

Evaluation of the Anglican
Diocese of Melbourne's

preventing violence against women program

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Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Melbourne and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne acknowledge and recognise the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live, serve, and worship: the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples, the Yorta Yorta Nation, and the Dja Dja Wurrung people, and pay our respects to Elders past and present, and affirm our commitment to the ongoing work of reconciliation.

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4	EVALUATION FINDINGS	29
Methodology	4	Impact	30
Findings	6	Capacity building	31
Conclusion	13	Survivor safety	38
Key recommendations	14	Cultural change	46
ABOUT THE PROGRAM	16	Implementation	50
Background and history	16	Reach	51
Aims and objectives	16	Inclusion	54
Program components	16	Acceptability and feasibility	56
EVALUATION APPROACH	18	Fidelity	62
Evaluation purpose	18	Lessons learnt	66
Audience and use	18	Implementation enablers	67
Methodology	19	Implementation barriers	71
Data collection	21	CONCLUSION	76
Data analysis	23	REFERENCES	78
Ethics	24	APPENDICES	80
Limitations	25	Appendix A:	
Demographics	26	Language and terms	80
		Appendix B:	
		Program Logic	82
		Appendix C:	
		Assessment of process and	
		impact indicators	84

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Preventing Violence Against Women Program (the program) implemented by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne (the Diocese) is a leading initiative for preventing and responding to violence against women and family violence within an Australian faith community. The program provides a wide range of training, activities and resources for faith leaders and parishes across the Diocese and within several churches who are implementing an intensive 'Whole-of-Church' model.

In 2022, The University of Melbourne developed a monitoring and evaluation plan. The purpose of this was to determine the value of the program's contributions to preventing violence against women within and beyond the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. The evaluation investigated implementation processes and sought to understand the impact of the program in bringing about positive cultural change within and beyond the Diocese.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation used a participatory, mixed methods approach based on a Program Logic and monitoring and evaluation plan developed through participatory processes with the Diocese. The committee of management and project staff contributed to the development of survey and interview questions, supported the recruitment of key informants, and contributed to data analysis through a sense-making workshop and feedback on the final report.



Data collection methods included ongoing monitoring activities and evaluation specific methods. **Monitoring data sources** included training session, event schedules and attendance data; pre- and post-training survey; website analytics; and program documents. The **evaluation data sources** include all the above monitoring data sources; qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with key informants across the Diocese; a review of program documents; and circulation of a Diocese-wide survey targeted to parishioners and leaders across the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

Analysis was informed by research on implementation science and the violence prevention evidence base, including within faith communities. An assessment of the Program Logic against internal monitoring process and impact indicators is also provided (See [Appendix B](#) – page 82). The Program Logic and indicators were established by the Diocese through participatory processes led by the University of Melbourne.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FINDINGS

The evaluation found that the program demonstrated a range of **promising outcomes** that contributed to shifts in attitudes, culture and practice within the Diocese by supporting faith leaders' capacity to respond to family violence, and to address the gendered drivers of violence against women. The evaluation also identified key areas for improvement and opportunities to strengthen outcomes.

Impact

Capacity building

The program significantly strengthened the capacity of participating faith leaders and church communities to both respond to and prevent family violence and violence against women. Quantitative analysis showed marked increases in participants' ability to recognise family violence (+46%) and in knowledge of where to access advice or support (+54%) following training. Qualitative data showed similar results, with participants reporting a greater understanding of the behaviours that constitute violence, available services, and safe response practices. Resources such as The Orange Door visits, Kooyoora consultations, and the Family Violence Policy were identified as key enablers in translating training into confident, appropriate action.

The program increased faith leaders' capacity to engage in violence prevention, enhancing their understanding of the gendered drivers of violence and equipping them with the language and confidence to address these issues within church settings. Tools like sermon guides, the gender equality tool, and community-based actions (for example the 16 Days of Activism) supported this work. While most leaders felt more confident responding to violence than preventing it, many were taking meaningful steps toward addressing gender inequality.

Areas for improvement include boosting the involvement of lay leaders and parishioners – especially Family Safety Champions – who showed strong interest but reported limited opportunities to engage in activities to prevent violence against women. Faith leaders also highlighted persistent pastoral care challenges, particularly when both perpetrator(s) and survivor(s) attend the same parish. These tensions reveal the need for clearer practice models and continued support to navigate the complex dynamics of family violence within faith communities.



Survivor safety

The program has made meaningful contributions to supporting the safety of family violence survivors within Anglican faith communities. Key informants consistently described the program as an essential component of Safe Ministry and church inclusion, with some leaders engaging due to overlapping responsibilities in child safety. Training and the Family Violence Policy were credited with creating safer environments for disclosure, equipping leaders to respond appropriately, and reinforcing a church culture that openly acknowledges family violence.

Many leaders perceived an increase in disclosures – both from parishioners and community members – which they attributed to increased awareness and visibility of the issue. This was supported by reports from a key professional safeguarding organisation, who noted a shift in the nature of calls from uncertainty about how to respond, to confirming alignment with policy. Positive disclosures were reported by survivors in some churches, where responses included emotional support, practical assistance, and actions to prioritise survivor safety – such as exclusion of perpetrators from church attendance.

The presence of family safety champions and publicly visible resources (for example posters and brochures) further supported disclosures by making family violence a recognised issue in church spaces. However, some gaps remain. Coercive control, especially when tactics do not include physical forms of abuse, is still under-recognised, and survivors continue to face dismissal or minimisation from some parishioners and lay leaders. There is a clear need to strengthen leaders' capacity to identify and address covert patterns of abuse and to deepen training on trauma-informed, long-term survivor care. Greater survivor involvement in resource development could enhance program relevance, reduce stigma, and build trust among those seeking help.

Cultural change

The program has made significant contributions to cultural change within and beyond the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne in addressing the drivers of violence against women. Key achievements include leadership in the faith-based prevention sector, increased public condemnation of violence, and visible structural efforts toward gender and intersectional equality. Program leaders actively shared learnings through newsletters, events, and professional networks, contributing to broader sector knowledge and influencing other faith organisations. External stakeholders acknowledged the Diocese as a national leader in prevention within faith settings.

The program demonstrated the Diocese commitment to violence prevention through consistent messaging, visible resources, and leadership endorsements. Initiatives like the uptake of family safety champion roles and the use of platforms like Hope25

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

helped challenge violence-supportive norms. Structural changes were also noted, including greater representation of women and culturally diverse individuals in leadership roles, and more equitable gender roles in some church functions.

Nevertheless, some challenges persist. Survey and training data indicate a continued reluctance to acknowledge the extent of violence within the Anglican Church compared to broader society. While training has had a positive impact, many still perceive violence against women as more widespread outside the Church – an assumption that contradicts available evidence. Qualitative findings also reveal that, despite overt support for gender equality, unconscious biases and entrenched gender norms continue to influence church culture and responses to abuse – consistent with challenges in broader society. These include downplaying non-physical violence, blaming victims, and overlooking the gendered nature of violence. Sustained efforts are needed to confront these deeply rooted attitudes and to strengthen understanding of abuse dynamics across all church contexts.

Implementation

Reach

The program has achieved meaningful progress in engaging its target audiences, with several areas performing strongly. Notably, awareness among ordained ministry was high, with 90% of survey respondents reporting familiarity with the program. Communities of practice sessions also exceeded expectations, with nine sessions delivered against a target of six. These outcomes reflect a solid foundation for further impact. However, some challenges remain. The Whole-of-Church model fell short of participation targets, with 11 of 15 targeted sites engaged and only four of 15 individual coaching sessions delivered. Additionally, awareness among lay leaders and parishioners was lower – just over 60% – pointing to ongoing gaps in communication and the need for clearer translation of the program's components at the congregational level. It is worth noting that some of these shortfalls reflect the intentionally ambitious targets set to stretch the program's reach and impact, which may have exceeded what was achievable within the current timeframe and resources.

Resource distribution was strongest for the family violence policy and posters, which were both highly requested and widely used. Training targets were partially met, with 135 participants trained across 49 parishes – falling short of the 200-participant and 100-parish goals. This highlights some challenges to uptake of training but also reflects a strategic focus on training more participants within Whole-of-Church sites to deepen engagement and embed learning. This approach prioritised depth over



breadth, aiming to create more sustained change within participating communities. Evaluation data also shows that training is reaching new audiences. Over 60% of training attendees had not previously attended training on violence against women, which is important given that nearly half of clergy reported feeling unprepared by their theological education to support those experiencing family violence. These findings underline the ongoing need for broader and deeper engagement, particularly with faith leaders, and point to further opportunities to collaborate with theological colleges to enhance reach and sustainability of the program.

Inclusion

The program demonstrates a strong and intentional commitment to inclusion, particularly in relation to cultural and linguistic diversity. Following recommendations from the first evaluation, the program has developed and implemented a model that centres the intersections of faith, culture, and violence prevention – supported by partnerships with migrant and refugee organisations and the use of culturally sensitive practices. This approach has been praised by external stakeholders as a unique and necessary advancement in faith-based violence prevention.

Inclusion efforts were less evident in relation to other diverse communities. Gaps remain in the representation and engagement of people with disabilities, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, and LGBTQI+ communities within training content and program resources. Additionally, some targets within the CALD Safe and Thriving project, such as coaching session delivery and the appointment of CALD champions, were not yet met, reflecting both the ambition and complexity of inclusive implementation. These findings highlight important progress, while also pointing to the need for deeper and broader engagement across all dimensions of diversity.

Acceptability

The program has been highly acceptable to participants, with training emerging as a standout strength. Over 80% of survey respondents rated the training as both appropriate and feasible, reflecting its relevance and effectiveness. Participants particularly valued the program's alignment with core church values such as social justice, compassion, and care for others. This values-based foundation fostered strong commitment among faith leaders, many of whom expressed ongoing dedication to implementing the program in their churches.

The Whole-of-Church model was also generally well-received, especially where leaders had more exposure to the program. While some lay leaders reported lower familiarity, this highlights an opportunity to strengthen communication and expand engagement at all levels of church life.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The program's gendered approach to preventing violence against women was widely supported and seen as essential to its impact. Some faith leaders perceived that discomfort or uncertainty was more commonly felt within theologically conservative contexts, highlighting the need for continued dialogue and context-sensitive engagement strategies.

Use of some core resources such as sermon guides and child and youth ministry tools were minimal, often due to time constraints, limited awareness, or differences in church practices. However, many churches found creative ways to integrate the program's messages using a range of available materials – demonstrating adaptability and a strong commitment to its goals.

To enhance long-term sustainability and reach, the program would benefit from continued investment in flexible, context-sensitive resources, reciprocal learning opportunities, and ongoing collaboration with theological colleges to embed violence prevention more deeply into church life.

Fidelity

The program demonstrates strong fidelity to the national and emerging evidence base for the prevention of violence against women, particularly in faith settings. Training, resources, and policies were designed in alignment with key prevention principles, including support for faith leaders, recognition of intersectionality, and sustained engagement with senior church leadership. The program also reflects many of the best-practice principles identified by Vaughan et al. (2020), although further development is needed to fully address resistance to gender equality and strengthen approaches to capacity-building.

While fidelity to implementation was more difficult to assess – due to the absence of documented action plans – qualitative data revealed several pragmatic adaptations. These included shortened training sessions, flexible entry points for faith leaders, and more informal approaches to coaching. These adaptations improved reach and acceptability, particularly among time-poor or hesitant faith leaders and parishioners who may have felt excluded by more time-intensive or gendered framing. However, these same adaptations present risks to the program's fidelity and long-term impact, including inconsistent use of resources, reduced accountability, and diminished capacity to measure or sustain change. Some leaders also altered or limited the use of materials in ways that potentially diluted key messages. These findings highlight the need for a more structured, stepped approach to implementation that accommodates local context while preserving the core integrity of the program.



Lessons learnt

These findings are shaped by a variety of implementation enablers and barriers that affect how program activities and outputs are delivered, influencing the program's reach, acceptability, feasibility, inclusiveness, and fidelity. While Program Logics aim to illustrate clear causal links between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes, it's important to recognise that meaningful change can still occur across the program as a whole – even when implementation challenges arise. This is reflected in the report's findings, which highlight promising outcomes emerging from activities and outputs that are still underway.

Implementation enablers

The program's success in reaching and engaging faith leaders has been supported by a comprehensive and flexible suite of strategies tailored to the unique contexts of Anglican churches. A holistic approach combining training, peer learning, coaching, and well-branded resources – delivered through accessible venues and reinforced by ongoing communication via letters, newsletters, social media, and church publications – helped maintain high levels of engagement and capacity-building. Program managers' responsiveness to each church's readiness and needs, particularly in times of leadership turnover or competing priorities like COVID-19 adaptations, further enhanced acceptability and feasibility.

Strong internal and external authorising environments played a critical role. The Diocese's clear mandate for change, ongoing financial investment including securing additional funding, and visible episcopal leadership – especially the pivotal support from the Bishop of Marningatha episcopate for chairing the PVAW Committee of Management and the Bishop of the Jumbunna episcopate for the CALD project who provided legitimacy and motivation for participation. Effective governance structures and staffing, characterized by credible, relatable staff with shared experiences and faith connections, strengthened trust and program delivery across diverse communities.

Importantly, the program's grounding in Christian values intertwined with evidence-based prevention strategies created a meaningful framework for faith leaders. This integration motivated participation, reduced stigma around family violence, and enhanced parishioners' acceptance by situating prevention within a familiar ethical and social justice context. Finally, fostering parish ownership through a values-based approach, collaborative clergy-lay leadership partnerships, and flexible diocesan support contributed significantly to the program's acceptability and sustainability.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Implementation barriers

The program faced several implementation challenges that impacted its reach, acceptability and effectiveness. Project staff juggled a wide range of responsibilities – training delivery, stakeholder engagement, resource development, evaluation, and individual church support – all of which stretched capacity and hindered progress toward key targets. Staff turnover, particularly in leadership and CALD-specific roles, further delayed implementation and disrupted relationship-building with faith leaders/communities.

Faith leaders also had to navigate competing demands, including pastoral duties and other church initiatives, which limited their capacity to engage fully in the program. High clergy turnover compounded this issue, particularly when new leaders prioritised establishing parish relationships over program participation.

Resistance to change emerged as another significant barrier. Some constituents denied the relevance or prevalence of violence against women within their parishes, often due to beliefs that Christians neither perpetrate or experience such violence, or because of assumptions tied to demographic factors such as age. Concerns about stigma and discomfort with gendered language also limited program acceptability.

Finally, theological tensions – especially around gender roles – posed complex challenges. While resources aimed to be inclusive, many leaders lacked support to navigate these issues meaningfully. Key informants recommended structured opportunities to unpack theological and cultural tensions to strengthen engagement and long-term sustainability.



CONCLUSION

This program contributed to a range of positive cultural changes resulting from the ongoing commitment and dedication of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne to preventing violence against women. Central to this change was the impact of training and key resources, which significantly enhanced participants' confidence and capacity to both prevent and respond to family violence and violence against women. These outcomes were further supported by the development and active use of family violence policies and procedures and key prevention resources, which helped foster a more informed, open, and responsive church culture where conversations about family violence and the promotion of gender equality are increasingly normalised. The program is recognised as aligning with broader key initiatives within the Diocese – such as Safe Ministry – demonstrating a shared commitment to principles of safety and inclusion and reinforcing its relevance and shared value.

Critical areas for improvement that could strengthen the program include: fostering deeper engagement of family safety champions and parishioners in prevention efforts; enhancing faith leaders' capacity to navigate their roles when both individuals using violence and victim survivors attend the same congregation; challenging ongoing violence-supportive attitudes, including reluctance to acknowledge the prevalence of family violence within the Anglican Diocese; and addressing enduring theological tensions that may hinder progress.

