

# Working Together With Men: Final Evaluation Report

Michael Flood | 2018



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## The project and its impact

Working Together with Men is an innovative violence prevention project based on community engagement and mobilisation. The project aims to contribute to the prevention of violence against women by engaging men to develop and implement primary prevention strategies in their local communities.

Working Together with Men was the focus of an impact evaluation, conducted by Dr Michael Flood from the Queensland University of Technology (QUT).

## How the project works

Working Together With Men focuses on recruiting men from the community, training them, and then involving them in project planning in activities to prevent violence against women.

The Working Together With Men project took place over 2015-2017 in Brimbank, a local government area in the west and northwest of the city of Melbourne. The project was coordinated by the HealthWest Partnership, a consortium of community organisations including IPC Health, Brimbank City Council, cohealth, and Women's Health West, and funded by the federal Department of Social Services.

Working Together With Men uses a range of strategies to educate, train, and mobilise men as violence prevention advocates. The project began with community-based recruitment, through information sessions. Fifty or so men, from diverse backgrounds,



participated in these opening events. Men interested in continuing in the project then took part in face-to-face education, in a series of educational workshops and sessions. They received support and mentoring from a dedicated project coordinator and guidance from an Advisory Committee. The seven men who continued with the project throughout its two years took part in training workshops, project planning sessions, and regular social meetings. In 2017 these men designed and implemented their own local violence prevention projects.

## The project's impact

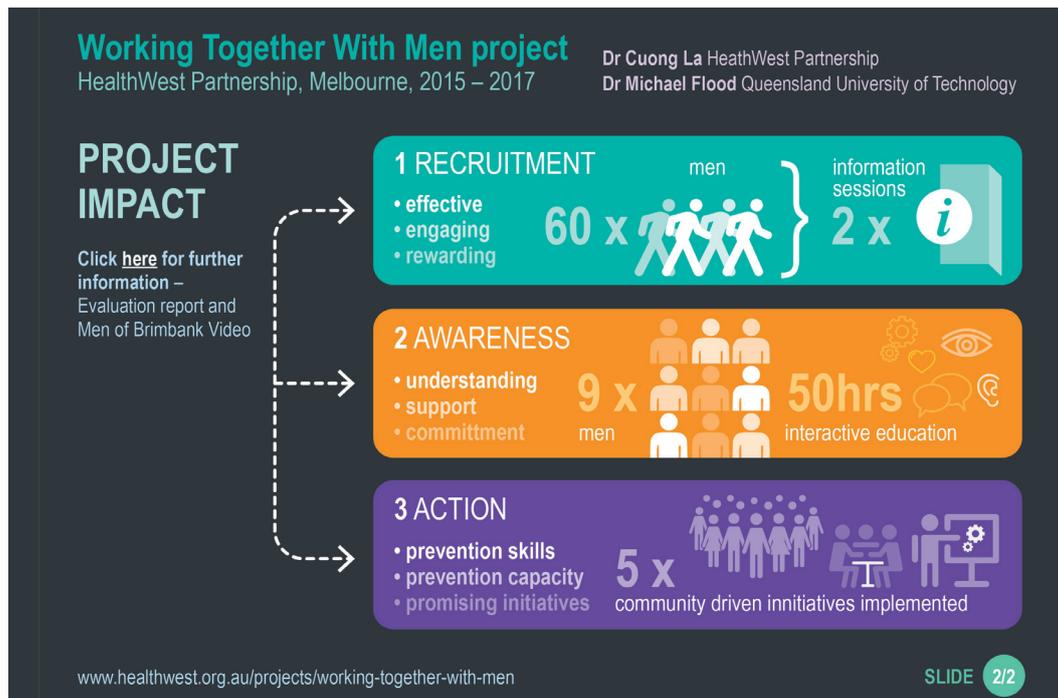
Impact evaluation was built into the design and implementation of the project. Dr Flood coordinated the evaluation, in collaboration with the project coordinator, Cuong La. The evaluation used diverse forms of data to assess the project's impact, including both quantitative data (surveys) and qualitative data (interviews, focus groups, observation of project events, and a desk review of documents). This document summarises the evaluation's findings, and these are described in more detail in the full report.

Working Together With Men has been successful at recruiting men into violence prevention education, educating them about violence against women and its prevention, and building a supportive and motivated group of prevention advocates.



## Objective 1: Engage men

The project was successful in the first instance in recruiting a group of male violence prevention advocates and sustaining their long-term participation.



The Working Together With Men project was effective in engaging an initial group of men, and then supporting a smaller group's participation as volunteers over the life of the project. The project has proven effective at providing an engaging, rewarding experience for its participants. The men who have taken part throughout the project emphasise the support and friendship they have found. Working Together With Men also had strong buy-in and support from the partner organisations. The project has become an important example for these organisations and wider prevention networks of the value of engaging men in violence prevention.



## *Objective 2: Increase men's awareness and understanding of violence against women*

Working Together With Men has been effective in increasing participants' understanding of men's violence against women. Evidence for this comes from the qualitative interviews and focus groups, although quantitative data is not available.

The men who took part describe increases in their understandings of and commitment to taking action on violence against women. Both mid-way through the project and at the project's end, they commented that they now know more about violence against women: about the diverse forms it can take, its causes or 'drivers', and its links to gender inequality. They emphasised that they now see the issue of violence against women as a crucial one, they endorse and advocate for gender equality in relationships and families, and they look critically at their own treatment of their female partners. Female partners interviewed for the project support these accounts. At the same time, some low-level violence-supportive attitudes did persist for some men.

## *Objective 3: Build men's capacity to implement violence prevention initiatives*

Working Together With Men also aims to build men's capacity to engage in violence prevention work.

Many of the men who turned up for the project's opening information sessions already felt a strong sense of their role in preventing violence against women, although their confidence in their skills in violence prevention was more uneven. Comparing the men who continued to participate over the next two years and the men who did not, the former group already had a greater level of involvement in actual prevention efforts, a stronger sense that violence against women is a personally relevant issue, and a higher sense of skill in prevention. These seemed to become even stronger, however, over the course of the project. By the end of the project, the men reported an increased capacity to design and implement violence prevention initiatives, with nearly all agreeing that they had knowledge and skills in prevention.



### *Objective 4: Support men in implementing violence prevention initiatives*

The men who took part in Working Together With Men developed a diverse range of projects:

- Ethiopian community education: An education session for leaders and other members of the local Ethiopian community; Development of an education manual on violence against women and its prevention, for the Ethiopian community
- Brimbank Men's Pledge: A written pledge involving a commitment to non-violence and to pro-social action, distributed on the street and through community events
- Education in an adult learning centre: Education on violence against women and its prevention to students in adult learning settings
- IPC Health policy: Establishment of the prevention of violence against women as a strategic priority within IPC Health
- Sierra Leone Soccer Club: Education for club management and players; Messages regarding non-violence and respect on players' t-shirts; Education in mothers' group regarding respectful relationships
- Respectful relationships education work in a primary school: Cooperative games among children at a school; Discussions with parents regarding violence and respectful relationships.

These projects do fit well with existing standards for effective practice in violence prevention. Although they necessarily are small in scale, and developed by volunteers who are new to the violence prevention field, they are promising initiatives which are likely to make positive contributions.

These projects, first, are informed – they address the gendered drivers of violence against women, as they were encouraged to. Second, they rely on well-tested strategies for change. Four of the six projects use face-to-face or direct education, two also draw on communications or social marketing, and one each draws on community mobilisation or organisational policy change. Third, the designs of most projects are likely to engage participants: their methods are interactive and participatory, their activities are long enough to make change, and they rely to some extent on skilled educators. Fourth, the projects are designed to be relevant to the communities and contexts in which they are delivered.



## Replicating the project

Projects such as Working Together With Men should be replicated in other settings and scaled up. The full report on the impact evaluation provides detailed recommendations on how best to do this. Summarising these, replication and scaling up of Working Together With Men should involve:

- The use of further strategies for recruiting participants;
- Education for participants which makes greater use of accessible materials on violence prevention, focuses more on prevention, has an intersectional analysis, includes skills development, and involves space for critical self-reflection;
- More extensive technical support in project planning;
- Room for more diverse forms of violence prevention advocacy by participants;
- Greater inclusion of accountability processes, including within the project's advisory group, between the project and feminist and women's groups, and by project participants in developing their projects.

## Conclusion

Working Together with Men is a significant project for the violence prevention field in three ways: (1) it combines three important strategies of violence prevention: community engagement, community mobilisation, and engaging men; (2) it includes a substantive evaluation of impact; and (3) it has had a significant and positive impact. The project's success has depended on effective participation, long-term education, intensive facilitation, expert guidance and advice, and resourcing.





# FULL REPORT

## Introduction

Working Together with Men is an innovative violence prevention project based on community engagement and mobilisation. The Working Together With Men project aims to contribute to the prevention of violence against women by engaging men in Brimbank, Melbourne, to develop and implement primary prevention strategies in their local communities. It focuses on recruiting men from the community, training them, and then involving them in project planning in activities to prevent violence against women.

This report describes the findings of an impact evaluation of the Working Together With Men project. Participatory evaluation (quantitative and qualitative) was conducted to examine the impact of the project on men's engagement in the primary prevention of violence against women.

## Background

The Working Together With Men project took place over 2015-2017 in Brimbank, a local government area in the west and northwest of the city of Melbourne and comprising 25 suburbs, 123 km<sup>2</sup>, and a population of around 200,000 people. The Working Together With Men project was coordinated by the HealthWest Partnership, a consortium of community organisations in Melbourne including IPC Health, Brimbank City Council, cohealth, and Women's Health West. The HealthWest Partnership was established by the Victorian Government and is one of 28 primary care partnerships (PCPs) throughout Victoria. The Working Together With Men project received funding through the federal Department of Social Services, and began in April 2016.<sup>1</sup>

Working Together With Men (WTWM) was coordinated by Cuong La, based at Healthwest, and guided by an Advisory Committee comprising representatives of the community organisations involved in the partnership. Cuong La was the Project Manager for WTWM, working four days per week on the project from its beginning in November 2015 until July 2017, when he went to one day per week in order to take up another position. Nuredin Hassan, from IPC Health and a member of the Advisory Committee, then began working on WTWM for one day per week, with Helen Scudamore from Healthwest working one day per week. The project initially was funded to run to June 2017, but with extended, further funding it concluded in November 2017.



Dr Michael Flood, an Associate Professor based at the Queensland University of Technology, collaborated with the HealthWest Partnership on an impact evaluation of the Working Together With Men project. He acted as an external evaluator, working in collaboration with the people and organisations implementing the intervention. Dr Flood was funded to conduct this and other evaluations as part of an Australia Research Council (ARC) Future Fellowship (2015-2018), a national grants scheme for academic scholarship in Australia. Ethics approval for this research was given by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Wollongong, and when Dr Flood moved to Queensland University of Technology (QUT), ethics approval was given by the Human Research Ethics Committee at QUT.

## The project

Working Together with Men is a primary prevention initiative based in community development and community mobilisation. It recruits men from local communities to develop and implement primary prevention strategies in their local settings. The project has four objectives:

- 1) Increase the capacity of local agencies to identify and engage men in the primary prevention of violence against women;
- 2) Increase awareness and understanding of the issue of violence against women and children among men in the city of Brimbank;
- 3) Build the knowledge, skills and capacity of men in Brimbank to develop and implement community-based initiatives to prevent violence against women and children;
- 4) Increase the capacity of men in Brimbank to advocate and sustain violence prevention actions.

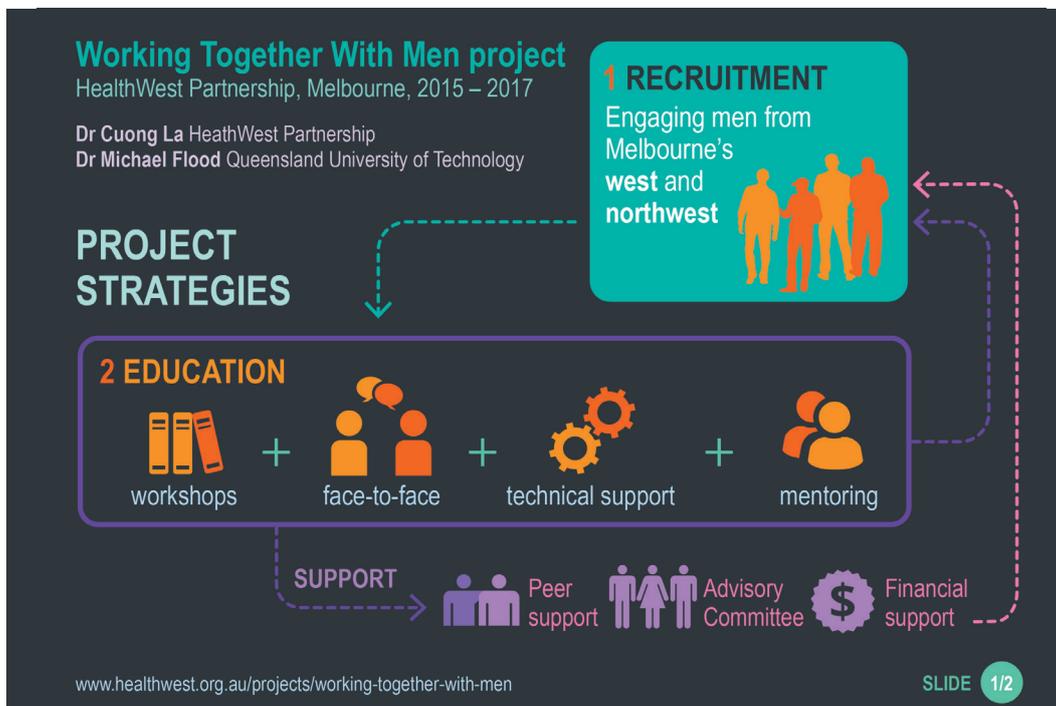
Working Together With Men uses a range of strategies to educate, train, and mobilise men as violence prevention advocates. Its two primary strategies, once it has recruited men as participants in the project, are face-to-face education (comprising a long-term, staged series of educational workshops and sessions) and tailored support by a dedicated project coordinator, (including technical advice, mentoring, and support). These strategies are complemented by peer support among the members, the guidance of an Advisory Committee, and the provision of financial support for participants' projects (if approved). Figure 1 shows Working Together With Men's key strategies and activities.

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1 The funding goes to Carers Victoria, the organisation which auspices the organisation coordinating the project, the Healthwest Partnership.



Figure 1



The project started in November 2015 and ended in November 2017. It began with community-based recruitment of men in Melbourne to participate in the project. Fifty or so adult men, from diverse ethnic backgrounds, participated in two information sessions. (Two sessions were held, one during the day and the other during the evening, to maximise participation and to allow men with differing work and parenting schedules to attend.) Sixteen of these men then attended a training course, and ten of these were selected to take part in an ideas generation event. A smaller group of seven men then participated in two project planning workshops, and continuing to participate as the project continued: attending regular education workshops and meetings, and designing and implementing their own violence prevention projects in the local community. Projects which were approved by the WTWM Advisory Group had access to up to \$3,000 for costs associated with implementation. Implementation of the men's own projects began for some in mid-2017, while for others this only began in October or November 2017. The projects are described later in this report.



Working Together With Men relies on an intensive, long-term, and staged process of education and training. This consisted of an opening, two-hour information session, three training sessions on violence against women and its prevention comprising eight hours, two sessions on project planning comprising six hours, and about 40 further hours of education, discussion, and interaction in regular face-to-face meetings or ‘catch-ups’. Two external facilitators presented the training sessions on violence against women, while other sections of the education and training were facilitated by the Project Manager or other external educators. Prior to delivery, the content of the training was reviewed by the project’s Advisory Committee and by Women’s Health West.

Other than the opening information events, the education sessions were highly interactive and participatory. The education and later ‘catch-up’ sessions made use of a wide range of teaching materials, including videos and films, quizzes, and handouts. The project included the conscious creation of a learning environment in which the participants could raise questions and issues of their own, particularly as they began to design and then implement their own prevention initiatives.

The project’s program of education was designed to be staged and cumulative, moving from introductory material on men’s violence against women and its prevention, to more detailed material on the drivers of this violence and on effective strategies of prevention, to explorations of key issues or challenges in prevention work. The regular ‘catch-up’ sessions, attended by men who had persisted with the project and were moving towards implementation of their own prevention initiatives, covered such topics as how to recruit men and women (February 2 2017), how to handle resistance and backlash (March 9 2017), handling ‘curly questions’ (April 20 2017), journeys to advocacy (March 23 2017), how to handle disclosures of violence (May 18 2017), the gendered drivers of violence against women (July 27 2017), and so on.

Support and mentoring by the Project Manager, Cuong La, has been a vital part of the project. As well as coordinating the project overall, including its education sessions, he provided one-on-one support to the members of the implementation group. This included practical advice on the design and implementation of their prevention initiatives, facilitation of their contact with other people outside the project who could provide support or advice or access to particular settings, and informal mentoring and encouragement via telephone and email. Cuong La received guidance from the project’s Advisory Committee, and external mentoring from an individual in the national violence prevention organisation Our Watch (Scott Holmes).



The project also relies on a staged process of screening for the men it recruits. In the opening sessions, the ‘bar’ is set low, with any and all participants welcome. However, later in the project, at the point where individuals have continued with the project and can submit proposals for their own prevention initiatives, the bar is raised. Applicants consent to a police background check in the process of submitting their expressions of interest for support and funding.

The following table outlines the timeline for the development and content of the Working Together With Men project.

**Table 1: Project timeline and process**

DATE	ACTIVITY
March 2016	Formation of the Working Together With Men Advisory Group. Partnership agreements developed with partner organisations.
May – June 2016	WTWM integrated into regional family violence prevention plans including the Preventing Violence Together (PVT) regional partnership and action plan
March – July 2016	Promotion of WTWM in the local community
July and August 2016	Information Sessions (2 hours x 2) on the project. 60 people attend, including 50 men. Participants are invited to participate in the ongoing WTWM project.
August 2016	Training sessions: 3 educational workshops, facilitated by external educators, and comprising 8 hours in total. Completed by 9 men
September – October 2016	Participants submit project proposals for review. Support and funding provided for selected projects
November 2016	Project planning workshops: 2 3-hour workshops to design and plan violence prevention projects
January 2017	Project implementation begins (January – December 2017)
January – November 2017	Catch-up sessions: Regular meetings of the WTTWM participants, 20 in all, for 2 hours each.





