

Evaluation of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne's **Preventing Violence Against Women Program**

University of Melbourne | APRIL 2021



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement of Country

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne recognises the traditional owners of the lands upon which we live, serve, and worship. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and affirm our commitment to the ongoing work of reconciliation.

Thank you to contributors

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CONTENTS



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 activities and resources for faith leaders, parishes, and colleges across the Diocese and within five churches involved in an intensive ‘whole-of-church’ pilot project.

The purpose of the evaluation is to understand the impact of the program for bringing about positive culture change in the Diocese through strengthening faith leaders’ capacity to effectively respond to family violence and violence against women and contribute to addressing the underlying gendered drivers.

Methodology


The evaluation used a participatory, mixed methods approach. This included reviewing program documents for background information, conducting qualitative interviews and focus groups with key informants across the Diocese and pilot sites, and administering quantitative pre, post and follow up surveys with participants in the program’s training sessions. 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 established by the Diocese is also provided (Appendix B).

Findings

The evaluation found that the program demonstrated a range of promising outcomes that contributed to shifts in culture, attitudes, and practices within the Diocese by supporting faith leaders to understand and take action to prevent and respond to violence against women and family violence. Indeed, the program made progress to address the gendered drivers of violence against women and put the best practice actions described in prevention research to good use (Our Watch et al., 2015). The program also demonstrated strengths with respect to emerging evidence-based principles for preventing violence against women in faith communities (Vaughan et al., 2020).

As noted particularly in the ‘Capacity building’ section, the program:

- Supported faith leaders to increase their confidence and skills to respond to violence against women, challenge the underlying gendered drivers and make connections with specialist family violence services to support victim-survivors;

- 
- Contributed to strengthening the Diocese's commitment to gender equality and women's leadership; and
 - Contributed to the development of communities of safety and care where people can openly discuss violence against women.

These outcomes were reinforced by a capacity-building package of training, coaching and peer learning combined with resources that made the program visible, engaging, and safety-focused (see 'Capacity building' for more information).

The program also supported Anglican colleges to consider how they might provide response and prevention education to staff and students; worked in close partnership with Anglican agencies; and made contributions to the prevention evidence base through generating and sharing learnings with other faith communities and the prevention sector more broadly, both within Australia and internationally (see 'Advocacy and organisational development' and 'Generating and sharing evidence').

The findings are underpinned by a range of implementation enablers and barriers that influence the implementation of program activities and outputs and ultimately shape the program's reach, acceptability, feasibility, and adoption for faith leaders and their communities (see 'Implementation').

The evaluation also describes various areas for improvement intended to enhance the quality of the program, such as making changes to the training format and content, systematising the delivery of activities and resources, and further developing evaluative capacity. Recommendations are provided throughout the report to address the areas for improvement and implementation barriers. A summary of all findings and recommendations is provided in Appendix D.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this program contributed to a range of positive changes emerging from the concerted efforts of the Diocese and its partners. After several years of laying the foundations with limited resources, followed by a more intensive period of expansion and piloting, the program is now on the precipice of generating even greater impact. This signifies the importance of continued long-term, sustainable investment in this program to enable its reach to a large population of people across the Diocese and to grow its influence as a national and global leader in preventing violence against women within faith communities.

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.

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

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.

Indicator

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

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 this term 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 this term 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 (Domestic Violence Victoria, 2020).

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 of family violence, providing dedicated resources and advocacy to promote their rights and respond to their safety and support needs (Domestic Violence Victoria, 2020).

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 (Domestic Violence Victoria, 2020).

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).

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Background and history

The *Preventing Violence against Women Program* (the program) is an initiative of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne (the Diocese). The Diocese consists of more than 200 parishes across Melbourne and Geelong and is home to a range of socially and culturally diverse communities.

Since 2011, the Diocese has made concerted efforts to play its part in preventing violence against women. Initially, this involved participating in the Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project run in partnership by Darebin City Council and VicHealth. This led to the engagement of a part-time project consultant who undertook a range of awareness raising initiatives, including delivering active bystander training, developing educative resources, and other activities that elevated the importance of this work on the Diocese's agenda.