Most importantly, after several years of laying the foundation for the program, followed by intensive piloting, persistence through significant disruptions caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic, and ongoing implementation of the key learnings from the first evaluation, the program is in a key position to grow and generate even greater impact. This highlights the importance of ongoing long-term, sustainable investment in this program to continually evaluate the implementation and impact of the program as the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne continues to evolve, ensuring that key learnings are adopted and fit-for-purpose. The program is well-positioned to expand its reach to a larger population of ordained ministry, lay leaders, and parishioners across the Diocese, and grow its influence as a national and global leader in preventing violence against women within faith communities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to address key implementation barriers and to strengthen program outcomes.

1. Provide further **coordination and support to family safety champions** to enhance their capacity to prevent violence against women and support the safety of survivors. This should consider ways to increase engagement of men as champions for preventing and responding to violence against women.
2. Consider ways in which faith leaders can be better equipped to understand their role and to **manage pastoral care challenges**, particularly when both perpetrators and victim survivors are in the same parish. This would ideally involve further relationship building with specialist family violence peak organisations and services, including men's behaviour change organisations and other perpetrator interventions.
3. Build on existing training strengths by developing **more comprehensive materials** that address gaps in participants' knowledge in relation to coercive control, spiritual abuse, family violence against older women, and trauma informed practice.
4. Explore safe ways of **engaging people with lived experience** in the program such as through co-design of resources, advocacy and/or involvement in training.
5. Explore how existing **training and/or resources can be strengthened** to address persistent violence supportive attitudes.
6. Continue to strengthen **collaborative work with Anglican colleges**.
7. Drawing on lessons learned from the Safe and Thriving CALD project, improve the **program's reach and acceptability** for the Diocese's Aboriginal communities, LGBTQIA+ community, and people with disability, through engagement with relevant constituents and experts and updating program governance, design, activities, and resources accordingly.
8. Consider feedback from evaluators and parishioners about **changes/alternatives to the program resources** (for example Bible studies series, children and youth resources etc) that could improve their acceptability and feasibility.
9. Collaborate with the Anglican Church of Australia's Families and Culture Commission (FCC) to create a **central repository for resources** and system for reviewing & sharing resources or ideas developed at the parish level, to increase access to resources and maintain fidelity to the evidence base.

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10. Review the Whole-of-Church model, considering a **staged/stepped implementation approach** and improved accountability structures. A review could also consider development of more nuanced measures of engagement relating to individual coaching and support.
 11. Sustain commitment to **ongoing monitoring and evaluation** of the program to ensure continuous improvement; to inform future programs; and to continue to build the prevention evidence base in faith-settings.
 12. Secure increased and sustained **funding** from the Diocese and other sources to adequately resource both **strategic oversight** and **on-the-ground implementation**. This should include dedicated roles for program development and engagement, as well as day-to-day delivery across Whole-of-Church sites. Resourcing both levels is essential to support further program development, scale-up, and the embedding of the **Safe and Thriving CALD project** into the broader program to reach a wider audience.
 13. Provide guidance to support faith leaders to overcome issues of opposition and **navigate the complexities of theological, ideological, and cultural tensions** regarding gender equality issues.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The program was initiated by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne (the Diocese) in 2011 and has steadily grown through iteration, development, and evaluation over the years. Its design is informed by Our Watch's *Change the Story Framework* (Our Watch et al., 2015), the Victorian Department of Education and Training's *Respectful Relationships Whole School Approach* (Victorian Government, 2024), the *Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence* (State of Victoria, 2016), the program evaluation conducted in 2021 (Davis et al., 2021), evidence based resources about prevention work in faith-based settings (Vaughan et al., 2020) and the nature and prevalence of family violence within the Australian Anglican Church population (Powell & Pepper, 2021).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The program's **ultimate goal** is to contribute to reducing and preventing violence against women and girls (see [Appendix B](#) for Program Logic – page 82). This goal is supported by the following **program objectives**:

1. support Anglicans to take action on violence against women as an authentic expression of their faith;
2. build the capacity of clergy and lay persons across diverse Anglican communities to prevent and respond to violence against women;
3. influence change within and beyond the Diocese to address the gender and intersectional drivers of violence against women; and
4. provide safe and caring responses to adult and child survivors of violence in the Anglican community, while holding perpetrators accountable for their behaviour.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The program intends to achieve its goal and objectives through delivering several program components as shown in the table to the right, which are reflected in the activities and outputs shown in the Program Logic ([Appendix B](#) – page 82).



Program components	Description
Committee of Management	The program is overseen by the Committee of Management which is both an input and activity of the program
Monitoring and Evaluation	The program is monitored on an ongoing basis with an end of program evaluation as per this plan
Training	Diocese-wide training providing education in violence prevention and response to any clergy or lay member who wishes to participate
Resources	Posters, communication guide, videos, Bible study series, sermon and ministry resources, Bystander Action resource and children and youth resources, 16 Days of Activism billboards and prayer guide
Policy and Procedures	Family violence policies, procedures and guidelines for safe responses to adult and child survivors and perpetrators with versions developed for the Anglican Centre and parishes and authorised Anglican congregations (AACs) across the Diocese
Communications	Internal and external communication mechanisms are used to promote the program, attract training attendees, and share learnings within and beyond the Diocese
Whole-of-Church model	The Whole-of-Church (WoC) model was piloted from 2018-2021 at five parishes. During this next phase, the model will be expanded to 10 new parishes or AACs (totalling 15) using a staged approach to: • Participate in the Diocese-wide training sessions • Identify local implementers and form a PVAW implementation committee • Apply the gender assessment tool and use the results to develop and execute a PVAW action plan • Utilise various program resources to support action plans • Identify Family Safety Champions to manage safe and appropriate responses to disclosures
Safe and Thriving CALD Anglicans Project	Government funded project to engage CALD Anglicans in the PVAW program through consultation, identifying CALD champions, developing action plans with CALD congregations, and conducting community engagement events
Anglican colleges	The program provides support to Anglican colleges (Trinity and Ridley) to embed PVAW education, policies, and practices into their core business
Individual coaching	Individual coaching sessions provided by the program leadership to support Whole-of-Church participants and CALD Project champions
Communities of Practice	• Pre-Whole-of-Church Community of Practice for post-training participants who are interested in PVAW work but not yet ready to sign on for the Whole-of-Church model • Whole-of-Church Community of Practice for participants from parishes and AACs who have signed on to complete the Whole-of-Church stages (including original pilot sites) • CALD Community of Practice for champions participating in the 'Safe and Thriving CALD Anglicans Project'

EVALUATION APPROACH

EVALUATION PURPOSE

In 2022, The University of Melbourne developed a monitoring and evaluation plan (the plan). The purpose of this was to determine the value of the program's contributions to preventing violence against women within and beyond the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. The aims of the plan were to continuously monitor and report on the results of both process and impact indicators against evaluation criteria for the period July 2021 to June 2024; and to procure and manage a program evaluation.

The evaluation investigated implementation processes and sought to understand the impact of the program in bringing about positive cultural change within and beyond the Diocese.

AUDIENCE AND USE

The primary audience for the evaluation includes the following stakeholders who are directly involved in overseeing, advising, or delivering the program:

- Senior leadership of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne,
- The Committee of Management of the program,
- Faith leaders and parishioners in the Diocese,
- The national Anglican Church of Australia, and
- The Victorian Government.

This evaluation report is written to support the primary audience to identify key findings and support future program development and implementation.

The secondary audience for the evaluation includes stakeholders and institutions who may benefit from the findings as a contributor to knowledge on programs to prevent violence against women in faith settings, such as:

- National, state-based, and local prevention organisations and practitioners,
- Other faith organisations undertaking prevention work, and
- State and federal governments.



METHODOLOGY

The Plan is based on Utilisation-focused Evaluation, participatory approaches, and theory-based evaluation.

Utilisation-focused Evaluation is premised on the idea that evaluations ought to be planned with the intended users who will need to apply evaluation findings in their own real-world programs (Patton, 2003, 2013). As such, the monitoring and evaluation processes were designed to pragmatically collect and analyse credible data (using mixed methods) to answer evaluation questions and ultimately determine the value of the program.

Participatory approaches are considered best practice for evaluating programs aiming to prevent violence against women (Kwok, 2013). A participatory approach was used to design the plan with the program staff and Committee of Management. This approach was further applied in cycles of observation, reflection and action as program staff executed the plan and monitored processes.

The plan is also **theory-based** in that it utilises a Program Logic ([Appendix B](#) – page 82) expressing a causal pathway of program inputs and activities intending to generate outputs and outcomes toward an ultimate impact goal (Davidson, 2005; Rogers, 2014).

The Program Logic and associated process and impact indicators ([Appendix C](#) – page 84) were developed by the University of Melbourne in collaboration with program staff and governance representatives to inform the internal monitoring processes, and to guide evaluation of the program. The Program Logic also informed the **evaluation criterion and key evaluation questions** outlined in the table on the following page and provided a structure for the evaluation findings in this report.

EVALUATION APPROACH

Criteria and evaluation questions

M&E focus	Criteria	Definitions	Evaluation Questions
Implementation	Reach	The extent to which the program has effectively reached the target populations.	1. How effectively does the program reach target participants?
	Inclusion	The extent to which the program applied an intersectional lens to engage and address the needs of Anglicans from diverse communities.	2. How inclusive is the program for Anglicans from diverse communities?
	Acceptability - Feasibility - Unity - Sustainability	The perception that the program is acceptable with respect to the feasibility and sustainability of implementation and the unity fostered across social, cultural, and theological differences in the Diocese.	3. How acceptable, feasible and sustainable is the program?
	Fidelity - Evidence-based - Adaptability	The extent to which program was delivered as intended with respect to the program design and prevention evidence-base, while also considering the adaptability of the program to local needs and contexts.	4. How faithful is the program to the prevention evidence base, while also supporting reasonable adaptation to local needs and contexts?
Impact	Capacity building	The extent to which the program had an impact in building target participants' capacity to prevent and respond to violence against women.	5. What is the impact of the program in building the capacity of target participants?
	Survivor safety	The perception amongst survivors that the Diocese takes violence seriously, provides safe and appropriate care and support, and holds perpetrators accountable for their behaviour.	6. What contributions does the program make to supporting the safety of survivors?
	Cultural Change - Influence - Equality	The perception that the program contributed to cultural and social change within and beyond the Diocese to address the gender and intersectional drivers of violence against women.	7. What are the program's contributions to cultural change within and beyond the Diocese to address the drivers of violence against women?
Lessons learnt	N/A	Accounting for any implementation barriers and enablers, contextual issues, assumptions, and unexpected outcomes (positive or negative) relevant to the program.	8. What key lessons does the program provide?



DATA COLLECTION

Data collection methods included ongoing monitoring activities and evaluation specific methods.

The **monitoring data sources** included:

- Training session and other event schedules and attendance data;
- Pre- and post-training survey based on the National Community Attitudes Survey (Webster et al., 2018);
- Website analytics provided by the Diocese communications officer; and
- Various documents including:
 - Community of Practice notes (Whole-of-Church and CALD Project);
 - Committee of Management minutes;
 - Program resources (for example posters, sermon guides, gender assessment, training materials);
 - Policies and procedures;
 - Action plans (CALD Project and Whole-of-Church); and
 - CALD project documents (for example consultation and implementation support documents).

A **monitoring spreadsheet** based on the monitoring and evaluation matrix was provided for staff to regularly track results against indicators.

The **evaluation data sources** included all of the above monitoring data sources and results tracked by program staff in the monitoring spreadsheet and the following additional data sources:

Qualitative data

This evaluation used purposeful and snowball sampling methods to recruit key informants for interviews and focus groups. A total of 16 interviews and five focus group discussions were conducted with a total of 42 key informants. Interviews and focus groups were audio recorded with consent from key informants.

EVALUATION APPROACH

Key informants were from Whole-of-Church (pilot and new sites) and non-whole-of church sites and included representatives of the episcopates, clergy, lay leaders, Committee of Management, Safe and Thriving Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) project sites, Anglican partner agencies, external stakeholders, and parishioners either with lived experience of family violence or experience supporting someone experiencing family violence.

Quantitative data

Training survey

A pre- and post-training survey was administered to a purposive sample of 135 people across ten training sessions across the period of July 2021 until June 2024. A total of 52 matching responses for the pre- and post-training surveys were obtained and analysed.

The evaluators and the Diocese collaborated to design the survey using adapted questions from the National Community Attitudes Survey (NCAS) to ascertain faith leaders' knowledge, attitudes, and practices in relation to violence against women and family violence (Webster et al., 2018). The pre-training survey established a baseline, with comparison of the pre- and post-training survey results indicating changes that occurred as a result of the training.

Diocese-wide survey

A Diocese-wide survey was distributed across the network of churches in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. The survey was administered online (Qualtrics), with a limited number of physical copies provided to two churches.

The survey aimed to investigate respondents' perceptions of key elements of the program – namely, the Whole-of-Church model, the training sessions, and the Safe and Thriving CALD project, with questions modelled on Weiner and colleagues' (2017) validated scales of acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility. Open-ended questions were employed throughout the survey to capture the range of church-specific prevention activities taking place across the Diocese.

Online survey respondents were also prompted on their personal experience(s) with violence against women and family violence, including as a victim survivor, and/or a source of support to someone experiencing or using violence, among others.



Document review

Several documents were provided by the Diocese and reviewed to understand the program's context, implementation processes, resources and evolution. These included:

- Program materials such as training materials, practice guides and policies;
- Media resources such as newsletters and promotional materials;
- Program reports and meeting minutes from the Committee of Management; and
- Community of Practice minutes.

DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative data were analysed using a general inductive approach as described by Thomas (2006). Data were coded into themes using NVivo software to support this process. The thematic analysis aimed to respond to the key evaluation questions, inform assessment of the Program Logic, and highlight other promising outcomes of the project or areas for improvement.

The pre- and post-training surveys and the Diocese-wide survey were analysed using descriptive statistics, through Microsoft Excel and in Qualtrics, respectively. Qualitative data from the open-ended questions in both surveys were analysed thematically using NVivo.

In addition, data analysis was informed by research on implementation science (Proctor et al., 2011) and the evidence base on the prevention of violence against women, including within faith settings, that informed the program design (Our Watch et al., 2015; Vaughan et al., 2020).

EVALUATION APPROACH

ETHICS

The evaluation was approved by the University of Melbourne Human Research Ethics Committee (ID# 30305). All participants in all data collection activities were provided with information about the risks and benefits and voluntary nature of their participation via a plain language statement.

Each participant provided consent prior to commencement of data collection and were reminded that their participation was completely voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time. Interview and focus group participants were provided with a consent form, and Diocese-wide survey respondents were required to provide an affirmation of consent prior to beginning the survey. This report uses pseudonyms and de-identified quotes from key informants and survey respondents to protect their anonymity.

A 'quick exit' button was also included in all pages of the Diocese-wide survey, to ensure respondents were able to exit the survey if they encountered a potentially threatening or unsafe situation. This button led to a Google browser page, with the return button disabled to prevent an immediate return to the survey.

Collecting data related to family violence poses the risk that participants may experience distress. To mitigate potential risk of harm to participants, researchers developed a comprehensive family violence and trauma informed safety protocol that outlined clear process for identifying and responding to signs of distress. All participants were provided with information (via the plain language statement and a participant debriefing sheet) about where they could seek follow up support, including from the evaluation team. To minimise potential power imbalances between key informants, focus group discussions were conducted with participants in similar roles (for example, members of clergy were grouped together, and lay leaders were grouped together).



