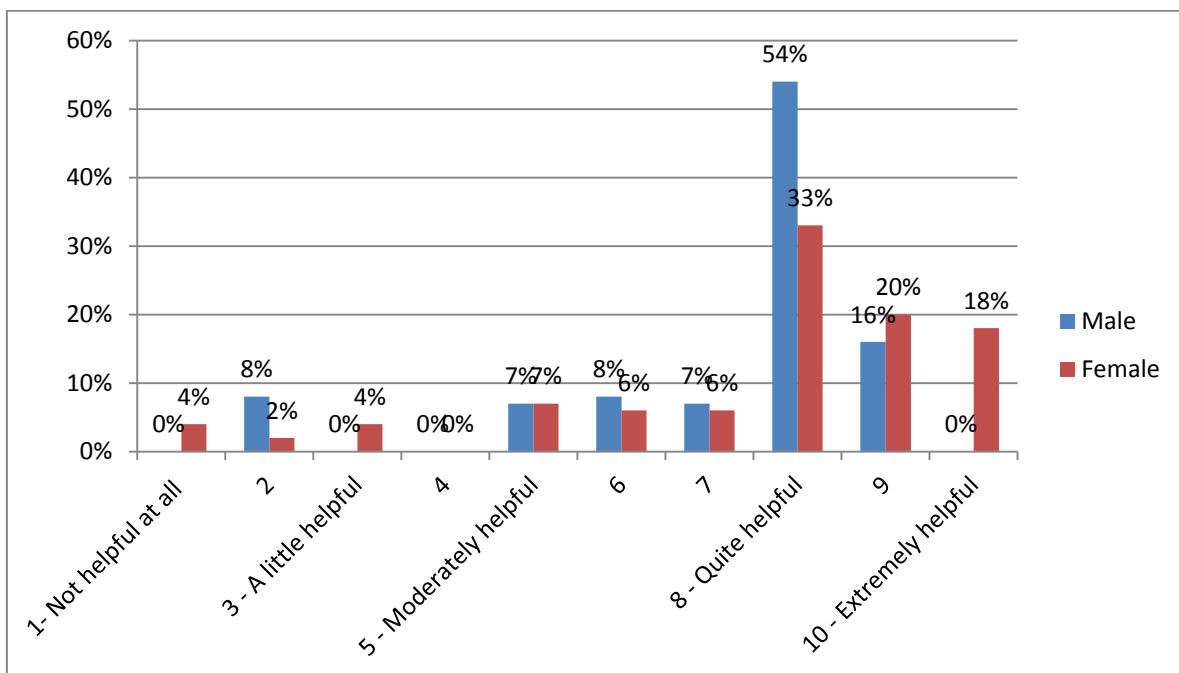
Question 19: Helpful Aspects of the Regional Approach

This question asked respondents about what aspects of the regional approach have been helpful. Respondents could choose from seven options and add extra comments. Seventy-seven per cent (77%) of Section 2 respondents answered this question.

The most common response (from 71% of respondents) showed that support from WHIN had been the most helpful aspect of the regional approach although a lower 40% of respondents found that presentations from WHIN were helpful. Professional development events were also considered helpful (63% of respondents) followed by using the Strategy as an advocacy tool (59%) and using the Action plan in the Strategy (57%). Just over a third of respondents found the Implementation Advisory Group helpful. Figure 33 (overleaf) shows respondents' thoughts about the helpful aspects of the regional approach.

Figure 33: Helpful Aspects of the Regional Approach
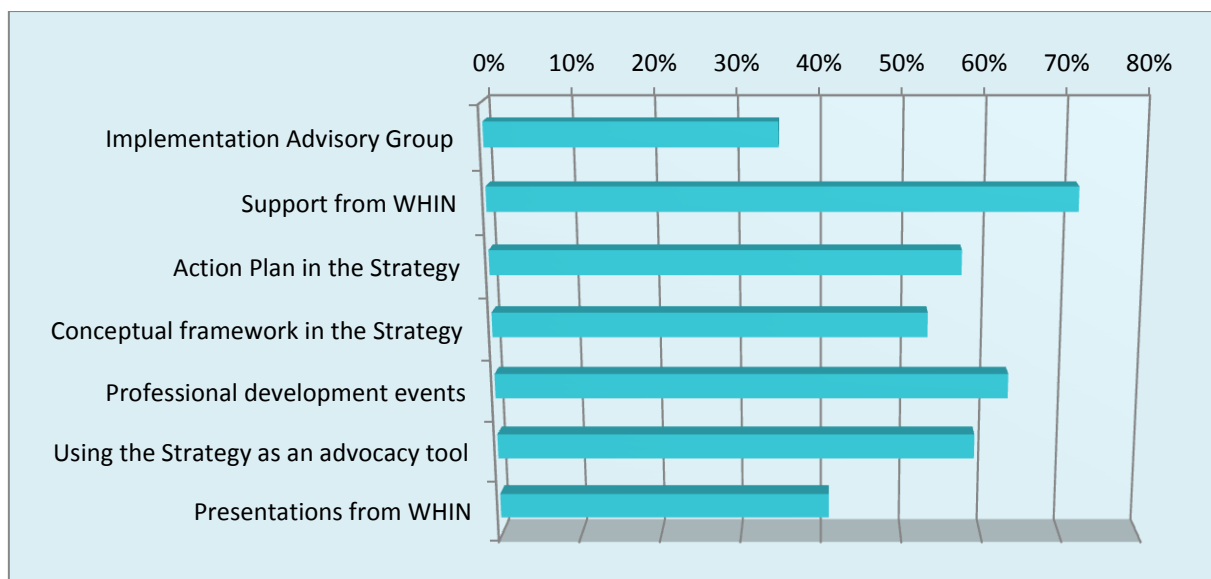
Some respondents noted that helpful aspects of the regional approach were the 'data and analysis to guide actions and strategies' and the 'collaboration and sense of others working on this issue'. However, six respondents identified that they were not aware of how the regional approach was being utilised in their workplace.

Responses by Gender

Three quarters of women reported that support from WHIN had been helpful and 65% of women noted that professional development events had been helpful. This was closely followed by the use of the Strategy as an advocacy tool (60%) and using the Action Plan in the Strategy (58%). Curiously, men's responses were consistent across five of the seven categories – 42% of men finding all the aspects of the regional approach helpful except for the Implementation Advisory Group and presentations from WHIN, the latter activity being the least helpful for men (8%). The least helpful activity for women was the Implementation Advisory Group although this still attracted over a third of the responses from women (38%). Figure 34 (overleaf) shows men's and women's thoughts about the helpful aspects of the regional approach.

Figure 34: Helpful Aspects of the Regional Approach – Responses by Gender
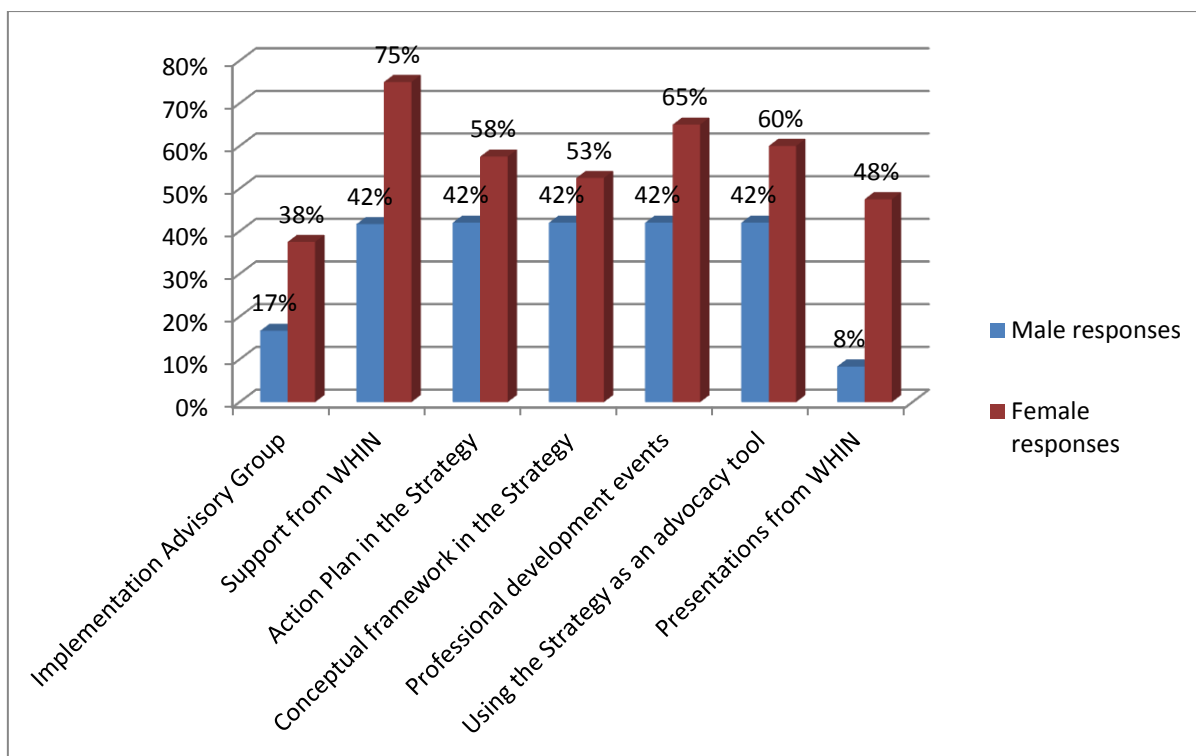
Question 20: Preventing Violence against Women Activities in the Northern Metropolitan Region since the Introduction of the Regional Strategy

This question asked respondents about the changes, developments and improvements in preventing violence against women activities they had noticed in the region since the introduction of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*. Fifty-seven per cent (57%) of Section 2 respondents answered this open-ended question.

Eleven respondents noted that they had not noticed any changes, or had not been in their current role long enough to comment. The key changes mentioned by other respondents were:

- a greater awareness of preventing violence against women work across different services;

- improved coordination and collaboration between agencies to facilitate a regional approach; and

- a higher priority given to preventing violence against women activities through the delivery of training and the inclusion in strategic directions.

Examples of respondents' comments noting the changes included the:

Strategic flow through to other related policies and initiatives.

Increased support for IHP resources towards addressing PVAW; even when funding cuts occurred IHP resources were reorientated to maintain PVAW commitment.

More focus on organisational policies and improving support for employees affected by violence. As a result PVAW being more considered as core business.

Responses by Gender

Responses from women tended to highlight the increase in resources that have been allocated to preventing violence against women work and activities. Some comments from women were:

'Increased awareness' – of the Strategy, of the issue of violence against women, and of knowing what others are doing.

The region seems to be focusing more on gender equity, so looking at the underlying causes of family violence.

Greater discussion between agencies/organisations about VAW and how VAW will be addressed in the local community.

Social and educational groups for women, professional development trainings for employees.

Whilst 5/10 male respondents could not comment or had not noticed any changes, others commented that:

It has helped coordinate things a bit better.

Greater presence at various events in the community.

High recognition of issues, better integration of gender issues in Council plans. Increased recognition of a 'gender lens'.

Improved collaboration between organisations and raising the profile of the issue within our organisation.

Question 21: Communication about Preventing Violence against Women Work Throughout the Region

This question asked respondents about the ways in which they find out about the preventing violence against women work that is occurring in the region. Sixty-six per cent (66%) of Section 2 respondents answered this open-ended question.

More than half of the respondents noted that they learned about information through networks, including health promotion networks, WHIN, primary care partnerships, the Municipal Association of Victoria, and the NIFVS Strategic Network. Thirty-eight per cent (38%) learned about regional preventing violence against women work through their workplace in activities such as internal committees, professional development and other events. Nearly one quarter of respondents were informed via newsletters and emails.

Responses by Gender

The responses from women and men were similar, but differed slightly in the order in which they were likely to find out about preventing violence against women work in the region. Women heard about preventing violence against women through:

- networks (Local Family Violence Networks, Municipal Association of Victoria, NIFVS Strategic Network, Implementation Advisory Group, primary care partnerships, health promotion networks);
- the workplace (professional development, management);
- newsletters and emails; and
- WHIN.

The emphasis for women on networks reflects the finding to survey question 13 (in Section 1 of the survey) that asked about participation in gender equity and in preventing violence against women work in organisations. In response to this question, women tended to rate interactive activities such as professional development, managerial support and participation in working groups or networks more highly than did men. Men's responses indicated a slight tendency to prefer activities that

focused on activities in which they could engage on an individual basis. The finding to this current question that men were most likely to hear about preventing violence against women work through the workplace and through websites also reflects this gender difference.

After the workplace, men found information through:

- WHIN and council websites;
- networks such as the NIFVS Strategic Network; and
- email updates.

Question 22: Aspects of the Strategy or Regional Approach that have not Worked Well

This question asked respondents their thoughts about what aspects of the Strategy or regional approach have not worked so well. Just under half of the Section 2 respondents answered this open-ended question.

Thirty-eight per cent (38%) of respondents did not identify any areas of the Strategy or the regional approach that had not worked well. Other comments and suggestions from respondents were:

> Not aspects of the strategy but who has been engaged or rather not engaged as much yet - culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

> Work with the PCP has floundered in terms of getting a project.

> Apart from my organisation, not sure who else in this region is participating in the Strategy or having training on this.

Responses by Gender

Both women and men raised some concerns about ensuring and sustaining organisational commitment to preventing violence against women and to the Strategy. The challenge of facilitating a regional strategy whilst keeping it relevant to individual organisations and communities was also mentioned by both women and men. Responses from women suggested a need for more consultation and communication with, and amongst partners, whilst some men advocated the need for the evaluation of preventing violence against women work.

In summary, men suggested the following aspects of the Strategy that have not worked so well or could be improved:

- Acceptance/commitment/capacity to respond to the Strategy – varies across the region and different organisations
- Needs a longer-term focus
- Has concentrated on raising awareness rather than prevention activities
- Ability to demonstrate impact on violence against women.

In summary, women suggested the following aspects of the Strategy that have not worked so well or that could be improved:

- Tailoring a regional strategy to individual organisations
- No minimum requirement such as commitment or action required
- More consultation with individual partners would be helpful
- Lack of awareness about what other partners are doing.

Question 23: Additional and/or Alternative Approaches to the Current Strategy

This question asked respondents to identify any additional and/or alternative approaches to the current Strategy. Thirty-two per cent (32%) of Section 2 respondents answered this open-ended question.

Some of the suggestions that were given by respondents included:

> More public forums.

> Engaging with male CEOs/Directors of major organisations across the region to get the buy-in at the top.

> I think the framework is good, but with so many different organisations in the region, there's a need to ensure all their different policy and implementation mechanisms are taken into account, to ensure the Strategy is taken up.

> Awareness strategy.

> More focus/provide education for the CALD [culturally and linguistically diverse] community.

> Elder abuse, women with disabilities, greater focus on CALD women and the specific barriers they may experience.

> More free capacity building available for orgs. to become better informed and therefore increased buy in.

> Not just provide one-off training, but perhaps provide resources, information and tips over a longer time.

> Needs to occur in parallel with strong structural change around gender equity, i.e. address cause as well as symptoms.

> I think it's important to work regionally.

> Keep working with councils. More presentations to senior staff and councillors. More practical assistance in terms of implementing for staff.

Responses by Gender

Responses from women tended to focus on the importance of a regional preventing violence against women strategy meeting the needs of specific and divergent populations. Communication and practical support to communities was also rated highly. These suggestions seem to, again, reflect the likelihood of women, rather than men, to be involved in prevention work through direct practice (for example, family violence work) and through community development and health promotion.

Women suggested:

- more public forums;
- engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- elder abuse focus;
- women with disabilities focus; and
- long-term support with resources – tips, information, practical support for implementation.

Responses from men tended to focus toward the need for broad and structural activities. Comments included:

Engaging with male CEO's/Directors of major organisations across the region to get the buy-in at the top.

Needs to occur in parallel with strong structural change around gender equity, i.e. address cause as well as symptoms.

Awareness strategy.

...work regionally.

Question 24: Organisational Responsibility for Planning and Implementing Preventing Violence against Women Work

This question asked respondents about which organisation(s) should have responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work in the region. Eighty-three per cent (83%) of Section 2 respondents answered this question. Respondents could choose from six possibilities and provide further comments in a text box.

Almost all respondents (96%) thought that community health services should have responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work. (It is worth noting that nearly half of the respondents who answered this question came from community health services.) A very high number of respondents (93%) also thought that local government and women's health services could have this responsibility. Family violence services were also suggested as logical organisations to hold this responsibility (90%). More respondents thought that local government (93%), rather than state government (83%) or primary care partnerships (80%), had a role in preventing violence against women planning and implementation.

Two respondents thought the police should have a role and one respondent suggested that there may be a need for specific groups to develop culturally appropriate services. Another respondent advocated that: *'All NGOs, churches, private organisations'* be involved.

What comes out most strongly is the need for the organisational responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work to be shared across organisations. This quote summarises this finding well: 'All hold responsibility – not left to one. Sharing of expertise'.

Figure 35 overleaf shows respondents' thoughts about which organisation(s) should have responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work in the region.