In 2016, the Diocese commissioned an independent review of its prevention project work that resulted in a decision to establish a formal program integrated within the Diocese (Redwood, 2016). Decisions were made in 2017 to establish new a governance and advisory structure, set the program's strategic policy direction, and employ an internal, full-time program manager. The formal program then commenced in 2018 with a three-year timeline. Two additional part-time staff were recruited during this period on a temporary basis.

The program's governance structure includes oversight by a Committee of Management with representation from diocesan leaders, Anglican agencies, and parishes, some of whom have experience in the prevention sector. Additionally, there is an advisory Taskforce consisting of clergy and lay leaders from across the Diocese to support program design and implementation.

The program was funded through a combination of contributions from the Diocese, the Melbourne Anglican Foundation, and Anglican agency partners, including Anglicare Victoria, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, and Relationship Matters. The program was also successful in receiving one-off grants from Ansvr Insurance to fund the program's communications work and the Victorian Government as part of the *Faith Communities Supporting Healthy Family Relationships* initiative to conduct a pilot project (see pages 12 – 13).



Aims and objectives

The program aims to support and equip ordained and lay leaders and Anglican communities to respond and prevent violence against women.

To achieve these aims, the program objectives are to:

- Build the capacity and ability of faith leaders in the Anglican community of Melbourne and Geelong to lead change in their parish, organisation, or college.
- Generate and share evidence about what works to build the capacity of faith leaders to prevent violence against women.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Program design

The program has a nested design structure for the broader Diocese-wide implementation and the intensive 'whole-of-church' approach in the pilot sites.

Overall, the program design is influenced by various evidence-based approaches for preventing violence against women, including emerging evidence for conducting this work in faith communities. This design enabled the program to align with prevention work taking place in other contexts (e.g. other faith communities, workplaces, schools, city councils, etc.) and broader government reforms to improve prevention and response interventions in Victoria following the Royal Commission into Family Violence.


The program utilised the *Change the Story Framework* to integrate education into capacity-building activities and resources about the gendered drivers of violence against women and best practice actions to reduce the probability of violence (Our Watch et al., 2015).

The gendered drivers are:

- Condoning of violence against women;
- Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life;
- Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity; and
- Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.

Actions that reduce the probability of violence involve:

- Challenging the condoning of violence against women;
- Promoting women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships;
- Fostering positive personal identities and challenging gender stereotypes and roles;
- Strengthening positive, equal, and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls, and boys; and
- Promoting and normalising gender equality in public and private life.



Additionally, the program utilised the emerging evidence pertaining to the role of faith leaders and faith communities in either reinforcing or addressing the gendered drivers of violence against women (Vaughan et al., 2020). This pertains to issues such as:

- Using faith teachings and scripture to prescribe rigid gender roles and justify controlling and abusive behaviours;
- Reproducing gendered and patriarchal leadership hierarchies;
- Maintaining barriers to divorce or separation for women experiencing violence; and
- Denying and silencing discussions about violence against women.

As such, the program design drew on evidence-based principles and recommendations for addressing violence against women in faith contexts (Vaughan et al., 2020):

1. Support faith leaders to prioritise public commitments to women and children's safety;
2. Strengthen relationships between secular violence prevention organisations and faith leaders;
3. Engage faith and sector experts to co-design and co-deliver prevention initiatives;
4. Understand the central role of gender inequality as a driver of violence against women;
5. Recognise intersectionality to inform prevention efforts with diverse communities;
6. Provide tailored delivery mechanisms in different faith communities;
7. Engage senior leadership in faith communities early and sustain engagement; and
8. Strengthen the evidence base to build understanding of violence against women and improve responses for victim-survivors and perpetrators in faith communities.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Whole Church Approach




Adapted from the Victorian Department of Education and Training's Respectful Relationships whole school approach.

Pilot project

While the overall program aims for broad reach across the Diocese, particularly through the training sessions, there were also five churches involved in trialling a more intensive whole-of-church pilot project that commenced in July 2019.

The pilot project built on the broader program design to address the gendered drivers of violence against women (see above) 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.



Pilot churches were selected after responding to an expression of interest from the Diocese and differ in size, location, demographics, and churchmanship/theological emphasis. Each site engaged a key project lead, clergy leadership, and active lay leaders and parishioners to form steering groups.