## Evaluation: methods and data

The Working Together With Men project was evaluated by Dr Michael Flood (Queensland University of Technology). The impact evaluation is informed by guidelines to best practice in the evaluation of violence prevention programs and interventions (Choi & An, 2016; Murray & Graybeal, 2007; Network, 2012; Raab & Stuppert, 2014; Yeater & O'Donohue, 1999). Accordingly, this evaluation:

- Involves a *participatory* design, in which those organising and implementing the project have played an active role in evaluation design;
- Focuses on the *impact* or *effects* of the project;
- Focuses on the impact of the project on *factors related to men's violence against women and its reduction or prevention*;
- Describes the '*intervention condition*': the content, format, duration, intensity, and other characteristics of the program;
- Collects both *quantitative and qualitative* data, using research methods which are methodologically robust; and
- Assesses both *short-term and long-term* outcomes.<sup>2</sup>

The following section describes the methods of data collection used in this evaluation.

### *Methods of data collection*

Multiple quantitative and qualitative methods have been used to collect data regarding the WTWM project. These include:

- Survey data (quantitative);
- Focus groups and individual interviews;
- Key informant interviews;
- Observation of project events; and
- Desk review of documents.

The following provides more detail on each of the methods used.



## Survey data (quantitative)

Participants in the project completed surveys at three points in the project. The first point was at the first events which community participants could attend, the two Information Sessions, on July 26 and August 4 2016. Men who took part in either of these sessions are described here as members of the 'engagement' group. The sessions were identical, but provided at different times of day to allow participation by members with daytime or night time commitments.

Men at the Information Sessions were given information about the impact evaluation research being conducted by Dr Flood. If they were happy to participate, they then completed a consent form and then filled in the survey. Nineteen individuals completed the survey, of 25 community participants in attendance.

The survey used in the first Information Session covered four areas: attitudes towards gender roles, understanding of domestic and sexual violence, perceived role in prevention, and sense of self-efficacy in prevention. This survey included detailed demographic questions, eight questions on attitudes towards gender roles, 15 statements regarding knowledge of domestic violence and 12 regarding sexual violence, nine statements regarding perceptions of one's role in violence prevention, three statements regarding one's existing involvement in such work, and 33 statements regarding perceived confidence and self-efficacy in prevention action. However, the experience in the first Information Session was that this survey was too long for some individuals, perhaps particularly those with English as a second language.

The survey used in the second Information Session a week later thus was shortened considerably. This survey dropped most of the first half of the earlier version, and included only nine statements regarding perceptions of one's role in violence prevention, three statements regarding one's existing involvement in such work, and 17 statements regarding one's self-efficacy in taking action. Twenty-one individuals completed the shorter survey at the second Information Session. Thus, while 40 individuals in total completed the first quantitative survey, about half of these completed only a shorter version of the survey.

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2 A further feature emphasised in guides to impact evaluation is the use of an experimental or quasi-experimental design involving control or comparison groups, in which individuals who have gone through the intervention or program are compared with individuals who have not. That was not practical in this case.



Individuals who continued with participation in the WTWM project then were surveyed a second time on October 6, 2016, at one of the early WTWM training sessions. This second survey was nearly identical to the shorter version of the first round survey, comprising the same nine statements regarding perceptions of one's role in violence prevention and the same 17 statements regarding self-efficacy in taking action. The training sessions involved a much smaller cohort of men, those individuals who persisted with the project. Six men completed this survey. Finally, this same cohort of men completed a survey a third time, in September 2017, towards the end of the project. The survey forms are provided in the Appendix, with details regarding the origins of the statements used.

### Focus groups and individual interviews

Men in the WTWM project participated in a short focus group discussion at one of the WTWM catch-up evenings, several months into the project, on October 6 2016. Dr Flood facilitated and recorded the discussion. A second focus group discussion was held in August 2017. Dr Flood also conducted one-on-one interviews with most the participants in October 2017 towards the end of the project, with all but one of these conducted in person.<sup>3</sup> Quotes from the focus groups and interviews are given verbatim, with omissions of words spoken signalled by “[...]”. The schedules for the focus groups and interviews are provided in the Appendix.

### Key informant interviews

Interviews with key individuals involved in the project in a professional capacity were conducted in August 2016. Interviewees included Cuong La, Dimity Gannon, Stephanie Rich, and Nuredin Hassan. These interviews took place at dates after the first initial information sessions and during the series of three training sessions. A second round of interviews with key informants, including the first three of the four individuals above, was conducted in October 2017.



## Observation

The evaluation draws on data including observation of WTWM events. Observation and note-taking were conducted by Dr Flood, Cuong La (the community coordinator of the project), and Paulina Ezer. Ms Ezer, a research assistant sub-contracted to Dr Flood, is a PhD student at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, and she acted as a participant observer in several of the Working Together With Men training sessions. Dr Flood was able to attend the first of the two Information Sessions, some of the training sessions, and some of the “catch-up evenings”. His notes are complemented by others’ observations. Observation was guided by a protocol specifying the kinds of behaviours and interactions to note, provided in the Appendix.

## Desk review

Finally, the evaluation draws on documents including the minutes of the WTWM Advisory Group and the project plans submitted by the participants in the project.

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<sup>3</sup> One participant was not interviewed, because it was felt that his English language ability would not be sufficient for an interview in English and conducting the interview in his first language was not feasible.





## Findings: A summary of Working Together With Men's impact and significance

Working Together With Men has been successful at recruiting men into violence prevention education, educating them about violence against women and its prevention, and building a supportive and motivated group of prevention advocates.

The project was successful in the first instance in encouraging men to participate. Fifty or so men turned up to the two opening events, 17 then opted to participate in further training sessions, and seven men have continued with the project then for a further 15 months in designing and implementing their own prevention project. The project thus was successful in recruiting a group of male violence prevention advocates and sustaining their long-term participation.

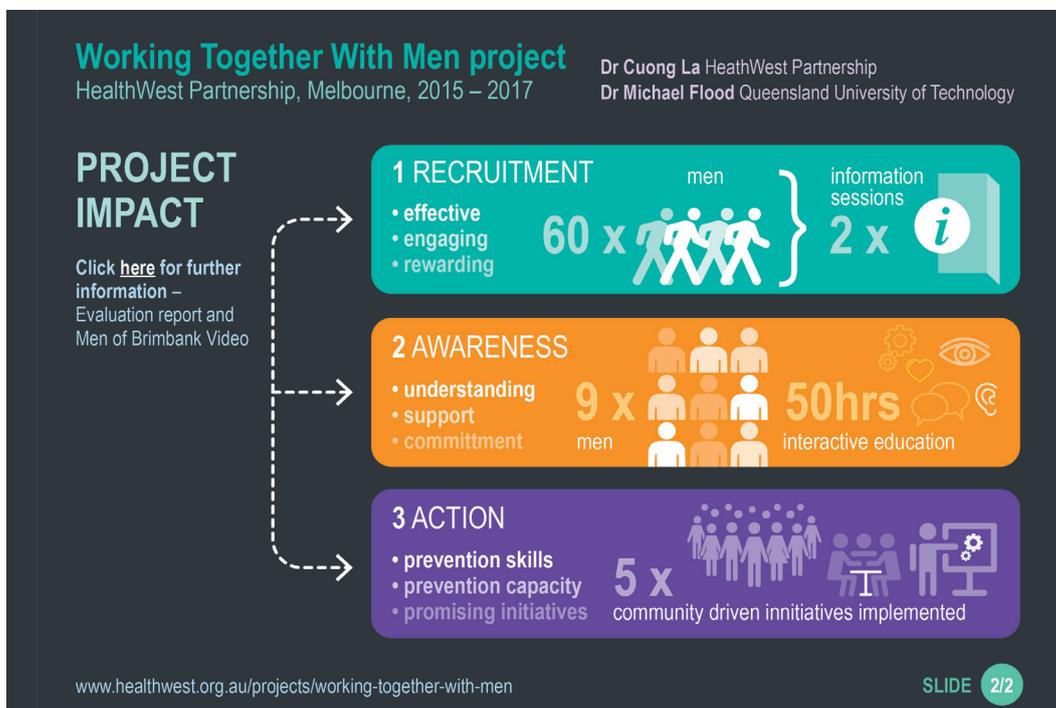
The men who participate in the WTWM project have shown increases in their understandings of men's violence against women and their skills and capacity in developing and implementing violence prevention initiatives. Among the men, there has been an overall increase in their knowledge of violence against women and their confidence and fluency in expressing this. At the same time, some violence-supportive attitudes have persisted among some participants.

The project also has been successful in increasing these men's capacity to design and implement violence prevention activities. The prevention activities designed by the men generally show features in line with existing standards for effective practice and are likely therefore to contribute to the prevention of violence against women. Five of the seven proposed projects are well under way or nearing completion (at time of writing, in October 2017). At the same time, progress in prevention design and implementation among the seven men is uneven. A sixth project has had little progress with design or implementation, while another proposed project did not receive approval and funding from the host organisation because it fell short of standards for effective practice. Nevertheless, Working Together With Men has had a positive impact overall in mobilising men as violence prevention advocates.



Working Together with Men is a significant project for the violence prevention field in three ways: (1) it combines three important strategies of violence prevention: community engagement, community mobilisation, and engaging men; (2) it includes a substantive evaluation of impact; and (3) it has had a significant and positive impact. The project's success has depended on effective participation, long-term education, intensive facilitation, expert guidance and advice, and resourcing. Figure 2 summarises the impact of the project.

Figure 2



The evaluation of the Working Together With Men project is guided by the project's objectives (above). Given these, the remainder of this report focuses on the project's impact on four domains:

- 1) local agencies' capacity to engage men in the primary prevention of violence against women;
- 2) men's awareness and understanding of violence against women;
- 3) men's skills and capacity in developing community-based prevention initiatives; and
- 4) men's capacity to advocate for and sustain prevention activities.





## Objective 1: Engaging men

Capacity to identify and engage men in the primary prevention of violence against women is assessed in terms of the use of strategies for engaging men identified as effective in other research, success at attracting men, participant engagement and satisfaction, and buy-in and support from the wider organisation. To assess agencies' capacity to engage men, this evaluation draws on four sources of data: (1) interviews with the project coordinator; (2) interviews with the members of the Advisory Group; (3) a desk review of agencies' minutes, planning documents, and other relevant documents; and (4) assessments of men's actual participation in and satisfaction with the project.

### The use of strategies for engaging men identified as effective

One of the key challenges in violence prevention work with men is achieving their initial participation and engagement. To do this, it may be necessary both to 'go to men' and to 'bring them to you'. There is some evidence that generalised appeals to men – such as flyers or leaflets, letters and mass emails, posters or other media campaigns – are less ineffective in attracting men's attention and attendance than more personalised invitations (Casey, 2010). Reaching men through personal networks is identified in some prevention literature as a particularly important strategy for engaging men (Bilen-Green et al., 2015; Casey, 2010, p. 270). When men are approached through existing social, professional, and familial ties, they are more likely to see the movement as relevant and the 'messenger' as credible.

Working Together With Men relied on both a general appeal to men and more personalised invitations. The former took the form of a poster inviting initial participation. While some efforts try to reach men by providing events and groups where violence against women is part of a wider discussion about topics which may be appealing to men such as sex, dating, communication, or masculinity (Casey, 2010), WTWM focused squarely on violence against women. Under the heading "Calling men of Brimbank", the project's poster read, "You are invited to be part of a discussion that explores how men can work together to make Brimbank a safer place for women and children. Men have an important role in ending violence against women." The poster was written in plain English and translated into Vietnamese, Arabic, and simple Chinese. Advertising the



opening information sessions in July and August 2016, the poster was distributed on local community boards in the Brimbank region of Melbourne.

The project coordinator, Cuong La, also approached community organisations in Brimbank including the men's shed; men's health sessions run by Sons of the West; rotary clubs; lions; scouts; sport clubs; faith-based organisations; community hubs in schools in Brimbank; leisure centres; public libraries; and Men's Sheds.

The project also relied on more personalised invitations. The Project Manager reached out through his own personal and professional networks to invite men to the opening events. Indeed, several men came to events primarily through because of encouragement by their female partners or wives. As the Project Manager commented about one man, "when we asked why you are here, he said my wife said you must come. If you don't come you are not my husband anymore." A key informant also commented that other projects in which his organisation are involved include large numbers of women, and approaches to those women to send partners to the WTWM events did bear fruit.

A further strategy identified in the literature as effective in engaging men is to build communities of support. Working Together With Men has been effective at generating a supportive group of male prevention advocates, as discussed below.

## Success at attracting men

The project was successful in getting men to *walk in the door* – to turn up to the opening events of the intervention. This initial participation is by no means guaranteed, as some interventions aimed at men struggle to attract men at all. The intervention began with two identical Information Sessions, in July and August 2016. About 25 members of the community, largely male, attended the first, and another 25 or so members attended the second.

Working Together With Men (WTWM) was intended to attract an initial cohort of men, recruited from the local community, and then to continue to work in a more intensive and ongoing manner with a smaller group of men self-selected from this cohort. At the conclusion of each of the Information Sessions, participants were invited to participate in ongoing training, to begin in mid-August. Sixteen men took up this invitation. Over a period of 14 or so months, seven men have continued to participate in the project. Other men's reasons for withdrawal included family commitments and new work responsibilities. WTWM thus was successful in recruiting and sustaining a small cohort of men for a prolonged period of training, education, and advocacy. This is particularly remarkable as these men were volunteers, with no financial or material reward or compensation for their participation or efforts.



At the same time, the experience of the project also demonstrates just what it takes to foster violence prevention advocacy. As one key informant commented in an interview towards the end of the project, “something that’s been quite evident is the amount of resourcing that it requires to build men’s capacity and sustain their engagement in this work”.

## Participant engagement and satisfaction

Getting men to walk through the door means little if a project then is unsuccessful at engaging their participation and interest. The Working Together With Men project relies in part on group-based education, with the participants coming together in regular meetings in which they receive education on violence against women and its prevention and they plan and develop their own prevention projects. Having attracted an initial cohort of men, how did the project go in sustaining these men’s participation, in the first instance in the training sessions which followed the two opening Information Sessions?

### Participation in the training sessions

The Working Together With Men training sessions took place on August 11, 18 and 25, 2016. A total of 16 men signed up for the training sessions. The first training session had seven participants, the second had these seven men and two more, and the third had all nine. Observation of the training sessions documented that there was a high degree of participation and interaction in these sessions. Specifically:

- All of the participants in each of the training sessions actively participated by engaging in the activities, posing questions to the facilitators and the group, answering questions posed by the facilitators or other group members, and building on each other’s comments. While some spoke more than others, no one was dominating, disruptive, or challenging.
- The participants showed respect by listening to one another and never interrupting. They also displayed active listening by looking at the person who was talking, nodding, and verbal nodding. Some of the participants referred to one another by name, which indicated that they had made an effort to learn each other’s names.
- Interactions with one another occurred during group activities in which participants formed small groups with those sitting next to them. Participants sat in different seats every session and therefore interacted with different participants every session. The men were engaged and respectful during these interactions. During each of the sessions’ breaks, the participants continued talking to each other and no one sat quietly on their own.



The three training sessions in August 2016 were intended to be effective educational workshops, with two facilitators engaging the participants in interactive and participatory activities to increase their understanding of violence against women and their skills in taking action to prevent and reduce it. If these workshops are effective, then one will see signs of engagement (physical and verbal participation, attentiveness, and interest), of understanding of violence against women, and of a sense of capacity to contribute to violence prevention (signalled for example by comments indicating that VAW is an issue of personal concern, they have a responsibility to do something about VAW, they can make a difference, and so on). To what extent were these visible during the sessions?

Focusing on the first training session, participants demonstrated enthusiasm during most of the activities. When asked to form small groups, the men in each group talked to each other for the entire duration of each activity. They seemed interested in what the others had to say. They spoke one at a time, listened to each other, and made eye contact with each other. There was nodding, verbal nodding and laughter. By the end of the first session, the participants starting sharing their thoughts during activities without being prompted. The activities seemed successful in generating awareness and understanding.

In one activity in the first session, the men were asked to describe a masculine male, feminine male, masculine female, and feminine female. Participants' comments were relevant and constructive. One man commented that stereotypes have been developed for each of these males and females and that they are not necessarily true. Another mentioned how easy it is to slip into these stereotypes, which he notices among his male friends who have a sense of entitlement and expect their wives to cater to them. A third noticed that weak characteristics are given to feminine females and feminine males and strong characteristics to masculine females and masculine males.

One activity in the second training session was particularly powerful for the participants. This was a 'Privilege Walk', an activity now widely used in educational work on inequality and injustice (Deutsch, 2006). This activity involved splitting the men into two groups (one that represented males and the other that represented females) and asking them to take a step forward if a statement applied to their group. Each time a statement was made and a step was taken by either group, it was a physical representation of that group's opportunity over the other. After the group representing the men had taken several steps forward, indicating that the statements read by the facilitators applied to them, this group began assuming that all of the statements and opportunities would apply to them and they took a step forward when one should have been taken by the group representing females. The group representing females, on the other hand, stayed in place as they similarly assumed that all of the opportunities would apply to men. The participants were very moved by this experience and discussed their assumption that all opportunities belong to men. Although they understood this intellectually, this activity allowed them to add a physical understanding to this experience.



At some points in the sessions, the participants were less talkative. For example, during a different activity in the second session, the facilitators showed two videos about learned masculinity and VAW: “The Man Box” and “The Mask You Live in.” The men watched the videos attentively but were reluctant to share their thoughts on them. At one point, one of the facilitators had to encourage them to speak up. In the third session, the participants were asked to list organisations in which they are involved to get a sense of their spheres of influence. At first, the participants had trouble identifying such organisations and named very few but once the purpose of the activity was better explained to them, they began listing so many organisations that the whiteboard was full. This visual representation of their spheres of influence was very impressive to them and they remarked that they have more influence than they initially realized.

Overall, the participants showed signs of interest in and support of the topic. They paid attention throughout the sessions and looked directly at the person speaking whether it was one of the facilitators or another group member. Some of the participants took notes throughout the session or took pictures of the slides and whiteboard. They rarely displayed signs of disinterest or boredom; however, a couple of the participants were briefly on their phones while the facilitators showed the group a video clip. None of the men displayed any signs of resistance, hostility or discomfort.

A mix of men from different age groups, ethnic backgrounds, and religious orientations took part in the WTWM training sessions. Some of the men were from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB), and participants from NESB and ESB backgrounds spoke equally as did participants from all age ranges. One man who was older and from a NESB background was quieter during the last training session, but was still attentive. Another participant who was from a NESB background sometimes had trouble expressing himself and would repeat himself to get his point across, but the other participants tried to help him out and understand what he was trying to say. This indicated that the other group members valued what he had to contribute to the conversation.