LIMITATIONS

The limitations in this evaluation primarily pertain to issues of sampling, internal validity, and scope. The qualitative and quantitative data both used non-probability sampling methods, meaning that the sample of participants was not randomly selected. Therefore, while participants offered insights into the program as a result of their direct involvement, they may not necessarily represent everyone who may have been exposed to the program or who may benefit from it in the future. Related to this, while some active parishioners participated in focus groups and surveys, the project primarily targeted faith leaders. As such, there is relatively little data about how parishioners perceive the program.

The pre- and post-training survey may be prone to testing effects (internal validity) as participants post-training survey responses may be influenced by their familiarity with the pre-training survey questions. In addition, pre- and post-test surveys have been shown to be subject to response shift biases (Pratt et al., 2000), where respondents may have overestimated their knowledge of violence against women prior to receiving training. Consequently, the true effect of the training may have been diminished in the survey results.

Difficulties with recruitment for the Diocese-wide survey resulted in a relatively small number of respondents¹ – likely due to the timing of recruitment over a particularly busy period of the Diocese and the length of the survey (Kost & de Rosa, 2018) – limiting the generalisability of the survey findings. Findings pertaining to the survey should be interpreted with this in mind, although still a useful measure of the reach and perceptions of the program and scope of related prevention activities across the Diocese. Importantly, however, the final iteration of the survey encompasses the agreed scope of the evaluation alongside the emerging priorities of the program management team and offers useful insight for the focus for future evaluation survey(s). Figures for Diocese-wide survey responses presented in this report are relative to the number of respondents for the respective question(s)² in considering the relatively limited sample size and to ensure key insights are incorporated.

Finally, this evaluation draws comparisons and linkages between the current evaluation (2021 to 2024) and its (2018 to 2020) iteration but does not include a comprehensive comparative analysis. Prior prevention activities in the Diocese have likely laid the foundations for the outcomes described in this report. There may also be other alternative influences, such as public discourses on violence against women and key informants' own professional and personal experiences, that contribute to the findings.

¹ At most, 111 respondents; with 85 having completed the survey in its entirety.

² For example, 25 people of a question with 100 respondents is presented as 25 percent; 25 people of a question with 50 respondents is presented as 50 percent.

EVALUATION APPROACH

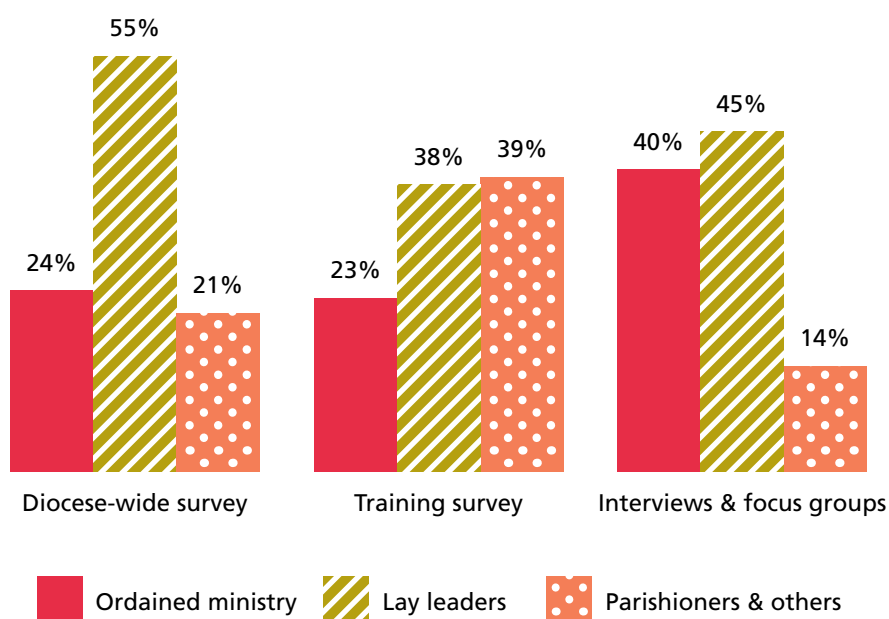
DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic profile of participants across the three methods of data collection were relatively consistent. The majority of participants:

- Identified as women,
- Were between 45 and 74 years old, and
- Held roles of ordained leadership or lay leadership.

Responses from the pre- and post-training surveys demonstrate the most equal distribution of respondents in leadership and non-leadership roles (i.e. parishioners), reflecting the broader reach of the training to general members of the church. The graph below highlights the distribution of leadership versus non-leadership roles across each of the methods of data collection.

Church roles of participants across data sources (n=195)





EVALUATION FINDINGS

To respond to the key evaluation questions (see [Evaluation approach](#) – page 18), the evaluation findings are presented under the following headings:

Impact	30
Capacity building	31
Survivor safety	38
Cultural change	46
Implementation	50
Reach	51
Inclusion	54
Acceptability and feasibility	56
Fidelity	62
Lessons learnt	66
Implementation enablers	67
Implementation barriers	71

These findings are accompanied by [Appendix C](#) (page 84), which provides an assessment against the Program Logic's process (implementation) and impact (outcomes) indicators.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPACT



Analysis of the program's impact indicators found promising outcomes across each of the key areas of capacity building, survivor safety and cultural change, with many of the key targets wholly or partially met. Other activities across each of these three areas were still in progress and have areas for improvement. These are outlined below.

CAPACITY BUILDING

What is the impact of the program in building the capacity of target participants?

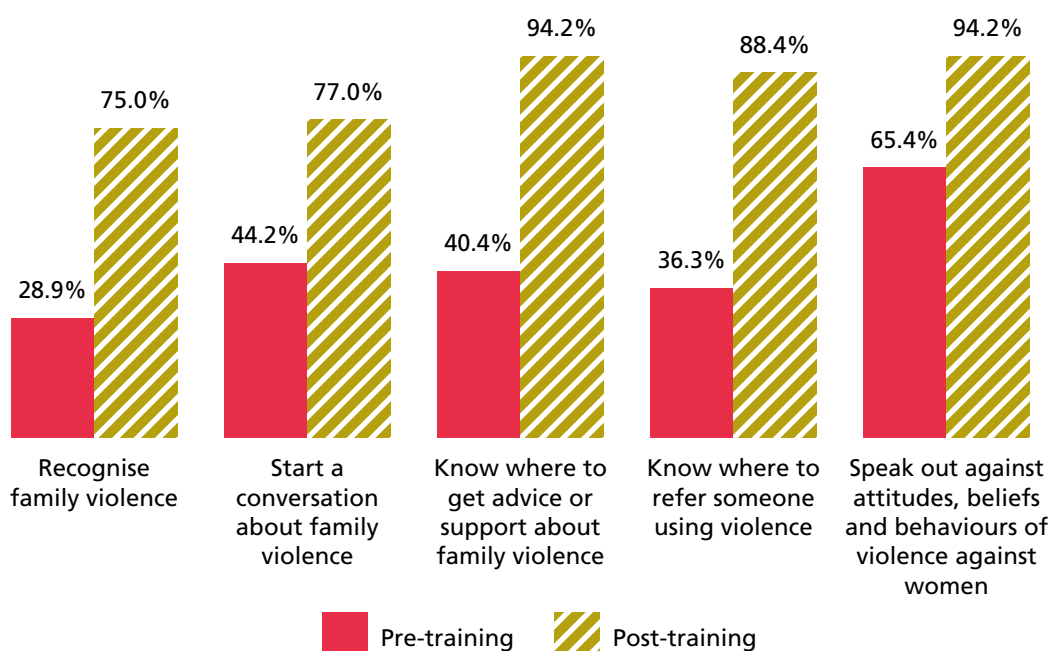
Promising outcomes



Increased confidence and capacity to respond to family violence

Analysis of the pre- and post-training data found that training led to a notable increase in the capacity of participants to respond to disclosures of family violence. The graph below demonstrates that training was most effective in increasing the knowledge of participants on **where to get advice** or support about family violence (54 per cent difference before and after training) and to **recognise family violence** (46 per cent difference).

Training participants' confidence to...



EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPACT // CAPACITY BUILDING

Analysis of qualitative data showed a similar trend, with key informants reporting an increase in confidence to **identify and respond to disclosures of family violence** as a result of training. Key informants overwhelmingly regarded training as a high-quality and a crucial introduction to family violence which expanded their understanding of the behaviours that constitute violence, what services are available for support, and how to safely respond to disclosures.

“But another thing that impressed me at that training was the kind of resources that are available and the agencies that help in such situations. That awareness was very helpful because previously in the previous parish, I really didn’t know where to direct these people to. But the fact that these training programs give us information and make these resources available, helps. That motivated me to continue in this program.” – Ordained leader.

Most participants noted that combining key resources with training was crucial in shifting from awareness to increased confidence and capacity to respond to family violence. The resources most commonly identified as helpful included:

- The Orange Door visits, which were reported to build trust and confidence in external service providers and strengthen knowledge about referral options;
- Availability of Kooyoora for consultation (used mostly by ordained leaders), which was reported to strengthen participants’ confidence that they were responding appropriately; and
- The Family Violence Policy (used by some leaders in Whole-of-Church sites), was seen as a key tool in giving leaders clarity and confidence to respond appropriately.



Increased confidence and capacity of faith leaders to prevent violence against women

Qualitative and survey data similarly showed that training supported an increased **awareness** and **knowledge** about prevention of violence against women.



“It [training] explained the size and nature of the issue and generated consensus on the way to address the issue. I feel more informed with much practical advice given. I have had some training on family violence before, but not on the underlying causes, so I found the second section [prevention focus] particularly helpful.” – Diocese-wide survey respondent.

Findings show that training:

- Provided a comprehensive introduction to the gendered drivers of violence against women;
- Supported participants’ confidence to identify actions to address these gendered drivers;
- Better equipped participants with the vocabulary to discuss family violence and violence against women within the Church context (often through sermons); and
- Increased their confidence to have these discussions even where it was an uncomfortable or unfamiliar topic for others around them.

While training participants demonstrated a generally high baseline (pre-training) knowledge of family violence and the gendered drivers of violence against women, the training was a well-situated tool to bolster these attitudes. Participants’ **strong rejection of violence-endorsing attitudes** – similar to those of the general Australian population (Coumarelos et al., 2023) – that were reinforced with the training included **high disagreement with the statements:**

- It is a woman’s duty to stay in an abusive relationship in order to keep the family together (100 per cent disagreement post-training);
- Family violence is excusable if it results from someone getting so angry that they lose control (90.4 per cent disagreement post-training);
- Violence may be justifiable if a wife is disobedient (96.2 per cent disagreement post-training); and
- A wife should tolerate violence rather than seek to end her marriage (94.2 per cent disagreement post-training).

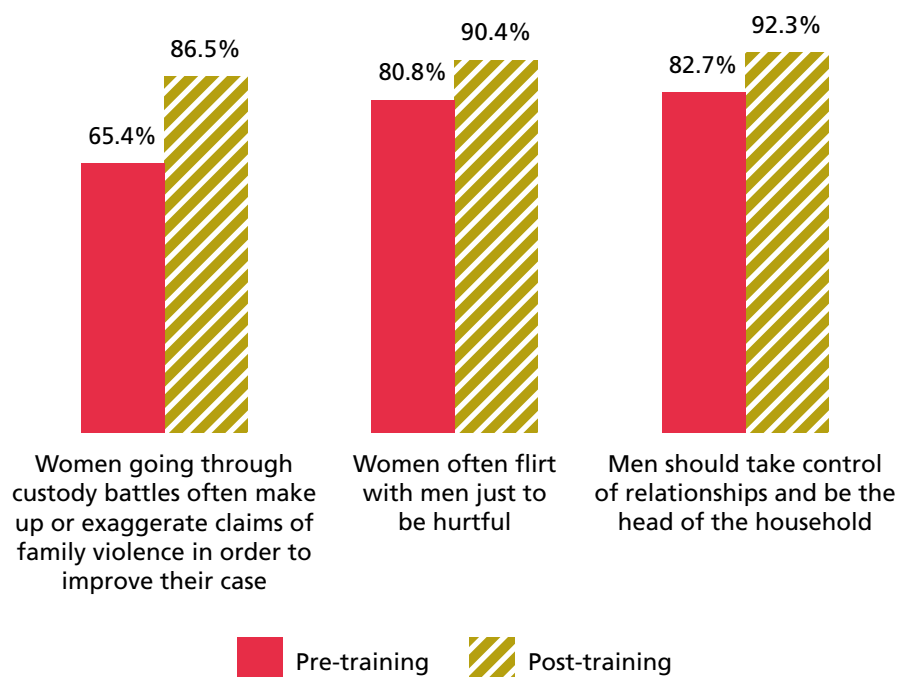
These findings likely reflect the impact of the program alongside broader societal discourse on violence against women in the Anglican Church, in challenging attitudes that may implicitly enable and dismiss violence against women in faith-based contexts (Truong et al., 2022).

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPACT // CAPACITY BUILDING

While participants may represent a group particularly attuned to issues of violence against women – given that participation in the training is voluntary – the training was nonetheless a valuable tool for bridging gaps in participants' knowledge of, and attitudes towards violence against women. These are visualised in the graph below.

Training participants' disagreement that...



Training was one essential element to equip participants to translate prevention knowledge into action, however, most participants reported that it was a combination of training and the following key program resources that boosted their **confidence** and **capacity** to put learnings into practice:

- Communities of practice – provided valuable peer support, practical guidance for post-training implementation, and a space to discuss challenges in taking action;
- Posters and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign were identified as very tangible and relatively low effort actions to challenge the condoning of violence against women, and were seen to facilitate a sense of 'openness' around the topic of family violence & violence against women; and

- The availability of project leaders was highly valued in terms of providing resources and practical support for prevention work.

The gender equality tool was also cited as being helpful to identify and address unequal power structures and gender roles impacting women's leadership and independence. This was, however, most often used by churches self-reporting a high baseline level of gender equality, suggesting that its uptake was limited in settings where it was most needed. The sermon guide and Bible studies series were also reported to support the capacity of some leaders to challenge men's control of decision making, rigid stereotypes and to promote and normalise gender equality although there were barriers to using these for several participants (see [Acceptability](#) – page 56).

Both lay and ordained leaders reported that the training, communities of practice, and key resources had enhanced their sense of confidence to incorporate messaging about preventing violence against women in other church-initiated activities and/or events. These included but were not limited to Sunday sermons, men's and women's forums, and community lunches.

Overall, most key informants reported feeling more confident to respond to family violence than to prevent violence against women, however, most were taking important action to address the gendered drivers of violence against women. Lower confidence in prevention work appeared linked to perceptions of it being less tangible and harder to measure than response efforts, and may also stem from limited engagement with certain prevention focused resources by some key informants (see [Acceptability](#) – page 56).

Areas for improvement



Capacity of family safety champions and parishioners to prevent violence against women

The program has prioritised strengthening leadership capacity, aligning with evidence-based principles for addressing violence in faith settings (Vaughan et al., 2020). However, many faith leaders noted that their involvement was largely inspired by passionate lay leaders and parishioners within their congregations who were often the primary drivers of this work.

Qualitative data also indicates that while family safety champions generally understood their role as encompassing both response and prevention, those from non-Whole-of-Church sites felt less confident and had fewer opportunities to

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPACT // CAPACITY BUILDING

engage in prevention activities compared to other faith leaders. Many champions interviewed showed strong commitment to preventing violence against women and expressed a desire for deeper involvement in the program. These findings point to family safety champions and parishioners as a potentially underutilised source of support and influence for the program.