The pilot project was funded by the Victorian Government as part of the *Faith Communities Supporting Healthy Family Relationships* initiative in partnership with the University of Melbourne and the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health. This initiative was established in response to recommendations 163 and 165 from the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence to develop initiatives that aim to build the capacity of faith leaders and communities in preventing and responding to family violence and violence against women.

Activities and resources

Program implementation involved delivering a range of capacity-building activities and resources for faith leaders across the Diocese, with some specific initiatives tested within the pilot sites only.

Diocese-wide activities and resources:

- Violence against women response and prevention training;
- Post-training information package;
- Peer learning sessions;
- Individual coaching and mentoring;
- Family Safety Champion position and supporting resources;
- Communications guide for leaders;
- Bystander action resource;
- 'Love Does No Harm' posters (physical and digital);
- Family violence policy package for the Anglican Centre and the Diocese;
- Statement of commitment; and
- YouTube videos.

Pilot site only activities and resources:

- Whole church gender assessment tool;
- Sermon guide on gender equality;
- Gender justice Bible studies series;
- Equality and respect youth group sessions; and
- Equality and respect children's ministry sessions.

Please refer to Appendix C for further detail about the program's activities and resources as they are referred to frequently throughout this evaluation report.

EVALUATION APPROACH

Evaluation purpose

The purpose of the University of Melbourne's evaluation is to understand the impact of the program in bringing about positive culture change in the Diocese through strengthening faith leaders' capacity to effectively respond to family violence and violence against women; and contributing to addressing the underlying gendered drivers. Fulfilling this purpose includes:

- Generating an evidence base and disseminating findings about what works (or not) when doing prevention work in a faith setting, and what factors have contributed to this;
- Accounting for and reporting on the use of resources allocated and the results achieved to partners and a range of stakeholders, including faith leaders and parishioners;
- Informing future strategic directions of the Diocese's work to prevent violence against women; and
- Informing and influencing the work of the Anglican Church nationally and internationally in responding to and preventing violence against women.

The evaluation covers the period of implementation from April 2018 to December 2020 after the program was formalised by the Diocese (see 'About the program').

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 and the Taskforce,
- Faith leaders and parishioners in the Diocese,
- The national Anglican Church of Australia, and
- The Victorian Government.



The evaluation is written to support the primary audience to identify key findings and support further program development and implementation.

The secondary audience for the evaluation includes stakeholders and public 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.

Secondary audiences seeking more in-depth detail about the evaluation approach, evidence and findings are advised to get in touch with the Diocese or the University of Melbourne.



EVALUATION APPROACH

Methodology

The evaluation used a participatory, mixed methods approach to determine its findings from a variety of sources and enable the utilisation of the evaluation by key stakeholders.

The methodology is underpinned by a conceptual understanding that prevention programs may only contribute incrementally to addressing the drivers of violence against women alongside many other efforts within broader social and political contexts. As such, best practice for evaluating prevention programs is generally participatory and theory-based to determine a program's value as a contributor to reducing violence against women in society overall (Kwok, 2013).

The theory for this program is underpinned by its program logic (Appendix A). The program logic and associated process and impact indicators were created by program staff and governance representatives to inform internal monitoring processes. The evaluation team were not involved in developing these tools, however, the evaluation findings were used to provide an assessment against the indicators (Appendix B). The report recommends reviewing these components in line with the evaluation findings and prevention evidence base (see 'Generating and sharing evidence').

The program logic also informed the key evaluation questions and provided a structure for the evaluation findings in this report.

The key evaluation questions were:

1. What outcomes (positive, negative, unintended) emerged during implementation of the program?
2. What has been the impact of the program on building the capacity of faith leaders to lead change in culture, attitudes, and practices within the Diocese?
3. What particular program activities – or combination of activities and resources – had the most impact in bringing about change?
4. What has been achieved by the program to embed prevention work into organisational advocacy and development?
5. What can be learned and shared from this program about the value of doing prevention work in faith settings?



Data collection

The mixed methods data collection involved document review, qualitative interviews and focus group discussions, and quantitative pre, post and follow up surveys with training participants.

Document review

A range of documents were supplied by the Diocese and reviewed to understand the program's context, history, implementation processes, and resources. These documents included:

- Program logic and monitoring records;
- Program reports and materials from capacity-building activities and resources;
- Training, coaching and peer learning records; and
- Media resources, such as the website, social media, videos, newsletters, and articles.