Figure 35: Organisation(s) which should have Responsibility for Planning and Implementing Preventing Violence against Women Work in the Region
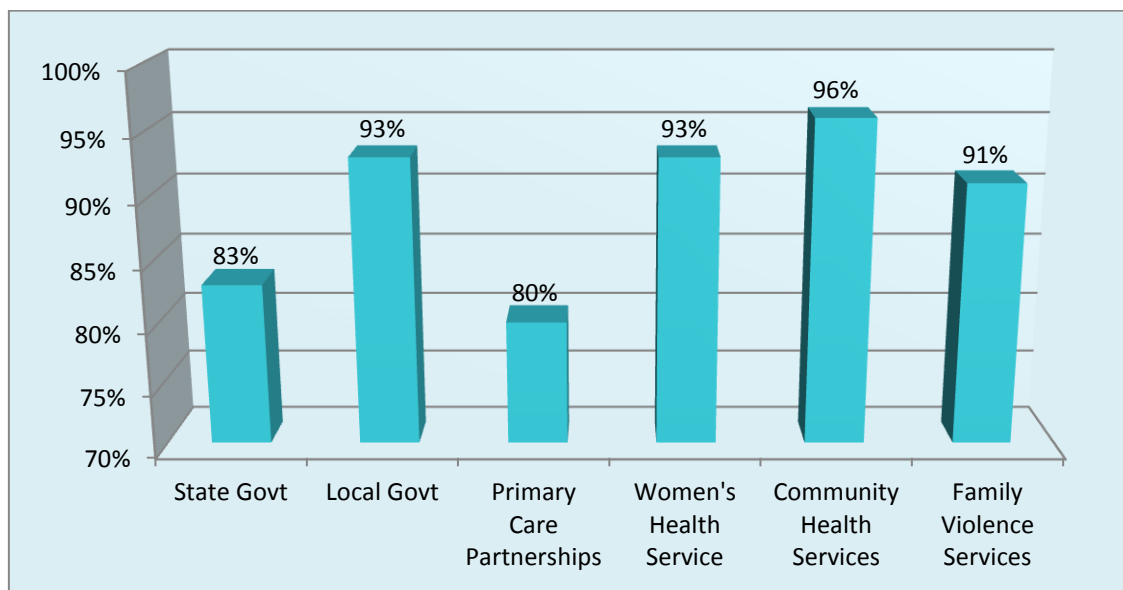
Responses by Gender

The highest percentage of responses from women (essentially all 90%) favoured local government, women's health services and community health services as best placed for taking organisational responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work. There was very little variation in the responses from women, so although their least favoured organisations were state government and primary care partnerships, these organisations were still favoured by 80% of women.

In contrast, there was greater variation in men's responses about preferred organisations to take responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work. Nearly all the men thought that community health services were best placed for this role. This was followed closely (at just under 90%) by family violence services, women's health services and local government. The least favoured organisation was primary care partnerships with just under 70% of responses.

These responses from women and men are not wholly surprising given that the organisations that are preferred to take responsibility are typically the organisations currently involved in preventing violence against women work and would be familiar to respondents.

Figure 36 (overleaf) shows women's and men's thoughts about which organisation(s) should have responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work in the region.

Figure 36: Organisation(s) which should have Responsibility for Planning and Implementing Preventing Violence against Women Work in the Region – Responses by Gender
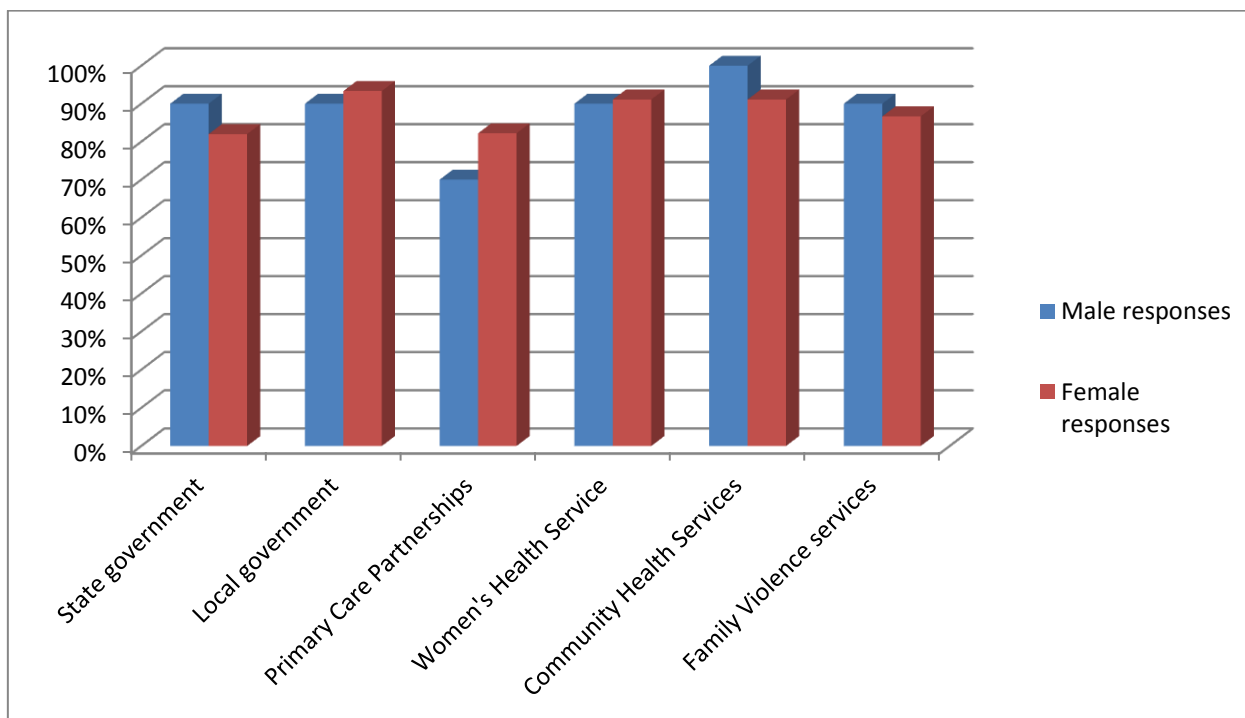
Question 25: WHIN's Role in Leading Preventing Violence against Women Work in the Region

This question asked respondents about whether WHIN is the best-placed organisation to be leading preventing violence against women work in the northern metropolitan region. Sixty-eight per cent (68%) of Section 2 respondents answered this question. The question consisted of a Yes/No choice and provided opportunity for respondents to add comments.

Ninety-three per cent (93%) of respondents replied 'yes'. WHIN's knowledge, experience, expertise and existing infrastructure were factors that contributed to WHIN being the best placed organisation to lead and coordinate the preventing violence against women work. WHIN's relationships with, and links into, other organisations, and local and state governments were recognised as other factors. WHIN's mission, prioritisation of preventing violence against women and its leadership role enabled it to focus directly and consistently on preventing violence against women whereas some other – and larger – organisations had a wider agenda that this work could get lost in.

However six respondents (about 9%) were unsure about WHIN's appropriateness as leader. Some respondents suggested that as the lead organisation, WHIN needed to have more knowledge about local government processes in order to better align the preventing violence against women work, and the timing of this work, with the different organisations. The importance of working in conjunction and consultation with other organisations was emphasised so that WHIN did not take on, and was not given, sole responsibility for preventing violence against women in the region. It was recognised that WHIN could be more effective if it had increased funding.

Figure 37 overleaf shows respondents' thoughts about WHIN as the appropriate organisation to lead preventing violence against women work in the northern metropolitan region.

Figure 37: WHIN's Role in Leading Preventing Violence against Women Work in the Region

Is WHIN the best placed organisation to be leading PVAW work in the northern metropolitan region?

93.2 %   6.8 %

Yes
No
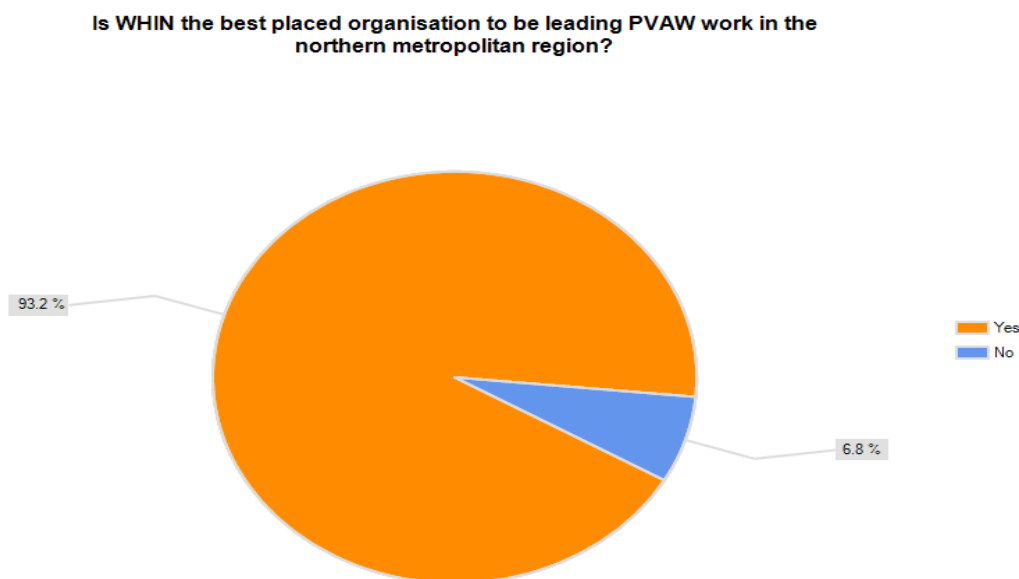
Some comments from respondents about WHIN's role in leading preventing violence against women work in the region included:

> WHIN has the necessary perspective, mandate and service delivery barometer to gauge changes, trends, themes and to suggest actions. WHIN is also best placed to compile and integrate information from local government areas and specialist agencies.

> It covers the NMR, it has specific expertise in women, prevention, domestic violence and health promotion. Which is what the strategy is about essentially.

Responses by Gender

Thirty-seven women responded to this question and 95% of them believed that WHIN is the best-placed organisation to be leading preventing violence against women work in the northern region. Some of the comments from women were:

> The infrastructure is in place - it can only be built on.

> I think there's an opportunity for WHIN to be the lead agency coordinating the PVAW work.

> With more resources to work with LGAs at a local level.

> To lead the work absolutely. But they don't have sole responsibility.

Nine men responded to this question and all of them believed that WHIN is the best placed organisation to be leading preventing violence against women work in the northern metropolitan region. Some of their comments were:

> It's a focused organisation that has the knowledge and ability to coordinate the complex response required.

> WHIN has the necessary perspective, mandate and service delivery barometer to gauge changes, trends, themes and to suggest actions. WHIN is also best placed to compile and integrate information from local government areas and specialist agencies.

> Yes, though obviously the role of partners such as local government and health centres is critical. State government agencies such as DHS and DOH also have a responsibility in this area.

There were no obvious gender differences in the responses to this question.

Question 26: Final Comments

This final question provided respondents with an opportunity to add any further ideas and thoughts to their survey responses. There was one further comment:

> I would like to see a greater commitment from management in our organisation to increase our prevention efforts. Perhaps if funding is directly allocated to this area it would be an incentive for management to recognise the importance of this work.

Responses by Gender

There were no other comments from male respondents, and only one from a female respondent, which is the quote included above.

Question 27: End of Part Two of the Survey

Focus Groups and Interviews

Four focus groups, attended by a total of 16 people, and three interviews were held. Given the qualitative nature of the data collected in the focus groups, interviews, and the open-ended questions in the survey, qualitative analysis of the data was undertaken. Thematic analysis, a type of qualitative analysis, was used. See page 21 for more explanation.

Five major themes were identified from the conversations and discussions that occurred in the focus groups and interviews. Each theme includes a number of smaller sub-themes.

Theme 1. Preventing Violence against Women Work

- The complexity of preventing violence against women work
- The links between preventing violence against women and gender equity
- The links between response, early intervention and prevention work.

Theme 2. Implementation of Preventing Violence against Women Work and Activities

- The *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*
- Communications, advocacy and champions
    - o *White Ribbon Campaign*
    - o *Week Without Violence Campaign*
    - o *The involvement of men*
    - o *Social media*
- Partnerships and structures
- The regional approach.

Theme 3. The Role of WHIN

- Consultant and knowledge-holder

- Leader, coordinator and connector
- Trainer and facilitator.

Theme 4. Barriers and Challenges

- The complexity of preventing violence against women
- Community awareness activities, training and professional development
- Partnerships and structures
  - *Organisational culture and preventing violence against women roles*
- The regional approach
  - *Communication.*

Theme 5. Future Work and Directions

These five themes and the ways in which they answer the two evaluation questions are explored in the following chapter of this report: Findings and Discussion.

Findings and Discussion

This section of the report uses the results from the survey, the interviews and the focus groups to answer the two evaluation questions. The results will be presented under the headings of the five themes that came out of the interviews and focus group discussions.

To recap, these five themes are:

Theme 1:   Preventing Violence against Women Work.

Theme 2:   Implementation of Preventing Violence against Women Work and Activities.

Theme 3:   The Role of WHIN.

Theme 4:   Barriers and Challenges.

Theme 5:   Future Work and Directions (this is discussed separately in the 'Future Work and Directions' chapter).

These themes, and the discussions within them, can also be aligned to the prevention action areas from the Action Plan in the Strategy. In doing so, the evaluation questions can be answered more comprehensively.

The prevention action areas from the Action Plan are:

1.   Partnerships and Structures.

2.   Community Leadership.

3.   Capacity and Tools.

4.   Communications, Advocacy and Champions.

5.   Skills, Attitudes and Social Norms.

6.   Planning, Research and Evaluation.

7.   Embedding.

Table 6: Links between the Discussion Themes and Action Plan Areas

Discussion Themes	Action Areas from the Strategy's Action Plan
1. Preventing violence against women work	Embedding
	Skills, Attitudes and Social Norms
2. Implementation of preventing violence against women work and the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* activities	Communications, Advocacy and Champions
	Partnerships and Structures
	Community Leadership
3. The role of WHIN	Community Leadership
	Capacity and Tools
	Partnerships and Structures
	Communications, Advocacy and Champions
	Skills, Attitudes and Social Norms
	Planning, Research and Evaluation
	Embedding

4. Barriers and challenges	Capacity and Tools
	Partnerships and Structures
5. Future work and directions	All

The first section of this discussion provides an overview of the findings, in relation to the two key evaluation questions. Following that, the identified themes are discussed in more detail. In the thematic discussion, the key evaluation questions are not considered separately because of the overlap in content in the findings for each question.

Specific approaches and actions from the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* are included throughout the discussion to illustrate particular areas of work and progress with these approaches and actions. These are highlighted in the blue boxes.

Ideas for future work and directions in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* are included in the discussion as they arise. These are included in the pink boxes. The ideas are relevant to future work for WHIN, but are also applicable to individual organisations involved in preventing violence against women and in implementing the Strategy. These ideas will be discussed further in the final section of the report: Future Work and Directions.

Overview of the Findings

This evaluation of the *Building a Respectful Community: Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* is the Phase 1 component of WHIN's overall evaluation of the Strategy. Within the Strategy, evaluation is seen as an ongoing, evolving and developmental process. Consequently, the two evaluation questions will be answered in different ways and to different degrees as the Strategy moves through the 2011-2016 implementation period.

Evaluation Question 1: In what ways have the different approaches and activities employed in the *Building a Respectful Community: Preventing Violence against Women strategy* achieved their aims?

For this first phase in 2012-2013, the evaluation explores the approaches and activities that have, to date, been employed in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy.* Many activities and actions have achieved, or are progressing toward achieving, their aims. However, given the early stage of the Strategy's implementation, the evolving nature of preventing violence against women work and, specifically, preventing violence against women actions within the Strategy, the value of this evaluation lies in identifying the processes involved in the implementation of the Strategy through its approaches and activities as much as considering their outcomes.

The integrated partnership approach has proven an effective method for engaging diverse sectors, organisations and communities to commit to and to undertake prevention of violence against women throughout the northern metropolitan region. Building on the partnerships that have been developed, the Strategy and the associated Action Plan have facilitated a consistent and shared regional understanding of the nature and importance of preventing violence against women. Structures such as the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network have provided crucial forums for communication, community leadership, training and involvement in the Strategy's ongoing development and implementation.

The Action Plan within the Strategy, has been used by organisations and communities as a model to assist and motivate the development of their own preventing violence against women action plans.

The Strategy has frequently been employed as a tool to engage staff and management in organisations across the region in preventing violence against women, and to advocate for the relevance of preventing violence against women in their own individual organisations as well as in the communities in which they work. A particularly important activity was the 'The North Commits to Building a Respectful Community' event in May 2013, where fifty organisations from the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne made a public commitment to the Strategy, and to actions to prevent violence against women.

WHIN's leadership, coordination, facilitation and consultancy roles with preventing violence against women and with the Strategy was highly valued and applauded. The importance of a strong, knowledgeable and respected lead organisation in the implementation of the Strategy was found to be crucial.

Various barriers and challenges for preventing violence against women and Strategy implementation were identified. One of the most obvious challenges was the nature of the region itself which was characterised by myriad differences ranging from geographical locations and organisational reach; the levels of knowledge of violence against women and prevention work; the cultural, political and philosophical beliefs about gender equity, violence against women and prevention work; and organisational 'readiness' and willingness to engage in preventing violence against women. A significant challenge has been finding activities to initiate, develop and then sustain attitudinal and behavioural change in relation to acceptance and tolerance of violence against women. The complexity of preventing violence against women has been an ever-present consideration in the implementation of the Strategy.

In summary, significant progress and development has occurred with the implementation of the Strategy to date. Further exploration of this progress and development under the five themes is included below. See also Appendix 3 for the *Assessment of WHIN's Progress against the Action Plan, November 2013*.

Evaluation Question 2: How successful is a regional approach to a Preventing Violence against Women Strategy where regional partners are included in the activities? In what ways is it successful?

Exploring the ways in which a regional approach to a preventing violence against women strategy has been successful is arguably of more benefit in this initial stage of the implementation of the Strategy than is expecting to find concrete outcomes. Question two can be partly answered with the responses to question one.

Whilst still evolving, the regional approach to a preventing violence against women strategy where regional partners are included in the activities has been successful in achieving its aims. The approaches and activities employed in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* and described in relation to question one, have also enabled a regional approach to work well. Similarly, one of the most significant challenges in implementing a regional preventing violence against women strategy is the diversity and difference within the region. A regional strategy needs to be flexible enough, and allow a staged approach, with its activities and in its implementation to meet the diversity of needs throughout the region. However, care must be taken to ensure that activities and approaches do not become fragmented and piecemeal, thus preventing sustainable structural changes.