Faith leaders' confidence to manage pastoral care challenges, particularly when perpetrators and victim survivors are in the same parish

Qualitative data revealed that some faith leaders continue to face challenges in understanding their role when both people using violence and victim survivors attend the same church. While most reported responding to disclosures in ways that align with the Diocese's family violence policy and are guided by the needs of victim survivors, many also described ongoing tensions and uncertainties in how to appropriately engage with those using violence. These included:

- Tension between wanting to make a visible (often interpreted as public) stand against those using violence versus being led by victim survivors, who may prefer that no action be taken.
- Uncertainty about how to maintain victim survivor safety if/when engaging with perpetrators.
- Difficulty resisting collusion³ with people using violence.
- Tension between supporting repentance and change – often connected to key values associated with their faith – which was often at odds with the best-practice approach.
- Fear or uncertainty about how to manage backlash from other parishioners following a response to family violence (for example in one case, several parishioners left a church after a faith leader supported a victim survivor to leave their abusive partner).
- Tensions between wanting to provide holistic family focused pastoral care responses (especially when requested by victim survivors), and the need to follow established processes. This likely reflects a broader gap in practice models for whole-of-family responses to family violence, not limited to faith settings.

³ Collusion can refer to any response from a person to someone using violence that inadvertently or deliberately, indirectly or directly indicates agreement with or support for their beliefs or behaviours of that person, or than minimise or deny a perpetrator's violence.



“It’s really, really complicated. So, there’s been times when women have wanted us to have a more holistic pastoral care approach, where we’re, you know, wanting to include both the husband and the wife. And our training is to separate them and to, you know, to do things separately for their safety ... I don’t know that I’ve got answers, but it’s just something that on the ground I kind of experience that tension all the time.” – Faith leader.

One key informant highlighted the limitations of both church leaders and professional standards organisations in being able to hold church members accountable for non-physical violence compared to physical or sexual abuse. They attributed this to a lack of understanding by faith leaders about coercive control as the underlying dynamic of family violence (see [Survivor safety](#) – page 38 for more information), and to an absence of specific criminal laws addressing spiritual abuse or coercive control in Victoria.



Recommendations

1. Provide further **coordination and support to family safety champions** to enhance their capacity to prevent violence against women and support the safety of survivors. This should consider ways to increase engagement of men as champions for preventing and responding to violence against women.
2. Consider ways in which faith leaders can be better equipped to understand their role and to **manage pastoral care challenges**, particularly when both perpetrators and victim survivors are in the same parish. This would ideally involve further relationship building with specialist family violence peak organisations and services, including men’s behaviour change organisations and other perpetrator interventions.

EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPACT

SURVIVOR SAFETY

What contributions does the program make to supporting the safety of survivors?

Promising outcomes



The program is viewed as an important aspect of Safe Ministry and inclusion

Qualitative data shows that key informants consistently agree that program objectives align with and are an important part of Safe Ministry and inclusion, with some participants engaging through their involvement in Safe Ministry.

“And basically, why I came into the role of the family violence safety champion is because of my role as child safety officer. And I think they sort of work together ... often children are victims of family violence ... And that’s how I became involved. So, I think, yeah, [they are] very important things that we do have to look at as a culture of the church and how we’re presenting [family violence and safety] biblically.” – Lay leader.



Perceived increase in disclosures of family violence and positive use of family violence policies and procedures

Many key informants observed an increase in disclosures of family violence at their church and provided examples of this from both within the church (parishioners) and outside of the church (people walking in off the street). Most attributed this increase to the program alongside a general increase in community awareness about family violence.

A key informant from a professional safeguarding organisation similarly reported increased family violence calls resulting from the program, noting that similar increases have not occurred across other Anglican Diocese they engage with. They also observed that the nature of calls have changed over time, from seeking guidance about how to respond to now predominantly confirming adherence to policies and procedures.

Consistent with these findings, qualitative data shows that there were high levels of awareness about the family violence policy among ordained leaders, and key informants frequently reported that the policy has been a helpful tool when responding to disclosures of family violence.

“Yeah. So, [the FV policy] it’s something that we rely quite heavily on. I think, you know, anytime that there is a disclosure I want to, yeah, just go back to the policy and check that we’re doing things in the right way and in the order as well ... I think the flow chart is really helpful as well.” – Faith leader.

Diocese-wide survey and qualitative data indicate that the policy as well as training, posters, brochures and other signage placed internally and publicly facing (for example posters in church hall bathrooms, brochures in opportunity shops and billboards) were perceived to work in synergy to support disclosures by:

- Increasing the visibility of violence against women and family violence as being an issue within the church;
- Contributing to a culture of openness in conversation around family violence; and
- Equipping people with the skills and confidence to identify and respond appropriately to signs of family violence.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPACT // SURVIVOR SAFETY

Qualitative data reveal that people's readiness to disclose family violence appeared to be strengthened in contexts where faith leaders had openly disclosed personal experience of, or prior experience responding to family violence (for example in other roles or contexts outside of the church).

"I was really slow to disclose to people in the church ... Initially, I had probably put out some flags as kind of an attempt to see how people would respond ... So, once I'd made a decision that I couldn't keep going in my relationship, I disclosed to one of the ministers who I anticipated would be more likely to be a safe person through their own experiences [of family violence] ... they were fantastic, supportive and very much placed things according to what I needed at the time and engaged further support from leadership." – Victim survivor.



Indications of positive responses to disclosures of family violence

Three participants across the Diocese-wide survey and qualitative data – all of whom were from churches that participated in the program – sought support from someone in their church for their experience of family violence. All three people reported receiving at least one positive response that helped them feel supported. This was usually from someone in a leadership role, but also included other staff and non-staff members. Responses included being offered emotional support and prayer, as well as practical help such as by engaging with other leadership figures within the church to publicly speak out against family violence.

Although a small sample, these experiences align with the observations of many key informants who reported either providing or witnessing positive responses to disclosures of family violence, most often by faith leaders. These responses included:

- Validating victim survivor experiences and conveying that they were believed;
- Referrals to and/or support to access external services (for example, attending the Orange Door or Magistrates Court);
- Supporting a woman with getting her children to school;
- Providing housing for a woman fleeing family violence;

- Paying for a woman to relocate interstate following family violence;
- Excluding the person using violence from attending the same church as the victim survivor; and
- Removing a person using violence from a church leadership role – in consultation with the relevant professional standards and safeguarding organisation.



Uptake and participation of family safety champions in the program

There were 12 family safety champions across Whole-of-Church sites and 18 nominated at non-Whole-of-Church sites. While the target of two champions per Whole-of-Church site wasn't fully met, the numbers indicate broad engagement with this aspect of the program across the Diocese.

Some key informants felt that the visibility of family safety champions helped to raise awareness of family violence and may have encouraged disclosures in certain churches. Low participation rates from victim survivors and family safety champions – due to non-response or recent involvement in the program – limited evaluators ability to comprehensively assess their impact on survivor safety. The findings indicate a need for increased support and coordination to fully realise the potential of the family safety champion role.



EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPACT // SURVIVOR SAFETY

Areas for improvement

A total of eight people who experienced family violence within an Anglican church context during the life of the program participated in this evaluation. Of these, only three had sought help from someone within the church. The remaining five cited barriers including feeling it was wrong to speak negatively about their partner at church, perceiving the Anglican Church as lacking the right expertise, not knowing or trusting anyone sufficiently, or being unsure whether they would be believed or supported. Only one of these five participants had direct engagement with the program, through the WoC model and by participating in training through the program.

These findings should not be interpreted as a failure of the program itself but may reflect limited program reach or uneven uptake across sites. They highlight the ongoing challenge of ensuring PVAW initiatives effectively permeate all communities and reach those most affected, underscoring the need for strategies to broaden engagement, reinforce program visibility, and translate learning into supportive responses for all parishioners experiencing family violence.



Identifying and responding to coercive control and family violence against older women

While the training enhanced participants' capacity to identify family violence, key gaps remained in recognising patterns of coercive control where physical violence was absent. Disclosures within church settings were at times met with violence-supportive responses from some parishioners and lay leaders. One woman reported that gender double standards and victim-blaming in her church prolonged her abuse and intensified her isolation. As she reflected:

“There is a lot of onus on the victim to first be able to articulate, and describe, and convince someone that what they’re undergoing is actually abuse and worthy of support, care, compassion, assistance. ... There are still many within the church who very much view abuse as just being physical abuse and not applying to spiritual, emotional, psychological abuse. So, it means that because there’s a lack of recognition, because there’s strongly held values around



maintaining the marriage, then there's often a lot of onus put on the [woman] to work harder at a relationship that only they are putting [effort] into, in which they are being harmed [and are] without the support to seek help or protection.” – Victim survivor.

This pattern reflects broader qualitative data and findings from the Diocese-wide survey, which showed that non-physical forms of violence and coercive control were less likely to be identified as abuse, and more likely to be dismissed or downplayed by members of the church. Survey and interview participants stressed the need to better equip faith leaders to identify and respond to these dynamics. Another victim survivor stated:

*“Male clergy should be more direct to perpetrators about how their violence is unacceptable and **be able to understand and identify coercive control** so they can shed light on this very subtle form of abuse.” – Victim survivor, Diocese-wide survey.*

Some key informants emphasised the need for more thorough coverage of spiritual abuse in training, given its relevance in faith settings and its use as a tactic of coercive control.

“Just in the spiritual abuse area ... in the training it's touched on, but I just think that that's an important area where it needs more expansion ... So yeah, thinking through those theological issues of non-voluntary suffering and repentance, reconciliation and grace and all those buzzwords in, you know, in the church. It would be great to think through that and present a fuller package on that for people.” – Faith leader.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPACT // SURVIVOR SAFETY

Key informants also called for stronger trauma-informed responses that address the long-term impacts of coercive control and the harm caused by inadequate support.

“I don’t think just the initial response, but I’d love to think about more remedial ways of how to work through, you know, lament and post traumatic growth and in helping people to flourish afterwards as well. I’d love to see the whole spectrum of caring for people in this space.” – Faith leader.

Qualitative data highlight the need for greater awareness of family violence against older women and the support options available to them. While some participants assumed the issue was less relevant in older congregations, others identified it as a significant concern – pointing to limited external services and uncertainty about how best to respond beyond the church.

The involvement of Anglican’s with lived experience of family violence in the development of training and/or other program resources, could positively contribute to program outcomes by:

- Supporting capacity building of faith leaders through improvements to training content and resources to address gaps in program participants knowledge;
- Addressing persistent attitudes and resistance to the idea of violence against women occurring in faith settings; and
- Increasing the perceived relevance, *acceptability*, and subsequent *engagement* of some participants in the program.



Recommendations

3. Build on existing training strengths by developing more comprehensive **materials** that address gaps in participants' knowledge in relation to coercive control, spiritual abuse, family violence against older women, and trauma informed practice.
4. Explore safe ways of engaging people with **lived experience** in the program such as through co-design of resources, advocacy and/or involvement in training.



EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPACT

CULTURAL CHANGE

What are the program's contributions to cultural change within and beyond the Diocese to address the drivers of violence against women?

Promising outcomes



Program leaders shared learnings and contributed to the prevention evidence base

Qualitative data and document reviews provide evidence that program leaders shared program learnings and contributed to the evidence base within and beyond the Diocese via newsletters, at roundtable events, communities of practice, and through professional networks. Key informants from external services consistently highlighted the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne as leaders in prevention of violence against women in faith settings and reported that shared learnings supported prevention work across other faith organisations.

*"I think that this is one of the biggest gaps in the sector, working with faith leaders. It is like a complex part of work that the Diocese have really ... embraced that portfolio and really started to **lead the way prevention can be done in these spaces**. And I think that **they've done some really awesome projects that help other organisations** to see how they could better equip themselves to do this work as well." – External stakeholder.*



Increased visible condemnation of violence against women

Qualitative and Diocese-wide survey data provide evidence that the program contributed to an increased visible condemnation of violence against women. Examples of this included:

- Ongoing commitment to and funding of the program in and of itself;
- Consistent messaging in training and program documents and resources, and the development of a family violence policy;
- Witnessing positive responses to disclosures of family violence including examples of perpetrator accountability;
- Leadership's messaging about the program at Synod and through roundtable events;
- The use of promotional materials such as posters;
- The uptake of family safety champion roles in many churches;
- Utilisation of program resources that challenge the condoning of violence (For example when delivering Sunday sermons); and
- Using Hope25⁴ as a platform to speak about prevention of violence against women.



Increased visible structural changes to support gender and intersectional equality

Key informants and document analysis identified several examples of visible structural changes aimed at promoting gender and intersectional equality. These included:

- The appointment of two Indian woman – each to a separate leadership position – within the CALD Safe and Thriving project and Committee of Management;
- Employment of a new disability inclusion officer at the Diocese;
- More gender equal roles in church activities (for example, on morning tea rosters);
- A reported increase by key informants of women on Parish council;
- Women taking a lead in relation to the program (for example as family safety champions or lay leaders at Whole-of-Church sites); and
- A perceived increase by some key informants of ordained women leaders across the Diocese since the program began.

This last point is supported by data showing a rise from 28 per cent of ordained women leaders in 2019 to 33 per cent in 2024.

⁴ Hope25 seeks to empower Australian Anglican parishes and communities in an intentional season of sharing hope in Jesus from Easter to Pentecost in 2025.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPACT // CULTURAL CHANGE

Areas for improvement



Violence-supporting and sexist attitudes & behaviours

Although training improved recognition of family violence, fewer participants believed it was common in the Anglican Church compared to the broader Australian community, both before and after training. There was also greater **uncertainty** (post-training) about the prevalence of family violence within the Anglican Church (44.2%) than in broader society (26.9%). This suggests ongoing reluctance to acknowledge the presence of family violence in the Anglican church context, despite evidence showing rates equal to or higher than in the broader community (Powell & Pepper, 2021, p.10). This resistance was also noticeable across the Diocese-wide survey responses and key informant interviews (see [Implementation barriers](#) – page 71 for more information).

Similarly, while pre- and post-training surveys showed important attitudinal changes, both qualitative and survey data revealed the persistence of certain sexist and violence supportive beliefs. These included:

- A tendency to view men are more credible than women;
- Misunderstanding of the dynamics of abuse and mutualising violence by conflating it with 'conflict';
- Gender double standards regarding who is responsible for maintaining the harmony in a marriage;
- Blaming victim survivors for men's use of violence; and
- Beliefs about men being equally impacted by family violence, contributing to resistance toward recognising the gendered drivers of violence against women.

This last point was also reflected in the pre-training data, with one-fifth of participants believing that men and women experience equal levels of fear and physical harm as a result of family violence.



Some key informants noted that sexist and violence-supportive attitudes often persist subconsciously, despite widespread explicit agreement that violence against women is harmful and not condoned by church members.

“People say, ‘Yes, we’re all on board for equality. Yes, we care about these issues. No woman should be abused.’ But actually, having that situational awareness or that sensitivity to seeing, actually, there’s all these really subconscious biases that people have that are still there. Even though you might say men and women are equal, there are all these things in church culture where there’s actually a massive divide. Where there is still that culture, at a subconscious level, of women should be meek and mild, and, you know ... diplomatic and peacekeepers, and whatever else, and the man is a leader. And at a subconscious level, they’re very much impacting how people view what should happen when there’s relational conflict or abuse” – Victim survivor.

Most key informants noted a lack of clear evidence for cultural change in relation to sexist or violence supporting attitudes. They attributed this to difficulties in separating the program impact from broader societal shifts and to a perception of already high gender equality within their church contexts, which made any change less apparent.



Recommendations

5. Explore how existing **training and/or resources can be strengthened** to address persistent violence supportive attitudes.

EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPLEMENTATION



This section summarises how well the program achieved its targets against process indicators (see [Appendix C](#) – page 84) across the four implementation criteria reach, inclusion, acceptability and fidelity. These findings are influenced by several implementation enablers and barriers (see [Lessons learnt](#) – page 66) and contribute to the observed outcomes of the program (see [Impact](#) – page 30).



REACH

How effectively does the program reach target participants?