Qualitative data

Purposeful sampling methods were applied to conduct a total of 17 qualitative interviews and 17 focus groups with approximately 70 key informants in total.

Key informants were from both pilot and non-pilot sites and included representatives of the episcopate, clergy, lay leaders, parishioners, Anglican partner agencies, Anglican colleges, specialist family violence services, the Committee of Management, and the Taskforce. In the pilot sites, an initial round of qualitative data collection took place between October 2019 and June 2020 with follow up data collection occurring between November and December 2020.

Qualitative data collection was guided by a modified version of the Most Significant Change (MSC) approach (Dart & Davies, 2003). MSC is a flexible, participatory approach that captures program outcomes by enquiring about stories and experiences of change in relation to a program. Typically, MSC is facilitated in a one-day (or multi-day) workshop setting whereby a collective process is undertaken to select and map out stories and outcomes, however, due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns, the process was modified into 90-minute video call focus groups where key informants provided feedback about the significant changes they have experienced or witnessed as a result of this program.

EVALUATION APPROACH

Quantitative data

A pre and post survey was administered to a convenience sample of 248 people who participated in 15 training sessions from July 2019 until February 2021. The evaluators and the Diocese collaborated to design the survey based on 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, against which changes that took place over the course of the training were then measured through the post-training survey. Additionally, in July 2020, 200 participants who had undertaken training up until February 2020 were sent a six-month follow-up survey to ascertain the extent of their knowledge and skills retention.

Data analysis

The qualitative data were inductively coded into themes, with NVivo software used to support this process. The thematic analysis sought to respond to the key evaluation questions, inform the program logic assessment, and determine any other promising outcomes or areas for improvement. The pre, post and follow up surveys were all analysed using descriptive statistics in Qualtrics software with qualitative (free text) survey responses analysed thematically using NVivo software.

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



Ethics

The evaluation was approved by the University of Melbourne Human Research Ethics Committee. Participants in all data collection activities were provided with consent forms and plain language statements prior to their involvement and informed of their rights with respect to their confidentiality and voluntary participation. This report uses de-identified quotes from key informants to illustrate findings while protecting participant anonymity.

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 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, the project primarily targeted faith leaders. As such, there is little data pertaining to how parishioners perceive the program. This is addressed as a recommendation in the 'Generating and sharing evidence' section of the report.

While the qualitative data investigated key informants' views and experiences of the program as a whole, the quantitative data are limited only to measuring changes as a result of training participation. Additionally, the quantitative data may also 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.

Finally, the evaluation scope did not include a comparative analysis between the current program (2018-2020) and its pre-2018 iterations. As such, prior prevention activities in the Diocese may have 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.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

To respond to the key evaluation questions (see 'Evaluation approach'), the evaluation findings are presented under the following headings:



These findings are accompanied by Appendix B, which provides an assessment against the program logic's process indicators and impact indicators.

EVALUATION FINDINGS



Photo: Ivan Smith

IMPLEMENTATION

The findings relevant to program implementation first summarise how well the program achieved its activities and outputs against the process indicators (Appendix B). These results are likely related to various enablers and barriers that occurred in the program context. This influences implementation outcomes that emerged with respect to 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 or college.



Tracking activities and outputs

Analysis of the program's process indicators show that the capacity-building activity area had the most success in delivering outputs and exceeded all anticipated targets (Appendix B). This is likely due to the reach and uptake of the program's training sessions, alongside faith leaders' engagement with coaching and peer learning support.

Key informants regarded the training as a high-quality and critical entry point to learn about and understand their role in preventing and responding to violence against women. Those who participated in peer learning and individual coaching sessions commented on the invaluable support they received to sustain change after training and progress implementation in their settings.

In the other activity areas (resource development, advocacy and organisational development, and generating and sharing evidence), some of the process indicators for outputs were met. However, several others were either in progress or require further improvements, as described in the relevant sections of this report.

Notably, while program logics intend to show a causal link between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (changes or impacts), it should be acknowledged that the operation of a program as a *whole* can still produce changes despite implementation challenges. This is evident in the findings of the report where we see promising outcomes that emerged from activities and outputs in the program logic that are still in progress.