Theme 1. Preventing Violence Against Women Work

The ideas within this theme reflect the understandings, experiences and comments that participants had about the general nature and characteristics of preventing violence against women work. Three components were identified within this theme. These were:

- The complexity of preventing violence against women work.

- The links between preventing violence against women and gender equity.

- The links between response, early intervention and prevention work.

These three components are important because they underpin, and provide a context for, all the activities, challenges and achievements that occur in preventing violence against women and in the work undertaken as part of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy.* The complexity of preventing violence against women work, the links with gender equity and the interconnections between response, early intervention and prevention work are common, ever-present features of preventing violence against women. Consequently, they need to be acknowledged and understood by anyone engaged in preventing violence against women. They must be included as baseline knowledge in any preventing violence against women strategy because they provide a well-informed, strong foundation and direction for the preventing violence against women work that is undertaken. Their inclusion also has an influence on the effectiveness, or otherwise, of a consistent regional approach to preventing violence against women.

The Complexity of Preventing Violence against Women Work

Preventing violence against women work is complex because of the contexts within which it occurs, the influences that make this work essential despite the challenges, and the various needs of different individuals and communities as providers and/or as recipients of this work.

Overall, preventing violence against women work was both restricted by, and generated by, a range of influences. Large-scale structural influences were particularly powerful and were seen to exist within political, economic, organisational, cultural and social contexts. Structurally, the level and predictability of ongoing funding was frequently cited as a potential impediment to the sustainability of this work. The amount and continuation of funding was often considered to be influenced by the reporting and portrayal of violence against women in the media, and the political and community attention given to high profile campaigns and events such as Week Without Violence and White Ribbon.

Linked to the campaigns and media attention were the structural impacts of gender inequality. The connection between violence against women and gender inequality, and the associated attitudes and practices are now well recognised. Attitudinal change is difficult and multifaceted. It requires attention to be given to altering gendered stereotypes, generating an awareness of the inappropriateness and offensiveness of gendered comments in workplaces and uncovering assumptions about the comments and behaviours that constitute violence against women.

The complexity of preventing violence against women was further underscored by the extent to which gendered inequities were embedded in organisations, communities and cultures. At times, staff involved in preventing violence against women still encountered attitudes from colleagues and community members of 'not my responsibility' when preventing violence against women was discussed. The potential for backlash to the empowerment of some women who participated in preventing violence against women activities or who changed even small aspects of their lives was noted by participants. Overall, the extent of structural and systemic influences was seen as a factor to inspire and stimulate ongoing and renewed preventing violence against women activities by staff

and organisations. However, the enormity of these influences was also, at times, a factor that contributed to disillusionment and a sense of being overwhelmed for those involved in preventing violence against women. This finding reaffirms the value of structures such as the Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network for workers and organisations involved in preventing violence against women and in implementing the Strategy.

Organisational factors such as the degree of managerial support for preventing violence against women work and policies, the concrete implementation of such policies through actions such as the introduction of family violence leave, and employee and managerial participation in networking and awareness raising activities were significant influences on the ways in which preventing violence against women work could occur. Organisational acceptance and adoption of actions such as these represented significant cultural shifts in organisations, particularly for organisations that have worked in socially conservative ways and/or have not traditionally undertaken leadership in complex areas such as the prevention of violence against women. As one participant noted, these actions represented 'generational change' for many organisations – some staff members and organisations were more comfortable with this than were others.

In turn, all these structural factors were influenced by the varying needs of individuals and communities, whether they were providers of preventing violence against women work or recipients of this work. The intersections of the broad factors of gender, race and ethnicity were noted as important reminders for staff involved in preventing violence against women to assess the need to employ different activities in different areas and with different communities. Questions of how to be respectful of faiths and beliefs whilst undertaking preventing violence against women work, which may be seen to challenge these faiths and beliefs were raised.

The notion of 'readiness' was mentioned by a number of participants and it is worthy of consideration when attempting to engage organisations and communities in preventing violence against women. This consideration was particularly relevant in the following situations:

- where different cultural understandings of violence against women existed;
- where competing local needs were evident, such as the concrete need for transport infrastructure as against the need for preventing violence against women in urban growth corridors with high levels of isolation and family violence; and
- where the preference of local government was to engage in local, specific, small-scale preventing violence against women activities rather than larger regional activities.

Finally, cultural influences such as popular culture, advertising, social and traditional media, television programs, music and lyrics (that objectify and sexualise women and girls and promote gendered stereotypes) were identified as significant contributors to the violence that women experience, and an overall culture of sexism. Politicians and public figures including prominent sportspeople, usually sportsmen, and radio 'shock jocks' were also considered responsible for an unacceptable level of tolerance for violence against women in the community. Responding to, and challenging, these cultural influences added a further level of complexity to preventing violence against women.

Consequently, one of the characteristics of preventing violence against women work identified by participants was its complexity. It was complex because of the varying and intersecting structural factors, influences, and the disparities in understandings, needs and readiness of different individuals, communities and organisations.

Future Work and Directions: Ensure preventing violence against women work is informed by an understanding of the factors and structural influences that contribute to its complexity. Consequently, a variety of activities and approaches are required within an overall preventing violence against women regional strategy in order to engage partners at all stages of readiness.

The Links between Preventing Violence against Women and Gender Equity

A second characteristic of preventing violence against women work identified by participants was the links between violence against women and gender inequity and gender inequality. Women's experiences of gender inequity make up their day-to-day lived experiences and all these experiences must be kept visible by those engaged in preventing violence against women. The essential recognition of these links between promoting gender equity and preventing violence against women is a strong feature of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy.*

The terms gender equity/inequity and gender equality/inequality are often used interchangeably, although they have different meanings. This raises the need for clear and consistent definitions and explanations of these terms in preventing violence against women. Participants suggested that explanations of gender equity and gender equality can be linked with explanations of human rights and/or equal rights. Participants emphasised the importance of using language that people can understand, particularly during training and work in schools and in the community.

The definitions of gender equity and gender equality used by WHIN and which underpin the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* are:

- **Gender equity** is the process of being fair to women and men. Women and men, and diverse groups of women and men, have different life experiences and different access to resources. Gender equity recognises this diversity, and any associated disadvantage, and seeks to address the historical, structural and social disadvantages that prevent women and men operating on a level playing field. Equity is a term that described fairness and justice in outcomes. It is not about the equal delivery of services, or distribution of resources, it is about recognising diversity and disadvantage, and directing resources and services towards those most in need, to ensure equal outcomes for all.

- **Gender equality** is the outcome reached through gender equity. It is the equal valuing by society of the similarities and differences between women and men, and the varying roles that they may play.

Future Work and Directions: Recognise that language is important. Clear and consistent shared definitions and understandings of key terms such as gender equity are crucial. These definitions need to be profiled clearly in documentation such as plans, project outlines, and terms of reference.

Generally participants understood the concept of gender equity and demonstrated support for efforts to work towards achieving it, either as an accomplishment in itself or as a clear component of preventing violence against women work. However, some participants expressed uncertainty about what was meant by gender equity and some believed that it meant little and was simply a politically correct term that warranted no attention. Nevertheless, there was very strong support amongst participants for the promotion of gender equity in organisations as part of actions to prevent violence against women and to support and increase gender equity – in workplaces and/or communities. There was also strong support for organisations to model gender equity in day-to-day work and activities and to provide community education about gender equity.

However, there was much less support for organisations to make changes to workplace practice and policy in efforts to promote gender equity. This suggests that people were generally accepting of the idea of gender equity but were not ready for it to be endorsed to the extent of formalising it into

practice and policy. Presumably, once incorporated into policy, practical and concrete efforts toward achieving gender equity in organisations would need to be made. This would then likely require monitoring, review, accountability and reporting. The notion of 'readiness' for change may again be helpful in making sense of this apparent discrepancy in levels of support for different gender equity actions and activities.

> **Future Work and Directions:** Provide ongoing clarification about the importance of gender as a determinant of violence against women and what constitutes 'gender equity work' in the context of preventing violence against women. This may assist and encourage organisations' efforts to engage in this work.

Connecting violence against women and gender equity was seen to assist in the development of organisational gender policies. When discussion about gender is encouraged and awareness of violence against women is raised, possible organisational responses can be generated. For workers in some organisations, linking gender equity and preventing violence against women gave leverage to gender equity strategies being developed and implemented. Increasing the numbers of women in leadership and management positions, for example, was seen as an important strategy for achieving gender equity and to break stereotypes of what kinds of work women and men are capable. The difficulties in achieving gender equity were commonly located at a broader structural level and this analysis by participants indicated a well-informed and critical understanding of the intricacies of realising gender equity. The existence of more women than men in part-time employment and the differentials in salaries between men and women were cited as examples of contributors to gender inequity. Whilst these differences occur in many professions and sectors, they are a particular feature of the violence against women sector.

> **Future Work and Directions:** Continue to identify and address gender inequity as a critical component of preventing violence against women work. WHIN and partner organisations to continue to implement actions and strategies to motivate and support organisations to introduce and use strong gender equity policies. This is an area of continuing work as part of the Strategy and a critical component of future work.

The Links between Response, Early Intervention and Prevention Work

A third characteristic of preventing violence against women work identified by participants was the links between response, early intervention and prevention work. This observation was made frequently, although it tended to come more often from workers in direct practice programs and organisations than workers involved in policy, health promotion or program/project work. The links flow in all directions so that crisis response and early intervention work contain elements of prevention work and knowledge (for example, the development of safety plans), and prevention work can benefit from having a good understanding of what is involved in response work (for example, crisis data can be valuable in informing the development of prevention activities). As one participant commented, 'PVAW work is more than information about response'. A number of participants believed that work that achieves or aims for system change and getting a better service for women who have experienced violence could be considered prevention work. These interconnections illustrated, again, the complexity of preventing violence against women, and by implication, the complexity of implementing a regional strategy and evaluating its actions and approaches.

It should be noted that the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy,* and WHIN's health promotion work, is targeted at the primary prevention level, but is informed by crisis response and early intervention. The Strategy focusses on addressing the determinants of violence against women and using community engagement to address these determinants.

Different understandings and perspectives about what constitutes 'prevention' work can cause tension between professionals from different disciplines and organisational focus. Specialist services have traditionally, and for some decades now, provided vital responses to women experiencing violence. Some of the tension arising from different disciplines may be due to specialist services perceiving they have been left out of the state-wide prevention work. Incorporating, but not working exclusively from a health promotion focus, enables WHIN to view prevention work on a continuum from primary prevention through to some activities that include prevention and response components (such as a Workplace Family Violence Policy), thus striving to include input from specialist services. Integrating a range of perspectives about what constitutes prevention work whilst remaining informed by the philosophy behind the notion of prevention provides an ongoing challenge for WHIN and the regional strategy. However, it is a challenge of which WHIN is aware.

As a further consequence of the links between response, early intervention and prevention work, professionals from different disciplines and backgrounds, and organisations with different areas of core business, have been brought together in preventing violence against women work. The opportunities for shared learning and support and for well-informed prevention work are significant. So too, is the potential for disaffection with particular activities or approaches within the Strategy should they be perceived as, for example, focusing on prevention at the expense of response. Whilst such difficulties were not major or frequently apparent in this evaluation, there were some concerns expressed by participants about the emphases of the Strategy on occasion. (For more discussion, see Theme 4: Barriers and Challenges). In a regional approach to preventing violence against women, particularly where the region is characterised by diverse areas and populations, potential difficulties need to be anticipated and responded to. This may well be the responsibility of the organisation(s) with leadership and coordination roles – in this instance, WHIN.

Future Work and Directions: Preventing violence against women activities and approaches need to be informed by and to reflect the links and interconnections between response, early intervention and prevention work.

Theme 2. Implementation of Preventing Violence against Women Work and Activities

This theme explores the different approaches and activities that have been employed by organisations, including WHIN, in preventing violence against women work and in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy.* These approaches and activities were characterised by four main components:

- The *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*

- Communications, Advocacy and Champions

- Partnerships and Structures

- The Regional Approach.

These components are discussed individually although there is overlap in the content between them.

The *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*

In general, and not surprisingly, participants who had involvement in preventing violence against women activities compared with those who had no involvement, demonstrated a higher level of understanding about what constituted prevention work and the ways in which the Strategy had been

or could be used. One participant eloquently summarised the nature of the Strategy by describing it as, 'A primary prevention strategy that worked to prevent violence against women by addressing gender inequity and violent normative social structures'. The opportunities provided by the Strategy to develop collaborative working relationships and an integrated service system in order to best support and work with women and their children were also emphasised. VicHealth's *Framework for preventing violence before it occurs* (2007) was valued for its contribution to raising awareness of violence against women and highlighting the possibilities for prevention work and strategies. The further development, operationalisation and localisation of VicHealth's work to the northern metropolitan region through the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* was seen as a solid achievement by WHIN. The Strategy was viewed as a foundational guiding document for preventing violence against women work in the region.

There was significant variation across organisations, and throughout the region, in relation to the level of action that had been undertaken within the Strategy. Some people/organisations were aware of its existence, but had not yet begun any planning or implementation. About one-third of survey respondents who were involved in preventing violence against women had not yet used the Strategy, whilst another third used it frequently or quite often.

For many partner organisations, particularly local governments, preventing violence against women comprised a new priority area for action. Action plans, activities and specific strategies were commonly incorporated into Integrated Health Promotion Plans, bridging-year plans, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans and in organisational strategic plans.

Examples of activities from the Strategy's Action Plan that had been incorporated into organisational preventing violence against women work included:

- gender analysis training;
- supporting and attending regional events;
- collaboration between organisations and partners;
- including a focus on gender equity within policies and actions;
- involvement in the White Ribbon campaign;
- contribution to a mapping project; and
- the development of family violence policies within organisations.

The notion of 'embedding' preventing violence against women actions and the Strategy into organisational policies, processes and philosophies was frequently mentioned. This highlighted the level of importance that participants attached to preventing violence against women, the usefulness of the Strategy for guiding this work, and participants' commitment to achieving change.

The *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* was most often used to inform other major organisational policies and strategies including organisations' own action plans. It was also employed as a tool for persuasion, decision-making and internal advocacy and capacity building regarding the need for, and acceptance of, preventing violence against women activities within organisations. The following comments illustrated concrete examples of the ways in which people have used the Strategy:

> I have distributed the strategy to councillors to help increase awareness of the issue.

> I used (the Strategy) to create a culture of gender equity in council.

The Strategy was seen as a useful tool because of the clarity with which it was written and the staged possibilities for action within the Action Plan. Allowing a staged approach in implementation was

considered important as it enabled organisations to plan the introduction of activities and to pace these activities to suit organisational capacity and readiness.

Whilst the Strategy's breadth was seen as a positive attribute, it was also noted as a possible limitation in terms of the difficulty in finding a 'starting place' for organisations new to preventing violence against women. Nevertheless, the Strategy was generally described as easy for organisations to understand and for people to see what could be transferred into their own organisations. The background section in the Strategy was commonly used to increase workers' own understandings of preventing violence against women. Many participants commented that, as a result, conversation about preventing violence against women had become internalised in many organisations – that it had become part of the culture. Another change was that the sole focus on the experience of violence had shifted (although this understanding and vocalisation of it remained vital), because people were now thinking more critically about the causes of violence against women, the contributing factors and the ways in which large-scale structural changes (and the smaller more quickly achievable components within these changes) might occur.

The usefulness and practicality of settings/place-based approaches for preventing violence against women activities were noted. Organisations had developed and implemented prevention activities and strategies for their internal workplaces and/or for other community settings such as schools and community groups. Organisations that could focus attention on particular settings as development and implementation of their prevention activities increased over time, noted that this was an efficient and manageable way of undertaking preventing violence against women work. Other examples of these activities were where organisations aimed for more women in leadership and decision-making roles.

Communications, Advocacy and Champions

In the Strategy's Action Plan, 'Communications, Advocacy and Champions' constitute one area of endeavour. One of the aims is to, 'Implement multiphase communications, campaigns and programs, engage champions and undertake media advocacy to promote equity and non-violence' (WHIN 2011). This action has attracted significant community interest and involvement.

White Ribbon Campaign

Through primary prevention initiatives and an annual campaign, White Ribbon Australia seeks to change the attitudes and behaviours that lead to and perpetuate men's violence against women, by engaging boys and men to lead social change. For more information about White Ribbon, see: http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/about .

Mixed attitudes characterised the responses to the White Ribbon Campaign. White Ribbon Campaign activities are included in the Strategy with a particular focus on integrating them into whole-of-organisation approaches in councils. White Ribbon activities provide a highly visible campaign for men to demonstrate their commitment to preventing violence against women, and to demonstrate a way for them to take responsibility for working to achieve change in men's behaviours, attitudes and beliefs that contribute to violence against women. The potential for White Ribbon to involve men in preventing violence against women, and raise the profile of prevention work in organisations, was seen as significant. However, uncertainty about the aims and processes of some White Ribbon activities was a common issue expressed by participants. Concerns were expressed that some men who have taken the White Ribbon pledge[2] had not, in practice, maintained their commitment to the pledge. On many occasions, women, rather than men, have been the organisers of events and activities. More overt links between gender equity and gender equality on the one hand, and preventing violence against women work on the other, need to be recognised within White Ribbon campaigns and activities. Advocating for the prevention of violence against women was considered

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[2] My oath: I swear never to commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women.

essentially meaningless when there was no understanding or acknowledgement of the ways in which gender inequities and patriarchy contribute to violence against women in the first instance.

Whilst the high profile of White Ribbon was considered a positive aspect of the campaign, the downside was the ease with which individuals and organisations could choose to participate in it and include campaign activities in organisational preventing violence against women action plans without necessarily any other involvement in primary prevention work. If the decision to participate in the White Ribbon Campaign was made in place of choosing more intensive and longer-term actions that focused on policy or structural change, achievement of organisational and regional aims was less likely to occur. In other words, if an organisation's sole preventing violence against women activity was to hold an annual White Ribbon Day event, that organisation's prevention strategy was under-developed and barely contributed to a vibrant, evolving regional Strategy.