The facilitators began the first session by explaining that they wanted to create a safe space during the training sessions and that everyone’s input was valuable to the discussion. Once this safe space was established, it was carried on into the following two sessions. The facilitators presented their material to the group in a clear manner. When participants responded to their questions, the facilitators acknowledged the participants’ responses by nodding and writing the participants’ comments on the board. The facilitators were also knowledgeable and able to answer participants’ questions and comments. However, they were unable to integrate the cultural and ethnic diversity of the group into their presentations due to lack of time. As a result, the nuances of VAW in each man’s particular cultural groups were not discussed, and this information might have been very relevant to



some of the participants as one of the project team members mentioned at the end of the second session. The facilitators seemed unsure of how to handle tangential comments from the group as they did not want to interrupt the person speaking. However, once the person had finished making their point, they were able to shift the conversation back on topic. Some of the participants arrived late to each session and this affected the facilitators' timing of the sessions as did having to integrate the new group members in the second session.

Close to three months into the project, four of the seven men who had continued to participate in the WTWM project shared their experiences in a focus group discussion. Men in the group commented that they appreciated various aspects of the project, including:

- The step-by-step education and training;
- The provision of resources, including funds;
- Strong facilitation and expert guidance;
- The inclusive and supportive environment;
- The project coordinator's regular and persistent contact with them

Focus group participants commented, for example:

- "It's starting the conversation. It's step by step process. Even if you don't have any particular training or experience, you can come into the group and learn and grow through the process. It's personal development and education at the same time."
- "[The facilitators] facilitated very well. Respectful to the group, respected each person's opinion. They tried to be culturally, you know, competent. [...] Quite supportive and encouraging."

### **Participation in the catch-up sessions**

The men's high degree of participation and interaction continued at the Working Together With Men 'catch-up sessions'. These began in January 2017 and took place at regular intervals throughout the project, with a total of 20 two-hour sessions in all. Six men have continued to participate in the WTWM project through to its conclusion in November 2017, with one withdrawing after taking on a new job with greatly increased hours. Thus, of the men who participated in the training sessions early in the project, nearly all have gone on to participate throughout the life of the project. Attendance at the regular catch-up sessions has been high, with typically five or so men at each.



## A friendship group and support network

The Working Together With Men project has proved effective at providing an engaging, rewarding experience for its participants. In both the focus groups and individual interviews, the men give very positive accounts of their participation in the project, and particularly of the friendships and support they had found in the project group itself. WTWM's 'catch-up sessions' – regular (often fortnightly) get-togethers, over dinner, sometimes with a guest speaker or focused discussion – have been particularly important in fostering a sense of camaraderie and mutual support. This reflects the insight in this field that providing positive reinforcement for men's engagement in violence prevention is useful. This may include intrinsic rewards such as the benefits of participating in groups and friendship circles with positive identities, as well as extrinsic awards such as leadership awards nights and other public affirmations of particular men's or groups' efforts (Crooks, Goodall, Hughes, Jaffe, & Baker, 2007). While WTWM's peer-to-peer sharing, support, and learning were not highly visible in the project plan, they have been an important and effective component of the project.

Close to three months into the project, four of the seven men who had continued to participate in the WTWM project shared their experiences in a focus group discussion. Men in the group commented that they appreciated the participation of diverse and well-intentioned people and the relationships which the group had begun to develop:

- “What I like about this group, is that I’m seeing a diverse group of people. People who has the best intentions, of change for the better. For change [...] This is a group that can help me to do that [make change]. [...] Everyone has the same passion.”
- “We’ve established a good relationship [...] getting closer, more comfortable. But on the other side [...] some people don’t come.”

This theme of the group of men itself as a key positive experience was much more visible towards the end of the project, in the final round of interviews among the implementation group members in October 2017, receiving consistent emphasis here. Participants emphasised the friendships with other men established over the course of the project, the ways in which the group was supportive, respectful, and non-judgemental, the role of the group in sustaining and supporting each members' efforts to design and implement their projects, and the value of the diverse membership of the group. All interviewees spoke positively of their experience in taking part in this project. They have formed and joined



an ongoing page on the social media website Facebook. Key informants' observations corroborate this theme of peer support. One interviewee remarked on

“a really strong peer group amongst participants in this project. You can definitely see the relationships amongst the participants [...] people having conversations offline which is what we wanted to start to see. People are encouraging and supporting one another outside of the project, outside of the core support or outside of my support.”

Other research finds that communities of support are vital to men's ability to sustain a personal commitment to and involvement in anti-violence work. Two US studies among men involved in anti-violence work find that this involvement allows men to build connections with others, particularly other men, and to foster community and mutual support (Casey & Smith, 2010; Piccigallo, Lilley, & Miller, 2012). The men in these other studies reported that such groups allow them to have friendships with other men and 'do masculinity' in ways different from 'traditional' approaches (Casey & Smith, 2010), and that the new social networks or peer groups established were different from men's traditional homosocial networks (Piccigallo et al., 2012). While this was less apparent in the Working Together With Men project, the men did emphasise the friendships and support offered by the Men of Brimbank group as a key positive of their participation.

It is also encouraging that men in the implementation group have emphasised their interest in maintaining and extending the group. Men in the final interviews spoke of inviting other men into the Men of Brimbank group and building a wider network, and discussions are planned with the partner organisations to explore this.

The Working Together With Men project thus has been a highly positive experience for its participants. As one man commented in the final interview in October 2017,

“I think it's been a really worthwhile kind of thing. [...] I've really valued just building friendships with other people in the group [...] the opportunities of training that we've got, to know what the drivers are [...] how to confront those issues, how to build a project, that's all been really valuable. I wouldn't have missed it for the world [...] I've actually enjoyed the experience.”

Similarly, another man said,

“it's been a great project, I've really enjoyed being part of it [...] hope we can keep the project going [...] attract more men. Bring more men into the group [...] it's been a great project and, we've learnt a lot.”



## Buy-in and support from the wider organisation

One dimension of assessment of efforts to involve men in violence prevention is organisational capacity to engage men in violence prevention. In this evaluation, this is assessed primarily in terms of organisational support from the organisation directly responsible for the project. Other dimensions of organisational capacity, not directly assessed here, might include staff members' confidence in engaging men and awareness of the challenges of engaging men.<sup>4</sup>

The Working Together With Men project came out of earlier initiatives and activities focused on engaging men in violence prevention. Work to build agency capacity to engage men in violence prevention already had been done by one of the organisations in the HealthWest Partnership. Women's Health West leads Preventing Violence Together, the regional partnership and strategy that guides the primary prevention of men's violence against women in Melbourne's west. Preventing Violence Together (PVT) was launched in 2010, as the first regional primary prevention partnership and action plan of its kind in Victoria, and now comprises 18 partner organisations. As part of its work in violence prevention, Women's Health West had worked in 2015-2016 to build capacity to engage men. Women's Health West ran education workshops on engaging men in prevention, and their participants included men who then became the WTWM Project Manager and a member of the Advisory Group. Some other organisations which came on as partner organisations for WTWM also had some pre-existing involvement in efforts to engage men in violence prevention, such as Brimbank City Council's White Ribbon Working Group.

The impetus to seek funding for Working Together With Men was shaped also by informal networks and discussions among men and women interested in violence prevention and working in community organisations in Melbourne. In 2015, several women and men from partner organisations within Preventing Violence Together developed an interest in capturing the experiences of men taking action to prevent violence against women. Five men from partner organisations in PVT met in July 2015 to discuss this, then publishing an article in the Women's Health West newsletter on the area. They then were invited by the Healthwest Partnership, another organisation participating in Preventing Violence Together, to join a grant to seek funding for the Working Together With Men project.

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<sup>4</sup> One way to assess organisational capacity to engage men in prevention is to quantify this. An example of such a measure is the Continuum of Agency Readiness to Engage Men, produced by the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV, USA). The project coordinator completed this in August 2016, but it was decided that the instrument was not appropriate for other individuals in the Advisory Group or partner agencies to complete..



The design of the Working Together With Men project also was shaped by experience in other local community projects such as Our3021 (focused on health and empowerment for communities in Brimbank), and by other models such as the CHALLENGE Family Violence Project which had taken place over 2013-2015 (Castelino, Sheridan, & Boulet, 2014; Sheridan, Castelino, & Boulet, 2015). The Healthwest Partnership submitted a funding application to the Department of Social Services' "Building Safe Communities for Women" funding in August 2015, and this was successful. Working Together With Men began in April 2016.

One of the five men mentioned earlier became the Working Together With Men Project Manager. Cuong La had completed a PhD focused on men, gender, and sexual and reproductive health in Vietnam, and had worked in community health and development, including in the area of violence prevention. Of the other four men who had co-authored the piece in the Women's Health West newsletter, three went on to participate in the WTWM Advisory Committee.

Working Together With Men has had strong support from its managing organisation, Healthwest, since its beginnings. Healthwest's Executive Officer supported the project, and Healthwest led the grant application to the Department of Social Services for funding. This funding included support for a project manager at four days per week, support for the violence prevention initiatives to be developed by project participants, and costs associated with governance. The managing organisation's support for the project also was manifest in more informal ways, such as the Executive Officer of the Healthwest Partnership attending a Working Together With Men session. As one key informant commented,

"I mean I've worked on a lot of projects and it isn't often that the CEO attends and hangs out in those project sessions. It's not often at all and I think it was really, really good. So that all feeds into that whole relationship building aspect that we're all committed to this."

The project also has support from Healthwest's partner organisations on the project: IPC Health, Brimbank City Council, cohealth, and Women's Health West. This takes the form of participation by partner organisations' staff members in the WTWM Advisory Committee and other, more informal support.



The qualitative interviews with key informants suggest that the Advisory Committee for the project is characterised by high levels of commitment and engagement. A key informant in August 2016 described the Advisory Committee as “a really positive and productive space”, in which members turn up, participate, and are keen to engage. Another key informant said,

“my observation is that everyone around the table, and I don’t say that lightly, but I say that because I’ve worked with these people for a few years now, quite closely, I think everyone around the table is genuinely really committed to this work. I think everyone is genuinely committed to a feminist analysis of violence against women coming from a recognition of we need to be re-addressing gender and equity or gender and equality. So I think that’s conceptually there. I think there’s been challenges in how that’s sort of being operationalized or playing out. But I think the commitment is there and the conceptual commitment to the ideas is there.”

The levels of engagement and trust around the table in the Advisory Group were shaped, according to two key informants, by the fact that the members had worked together before, in the Preventing Violence Together partnership.

Implementing a project focused on engaging men in violence prevention was seen in some ways as a brave step by the HealthWest Partnership. A key informant commented in August 2016 that the project was seen as risky in various ways. Men from the community might not turn up to participate in the project, male perpetrators of violence might seek to use the project as a way to rescue their reputations, and men might go into the community and say or do the wrong thing, causing harm to the organisation’s reputation and community goodwill. Reflecting now at the project’s conclusion, these risks have not been realised.

While the WTWM project is guided by the HealthWest Partnership, a consortium of community organisations, the project is unlikely to have a significant impact on these partner organisations’ own capacity to engage men. Individuals from the partner organisations participate in the Advisory Committee, and this is likely to build their own understanding of engaging men in prevention. Beyond this however, there is no mechanism for the project to then feed back into how these organisations – their other staff or the organisation overall – understand or practise engaging men in violence prevention. Such feedback effects may be especially small where the partner organisation is large or itself undergoing substantial change.



As one key informant commented in the August 2016 interviews,

“Because we’re such a large organisation and because there’s so many different layers of authority that you go through. I mean I can tell you around the fact that my manager was interested, even prior to me joining, around engaging men in the communities. She’s already been interested in that. But whether that carries through across the whole organisation or what that means for us today I honestly can’t answer that.”

The first objective identified in Working Together With Men’s initial plan, to “Increase the capacity of local agencies to identify and engage men in the primary prevention of violence against women”, therefore seems overly ambitious.

At the same time, Working Together With Men has been an important example to these partner organisations of how to effectively engage men in prevention. Key informants interviewed for the evaluation emphasise that the partner organisations see the project as important and significant. In addition, implementing or supporting the project may have increased levels of awareness of issues of sexism and gender inequality among organisations’ staff members. For example, a key informant commented in the August 2016 interviews that she has noticed changes at Healthwest since it began supporting the project:

“I’ve noticed changes. I think within our organisation about just people being a bit more comfortable to talk about gender equity, or pull people up on language. There was a comment that went down in the office the other day, it was a joke. Yeah, I hadn’t actually tweaked that it might offend someone. Someone else, another woman in the team, raised that. I think it’s because of the discussions that are happening around this project, that people are just more aware of the issues and feel a bit more empowered to bring them up.”

Participation in the WTWM Advisory Group has heightened some members’ awareness of the value of engaging men in prevention, and this has fed into their work in their own organisations. For example, one key informant interviewed in 2016 reported that now when considering applications to his organisation for support for prevention projects, he is more likely to suggest that they include efforts to engage men.



There are encouraging signs that the Working Together With Men project's work in engaging men in violence prevention is increasingly visible within wider violence prevention plans and networks. The organisations represented by the members of the WTWM Advisory Committee also are members of Preventing Violence Together, the regional violence prevention partnership and strategy in Melbourne's west. Working Together With Men began reporting quarterly to PVT in 2017. In late 2017 there were discussions regarding the possibility of ongoing links between WTWM or the Men of Brimbank and Preventing Violence Together. As a key informant from Healthwest remarked,

“we've been quite successful in elevating the issue or the importance of men's involvement in primary prevention because before this project, no one was really talking about it. So, I think sort of creating that alignment with the PVT executive governance group has really helped and reporting into the implementation group, sort of building awareness around the project, I think that's been quite successful.”

The integration of Working Together With Men into the Preventing Violence Together partnership and strategy also has legitimated the project and encouraged partner organisations' support for it. As a key informant commented about one such organisation,

“at the beginning they were really reluctant to commit to anything [...] But it's only now that it is seen as part of PVT, that they're actually saying to us how can we help, what more can we do?”

If community organisations are to be truly supportive of efforts to prevent and reduce violence against women, they must include attention to their own workplace cultures. When it began, the Advisory Committee for Working Together With Men already included individuals with pre-existing involvement in violence prevention, links to other violence prevention networks, and an awareness of and commitment to the issue of violence against women. Nevertheless, there were some signs of gender-inequitable dynamics within the group, and group members took various steps to address them. Two key informants commented in the 2016 interviews that they had noticed some problematic dynamics during Advisory Committee meetings, in which at times men spoke over women, women's contributions were neglected, or women were delegated lower-status work. In addition, when such things occurred, there was little effort by others to intervene in these, although some members did comment outside the meetings on them.



In response, the Women's Health West representative proposed a code of conduct for the members of the Advisory Committee, having seen something similar used in work regarding family violence in Indigenous contexts. Later termed a "pledge", this was drafted by the Project Manager and revised with feedback from others in the group. The pledge commits individuals, for example, to:

“Listen to women and believe about their lived experiences of violence against women.

Work to recognise male power and challenge male privilege within my community

Continually work to recognise and transform my own harmful sexist or violence-supportive attitudes, beliefs, behaviours

Speak out against sexism and violence against women, and model change for other men. [...]"

(See the Appendix for the pledge's full text.) The pledge was signed by all members of the Advisory Group. There were discussions at the time for example about whether individuals on the Advisory Group would be signing the pledge as individuals or as representatives of their organisation, and whether the pledge would involve a commitment only by male members of the Advisory Group or by all members.

The Advisory Group pledge, and the discussions associated with developing and signing it, did raise awareness at the time of gender dynamics within the meetings. However, the pledge was not then the focus of later meetings, and no processes were used to check on its implementation. While there was discussion of a proposal for education and training for the members of the Advisory Committee themselves, this was not taken up. Nevertheless, as one key informant remarked, this initiative, and the wider discussions in the Advisory Committee meetings, did 'raise the bar of accountability' for the participants. This report returns to the issue of gender-equitable processes in the Recommendations section.





## Objective 2: Increased awareness and understanding of violence against women

Working Together With Men (WTWM) seeks to increase the understanding of men's violence against women among the men who participate directly in the project. The men who participate in the WTWM project have shown increases in their understandings of men's violence against women. This is visible in the comments they offer in the project events (the training sessions, ideas nights, and 'catch-up' evenings), their responses in the focus group and interviews, and their project plans. In the final interviews conducted during this project, the men reported increases in their understanding of violence against women and in their confidence about articulating these to others.

Longitudinal, quantitative data on changes over time in participants' attitudes towards violence against women is not available. Quantitative data on participants' attitudes towards violence against women was collected for this purpose in the survey for the first Information Session, but then dropped from the second Session for practical reasons, and not collected in later surveys. Instead, to assess changes over time in the participants' attitudes this report relies on several waves of qualitative data, although quantitative data are included in the assessment of participants' perceptions of their roles in prevention.

The pool of men who participated in the two opening Information Sessions for the project are described as the 'engagement group'. The men from among this pool who continued to participate, going on to take part in the WTWM training sessions in August, are described as the 'training group'. The seven men who then continued with the project, developing a violence prevention initiative, are described as the 'implementation group'.

Sixty or so people attended one or other of the two Information Sessions which opened the Working Together With Men project in July and August 2016, including 50 men, and 40 of these completed a quantitative survey. As noted earlier, the survey used for the second Information Session was considerably shorter than the survey used in the first session, because this had taken too long. While the surveys used in the Information Sessions did not collect demographic data on the participants, they did collect data on violence- and prevention-related attitudes and beliefs. I focus here on the questions common to both surveys, regarding perceptions of one's role in violence prevention, existing involvement in such work, and one's self-efficacy in taking action. (See the Appendix for the full survey.)



## A role in preventing violence against women?

Among the men who elected to take part in WTWM's opening two events, what level of commitment and involvement was there already for the work of preventing violence against women?

The men who attended the Information Sessions generally felt that they have a role to play in addressing domestic and sexual violence. Participants were presented with nine statements regarding perceptions of their roles in violence prevention, such as "I think I can do something about domestic violence and/or sexual violence" and "There is not much need for me to think about sexual violence", and asked to respond on a five-point scale from "Not at all true" to "Very much true". (Statements worded in an undesirable way were reverse-coded in the quantitative analysis.) For example, 69% agreed or strongly agreed that "Sometimes I think I should learn more about domestic violence and/or sexual violence", 81% agreed that "I think I can do something about domestic violence and/or sexual violence", and 65% agreed that "I am planning to learn more about the problem of domestic violence and/or sexual violence". Most men also rejected the ideas that sexual violence and domestic violence are not problems in the community, for example with 84% describing the statement "I don't think domestic violence is a problem in this community" as not at all true. Two-thirds of participants felt that there are things they can do about sexual violence and domestic violence: 67% rejected the statement that "I don't think there is much I can do about sexual violence" and 68% rejected the statement that "I don't think there is much I can do about domestic violence".