Implementation enablers and barriers

The evaluation found a range of enablers (positive) and barriers (negative or unintended) that operated in tension with each other. These enablers and barriers influenced how well the program tracks against the process indicators as previously detailed in Appendix B. They also 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 or college. Notably, the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions on places of worship and in-person gatherings disrupted program implementation during 2020, however, these circumstances were also time-sensitive and not unique or specific to the program context. As such, the impact of COVID-19 is considered as contextual to the other implementation enablers and barriers, as described on pages 28 – 30. For example, the pandemic may have affected faith leaders' perceptions of the program's *feasibility* as they faced significant challenges and demands during this time. Additionally, the quick work of program staff to pivot the training and other capacity-building activities to online engagement may have helped to continue the provision of holistic engagement to enable program *reach*.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation enablers



Holistic engagement and support strategies

The program included an array of promotional strategies to engage faith leaders' participation and support them on their capacity-building journey. This holistic and highly proactive approach helped to enable the program's *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 posted letters, social media, e-newsletters, and articles in The Melbourne Anglican newspaper;
- Using identifiable and professional program-specific branding to make resources stand out and engage faith leaders' attention;
- Locating training in churches across Melbourne and Geelong to increase accessibility and reach;
- Sending out follow up emails to training participants with links to further resources and invitations to take action;
- Creating YouTube videos to provide further education on issues relevant to violence against women; and
- 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, and the Diocese's own 'Love, Respect and Courage' event, which brought together a panel of Australian and international experts to present and discuss the latest research and best practice pertaining to the role of the Church in preventing violence against women.



Strong authorising environment

Key informants noted the program’s strong authorising environment, which was described in two main 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. This helped to enable the program’s *acceptability*.

Key informants especially valued the Diocese’s investment in the program, particularly through employing dedicated staff, and noted the episcopate’s leadership and championing of the program. Some cited a galvanising and symbolic milestone event when the Archbishop invited the program manager (an unordained woman) to deliver a sermon on preventing violence against women at Synod, an important annual gathering of the clergy and lay representatives of the Diocese with the Archbishop to make decisions about the Anglican Church’s corporate life.

EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPLEMENTATION



Productive governance, advisory and staffing structures

The program's structure including the governance body (Committee of Management), advisory group (Taskforce), and staffing (full time program manager with two part-time support staff) were highlighted as key enablers for the program's *reach*, and *acceptability* through:

- Securing financial support and grants to develop and implement the Diocese-wide program and pilot project;
- Supporting the program design, implementation, and engagement strategies across the Diocese; and
- Combining expertise in Christian faith alongside expertise in violence against women. This was noted as particularly relevant to the calibre of program staff and inclusion of representatives from the prevention and response sectors in the Committee of Management.



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.

Some key informants remarked that this enabled *acceptability* and *adoption* of the program as a natural fit for Christians who feel called as agents of change and strive to promote values of love, respect, and care not only in their parish, but in the community more broadly.

Additionally, key informants discussed how the program fit into the concept of attending church for personal and theological reflection where faith leaders and parishioners can support each other to learn about challenging issues and progress change.

“I think the importance has been our ownership [of the program] as Christians to be agents of change, not just in our own communities, but within the wider community and society as a whole. I think that’s something that we are all called to do as Christians, to actually be agents of change.” – Faith leader key informant.



Enabling parish ownership

The previously described implementation enablers collectively enabled ownership of the program by faith leaders, alongside:

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

These factors helped to enable the program's *acceptability*, *feasibility*, and subsequent *adoption*.

One of the pilots serves as an exemplar of the importance of enabling parish ownership. At this site, the project nearly ceased to progress due to changes in clergy leadership (which left the parish without a vicar), general uncertainty about project involvement within the parish council, and the impacts of COVID-19 in the church environment. Lay leaders overcame these challenges to re-invigorate the project through taking advantage of the coaching and flexibility offered by the program staff, securing the support and partnership of the new clergy leadership, and making adaptations to the training sessions to engage influential parish stakeholders in a cycle of learning and reflection. This transformation not only brought this pilot site back into the project, but also fostered the commitment of parish leaders to sustain implementation going forward.