Whole-of-Church

Monitoring data and document analysis reveal that there were some barriers to meeting targets for the Whole-of-Church model, but that progress had been made.

- Of the 15 sites targeted (five pilot and 10 new), there were 12 Whole-of-Church sites participating (three pilot, five new, and four newly engaged but not signed on);
- Of the 15 coaching sessions with individuals at Whole-of-Church sites, four were delivered; and
- Of the six communities of practice sessions targeted, nine were delivered.

Diocese-wide survey data revealed that awareness of the program and Whole-of-Church model was high across ordained ministry respondents (90 per cent reported being familiar with the program), although participation in the latter was lower. A substantially lower proportion (around 60 per cent) of lay leaders and parishioners were familiar with the program, suggesting potential bottlenecks in its translation between church leadership and lay leaders and parishioners. Additionally, several survey respondents and key informants were unsure whether the materials, training, or events they attended were part of the PVAW program, suggesting that its components may not be clearly communicated or recognised as a unified initiative by parishioners.

Resources

The most widely ***distributed resources*** were the communications guide, family violence policy, first evaluation report, and prevention of violence against women posters. The most widely ***requested resources*** were the posters and the family violence policy. This is consistent with the resources key informants reported using the

EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPLEMENTATION // REACH

most, and appears to be closely linked to how confident people felt to use them as well how much time they took to use (see [Acceptability](#) – page 56 for more information). Web analytics also indicate that as of November 2024, the newsletter was reaching 587 subscribers, with up to 72 per cent of people opening the newsletter.

Training

Training attendance records show that targets were partially met. Although the scope of the evaluation did not extend to thoroughly explore the barriers to training participation, lower than expected uptake was likely influenced by faith leaders competing priorities and/or resistance to aspects of the program, such as the gendered approach to preventing VAW (see [Implementation barriers](#) – page 71 for more information).

- Out of the 15 training days targeted, 10 were delivered;
- Of the 200 participants targeted, 135 were trained; and
- Of the 100 parishes targeted, 49 participated.

Although the comprehensive training package did not fully meet its output targets, pre- and post-training data indicate it was successfully reaching new audiences – over 60 per cent of participants reported they had never attended, or did not recall attending, any previous training on violence against women. Additionally, program staff sought to expand the reach and enhance the acceptability of the training by responding to faith leaders' requests for tailored sessions which included:

- Two-hour introduction to family violence (response focused training), which reached around 200 participants; and
- Bystander training, which reached around 70 participants.

Project leaders also opted to deliver closed training sessions to specific churches to support participant comfort and safety – particularly in contexts where resistance or theological differences were identified. This approach also aimed to improve the *reach* and *acceptability* of the training by engaging more participants from individual churches, allowing for deeper, more context-specific engagement (with fewer participants) rather than broader but more diffuse participation. See [Fidelity](#) (page 62) for further details on adaptations made to enhance training *uptake* and *reach*.

Of note, approximately half (45 per cent) of clergy who completed the **pre-training survey** expressed feeling **unprepared by their theological training** to support



someone experiencing family violence, despite evidence indicating that doing so is a significant part of their ministry (Powell & Pepper, 2021). This underscores the importance of continued efforts to reach faith leaders, particularly in light of the encouraging training outcomes noted under [Capacity building](#) – page 31. Expanding the involvement of theological colleges in the program would strengthen the Diocese’s efforts to build leadership capacity and support a whole-of-population, multi-settings approach to prevention (Our Watch, 2021). See [Acceptability](#) – page 56 for further detail on college engagement.



Recommendations

6. Continue to strengthen **collaborative work with Anglican colleges**.



EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPLEMENTATION

INCLUSION

How inclusive is the program for Anglicans from diverse communities?

Analysis of program documents and qualitative data reveal that the program design, training and resources positively reflect intersectionality and inclusion concepts, most strongly in relation to cultural and linguistic diversity.

“I think it’s really great that the Diocese has committed to creating specialised, tailored programs for the CALD members of their community ... I think it’s a unique thing. It’s not something that a lot of other organisations are doing ... These things are not homogenous and it’s really important to actually pick apart and understand those overlaps and those intersections so that everyone is getting support that reflects their lived experience and what they actually need.” – External stakeholder.

There is clear evidence that the recommendation from the first evaluation to improve the program’s reach and acceptability for the Diocese’s diverse sociocultural communities has been incorporated (See [Appendix C](#) – page 84 for more information). Of note is the development and ongoing implementation of a model for community engagement, resource development and training, which focuses on the intersections of faith, culture and the prevention of violence against women. This model includes ongoing partnerships and linkages with key migrant and refugee organisations and applies culturally sensitive practice.



“For the 16 Days of Activism, [the CALD project officer] had played a very vital role in getting the posters done in different languages. Because we are trying to reach out to every kind of people in their local language to make them understand that we are with you ... we are trying to actually get rid of the barriers, language barrier, cultural barriers ... with her understanding of the culture, being from this culture, she [CALD project officer] contributes a lot ... and helps us to overcome barriers [to engaging CALD communities].” – Abby, Ordained leader - CALD project.

Some gaps identified in the document analysis and highlighted by key informants include limited representation of people with disabilities or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in the training or resource materials. There was also limited discussion found in training material and program resources about the intersections of colonialism, ableism, or discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people which shape the social context in which violence against women often occur. Additionally, some of the more ambitious targets for the CALD Safe and Thriving project – namely delivery of coaching sessions and appointment of CALD champions – were not yet achieved, signalling the complexity of this work, and highlighting some barriers to implementation (see [Implementation barriers](#) – page 71 for more information).



Recommendations:

7. Drawing on lessons learned from the Safe and Thriving CALD project, improve the **program’s reach and acceptability** for the Diocese’s Aboriginal communities, LGBTQIA+ community, and people with disability, through engagement with relevant constituents and experts and updating program governance, design, activities, and resources accordingly.

EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPLEMENTATION

ACCEPTABILITY AND FEASIBILITY

How acceptable, feasible and sustainable is the program?

Training

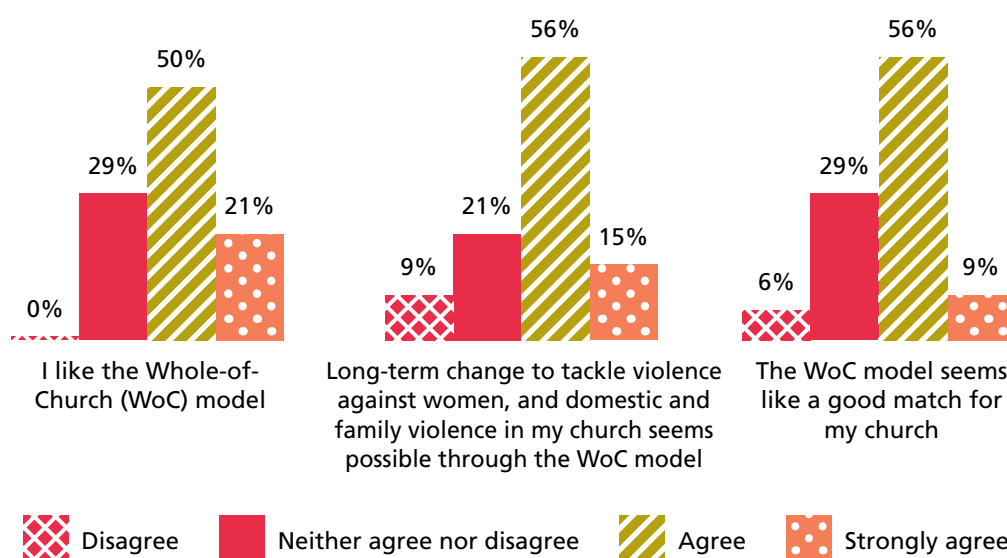
Pre- and post-training data, along with qualitative feedback, show **high overall acceptability of the training**, with over 80% of surveyed participants (n=29) finding it *acceptable*, *appropriate*, and *feasible*. Some training delivery targets were, however, unmet, and participants suggested improvements – particularly around the length and content volume – to enhance accessibility. See Survivor safety (page 38) for more information about areas of improvement relating to training content.

Whole-of-Church approach

The graph on the page opposite demonstrates the acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility of the Whole-of-Church model to Diocese-wide survey respondents who were aware of the model.

Most respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement towards the acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility of the Whole-of-Church model. There were notable levels of uncertainty as well. Although the scope of the survey did not extend to thoroughly unpack the root of these uncertainties, this may indicate a lack of relevance or engagement with the model in the context of the broader program.

Diocese-wide survey respondents' thoughts about the Whole-of-Church model (n=34)



Gendered approach to preventing violence against women

Many ordained leader respondents (67 per cent) of the Diocese-wide survey expressed being comfortable or very comfortable taking a gendered approach to preventing violence against women, however, approximately one-third of ordained ministry respondents expressed uncertainty in doing so. Given that a gendered approach is integral to the program and its fidelity to the prevention evidence base, this finding points to an important gap in the acceptability of the program that may have implications for its translation and delivery across the Diocese (see also [Fidelity](#) – page 62).

Key informants from qualitative interviews reported that the program aligned with the core values and teachings of the church relating to social justice, love and respect, and key informants were generally comfortable and committed to the gendered approach to preventing violence against women.

“Addressing violence against women is doing God’s work, in that you are ensuring the church is a safe place for women and they feel valued, loved and supported.” – Diocese-wide survey respondent.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPLEMENTATION // ACCEPTABILITY

The gendered approach appeared to be more readily accepted and integrated at churches that were either:

- More egalitarian⁵ in orientation – with all but two key informants identifying as egalitarian or expressing views aligned with this approach to matters of faith; or
- Located in communities where parishioners were perceived by faith leaders to hold more progressive social views, often reflecting the broader demographic characteristics of the surrounding area.

This data suggests some ongoing barriers to participation for more complementarian-leaning churches, including difficulties navigating theological tensions and a resistance to change (see [Implementation barriers](#) – page 71 for more information).

Action plans and resources

Action plans, a data source in the monitoring and evaluation plan, were not available or ready for evaluators to review, and many of the faith leaders reported that they had not yet achieved the final stages of the Whole-of-Church model. Further to this, the graph on the page opposite shows that respondents from the Diocese-wide-survey reported relatively low use of several of the resources that were designed to support prevention work – namely, producing an e-newsletter, as well as youth group and children’s ministry and Bible study resources on gender equality and respect.

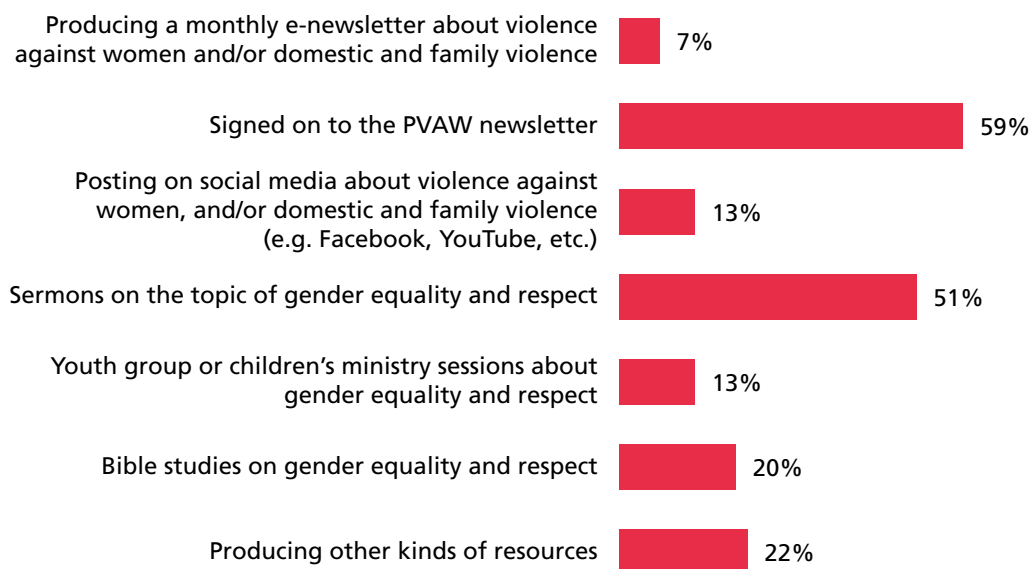
Key informants reported similarly low levels of using the youth group and children’s ministry and Bible study resources, sermon guides and gender equality tool and attributed this to:

- Lack of knowledge about key resources and/or clarity about how to access them;
- Complexity of the task in the context of limited time or competing demands, particularly in cases of leadership turnover; and
- Lack of relevance to the context (for example the Sermon series doesn’t follow the revised common lectionary reported to be used by some churches).

⁵ *Egalitarian* refers to the teaching that men and women are equally suited for all roles of ministry and leadership, ordained and lay. *Complementarian* refers to the teaching that men and women are designed for distinct complementary roles and responsibilities in marriage and church.



Diocese-wide survey respondents' awareness of their church's engagement with key resources (n=94)



The first [Evaluation Report](#) similarly identified challenges experienced by individuals engaging with program resources (page 42), and recommended updates or alternatives to improve *acceptability* and *uptake*. This recommendation was planned for future project phases and has not yet been implemented. Current challenges with resource engagement are therefore expected and recommendations should be considered alongside relevant findings from the first evaluation.

Several key informants also expressed a desire for sharing additional resources developed by individual churches, as a means of supporting their prevention capacity and engaging in reciprocal learning about what works in different contexts. Participants stated that these avenues did not yet exist.

Despite these challenges, qualitative data shows that **Whole-of-Church sites were engaged in a variety of primary prevention actions**, using a combination of different tools and resources, and all faith leaders involved in the evaluation reported that they **were committed to ongoing implementation of the program**. This included churches that were not yet formally signed on to the Whole-of-Church model.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPLEMENTATION // ACCEPTABILITY

Colleges

Assessing the program's acceptability to the Theological Colleges was difficult due to limited engagement of colleges throughout this period of evaluation (2021 – 2024). However, discussions between the Diocese and Colleges have recently resumed, with one representative now on the program's Committee of Management. Given the importance of colleges to the program's capacity building objectives, it is crucial for such engagements to be consistent and continuous (see [Reach](#) – page 51 for more information and recommendation about colleges).



Recommendations

8. Consider feedback from evaluators and parishioners about **changes/alternatives to the program resources** (for example Bible studies series, children and youth resources etc) that could improve their acceptability and feasibility.
9. Collaborate with the Anglican Church of Australia's Families and Culture Commission (FCC) to create a **central repository for resources** and system for reviewing & sharing resources or ideas developed at the parish level, to increase access to resources and maintain fidelity to the evidence base.



EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPLEMENTATION

FIDELITY

How faithful is the program to the prevention evidence base, while also supporting reasonable adaptation to local needs and contexts?

Fidelity to the evidence base

The document analysis shows that the program – including the training content, resources and policies – were designed using the prevention of violence against women evidence base. There was evidence that the program included:

- Comprehensive information about the drivers of violence against women;
- Consideration for the essential actions to address the gendered drivers and to change the social context in which violence against women occurs; and
- Resources designed to build the capacity of faith leaders to implement such actions.

The program also demonstrates fidelity to the emerging evidence-based principles for preventing violence against women in faith-settings (Vaughan et al., 2020). Findings show that the program aligns well with the following principles (see [Appendix C](#) – page 84 for more information):

- Principle 1: Support faith leaders to prioritise public commitments to women and children's safety.
- Principle 2: Strengthen relationships between secular violence prevention organisations and faith leaders.
- Principle 3: Engage faith and sector experts to co-design and co-deliver prevention initiatives.
- Principle 4: Understand the central role of gender inequality as a driver of violence against women.
- Principle 8: Engage senior leadership in faith communities early and sustain engagement.