Community Leadership Action 2.5: Develop a whole-of-organisation approach to, and actively support and engage in, White Ribbon Campaign activities.

Week Without Violence Campaign

The Week Without Violence Campaign and associated Clothesline Project were noted as highly successful because of the significant involvement of different organisations in these activities, their high profile within the community and their capacity to generate significant community involvement and sense of ownership in local preventing violence against women activities. These activities provided opportunities for women to develop and enhance their leadership skills, reduce social isolation and improve community actions. Thus actions 2.2 and 2.3 (see the boxes below) have been well achieved. WHIN's involvement and support with these activities was seen as crucial.

Community Leadership Action 2.2: Develop strategies and campaigns that promote full and active participation in community life to women from diverse backgrounds.

Community Leadership Action 2.4: Support and actively engage women and the broader community in preventing violence against women involvement in the Week without Violence Campaign including the Clothesline Project.

Above: A Week Without Violence banner painted by women in refuge accommodation for Mary Anderson Family Violence Services.

Some participants expressed concerns that involvement in such campaigns could be relatively brief and undemanding but individuals and organisations would nevertheless be seen to be involved in preventing violence against women work. Concerns revolved around occasions where this participation appeared to be a token effort and a 'tick-the-box' activity where the initial participation does 'not fully translate in practice or beyond a particular activity'. One participant remarked that, 'PVAW is not just Week Without Violence or White Ribbon. There are many options and possibilities'.

A message for organisations could be one of be prepared to take risks and try something new when engaging in preventing violence against women work.

Future Work and Directions: WHIN to encourage organisations to evaluate their preventing violence against women activities as a regular action in the Strategy. WHIN to develop a portfolio, or archive, of evaluations that have been undertaken by organisations in relation to their preventing violence against women activities and/or in identifying what contributes to changes in behaviours and attitudes towards violence against women over time.

Involvement of Men

The involvement of men in preventing violence against women, and in the Strategy, was clearly agreed to and expected. Prevention work was considered not only the responsibility of women, but of men and the whole community. There was encouragement for men to participate in broad community-focused activities in advocacy roles; in education and awareness raising; and in prevention. There was, however, frustration expressed with the attention and general commendation sometimes given to men who participated in preventing violence against women work, particularly in high profile campaigns such as White Ribbon. It was apparent that a gendered difference was frequently obvious here. As participants noted, women are generally not lauded for being 'champions' for participating in prevention work and speaking out about the need to recognise and stop violence against women. The tendency to congratulate men for their anti-violence stance runs the risk of continuing to reinforce traditional expectations that preventing violence against women is women's work and that men who participate are exceptional. Participants frequently expressed the need for more men in senior positions in local government to become involved in, and actively support, preventing violence against women. A comment from a male survey respondent summed up much of the thinking about the involvement of men:

> Men must be included in the healing process of female victims instead of being excluded as it reinforces damaging perceptions and stereotypes about men (based on the last experience a woman would have had, which is negative). Engaging men must be through reinforcing positive messages rather than negative messages, as research has shown consistently that positive messages help in changing social attitudes. However, putting collective responsibility on all men for the violent actions of a few leads to disengagement and detachment from the process.

Social Media

WHIN's involvement in, and use, of various traditional and social media in preventing violence against women work was viewed as a relatively new action, with Facebook and Twitter usage starting in 2010. It was recognised as having much potential to increase the profile of prevention work and the Strategy and to reach a wide range and number of individuals, communities and organisations. The use of social media also provided an accessible platform for regional coverage and information-provision.

Communications, Advocacy and Champions Action 4.2: Promote preventing violence against women activities in the mainstream media and organisational publications, and recognise the importance of media in transmitting key messages.

Communications, Advocacy and Champions Action 4.3: Monitor mainstream media and social

media reporting of VAW in order to encourage the media to be accurate and evidence based.

Future Work and Directions: WHIN to continue to promote prevention of violence against women activities in the mainstream media and organisational publications, and recognise the importance of media in transmitting key messages.

Partnerships and Structures

The establishment of partnerships across government and non-government agencies as well as accountable leadership structures for sustainable prevention is one of the major actions in the Strategy's Action Plan.

There was significant recognition of the value of partnerships and collaborative work across organisations and sectors. Preventing violence against women was considered a whole-of-community responsibility and not the purview of any one sector or organisation. WHIN's partner organisations in the Strategy – primary care partnerships, community health services and local governments were considered to have legitimate responsibility for developing and implementing preventing violence against women activities and strategies. Indeed, prevention work was now considered core business by a number of local governments. This consideration meets Action 5.2 in the Strategy's Action Plan: 'Recognition of preventing violence against women as the core business of local government and health services'.

People with the ability to implement change in practice were considered best placed to, at least, coordinate and inform the implementation of preventing violence against women actions. These conclusions draw attention to the skills and abilities needed, and held by, workers responsible for the implementation of prevention activities and strategies. Whilst there was no direct discussion from participants about these requirements, the preventing violence against women workforce would need to possess significant coordination, communication, engagement, planning and implementation skills.

The strength of partnerships between organisations was sometimes dependent upon individual personnel, their commitment to developing and sustaining collaborative working relationships, and their acknowledgement of the necessity of preventing violence against women. In the event that such individuals left an organisation, particularly if they had occupied a senior or management position, there was a risk that the momentum and commitment to preventing violence against women would also disappear.

Specialist Violence against Women Response Services

Whilst specialist family violence and sexual assault services have provided crisis, early intervention and support services in response to violence against women, as a sector they have also always incorporated a secondary prevention/early intervention component in their work. The growing focus on primary prevention in recent years, and the development and implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women Strategy,* has enabled and encouraged these services to increase their involvement in prevention work. Collaborative relationships between organisations were valued highly with one specialist service noting that one of their key partners is now the police.

It is worth noting that funding to these specialist services may not have been targeted to prevention work. Nevertheless, these services have employed the Strategy as an informational guide in the development of a range of prevention activities. Such activities have included respectful relationships

programs in schools (for example, the Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools[3] delivered by the Centres Against Sexual Assault); inclusion of preventing violence against women messages and content on organisational websites; the provision of preventative community education work through information sessions with schools, community and other organisations; and therapeutic group work with children who have experienced violence in the home. The Strategy has also been used to identify and highlight opportunities for undertaking broader structural organisational work and practice, particularly around workplace policies and gender equity within organisations.

Different ways of thinking and understanding about what constitutes prevention of violence work is required for different communities and women. For example, flexible prevention responses are needed when working with Aboriginal women and their families and communities. Participants stated that work with Aboriginal communities has to be a priority. Questions about whom to work with, how to respond to the violence, and how to understand the violence in different contexts need to be contemplated. The links between response, early intervention and prevention work are important interacting considerations here.

> **Future Work and Directions**: Explore the ways in which preventing violence against women work has been/is undertaken with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their communities.

A number of participants stated that women with disabilities are not well represented on preventing violence against women committees or groups. Specific events or forums have been held but it was unclear about the extent to which active consideration of women with disabilities was an ongoing part of preventing violence against women thinking and working.

> **Future Work and Directions**: Explore the ways in which preventing violence against women work has been/is undertaken with women with disabilities.

Local Government

There was variation in the extent to which preventing violence against women planning and activities have been undertaken within local governments. A challenge for one participant was, 'Getting it [preventing violence against women and the Strategy] known and accepted across Council'. However, there was increasing recognition that preventing violence against women was relevant work for local government because of its impact on local issues of concern, its reach into the community, its ability to set priorities for action in specific local government areas, and its ability to have impact on community health, particularly through Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans. Councils also have reach into sports clubs, youth services, family services and support services for older people. This reach and overview of local communities provided opportunities for large-scale awareness-raising and education regarding preventing violence against women.

However, not all councils have provided a 'mandate' or ongoing commitment for preventing violence against women. In some cases, this lack of mandate contrasted with the greater acceptance of associated, although different, activities such as occupational health and safety and equal opportunity. Typically, there are large workforces in local government and questions were often raised about where preventing violence against women work should focus, where it should first be directed, whose role it was and how the evaluation of any change could be included in this work. As one participant noted, there is 'difficulty in demonstrating the effectiveness of strategies, the impact of PVAW'.

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[3] The Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools (SAPPSS) is a whole-of-school model to prevent sexual assault in secondary schools. The model was developed by CASA House and includes staff professional development, respectful relationships curriculum for junior and middle school, Train the Trainer, Peer Educator Programs and ongoing evaluation. SAPPSS enables CASA and other agencies to work in long-term partnership with schools to integrate respectful relationships education and understandings of gender equity into everyday school life.

The involvement of the peak body for Victorian local government, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), in preventing violence against women was viewed enthusiastically because of its ability to bring councillors 'on board'. There was some suggestion that the MAV should drive prevention work for local government. The MAV's Prevention of Violence against Women Leadership Statement (2012) was seen as a valuable resource and guide for highlighting the connection between gender inequities and violence against women, as well as for encouraging local government involvement in preventing violence against women work.

The Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Implementation Advisory Group

The Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group comprises representatives from WHIN, the region's three primary care partnerships, the seven local governments, the NIFVS Strategic Network and community health services.

The Advisory Group is a regional network with a prevention focus. It meets quarterly with the aims of monitoring the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*, developing project ideas, pursuing funding and disseminating information. Not all participants in this research were aware of the existence or purpose of the Advisory Group, although those who participated as members or belonged to organisations that were represented in the Advisory Group were generally positive about its role. Its purposes were described variously as the provision of advice regarding the development of action plans and strategic plans, feeding the progress of the implementation of the Strategy back to organisations, taking the role of a project reference group, and discussing priorities for preventing violence against women work.

Members valued the chances to learn from the experiences of other people, to actively reflect on preventing violence against women activities and directions, to have a sense of belonging to a peer network and to be able to influence the ways in which the Strategy could be implemented and further refined and developed over time. Feedback indicated that the Advisory Group was having a regional impact through encouraging and supporting collaboration across municipalities and organisations. As one participant said, the Advisory Group 'is instrumental in enabling broader, higher level collaboration, communication and resourcing across the region'. Without the Advisory Group and without WHIN's involvement, it appeared unlikely that such collaboration and communication would occur to the extent that it does. WHIN's involvement in the Advisory Group was strongly endorsed.

> **Partnerships and Structures Action 1.2:** Establish a Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group. Achieved.

> **Future Work and Directions**: Continue to resource and convene the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group.

The Northern Integrated Family Violence Services (NIFVS) Strategic Network

Another important structural support for the Strategy identified by participants was the NIFVS Strategic Network that was established in 2008. The NIFVS Strategic Network brings together the organisations in the northern region that have a role in family violence response and support. It acts as a regional information exchange and advocacy platform for the community sector on family violence issues. Whilst the primary focus of most of the organisations in this network is response and early intervention, prevention is one of five priority areas identified in the *NIFVS Regional Action Plan 2013-2017* which drives the work of the Strategic Network. Key actions include Week Without Violence activities, media advocacy and the update and dissemination of the Family Violence Help Cards. The NIFVS Strategic Network was involved in the development of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* and has officially endorsed the strategy, along with the majority of member organisations.

WHIN convenes and offers executive support to the NIFVS Strategic Network and ensures wide regional representation. The Network has been successful in its aims of being well attended, representing the broad sector and having prevention as a priority. The Network was seen as a venue for communication across sectors and organisations where a range of information about violence against women work was presented, shared and taken back to organisations. Its rationale and activities were seen to reinforce the key value of a gendered understanding inherent in the prevention of violence against women. The breadth of membership was often commented upon with members including representatives from the police, Department of Human Services, courts, housing, specialist services and WHIN's prevention partners. Some members of the NIFVS Strategic Network also belong to the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group. Updates regarding the work of the Advisory Group on the implementation of the Strategy were valued. One participant described the approach underpinning the Network as the 'old-fashioned community development approach' which brings people together and encourages local, collaborative community-based work to occur. As another participant mentioned, WHIN keeps things together and does drive a lot of the Network (NIFVS) and its functioning. Their continuing support is vital'.

Additional comments and responses were received from participants in relation to the role and function of the NIFVS Strategic Network. However, whilst a detailed evaluation of the Strategic Network was outside the scope of this evaluation, a formal evaluation is a recommendation for future work.

Partnerships and Structures Action 1.4: Support and strengthen cross-regional links with the NIFVS Strategic Network.

Future Work and Directions: Undertake an evaluation of the NIFVS Strategic Network's role, purposes and functioning. The evaluation would include consideration of:

- its role in informing prevention work;
- the provision of opportunities for specific practice-based issues in violence against women work to be raised and integrated into prevention planning, activities and the overall prevention Strategy; and
- its connection to the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group.

The Regional Approach

In order to implement the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* effectively, organisations across the northern metropolitan region need to come together and partner in the development of creative prevention models. Strategies need to be implemented in a wide range of settings across the region (WHIN 2011). The idea of a regional preventing violence against women strategy was strongly supported by participants. The idea was, however, qualified by a number of factors, the most significant being the many and varied differences in communities and in organisations across the region and even within local government areas.

Many strengths were associated with the regional approach of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy.* Firstly, despite some of the challenges related to the differences and diversity throughout the region, a regional approach was considered to be 'workable'. Power in numbers was seen as a distinct advantage of a regional strategy and that when organisations were involved, everyone was, 'Working toward a shared goal'. This, of course, could only happen when there was a level of consistency in the values, approaches, activities and strategies across the region. The opportunities for communication and for regional networks, partners, organisations and professionals to feed in together were seen as key to the success of a regional strategy. Communication about preventing violence against women work throughout the region commonly occurred through regional networks and organisations including community health promotion networks, WHIN, primary care partnerships, the Municipal Association of Victoria,

the Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network. Staff also learned about preventing violence against women activities through organisational committees, professional development events and from other newsletters and emails.

Health promotion plans were considered a useful regional tool for developing and outlining preventing violence against women actions and the importance of aligning plans, activities and strategies between member organisations, such as primary care partnerships, was emphasised.

A number of participants noted that the participation of organisations in preventing violence against women activities on a regional basis could motivate other like-minded or similarly funded organisations in the region to also be involved.

Since the introduction of the regional Strategy, participants mentioned a number of changes they had witnessed in the development and implementation of preventing violence against women work.

These changes were:

- a greater awareness of preventing violence against women and the Strategy across different services;

- improved coordination and collaboration between organisations to facilitate a regional approach; and

- a higher priority being given to preventing violence against women activities through the delivery of training and the inclusion in organisational strategic directions.

A comment from one participant provided a succinct overview:

There is 'greater awareness of the seriousness and prevalence of violence against women among a number of sectors; an increase in the number of people trained in relation to PVAW and gender equity; and broad momentum for PVAW and gender equity work, including an increased commitment through Health Promotion Plans and PCP priorities'.

Across the region there are many variations and differences, including those in cultural and ethnic backgrounds, different religious faiths and beliefs, geographical differences in terms of growth areas, inner-urban and rural-urban areas, other different population demographics, different exacerbating factors for violence against women, different needs of different communities, and this translates into different stages of 'readiness' for individuals, communities and organisations to engage and be involved in in preventing violence against women.

Strategies employed by individuals and organisations in responding to these differences included tailoring their work and the Strategy to particular areas and populations; taking the general actions and activities within the Strategy and 'adapting and integrating' them into a given community or location; using the generic framework of the Strategy and Action Plans and encouraging and assisting people and local communities to 'work to their capacities'; and generally 'localising' activities and strategies.

The Strategy needed to be flexible enough and allow a staged approach with its activities and in its implementation to meet the diversity of needs throughout the region. However, care was advised to ensure that activities and approaches did not become fragmented and piecemeal, thus preventing sustainable structural changes. It seems evident that WHIN and the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group have a monitoring role here. Various participants grappled with decisions about whether their prevention work was most effective when undertaken at a local rather than regional level, or whether the work should occur at both levels.

Partnerships and Structures Action 1.4: Support and strengthen cross-regional links with the NIFVS Strategic Network.
Communications, Advocacy and Champions Action 4.4: Support individuals and organisations to champion and promote regional prevention of violence against women activities.
Future Work and Directions: WHIN must remain cognisant of the differences and diversity throughout the region and develop and implement preventing violence against women activities and actions in ways that enable consistency in approach across this diversity. Flexibility must also be enabled so that prevention work is relevant and meaningful to each community and organisation.

Theme 3. The Role of Women's Health In the North

This theme looks at the role of WHIN in relation to the development and implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*.

WHIN's overall role in relation to the implementation of the Strategy was clearly one of leadership with universal endorsement from regional organisations for WHIN to undertake this position. WHIN has been successful in this role for a number of reasons (see below), but an important one was that preventing violence against women was seen to be part of WHIN's core business. This meant that the focus was clear and 'personalities', politics and jockeying for positions of influence and power could largely be avoided. The role of WHIN's CEO as a strong advocate for preventing violence against women and the Strategy, and her ability to influence and encourage other CEOs and senior managers to participate, significantly contributed to the success of the Strategy across the region. The work ethic of WHIN staff members and WHIN's unwavering commitment to, and belief in, preventing violence against women also contributed to WHIN's success in the leadership role.

WHIN's leadership role was broadly divided into three areas:

- consultant and knowledge-holder;
- leader, coordinator and connector; and
- trainer and facilitator.

Consultant and Knowledge-holder

Of particular importance within the consultancy – and leadership – roles was WHIN's capacity to provide the unambiguous and direct message that preventing violence against women is everyone's responsibility. Providing key definitions and explanations of terminology and guidelines for prevention work added to organisational and community understanding about what is involved in preventing violence against women. As a consultant and knowledge-holder, WHIN provides advice about the development of individual and/or combined organisational action plans. WHIN assists with integrating and utilising the Strategy in organisational preventing violence against women work and within local communities. WHIN encourages an integrated approach to preventing violence against women throughout the region by assisting organisations to work together and share their experiences of implementing preventing violence against women strategies.