The men who turned up to these first Information Sessions, then, generally felt that domestic violence and sexual violence are real problems in the community, and issues of personal relevance to them, and that they could play some role in addressing these.

Participants also were asked about their existing involvement in violence prevention activity (excluding the WTWM project itself). Despite the perceptions above, most men in the room were not involved in such activity. Only one-quarter (28%) reported that they were actively involved in projects to deal with domestic violence and/or sexual violence and one third (33%) that they had recently taken part in activities or volunteered their time on projects focused on ending domestic violence and/or sexual violence. The individuals who participated in Working Together With Men's opening events also were asked about their own capacity to prevent violence against women, but this is the focus of the following section.



## An interest in taking action

Of the 50 men who attended the initial Information Sessions, 16 then signed up to participate in the Working Together With Men training sessions. These took place on August 11, 18, and 25, 2016, and a total of nine men attended. Observation of these sessions suggests that the men who attended were in general sympathetic to the issue of violence against women and interested in taking personal and social action to address it. The following patterns were visible in the training sessions:

- Most of the comments offered were informed and supportive and showed a level of curiosity and insight. Some participants drew on their personal experiences of violence against women (VAW) in their families and communities.
- The participants seemed interested, moved, and motivated by the sessions. One man expressed that he felt emotional when the facilitators presented statistics of yearly deaths from VAW and that this knowledge motivates him to do more. Another worried that the statistics may have the opposite effect because they are ‘numbing’ and that they may cause people to become jaded rather than proactive.
- All of the men acknowledged that they were looking for skills and strategies to help their community regarding VAW. All of their comments suggested a sense of commitment to preventing and reducing VAW.

Observation of the training sessions also suggests that the men were learning the language and approaches associated with the issue of violence against women and its prevention:

- Overall, the participants were relatively comfortable with the terms and language used once it was presented to them, although they may not have been familiar with all of the terms and language beforehand. Participants used appropriate language but seemed hesitant at times. For example, they seemed hesitant to use the word ‘gay’ in one activity. They were also unsure of the differences between sex and gender.
- At one point in the third session, while discussing responses to VAW, the participants seemed to miss the point that the focus of the training sessions was on primary prevention rather than intervening in specific VAW situations that they come across. This needed to be clarified by the facilitators.
- When discussing VAW myths, two men commented that the myth of “if it was that bad she would leave” was difficult for them to understand in the past and they discussed the repercussions of this myth in terms of dismissing women’s experiences.

The training sessions included moments where the educators directly challenged and sought to improve participants’ understandings. For example, at one point one man commented that some men are violent because they “bottle everything up”. The facilitator (Kiri Bear) took this opportunity to challenge this comment by showing how easy it



is, even for men who are well informed on the topic of VAW, to slip back into thought patterns that excuse VAW and the perpetrator. The man did not become defensive and Kiri's comments turned the conversation into a teachable moment.

## Violence against women as important and personal

Qualitative data from later in the project corroborates the sense that the participants showed increased awareness and understanding of violence against women. Six of the men from the original 'engagement' group continued to participate in the WTWM project throughout, and these men – plus one other who joined the project after the opening Information Sessions – comprise the 'implementation' group. The six men attended a focus group discussion in October 2016, after the training sessions and close to three months after the project had begun. During the focus group, individuals commented that they now see the issue of violence against women as a crucial one, that they endorse and advocate for gender equality in relationships and families, and that they look critically at their own treatment of their female partners. The following are direct quotes:

- “I've realised that this issue, violence against women, is a very important one for any society. [...] This is a very good lesson for everybody.”
- “Gender equality is a must. [...] That we like to see. [...] harmony and unity in the family. [...] A democracy with two parties, not just a dictator in the house. Yeah, that's what we want. That's what we want.”
- “Sometimes I found it difficult to differentiate, for example, when there's a disagreement at home with my partner, you know, and [...] I express my emotion, or, anger, is this another form of domestic violence, or am I right? [...] The challenge is how to deal with it sometimes [...] For example, she wants to send money [to her relatives], and I say, no that's not our priority. And, as a result, the discussion will heat up. [...] How, what are the boundaries, you know? I start asking myself, is this, okay, normal, you know, human reaction, or could it be interpreted as another form of domestic violence? That comes to my mind sometimes. Yeah yeah.”
- “One of the skills is learning about DV ourselves [...] how we can use those skills in our families, or, um, in our private lives. [...] Being aware of how you speak. What you say [...] Being able to listen to your partner [...] Having more, better communication with your partner.”



Most members of the implementation group completed a second quantitative survey about 14 months after the first survey, in October 2016. As one might expect given their ongoing participation in the project, these men showed a high level of agreement that violence against women is an important community problem and an issue of personal relevance to them. Participants again were presented with nine statements regarding perceptions of their roles in violence prevention and asked to respond on a five-point scale from “Not at all true” to “Very much true”. All (100%) agreed that “I think I can do something about domestic violence and/or sexual violence”, and three-quarters (76%) agreed that “Sometimes I think I should learn more about domestic violence and/or sexual violence”. Among the implementation group there was unanimous rejection of the ideas that sexual violence and domestic violence are not problems in their community and that “there is not much I can do” about sexual violence and domestic violence.

## Increases in knowledge

Towards the very end of the Working Together With Men project, in October 2017, the seven men participated in one-on-one interviews. They were asked to reflect on whether and how their understandings of violence against women might have changed over the course of the project. Nearly all individuals described improvements in their understanding. They referred for example to:

- Increased knowledge of the high levels of violence against women in Australia and/or in the local community;
- Greater awareness of the different forms of violence, including awareness of non-physical forms of coercion and abuse such as emotional abuse and financial control;
- Increased understanding of the ‘drivers’ of violence against women, and the links between this violence and patterns of gender inequality;
- Improved knowledge of what characterises healthy and unhealthy relationships;
- Insight regarding culturally specific factors which shape violence against women;
- A greater ability to substantiate their views about violence against women in interactions with others, informed for example by the notes, scenarios, and conversations in the WTWM training sessions.

All men reported that their own understanding of violence against women had improved over the course of the project. At least one man commented that his increased knowledge of violence against women had fed into increased confidence in articulating and implementing prevention activities. Only one of the six men said that his understanding of violence against women had changed little over the project, emphasising that he had been involved in the issue since the mid-1990s, although his knowledge of violence prevention practice had. In the final survey conducted among the implementation group, there was



unanimous, strong agreement with the statement, “I see gender inequality as a key cause of violence against women.” All the men also agreed that “I have a good understanding of the key causes or drivers of violence against women”, although this was split evenly among those who “strongly” or only “somewhat” agreed. It is also clear that for some men in the group this increased understanding has had a *personal* significance, in generating reflection on the ways in which their own behaviour may be violence-supportive or gender-equitable. Comments in the focus group discussion in October 2016, reported above, demonstrate this. A year later, in the end-of-project interviews, several men offered further comments attesting to their critical self-reflection. For example:

- One man commented at length on how, in the course of the project, he has become more aware of problematic gender dynamics in his relationship with his female partner. He now is more aware of how domestic work is distributed in their household and of unhelpful ways he has conversed with her in the past, and he situates these and other issues within his developing understanding of gender stereotypes and male privilege.
- Another man emphasised how contributing to his family’s happiness involves communication, trust, and respect, linking this to the awareness of emotional, financial, and other forms of abuse and control in families that he had gained through the project.

These self-reports do not provide definitive evidence that the project has shifted these men’s attitudes towards violence against women. It proved impractical to gather other kinds of evidence such as pre- and post-intervention quantitative data on shifts over time in participants’ attitudes.

However, these self-reports are corroborated by testimonies from the men’s female partners. The Working Together With Men project engaged a film maker, Andrew Robb, to capture the journeys of the Men of Brimbank. He conducted video interviews with the members of the implementation group and with two of the men’s female partners. One woman commented that

“Even [Name] has changed a lot since he started coming to the group, I must confess. Yeah he has, changed a lot, so. [...] The way he talks, he, the communication. He didn’t used to talk or anything. Like, he don’t want to communicate. He just do things because he’s the man. But now. And even now. Even financially. [...] he shares. And, he cares for his children. He wants to be part of their life. Whereas, back home, it’s not like that. Kids don’t even see their dads, maybe, two days or more, that’s it. [...] And even in Australia, most of the men tend to do that. [...] They leave everything with the woman. [...] I’m really really pleased to, get connected with this men’s group.”



Another woman reflected,

“I know it was um, very influential for [name]. We had many conversations about, the Men of Brimbank workshops. And um. I feel it really had a big impact on him, in a positive way. And he’s really, ah, wanting to do something to ah, promote and, to prevent, domestic violence, as a result. [...] The very first workshop I do recall him coming back and, being really inspired to do something [...] I could see he was, I think he was getting quite passionate about doing something. Um. And, and, about, you know, with a group of men. That he felt he could actually make a difference.”

The men’s self-reports, corroborated by these partners’ accounts, are encouraging signs of the project’s significance for its participants. While it proved impractical to gather other kinds of evidence such as pre- and post-intervention quantitative data on shifts over time in participants’ attitudes, they support the assessment that the project has shifted these men’s attitudes and practices regarding gender and violence.

## The persistence of violence-supportive attitudes

There were some signs of violence-supportive attitudes among men early on in the Working Together With Men project, and a few men who persisted with their involvement also continued to offer such attitudes.

One might expect that the men who elected to participate in this violence prevention project will have lower levels of support for men’s violence against women than men in general. On the other hand, violence-supportive attitudes are common in Australian society. National survey data finds that such attitudes – which justify the use of violence, excuse the perpetrator’s behavior, minimise the extent or reality of men’s violence against women or trivialise its impact, and blame the victim – are widespread, and more so among men than women (K. Webster et al., 2014). Men involved in anti-violence advocacy hardly are immune from wider cultural messages which normalise men’s violence against women. Men may join violence prevention efforts out of problematic motivations such as chivalric and paternalistic understandings, and research among male activists finds that some do act in patriarchal ways which undermine their ostensibly feminist goals (Flood, 2014).

Among the men who have participated in Working Together With Men all along, there have been some signs of violence-supportive attitudes. These did not involve explicit endorsement of or justifications for men’s violence against women, but other claims which minimised the actual extent of this violence or excused perpetrators from responsibility for their actions. Some men have remarked in meetings on women’s use of false accusations of violence or offered an understanding of men’s intimate partner violence as originating in an inability to control their anger.



Among the men in the project's 'implementation group', in the October 2016 focus group, while most comments on men's violence against women made were positive, one man did offer a comment at the end that some women make false accusations of domestic violence in order to end marriages that they entered into only to secure residency in Australia. He commented, "there are lots of cases where women sponsored by men, get permanent residency, then falsely accuse the man, and go. [...] There are some women who are abusing the system." Another man offered a partial endorsement of this, stating that "we need to tell the other party [women] that the law is on your side, but you shouldn't abuse it". He returned to this issue in the final interviews conducted for the project a year later, expressing concerns about how family law may exacerbate men's violence because of bias against fathers.

The presence of such beliefs is not surprising given their prevalence in the population at large. National data shows that more than half of men and women (53%) agree that

"Women going through custody battles often make up or exaggerate claims of domestic violence in order to improve their case" (K. Webster et al., 2014).

The Working Together With Men project is defined in part by education and training among its participants. The Project Manager, the expert educators who facilitate the training sessions and other events, and indeed other men participating in the project have worked to steer individuals away from violence-supportive views. This has happened both through discussion and education in the project meetings and workshops and one-on-one discussions between the coordinator and individual men.

There were differing levels of understanding and awareness of violence against women and its prevention among the men first recruited for the project, and this is true among the seven men who have continued to participate. This has brought challenges for the implementation phase of the project, in which the participants design and implement their own projects. In particular, one of the men among the implementation group persisted with a plan for a prevention project based on problematic understandings of the problem of violence against women and of how to prevent it. His project focuses on fostering healthy and happy relationships in families and the community, a laudable goal. The project, however, had some significant weaknesses. It focused particularly on preventing divorce, it did little to address the gendered drivers of violence against women, and its strategies for encouraging healthy relationships focused on such generic practices as mindfulness and communication. For these reasons, the project did not receive support or funding. The report returns to discussion of the actual projects developed by the WTWM participants further below.

A key objective of the Working Together With Men project is to build men's capacity actually to engage in violence prevention work. To what extent has this been effective?





## Objective 3: Build the knowledge, skills and capacity of men in Brimbank to develop and implement community-based initiatives to prevent violence against women and children

There are several overlapping dimensions to project participants' knowledge, skills and capacity in developing and implementing violence prevention initiatives, including participants':

- sense of their role in violence prevention;
- knowledge of key frameworks, concepts, and strategies in violence prevention; and
- perceived capacity to implement community-based initiatives.

Note that participants' actual development of violence prevention initiatives, their actual prevention *behaviour*, is the focus of the fourth project objective, discussed further below.

### Sense of one's role in violence prevention

Individuals' ability to enact violence prevention is shaped by their sense of responsibility, their perceived role in prevention, and their sense of self-efficacy, their perceived ability or capacity to engage in prevention. To what extent were these present among the men who first began in the Working Together With Men project, and to what extent were these extended as those men continued with the project?

Among the 50 men who turned up to Working Together With Men's opening events, to what extent did they feel they have the skills and capacity to prevent violence against women? Participants were presented with 17 statements focused on prevention self-efficacy and asked to respond on a five-point scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly disagree". The statements included both general statements about their capacities in prevention (such as "I can help prevent violence against women in my community" and "Men have an important role to play in ending violence against women") and more specific statements focused on their capacity to take particular forms of preventative action (such as "A group of guys would listen to me if I confronted them about their sexist behavior" and "The fear of being laughed at would prevent me from telling a group of guys it was disrespectful to whistle at women").



The vast majority of men in this initial ‘engagement group’ felt that “I can help prevent violence against women in my community”, with 95% agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Similarly, around nine out of ten agreed that “my personal efforts can make a difference in reducing violence against women” (87% agreement) and that “Men have an important role to play in ending violence against women” (90% agreement). Close to nine out of ten (89%) agreed that “Violence against women is an important issue in this community”, and four-fifths (85%) agreed that “violence against women comes from behaviours and habits that can be changed.” Most men in the Information Sessions also rejected statements which distance themselves from violence against women, such as “Violence against women is primarily a ‘women’s issue’” (84% disagreement), “Violence against women doesn’t affect me” (84% disagreement), and “Violence against women is a private matter between those directly affected” (72% disagreement).

While these men’s sense of their role in, and their general capacity for, violence prevention were strong, their confidence in their skills in taking particular forms of preventative action was more uneven. For example, close to three-quarters (72%) agreed that “It is intimidating to think about trying to stop a guy from hitting his girlfriend”, and close to half (44%) agreed that “It would be too hard for me to confront a stranger who was being abusive toward a woman”. These responses may reflect a fear of physical confrontation on intervening, as many people assume that the only way to intervene in actual incidents of domestic violence is through violent confrontation (Flood, 2011b).

The men felt more capable of other forms of intervention such as challenging sexist and violence-supportive comments and behaviours, although the men who reported self-efficacy typically were in the minority. About one-third (37%) agreed that “A group of guys would listen to me if I confronted them about their sexist behavior”, and a similar proportion (41%) disagreed that “The fear of being laughed at would prevent me from telling a group of guys it was disrespectful to whistle at women”. Half the men (49%) disagreed with the statement that “I don’t think I could stop a group of guys who are harassing a woman at a party”.

The participants in the Information Sessions showed more confidence in challenging violence-supportive behaviour when this was with friends or peers. Four-fifths (80%) agreed that “my peers will listen to me if I speak out against sexual violence,” and three-quarters (74%) agreed that “I would be comfortable telling my friend to stop calling his girlfriend names.” In addition, around half (53%) agreed that they “have the skills to help support someone who is in an abusive relationship”.



## *Comparing joiners and non-joiners*

Most members of the implementation group – the men who continued to participate in the project throughout its duration – were present for the opening Information Sessions and thus part of the pool whose survey results are described above. We can compare the initial survey responses of these six men, the ‘joiners’, to those of the other men who did not continue with the project, the ‘non-joiners’, although the numbers are too small to detect statistically significant differences.

Based on the survey responses in the initial Information Sessions, the six men who later joined the WTWM implementation group seemed to have a stronger recognition of violence against women than the men who did not. For example, while 19% of the non-joiners saw as very much true the statement that “I don’t think sexual violence is a problem in this community” or were unsure, none of the six joiners did so. However, the joiners and non-joiners had similar responses to the statements that “I don’t think there is much I can do about sexual violence” and “I don’t think there is much I can do about domestic violence”.

At these first Information Sessions, the WTWM joiners already had higher levels of involvement in violence prevention efforts. Three of the six men (50%) reported that they had recently taken part in activities or volunteered their time on projects focused on ending domestic violence and/or sexual violence, compared to 30% of the non-joiners. Half (50%) reported that they had been or were currently involved in ongoing efforts to end domestic violence and/or sexual violence (excluding WTWM itself), compared to 36% of the non-joiners.

The men who continued with long-term participation in the WTWM project do not seem to have had any stronger sense of violence prevention self-efficacy at the beginning of the project than the men who withdrew. There were similar levels of agreement that “I can help prevent violence against women in my community”, “my personal efforts can make a difference in reducing violence against women”, and “violence against women comes from behaviours and habits that can be changed.”

The joiners were more comfortable than the non-joiners with the idea that violence against women is or should be an issue of concern to men. They showed a stronger rejection of the idea that “Violence against women is primarily a ‘women’s issue’”, with 100% disagreeing, compared to 80% of the non-joiners. They were unanimous (100%) in agreeing that “Men have an important role to play in ending violence against women”, with five of the six strongly agreeing, compared to 91% of the non-joiners. While 9% of the non-joiners (3 of 33) agreed that “Violence against women is a private matter between those directly affected”, none of the joiners did so.