- 
- Principle 9: Strengthen the evidence base to build understanding of violence against women and improve responses for victim-survivors and perpetrators in faith settings.

Adopting the recommendations in this report may assist the program to further address:

- Principle 5: Anticipate and address resistance to gender equality.
- Principle 6: Recognise intersectionality to inform prevention efforts with diverse communities.
- Principle 7: Strengthen multifaceted approaches to capacity building.

Fidelity to implementation

The second measure – fidelity in action plans – was difficult to measure as no action plans were made available to evaluators. Analysis of qualitative data did however reveal several **adaptions to implementation** of the Whole-of-Church model made **by the project team**. These included:

- Development and delivery of two-hour introduction to family violence (response focused training);
- Development and delivery of bystander training;
- Inclusion of churches, not formally signed on, in the Whole-of-Church model;
- Allowing some faith leaders to engage in the model without their commitment to completing first stages such as the training; and
- Awareness and response focus of the Safe and Thriving CALD project training.

There is strong evidence that the **flexibility of program staff and their modified approach to implementation have increased the reach, acceptability and feasibility** of the Whole-of-Church model and increased participation for some faith leaders who would have been unlikely to take part had these changes not been made. In particular, adaptations have supported participation of:

- Faith leaders who were time poor;
- Faith leaders and/or parishioners with a specific interest in building their capacity to respond to family violence;

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPLEMENTATION // FIDELITY

- Faith leaders and/or parishioners who may have been resistant to aspects of the program (for example the gendered drivers or the gender-audit) for cultural, theological, political or other reasons.

It appears that coaching was also, in practice, more fluid and less formal than had been outlined in the monitoring and evaluation plan. Many key informants spoke about receiving individual support from one of the program managers, but that they did not usually identify this as coaching. This support often involved elements of coaching that included building rapport, creating safety and trust, identifying goals, and offering practical and emotional support to prevent or respond to violence against women. Program leaders also reported that to increase acceptability, they did not always define one-on-one support as coaching, especially when providing this to leaders newly engaged in the program. While pragmatic, this approach may limit the structure and depth of formal coaching, reducing its effectiveness in measuring and/or achieving desired outcomes.

Qualitative data also reveals that there have been some **changes to the intended implementation** of the Whole-of-Church model **at the parish level**. These included:

- Participation in prevention activities despite not having completed training;
- Some ordained leaders engaged only in simpler prevention activities, such as putting up posters;
- A faith leader limiting poster and flyers displays to only part of the year; and
- Faith leaders altering sermons or bible studies content, such as removing references to gender to focus on broader concepts of respect.

There is some evidence that **these modified approach to implementation may have increased the reach, acceptability and feasibility** of the whole-or-church model. In particular, adaptations may have supported participation of:

- Parishes where the ordained leader was time poor or resistant to some aspects of the program; and
- Parishioners who may have felt excluded by the gendered and binary language of violence against women, such as people who identify as gay or non-binary.

Improvements to these key elements of implementation (reach, acceptability and feasibility) are crucial to the overall success and impact of the program. However, the current approach to implementation also risks:

- Project resources and materials being used in ways not originally intended;
- Undermining of the program's fidelity to the evidence base; and
- Limitations to the achievement of key outcomes such as cultural change.



The current Whole-of-Church model may also lack sufficient accountability at the parish level, particularly in ensuring responders and prevention leaders have the skills to apply trauma-informed, survivor-centric approaches. Key informants recommended integrating the program into the Diocese's supervision model and strengthening links with child safety initiatives to reinforce parish-level accountability. They also expressed a need for a more structured capacity-building framework with clear, actionable steps for prevention activities, progress tracking, sustained momentum, and ongoing skill development. As one ordained leader explained, breaking the process into stages would provide practical guidance and clarity.

"I just think, just break it down into small little bites ... different levels. The first level is growing awareness within the church ... foundation. So, [next] it could be breaking up the soil ... It could be then planting seeds. It could be then growth and cultivation ... It could be that the church has already done the foundational level. They've already broken the soil ... The next bit then, okay, planting the seeds. Okay, what does that look like? Planting seeds means [for example] having a poster outside of church or having leaflets, you know, in your food bank ... So, I think if the Diocese came up with something, which broke it down for us ... it's like, well, here's an idea, you implement it." – Ordained leader.

These findings highlight the need to review the Whole-of-Church model to create a more systematic, stepwise approach that addresses barriers to reach and acceptability, enhances parish-level accountability, and better supports survivor safety.



Recommendations

10. Review the Whole-of-Church model, considering a **staged/stepped implementation approach** and improved accountability structures. A review could also consider development of more nuanced measures of engagement relating to individual coaching and support.
11. Sustain commitment to **ongoing monitoring and evaluation** of the program to ensure continuous improvement; to inform future programs; and to continue to build the prevention evidence base in faith-settings.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

LESSONS LEARNT



The evaluation found a range of enablers (positive) and barriers (negative or unintended) that operated in tension with each other. This reflects the continued strengthening of the program over the past three years and identifies where resources have not yet been available/prioritised. These enablers and barriers influenced how well the program tracks against the process indicators ([Appendix C – page 84](#)), and they shape the program's reach across the Diocese; faith leaders' perceptions of the program's acceptability and feasibility; and their willingness to adopt the program in their parish.



It is important to note that the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions on places of worship and in-person gatherings disrupted program implementation during 2021. Additionally, the broader policy context of Child Safe Standards within Victoria and mandatory training obligations for staff and faith leaders across the Diocese disrupted program implementation from 2022 onwards. These circumstances were time-sensitive and not unique or specific to the program context. As such, the impact of COVID-19 and the Diocese's Commitments to Safe Ministry is considered as contextual to the other implementation enablers and barriers. For example, the pandemic and additional mandatory child safety training may have affected faith leaders' perceptions of the program's feasibility as they faced significant challenges and demands during this time.

IMPLEMENTATION ENABLERS



Holistic engagement and support strategies

The program included a variety of strategies to engage and build the capacity of faith leaders. This holistic approach supported the programs *reach* as well as its *acceptability* and *feasibility*. Engagement strategies included:

- Offering a combination of training, peer learning, coaching and resources to support faith leaders' capacity building;
- Proactively inviting faith leaders to participate in the program and keeping them updated through email correspondence, posted letters, social media, and e-newsletters;
- Using identifiable and professional program-specific branding to make resources stand out and engage faith leaders' attention;
- Locating training in churches across the Diocese to increase accessibility and reach;
- Sending out follow up emails to training participants with links to further resources and invitations to take action;
- Promoting and encouraging faith leaders to participate in special events such as the Walk Against Family Violence, 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, International Women's Day forums, and 'Holding the Light' service to remember Victims and Survivors of Family Violence.

EVALUATION FINDINGS LESSONS LEARNT // IMPLEMENTATION ENABLERS



Responsiveness to the needs of individual churches

The flexibility of program managers to meet churches where they are at (in terms of readiness to participate) and go with where their interest were (for example starting with response training or with simpler resources), was greatly appreciated by participating church leaders and led to increased acceptability, feasibility and engagement in the program. This flexibility was especially important in churches facing leadership turnover or where resources were directed toward COVID-19 adaptations or mandatory child safety obligations.



Strong authorising environment

Key informants noted the programs strong authorising environment which was described in two themes: 1) external authorisation related to the broader social change context where issues related to violence against women and family violence are in the spotlight; and 2) internal authorisation signified by a mandate for change in the Diocese. These supported key informant's perceptions about the *acceptability* of the program.

High value was placed by key informants on the Diocese's ongoing investment in the program (including the securing of funding for an additional three years), the employment of two program managers, the National prevention of violence against women program, and the episcopate's leadership and championing of the program. Of note was the key role that the Bishop from the Jumbunna episcopate played in granting legitimacy to the Safe and Thriving CALD project, with some key informants describing this Bishop's promotion of the project as the catalyst for CALD leaders' engagement in the program.



Productive governance & staffing structures

The governance body (Committee of management) and staffing (Part-time program manager in addition to the full-time project officer) were seen as key enablers for the program's *reach*, *inclusion*, *acceptability* and *fidelity* to implementation. These structures were crucial to:

- The projects financial sustainability in terms of securing ongoing funding; and
- Supporting implementation, adaptations to the program, and engagement across the Diocese.

Key informants highlighted their appreciation for the relatability and credibility of program staff (including trainers and other consultants). These were reported to be enhanced by their:

- Leadership as women;
- Connection to the Anglican faith combined with their prevention expertise; and
- Lived experiences of migration and/or shared cultural or linguistic background - which was reported to support trust building and engagement.



Connecting Christian values and social change

The combination of prevention and faith expertise underpinning the program design supported a connection between Christian values and the socially transformative work of preventing violence against women. Key informants reported that this focus was often a key motivator for engaging in the program training especially for those who had completed external violence against women training and wanted to strengthen their practice in the Anglican faith context.

Some faith leaders perceived that their use of Christian values-based messaging to inspire interest in the program supported parishioner's acceptability of the training and/or broader program. Other key informants reported that through the program they had opportunities to connect their Christian values (such as social justice, love and respect) to broader social actions to address family violence (for example through connecting with local specialist family violence services, local council initiatives, and broader campaigns like 16 Days of Activism). Some perceived that this:

EVALUATION FINDINGS LESSONS LEARNT // IMPLEMENTATION ENABLERS

- Reduced the perceived stigma of family violence by situating this problem within a broader social context;
- Reduced some parishioner's resistance to the program;
- Gave validity to their work in the Diocese to prevent violence against women;
- Deepened their connection to Christian values; and
- Increased some faith leader's perceptions about the *acceptability* of and *engagement* with the program.



Enabling parish ownership

The combination of previously described implementation enablers collectively enabled ownership of the program by faith leaders in conjunction with:

- A values-based (rather than compliance-based) approach that engaged faith leaders' intrinsic motivation to participate;
- Strong partnerships between the clergy and lay leaders and a supportive parish council; and
- Support from the Diocese using a flexible and encouraging approach that supported faith leaders to adapt the program to their context.

These factors contributed positively toward key informant's perceptions of the program's *acceptability*, *feasibility* and *engagement* with the program.

While some key informants were in favour of mandatory prevention training to enhance the program's reach, most were against this as they felt it would increase resistance to the program.

IMPLEMENTATION BARRIERS



Competing demands experienced by project staff

It was clear that project staff held many different responsibilities within their designated roles and that they contend with many competing demands. These responsibilities include:

- Delivering and adapting training needs to meet requirements of individual churches and to address low rates of participation, resulting in more sessions run to fewer participants;
- Providing individual support to leaders participating in the Whole-of-Church model such as providing resources, facilitating communities of practice, providing mentoring, and other debriefing or individual support to use resources;
- Promoting and organising events to share learnings about the program;
- Building relationships with external stakeholders;
- Mapping out key contacts and target sites;
- Building relationships and trust across the Diocese necessary to expand the program;
- Sourcing funding;
- Adapting and/or modifying resources; and
- Ongoing monitoring and participating in evaluation tasks.

Key informants highly valued the individual support provided by project staff to implement the Whole-of-Church model. Many also highlighted the considerable workload of the program staff stating that due to the complexity of prevention work and their own competing demands (see below), an **increase in resourcing** would likely be needed to support a **sustainable expansion** of the Whole-of-Church model.

These competing demands influenced the project staff's ability to meet key implementation targets and to implement key recommendations from the first evaluation, which likely shaped program outcomes (see [Impact](#) – page 30).

EVALUATION FINDINGS LESSONS LEARNT // IMPLEMENTATION BARRIERS



Turnover of project staff

The recruitment, engagement and onboarding of a new program manager in 2022, following the development of the Program Logic and monitoring and evaluation plan, led to notable delays in the implementation of the program. In addition, the replacement of the project officer for the CALD Safe and Thriving project after only a short period of engagement, meant that the position was only fully staffed for two of the project's three years. This delay, alongside the new project officer's work to repair relationships with key parishes; establish relationships with practitioners and organisations across the prevention and faith sectors⁶; and meet ambitious targets set for the project; contributed to delays in implementation and to some of the targets not yet being met.



Competing demands experienced by faith leaders

Key informants from leadership noted that they contend with many competing demands in the church context, including responsibilities for managing church operations, pastoral care, and the implementation of a range of other initiatives, policies, and practices – including those related to Safe Ministry. Furthermore, while lay leaders were highly motivated implementers, they were usually women working in a volunteer capacity and managing competing demands with their own personal lives and commitments.

These competing demands, combined with faith leaders' perceptions about the complexity or time commitment of some tasks, and limited prior experience in doing prevention work, hindered their perceptions of program *feasibility* and subsequent *engagement*. This barrier was amplified in contexts where there was high turnover of the clergy, who were occupied with the demands of getting to know and establish trust with a new parish, and who were less available to complete training requirements and/or provide support to lay leaders to implement the program.

⁶ The time spent establishing relationships and networks within and beyond the Diocese was identified as particularly important to the success of the program given the limited-evidence base about what works to prevent violence against women, not only in faith-settings, but for multicultural communities in faith-settings.



Resistance to change

Consistent with findings from the first evaluation, the program continues to face resistance by some constituents, who feel confronted by, or deny, the prevalence of violence and/or evidence of the gendered drivers of violence against women. The pre- and post-training survey and qualitative data show that fewer participants agree that violence against women is common in the Anglican Church compared to the broader Australian society (see [Cultural change](#) – page 46 for more information).

Some key informants faced resistance from parishioners who believed that violence against women is not relevant for the Anglican Church. Some reported that this was due to a belief that Christians are less likely to engage in violent behaviours, or stated that a lack of disclosures therefore meant violence wasn't occurring. Others cited reasons such as their church having a predominantly older/ageing population, which was perceived by some to indicate that women were therefore not at risk of family violence. These were most commonly reported as the beliefs and attitudes of other individuals within the broader parish or in a small number of cases was the perspective of the faith leader/participant themselves as highlighted in the quote below.

“No. It [the program] has had no effect at all. I am not aware of any evidence that domestic violence is a major problem in our parish save for one instance where we assisted the victim to leave the abusive relationship. This is part of normal Christian pastoral care and does not require a program from the Diocese.”

– Lay leader, Diocese-wide survey respondent.

A small number of key informants reported that opposition was also likely related to parishioners concerns about stigmatisation of their church (or the Diocese) due to others' perceptions that their involvement in the program meant they had a problem with violence against women.

These challenges affected some key informants' perceptions of the program's acceptability and limited their engagement. However, several informants noted that intentionally adapting the language used to promote training – such as using values-based messaging or omitting explicit references to gender or violence against women – could improve its perceived relevance and acceptability for certain audiences. Additionally, some suggested that involving a male program staff

EVALUATION FINDINGS LESSONS LEARNT // IMPLEMENTATION BARRIERS

member could help address resistance and foster greater engagement among men by reinforcing their sense of inclusion and the importance of their role in preventing violence against women.



Challenges navigating theological tensions

The program's communications guide, and other resources, were strategically developed to promote the program's acceptability and adoption by faith leaders who differ on theological interpretations of the Bible's stance on gender equality issues, while also maintaining fidelity to the prevention evidence base. Despite this, key informants described ongoing challenges in navigating theological tensions on gender equality at the parish level. Many key informants reported that the program lacked opportunity to discuss theological tensions, nor provided guidance to faith leaders on how to manage discussions about theological tensions on gender equality with parishioners. These tensions were often seen by key informants to be intertwined with political and/or cultural perspectives, increasing their complexity. As resources have not yet been available/prioritised to address theological tensions as was recommended in the first [Evaluation – 2021](#) (page 29-30) this finding is to be expected.

