



23rd May 2023

Opportunity to provide feedback: First Action Plan under the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032

About EVAWQ

Ending Violence Against Women Queensland (EVAWQ) provides a representative and united voice for Queensland women and children affected by gender-based violence, and the individuals and service agencies that provide specialist support. Our organisation shares the depth and diversity of knowledge from specialist services within the women's sector to a broad range of government and non-government stakeholders in relation to all aspects of gender-based violence.

Introduction

It is pleasing to see progression being made on the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 in this First Action Plan (the Plan). However, we think that the Plan must be bolder in approach and include a greater diversity of indicators to measure progress of targets and activities. We recognise these targets are examples, but we would like to see these become more significantly comprehensive before finalised. EVAWQ would love to work further with The Office for Women in strengthening this response.

Anne Summers has a quote from an International Women's Day Keynote Address that we think is fitting for our feedback:

We need comparable targets, based on hard data, for reducing, and ultimately eradicating, domestic and family, and sexual violence against women. To be able to do this, we need to adjust some of our thinking. It is no longer enough to say that we need gender equality in order to reduce violence. Rather, we should be measuring reductions in violence as a performance indicator of our progress towards achieving gender equality. (Anne Summers, March 2021)

EVAWQ recommends:

- Clear and explicit actions with more measurable outcomes and explicit KPIs to be achieved.
- The targets to be updated- we are pleased to see high-level target areas identified, but feel that they are missing key aspects including a reduction in women's experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, and a reduction in men's perpetration of violence.
- As the key aim of the strategy is to eliminate men's perpetration of violence, this needs to be a much more explicit focus, including specific target measures (beyond just homicide). Statistics around this could be gathered using a combination of the ABS Personal Safety Survey and police data.
- More of Queensland's reform work is recognised in the State's Action Activities. There is a lot of significant change being made that has not been reflected in this Action Plan.



Action	Our Recommendations for Queensland Activities and Response
<p>Action 1: Advance gender equality and address the gendered drivers of all forms of gender-based violence, including through initiatives aimed to improve community attitudes and norms toward family, domestic and sexual violence. <i>(Pg.21)</i></p>	<p>Reshaping community attitudes about sexual consent and sexual violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will deliver a primary prevention-focused community education campaign to improve awareness and understanding of sexual violence and consent. • We will support the media to report on domestic, family and sexual violence in a way that is sensitive and trauma-informed, by developing a domestic, family and sexual violence media guide and regulatory framework in consultation with media outlets and key stakeholders. This could work similarly to how suicide is reported on, by including guides like not allowing reporting of violence tactics. • We make a substantial funding investment in community owned violence prevention initiatives.
<p>Action 2: Improve the national evidence base by agreeing and implementing consistent terminology, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and by increasing collection and sharing of data and evidence at a national level. <i>(Pg.34)</i></p>	<p>The Queensland Government to establish a victims' commission as an independent statutory office to promote and protect the needs and rights of victims of all violent offences.</p>
<p>Action 3: Strengthen the capability of workforces to deliver quality services, which are trauma-informed, culturally safe, and are tailored to respond to intersectionality and the unique experiences of victim-survivors. <i>(Pg.40)</i></p>	<p>We will fund specialised responses to children and young people, with consideration to being victims in their own right and the need for tailored responses for those who are using violence within familial or intimate personal relationships. Often children are treated as secondary victims to domestic and family violence.</p>
<p>Action 4: Build the capacity of services and systems that support victim-survivors to provide trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses that support long-term health and wellbeing. <i>(Pg.46)</i></p>	<p>Whole-of-government annual reports will be developed for tabling in Parliament on progress of the implementation of Taskforce recommendations, supporting a transparent, strong monitoring framework.</p> <p>Ministerial and Directors-General level governance mechanisms have already been established and will provide oversight of progress. We will also expand the role of the independent implementation supervisor to provide oversight of implementation of both Taskforce reports.</p> <p>The biggest thing that will increase capacity of services that support and respond to victim-survivors is adequate resourcing and funding. There needs to be a commitment to matching funding to service demand in line with population growth. Integrated approaches and guidelines can only do much to build capacity when waitlists are at an all-time high, with some victim-survivors waiting up to a year to access services.</p>
<p>Action 5: Strengthen systems and services to better hold people who choose to use violence to account and provide opportunities to support people who have used violence, or are at risk of using violence, to change their behaviours. <i>(Pg.52)</i></p>	<p>The Queensland Government will build the necessary capability and capacity for restorative justice to be a meaningful option for victims and perpetrators in Queensland communities. We will explore options for a sustainable long-term plan for the expansion of adult restorative justice in Queensland and facilitate mechanisms for police and prosecutorial decisions to be reviewed if requested by victim-survivors of sexual violence.</p>
<p>Action 6: Improve the recognition of and responses to sexual violence, including sexual</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will continue its implementation of Prevent. Support. Believe: Queensland's Framework to address sexual violence which includes elements aimed at shifting community attitudes and behaviours relating</p>