As one participant noted, 'WHIN provides foundational work and strategies for preventing violence against women work' which is beneficial for organisations because they do not have to 'start from scratch', and because steps and information are provided for professionals who are new to the area of preventing violence against women work.

WHIN was considered capable of taking on the consultancy role because of the knowledge, evidence and expertise it holds about what works in relation to preventing violence against women, and because it has access to contemporary thinking and research and violence against women.

A feminist philosophy and framework is of particular importance in developing, implementing and evaluating preventing violence against women actions and the Strategy. Underpinning and guiding all of WHIN's work is an overt feminist philosophy and this enables a strong and clear understanding of how to develop and implement a primary prevention strategy, in this case in preventing violence against women. WHIN's feminist philosophy is operationalised by hearing and representing women's voices and experiences, providing a range of opportunities for women to participate in events and activities and to undertake prevention work in a flexible way in order to make it relevant to women and communities in different situations and with different needs. In addition to feminist informed understandings of violence against women and prevention, the inclusion of a gender-equity focus and a gender lens ensured the Strategy could clearly identify, respond to, reduce and prevent the major determinants of violence against women.

Whilst WHIN was seen as the most appropriate organisation to lead and coordinate the regional preventing violence against women work, some comments were made about possible tension arising from a women's health service taking on this role and responsibility. These comments revolved around the possibility that when preventing violence against women is undertaken by women, it consequently becomes reinforced – and 'stuck' – as a women's, rather than community, issue. However, as a women's health service, WHIN is in an extremely strong position to advocate robustly around gendered issues and the presence of gender inequity at the core of violence against women. WHIN also advocates for male leadership in preventing violence against women and for engaging men as partners in this work.

Leader, Coordinator and Connector

WHIN was viewed as well-positioned to act as the coordinator of preventing violence against women activities and strategies throughout the region because of its regional focus and its knowledge of what is happening throughout the region; that is, 'who is doing what'. The consequent sharing of information amongst organisations and communities, bringing people together in forums such as the Advisory Group and connecting organisations with each other was a significant component of the work undertaken by WHIN. Building relationships and bringing different sectors together to talk about preventing violence against women as a regional priority has contributed to the attainment of a workable regional Strategy. Moreover, WHIN's capacity to source expertise and new knowledge, and subsequently transfer this to other organisations in a format that enabled further work and planning, was highly valued.

The most significant event that demonstrated WHIN's ability to bring people and organisations together in preventing violence against women was 'The North Commits to Building a Respectful Community' event in May 2013. At this event, fifty organisations from the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne made a public commitment to actions to prevent violence against women. The event involved senior representatives of the region's seven councils, nine community health services, three primary care partnerships, and members of the NIFVS Strategic Network, who committed to the vision and goals of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women – a Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016*, and committed to taking action to prevent violence against women.

> **Partnerships and Structures Action 1.1:** Endorse and support WHIN's *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women – a Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016*.

Subsequent feedback from workers after this event noted that it had encouraged awareness and commitment from management and CEOs and that increased organisational support for preventing violence against women had been forthcoming for workers. The event had 'helped with conversations', 'started ideas', and provided a sense of 'camaraderie' and 'belonging to a bigger picture'. For others, the event, 'created a great opportunity to really embed the work,' and to experience a 'sense of consolidation'. On a broader level, one participant noted that the event and attendance, 'shows a regional and a PCP catchment commitment'.

Above: WHIN CEO Helen Riseborough, Melbourne Business School Research Fellow Dr Victor Sojo and NIFVS Strategic Network Chair Michelle Reid at 'The North Commits to Building a Respectful Community' event.

People who attended the event had the opportunity to see and hear about preventing violence against women actions being undertaken by other organisations and, in some cases, this generated momentum for organisations to upscale their activities. Activities undertaken in response to people attending the event have included:

- presenting the Strategy to councillors;
- presenting statistical information about violence against women to councillors;
- merging the Strategy into a whole-of-council preventing violence against women framework;
- choosing preventing violence against women as a priority in Primary Care Partnership and community health Integrated Health Promotion Plans;
- developing media releases; and
- reinforcing the need for a family violence clause in an 'Enterprise Agreement'.

Evaluation participants raised questions about what managers and senior executives would do in practice now they had signed the commitment banner. Suggestions were made by participants that signing to commit to actual actions may have held more weight and accountability. One participant wondered, 'How do these events filter down to workers and teams and make changes? What is the trickle-down effect to women on the ground?' The importance of the links between response and

prevention are once again clear in these considerations. Participants suggested that the impacts of signing and committing to the Strategy be monitored and evaluated.

Future Work and Directions: Monitor and evaluate the impacts of signing and committing to the Strategy.

WHIN's responsiveness to the particular needs of members of the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group, the NIFVS Strategic Network, and other organisations was given particular importance. Whilst this responsiveness was generally affirmed and recognised, some organisations were less pleased with the attention given to particular areas of need. This concern came most often from some specialist services and organisations providing direct crisis and other response work. Support to these response organisations is provided by WHIN's Regional Integration Coordination Team. These organisations were often in the position of witnessing the limiting impact of systemic failures, such as restricted access to court support, on organisations' capacity to provide effective support for women experiencing violence. Poor system response was seen as a barrier to the overall preventing violence against women work that could be achieved within the region. The provision of a regional response and systems advocacy in response to these concerns was considered an important part of WHIN's work. One of the Regional Integration Coordination Team's key roles is to advocate for continual improvement in the response service system.

Future Work and Directions: WHIN to continue to undertake systems advocacy work to highlight the impact of systemic limitations (on response and structural levels) on preventing violence against women work.

Trainer and Facilitator

Through training, professional development and facilitation of meetings, working groups and the Implementation Advisory Group, WHIN provides opportunities for information exchange, problem discussion and problem solving, consultation with organisations about their needs, modelling of the Strategy and Action Plan, reflective practice, and education about the possibilities for preventing violence against women work. The provision of information and education about preventing violence against women and associated actions was seen as particularly important for organisations that had not previously worked in the preventing violence against women field or whose primary service response had been crisis rather than prevention.

WHIN's professional development and training in gender analysis, and how and why it could be employed with organisational data and statistics were highly regarded. Training information and support in relation to program and service planning was valued. The development of resources was welcomed with the *Gender Analysis Planning and Audit Tool* specifically mentioned.

Suggestions were made for more up-skilling and practical advice for the organisational implementation of preventing violence against women strategies. One participant thought that, 'some agencies may need more support with operationalising the actions in the strategy. Actions in the strategy may be strengthened through more formalised partnerships for implementing PVAW work'.

Future Work and Directions: Provide ongoing professional development and practical advice for the organisational implementation of preventing violence against women work and action plans.

One specific suggestion from some participants was that a regional position be created – and funded – based on the Industry Advisor model that is used in the Department of Health. In this model, an

advisor would work with organisations to assess their needs, and then provide ideas about how preventing violence against women actions could be implemented. It was suggested that such an advisor might be based with WHIN or within the primary care partnerships.

> **Future Work and Directions**: Investigate the Industry Advisor model and its possible applications to the northern metropolitan region, preventing violence against women work and the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*.

> **Future Work and Directions**: Seek funding from local government to create a regional preventing violence against women local government advisor position at WHIN.

Theme 4. Barriers and Challenges

The implementation of preventing violence against women strategies was frequently seen as a challenge for a range of reasons. As one participant noted, 'PVAW is a moveable feast'. Implementation must be seen as an ongoing, not a one-off process with the continual development and application of existing and new activities and approaches. Due to its nature, preventing violence against women is inherently challenging. One of the most common barriers to long-term preventing violence against women work and development is limited, short-term, or no funding. In addition to this, challenges and barriers exist in most of the components of the work, which have been discussed in previous sections. In this section, the challenges and barriers are noted and some ideas for responding to them will be presented in the next chapter: Future Work and Directions.

> **Future Work and Directions**: Recognise that the implementation of preventing violence against women work and the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* is an ongoing, evolving and long-term process, which requires continual development and implementation of existing and new activities and approaches.

> **Future Work and Directions**: Update the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* using outcomes and information gained from Phase 1 of the evaluation.

The Complexity of Preventing Violence against Women

As noted earlier, preventing violence against women work is complex, multifaceted and of a long-term nature. Momentum and commitment to preventing violence against women within organisations, communities and policy must be maintained for change in attitudes and behaviours to occur. However, this type of change happens over the long-term, can be difficult to monitor, gauge and evaluate, and for individuals, organisations and funding bodies who like to see concrete and more immediate change, preventing violence against women work can prove frustrating and, investment in it, questionable.

Bringing about, and sustaining, change in attitudes and behaviours is central in the consideration of the development and implementation of a regional preventing violence against women strategy. Planning, development and implementation need to occur in light of this consideration.

Many staff involved in preventing violence against women work continue to encounter a lack of understanding about the nature and existence of violence against women. This lack of understanding and knowledge comes from colleagues in the workplace as well as from community members. Consequently, preventing violence against women needs to begin with education and awareness-raising activities, sometimes at the most introductory level. This reminds us not to make assumptions about the level of knowledge, awareness and willingness that exists in communities and organisations in relation to violence against women and taking action to prevent it. Consultation

with communities and organisations about their needs, such as training, professional development, support with implementing a specific action or event, or information about presenting to management and funding bodies, is clearly important. At the same time, conversations with these communities and organisations about the most collaborative and informative ways in which to work with and support them in their preventing violence against women work is essential.

Future Work and Directions: Continue to consult with communities and organisations about the most collaborative and informative ways in which to work with and support them in their efforts to prevent violence against women.

Undertaking preventing violence against women work in diverse communities with differing needs was a key contributor to the complexity inherent in preventing violence against women work. It was evident that more attention needed to be given to engaging and working with particular individuals and communities. Culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Indigenous women and communities, and women with disabilities were all mentioned as being insufficiently included in preventing violence against women work to date. Further exploration of the nature and the extent to which active consideration of these women and communities is an ongoing part of preventing violence against women planning throughout the region, and within the Strategy, is required. The Strategy is clearly informed by an understanding of the higher risk of violence faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with immigrant and refugee backgrounds, and women with disabilities (WHIN 2011, p. 14). This consideration and understanding may well be present in organisations but it was not apparent in this evaluation research.

Partnerships and Structures Action 1.5: Support and strengthen cross-regional links with the Aboriginal Family Violence Regional Action Group.

Partnerships and Structures Action 1.6: Support prevention projects and campaigns which engage diverse communities including people with a disability, Aboriginal communities and young people.

Community Leadership Action 2.2: Develop strategies and campaigns that promote full and active participation in community life to women from diverse backgrounds.

Future Work and Directions: Explore and review the ways in which preventing violence against women work has been/is undertaken with women with immigrant and refugee backgrounds. As part of this review, examine the ways in which immigrant and refugee women and their communities choose to be engaged and involved in preventing violence against women work, planning and development.

Community Awareness Activities, Training and Professional Development

Awareness-raising and educational activities for communities, as well as training and professional development for staff and organisations in relation to what constitutes violence against women, were all highly valued aspects of the regional Strategy. Likewise, the provision of primary prevention and gender analysis training was valued highly. Many of the challenges associated with awareness-raising activities, training and professional development revolve around the intricacies involved in achieving attitudinal and behavioural change.

One-off events will not necessarily result in change, and changes that do occur may not be sustained past the event. Consideration needs to be given to ongoing support and reinforcement for change activities and change strategies. This enables awareness and learning to occur over time, to be cumulative and to become embedded in organisations and communities. Once professionals are trained in relation to preventing violence against women and have developed an understanding of how to undertake prevention work, they need to be supported to act – to actually put into practice what they have learned. Ideally, these individuals will work with, and encourage, other professionals

and their organisations to learn with them and engage in preventing violence against women work. The importance of managerial involvement and affirmation of preventing violence against women is underscored here. So, too, is the existence of bodies such as the Implementation Advisory Group that can provide collegial support, information about current work, achievements from across the region, and ideas for ongoing and innovative preventing violence against women development and implementation.

Some participants called for more training and professional development, particularly in relation to preventing violence against women and gender analysis. The possibility of offering gender analysis training at different levels was also suggested. This would assist organisations to continually embed and review gender analysis processes and awareness of gender equity in their organisations as progress occurred and in response to changing needs over time. Ensuring that training is informed by the organisations to which it is directed was seen as crucial. Training had to be relevant to each organisation's needs and developmental stage regarding preventing violence against women work and knowledge.

Capacity and Tools Action 3.1: Deliver and facilitate preventing violence against women and gender analysis training modules utilising relevant resources and tools.

Capacity and Tools Action 3.2: Provide opportunities for staff across all organisational levels to participate in primary prevention of violence against women and gender analysis training.

Future Work and Directions: Continue to provide opportunities for staff across all organisational levels to participate in primary prevention and gender analysis training. Organisations need to allocate finances for this training.

Partnerships and Structures

Organisational Culture and Preventing Violence against Women Roles

In response to questions about what distinguished some organisations from others in relation to the degree of involvement and progress in preventing violence against women, a number of factors were noted.

These included:

- support from management and governance;
- whole-of-organisation awareness, commitment and involvement;
- workers who were passionate and would drive this work;
- funding, resourcing and time; and
- employee recruitment.

Variations in the extent of managerial support for preventing violence against women work in organisations existed throughout the region. Preventing violence against women work and the Strategy must be supported and reinforced at all levels of management and governance within organisations. This will enable consistent and fully supported and endorsed prevention work to occur within and across organisations. The need for executive and managerial support extended to communication processes within organisations. This meant, for example, that information about preventing violence against women activities, meetings and professional development opportunities needed to be distributed and made available to staff members and not be confined to, or ignored at, management levels. As one participant noted, 'PVAW needs a champion in organisations'. Limited managerial support may, in part, contribute to the limitations in the structuring and funding of some

preventing violence against women roles and positions and even the inclusion of 'preventing violence against women' in position descriptions. For example, many workers engaged in preventing violence against women, particularly in local government, do not have specific dedicated roles or time fractions; preventing violence against women is often combined with other roles such as more general health promotion; and many preventing violence against women positions are part-time, secondments or contracted positions – in other words, often short-term and non-recurrent positions. Consequently, there can be a lot of movement within the preventing violence against women workforce, interruptions in the development and implementation of activities, and limited scope for longer-term, visible and sustainable strategy development.

The limited level of dedicated funding often results in part-time roles. Limited time fractions for preventing violence against women positions meant that sometimes decisions needed to be made between focusing on specific, visible activities such as the White Ribbon campaign or undertaking bigger regional activities and goals. Organisations – and individual workers – cannot be involved in all regional preventing violence against women activities, especially when events are held closely together, and when the time available for preventing violence against women is limited. Participants described times of tension when organisations and workers wanted to be fully involved in preventing violence against women activities and the Strategy, yet were restricted because of time fractions and other organisational priorities.

There was, additionally, some concern that WHIN expected that organisations be involved in all, or a high number, of activities and that this expectation could not consistently be met. In some ways though, this concern could also be viewed in a positive sense. Organisations and workers who expressed these concerns had generally been working on preventing violence against women and the Strategy for some time, and were able to reflect on their involvement and where they could best direct their energies. Their concerns could perhaps be viewed as reflections on their achievements and the developmental learning process of involvement in the regional Strategy – what was working well and what needed to be reviewed and done in a different way? Which organisation(s) is/are best placed to be involved in which aspects of preventing violence against women? This reflection and review process could be included in the planning, research and evaluation action of the Strategy's Action Plan, in organisational action plans as well as ensuring it is integrated into activities within bodies such as the Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network.

Planning, Research and Evaluation Action 6.1: Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of *Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women, A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region Of Melbourn*e.

Planning, Research and Evaluation Action 6.3: Participate in, and contribute to, research that builds the evidence base for preventing violence against women initiatives.

Future Work and Directions: Ensure opportunities for review, reflection and learning are provided for preventing violence against women workers. Build these opportunities into the Strategy's activities and approaches, into organisational preventing violence against women action plans, and into terms of reference for the Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network.

Recruiting employees who fit with an organisation's philosophies and values about preventing violence against women was noted as a strategy for organisations wanting to build commitment from their workforce. As one participant said, 'PVAW needs to be part of the organisation's statements and part of its commitment, so this also attracts workers who also value this approach and priority'. Preventing violence against women needs to be embedded in organisational policies and position descriptions.

A further challenge to undertaking preventing violence against women was the potential disjunction between the planning timelines of local government and other organisations on the one hand and

WHIN and/or preventing violence against women events and activities on the other. For example, priorities in community health services are decided and included in Integrated Health Promotion Plans every four years. Participants thought WHIN's awareness of organisational planning and timelines could be helpful because WHIN could then be guided in the development and scheduling of preventing violence against women work and the actions within the Strategy. Conversely, participants also noted that tight scheduling of prevention work could prevent flexibility and the capacity of organisations to respond to emerging needs and developments.

Embedding Action 7.2: Alignment of organisational and operational policies and plans with *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women, A strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne*.

Future Work and Directions: Continue to work towards closely aligning WHIN's planning and scheduling of preventing violence against women activities and events with the planning cycles of other organisations throughout the region.

The Regional Approach

The northern metropolitan region of Melbourne covers more than 1,600 square kilometres from inner city parts of Richmond to the more rural areas of the Kinglake Ranges. In between, the region contains suburbs diverse in ethnicity, socioeconomic status and infrastructure. The region contains the growth corridors of Hume and Whittlesea, both of which are 'interface councils', along with Nillumbik.

Whilst there are many benefits to a regional approach to preventing violence against women work, there are also certainly challenges and barriers to implementing and sustaining a regional Strategy. There are variations throughout the region that require flexibility and tailoring in many aspects of preventing violence against women work. These variations were explored earlier, but briefly, they include variations in:

- the levels of knowledge about violence against women and prevention work;
- the types and extent of training, professional development and community education activities that are required, and that are welcome and considered acceptable;
- geographical locations and reach of organisations;
- cultural responses to preventing violence against women work; and
- political and philosophical beliefs about gender equity, violence against women and prevention work.