Considering the issue of confidence in taking particular forms of preventative action, although the joiners and non-joiners had similar responses on some statements, there were also signs that the joiners also felt a stronger sense of self-efficacy or skill. The joiners were less likely to agree that “The fear of being laughed at would prevent me from telling a group of guys it was disrespectful to whistle at women”, with two-thirds (67%) strongly disagreeing, compared to only 36% of the non-joiners. Most joiners (83%) disagreed with the idea that “I don’t think I could stop a group of guys who are harassing a woman at a party”, compared to only 42% of the non-joiners. Half the joiners (50%) rejected the statement that “It would be too hard for me to confront a stranger who was being abusive toward a woman”, compared to only 33% of the non-joiners. On the other hand, while four-fifths of the non-joiners (81%) agreed that “I have the confidence to say something to a guy who is acting inappropriately”, only 67% of the joiners did so.

### *Comparing joiners at the beginning and end*

Most members of the implementation group – the seven men who continued to participate in the project throughout its duration – were surveyed for a second time about 14 months into the project, in October 2016. Among this smaller, self-selected group, the quantitative survey data shows that these men continue to have a high sense of prevention self-efficacy, and there are some signs that this has increased. With only six men, the numbers are far too small to detect any statistically significant differences between the men’s first and second wave of survey responses. In any case, the pattern is that on many items, by the second survey there is unanimous or near-unanimous endorsement of desirable attitudes towards violence prevention. For example, while one of the six men had been unsure in the July or August 2015 Information Sessions whether “I don’t think there is much I can do about sexual violence” and “I don’t think there is much I can do about domestic violence”, by October 2016 all six unanimously rejected these statements.

In a positive direction, by the second survey, the number who agree that “A group of guys would listen to me if I confronted them about their sexist behavior” had gone from 4 to 5 of the 6, the number agreeing that they “have the skills to help support someone who is in an abusive relationship” had gone from 3 to 5, and agreement that “I have the confidence to say something to a guy who is acting inappropriately” had gone from 4 to 6. On the other hand, the number who agree that “It is intimidating to think about trying to stop a guy from hitting his girlfriend” had gone from 4 to 5, and levels of agreement with other statements remained the same.



## Knowledge of key frameworks, concepts, and strategies in violence prevention

The capacity to design and implement effective violence prevention initiatives is underpinned in part by knowledge of concepts, frameworks, and strategies in prevention. Evidence that the participants have gained this knowledge comes from the qualitative focus groups and interviews and from self-reported survey data.

Early on, some of the men who had continued with the WTWM training sessions commented in a focus group that one important challenge is developing confidence and knowledge or expertise about violence against women and its prevention. Regarding knowledge, one man commented,

“The problem is that we are not expert. [...] We need Cuong to help us. To train us first. [...] In last two months, everyone has asked, need to prepare something to talk. Then we become more confident. To the outside. Or, when we go to a group, maybe we need one or two experts to come with us, at least. Maybe.”

By the end of the project, most members of the implementation group emphasised that they had gained substantial knowledge of violence against women and its prevention. Six of the seven men participated in one-on-one interviews in October 2017. One man, for example, emphasised the value of the training and education provided in both the three training sessions and the regular catch-up meetings:

“we were thoroughly, well prepared well trained [...] a lot of notes taken home, from the conversation, that we had to read [...] a lot of case scenarios [...] they were quite helpful [...] without that helpful information I don't think that we would have been able to handle situations where um, you know, the people who listen to us disagree [...] able to substantiate our claims.”



These self-reports are corroborated for example by one of the key informants, who had sat in some of the regular ‘catch-up’ meetings:

“the men have clearly grown in terms of their knowledge and their confidence and capacity. So I think something has worked well and it’s probably a combo of the training that we’ve done in bringing in those expert facilitators and also the constant catch-ups and opportunity for the men to throw ideas around amongst themselves and have Cuong there to sort of answer questions [...] just through observing the men and their conversations and their confidence in talking about the issue in particular. I think early on, yeah, there was definitely a hesitance to speak about the issue and that really shifted.”

## Perceived capacity to implement community-based initiatives

The capacity actually to implement violence prevention efforts depends in part on skills in project planning. Men in the final interviews emphasised the ways in which the WTWM project’s processes had enabled them to design their projects, including the group-based project planning discussions and the one-on-one mentoring by the Project Manager. As one man commented,

“My experience is, this was a good opportunity, to discipline myself. To work continuously on the project. To commit to it. To learn from one another. From the experts, that are coming to this program as well. And, if I had any questions I knew where to go to. And to ask information. Cuong [the project coordinator] for example he sent me a lot of material. You know, current research papers and things like that. And all that was a plus about this project.”

In a focus group discussion conducted several months into the project (October 2016), at the time of the training sessions, participants identified a range of challenges in actually developing and implementing violence prevention initiatives. These include:

- Having credibility and taking leadership;
- Persuading others of the need for violence prevention work;
- Figuring out how to begin processes of change, including in negotiation with institutions and institutional leaders;
- Taking substantive rather than token action.



With regard to credibility, one man commented that the head of the organisation he is trying to influence had asked that the two expert facilitators employed by the WTWM project come along instead. Another challenge is that the issue of violence against women simply may be seen as a minor or irrelevant issue, including in particular cultural contexts. One man commented for example,

“The biggest challenge is, for, most of the [named] community, they don’t see this as a priority. This is not a burning issue. They would rather talk about climate change, or ohhh, the American election. [Laughter] This is not, ah... Don’t worry about it, it’s not a big deal.”

Another man in this early focus group emphasised that he wants to make sure that they are not perceived as engaged merely in tokenistic action, but as taking genuine action:

“[...] as we keep going, we have to kick some goals, we have to get some results. [...] we have shown that we’re not one of those groups that does nothing... We have to show the community that we are accountable, that we do mean business. [...] The actions that we take. How we speak. Um, all those things.”

Prevention capacity also depends in part on people’s time and energies. In a focus group session conducted among the training group, several months into the WTWM project, two men commented that if the project leaders had made it clear from the start that participants would develop and implement a project, some people might have dropped out. Participants in the focus group also emphasised the challenge of making time for regular participation in the project meetings. Nevertheless, attendance at the regular catch-up meetings remained high over the course of the project.

The men in the WTWM implementation group had a reasonable level of confidence in their prevention skills by the end of the project, from the patterns of response to the third survey conducted in September 2017. This survey, towards the end of the project, included new questions intended to gauge their self-reported knowledge and skills in violence prevention, as a complement to the qualitative data just discussed. The following table shows the men’s patterns of response to the statements provided.



*Table 2: Self-reported knowledge and skills in violence prevention*

MY VIEWS	Strongly Agree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
I have a good understanding of the key causes or drivers of violence against women.	50	50			
I see gender inequality as a key cause of violence against women.	100				
I feel confident in explaining why some men use violence against women.	66.7	33.3			
I know how to engage other men in conversations about violence and gender.	50	33.3	16.7		
I know how the primary prevention of violence against women is different from other responses to this violence.	66.7	16.7	16.7		
I am familiar with a range of strategies for preventing violence against women.	33.3	66.7			
I know how to plan and design a violence prevention program or initiative.	16.7	66.7		16.7	
I am confident of my ability to implement a violence prevention program or initiative in my community.	33.3	66.7			

All agreed, for example, that they are “familiar with a range of strategies for preventing violence against women”, they known “how to plan and design a violence prevention program or initiative”, and they are confident of their “ability to implement a violence prevention program or initiative in my community”. Still, most of the men only ‘somewhat’ rather than ‘strongly’ agreed here. It should be acknowledged that this data provides only a rough measure of individuals’ self-reported skills in violence prevention. For example, the man who ‘somewhat disagreed’ that he knows “how to plan and design a violence prevention program or initiative” in fact had a well-organised initiative, the Men of Brimbank pledge.



One of the men has continued to struggle with actually enacting his project. He feels a strong personal commitment to addressing violence against women, he has been a consistent and vocal participant throughout the Working Together With Men project, and he reports increased confidence in his knowledge about violence against women. At the same time, he has struggled with his own confidence and skill in actually implementing a prevention project. This has included difficulties with managing the practicalities of a project (timelines, time management, and next steps), and a lack of a sense of self-efficacy in taking action. The latter has been informed by a powerful sense that he does not have a professional role in violence prevention, nor official training or expertise. It is not clear to what extent the project's processes of group education and one-on-one mentoring could have lessened these. At the same time, this man has engaged in considerable reflection regarding his relationships with his female partner and son as a result of the project, and he has volunteered to contribute to ongoing prevention work being organised by one of the partner organisations.

Although the implementation group has become an important, positive source of friendship and support for the men involved, peer support has had less influence on the direct design of each other's projects. Instead, education and guidance in project design has come largely from the Project Manager, the Advisory Group, and instruction in the training and project planning sessions. For example, when participants drafted their project plans these were circulated to group members for comment via email, but few of the men offered feedback on others' projects.

On the other hand, the group did act as a source of encouragement, pressure even, to make progress with one's project. As one man commented about the other group members,

“They're asking me all the time. Everybody is asking you, where is your project at? I have to say something [...] “Oh sorry, guys”, you can't say something like that. It's good you know, they check on you [...] And we are doing the same thing to others as well.”



Several of the men in the implementation group spoke in the final round of interviews of how involvement in the project had inspired or cemented a longer-term commitment to violence prevention advocacy. While they joined the project because of an initial interest in the issues, participation had fostered an orientation towards long-term involvement. As one man said,

“Initially it was just for me to, do something, in the short term. Execute a specific project. And that’s done. But now, ahhh, it’s. It shows me direction. This has to be long-term. [...] And I have to commit in myself you know for long-term goals.”

Another man commented,

“I’ve learned a lot and actually like, um... made change, alive, like, um in my life [...] Family violence have been areas of my interest, but the readiness was not there, maybe because I was not trained or because I was, I did not have any materials so I was not having enough motivation. Or like. But having these - being within this project actually like ah, gives me the readiness. And I’m always being an advocate within the family violence issue.”

He went on to report that the project has been “a real change in my life” and has inspired him to continue working in this area.

The report moves now to the final objective of the project, focusing here on the actual violence prevention initiatives being designed and implemented by the men who have taken part in Working Together With Men.





## Objective 4: Increase capacity of men in Brimbank to advocate and sustain PVAW

To what extent are the activities implemented by participants in Working Together With Men likely to contribute to the prevention of violence against women? This evaluation compares planned initiatives against existing standards for effective practice in violence prevention, but it does not directly assess the actual impact of these.

### *Fostering effective projects*

After Working Together With Men's two information sessions and three training sessions, those men continuing with the project developed and submitted proposals for their own violence prevention initiatives, using an "Expression of Interest template". Working Together With Men then used three means to encourage the development of appropriate and effective violence prevention projects: two three-hour workshops on project planning, a template for project plans, and tailored guidance and feedback from the project coordinator and Advisory Group members.

The project plan template, for example, is designed to encourage the formulation of focused and evidence-based strategies. Informed by Our Watch's "Change the Story" prevention framework (2015), the template asks which of this framework's four themes for action the project addresses.<sup>5</sup> It poses a series of further questions about the project's aims, strategies, milestones, risks, budget, and intended impacts. Members of the implementation group submitted proposals for their projects using this template, then receiving feedback and advice from the project coordinator and others in further developing and implementing their projects.

The following table outlines the initiatives developed by the seven men who have participated throughout the Working Together With Men project. Note that the last of these was not supported by WTWM and thus was not implemented.

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<sup>5</sup> These themes are: (1) Challenge condoning of violence against women; (2) Promote women's independence & decision-making; (3) Challenge gender stereotypes and roles; (4) Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships..



**Table 3: Projects proposed by WTWM participants**

PROJECT OUTLINE	PROJECT PROGRESS
<p><b>Ethiopian community education</b></p> <p>An education session for leaders and other members of the local Ethiopian community; Development of an education manual on violence against women and its prevention, for the Ethiopian community</p>	<p>The manual was developed. Feedback from the advisory group and a representative of Our Watch was provided. The launch will be in the last week of November.</p>
<p><b>Brimbank Men's Pledge</b></p> <p>A written pledge involving a commitment to non-violence and to pro-social action, distributed on the street and through community events</p>	<p>The pledge was developed. Feedback from the advisory group and Men of Brimbank provided. The pledge was translated into four community languages. A website that provides further information on men's role in PVAW and service providers was built. Two community engagement events were conducted to engage local men in PVAW awareness raising and men's commitment in pledge signing. An event with the Green Party members was organised in Melbourne.</p>
<p><b>Education in an adult learning centre</b></p> <p>Education on VAW and its prevention to students in adult learning settings</p>	<p>About 8 sessions on PVAW were held for 40 students. Topics included the extent of domestic violence in Australia and men's role in PVAW; forms of violence; respectful relationships; backlash and safety planning for women; service providers' role in PVAW.</p>
<p><b>IPC Health policy</b></p> <p>Establish the prevention of violence against women as a strategic priority within IPC Health</p>	<p>A session on PVAW and IPC Health's role was held among the board members. Discussion among management team regarding the priority of PVAW in the organisation strategic plan was conducted.</p>
<p><b>Sierra Leone Soccer Club</b></p> <p>Education for club management and players; Messages regarding non-violence and respect on players' t-shirts; Education in mothers' group regarding respectful relationships</p>	<p>Two sessions on respectful relationships with members of the mothers' group and soccer group were held; Vests with message "Stop Violence Against Women" were worn by soccer club players; Soccer club policy was revisited to discuss ways to involve female players.</p>
<p><b>Respectful relationships education work in a primary school</b></p> <p>Cooperative games among children at a school; Discussions with parents regarding violence and respectful relationships</p>	<p>Preliminary meeting with a community worker at a primary school in Brimbank was held to discuss ways to engage parents in PVAW awareness raising.</p>
<p><b>Education in faith-based settings</b></p> <p>Education on relationship, marriage, and communication, to members of a Buddhist (Vietnamese) church</p>	<p>NA</p>
<p>(Note: This project did not receive approval and financial support.)</p>	



## Principles of effective practice

National and international research and experience have generated an increasing consensus on the elements of good practice in violence prevention. This consensus is apparently particularly for the most extensively applied strategies such as face-to-face education in schools (Flood, Fergus, & Heenan, 2009), but there also are consistent themes in reviews of other fields of violence prevention practice. Although there is not sufficient evidence to say with certainty what dimensions of violence prevention practice are necessary (or indeed sufficient) to generate a significant and positive impact, the following four features receive consistent emphasis in the literature: violence prevention should be (1) informed; (2) comprehensive; (3) engaging; and (4) relevant.

- *Informed*: Violence prevention interventions must be based on a sound understanding of both the problem – the workings and causes of violence – and of how it can be changed. In other words, they must incorporate both an appropriate theoretical framework for understanding violence and a theory of change.
- *Comprehensive*: Effective interventions are likely to be comprehensive: they use multiple strategies, in multiple settings, and at multiple levels (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Nation et al., 2003). For example, they incorporate strategies addressing individuals, peer groups, and communities and have multiple strategies addressing the same outcome.
- *Engaging*: Violence prevention programs should involve effective forms of delivery which engage participants. More effective interventions will have appropriate content (whether in their educational curricula, their social marketing materials, or elsewhere), be implemented in well-designed and organised ways, and involve skilled personnel (whether educators, advocates, or others).
- *Relevant*: Good practice programs are relevant to the communities and contexts in which they are delivered. They are informed by knowledge of their target group or population and their local contexts (Nation et al., 2003).

Before assessing the WTWM participants' projects against these standards, some caveats are necessary. The projects necessarily are small in scale. They are coordinated by a single person (in most instances), on a voluntary basis, within a limited time scale (of no more than 12 months), and with only a modest budget (with WTWM support of \$3,000 per approved project). It is not reasonable, therefore, to expect these projects to meet the kinds of standards applied to large-scale, organisationally based, and well-resourced initiatives. Moreover, the projects are designed and implemented by individuals who are new to the violence prevention field. Finally, of course, because of individuals' constraints to do with paid work, parenting, and their own skills and confidence, some individuals have put more time than others into their projects.



The six supported projects all meet the first criterion above. It was not expected that each project would involve the development of a sophisticated theoretical account of violence against women or theory of change (e.g. in the form of a program logic model). However, projects were expected to address the gendered drivers of violence against women and to have an account of how program activities will help reduce violence against women in the community, with both of these included in the project template. All six projects do so, and indeed, they would not have been supported if they had not. It was for this reason that a seventh project was not supported, as it neglected the gendered drivers of violence against women. In another project, the Project Manager and others on the Advisory Group worked closely with the man designing the project to ensure that its content included sufficient attention to gender inequalities as central to violence against women.

How do the projects seek to make change? Four of the six projects rely, either entirely or in part, on face-to-face education. This education will be conducted among diverse audiences, including Ethiopian community leaders and representatives, students in adult education, managers and players in a local soccer club and their wives and partners, and children and parents in a school. The project in the Ethiopian community in Brimbank includes the development of a culturally appropriate education manual and the implementation of face-to-face education sessions, and these may be complemented by broadcasts through media outlets such as ethnic radio.

Face-to-face or direct education is a very well-tested violence prevention strategy, with a wealth of evidence that it can be an effective strategy of violence prevention and reduction. Among school and university populations, as well as in other contexts, face-to-face education programs have produced positive changes in violence-related attitudes and beliefs and in some instances in rates of perpetration and victimisation (Cornelius & Resseguie, 2007; Flood et al., 2009; Leen et al., 2013; Morrison, Hardison, Mathew, & O'Neil, 2004; Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011; Whitaker et al., 2006).

What other prevention strategies do the projects use? The Brimbank Men's Pledge draws on a communication or social marketing approach, with additional elements of community mobilisation. It focuses on inviting men to commit to and sign a public statement of their role and responsibility in ending violence against women and children. Men will be invited to sign the pledge through street stalls in public and through promotion in schools, sporting clubs, and community groups.



As the project application states,

“The aim of this project is to raise awareness of violence against women and children in Brimbank as a public health issue and a violation of human rights through a public pledge. [...] The Brimbank Men’s Pledge seeks to have men living in Brimbank publicly commit to speak out against violence against women and children. By taking the pledge men in Brimbank will be asked to affirm their commitment to not condoning violence against women and children; and their commitment to strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships.”

This prevention initiative is similar to one used within Australia’s White Ribbon campaign, in which individuals are encouraged to ‘take the oath’, publicly declaring (in this case through an online form) that “I will stand up, speak out and act to prevent men’s violence against women.” Looking at the Brimbank Men’s Pledge document itself, after a preamble introducing the issue of violence against women and the purpose and context of the pledge, the text states,

### *Take the pledge*

As a Brimbank resident I accept I have a role to play in reducing violence against women. It is my responsibility to work hard every day for change and gender equality; and to continually work to recognise and transform harmful attitudes that support sexist and violent beliefs and behaviours in myself and others.