<p>harassment, through prevention activities, specialist and mainstream services, justice systems and workforce policies. (Pg.58)</p>	<p>to sexual violence and provides tailored approaches for Queensland’s diverse community. This includes targeted messaging for young people and health services about reporting of sexual violence.</p> <p>The Government will include the measures set by the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to Domestic and Family Violence.</p>
<p>Action 7: Work in formal partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure policies and services are culturally competent, strengths-based and trauma informed and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. (Pg.62)</p>	<p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Group (the Prevention Group) has been established to have oversight of the framework.</p> <p>The establishment of the Prevention Group recognises Queensland’s commitment that DFV reform activities must be co-designed and undertaken in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to effectively and appropriately address the intersection of the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the complexity of DFV. Funding community owned solutions is integral for success.</p> <p>The Prevention Group’s purpose is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide oversight and support to the implementation of the Framework • Oversee and track progress on addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander DFV as part of the governance framework for the DFV reform program undertaken by the Queensland Government.
<p>Action 8: Develop and implement age-appropriate programs, informed by children and young people, that support recovery and healing from trauma, and intervene early on violence supportive behaviours. (Pg.67)</p>	<p>There will be a continuation of the K.I.N.D (Kinship, Improving relationships, No violence and Developing skills) program trial to help young people break the cycle of violence.</p> <p>A substantial funding investment is needed for children’s programs across recovery and early intervention.</p>
<p>Action 9: Improve justice and police responses to better support victim-survivors through the provision of safe settings and appropriate trauma-informed supports and hold people who choose to use violence to account. (Pg.74)</p>	<p>Include an acknowledgement of the intersection between the identified Action areas. Poor police responses to domestic and family violence are directly caused by and reflective of community attitudes, as outlined in the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to Domestic and Family Violence. The outcomes of this report need to be address in Action 9.</p> <p>Create accountability for police to stop misidentification of the person most in need of protection. Police should not get this wrong more in more than 10% of cases.</p> <p>The Queensland Police Service will continue to progress the actions included in the Queensland Police Service Sexual Violence Response Strategy 2021–2023 to enhance evidence-based and trauma-informed training.</p>
<p>Action 10: Improve access to short-term, medium and long-term housing for women and children experiencing violence, including those living in institutional settings, and supporting women to stay in their own homes when they choose to do so. (Pg.78)</p>	<p>In line with Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 continue to implement Rental Law Reforms (stage 2 & 3) to improve safety, security and certainty in the rental market.</p> <p>Continue to grow housing options for people experiencing domestic and family violence by leveraging new housing supply through the Queensland Housing Investment Growth Initiative.</p>



Section	Comments and Changes
Targets (Pg.23)	<p>The targets to be updated- we are pleased to see high-level target areas identified, but feel that they are missing key aspects including a reduction in women’s experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, and a reduction in men’s perpetration of violence. There needs be more clear and more identifiable KPI’s that can be worked towards.</p> <p>The reduction goals of the four target areas need to be updated to be both realistic but also an actual change. When the baseline figure is so poor the percentage decreases don’t mean much actual change. It is not clearly articulated how the measures are going to be used to eliminate violence in one generation.</p> <p>Homicide is not the best reflection of direct harm caused by domestic and family violence. Suicide is a common outcome for those experiencing violence, as well as car accidents. We think that it would be more accurate to use “death attributable to domestic violence” as a measurable. We also think that by framing homicide as a measurable, there is more of a focus placed on justice system responses rather than community impact.</p>
Theory of Change (Pg. 18)	<p>We think this Theory of Change could be strengthened. This is more of a program logic mixed in with a theory of change. This is a missed opportunity to see real progression.</p>
Expanded Outcomes Framework with sub-outcomes (Pg.21-22)	<p>There is no clear pathway between the long-term impacts and the sub-outcomes, we would like to see this strengthened.</p>
Collective action for change “Sporting and faith organisations are well placed to not only educate about healthy relationships and gender equality but may also offer a safe space for people experiencing FDSV to seek help and support.” (Pg. 14)	<p>We would also like acknowledgement that sporting clubs and churches are the best place to work with men in reducing domestic and family violence. These are both places where the gendered drivers of violence are rampant, and they are well positioned to work with men to stop perpetrating violence and seek professional supports.</p>
Other recommendations	<p>We would like to see further discussion and strategies to address migration law, which currently needs significant changes to create safety for refugee and migrant women and children experiencing violence.</p>

If you would like to discuss this feedback further, please don’t hesitate to reach out to EVAWQ at info@evawq.org.

Sincerely,

The Ending Violence Against Women Qld Management Committee.