Key informants highlighted that opportunities to discuss and unpack theological (and other) tensions could support faith leader's capacity to effectively convey prevention messaging in a meaningful way. Lack of opportunities for this were seen by some key informants as a key barrier to *acceptability*, *engagement* and *sustainability* of the program, particularly in more complementarian or conservative settings. Some of the key informant's ideas for how the program could provide support to address theological tensions included:

- Collaboration with Colleges to facilitate this support as part of the Ministry Formation Program;
- Creation of a dedicated advanced training module to address and explore theological, political, and cultural tensions;
- Embedding the program and guidance for theological tensions into the supervision model;
- Engaging an expert consultant to facilitate communities of practice sessions on this topic;
- Development of commentaries on difficult or problematic passages in scripture, such as via newsletters or other resources; and
- Using the revised common lectionary to identify passages that are controversial and need a gender lens.



Recommendations

12. Secure increased and sustained **funding** from the Diocese and other sources to adequately resource both **strategic oversight** and **on-the-ground implementation**. This should include dedicated roles for program development and engagement, as well as day-to-day delivery across Whole-of-Church sites. Resourcing both levels is essential to support further program development, scale-up, and the embedding of the **Safe and Thriving CALD project** into the broader program to reach a wider audience.
13. Provide guidance to support faith leaders to overcome issues of opposition and **navigate the complexities of theological, ideological, and cultural tensions** regarding gender equality issues.



CONCLUSION





This program contributed to a range of positive cultural changes resulting from the ongoing commitment and dedication of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne to preventing violence against women. Central to this change was the impact of training and key resources, which significantly enhanced participants' confidence and capacity to both prevent and respond to family violence and violence against women. These outcomes were further supported by the development and active use of family violence policies and procedures and key prevention resources, which helped foster a more informed, open, and responsive church culture where conversations about family violence and the promotion of gender equality are increasingly normalised. The program is recognised as aligning with broader key initiatives within the Diocese – such as Safe Ministry – demonstrating a shared commitment to principles of safety and inclusion and reinforcing its relevance and shared value.

Critical areas for improvement that could strengthen the program include: fostering deeper engagement of family safety champions and parishioners in prevention efforts; enhancing faith leaders' capacity to navigate their roles when both individuals using violence and victim survivors attend the same congregation; challenging ongoing violence-supportive attitudes, including reluctance to acknowledge the prevalence of family violence within the Anglican Diocese; and addressing enduring theological tensions that may hinder progress.

Most importantly, after several years of laying the foundation for the program, followed by intensive piloting, persistence through significant disruptions caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic, and ongoing implementation of the key learnings from the first evaluation, the program is in a key position to grow and generate even greater impact. This highlights the importance of ongoing long-term, sustainable investment in this program to continually evaluate the implementation and impact of the program as the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne continues to evolve, ensuring that key learnings are adopted and fit-for-purpose. The program is well-positioned to expand its reach to a larger population of ordained ministry, lay leaders, and parishioners across the Diocese, and grow its influence as a national and global leader in preventing violence against women within faith communities.

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APPENDIX A: LANGUAGE AND TERMS

Anglican agency

Non-profit agency associated with the Anglican Church that partner with the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne in the Preventing Violence against Women Program (currently includes Anglicare Victoria, Brotherhood of St Laurence, and Relationship Matters).

Anglican Centre

The Anglican Centre houses the episcopate, registry and business services which serve the parishes and other ministries of the Diocese.

Anglican college

Melbourne-based theological schools: Ridley College and Trinity College.

CALD Champions program

Parish level leaders who manage safe and appropriate responses to disclosures.

Coercive control

The pattern and underlying feature or dynamic created by a person's tactics and use of family violence and its felt impact or outcome on victim survivors. This includes any combination of family violence behaviours used by a perpetrator to create a pattern or 'system of behaviours' intended to harm, punish, frighten, dominate, isolate, degrade, monitor or stalk, regulate and subordinate the victim survivor (Gippsland Family Violence Alliance, 2025).

Gender

The socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women: gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time (Our Watch et al., 2015).

Gender inequality

Unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity, and value afforded to men and women in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures (Our Watch et al., 2015).

Gendered drivers (of violence against women)

Specific elements or expressions of gender inequality that are most strongly linked to violence against women. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality and roles in public and private life. The gendered drivers are the underlying causes [also described in this evaluation report as 'social enablers' of violence against women] that create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They must always be considered in the context of other forms of intersectional discrimination and disadvantage (Our Watch et al., 2015).

Faith leader

For the purpose of this evaluation, faith leaders are recognised as people who are either in formal religious leadership roles (e.g. clergy) or lay people who play a leadership role in their faith communities (Vaughan et al., 2020).

Family violence

Family violence is defined by the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) as any behaviour that occurs in family, domestic or intimate relationships that is physically or sexually abusive, emotionally, or psychologically abusive, economically abusive, threatening, or coercive, or is in any other way controlling that causes a person to live in fear for their safety or wellbeing or that of another person. Family violence is also defined as behaviour by any person that causes a child to hear or witness or otherwise be exposed to the effects of the above behaviours.

Indicators

Indicators are used to measure how well a program is tracking against a Program Logic (VicHealth, 2015). This report refers to process indicators and impact indicators. Process indicators track implementation activities and outputs described in the Program Logic. In other words, they measure how well the program did in creating and delivering various processes, such as the capacity-building activities and resources in this program. Impact indicators track the outcomes of

the program toward achieving desired changes described in the Program Logic. They measure the difference the program is making for the people who should benefit from it, which in this program are the clergy and lay leaders in the Diocese.

Intersectionality

A theory explaining how multiple, overlapping social oppressions, such as racism, ableism, ageism, sexism, heterosexism, and xenophobia, contribute to intensifying experiences of discrimination and disadvantage (Chen, 2017; Crenshaw, 1991).

Perpetrator/Person using violence

The person who uses violence against women/ family violence. This term signifies the importance of placing responsibility with the person(s) who chooses to use violent, abusive, and controlling behaviours to intimidate, harm and cause fear in another person. It is important to acknowledge that the term perpetrator may not be preferred by some people and communities. Other expressions such as 'person using (or choosing to use) family violence' might be preferred instead, depending on context. Additionally, some victim survivors may not relate to the term perpetrator or find it alienating, and it is not a term that should be used in cases where an adolescent or young person is using violence against parents/carers or other family members (Victorian Government, 2021).

Program Logic

A Program Logic visually represents the links between a program's inputs, activities, outputs, and desired changes (outcomes) to show how the program intends to work. Each of these terms is explained below:

- Input – project resources such as funding, staffing, policies, research, authorisation.
- Activities – ideas about what the program should put into action, such as capacity building, resource development, advocacy, organisational change, and partnership work.
- Outputs – tangible products that come from the activities, such as training and peer learning sessions, documents and materials, agreements, and action plans.

- Outcomes – the desired changes and impacts that the program hopes to achieve as a result of the inputs, activities, and outputs.

Specialist Family Violence Service

Funded professional services and programs that work directly with victim-survivors and/ or perpetrators of family violence, providing dedicated resources and advocacy to promote victim survivors' rights and respond to their safety and support needs (Victorian Government, 2023).

Victim-survivor

The person, including adults, infants, children, and young people, who has experienced violence. This term acknowledges that the person is both a victim of a crime and a human rights violation, and they are also a survivor with respect to their autonomy, strength, and resilience. The term 'victim-survivor' does not wholly define a person and some people do not prefer this term or any particular label at all (Victorian Government, 2023).

Violence against women

Any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or private life (United Nations General Assembly, 1993, Article 1).

Whole-of-Church

Churches involved in an intensive model of engagement as part of the program. This refers to churches that were part of the pilot project, as well as newly signed on churches. The pilot project built on the broader program design to address the gendered drivers of violence against women and adapted existing evidence-based approaches and resources relevant to prevention work within an organisational change context, such as Victorian Department of Education and Training's Respectful Relationships Program and guidance from Our Watch on preventing violence against women in workplace settings.

APPENDIX B: PROGRAM LOGIC July 2021 – June 2024



Needs

VAW is a serious social problem that needs to be addressed in Australian society. The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne has a responsibility to address the drivers and risks of VAW. Anglicans need to take action on VAW as an authentic expression of their faith.



Inputs

FAITH:
Christian values, teachings and communities

PEOPLE:
Diocese Leadership
Program Manager
CALD Project Officer
Parishes and AACs

PARTNERSHIPS:
Stakeholder organisations
Anglican colleges
Safe Ministry

FUNDING:
Government and partnership funding

FV/VAW POLICY & STRATEGY:
National
State
Diocese

EVIDENCE BASE:
2018-2021 Evaluation
UOM Evidence Guide
UOM Key Lessons Report
Our Watch frameworks
PVAW research



Activities

Committee of Management
Communications
Training
Program Resources
FV Policies & Procedures
WoC Model
CALD Anglican Project
Individual coaching
Communities of Practice
Partnership work with Anglican Colleges and Safe Ministry
Monitoring & Evaluation



Outputs

Bi-monthly CoM meetings delivered
CoM membership updated to reflect program needs and Diocese diversity
Program promoted internally and externally
Program resources and policies distributed across the Diocese
Training days delivered to participants across the Diocese
WoC model expanded
Communities of Practice delivered (Pre-WoC, WoC, and CALD)
Coaching sessions provided to WoC and CALD Project participants
CALD Project consultation and events activities delivered
WoC and CALD Project Action Plans established
Family Safety Champions recruited and trained
Partnership commitments made with Anglican Colleges and Safe Ministry
M&E results reported



EVALUATION SCOPE

AACs: Authorised Anglican Congregations
 CALD: Culturally & Linguistically Diverse
 CoM: Committee of Management
 CoP: Community of Practice
 FV: Family Violence
 M&E: Monitoring & Evaluation
 VAW: Violence against Women
 WoC: Whole-of-Church



APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
1. REACH How effectively does the program reach target participants?	1.1	15 training days delivered across the three episcopates.	Training schedule	10 training days delivered across three episcopates.	Partially met
	1.2	200 training participants attended a training day including: • 50 per cent lay • 50 per cent clergy • 50 per cent women • 50 per cent men	Training attendance records	135 participants attended a training day between July 2021 – November 2024: • 26 per cent clergy (n=35) • 55 per cent lay leaders (n=74) • 19 per cent parishioners (n=26) • 68 per cent women (n=92) • 32 per cent men (n=43)	Partially met
	1.3	Training participants represented 100 parishes or AACs spread across the three Episcopal areas with no more than 25 per cent repeats in parish or AAC representation from previous training days.	Training attendance records	Consolidation of no. of churches reached in each Episcopate: • 23 churches from Marningatha Episcopate • 11 churches from Oodthenong Episcopate • 15 churches from Jumbunna Episcopate Other types of PVAW campaigns delivered: • Synod table launching the FV policy with Archbishop • 16 Days of Activism (four churches) • Invitation to Respect Vic walk • Two The Orange Door tours • Evensong Service at one church • Social Media Campaign • Billboards out the front of WOC churches • Conducted two workshops at Faith, Hope, and Love National Conference (one on the WOC model and one on working with CALD leaders)	Partially met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
1. REACH How effectively does the program reach target participants?	1.4	Whole-of-Church model expanded to 15 sites (five original pilots + 10 new).	Track in spreadsheet	• Three Pilot churches still active • Five newly sign-on churches • Four churches engaged with the model, but not formally signed on	Partially met
	1.5	Participants from 15 Whole-of-Church model sites attended six Whole-of-Church Community of Practice sessions.	CoP notes	Twelve participants from eight WoC model sites attended nine CoP sessions on the following dates: • 5 May 2023 • 7 July 2023 • 11 August 2023 • 20 October 2023 • 10 November 2023 • 23 February 2024 • 19 April 2024 • 14 June 2024 • 18 October 2024 Topics discussed include: • General updates/successes/challenges • Gender Assessment Tool • Training • 16 Days of Activism prep • Guest speakers – representatives from: The Man Box, OurWatch, leader from pilot church site, Mission Aviation Fellowship Australia • New resources and research Note: • Total number of participants at each session unclear • Community of Practice notes unavailable to evaluators	Partially met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
1. REACH How effectively does the program reach target participants?	1.6	Participants from 10 other parishes and AACs attended six Pre-Whole-of-Church Community of Practice sessions.	CoP notes	Participants from between five and seven parishes attended above CoPs. Note: • Total number of participants unclear • Community of Practice notes unavailable to evaluators • Program staff did not have the capacity to set up 2 CoPs. In order to address this, they allowed people who were contemplating being a part of the Whole-of-Church program to attend the WoC CoP. This was also viewed as an effective way for people to get a better sense of what the WoC project involved and many then went on to sign on for the WoC	Not yet/ Partially actioned
	1.7	15 participants from Whole-of-Church model sites were provided at least one individual coaching session.	Track in spreadsheet	Regular formal coaching with participant from one parish. Note: Three other churches have had three coaching sessions each; further detail unavailable to evaluators.	Partially met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
1. REACH How effectively does the program reach target participants?	1.8	# and type of resource downloads from program website. Resources disseminated via communication and training activities.	Website analytics Track in spreadsheet	Most widely distributed resources: • Evaluation and communications guide (July 2021 – Oct 2022) • Evaluation and Family Violence policy (Nov 2022 – Apr 2023) • Family Violence policy (May 2023 – Oct 2023) • Evaluation reports, communications guide, Whole-of-Church document, and PVAW program posters (Nov 2023 – Apr 2024) • Family Violence policy document, evaluation reports, communications guide, Whole-of-Church document, and PVAW program posters (May 2024 – Oct 2024) Most widely requested resources: • Posters and parish council presentation (July 2021 – Oct 2022) • Posters and FV policy (Nov 2022 – Apr 2023) • Family Violence policy (May 2023 – Oct 2023) • PVAW program posters and 1800 RESPECT resources (Nov 2023 – Apr 2024) • PVAW program posters (May 2024 – Oct 2024) As of Nov 2024, program newsletter (distributed through Mailchimp) is reaching 587 subscribers of 684 contacts. • Up to 72 per cent of subscribers open the newsletter	Partially met
	1.9	# of FV policy and procedure downloads from program website & FV policies and procedures disseminated via communication and training activities	Website analytics Track in spreadsheet	Data not made available to evaluators but survey and qualitative data reveals that many faith leaders have accessed and used the FV policy.	Partially met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
2. INCLUSION How inclusive is the program for Anglicans from diverse communities?	2.1	Program design, training and resources reflect intersectionality and inclusion concepts.	Document analysis of program documents	• Training updated to include intersectionality training, in alignment with recommendations from the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health - Updated content delivered at all training sessions since May 2022 (reach: 93 participants across seven sessions) • Securing funding for, and implementation of the Safe and Thriving CALD project; • Engagement of an external facilitator to deliver culturally responsive and targeted communities of practice sessions to CALD faith leaders; • Development of targeted training and resources for Farsi and Chinese speaking parishes; • Sourcing and distribution of resource materials in other languages; • Consultations with around 40 CALD leaders to develop the CALD champions program; • Appointment of a faith leader from Indian background to the Committee of Management; • Engagement of 13 CALD champions, exceeding targets of 10 champions; and • Training was delivered to 22 CALD faith leaders, exceeding targets of delivery to 10 leaders. • As of October 2024, program management was in conversation with: - Common Grace for assistance to update Bible study guide, in alignment with recommendations from first program evaluation. - Children and Youth Team at the Melbourne Anglican Diocese for assistance to update Children and Youth resource.	Partially met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
2. INCLUSION How inclusive is the program for Anglicans from diverse communities?	2.2	The Committee of Management membership reflects the diversity of the Diocese.	Monitoring spreadsheet Document Analysis CoM minutes	Current status of Committee of Management: - Composed of three men and six women - One new member: South Asian background - No young people Note: - Invitation for membership was extended to three new leaders involved in CALD project; one has become a member	Partially met
	2.3	CALD Anglicans Project consulted with 40 CALD Anglicans (clergy and lay, including 50 per cent women) to develop the CALD champions program.	Track in spreadsheet CALD project docs (records of consultation)	- Visited Dream Stitches program three times (unclear of the number of women) - Engaged with over 30 multicultural clergy members in Multicultural Connections meeting held on Oct 2023 - Post-training feedback session (five clergy) and one-on-one sessions (unclear of the number of one-on-one participants)	Partially met
	2.4	CALD Anglicans Project engaged 10 CALD champions (clergy and lay, including 50 per cent women) in the program.	Track in spreadsheet CALD project docs (records of consultation)	Engaged 13 CALD champions in total (nine ongoing and regular).	Met
	2.5	CALD Anglicans Project provided training sessions to the 10 CALD champions.	Training attendance records	Training for 22 clergy delivered.	Met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
2. INCLUSION How inclusive is the program for Anglicans from diverse communities?	2.6	CALD Anglicans Project provided eight Community of Practice sessions for 10 CALD champions.	CoP notes	- Four Community of Practice sessions delivered, with a total of 15 people attending Note: - Most recent session as of October 2024 was facilitated by external consultant in partnership with the PVAW program team and five attended the session. These sessions provide a valuable platform for ongoing discussions, resourcing, and co-design of the project.	Partially met
	2.7	CALD Anglicans Project provided four coaching sessions to each of the 10 CALD champion (total = 40 sessions).	Track in spreadsheet	Not yet actioned	Not yet actioned
	2.8	CALD Anglicans Project supported 10 CALD champions to develop Action Plans that engage 500 CALD Anglicans (i.e., 50 CALD Anglicans x 10 champions).	Collect action plans	Not yet actioned	Not yet actioned
	2.9	CALD Anglicans Project supported 10 CALD champions to deliver events engaging 200 CALD Anglicans and 100 wider Diocese members.	Event schedule and attendance records	Not yet actioned	Not yet actioned