I hereby pledge to speak out against sexism and men’s violence against women, to work with other men and women to create respectful relationships with all women, and to be a role model for other men in Brimbank.

Signed:

The man coordinating this project has proposed innovative strategies for maintaining and extending its impact over time, including electronic, automated reminders to those who have made the pledge, a business card-sized pledge to carry in one’s wallet, follow-up events, and an ongoing network of men engaged in prevention activities.

The Sierra Leone Soccer Club project draws on two complementary strategies: face-to-face education and social marketing. The project proposes education sessions among the soccer management team and players, complemented by the use of messages about respectful relationships on players’ club shirts or jerseys. The latter represents a communications strategy, albeit at a small scale, and these too are well established in the violence prevention field (Donovan & Vlasis, 2005). The project also involves face-to-face education in a local mothers’ group, in which many of the women are partners of the soccer players.



The project regarding respectful relationships work (possibly) in a school setting is the most under-developed of the six. While the individual associated with this project has considered various strategies – the use of cooperative games among children to foster non-violence, engaging fathers and sons in building or rebuilding their relationships, and so on – he has not been able to plan such activities. At the time of the final interviews with members of the implementation group in October 2017, this project did not have a clear focus and implementation had not begun. (However, this man has taken up an important advocacy role in assisting with consultation on the development of a prevention toolkit by one of WTWM’s partner organisations.)

Finally, a sixth project is aimed at policy change – at establishing the prevention of violence against women as a strategic priority of a public sector organisation. One of the men in the WTWM implementation group is one of the Directors of the Board of IPC Health, a not-for-profit organisation which works in partnership with local communities in the Western Metropolitan Region of Melbourne to provide responsive, interconnected health and community services. His project focuses on encouraging the organisation to adopt the prevention of violence against women as a priority, taking strategic prevention and service actions to enact this. The project’s activities therefore involve education and advocacy work internal to the organisation, and particularly among the organisation’s board, executive management, clinical managers, and health promotion team. The individual associated with this project became the Mayor of the Brimbank Council in November 2016, greatly increasing his work duties and making it difficult to put much time into the WTWM project.

While the projects supported by WTWM draw on well-established and credible strategies for violence prevention, are they designed to implement these in ways which are likely to be effective?

Because of the scale at which they are implemented and supported, the WTWM projects simply are not in a position to be ‘comprehensive’ – to use multiple strategies, in multiple settings, and at multiple levels. Nevertheless, some of the projects do involve the use of multiple, complementary strategies, including combinations of community education and communications or community mobilisation. The policy-focused project is the most large-scale of the six proposed projects. IPC Health’s adoption of violence prevention as a policy priority ideally will have flow-on effects for clinical services and health promotion activities in the region, including among the six health centres across Melbourne with which it is associated. Prevention initiatives at the policy level are valuable because they can reach larger populations, disseminate particular strategies of primary prevention, and support and enhance prevention efforts at grassroots and community levels (Texas Council on Family Violence, 2010).



To what extent are the six planned projects ‘engaging’? That is, to what extent do they involve effective forms of delivery which engage participants? Two-thirds of the projects involve face-to-face education, and there are well-developed standards for this strategy of prevention (Carmody et al., 2009; Flood et al., 2009). Briefly, these standards include appropriate curriculum content, interactive and participatory teaching methods, sufficient duration and intensity, and the use of skilled educators.

First, prevention curricula should address the factors known to drive violence, including violence-supportive and sexist attitudes and norms, gendered power relations and inequalities, and a host of other social and cultural factors (Our Watch et al., 2015; Kim Webster & Flood, 2015). This is true of the curriculum content for the Ethiopian community education. The project’s education manual combines generic material on violence against women and primary prevention with culturally specific case studies. The Project Manager and others worked with the man developing this project on successive drafts of the manual, particularly to bolster its attention to the drivers of violence against women and to primary prevention of this violence. The intended content of the curricula associated with two other projects, in the Sierra Leone soccer club and the adult education setting, also looks appropriate, in part as it is intended to draw on the content of the WTWM training sessions themselves. The presentations to students in adult education were given by the Project Manager Cuong La, with the project participant then elaborating on these in later sessions. Cuong La also gave one of these presentations to the mothers’ group associated with the Sierra Leone soccer club.

Second, effective prevention education is interactive, participatory, and include small-group learning (Ellis, 2008). It involves active learning, rather than traditional, lecture-based delivery (Ellis, 2008; Gibbons, 2013). Face-to-face education should include such teaching and learning strategies as participatory discussion, group work, cooperative learning, role plays, introspection and critical reflection, and behavioural rehearsal.

The Ethiopian education manual includes questions and interactive exercises, as do the proposed plans for the educational work in the Sierra Leone soccer club and the adult learning setting. On paper, therefore, these three projects do include interactive and participatory teaching methods. The education session among mothers and wives associated with the Sierra Leone soccer club took place in May 2017. This was highly interactive, with the member of the WTWM implementation group facilitating a lively conversation among the participants.

A third key feature of effective community education is that it has sufficient duration and intensity to produce change. It is a consistent finding in violence prevention, as elsewhere, that programs with greater duration and intensity also have greater impact (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Bachar & Koss, 2001; Carmody et al., 2009; Hassall & Hannah, 2007;



Lonsway, 1996; Nation et al., 2003; Tutty et al., 2002; Vladutiu et al., 2011; Whitaker et al., 2006; Yeater & O'Donohue, 1999). One-off, short-duration education sessions simply will not achieve lasting change.

The Ethiopian community education sessions are intended to be held with up to 25 community members per session, with each session running for six hours. This is promising, as this is a substantial duration relative to most respectful relationships programs currently in high schools for example, and the combination of this length and a relatively small group size will allow for greater interaction and discussion. The education sessions in the adult education centre take place within the normal classes, with classes of between 15 and 20 students in sessions lasting approximately one hour. The education sessions planned the Sierra Leone soccer club run for approximately two hours. While the sessions in the latter two projects thus are of a shorter duration, they may allow for some level of interaction and discussion.

Duration and intensity also are issues for communications and social marketing strategies. The Sierra Leone soccer club project has the strength that club members may have multiple exposure to the violence prevention messages, through both the direct education for club management and players and the messages on players' soccer shirts. The evidence is that communication and social marketing interventions have greater impact if they are more intensive, involve exposure to messaging through more than one component, and/or are complemented by on-the-ground strategies (Fulu, Kerr-Wilson & Lang, 2014; WHO, 2007).

Finally, effective violence prevention education involves the use of skilled educators: individuals with both content expertise and skills in participatory learning strategies (Dills, Fowler, & Payne, 2016; Flood et al., 2009). Among the projects supported as part of Working Together With Men, education in some is delivered by expert or professional presenters and facilitators, and in others by a combination of these and the men themselves. The Ethiopian education sessions will be presented by the WTWM participant and a female co-facilitator drawn from the local community. The education in the adult learning centre will be delivered by the man who already works there, as part of his normal role as a teacher in the institution, as well by guest speakers (including individuals who have presented to earlier WTWM training and education sessions). The Sierra Leone education sessions among mothers were cofacilitated by the WTWM participant and the WTWM Project Manager, while the plan for the later sessions among soccer coaches and players is to use professional presenters such as representatives of the Police and Relationships Australia.



The Brimbank Men's Pledge is intended to be 'engaging' in a personal way, with individual men invited to make personal commitments to non-violence. The man organising this project, in the final interviews for this evaluation, acknowledged that strategies such as pledges and oaths can be tokenistic, 'feel-good' exercises which do not prompt substantial or sustained change. He emphasised the need to build in to the project ways of reminding men of the pledge they have taken and to foster their accountability to women and communities.

On the other hand, 'engagement' looks very different for the WTWM project within IPC Health. Here, making the initiative engaging involves tailoring proposals for violence prevention policy to the institution's policy processes and context, and generating the support of policy-holders and gate-keepers such as the members of the IPC Health board and management.

A fourth element of good practice in violence prevention is that the initiative is relevant to the communities and contexts in which it is delivered. Culturally relevant interventions among racially diverse populations are more effective than 'colourblind' ones (Heppner, Neville, Smith, Kivlighan Jr, & Gershuny, 1999), and initiatives should be responsive to forms of difference or diversity associated with ethnicity, class, and sexuality (Flood et al., 2009).

Most of the projects sponsored within Working Together With Men can make reasonable claims against this standard. Relevance thus is a particular strength of the implementation group's projects. The manual developed as part of the project aimed at the Ethiopian community includes four case studies drawn from the local community, highlights culturally specific issues which impact on domestic and family violence, and will be translated into the main Ethiopian language Amharic to extend its reach. The Sierra Leone soccer club and mothers' group project will address culturally specific issues such as conflicts and violence among extended family members living under the same roof, and will be informed by guidance on cultural appropriateness from elders and members of the community group Sierra Leone Australia Community of Victoria. The education session with the mothers' club took place in May 2017. There was a strong degree of participation, with the mothers raising and exploring various issues particularly relevant to the Sierra Leone community, such as the use of dowry as a way to control family finances, the social isolation of victims, and men's sexual affairs and mistrust between women and men.

Neither the Brimbank Men's Pledge nor the IPC Health project are aimed at particular cultural communities, but both are designed to be relevant to their intended audiences. The Brimbank Men's Pledge has been written to be accessible and meaningful to a wide range of men in the community, while the policies on violence prevention for IPC Health are intended to dovetail with the existing policy context. It is not clear to what extent



the education provided to students in the adult education settings addresses issues specific to the ethnic communities from which those students come. A further project, comprising education in local Buddhist churches and communities, was planned to include publications and talks relevant to the Vietnamese Buddhist community, but was not supported under WTWM.

Having compared the projects generated by the men in Working Together With Men with standards for effective practice in violence prevention, we can conclude that in general they represent sound initiatives in violence prevention. While small in scale and thus in likely impact, most are promising initiatives which are likely to have some positive effect.

Alongside this desk review of the violence prevention initiatives which the Working Together With Men project has generated, qualitative data highlights WTWM participants' growing understandings of the practice of violence prevention. Men early in the project had identified challenges they perceive to implementing violence prevention activities, and their perceptions of such challenges have sharpened as the WTWM project has continued. Members of the implementation group took part in one-on-one interviews towards the end of the project, in October 2017. At this point, some men's own projects were well under way, while other men's were only just taking shape or still being developed. Challenges identified in the interviews include the following:

- Facing and negotiating disagreement and resistance when conducting education;
- Balancing the conceptual and political rigour of one's educational materials with their accessibility to the local community; and
- Designing campaigns which are relevant and meaningful for the culturally specific contexts in which they take place.

At the same time, the men who have begun actually to implement violence prevention activities have found this positive in various ways. For example, one man who delivered education sessions to his adult education class emphasised how rewarding it felt to be able to provide information for individuals in the classes living with family violence.

Some men in the final interviews offered sophisticated accounts of the practice and politics of violence prevention. For example, one man with a long history of social justice activism emphasised the need for accountability – for his project to be informed by substantial consultation with violence prevention advocates and with women. He also emphasised the need for activities which are sustained and long-lasting and thus more likely to generate impact. And he commented on the challenge of sustaining participation and momentum in volunteer-based prevention work.



The principle of accountability was not universally affirmed among the men, however. A key informant reported that in one meeting, one man resisted the suggestion that he consult with women in the community about the design of his project, responding instead with the troubling claim that men know better than women how to do this. The key informant commented that men involved in violence prevention may act out traditional gendered dynamics of male leadership. There is a dynamic “of men feeling like taking action equals taking charge, and that therefore they’re playing out their role as leaders rather than allies.”

A member of the implementation group, developing materials for the local Ethiopian community, commented insightfully on the challenge of designing education sessions which will engage members of this community:

“[...] what would be the needs of those, you know, targeted audiences? As I said, different education level, different understanding [...] What makes it more, you know, motivating for them to be engaged in that process? [...] If for example I’m going to go talk about domestic violence, I don’t think they will come. [...] they gave us advice to call it ‘family conflict’. Then, you start from there. Then you can come to the main subject. [...] So the difficult thing for them was, what would be the appropriate material, you know, to, bring these people in, to make them excited, to join the discussion [...] That was the hardest thing to identify [...] This is just, you know, a brand new group. And they’ve never had the chance to discuss something like this.”

## Significance

Working Together with Men is a significant project for the violence prevention field. It is significant in the first instance because of the *kind* of violence prevention project it represents. The project brings together two important strategies of violence prevention, community engagement and community mobilisation, with a third, engaging men. Through education, skills development, and the provision of resources, the project is intended to enable community members to lead change in their communities. The project thus engages ordinary members of the community in violence prevention work, fostering local ownership of the issue of violence against women and building local capacity to address it. The project also seeks to mobilise its participants such that they become ongoing advocates or agents of change.

There is a growing consensus that strategies of community engagement and community mobilisation are central to violence prevention (DeGue et al., 2012; Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2004). Overlapping with this, in public health there has been a growing emphasis on community participation, organisation, and empowerment (Kim-Ju, Mark,



Cohen, Garcia-Santiago, & Nguyen, 2008). Strategies of community engagement and mobilisation are rare in the prevention field, but they are vital, to shift the cultures, social relations, and structural inequalities which underpin violence against women.

The project also is an important example of efforts to engage men in the primary prevention of violence against women. These have become increasingly prominent in the violence prevention field in the last decade (Flood, 2011a). Despite this, there are only a small number of well-developed primary prevention projects in Australia which are aimed at men.<sup>6</sup>

Working Together with Men is a significant project for the field, second, because it includes a substantive evaluation of impact. Although there is a growing expectation in the violence prevention field that interventions will include an evaluation component, substantive and robust impact evaluations still are rare. Impact evaluations of secondary and tertiary intervention strategies in Australia such as programs for perpetrators and services for victims and survivors are increasingly common, but the body of evidence on the impact of primary prevention efforts is far smaller. This includes several impact evaluations of schools-based programs in respectful relationships education, evaluations of the schools and workplace programs provided by White Ribbon Australia, a single evaluation of a national social marketing campaign, a process evaluation of a ‘healing’ program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, and a small number of other studies. Evaluations of primary prevention programs which draw on pre- and post-intervention data and combine quantitative and qualitative data, such as this evaluation of Working Together with Men, are scarce.

The Working Together With Men project has a third significance: it has had a significant and positive impact. The experience of the project confirms that interventions such as this:

- Can get men ‘in the door’, recruiting men successfully from communities to contribute to violence prevention efforts;
- Can, through focused, participatory education, build men’s non-violent and gender-equitable understandings;
- Can foster sustained groups and networks of male advocates; and
- Can build men’s skills and capacity in violence prevention.

Several features of the Working Together With Men project contributed to these positive impacts, as follows. While it is difficult to say what combination of these elements is necessary or sufficient to produce positive outcomes, the qualitative data suggest that these were important elements in the project’s processes of education and capacity-building.

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<sup>6</sup> The largest primary prevention campaign in Australia aimed at men is the White Ribbon Campaign. Other, smaller local projects include a Sydney project by CORE Community Services aimed at men from African and Middle Eastern backgrounds, Community Champions Ending Violence Against Women by the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service, work by the Australian Migrant Resource Centre among men from new arrival communities, AMES Australia’s Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW) Respect and Responsibility Program, and other projects.



- *Participation*: The participation of individuals who recognised the problem of violence against women and who felt some level of personal commitment to taking part in efforts to address it;
- *Education*: An intensive, long-term, and staged process of education and training (comprising 10 hours of face-to-face education and a further 40 hours of education, discussion, and interaction in face-to-face meetings);
- *Facilitation*: Tailored support throughout the project by a dedicated project coordinator (funded to work four days per week), including technical advice, mentoring, and personal support;
- *A supportive group*: The creation of an inclusive and supportive environment, which came to be a valued social space for the participants;
- *Expert guidance*: The use of violence prevention experts as educators and guest speakers;
- *Expert advice*: The influence of an Advisory Committee including representatives of community and women's services, who could advise both the Project Manager and the project participants;
- *Resourcing*: The provision of resources, including funds to support small community activities designed and implemented by the participants.

Working Together With Men project centres on recruiting, educating, and mobilising men as violence prevention advocates, and the project could not have proceeded without the participation of a cohort of committed men. Based on their initial responses to a quantitative survey, the men who went on to participate in the project already had some recognition of violence against women as an important issue, all felt that men have an important role to play in ending this violence, and half had recently been involved in prevention efforts. But during the 18 months of the project, they increased their awareness of violence against women and their knowledge and skills in its prevention. They formed a supportive group of peers and friends, one they are interested to sustain beyond the project.

The Project Manager's role in was a vital one. Cuong La coordinated the day-to-day and week-by-week processes of the Working Together With Men project. An important part of his role was the contact with and support for participants outside the regular education sessions and meetings. This one-on-one, tailored support was valuable both for participants' design and implementation of their projects and for sustaining their momentum and confidence.

In turn, this work would not have been possible without institutional support: a funded role, partnerships between a series of community agencies, and their support and guidance through the Advisory Committee.





## Recommendations

The Working Together With Men project demonstrates that it is possible to recruit, train, and mobilise men in local communities to take action in the name of preventing violence against women. Given this, replicating and scaling up this work are obvious next steps.

### Replication and scale-up

To what extent is this project replicable in and transferable to other contexts? The design of the Working Together With Men project involves a strong degree of cultural relevance, in that prevention initiatives are developed by the project participants themselves and (ideally) informed by knowledge of their local contexts and communities. A WTWM-type project thus is likely to have relevance in contexts other than the one where it was first run, assuming that the same degree of resourcing and support is available.

Scaling up is a more complicated project. Certainly the key structures and processes of the Working Together With Men project readily could be scaled up. WTWM's early vision included a greater number of participants, both in the initial recruitment phase and the ongoing implementation group. However, scaling up raises issues, first of resourcing, and second of process. On resourcing, it is not clear that the level of staffing for the project could have supported a much larger implementation group. It is unlikely that the Project Manager could have provided a reasonable level of one-on-one support for a group several times larger than the seven men with whom he worked, and further Project Co-managers or providers of technical support would be required. Second, the workings of a key element of the project, the ongoing implementation group, probably were shaped by its size. Six or seven men participated in this over the course of the project. It is unlikely that participants could have established a friendly, supportive social group if it instead had 20 or 30 participants. One option, then, would be to establish multiple, concurrent implementation groups, with the aim that each would become a supportive peer group.