“At the end of the day, what’s going to make this successful in both our church and other organisations is embedding [the program] inside the structural power-base, the influential power-base, into the very structure of the organisation. It’s their reflections and their learning and their personal implementation as well as the actions that we do as a group that really create the foundations of success.” – Faith leader key informant.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation barriers



Competing demands experienced by faith leaders

In addition to the stressors caused by COVID-19, as previously described, key informants from the clergy noted that they contend with many competing demands in the church environment, including responsibilities for pastoral care, managing church operations, and the implementation of a range of other initiatives, policies, and practices. Furthermore, while lay leaders were highly motivated implementers, they were usually working in a volunteer capacity and managing competing demands with their own personal lives and commitments. These competing demands hindered perceptions of program *feasibility* and subsequent *adoption*.



Challenges engaging socio-culturally diverse congregations

The program offered some guidance for faith leaders to consider issues of socio-cultural diversity, such as providing information pertaining to the disproportionate impacts of violence against women for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, women with disabilities, and women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Key informants also described examples of efforts to proactively engage with culturally-specific congregations in their church, such as gaining the support of key clergy and lay leaders and finding individuals who could translate some of the program resources. One pilot site also implemented three Family Safety Champions, with each focusing on providing support to: 1) a culturally-specific congregation, 2) older people, and 3) young people.

Despite these efforts, key informants across pilot and non-pilot sites spoke of significant challenges overcoming barriers caused by the lack of culturally-specific and in-language resources for congregations. Additionally, barriers related to cultural perspectives on gender equality and violence against women intersected with other barriers described on page 29 (opposition, stigma, and navigating theological tensions), which created challenges to engage with some congregations.

Key informants were also concerned that the program's governance did not represent the socio-cultural diversity of the Diocese and more proactive efforts are required to rectify this gap. These issues signify challenges for the program's *reach*, *acceptability*, *feasibility*, and *adoption*.



Opposition to change

All programs aiming to prevent violence against women, regardless of setting, face opposition from some constituents who feel confronted by, or deny, the prevalence of violence and evidence of the gendered drivers as the underlying social enablers of violence against women. Key informants reported that this program faced similar concerns during implementation, particularly where oppositional constituents viewed the program as inserting a secular or feminist agenda into the church environment.

Additionally, some key informants faced opposition from constituents who do not agree that violence against women is a relevant issue for the Anglican Church, as [they believe] Christians are less likely to engage in violent and abusive behaviours. This is reflected in the training data as well (see 'Capacity building'). Additionally, some pilot sites experienced opposition where people were concerned about stigmatising their church because others may perceive their involvement in the program as an indication that they have a particular problem with violence against women.

These issues hindered the program's *acceptability* and *adoption*, however, some key informants reported making use of the strong authorising environment (an implementation enabler) to signal the program's importance to the Diocese. Other key informants made deliberate changes to the language they used to increase acceptability for those who might be initially opposed, confronted, or concerned about stigma. In some parish contexts, expressions such as 'abuse' or 'controlling behaviours' were seen as preferable, as well as broaching the topic through initial conversations about human rights and equity, before introducing discussion of gender equality and violence against women.



Challenges navigating theological tensions

The program used a communications guide to provide information to support faith leaders' understanding of violence against women and enable them to talk about this issue in an inspiring and engaging way within their parish or college. The language in the guide was 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. The guide did not overtly name the theological tensions on this matter, rather, the language used deliberately intended to foster common ground across theological divides and bring forth the commitment of all faith leaders to prevent and respond to violence against women. The guide subsequently informed other program resources such as the training materials and Bible studies series.

EVALUATION FINDINGS IMPLEMENTATION

Despite this strategic approach, key informants described significant challenges navigating the reality of these theological tensions on gender equality at the parish and college level. Many held concerns that the program activities and resources did not overtly name this issue and they lacked direct guidance for how to manage discussions where this topic inevitably arose. This may have hindered the *acceptability* and *adoption* of the program in some contexts. Key informants also noted how these theological tensions intertwined with political ideologies and cultural perspectives, thus adding further complexity to issues of opposition.

“I think the intention was not to name it [theological tension] at the beginning, that it could be divisive...but, I think in hindsight, it was important to name those issues and just recognise that people are coming from different places and develop a way that we can talk together and accept all points of view. I think next time around I would do that from the get-go.” – Faith leader key informant.