One participant summed up the challenges of a regional approach when she said:

> It is difficult to build a complementary or consistent inter-agency or partnership approach to PVAW, despite the consistency provided by the Strategy. This is not a shortcoming of the Strategy, which provides a strong framework for a consistent approach that can be adapted to individual agency and community context, but perhaps a result of the diversity of needs and issues across a large region, the different stages of readiness for PVAW work, the challenges in working outside the bounds of individual agencies, and the lack of funding available to do more than 'business as usual'.

Communication

Communication between WHIN, partner organisations and other regional organisations was obviously a key component of the regional approach and a key action within the Strategy. Given the diversity throughout the region, knowing how and where to pitch communication and information

about preventing violence against women activities seems to be a major challenge. This was apparent when some participants noted the information overload in regard to preventing violence against women whilst other participants expressed difficulties in finding information about what was happening with preventing violence against women work and where it was happening. This may be a reflection of individuals' different levels of involvement preventing violence against women activities such as the Implementation Advisory Group and the Week Without Violence, or the amount of time in which people had been involved in regional prevention work.

Whilst participation in the Implementation Advisory Group, the NIFVS Strategic Network and other meetings and professional development opportunities were valued, some participants expressed a concern that there were too many meetings and they could not attend all of them. This was of particular concern for workers who were employed in part-time roles, and for workers and managers in specialist services with small workforces and where the unpredictable nature of crisis work meant that plans to attend prevention meetings sometimes had to take a back seat. One participant was quite blunt when she noted that WHIN, 'rolls out the big strategy and expects specialist organisations and direct practice organisations to be able to be involved immediately'.

Communication is an essential action within the Strategy and continuing to provide information through a variety of channels is crucial.

Communication, Advocacy and Champions Action 4: Implement multiphase communications campaigns and programs, engage champions, and undertake media advocacy to promote equity and non-violence.

Future Work and Directions: Continue to communicate and to provide information about the Strategy and associated preventing violence against women activities to partner organisations through a variety of channels throughout the region. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these communication processes and channels for partner organisations.

The ideas for future work and directions that have been highlighted in this section will now be explored further in the final section of this report: Future Work and Directions.

Future Work and Directions

Significant achievements have occurred in the first stage of the development and implementation of the regional *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*. As would be expected from an early and initial evaluation, ideas and suggestions for future work and directions have been identified. The notion of future work and directions constitutes the fifth theme from the findings. This theme is presented as a separate section in this evaluation report in order for the ideas for future work and directions to be accessed easily.

The ideas and suggestions in this section have emerged from the survey, the focus groups and interviews. They have come from participants' reflections on their experiences of preventing violence against women and implementing the Strategy, particularly where they have experienced barriers and challenges as noted in the previous section. Ideas and suggestions have also come from participants' observations about aspects of the regional Strategy that have not worked as well as they were intended. Some suggestions for future work and directions have already been made in earlier sections. They have been incorporated into the ideas presented here.

As much as possible, the ideas are presented in terms of the seven actions within the Action Plan in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*.

These ideas for future work and directions are applicable to Women's Health In the North and, in most cases and on a smaller scale, to WHIN's partner organisations in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*.

1. General Practice Principles

The ideas in this section are not necessarily new but they have emerged as important factors that need to be taken into account in any future development and implementation of preventing violence against women activities within the Strategy. Hence, they are referred to as general practice principles and they are relevant to WHIN and to individual organisations.

1.1 Recognise that the implementation of preventing violence against women stratgies and the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* is an ongoing, evolving and long-term process, which requires continual development and implementation of existing and new activities and approaches.

1.2 Continue to ensure preventing violence against women work is informed by an understanding of the factors and structural influences that contribute to the complexity of this work. A variety of activities and approaches are required within an overall regional strategy in order to engage partners at all stages of readiness.

Key concepts and approaches that will continue to be employed in informing preventing violence against women work are gender, complexity and intersectionality. Intersectionality was discussed in the Evaluation Framework. Briefly, the concept reminds us of the impacts and consequences that intersecting factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, (dis)ability, class and sexuality have on different women's experiences of violence, gender inequity and oppression.

1.3 WHIN to continue to promote the *Gender Analysis Planning and Audit Tool* and the *Preventing Violence against Women Organisational Assessment Tool* as complementary resources for organisations to use in their assessments of, and planning for, preventing violence against women work. These tools assist organisations to include the notion of 'complexity' in prevention work and how this might be understood and addressed. The tools also provide a structure and

questions that can inform organisational planning, policies, evaluation, and staff development (including reflection and learning). Promotion by WHIN will continue to occur through the Implementation Advisory Group, the NIFVS Strategic Network, other networking meetings and opportunities, and through media and publications.

1.4 Recognise that language is important. Clear and consistent shared definitions and understandings of key terms, such as violence against women, primary prevention and gender equity, are crucial. These definitions need to be profiled clearly in documentation such as plans, project outlines, and terms of reference. For example, the gender equity/equality definitions included on page 77 need to be shared and understood by all partners.

1.5 Continue to identify and address gender inequity as a critical component of preventing violence against women. WHIN and partner organisations to continue to implement actions and strategies to motivate and support organisations to introduce and use strong gender equity policies. This constitutes an area of continuing and future work within the Strategy.

1.6 Provide clarification about the importance of gender as a determinant of violence against women and what constitutes 'gender equity work' in the context of preventing violence against women. This may assist and encourage organisations' efforts to engage in this work.

Of further assistance would be the ongoing provision of current examples and information about ways to implement a range of actions focusing on gender equity. The Implementation Advisory Group is one potential venue for sharing examples given that one of its roles is to provide assistance with the recording of good practice across the region and the dissemination of this information. The NIFVS Strategic Network is another venue as one of its functions is to build and share knowledge across the breadth of stakeholders in the north about effective responses to family violence and approaches to prevention that address underlying causes. WHIN is encouraged to give consideration to other forums that may also enable organisations to feature and share their examples of successful gender equity work.

1.7 Preventing violence against women activities and approaches need to be informed by and reflect the links and interconnections between response, early intervention and prevention work. This enables a broad understanding of 'prevention' and 'primary prevention', and the ways in which prevention actions may be undertaken in relation to violence against women.

2. Partnerships and Structures

In relation to partnerships and structures, the Strategy's Action Plan states that the overall aim is to establish partnerships across government and non-government agencies as well as accountable leadership structures for sustainable prevention. Many of the ideas in this section contribute to the implementation of the Strategy region-wide and take into account some of the challenges that have been raised about taking a regional approach to preventing violence against women. Again, the ideas in this section are relevant to WHIN and, in most cases, to individual organisations too.

2.1 WHIN to clarify possible overlapping roles held by WHIN and other organisations, especially primary care partnerships. For example, there is overlap, or potential for overlap in the provision of activities such as capacity building activities, workforce development, and training. Whilst this was not considered a major problem, it was raised to ensure adequate planning and communication occurred in relation to the delivery of these activities. WHIN to consult with partner organisations to clarify planning processes and timelines.

2.2 Continue to consult with communities and organisations about the most collaborative and informative ways in which to work with, and support them, in their efforts to prevent violence against women. WHIN needs to consult with organisations, or provide informational resources, about:

- The ways in which organisations and communities that are new to preventing violence against women work can decide where to begin their work and how they undertake an assessment of their needs. The recently-revised *Preventing Violence against Women Organisational Assessment Tool* could be useful in this task.

- The ways in which organisations assign priorities in their preventing violence against women work.

- The resources that are available for organisations. Information about the ways in which WHIN and/or partner organisations support them in these processes must be available.

2.3 Continue to resource and convene the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group.

2.4 The Advisory Group to review its implementation priority areas annually to ensure the currency of work undertaken. In addition to this, a review of the role, responsibilities and processes of the Implementation Advisory Group is suggested, including:

- Review the roles, responsibilities and processes of the Advisory Group to check that they remain relevant to the work of the Advisory Group as the Strategy evolves and rolls out. In fact, such a review by WHIN with Advisory Group members was completed in October 2013 and an additional role, 'to share information and act as a community of practice', was developed. Continue to undertake annual reviews of roles, responsibilities and processes.

- Review the ways in which the provision of practical advice for implementation strategies is offered in the Advisory Group. The Terms of Reference state that one of the functions of the Advisory Group is, 'to provide input and advice on the implementation of the Strategy'. An increased focus on this role is needed in order for organisations to have clearer knowledge about a range of different methods and activities to assist them in their implementation actions.

- Undertake a further partnership evaluation of the Advisory Group to ensure the membership is representative of the organisations and communities within the region. Explore the need for developing another community of practice to ensure organisations' needs are catered for depending on where they are up to in implementing preventing violence against women actions.

- Introduce a more formalised process for information-sharing in Advisory Group meetings to be more time efficient and reduce the repetition of information.

- Ensure that regular reports from the Advisory Group continue to be provided to the Strategic Network and that strong links are facilitated and maintained by WHIN.

2.5 Undertake an evaluation of the NIFVS Strategic Network's role, purposes and functioning. The evaluation would include consideration of:

- Its role in informing prevention work;

- The provision of opportunities for specific practice-based issues in responding to violence against women to be raised and integrated into preventing violence against women planning, activities and the overall Strategy; and

- Its connection to the Implementation Advisory Group.

The Strategic Network Terms of Reference make provision for the role and effectiveness of the Network to be reviewed at least annually and on an ad-hoc basis if felt necessary by network members, or in reaction to any changes in state-wide or regional governance structures. The most recent review of the Terms of Reference and the Strategic Network's functions was undertaken in February 2013. This current suggestion of an evaluation has a particular focus on the prevention aspect of the Strategic Network's role, purposes and functioning.

2.6 WHIN must continue to remain cognisant of the differences and diversity throughout the region, and develop and implement preventing violence against women activities and actions in ways that enable consistency in approach across this diversity. Flexibility must also be enabled so that preventing violence against women is relevant and meaningful to each community and organisation.

In order to do this, WHIN needs to:

- Remain up-to-date with demographic changes throughout the region, and to become acquainted with emerging communities and their needs regarding preventing violence against women.

- Continue to engage and develop relationships with key people and groups within these communities.

- Continue to be guided by, and to report against, Action 6 in the Strategy's Action Plan: Planning, Research and Evaluation: 'Undertake research, evaluation and monitoring of policy and programs to ensure continuous improvement'.

- Continue to research new and innovative ways to prevent violence against women.

- In consultation and training, make informed decisions about where to pitch information about preventing violence against women. For example, assess the capacity of individual organisations and communities to undertake prevention work and explore how the organisations themselves assess their capacity and their needs. Explore with organisations where their prevention work can be focused, for example, at an executive level, and/or at a broad community level.

2.7 Evaluation participants stated that work with Aboriginal communities has to be a priority. Therefore, explore the ways in which preventing violence against women has been/is undertaken in and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their communities.

WHIN needs to consult with Aboriginal women and communities in order to:

- Consider the ways in which Aboriginal women, their communities and relevant organisations are/can be engaged and involved in preventing violence against women work, planning and development.

- Consider the ways in which the Strategy and the Implementation Advisory Group can guide and support this work.

- Continue to support and strengthen cross-regional links with the Aboriginal Family Violence Regional Action Group.

2.8 Evaluation participants stated that more attention to immigration and the impact on women, as well as exploration and discussion about preventing violence against women with immigrant and refugee women was required. Therefore: Explore the ways in which preventing violence against women has been/is undertaken with women with immigrant and refugee backgrounds.

WHIN needs to consult with immigrant and refugee women in order to:

- Consider the ways in which immigrant and refugee women, their communities and relevant organisations are/can be engaged and involved in preventing violence against women work, planning and development.

- Consider the ways in which the Strategy and the Implementation Advisory Group can guide and support this work.

2.9 Evaluation participants stated that more attention needed to be given to involving women with disabilities in preventing violence against women. Therefore, explore the ways in which preventing violence against women work has been/is undertaken with women with disabilities.

WHIN needs to consult with women with disabilities and relevant organisations in order to:

- Consider the ways in which women with disabilities and relevant organisations are/can be engaged and involved in preventing violence against women work, planning and development.

- Consider the ways in which the Strategy and the Implementation Advisory Group can guide and support this work.

2.10 WHIN to investigate the role that an organisation that works with men on preventing violence against women, such as 'No To Violence', may have in feeding into the regional preventing violence against women work. Consider what scope there is for them to be represented on the Implementation Advisory Group and what their role could be.

2.11 Discussion about the role of men in regional preventing violence against women work needs to be regularly scheduled within the Implementation Advisory Group.

3. Planning, Research and Evaluation

The aims of these Actions within the Strategy's Action Plan are to undertake research, evaluation and monitoring of policy and programs to ensure continuous improvement. The ideas in this section are relevant to WHIN and, in some cases, to individual organisations.

The overall future direction for this topic is to, 'Participate in, and contribute to, research that builds the evidence base for prevention of violence against women initiatives'.

In order to work towards this action, WHIN needs to:

3.1 Continue to emphasise the role and value of evaluation in the Strategy. Prevention can be hard to quantify, to monitor and to evaluate. In addition, evaluation can easily be overlooked in the enthusiasm of facilitating and implementing activities and projects. However, as documented in the Evaluation Framework for this project, there are many reasons for evaluating preventing violence against women work, not the least of which is the limited research and evidence base to date. Evaluating, recording, publishing, and/or documenting activities as they happen provide organisations with evidence and resources required for funding and accountability. Likewise, if opportunities arise for media coverage or other demonstrations of preventing violence against women work, organisations have relevant material ready to go.

3.2 Source and provide training and professional development in relation to evaluation methods and processes for organisations.

3.3 Develop a portfolio, or archive, of evaluations that have been undertaken by organisations in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne in relation to their preventing violence against women activities and/or in identifying what contributes to changes in behaviours and attitudes towards violence against women over time. Currently, Implementation Advisory Group members share examples of their work, including evaluations, with each other on an ad-hoc basis. To build on

this, an archive might be developed as a database of links to organisations' websites, for example, or a collection of evaluation projects documented in a format similar to the *Achievements and Commitments Report* developed by WHIN in May 2013 to mark 'The North Commits to Building a Respectful Community' event.

3.4 Monitor and evaluate the impacts of signing and committing to the Strategy at the 'The North Commits to Building a Respectful Community' event. The evaluative comments provided in the May 2013 meeting of the Implementation Advisory Group could be used by the respective organisations as a basis on which to assess impacts and developments within their organisations. These organisations might provide six-monthly reports to the Advisory Group about impacts and changes. This reporting can be built into organisations' own evaluation projects.

3.5 Provide clear processes and opportunities for organisations to provide feedback about the Strategy, its effectiveness and the relevance of specific preventing violence against women activities. In turn, processes need to be in place for WHIN to inform organisations about whether feedback was taken into account and how feedback has been employed to bring about changes and developments in the Strategy. The inclusion of feedback can be incorporated into review processes undertaken by the Implementation Advisory Group when members document and evaluate regional activities. Reports from the Implementation Advisory Group to regional forums would enable the two-way process of giving and receiving feedback.

3.6 Update the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* using outcomes and information gained from Phase 1 of the evaluation.

4. Communications, Advocacy and Champions

In relation to communications, advocacy and champions, the Strategy's Action Plan states that the overall aim is to implement multiphase communications campaigns and programs, engage champions, and undertake media advocacy to promote equity and non-violence. The following suggestions generally apply to WHIN.

4.1 WHIN is encouraged to continue to develop its social media profile. WHIN's use of various traditional and social media in preventing violence against women is a relatively new action with Facebook and Twitter usage starting in 2010. It was recognised as having much potential to increase the profile of preventing violence against women and the Strategy, and to reach a wide range and number of individuals, communities and organisations. Use of social media provides an accessible platform for regional coverage and information-provision.

4.2 Promote prevention of violence against women activities in the mainstream media and organisational publications, and recognise the importance of media in transmitting key messages.

4.3 Monitor mainstream media and social media reporting of violence against women in order to encourage the media to be accurate and evidence based.

4.4 Continue to communicate, and to provide information about the Strategy and associated preventing violence against women activities to partner organisations through a variety of channels throughout the region. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these communication processes and channels for partner organisations.

4.5 For some staff involved in preventing violence against women work, particularly those in part-time positions, the amount of correspondence and information about violence against women is increasingly difficult to manage. Currently, the Municipal Association of Victoria produces a

fortnightly email bulletin of collated links to information from local, state and national preventing violence against women bodies and organisations. Other monthly email updates, similar to this are available, including one from the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria. This year, WHIN started the quarterly *Preventing Violence against Women in the North – Executive Update* that focuses on the northern metropolitan region. WHIN needs to continue to monitor and evaluate the most ordered and efficient ways in which information about preventing violence against women can be collated or communicated. One way of doing this might be facilitating an annual web-based survey with partner organisations to explore where information is sourced, what is most useful/helpful, and any suggestions for changes.

5. Capacity and Tools

In relation to capacity and tools, the Strategy's Action Plan states that the overall aim is to build capacity and tools for organisational change and workforce development. The following suggestions have relevance for WHIN and partner organisations.

5.1 Undertake a review and further development of actions within the professional development and workforce development areas. WHIN needs to consult with partner organisations about what constitutes workforce development and what additional training and professional development may be beneficial for staff involved in preventing violence against women. New knowledge about skills and attributes required for preventing violence against women can be integrated into position descriptions. Information about professional development needs can be communicated to partner and other organisations which can then actively support preventing violence against women staff in their roles. Professional and workforce development in relation to prevention work may be able to be aligned with the NIFVS Strategic Network's 'comprehensive workforce training and development' work.

5.2 Provide ongoing professional development and practical advice for the organisational implementation of preventing violence against women strategies and action plans. This suggestion is linked with point 2.4. It is presented here in order for consideration to be given to the provision of information about implementation for those organisations that do not belong to, or do not attend, the Implementation Advisory Group.