## Recruitment

Recruitment of individuals from local communities into the Working Together With Men project proved to be a labour-intensive and lengthy task. There may be other ways to recruit cohorts of men into anti-violence advocacy. Certainly it is clear that drawing on personal connections and networks is more effective than generalised strategies alone in recruiting potential male advocates, as other research also finds (Bilen-Green et al., 2015). In future iterations of Working Together With Men, one option may be to try to recruit peer groups and networks themselves – to locate supportive networks of sympathetic men and invite them to join such projects en masse. Another option may be to recruit as supporters and advocates influential actors and elites who have broader social influence, such as religious and political leaders, although this requires careful selection, training, and support (CARE, 2014). A third option may be to focus more systematically on recruiting men through their female partners, by targeting sympathetic groups and networks of women and asking them to invite their male partners to participate (although this should be complemented by strategies more inclusive of gay and bisexual men). Nevertheless, Working Together With Men's existing strategies did produce a cohort of men who have persisted with the project throughout its 18-month duration.

The project did not aim to recruit only those men with well-developed, feminist-informed understandings and practices, but assumed that interest and good intentions were sufficient at least for initial participation. Discussions for example in the April 2016 Advisory Committee meeting suggested that the program aims at 'well-meaning men': men who recognise the issue of violence against women as important and have some level of interest in doing something about it, although they may also have violence-supportive understandings. This is in line with recommendations in other literature. For example, Crooks et al. (2007) argue for acknowledging 'well-meaning' as a launching pad for men's involvement, and then challenging them to reach further. This position is not, however, all-inclusive, and it excludes men with entrenched violence-supportive attitudes and/or recent histories of significant violence perpetration.

How, and to what extent, should potential participants in such projects be screened for histories of violence perpetration? There was considerable discussion early in the Working Together With Men project about the issue of men with histories of violence against women joining the project, and how to minimise the risks associated with this. Although there was discussion of using police reference checks with all initial participants in the project, WTWM only used these with the smaller cohort of men who applied for support within the project for their own violence prevention initiatives. The rationale for this was that it is at this point that the risks for organisations are particularly high.



As one key informant commented,

“the real critical part where it becomes very, very important for us as organisations where the biggest risks are is around when we decide to support that particular person with the resources, with time, with effort and we enter into that agreement to say you’ve been endorsed.”

Future replications of efforts to recruit men into anti-violence advocacy should consider their screening or vetting processes. One obvious issue here is that police checks only will identify those men whose perpetration of violence has come to the attention of the criminal justice system and these men are a minority of those who use violence. Projects engaging men also should have explicit protocols for what should happen if a project leader or participant engages in violence, like the one developed for the CHALLENGE Family Violence Project (Castelino et al., 2014).

## Education

Education and training was a central component of the Working Together With Men project. Participants’ own reports, and observation, suggests that the education sessions were productive and engaging. The education in the project fits with standards for effective practice: it was intensive, lengthy, participatory, and covered relevant content. Even well-designed face-to-face education is no magic bullet, of course, and it will not necessarily shift ingrained violence-supportive attitudes. A couple of individuals in the WTWM implementation group continued to offer some views tolerant or excusing of violence as the project continued.

This report makes several recommendations regarding education in future iterations of Working Together With Men, as follows:

*Accessibility:* Sourcing or developing materials which are simultaneously well-informed by contemporary scholarship and accessible to a lay readership is a challenge throughout the violence prevention field. Interviews with the WTWM participants suggest that some still did not feel well versed for example in explaining the drivers of men’s violence against women. Bodies such as the national violence prevention organisation Our Watch are working to translate sophisticated prevention frameworks into more accessible guides for action (Our Watch, 2017). Projects which aim to engage men in violence prevention should seek to draw as much as possible on materials which present user-friendly and feminist-informed accounts of violence against women and its prevention.

*A focus on prevention:* When community members think about what to do about violence against women, they may be drawn above all to strategies focused on victims and perpetrators. During the WTWM project, some participants needed guidance to steer



them away from more secondary and tertiary forms of prevention activity focused on responding to victims and survivors of violence and towards primary prevention. It might be valuable for the curricula for WTWM-style projects to include greater attention to the different forms of prevention or intervention. At the same time, primary prevention initiatives often generate disclosures about violence which thus require secondary and tertiary responses. In addition, it is problematic to implement primary prevention initiatives in contexts where secondary and tertiary processes are not already in place.

*An intersectional approach:* The members of the implementation group in the Working Together With Men project were highly culturally diverse, from countries including Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Vietnam, and Australia. As they designed and began implementing their own prevention initiatives, some men described encountering culturally specific obstacles to prevention or having to address culturally specific supports for or dynamics to violence against women. It would be desirable to build an intersectional approach in throughout the project's education and training, providing (accessible) frameworks and tools with which to do prevention work. Although intersectional approaches to violence prevention are in their infancy, there is increasingly widespread recognition of the need for them.

*Skills:* The WTWM project did increase participants' self-reported prevention skills, both skills in designing and implementing violence prevention projects and in interpersonal strategies of bystander intervention. At the same time, it might be valuable to build more direct skills development into the education program, for example using role plays and behavioural rehearsals. Active learning and the focused development of desirable skills are valuable in violence prevention (Gibbons, 2013; Wight et al., 2002). In the WTWM program this could include giving participants practice at challenging violence-supportive comments and jokes and other facets of bystander intervention, as encountering such behaviours often is part of the experience of doing violence prevention advocacy.

*Critical self-reflection:* This impact evaluation documents that the men particularly appreciated their participation in a supportive and friendly group, and that as a result of the project some men engaged in more critical reflection on their own behaviour and relationships. This should be extended in similar efforts in the future, by intensifying the group's role as a space for critical self-reflection.

Encouraging and providing space for critical reflection is a necessary component of engaging men in prevention work. Critical reflection can be used for both personal change, shifting men's identities and their relations with women and other men, and social change, inspiring and sustaining collective activism. Non-judgmental environments for open discussion and dialogue are valuable means to foster men's feminist awareness and lessen their defensiveness (Berkowitz, 2004). In addition, such processes of personal



change may strengthen men's accountability to women and inspire greater trust from women for the initiatives being developed. (The issue of accountability is discussed in more detail below.)

## Technical support

In community development and mobilisation efforts which engage members of local communities to develop violence prevention work, one of the key challenges is fostering the development of effective and appropriate initiatives. In the Working Together With Men project, guidance and support for the participants' design and implementation came through planning templates, group instruction, feedback on project plans, and individual mentoring and assistance by the Project Manager. This range of strategies was effective in WTWM, in that the participants' initiatives generally represent sound initiatives in violence prevention, although by necessity they are small in scale.

More focused technical support, nevertheless, would be a valuable way to improve participants' skills in violence prevention and the actual efficacy of the initiatives they implement. It might be desirable for participants in projects such as Working Together With Men to receive more extensive technical support, including instruction focused on effective practice for the particular strategies they intend to use. This training might incorporate recent guides to violence prevention planning (Our Watch, 2017), including guides to community-based prevention (Curtis, 2014; Gender and Development Network, 2012; Townsend, 2009). While the men in the implementation group took part in two workshops on project planning (of three hours each), one key informant commented that more time could have been spent on workshopping and developing their project plans in a group session. An 'action learning' approach might be valuable here, in which the participants actively reflect on the projects they are designing and potential strategies and solutions.

In addition, it may be impractical even for a lengthy program of education and training to sufficiently build participants' skills as community educators themselves. Most initiatives supported within WTWM use face-to-face education, and for this most rely either on the Project Manager himself or on other, external presenters and facilitators to deliver the training. Future replications of Working Together With Men could include resourcing for funding professional educators, or build in more structured ways for the Project Manager or others to work with and develop participants' skills as educators.

When participants in the project's implementation group first developed their own plans for violence prevention initiatives, they received feedback on these from the Project Manager. While Advisory Committee members and other implementation



group members also could provide feedback, this was rare. For example, few Advisory Committee members provided written feedback on the first drafts of project plans, although they did discuss these at the meetings. A structured process for formal feedback, particularly from Advisory Committee members, might be useful.

## Forms of advocacy

The Working Together With Men project focused on working with men to build their capacity to design and implement a violence prevention project. The projects generally were assumed to be self-contained, discrete initiatives, although men could team up to work on shared projects and could involve external collaborators (although they still were expected to lead their projects). There may be benefit, however, in allowing for more diverse forms of advocacy in the project's intended outcomes. Participants could be given the option to develop a new project, to join existing projects and strategies, or to engage in more diffuse and less project-focused forms of violence prevention advocacy (such as producing particular resources, developing websites, fostering networks, and so on). This might be particularly useful for participants who have little institutional or structural power or less personal sense of self-efficacy. Participants could still be mobilised to contribute to violence prevention advocacy, but in more diverse ways.

## Accountability processes

Future iterations of Working Together With Men should build accountability into their processes from the start. Accountability here can be defined simply as working in gender-equitable ways. There is a growing emphasis in the 'engaging men' field on the need for accountability, and both curricula and accountability standards recently have been developed (International Rescue Committee, 2014; MenEngage, 2014).

Accountability is a key practice in minimising the risk that projects engaging men do not reproduce or intensify sexism and violence. To engage men in ending violence against women is to involve members of a privileged group in dismantling that same privilege. This raises issues of practice: how to engage men in ways which do not reproduce patriarchal privilege, how organisations and individuals can act in accountable and gender-equitable ways, and how to minimise resistance and backlash.

Accountability is necessary at three levels: personal, interpersonal, and institutional.

*Personal* accountability involves men addressing their own practice, striving to ensure that they behave in gender-equitable ways. While the Working Together With Men project did involve the community participants in critical self-reflection, this could



be intensified, as recommended above. As one key informant commented, future replications of the project should involve more extensive use of curricula on how men can be effective allies to women.

*Interpersonal* or relational accountability involves strategies to build gender-equitable dynamics and processes in interaction. It addresses the politics of whose voices are heard, who decides and who leads, who does the low-status behind-the-scenes work and whose efforts are given attention and praise. In the Working Together With Men project, this was eventually addressed in part through the Advisory Group Pledge, endorsed by all the members of the partner organisations. Again, explicit attention to the gender dynamics of decision-making groups and processes should be built into such projects from the start, not only through codes of conduct or pledges but also through assessments or gender audits and education and training for the staff of organisations.

*Institutional* accountability involves structures of consultation and collaboration with feminist women and women's groups and others concerned with gender and sexual justice and/or with other forms of social injustice and oppression. In the Working Together With Men project, this was enacted particularly through the participation in the partnership group of a representative of a women's organisation, Women's Health West. This women's organisation was only brought into the partnership group after the project had begun, and as both the Project Manager and other key informants commented, it would have been ideal if this had been in place from the start.

Future efforts to engage men as violence prevention advocates should have structured processes in place to bring in feminist women's voices. Feminist or women's rights organisations have a particularly important role to play: they have expertise and track records in violence against women and gender equality work, they understand local social and political structures have experience in negotiating them, they are well equipped to challenge culturally specific justifications for violence, and they often have women in key decision-making positions (Gender and Development Network, 2012). Note too that advice from women per se is insufficient, and advisory groups and processes should be feminist (Castelino et al., 2014).

If participants in the project also are to be supported to develop their own violence prevention initiatives, the issue of accountability is relevant here too. Accountability should be built into the design of initiatives, with project templates asking: Which are the relevant women and women's organisations with whom you should consult? In other words, when prevention advocates are mobilised to begin their own prevention initiatives, these too should have processes or structures for accountability.





## Appendix

Working Together with Men has been an important violence prevention intervention for the field. It represents an innovative and effective effort to educate and mobilise men as agents of change in local communities. Replicating and scaling up this intervention would make a significant contribution to the prevention of violence against women.

This Appendix concentrates on documents directly relevant to the impact evaluation of the Working Together With Men project and/or discussed in this report. It does not include the wide range of documents produced for or in the course of the project. The following documents are included:

### *Working Together With Men documents:*

- Poster advertising the opening Information Sessions
- Expression of Interest template
- Project planning template
- Advisory Group Pledge

### *Impact evaluation documents:*

- Surveys: Sources used
- Quantitative surveys
- Focus group schedule
- Key informant interview schedule
- Observation of training protocol



## Documents

### Poster advertising the opening Information Sessions



You are invited to be part of a discussion that explores how men can work together to make Brimbank a safer place for women and children.

Men have an important role in ending violence against women.

**We need your help to create a safer Brimbank.**

**Come to one of the Working Together with Men Info Sessions - Light meal provided**

When: **Tuesday 26th July** (7.00 – 9.00 pm) or **Thursday 4th August** (10.00am - 12.00pm)

Where: Visy Cares Hub – 80b Harvester Road, Sunshine

Who: Men connected to Brimbank who want to make their community a safer place for women.

RSVP: One week in advance on the HealthWest Events page at [www.healthwest.org.au](http://www.healthwest.org.au)  
or contact Cuong La, 9248 9657 or [cuong.la@healthwest.org.au](mailto:cuong.la@healthwest.org.au)

Working Together with Men is a partnership project between HealthWest Partnership, Women's Health West, ISIS primary care, cohealth and Brimbank City Council.



## Expression of Interest template

### Working Together with Men Expression of Interest

Contact	Name	Phone	Email
Name of project			
Brief description of your project			
How will your project help reduce violence against women in Brimbank or in your community?			
What is the aim/goal of your project?			
What actions will you take to achieve these aims?			
Who will be involved in this project and what will they do?			
How do you plan to get these people involved?			

## Project planning template

### Project Plan

1	Your name/s	
2	Phone number and email address	
3	Name of project	
4	Brief description of your project	(e.g. is it to affect change in gender norms? Is it to raise awareness of violence as a public health problem and a human rights violation? Is it to raise awareness of legislation?)
5	What is known about the problem of violence against women in the programme's coverage area?	(e.g. What does the community think about violence in general? What are boys' and men's main concerns regarding violence in general? What are the prevailing norms related to masculinities and gender in the community? How do these norms affect relations between men and women? Are there particular forms of violence against women or girls that are of greater community concern or of greater concern to men and boys?)
6	Who will be involved in this project and what will they do?	(e.g. Is it focused on reaching a particular group of men in the community, a specific setting or institution, or a large and/or multi-sectoral effort intended to reach many diverse groups of men? etc.)
7	How do you plan to get these people involved?  How much time should be allocated for this step?  Is there any expertise available in the group?	(What role do men and boys think they could play in preventing violence against women? How do they suggest that the programme reach additional men and boys?)
8	How will your project help reduce violence against women in your community or in Brimbank?	



*Project planning template continued*

9	The overall vision for your project			
10	What is the aim/s of your project?			
11	What are milestones of your project? What are key achievements/major progress points that must be reached to achieve success of the project? What are different tasks and steps that you will need to do to get to an end result? (E.g. a group formed; a venue found; first activity undertaken). Are all the milestones/tasks absolutely necessary? Are there any milestones missing? Are your milestones specific & measurable? Do you have capacity (\$) and people) to achieve them?		When will this happen? (Completion date)	
Step 1				
Step 2				
Step 3				
Step 4	Please add extra lines where required.			
12	What are the risks that your project might face? How do you plan to mitigate risks?	Potential risks		Mitigation strategies
13	Project budget	Item	Methods of payment 1- Suppliers to invoice HW 2- You invoice HW with ABN 3- Load & Go Card	Cost
				TOTAL: \$
14	How will you know if your project is successful?			
15	How will you report the progress and the outcomes of your project?		What does success look like for each activity?	
16	Is there any training you will need to carry out your project?			
17	What will you need support with to carry out the project?			



## Advisory Group Pledge

### Working Together with Men

# PLEDGE



**To role model accountable practice that underscores the need to listen to the voices of women, as members of the Working Together with Men Advisory Group, We**

**Pledge to:**

- Work hard every day for change and gender equality.
- Name men's violence against women and girls as a critical issue.
- Listen to women and believe about their lived experiences of violence against women.
- Work to recognise male power and challenge male privilege within my community
- Continually work to recognise and transform my own harmful sexist or violence-supportive attitudes, beliefs, behaviours
- Speak out against sexism and violence against women, and model change for other men.
- Support women who experience violence by asking them how I can help. Just listen and be supportive. Don't mediate or attempt to provide counselling.

**Commit not to:**

- Expect that change will happen overnight. Working towards transformational change and gender equality means taking action every day to help create a safer world for women and girls.
- Stay silent or collude with other men around sexism, misogyny or violence against women.
- Make it a competition about who suffers more from gender inequality, or bring the conversation back to how men are harmed by expectations of masculinity. Keep the focus on women and girls.
- Make my changes towards gender equality and preventing violence against women dependent on women's recognition, gratitude or validation.

Melbourne, 08/09/2016

**Ashleigh Broom**, Health Promotion Officer, ISIS Primary Care

**Dr Cuong La**, Project Coordinator, HealthWest Partnership

**Dimity Gannon**, Prevention and Advocacy Coordinator, HealthWest Partnership

**Dr Michael Flood**, Associate Professor, University of Wollongong

**Nuredin Hassan**, Community Development Officer, ISIS Primary Care

**Peter Crowley**, Community Safety Officer, Moonee Valley City Council

**Dr Samuel Muchoki**, Health and Wellbeing Policy Officer, Brimbank City Council

**Stephanie Rich**, Team Leader – Prevention Violence Together, Women's Health West

**Jeremy Hearne**, Manager Prevention and Health Promotion Project Lead – cohealth

**Cath Lancaster** - Health Promotion Project Lead – cohealth



## Quantitative surveys: Sources used

Items in the participants' surveys are drawn from various sources. The first cluster of statements under the heading "Role" are based on the Readiness to help, Responsibility subscale; Readiness to help, Awareness subscale; and Readiness to help, Action subscale, all from the Prevention Innovations Research Center (2015). While their measures include items focused on both sexual abuse and intimate partner abuse, they note that some versions of these measures focus on one or the other. I have included both forms of violence in the items, referring to "domestic violence and/or sexual violence". While their measures used the term "intimate partner violence", I have used the term "domestic violence" throughout. The Awareness subscale included reference to violence against women as a problem "on this campus", and this was changed to, "in my community".

The second cluster of statements under the heading "Taking Action" is drawn from the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Efficacy Scale (Ward, 2000) and Allen (2010). Again, one item included reference to violence against women as a problem "on this campus", and this was changed to, "in my community".

The third cluster of statements, used only in the final, follow-up survey, was written by Dr Michael Flood.