Recommendations

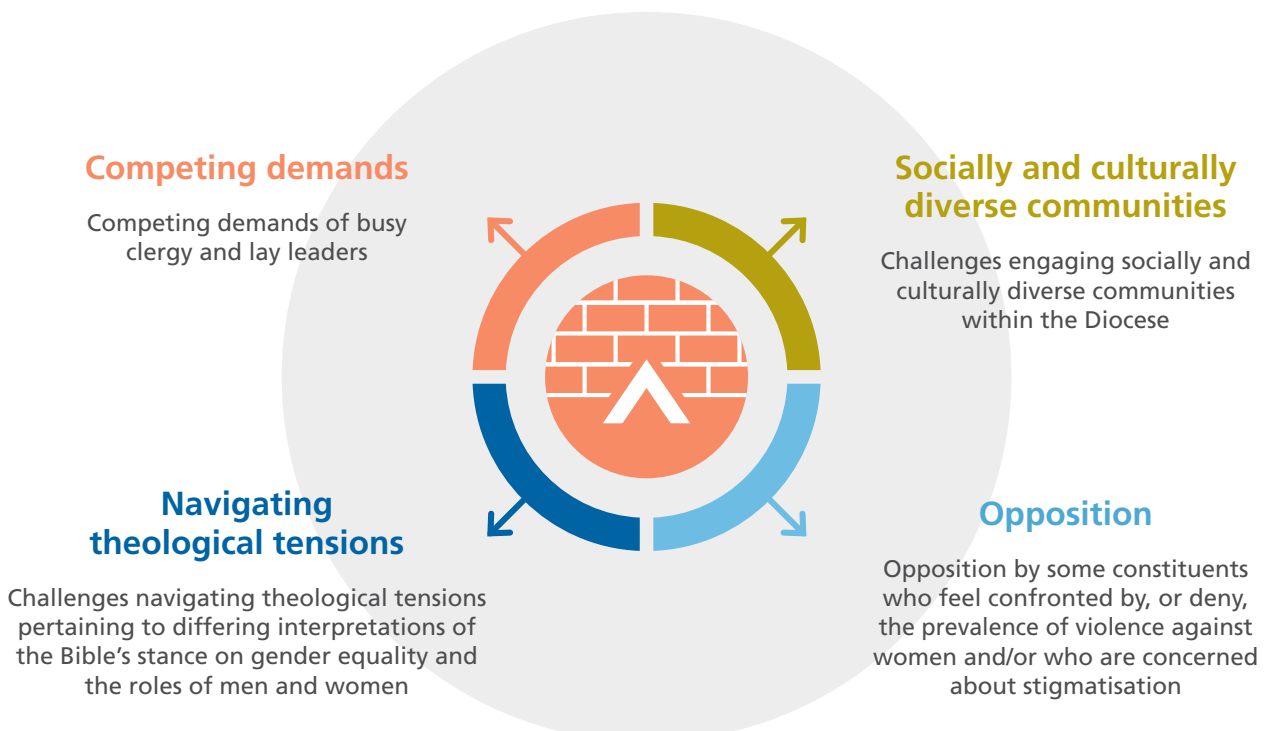
1. Review the program design to enhance the influence of implementation enablers, and address implementation barriers, as a means to promote progress toward achieving outputs and desired changes.
2. Improve the program’s reach and acceptability for the Diocese’s diverse socio-cultural communities through consultation with relevant faith leaders and experts from those communities and updating program governance, design, activities, and resources accordingly.
3. Provide further guidance to support faith leaders to overcome issues of opposition and navigate the complexities of theological, ideological, and cultural tensions regarding gender equality issues.
4. Consider learnings from online engagement during COVID-19 restrictions to potentially increase the program’s reach, particularly as a means to connect with busy faith leaders managing competing demands.

Implementation enablers and barriers

Enablers



Barriers



EVALUATION FINDINGS



Photo: Benjamin Andréo-Boosey

CAPACITY BUILDING

The program's activities and outputs pertaining to capacity building and resource development go hand in hand to support faith leaders to understand and take action to prevent and respond to violence against women. The intention is to produce the following desired changes, as per the program logic (Appendix A):

- Leaders in the Diocese have improved knowledge, skills, and confidence to take action.
- Leaders in the Diocese are convinced of their role and are making personal and organisational changes.