5.3 Ensure opportunities for review, reflection and learning are provided for staff involved in preventing violence against women. Build these opportunities into the Strategy's activities and approaches, into organisational action plans, and into terms of reference for the Implementation Advisory Group and the NIFVS Strategic Network.

5.4 Continue to provide opportunities for staff across all organisational levels to participate in primary prevention and gender analysis training. WHIN to continue to develop and deliver training and professional development to partner organisations.

5.5 Develop more resources and materials in languages other than English. The 'Help Cards' were cited as an excellent example of how a resource can be developed to meet the diversity of needs throughout the northern region.

5.6 WHIN to investigate the Industry Advisor model (used in the Department of Health), and its possible applications to the northern metropolitan region, preventing violence against women work and the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community: Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*.

5.7 WHIN to seek funding from local government to create a regional local government preventing violence against women advisor position at WHIN.

6. Embedding Gender Equity and Preventing Violence against Women into Organisations

In relation to embedding gender equity and the prevention of violence against women work into organisations, the Strategy's Action Plan states that the overall aim is to improve policy, regulation and legislation to embed prevention of violence and gender equity. The following suggestions are relevant to WHIN and to partner organisations.

6.1 WHIN and partner organisations to continue to be informed by a whole-of-organisation approach when further developing, implementing and embedding the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*. A whole-of-organisation approach is a key component of embedding the prevention of violence against women. Whole-of-organisation approaches require organisations to 'walk the talk', and embed the principles of respectful, non-violent relationships and gender equity within internal and external plans, policies, services and programs, and build organisational capacity for preventing violence against women. This means that everyone within an organisation needs to participate in, and to take responsibility for, implementing preventing violence against women and gender equity plans and actions. At the same time, however, flexibility is needed within a whole-of-organisation approach to reflect different levels of knowledge and experience. For example, training about preventing violence against women might well be different for different groups, but everyone needs to be trained.

6.2 WHIN to continue to work towards closely aligning its planning and scheduling of preventing violence against women activities and events with the planning cycles of other organisations throughout the region. This has relevance with Action 7.2 within the Strategy: 'Alignment of organisational and operational policies and plans with *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*'.

6.3 WHIN needs to be more 'council savvy' – that is, more aware of local government timelines, schedules and demands, and to develop resources that assist councils in developing health plans with a preventing violence against women focus. WHIN needs to investigate the possibility of strategic planning for prevention work to be done on a four-year timeline.

Concluding Remarks

This evaluation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* is a substantial contribution to the evidence base of what constitutes effective preventing violence against women work. The two evaluation questions that guided this evaluation were:

1. In what ways have the different approaches and activities employed in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* achieved their aims?

2. How successful is a regional approach to a preventing violence against women strategy where regional partners are included in the activities? In what ways is it successful?

Of particular note was the Strategy's focus on a regional approach, the building of partnerships, the leadership of a regional feminist-informed women's health organisation and attention to meeting the diversity of needs throughout the region. The acknowledgement of the complexity of preventing violence against women was a defining feature of the Strategy; the complexity provided challenges but ensured the development and implementation of well-considered and sound approaches and activities.

Embedding preventing violence against women as core business within a whole-of-organisation approach is a continuing emphasis of the Strategy. WHIN will use the evaluation findings and ideas for future work to build on, inform and influence current practice in the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*, and the direction and practices of the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group. The evaluation may lead to changes in direction of strategies or actions.

It is anticipated that the findings of this evaluation may potentially be built into strategic plans, health plans, work plans or policies of WHIN or regional partner organisations, and that the evaluation will assist in the alignment of organisational plans across the region. The evaluation outcomes may also be used to inform prevention work in other regions.

There is also scope for the development of:

- practice principles;
- benchmarks; and
- other organisations' own evaluation strategies.

Many insights are gained and knowledge is expanded whenever research is undertaken. In this evaluation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy* insights and knowledge have been gained in relation to the content of the evaluation as well as the processes involved in planning, undertaking and writing up the evaluation. The importance of a strong, knowledgeable and respected regional lead organisation to take responsibility for coordinating a preventing violence against women strategy has clearly been identified. Another notable finding was the importance of recognising diversity across a region and the impact of this on undertaking a regional approach. Just as the value of partnerships amongst organisations in implementing a regional preventing violence against women strategy was highlighted, so too was the value of partnerships between all parties to the evaluation.

Key strengths in this evaluation process have been the collaborative working relationships between WHIN, partner organisations and the evaluator and their shared understandings of the nature and aims of preventing violence against women work. This evaluation – the framework and the report – represent the development of a significant resource for the region and for informing preventing violence against women work. Some of the limitations have included the difficulties in involving large

numbers of participants in evaluation activities and ensuring that the evaluation outcomes are as representative as possible. A major learning for WHIN and the external evaluator (GLASS) was the importance of developing clear and answerable evaluation questions.

Next Steps

The above section has provided a brief summary of the strengths and limitations of this evaluation project and the evaluation processes. A further document with a more detailed analysis and description of the strengths and limitations will now be developed. It is intended that this reflection paper, *Evaluation of the Northern Metropolitan Region Preventing Violence against Women Strategy: Insights and Reflections on the Evaluation Process*, will be available in early 2014 and that it will be a supplement to this overall evaluation report.

A Dissemination Plan will also be developed, to guide the dissemination of findings through seminars, conferences, journal articles, social media and other avenues.

The ideas for further work that have been presented in this evaluation report will be assessed and further developed by WHIN in early 2014, in consultation with the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group. This will result in the development of an Evaluation Implementation Plan.

WHIN will continue to monitor and evaluate activities and processes in the implementation of the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy*, building towards a final evaluation in 2016/2017.

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Appendix 1: Survey Questions

SURVEY SECTION 1 – ALL RESPONDENTS

1. Your organisation

2. Male/female/prefer not to answer

3. On the following scale, where would you rate your knowledge of violence against women? Scale from: 0 'very little' to 10 'thoroughly informed'.

4. Please list all the forms of violence against women that you are aware of.

5. How serious do you think the following actions/behaviours are? (Scale from: not at all serious to very dangerous)

   o Hitting a partner because they are nagging, annoying, won't leave you alone
   o Having sex with a partner even when they have said No
   o Ringing or texting a partner every couple of hours to see what they are doing, where they are
   o Holding sole access to finances and providing a partner a limited amount of money to do the grocery shopping
   o Making jokes about a partner's appearance or abilities in front of other people, especially mates
   o Acting in a way, physically or emotionally, to cause fear or harm to a partner
   o Threatening a partner; eg. to 'get rid' of a pet or to hurt a family member knowing this will frighten and control a partner
   o Posting private and/or embarrassing pictures of a partner on the web

6. In your opinion, who commits domestic violence? 'Only men', 'mainly men', 'men and women the same', 'mainly women', 'only women', 'don't know'.

7. How common do you think violence against women is? Scale from 0 'rarely occurs' to 10 'happens everywhere, all the time'. Also include space for any additional comments for this question.

8. What do you think is the main cause of violence against women?

9. If someone told you they were experiencing violence from someone close to them, what would you do?

10. The term 'gender equity' is often used when talking about preventing violence against women work. What does the term 'gender equity' mean to you?

11. If you heard a sexist comment or joke about women at work, what would you do? Choices: 'It wouldn't worry me', 'I would feel a bit uncomfortable but I wouldn't feel I needed to do anything about it', 'I would say something to show it wasn't acceptable', 'not sure'.

12. What could your organisation or specific work area do to prevent violence against women and to support and increase gender equity – either in your workplace or in the community? Choose all that apply: 'Nothing', 'Research', 'Community education', 'Community program', 'Advocacy', 'Changes to workplace practice and policy', 'Model gender equity in day-to-day work and activities', 'Risk identification and referral', 'Audit services and facilities to ensure we are safe, accessible and welcoming of women', 'Promote gender equity', 'Don't know', 'Other'.

13. What would assist you to consider participating in preventing violence against women and gender equity work in your organisation? Choose all that apply: 'Not interested', 'Informative resources', 'Professional development or training', 'Support from management', 'Working group or network', 'Other'.

14. End of Section 1.

SURVEY SECTION 2 - QUESTIONS FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THEIR WORK

15. To what extent do you use and/or consult the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence Against Women: A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016'* in your work? Scale: 'We haven't used it yet', 'Occasionally', 'Quite often', 'It frequently informs and guides our work'.

16. How have you or your organisation used the Strategy? Choose all that apply: 'Have not used it', 'Referred to the background section to increase own understanding', 'Used Strategy to inform other major organisational policies/strategies', 'Used Action Plan to develop organisational action plan', 'Used Strategy as internal advocacy tool', 'Used Strategy with community working group or network', 'Other'.

17. How important do you think it is to have a regional approach to preventing violence against women? Scale: 'Not important', 'Somewhat important', 'Important', 'Very important'.

18. How helpful do you think the regional approach has been to your work? Scale: 1 'Not at all helpful' to 10 'Extremely helpful'.

19. What aspects of the regional approach have been most helpful in your work? Choose all that apply: 'Implementation Advisory Group', 'Support from WHIN', 'Action Plan in the Strategy', 'Conceptual framework in the Strategy', 'Professional development events', 'Using the Strategy as an advocacy tool', 'Presentations from WHIN', 'Other'.

20. What changes, developments and improvements in preventing violence against women activities in the region have you noticed since the regional preventing violence against women strategy was introduced?

21. How do you find out about the preventing violence against women work that is occurring in the region?

22. In your opinion, what aspects of the strategy or regional approach have not worked so well?

23. Can you think of any additional and/or alternative approaches to the current preventing violence against women strategy?

24. Across the northern metropolitan region, which organisations should have responsibility for planning and implementing preventing violence against women work? Choose all that apply: 'State Government', 'Local Government', 'Primary Care Partnerships', 'Women's Health Service', 'Community Health Services', 'Family violence services', 'Other'.

25. Is WHIN the best-placed organisation to be leading preventing violence against women work in the northern metropolitan region? 'Yes/No'. Please expand on your answer.

26. Do you have any other comments?

27. End of Section 2.

Appendix 2: Focus Group and Interview Questions

1. How would you describe preventing violence against women work?

2. How do you think communities can bring about cultural change regarding violence against women?

3. The term 'gender equity' is often used when talking about preventing violence against women work. What does the term 'gender equity' mean to you?

4. In what ways does your organisation model and/or demonstrate gender equity in day-to-day work and activities?

5. To what extent do you use and/or consult the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence Against Women: A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016* in your work?

6. How familiar is your organisation with the Action Plan in the Strategy?

7. To what extent has your organisation integrated the Strategy with other major strategic directions of the organisation?

8. What role do you think local government has in the prevention of violence against women?

9. What role do you think regional family violence networks have in the prevention of violence against women?

10. What role do you think health organisations such as community health and primary care partnerships have to play in the prevention of violence against women?

11. How important has WHIN's role been in implementing a regional approach? What has been most helpful? How has WHIN supported you/your organisations?

12. What has been the most significant regional preventing violence against women activity in the last 12 months?

13. How do you find out about what preventing violence against women work is happening in the region?

14. Have specific goals, roles and responsibilities been developed for the Building a Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group/Northern Integrated Family Violence Services Strategic Network? To what extent do they guide the work that is undertaken in the Advisory Group/Strategic Network?

15. In what ways do you think the Advisory Group/Strategic Network has been able to support and resource the work within the preventing violence against women strategy?

16. In what ways does the Advisory Group/Strategic Network monitor and evaluate the regional Strategy?

17. What, if any, barriers do you see affecting the roles of the Advisory Group/Strategic Network in supporting and resourcing the work in the preventing violence against women strategy?

18. What ideas do you have for the role of the Advisory Group/Strategic Network in the preventing violence against women strategy in the next 12 months-2 years?

19. How effective do you think the regional approach is in undertaking preventing violence against women work? And what aspects are the most effective/helpful? For example, what is to be gained by organisations working together in a coordinated manner, rather than on an individual basis, in preventing violence against women work?

20. What changes, developments and improvements in preventing violence against women activities in the region have you noticed since the regional strategy was introduced?

21. In your opinion, what aspects of the Strategy or regional approach have not worked so well?

22. Can you think of any additional and/or alternative approaches to the current preventing violence against women strategy?

23. Do you have any other comments?

Appendix 3: Assessment of Progress against the Action Plan, November 2013

Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women – A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016

Introduction

The following table assesses the progress made against primary prevention actions identified in the *Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women Strategy.* Women's Health In the North (WHIN), who developed and is leading implementation of the Strategy, has completed this assessment. However, as most actions relate to organisations across the region, it is difficult to comprehensively assess progress against each action. This will be done in greater depth in 2016/2017. It is also worth noting that the actions identified in the strategy are 'suggested actions' that organisations can choose to undertake, and while 50 partner organisations have committed to the vision and goals of the strategy, the level of commitment to these actions varies. Despite this, this assessment shows strong progress in many areas.

Key

■ (dark blue)	Achieved (this may include some actions that have been achieved but are ongoing)
■ (blue)	Strong progress
■ (light blue)	Some progress – attention needed
■ (grey)	Not actioned

1. PARTNERSHIPS AND STRUCTURES

Establish partnerships across government and non-government agencies as well as accountable leadership structures for sustainable prevention

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013 – WHIN
1.1 Endorse and support WHIN's *Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women, A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region Of Melbourne.*	Western region organisations' endorsement of Preventing Violence Together, the Western Region Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women; the Knox Accord; Inner East PCP-funded Prevention of Violence against Women position; and 'The Preventing Violence against Women in Our Community' project with nine local councils involved.	• WHIN; • local government; • community health services; • PCPs; • the NIFVS Strategic Network; and • partner organisations.	Formalised endorsement process and sign on by the relevant partners.	Achieved. 50 organisations endorsed the Strategy and committed to its vision and goals on 6 May 2013. Includes all 7 local governments, 9 community health services, 3 PCPs, and about 30 of the NIFVS Strategic Network member organisations.

1.2 Establish a Building A Respectful Community Advisory Group. The Advisory Group will comprise WHIN, representatives of the three regional PCPs, local government, and the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Northern metropolitan region local government PVAW Network; and the western region Preventing Violence Together steering group.	• WHIN; • local government; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Quarterly meetings. Members will monitor the implementation of Building A Respectful Community; develop project ideas; pursue funding; and disseminate information.	Achieved (ongoing). Advisory Group has met quarterly through 2012 and 2013, with strong attendance from all sectors. (impact being assessed through GLASS evaluation)
1.3 Ongoing involvement in, and support of, regional and local PVAW networks, including local family violence networks.	NMR local family violence networks; and regular network convenor meetings.	• WHIN; • Northern Region Local Networks Convenors' group; • local family violence networks; • local government; and • PCPs.	The local networks are well attended, convened and supported. WHIN convenes regional network convenors meetings.	Some progress - attention needed. Networks are well-attended in Darebin, Whittlesea, Hume, Sunbury, Yarra and Moreland. The Banyule/Nillumbik network is currently not meeting. WHIN's NIFVS Coordination Team continues to support and resource the networks (with a focus on Week Without Violence), attending intermittently to provide updates and share information. WHIN convened two convenors meetings in 2012 and one in 2013. The role and best use of this meeting is currently being revised.
1.4 Support and strengthen cross-regional links with the NIFVS Strategic Network .	NIFVS Strategic Network, established in 2008, meets quarterly and is consistently attended by a wide range of sector partner organisations.	• WHIN; • NIFVS Strategic Network; and • regional representatives.	WHIN convenes and offers executive support to the Strategic Network and ensures wide regional representation. The Strategic Network continues to be well attended, representative of the broad sector, and has PVAW as a priority.	Achieved (ongoing). WHIN continues to provide executive and administrative support to the NIFVS Strategic Network, and the new Action Plan 2013-2017 includes 'prevention' as one of 5 priorities.
1.5 Support and strengthen cross-regional links with the Aboriginal Family Violence Regional Action Group (AFVRAG).	Action Group meets regularly. WHIN and the NIFVS Strategic Network are represented by the Regional Integration Coordinator. Chair of AFVRAG is a member of the Strategic Network.	• WHIN; • AFVRAG; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Attendance at the AFVRAG, regular reports to the NIFVS Strategic Network and Regional PVAW Reference Group.	Some progress – attention needed. The AFVRAG was invited to join the Building A Respectful Community Implementation Advisory Group but did not take this up. The Advisory Group & WHIN Health Promotion Team has focussed on building a relationship with the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Vic. (recent progress on this).
1.6 Support prevention projects and campaigns which engage diverse communities including people with a disability, Aboriginal communities and young people.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; and the White Ribbon and Week Without Violence campaigns.	• WHIN; • PCPs; • local government; • community health services; and • local family violence networks.	Organisations across the region have organisational and operational plans that address violence against women and gender inequities, and allocate resources to prevention projects and campaigns.	Some progress – attention needed. Support has been provided to various PVAW projects that work with diverse communities, such as advocacy, inclusion in the Advisory Group, highlighting the projects in publications, and providing advice/expertise. Funding has also been sought

				(unsuccessfully). More work is needed to provide a higher level of support.

2. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP
Strengthen community leadership to drive change

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013 – WHIN
2.1 Provide and support opportunities for women in the community to take a leadership role in PVAW work.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; Week Without Violence Campaign; and the Darebin City Council/ WHIN partnership providing leadership training at the East Reservoir Neighbourhood Renewal project.	• WHIN; • local government; and • PCPs.	Provision of opportunities for women to develop and enhance their leadership skills, reduce social isolation and improve community connections.	Some progress – attention needed. WHIN has developed and trialled a leadership course for women (with Darebin Council), but this is not specific to PVAW. WHIN encourages participation of women in campaigns through social media and through Week Without Violence activities. There is potential to develop this action further, through direct WHIN programs, or through supporting other PVAW leadership projects (e.g. Good People Act Now – Banksia Gardens Community Centre; Living In Harmony – North Yarra Community Health)
2.2 Develop strategies and campaigns that promote full and active participation in community life to women from diverse backgrounds.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; Week Without Violence Campaign; and WHIN's Refugee Dialogues, June 2011.	• WHIN; • local government; and • PCPs.	Provision of opportunities for women to develop and enhance their leadership skills, reduce social isolation and improve community connections.	Some progress – attention needed. Much of WHIN's work is directed at this level, e.g. the delivery of Financial Literacy Workshops for women, with a focus on refugee and immigrant women.
2.3 Develop regional and organisational Prevention of Violence Against Women/Family Violence policies.	Moreland City Council's Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2011-2015; Darebin City Council's White Ribbon Action Plan; and Family Violence Policy and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan.	• Local government; • community health services; and • PCPs.	Policies are reviewed and evaluated in line with strategies identified in VicHealth's *Preventing Violence before it Occurs: A Framework and Background Paper to Guide the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women in Victoria, 2007*.	Some progress – attention needed. Organisations with stand-alone PVAW Action Plans: Darebin Council Moreland Council Banyule Council Whittlesea Council (Framework in development) Darebin Community Health
2.4 Support and actively engage women and the broader community in PVAW involvement in the Week without Violence Campaign including the Clothesline Project.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; and previous successful regional projects.	• WHIN; • Northern Region Local Networks Convenors' group; • local family violence networks; • local government; and • PCPs.	WHIN will support and provide leadership to the campaign. All northern region councils participating in the Week Without Violence campaign including the Clothesline Project. Formal evaluation of Week Without Violence conducted.	Achieved (ongoing). Thousands of women engaged through the social media campaigns run by WHIN in 2012 and 2013. Hundreds of women engaged in events or activities held by partner organisations

				across the region in 2012 and 2013.
2.5 Develop a whole-of-organisation approach to, and actively support and engage in, White Ribbon campaign activities.	City of Darebin and City of Maribyrnong White Ribbon Action Teams comprising male representatives from each council department; and successful Northern White Ribbon Leaders' lunches held since 2008.	• Local government; • community health services; and • WHIN.	All northern councils establish and resource White Ribbon Action Teams and are actively involved in the planning, attending and evaluating Northern White Ribbon Leaders' Lunches.	Strong progress. Six of the seven northern metropolitan region councils have active, cross-organisational White Ribbon or PVAW working groups. Three of the nine northern region community health services have active, cross-organisational PVAW working groups. The White Ribbon Leaders Lunch was held annually 2009-2012. It was not held in 2013 because it was deemed to have 'run its course' in its current format. Other regional events are being considered for the future.

3. CAPACITY AND TOOLS
Build capacity and tools for organisational change and workforce development

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
3.1 Deliver and facilitate PVAW and gender analysis training modules utilising relevant resources and tools.	Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women; WHIN Gender Analysis Training and Tools; WHIN's Women in Melbourne's North: A Data Book for Program and Service Planning in Health; Love Control DVD and resource notes; VicHealth's short course for preventing violence against women; and Women's Health Victoria's Applied Gender Analysis workshop.	• WHIN; and • VicHealth.	Training courses delivered and attended by northern organisations' staff.	Achieved (ongoing). WHIN has delivered two gender analysis training sessions to individual organisations and one gender analysis regional workshop. WHIN has also delivered two regional practice forums on whole-of-organisation approaches to PVAW, and three workshops to individual organisations. Further gender analysis training is scheduled to be delivered in 2014.
3.2 Provide opportunities for staff across all organisational levels to participate in primary PVAW and gender analysis training.	Attendance of council officers at VicHealth training from the Cities of Moreland, Whittlesea and Darebin.	• Local government; • community health services; and • PCPs.	Increased skills in planning, implementing and evaluating primary prevention initiatives; and the ability to apply a gender analysis to planning and program development.	Some progress – attention needed. Large numbers of council and community health staff in the region have undertaken training in gender analysis or PVAW – exact numbers are difficult to collate. However, training needs to be embedded in annual training calendars and inclusive of staff across all areas of organisations, especially at management and executive level.

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
3.3 Develop and disseminate resources to support the prevention of violence against women.	Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women; WHIN Gender Analysis training and tools; WHIN's Women in Melbourne's North: A Data Book for Program and Service Planning in Health; Love Control DVD and resource notes; VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; and Week Without Violence resources.	• Local government.	Increased accessibility and safety of council facilities, and increased involvement of women in the community in the planning of buildings and public spaces.	Achieved (ongoing). WHIN has developed a range of resources and publications, including: VAW Fact Sheets Achievements & Commitments Report PVAW Mapping Report BRC banner replicas Program Logic Organisational Audit Tool WWV Campaign Toolkit 16 Days Campaign Toolkit Other organisations have also produced their own resources.

4. COMMUNICATIONS, ADVOCACY AND CHAMPIONS

Implement multiphase communications campaigns and programs, engage champions, and undertake media advocacy to promote equity and non-violence

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
4.1 Support community leaders to become ambassadors/champions for the prevention of violence against women.	White Ribbon Campaign; Week Without Violence Campaign; and VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Increased communication in the community about respectful and equitable gender relations and the prevention of violence against women.	Some progress – attention needed. WHIN has not focussed on this action. However, some partner organisations have encouraged community ambassadors or mentors.
4.2 Promote prevention of violence against women activities in the mainstream media and organisational publications, and recognising the importance of media in transmitting key messages.	Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS) Advocate Program; WHIN media and family violence workshop; EVA Awards; WHIN's use of social media; and VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Increased references in the media and organisational publications to respectful and equitable gender relations and the prevention of violence against women.	Achieved (ongoing). WHIN has run significant social media campaigns, and had a large number of local newspaper articles published about VAW. Other organisations have achieved similar results. This area is a focus for the NEPCP and HWPCP over 2013-2017.
4.3 Monitor mainstream media and social media reporting of violence against women in order to encourage the media to be accurate and evidence based.	Women's Health Services media monitoring; Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic) advocacy; media monitoring; and EVA Awards.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Continuation of WHIN's role to promote gender equity and combat gender stereotypes in daily social media communications and monitor mainstream media.	Some progress – attention needed. WHIN conducts some media monitoring but not comprehensively. WHIN responds to irresponsible/inaccurate articles in local newspapers when they arise. Whittlesea Council has been particularly vigilant with this.

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
4.4 Support individuals and organisations to champion and promote regional prevention of violence against women activities.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; Darebin, Banyule and Nillumbik's White Ribbon Action Group; Week Without Violence activities; the Living in Harmony project based in the City of Yarra; and the Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Increased involvement in community activities which focus on respectful and equitable gender relations and the prevention of violence against women.	Some progress – attention needed. WHIN provides support and advice to individuals at regional partner organisations, and helps to promote the work of organisations across the northern region, e.g. the new *Preventing Violence against Women in the North – Executive Update*.
4.5 Support the development of the next iteration of the northern region Family Violence Help Cards, including their translations into community languages.	Family Violence Help Cards evaluation.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Women and men have greater access to family violence information and support.	Achieved. Evaluation of the Help Cards has been completed and recommendations are being implemented, including an update and reprint of English and translated cards. New languages and formats are also being investigated.
4.6 Advocate to government for more resources and information to PVAW in languages other than English.	Family Violence Help Cards distribution, evaluation will inform future language requirements	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Funding for the further development and reprinting of Family Violence Help Cards in relevant community languages.	Some progress – attention needed. Family Violence Help Cards are being updated and reprinted in 12 community languages, and new languages investigated. Action needs to be taken to advocate to government or seek funding for further translated resources focussed on prevention.

5. SKILLS, ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL NORMS

Develop and strengthen systems and programs that build respectful relationships skills and influence social norms, attitudes and behaviours

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
5.1 Create gender equitable sporting facilities and clubs through strategies that promote the active engagement of women and girls.	City of Moreland's Active Women and Girls in Moreland Strategy and Allocation of Sporting Grounds and Pavilions Policy; the AFL Victoria's Fair Game Respect Matters Program; and VicHealth's Everyone Wins.	• Local government.	Increased accessibility to, membership and involvement with, sporting clubs and facilities by women and girls.	Strong progress. Moreland, Darebin and Whittlesea councils are taking significant action regarding sports clubs and facilities. Yarra and Hume have this in their MPHWP actions. City of Whittlesea, Northern Melbourne Medicare Local and HWPCP are working on a PVAW/gender equity project with sports clubs in Whittlesea and Hume.
5.2 Recognition of PVAW as the core business of local government and health services.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; WHIN's whole-of-agency responses to PVAW workshops.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and	Wide spread regional implementation of whole-of-organisation responses to violence against women.	Strong progress. PVAW is included in all seven council's MPHWPs, all three PCP's IHP Plans, and in five-seven of the community health IHP

				Plans (TBC pending final plans).
5.3 Develop programs that explore and promote positive masculinities and improve family and gender relations.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; and the City of Whitehorse's Baby Makes Three program.	• local government; • PCPs; and • community health services.	Delivery of programs throughout the region.	Some progress – attention needed. DOJ project with Whittlesea MCH will develop images of positive fathering. Number of respectful relationships programs in schools is growing: e.g. Dianella Community Health's new program at Mount Ridley SC; SAPPSS program is expanding its reach.
5.4 Include questions on attitudes to violence against women and gender equity in community indicators surveys and other organisational surveys.	City of Maribyrnong Respect and Equity project; and VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs.	• local government; • PCPs; and • community health services.	Community attitude surveys, including questions about violence against women conducted in all seven LGAs.	Some progress – attention needed. two-three councils do this. But this is a difficult area to influence. NEPCP will be working on this with Darebin, Banyule and Nillumbik councils.
5.5 Design and conduct a voluntary staff survey on attitudes to violence against women and gender equity.	City of Maribyrnong's Respect and Equity project; and VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs.	• local government; • PCPs; and • community health services.	Surveys conducted, potentially to be used as a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of training and attitudinal change initiatives.	Achieved. Workplace survey conducted with councils and community health services (GLASS project), with more than 600 responses. Report available Dec 2013. To be repeated in 2016/2017.

6. PLANNING, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
Undertake research, evaluation and monitoring of policy and programs to ensure continuous improvement

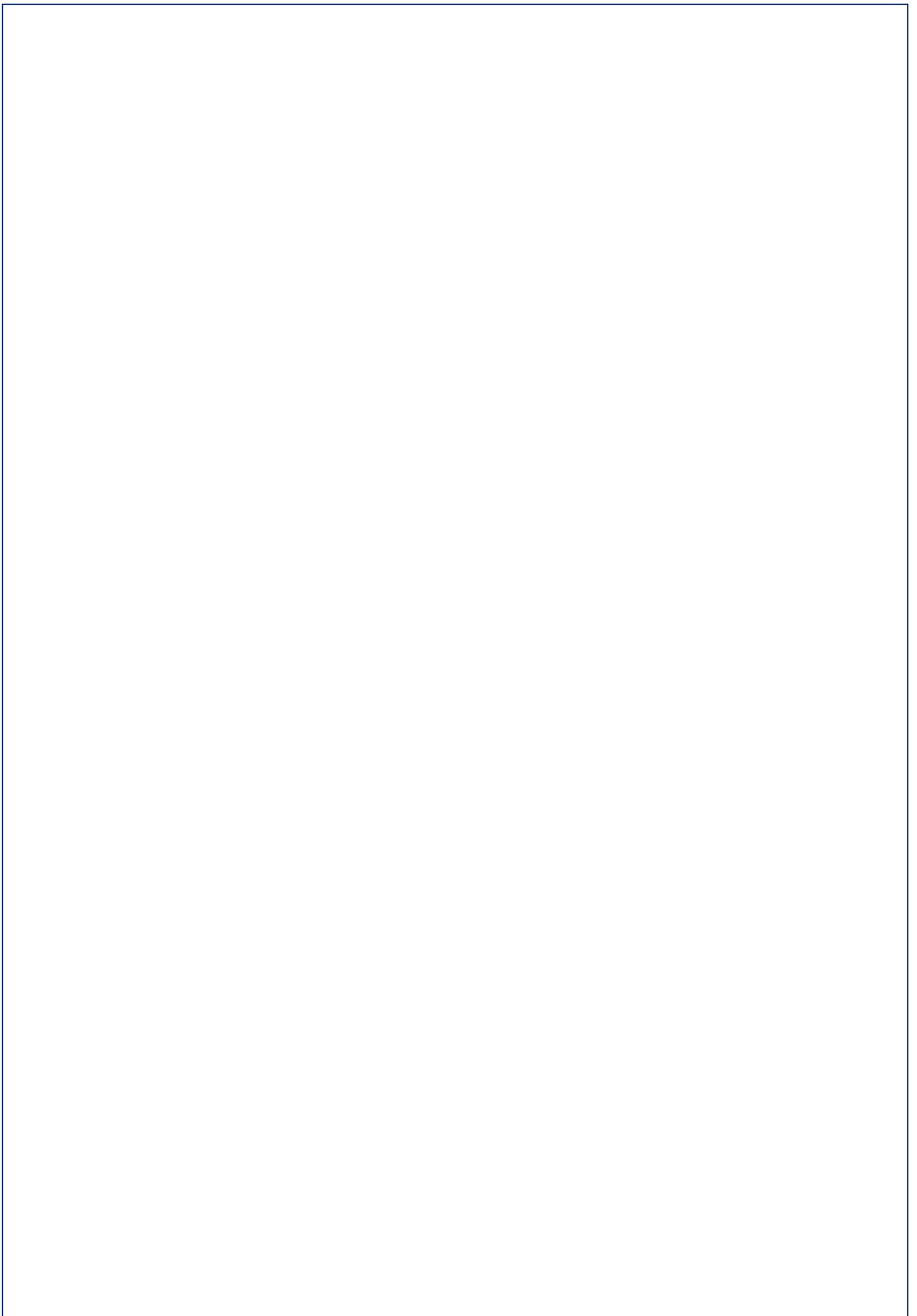| ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
6.1 Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women, A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region Of Melbourne.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs and short course for preventing violence against women; and WHIN's Population Health Program Logic model.	• WHIN; and • the 'Building A Respectful Community' Advisory Group	Advisory Group meets regularly to document and evaluate regional activities; it reports to regional forums.	Achieved (ongoing). Evaluation is a standing agenda item for the Advisory Group meetings. The major evaluation with GLASS has been completed and Report will be launched in Dec 2013. WHIN has ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities in place.
6.2 Utilise evaluation findings from 'Building a Respectful Community' in future program development.	VicHealth's ongoing evaluation of statewide prevention of violence against women projects; and WHIN's Love Control evaluation.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Implementation of evidence-based violence prevention activities.	To be actioned in 2014. A major evaluation (GLASS project) has been completed, with the report to be launched Dec 2013. The findings and future directions identified in this Report will be used in implementation of the Strategy and other activities.

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
6.3 Participate in, and contribute to, research that builds the evidence base for prevention of violence against women initiatives.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs and ongoing evaluation of statewide PVAW projects.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Improved evaluation.	Achieved (ongoing). A major evaluation (GLASS project) has been completed, with the report to be launched Dec 2013. Other VAW research continues to be conducted by WHIN.
6.4 Apply gender analysis to planning and research using sex-disaggregated data.	Sex-disaggregated data provided in WHIN's Women in Melbourne's North: A Data Book for Program and Service Planning in Health; and WHIN's Gender Analysis Training Tools.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Application of gender analysis in the development of prevention activities.	Some progress – attention needed. Several councils are now starting to implement sex-disaggregated data collection and there is increased awareness and discussion among community health. Three councils have gender equity strategies and/or organisational working groups tasked with implementing gender analysis and equity strategies. WHIN has delivered a regional gender analysis forum and training to two organisations.

7. EMBEDDING
Improve policy, regulation and legislation to embed prevention of violence and gender equity

ACTION	EXISTING EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE	KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PROGRESS AT NOVEMBER 2013
7.1 Advocate to, and partner with, all levels of government to inform and influence policy and program planning that addresses violence against women, gender inequities, and which recognises Human Rights obligations.	VicHealth's Preventing Violence Before it Occurs; and WHIN's Building a Respectful Community - Preventing Violence against Women, A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region Of Melbourne.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	That government policies and program planning has been influenced, and that strong legislative and regulatory frameworks are resourced and effectively implemented.	Strong progress. WHIN and partners have been advocating to gov't and contributing to consultations, e.g. Victoria's Action Plan to Address VAW, the consultations for the new Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women, among others. Some councils (Whittlesea) are also very active. But the current governments have not given PVAW a strong platform. There is success in that PVAW remains on the agenda regionally, at a state and national level.
7.2 Alignment of organisational and operational policies and plans with Building a Respectful Community – Preventing Violence against Women, A strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of	Moreland City Council's Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2011-2015; and Darebin City Council's Family Violence Policy and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Organisations across the region have organisational and operational policies and plans which address violence against women and gender inequities, and which allocate resources to prevention projects and	Strong progress. All councils and PCPs acknowledge and commit to the Strategy in their own plans/resolutions. Several use this Action Plan. Some community health services have also

Melbourne.			campaigns.	done this.
7.3 Ongoing commitment to fund local government staff positions whose primary responsibility is the prevention of violence against women.	The City of Darebin's dedicated funding for a Preventing Violence Against Women Officer; and the City of Yarra's dedicated funding for a Women's Health Planner.	• Local government.	Funded and ongoing local government officer positions with responsibility for the prevention of violence against women in all LGAs.	Some progress – attention needed. All seven councils have a designated person with PVAW in their role, but with differing time allocations & authority (most spend 0.2-0.4EFT on PVAW, but only a couple have it in their PD). Beyond WHIN's control – but we continue to advocate for and highlight this.
7.4 Development and implementation of organisational family violence policies.	City of Darebin's Family Violence Policy; the Surf Coast Shire's Family Violence policy; and Women's Health East.	• WHIN; • local government; • PCPs; • community health services; and • the NIFVS Strategic Network.	Organisations' commitment to family violence leave is reflected in Human Resources policies.	Strong progress. Six of the seven councils (TBC pending current negotiations) have a Family Violence Clause in their EAs with paid leave included, and have, or are developing, FV Policies. All community health services are now covered by an Award that requires development of a Family Violence Policy (but not including paid leave). Several community health services have already progressed a policy.