## Quantitative surveys: Text

### *Working Together With Men: Survey 1*

#### Introduction

This is a survey about people's attitudes and understandings of violence against women and related issues. We are interested in your opinions and attitudes. Your answers will be confidential. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer the questions honestly or to the best of your knowledge.

#### (1) Role

Please read each of the following statements and indicate how true each is of you using the following scale.

	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Very much true 5
Sometimes I think I should learn more about domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I think I can do something about domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am planning to learn more about the problem of domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think sexual violence is a problem in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think domestic violence is a problem in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think there is much I can do about sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think there is much I can do about domestic violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There is not much need for me to think about sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There is not much need for me to think about domestic violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				



Please read each of the following statements and indicate how true each is of you using the following scale. Please do not include the Working Together With Men project itself in your responses.

	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Very much true 5
I am actively involved in projects to deal with domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I have recently taken part in activities or volunteered my time on projects focused on ending domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I have been or am currently involved in ongoing efforts to end domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## (2) Taking action

For each statement below, please note whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know / Can't say
I can help prevent violence against women in my community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is intimidating to think about trying to stop a guy from hitting his girlfriend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A group of guys would listen to me if I confronted them about their sexist behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the skills to help support someone who is in an abusive relationship.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The fear of being laughed at would prevent me from telling a group of guys it was disrespectful to whistle at women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't think I could stop a group of guys who are harassing a woman at a party.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## 2) Taking action *continued*

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know / Can't say
I would be comfortable telling my friend to stop calling his girlfriend names.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe my peers will listen to me if I speak out against sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the confidence to say something to a guy who is acting inappropriately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would be too hard for me to confront a stranger who was being abusive toward a woman.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe violence against women comes from behaviours and habits that can be changed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that my personal efforts can make a difference in reducing violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is an important issue in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is primarily a "women's issue".	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Men have an important role to play in ending violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women doesn't affect me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is a private matter between those directly affected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

-- END OF THE SURVEY --

Thank you for completing this survey.



## Working Together With Men: Survey 2

Date: October 6, 2016

Name (Please print): .....

### Introduction

This is a survey about people’s attitudes and understandings of violence against women and related issues. We are interested in your opinions and attitudes. Your answers will be confidential. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer the questions honestly or to the best of your knowledge.

### (1) Role

Please read each of the following statements and indicate how true each is of you using the following scale.

	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Very much true 5
Sometimes I think I should learn more about domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I think I can do something about domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am planning to learn more about the problem of domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think sexual violence is a problem in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think domestic violence is a problem in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think there is much I can do about sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think there is much I can do about domestic violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There is not much need for me to think about sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There is not much need for me to think about domestic violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				



## (2) Taking action

For each statement below, please note whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know / Can't say
I can help prevent violence against women in my community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is intimidating to think about trying to stop a guy from hitting his girlfriend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A group of guys would listen to me if I confronted them about their sexist behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the skills to help support someone who is in an abusive relationship.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The fear of being laughed at would prevent me from telling a group of guys it was disrespectful to whistle at women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't think I could stop a group of guys who are harassing a woman at a party.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be comfortable telling my friend to stop calling his girlfriend names.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe my peers will listen to me if I speak out against sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



(2) Taking action *continued*

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know / Can't say
I have the confidence to say something to a guy who is acting inappropriately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would be too hard for me to confront a stranger who was being abusive toward a woman.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe violence against women comes from behaviours and habits that can be changed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that my personal efforts can make a difference in reducing violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is an important issue in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is primarily a "women's issue".	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Men have an important role to play in ending violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women doesn't affect me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is a private matter between those directly affected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

-- END OF THE SURVEY --

Thank you for completing this survey.



## Working Together With Men: Survey 3

Date: April 6, 2017

Name (Please print): .....

### Introduction

This is a survey about people's attitudes and understandings of violence against women and related issues. We are interested in your opinions and attitudes. Your answers will be confidential. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer the questions honestly or to the best of your knowledge.

### (1) Role

Please read each of the following statements and indicate how true each is of you using the following scale.

	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Very much true 5
Sometimes I think I should learn more about domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I think I can do something about domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am planning to learn more about the problem of domestic violence and/or sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think sexual violence is a problem in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think domestic violence is a problem in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think there is much I can do about sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't think there is much I can do about domestic violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There is not much need for me to think about sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There is not much need for me to think about domestic violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>				



## (2) Taking action

For each statement below, please note whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know / Can't say
I can help prevent violence against women in my community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is intimidating to think about trying to stop a guy from hitting his girlfriend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A group of guys would listen to me if I confronted them about their sexist behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the skills to help support someone who is in an abusive relationship.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The fear of being laughed at would prevent me from telling a group of guys it was disrespectful to whistle at women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't think I could stop a group of guys who are harassing a woman at a party.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be comfortable telling my friend to stop calling his girlfriend names.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe my peers will listen to me if I speak out against sexual violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the confidence to say something to a guy who is acting inappropriately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would be too hard for me to confront a stranger who was being abusive toward a woman.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe violence against women comes from behaviours and habits that can be changed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



(2) Taking action *continued*

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know / Can't say
I feel that my personal efforts can make a difference in reducing violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is an important issue in this community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is primarily a "women's issue".	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Men have an important role to play in ending violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women doesn't affect me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence against women is a private matter between those directly affected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



### (3) Violence prevention

For each statement below, please note whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know / Can't say
I have a good understanding of the key causes or drivers of violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I see gender inequality as a key cause of violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel confident in explaining why some men use violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know how to engage other men in conversations about violence and gender.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know how the primary prevention of violence against women is different from other responses to this violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am familiar with a range of strategies for preventing violence against women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know how to plan and design a violence prevention program or initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am confident of my ability to implement a violence prevention program or initiative in my community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

-- END OF THE SURVEY --

Thank you for completing this survey.



## Focus Group Schedule: First focus group

### *Introduction*

- Introduce the research project
- Review the Personal Information Sheet
- Review the Consent Form. Participant to sign this if they are willing to participate.

### *Involvement in men's anti-violence work*

- How do men become involved in anti-violence work?
  - Sensitising experiences: What are some of the typical ways that men first hear about this issue or first start caring about this issue?
  - What are some typical opportunities for involvement?
- Men's experience of involvement
  - Positives: What do you think men find positive about their involvement?
  - Negatives: What do you think men find hard or difficult?
  - Challenges: What challenges do men encounter? How do they respond to these?
- Others' perceptions of their involvement: How do others respond?
- Do you think that getting involved in this work changes men? How? Does it change, e.g. men's sense of identity or self? Men's relations with women? Men's relations with other men?

### *Experience of the Working Together With Men project*

- What has your experience been so far of the Working Together With Men project?
  - What did you think of the first Forum?
  - What did you think of the Training sessions?
  - What are your relations with the others in the project like?
- What do you feel is working well?
- What is not working so well? What areas can they improve upon?

### *Role in violence prevention*

- How do you see men's role in preventing and reducing violence against women?
- Are there advantages in being a man doing this work? Are there disadvantages?

### *Final questions*

- Do you have anything further you would like to discuss?
- What question did I not ask that I should have?

(Thank the participants.)



## Focus Group Schedule: Second focus group

### *Introduction*

- Remind people of the research project

### *Experience of the Working Together With Men project*

- What has your experience been so far of the Working Together With Men project?
  - What is your experience of the catch-up sessions?
  - What are your relations with the others in the project like?
- What do you feel is working well?
- What is not working so well? What areas can they improve upon?

### *Involvement in men's anti-violence work*

- Men's experience of involvement
  - Positives: What do you think men find positive about their involvement? [Or, more personal: What do you find positive...?]
  - Negatives: What do you think men find hard or difficult?
  - Challenges: What challenges do men encounter? How do they respond to these?
- Others' perceptions of their involvement: How do others respond?
- Do you think that getting involved in this work changes men? How? Does it change, e.g. men's sense of identity or self? Men's relations with women? Men's relations with other men?

### *Role in violence prevention*

- How do you see men's role in preventing and reducing violence against women?
- Are there advantages in being a man doing this work? Are there disadvantages?

### *Skills and capacity in violence prevention*

#### **Familiarity with key concepts and frameworks in violence prevention**

- Do you feel like you now have a good understanding of violence against women?
  - Of the causes or 'drivers' of VAW?
- Ever had experience explaining these to someone else? How did it go?
- Are there things you find hard or difficult? Things you've heard or read that you disagree with or you're unsure about?



### *Familiarity with prevention strategies*

- Do you feel like you now have a good understanding of violence prevention?
- If someone asks you, “How can we prevent VAW?”, do you feel like you’d know what to say?
  - Sense of what primary prevention is?
  - Has anyone looked at frameworks like *Change The Story*?
- Are there things you find hard or difficult? Things you’ve heard or read that you disagree with or you’re unsure about?

### **Capacity to implement community-based initiatives**

- You’re all in the process of planning actual strategies or activities or interventions. How is that going?
- What is going well?
- What is proving hard?

### *Final questions*

- Do you have anything further you would like to discuss?

(Thank the participants.)



## Key Informant Interviews: Round 1

### *Introduction*

Remind the interviewee of the research project

### *Organisation's history*

- Prior to your organisation's involvement in the Working Together With Men (WTWM) project, in what ways had it been involved in efforts to prevent and reduce violence against women?
- In what ways, if any, had the organisation been involved in efforts to engage men in this work?

### *Support for the Working Together With Men project*

- How did your organisation come to be involved in the WTWM project? In prompting and shaping this involvement, can you describe any:
  - Key experiences?
  - Key insights or understandings?
- How does involvement with the WTWM project fit with your organisation's mission?
- How does the organisation see the WTWM project as valuable or useful or important?
  - What about you personally?
- Was there any resistance within the organisation to involvement in this work? Are there tensions or difficulties in supporting the project? (I.e., degree of buy-in)
  - E.g., regarding gender-inequitable practices in the project? Cf the WTWM 'risk management' document. And response of the Pledge.
- What about you personally?
- How has the organisation's involvement in the WTWM project been seen by other stakeholders? (E.g., other organisations, advocates, policy makers, clients of the service, and so on.)



### *Experience of the Working Together With Men project*

- What has your experience been so far of the Working Together With Men project?
  - What did you think of the first Forum?
  - What did you think of the Training sessions?
  - What are your relations with the others in the project like?
- What do you feel is working well?
- What is not working so well? What areas can they improve upon? Challenges?
  - E.g., in getting men involved?
- Have there been any significant changes in your understanding of ‘engaging men’ since becoming involved in this project?
- Has involvement in this project had any influence on your own views of ‘engaging men’?
- Has involvement in this project had any influence on how your own organisation engages men? I.e., has it ‘fed back’ to your own organisation’s work?
- How has involvement in the project changed your or your organisation’s approach or strategy? E.g.,
  - Hearing others’ views at the WTWM meetings
  - Thinking about how the project will work
  - Etc.

### *Men’s role in violence prevention*

- How do you see men’s role in preventing and reducing violence against women?
- Are there advantages in men doing this work? Are there disadvantages?

### *Final questions*

- Do you have anything further you would like to discuss?

(Thank the participants.)



## Key Informant Interviews: Round 2

### *Introduction*

- Remind the interviewee of the research project

### *General reflections on the Working Together With Men project*

- What do you feel is working well?
- What has been difficult or challenging?

### *Capacity to engage men: Skill and knowledge in engaging men*

- Learnings about engaging men? What can be learnt from this project about engaging men? How to do it? Not do it?
- Challenges in engaging men?
- Have there been any significant changes in your understanding of ‘engaging men’ since becoming involved in this project?
- Has involvement in this project had any influence on your own views of ‘engaging men’?
- Has involvement in this project had any influence on how your own organisation engages men? I.e., has it ‘fed back’ to your own organisation’s work?
- How has involvement in the project changed your or your organisation’s approach or strategy? E.g.,
  - Hearing others’ views at the WTWM meetings
  - Thinking about how the project will work
  - Etc.

### *Impact among the men*

Ask about:

- Awareness and understanding of violence against women
- Skills and capacity to implement violence prevention
- Activities and interventions being implemented (Are these *likely* to contribute to prevention?)

### *Role of project coordinator*

Role of advisory committee [I.e., organisational / process issues]

- Has the role of the advisory committee been successful?
- If you could do it all again, what might you do differently?

### *Final questions*

- Any final thoughts or comments?

(Thank the participants.)



## Protocol for observation of the training

By Michael Flood.

### *Context*

Working Together With Men is a community-based violence prevention project. The Working Together With Men project aims to recruit, train, and mobilise men to initiate violence prevention activities in their local communities and contexts. The project is being implemented in Brimbank, Melbourne, by a partnership of community organisations.

Dr Michael Flood's evaluation centres on the impact of the intervention among the participants and among the organisations involved in the intervention.

**Working Together With Men (WTWM) has four objectives:**

1. Increase the capacity of local agencies to identify and engage men in the primary prevention of violence against women
2. Increase awareness and understanding of the issue of violence against women and children among men in the city of Brimbank
3. Build the knowledge, skills and capacity of men in Brimbank to develop and implement community-based initiatives to prevent violence against women and children
4. Increase capacity of implementation groups (men in Brimbank) to advocate and sustain PVAW actions.

**Working Together With Men involves three main components:**

- Information Session, to recruit participants into the intervention (17 August).
- Training of participants, over three consecutive days (17, 29, and 31 August)
- Project planning workshops, on two days (5 and 12 October), and participants' own project planning, over November to December 2016.

### *Observation*

The Research Assistant will sit in and observe the further WTWM training sessions. She will be an observer rather than a participant.<sup>7</sup> (She will sit to the side or up the back, not take part in session activities, and refrain from participating in discussion or questions.)

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<sup>7</sup> In technical terms, the Research Assistant will be an 'observer as participant'.



The Research Assistant will make observations related particularly to the first three of the four objectives above. In particular;

1. To what extent / In what ways is the training session effective in engaging men?
  - a. Do individuals show signs of interest and support, disinterest and boredom, or resistance or hostility?
  - b. Do individuals actively participate in the session?
  - c. Etc. (see “What to note” below.)
2. To what extent / in what ways does the training session increase awareness and understanding of the issue of violence against women and children among the participants?
3. To what extent / in what ways does the training session build the knowledge, skills and capacity of men in Brimbank to develop and implement community-based initiatives in violence prevention?

## **Domains of observation**

Qualitative data from observation of the training sessions will be complemented by quantitative data. The first round of quantitative data was collected via survey prior to WTWM’s first event, an information session in early August. The second round of quantitative data will be collected in October.

The participant observation is intended to collect data on three domains, related to the three objectives above.

- 1. Engagement**
  - a. Participation (verbal, physical)
  - b. Attentiveness
  - c. Interest and support
  - d. Etc.
- 2. Awareness and understanding of violence against women (VAW) (and, related to these, of gender roles and relations)**
  - a. Support for positive / desirable understandings (e.g., that:
    - i. VAW is common.
    - ii. VAW is a serious problem.
    - iii. VAW is caused by or a reflection of gender inequalities or sexism (in particular).
    - iv. The perpetrator, and not the victim, is responsible.
  - b. Rejection of violence-supportive / undesirable understandings
    - i. E.g., that justify, excuse, minimise or trivialise physical or sexual violence against women, or blame or hold women at least partly responsible for violence perpetrated against them



### 3. Knowledge, skills and capacity in violence prevention

- a. Sense of personal responsibility (that VAW is an issue of concern to them, that they have a responsibility to do something about VAW, etc.)
- b. Sense of personal efficacy (that they can do something about VAW, that they can make a difference, etc.)
- c. Knowledge of particular strategies of violence prevention
- d. Skills and confidence in prevention and intervention strategies

## General process

### At the session:

- Paulina to make contact with Cuong La prior to the start of the session.
- Paulina to sit to the side or back.
- At the start of the session, Cuong La will briefly introduce Paulina and her role.
  - “This is Paulina Ezer from La Trobe University. She is here to observe the session. She is working with Michael Flood from the University of Wollongong, doing research on violence prevention programs and how they work.
  - “Paulina will take notes on how the session goes. Her notes are confidential. They will be seen only by Michael Flood, the senior researcher. They will not be seen by Cuong or others from the Working Together With Men project.”
- Paulina to take notes, on laptop or by hand.
  - Take as detailed notes as you can. (See the field guide below for thoughts on note-taking.) Including:
    - Verbatim dialogue / quotes
    - Summaries or paraphrasing of people’s words and comments
    - Who says what
  - Note various dimensions of the session – please see below.
- At the end of the session, the facilitators and Paulina to have a short (e.g. 30-minute) debrief. Paulina to take notes or record this.

After the session, and while it is still fresh in her mind, Paulina to expand and revise these notes.

### *Practical guidance on participant observation*

The following provides a particularly useful guide to participant observation: <https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/documents/ParticipantObservationFieldGuide.pdf>



### Further reading (optional)

The following also offer some general tips:

<http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/fieldnotes>;

<http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/research/guides/ethnographic.htm?part=2>

<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/466/996>

### Field guide: What to note

TOPIC	INFORMATION
A. Patterns of conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who speaks and who does not (levels of participation)</li> <li>• Comments and questions (active participation)</li> <li>• Listening, paying attention</li> <li>• Interaction: Who interacts with whom? How do participants interact with and respond to each other? Do they take up and respond to each other's comments</li> </ul>
B. Content of comments and questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What comments or questions people offer:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Informed vs ill-informed</li> <li>– Supportive vs critical</li> <li>– Etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Do participants' comments suggest a sense of commitment to preventing and reducing VAW? Do they suggest a sense of personal responsibility for prevention?</li> <li>• Do participants draw on their personal experience, and use 'I' language? Or speak only in the third person?</li> <li>• Do participants seem comfortable and familiar with the terms and language used? Do they use appropriate language? Do they seem hesitant or unsure?</li> <li>• Do participants stay on topic, or move or drift onto irrelevant topics?</li> </ul>
C. Participation in activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent do individuals participate in each activity?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Levels of energy and enthusiasm?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Do the activities seem successful in generating awareness or understanding?</li> </ul>
D. Body language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interest and support?</li> <li>– Disinterest and boredom? (Leaning back in chair, yawning, head in hands, etc.)</li> <li>– Resistance or hostility? (Crossed arms, angry tone, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Energy, enthusiasm?</li> <li>• Signs of comfort or discomfort?</li> </ul>
E. Age, ethnicity, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there differences in participation and engagement e.g. between:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Older and younger participants?</li> <li>– Participants from NESB and ESB backgrounds?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
F. Facilitators' and presenters' work	Participants submit project proposals for review. Support and funding provided for selected projects





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