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
2. INCLUSION How inclusive is the program for Anglicans from diverse communities?	2.10	CALD Anglican Project consulted 10 CALD champions to 'take stock' and recommend program improvement	Workshop documents	Not yet actioned	Not yet actioned

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
3. ACCEPTABILITY - Feasibility - Unity - Sustainability How acceptable, feasible and sustainable is the program?	3.1	15 Whole-of-Church model sites (five pilots, 10 new) developed action plans.	Document analysis: Collect action plans	Information was unavailable to evaluators. Note: It should be Project Manager reported that three churches have wholly or partially completed action plans but were unavailable to evaluators	Not yet actioned
	3.2	10 of 15 Whole-of-Church model sites (5 pilots, 5 new) attained the final Whole-of-Church stage.	Track in spreadsheet	- Five new sites (ongoing implementation) - Three new sites not yet signed on to the model but doing work (reflected in qualitative data) - Three further churches have expressed recent interest in signing on to Whole-of-Church model (late 2024) - Six Churches offering to host general training sessions	Partially met
	3.3	15 Whole-of-Church model sites are committed to ongoing implementation regardless of stage attained.	Focus Group Transcripts & spreadsheet	- Two pilot sites no longer formally engaged - Five signed on sites (pilot and new) expressed commitment to ongoing implementation (assessed using qualitative data) - Three sites not yet signed on expressed commitment to continuing engagement with program - Faith leader from one other site (not yet signed on) expressed desire to sign on Note: - No involvement in evaluation from one pilot site, two new signed on sites, and one new site engaged but not signed on – unable to assess commitment of these churches - Monitoring data shows that four other new sites (not yet signed on) expressed interest in signing on	Partially met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
3. ACCEPTABILITY - Feasibility - Unity - Sustainability How acceptable, feasible and sustainable is the program?	3.4	90per cent of participants agreed that the Whole-of-Church model was acceptable and feasible to implement in their setting.	Survey results and FGD transcripts and interviews	Diocese-wide survey: - Of respondents whose parishes were part of the Whole-of-Church model (n=34), 71 per cent found the model acceptable and feasible for their church setting Qualitative data: - High level of acceptability and feasibility expressed by key informants participating in evaluation - Key informant reports about acceptability to broader parish = some participants highlighted resistance from small number of parishioners, while others did not encounter the same issues - Some clergy reported challenges in implementing the program, with some not having completed program training, having limited consistency in use of, and awareness of resources - Qualitative data highlighted that women in volunteer roles (lay leaders) were doing much of the work day-to-day	Partially met
	3.5	Parishes and AACs involved in the program represented a variety of theological alignments.	Interviews and FGDs & spreadsheet	- Most parishes taking-part in the evaluation were egalitarian-leaning, with just two being more complementarian - Faith leaders from multiculturally diverse churches involved in the evaluation (n=5), reported that the position of parishioners is more influenced by cultural background rather than the head pastor and often reflected more conservative theological alignments	Partially met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
3. ACCEPTABILITY - Feasibility - Unity - Sustainability How acceptable, feasible and sustainable is the program?	3.6	Participants reported that the program is acceptable in that it fosters unity and offers support to navigate social, theological, and cultural differences.	Survey results and FGD transcripts and interviews	Focus groups & interviews: Most participants reported receiving good support from program leaders – however, there is a lack of resourcing and opportunities to have theological discussions and really embed the PVAW program in this way. Diocese-wide survey: Few respondents described the impact of the program in relation to navigating social, theological, and cultural differences (notably, few respondents were aware of the CALD Project). A small number of respondents touched on the need for the program to address theological tensions relating to PVAW and complementarianism.	Partially met
	3.7	Anglican colleges further embed PVAW training, policies, and practices into their Ministry Formation program.	Interviews and FGDs & survey results	No involvement of Colleges, until recent re-engagement of representative from Ridley college on the Committee of Management.	Not yet actioned
	3.8	The program has secured funding commitments beyond 2024.	Interview transcripts	Funding secured for broader PVAW project but not yet for CALD Project.	Partially met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
4. FIDELITY - Evidence-based - Adaptability How faithful is the program to the prevention evidence base, while also supporting reasonable adaptation to local needs and contexts?	4.1	The program design demonstrates fidelity to the faith-based PVAW program evidence base (gendered drivers & faith evidence base).	Document analysis (program docs), Interviews & FGDs	Evidence of work across the essential actions addressing the gendered drivers of VAW, mostly focussed on Action one. The program (including training content, resources, and policies) were designed using the PVAW evidence base, including within faith communities. Greater efforts are needed to: • Address intersections of ageism, ableism, colonialism, • Create opportunities to use tools and maximise efforts to put actions into practice, such as through youth resources, engagement with the audit tool, and development of the action plans. Evidence of fidelity to faith-based evidence base (adherence to key principles): Principle 1: Prioritise safety – public commitment to prioritising women’s safety and visible stand against VAW. Principle 2: Strengthen relationships between secular violence prevention organisations and faith leaders (for example Kooyoora, The Orange Door, Connecting Communities, Our Watch, Safe & Equal, and Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health). Principle 3: Engage faith and sector experts to co-design and co-deliver prevention initiatives (for example through the pilot program; and consultations with and co-design of the CALD program with CALD faith leaders, the Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health, and external consultants from multicultural organization for training). <i>Continued overleaf</i>	Met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
4. FIDELITY - Evidence-based - Adaptability How faithful is the program to the prevention evidence base, while also supporting reasonable adaptation to local needs and contexts?	4.1	The program design demonstrates fidelity to the faith-based PVAW program evidence base (gendered drivers & faith evidence base).	Document analysis (program docs), Interviews & FGDs	Principle 4: Understand the central role of gender inequality as a driver of violence against women (Evidence throughout program documents). Principle 8: Engage senior leadership in faith communities early and sustain engagement (for example CALD faith leaders, Clergy in Whole-of-Church, family safety champions). Principle 9: Strengthen the evidence base to build understanding of violence against women and improve responses for victim-survivors and perpetrators in faith settings. Note: Adopting the recommendations in this report may assist the program to further address: Principle 5: Anticipate and address resistance to gender equality resistance. Principle 6: Recognise intersectionality to inform prevention efforts with diverse communities (for example key gaps were identified in recognition of the intersections of ableism, colonialism, racism and ageism with sexism and gender inequality in program content. *Recognising that significant work has been undertaken in relation to race and migration. Principle 7: Strengthen multifaceted approaches to capacity building (for example there were great strengths identified in the different delivery mechanisms with peer mentoring and dialogical approaches overwhelmingly reported to be highly valued by key informants – however peer mentoring and CoP sessions did not quite meet targets set for these key aspects of implementation. There was also a strong need to improve and modify resources to increase acceptability and use which would strengthen capacity building particularly in relation to prevention).	Met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
4. FIDELITY - Evidence-based - Adaptability How faithful is the program to the prevention evidence base, while also supporting reasonable adaptation to local needs and contexts?	4.2	Evidence of fidelity in action plans while also supporting reasonable adaptations to local needs and contexts.	Document analysis (program docs), Interviews & FGDs	Interviews highlight that some churches make adaptations to sermon content, e.g. to include different passages that promote equality (not specifically gender equality). Program documents (e.g. adapted sermons) containing relevant information unavailable to evaluators.	Partially met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
5. CAPACITY BUILDING What is the impact of the program in building the capacity of target participants?	5.1	More than 80 per cent of post-training participants demonstrated changes in knowledge, attitudes, and confidence with positive increases in: • Awareness of the prevalence of violence against women in Australia and Anglican Church • Knowledge about family violence and violence against women • Anti-violence attitudes • Knowledge of the gendered drivers • Confidence to respond to family violence • Agreement with the Anglican Church's role to prevent family violence • Confidence to speak out about violence against women	Pre- and post-training surveys	Participants' knowledge of family violence and violence against women, anti-violence attitudes, knowledge of the gendered drivers of violence, and agreement with the Anglican Church's role to prevent family violence were high at baseline (as indicated by pre-training survey), with the majority of items measured within these domains garnering above 80 per cent positive responses. These were bolstered with training, with all items experiencing an increase in positive responses following training. The most notable increases were seen in: • Participants confidence to recognise, respond, start a conversation about, and speak out against family violence (see: Capacity building); and • Participants' knowledge of the prevalence of VAW in the Anglican Church (30.8 per cent agree or strongly agree prior to training, increasing to 73.1 per cent following training).	Met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
5. CAPACITY BUILDING What is the impact of the program in building the capacity of target participants?	5.2	Participants reported increases in prevention and response capacity as a result of training, communities of practice and/or individual coaching.	Survey results and FGD transcripts and interviews	Pre- and post-training survey data: • Notable increase in response capacity pre- and post-training, specifically in terms of confidence to recognise FV (46.1% increase), • Start a conversation with someone who may be experiencing FV (32.8% increase), and • Knowledge of where to get outside advice for someone facing FV (53.8% increase) or using violence (51.9% increase). • Participants also reported increased confidence to speak out against attitudes, beliefs, & behaviours that justify VAW (28.8% increase) Diocese-wide survey: • Open-ended responses indicate that program as a whole (including training) was helpful in raising awareness of the issue of family violence within the church context • 80 per cent of respondents that have participated in training as part of the PVAW program agree that it is feasible to achieve long-term change in tackling violence against women and family violence in their church setting Focus groups and interviews: • Participants reported increases in capacity to response, and prevention as a result of the program • Data indicates greater capacity (response and prevention) at sites that engaged with most/all resources • External stakeholders highlighted increased capacity of participants – reflected in attendance/engagement at events including Faith, Hope & love conference, in CoPs	Partially met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
6. SURVIVOR SAFETY What contributions does the program make to supporting the safety of survivors?	6.1	At least two trained lay persons at 15 Whole-of-Church model sites (total 30) were recruited as Family Safety Champions.	Monitoring spreadsheet & Document analysis	- Total of 30 Family Safety Champions: 12 from Whole-of-Church sites 18 from non-Whole-of-Church sites - Four FSC from new pilot sites engaged in interviews and FGDs - Five FSC from non-whole-of-church sites engaged in interviews and FGDs	Partially met
	6.2	The program is recognised as an important aspect of Safe Ministry and Inclusion in the Diocese.	FGD & Interviews	General agreement across participants that PVAW program aligns with objectives of Safe Ministry	Met
	6.3	Family Violence Policies and Procedures were followed after disclosures and participants observed an increase in survivor help seeking. Increased help-seeking calls to Kooyoora for family violence matters by: - Survivors - Clergy - Lay leaders - Other contacts (e.g., parishioners, perpetrators)	FGD & Interviews including representative from Kooyoora	- Representative from Kooyoora described an increase in the use of the policies, as well as changes in the way that churches in the Diocese were engaging with the organisation - Most clergy report using family violence policies - Mixed responses from lay leaders and parishioners regarding engagement – many were not aware of the policy - Key informant with lived experience of family violence reported that clergy had used this policy to guide their practice when providing support	Met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
6. SURVIVOR SAFETY What contributions does the program make to supporting the safety of survivors?	6.4	Adult survivors reported positive responses after disclosures, and positive feedback about the program overall.	Survey results & VS interviews	Mixed responses from victim survivors from interview and Diocese-wide survey. All report receiving both positive and negative responses alongside each other. Key informant with lived experience provided positive feedback about the program (at the Parish level) in terms of: • Contributing to an increase in women's leadership • Contributing to a decrease in violence supporting attitudes • Enhanced capacity of some faith leaders to respond to disclosures of VAW Note: Contributions of the program were seen to run in parallel with general increase in awareness of VAW in broader society.	Partially met

APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT OF PROCESS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
7. CULTURAL CHANGE - Influence - Equality What are the program's contributions to cultural change within and beyond the Diocese to address the drivers of violence against women?	7.1	Evidence that the program contributed to: • decreased violence-supporting and sexist attitudes and behaviours • increased visible condemnation of violence against women • increased visible structural changes to support gender and intersectional equality	Survey Interviews FGD Program docs (e.g. training feedback)	Some participants across the Diocese-wide survey and qualitative interviews described the program as increasing a sense of openness around the issue of family violence and violence against women. Most reported that it was difficult to attribute these changes to the program only, and most highlighted that these run in parallel to broader increases in societal awareness about family violence and VAW.	Partially met
	7.2	Program leaders shared program learnings and contributed to the prevention evidence base within and beyond the Diocese.	Interviews & FGDs	Yes, as highlighted through interviews with stakeholders and program leaders.	Met

Implementation criteria & key evaluation question	Indicator	Impact indicator	Data source	Results	Targets met
7. CULTURAL CHANGE - Influence - Equality What are the program's contributions to cultural change within and beyond the Diocese to address the drivers of violence against women?	7.3	External stakeholders report positive contributions and influence from program.	Interviews & FGDs	Yes, as highlighted through interviews with stakeholder and program leaders. Note: The CALD Project manager has established partnerships with key organisations to enhance support for CALD clergy and communities while providing valuable insights for the PVAW program. An external consultant from a specialist multicultural organisation is collaborating with the program to ensure the training materials are culturally relevant, as well as facilitating four Communities of Practice sessions and trainings, and advising on the CALD project. The CALD Project is also building a partnership with other relevant multicultural organisations to explore capacity-building and collaborative funding opportunities, with the potential to form an advisory group in 2025. These partnerships will significantly strengthen the initiatives and resources available for CALD clergy.	Met

EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team are from the Gender and Women's Health Unit within the Nossal Institute for Global Health at the University of Melbourne:

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- Jess Kirwan
- Isabel Chung

The Gender and Women's Health Unit aims to advance the health of women in Australia and internationally, to reduce inequity and create positive change. Through research, teaching and public engagement, our work contributes to a robust knowledge base about the health effects of gender inequity and its intersection with social, economic and cultural factors.



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