- Leaders are accessing and using resources to build their capacity and their organisation's capacity.

This evaluation found several promising outcomes and areas for improvement relevant to these desired changes.

Promising outcomes



Increased confidence to prevent and respond to violence against women

Analysis of the quantitative training data found that pre-training participants already demonstrated high baseline knowledge of violence against women, including the:

- High prevalence of violence against women in Australian society;
- Disproportionate impacts of violence on women in comparison to men;
- Various types of violence (i.e. physical, sexual, emotional, financial, technological abuse, and controlling behaviours); and
- Connections between violence, power, and control.

Similarly, the majority of pre-training participants supported statements promoting gender equality and rejected victim-blaming and violence-supporting attitudes, which was affirmed with marginal increases after training.

These findings are similar to those of the Australian population more generally, as seen in the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (Webster et al., 2018). Additionally, because training participants took part voluntarily, they may represent a group more likely to support gender equality and reject violence-supportive attitudes than others across the Diocese. That said, analysis of the surveys found that the training particularly helped increase participants' knowledge to:

- Describe gender inequality as an *evidence-based driver* of violence against women, compared to pre-training beliefs held by some participants that violence is caused by alcohol, drugs and poverty;
- Identify *signs* that violence may be occurring and respond appropriately to *disclosures*, including making *referrals* to professional services; and
- Understand how the misuse of scripture on *male headship and forgiveness* reinforces violence against women in faith communities.¹

¹ On this last point, the training explains that interpretations of Biblical concepts of forgiveness, male headship/ authority, and submission should not be used to pressure women to stay with perpetrators or justify abuse.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

CAPACITY BUILDING

Most significantly, training participants experienced substantial changes in their skills and confidence to identify and respond to violence against women after training. Analysis of survey data found that:

- 30 per cent of pre-training participants reported 'good' or 'very good' levels of confidence to recognise the signs that someone may be experiencing family violence. This increased to nearly 70 per cent after training.
- 40 per cent of pre-training participants reported 'good' or 'very good' levels of confidence to start a conversation with someone they are concerned about. This increased to nearly 70 per cent after training.
- 50 per cent of pre-training participants reported 'good' or 'very good' levels of confidence to know what to do if someone told them they were experiencing abuse. This increased to nearly 90 per cent after training.

Analysis of the six-month follow up survey showed retention of these results, although only 24 per cent of 200 participants returned the survey (n=48).

The quantitative findings from the training surveys are affirmed in the qualitative interviews and focus groups where key informants reflected on how the program as a *whole* contributed to their capacity to prevent and respond to violence against women. Key informants described how the program helped them to:

- Identify the different indicators and risks of violence against women;
- Prioritise victim-survivor safety, confidentiality, and personal empowerment;
- Understand their role limitations in pastoral care;
- Refrain from providing or referring to couples counselling; and
- Support referrals to specialist family violence services.

“What the program has done for me is make me aware of some of the resources and the alternative people that you can actually turn to because none of us really are qualified to deal with a full-blown situation... so to recognise that something is happening, and know how we can help, not by pushing someone, but trying to encourage them.” – Faith leader key informant.

Additionally, key informants reported how their understanding of the gendered drivers of violence against women helped them to:

- Challenge attitudes, beliefs or jokes that reinforce gender inequality and stereotyping;



- Feel more confident to speak up when women's perspectives were being dismissed;
- Engage in discussions with family members, friends, or members of the public about violence against women;
- Talk to partners about gendered norms and behaviours they would like to change in their relationships; and
- Change personal use of language and expressions that may inadvertently reinforce harmful gender stereotypes.

Finally, the capacity-building activities and wide-ranging resources available to faith leaders through the program enabled them to take ownership of *intentional prevention messaging* within their parishes through a variety of means, such as:

- Putting up the program's posters in visible locations, such as toilet stalls, kitchens, and community rooms;
- Uploading program information and digital posters on the parish website and social media;
- Weaving awareness raising and condemnation of violence against women into sermons and prayer; and
- Including a regular column in parish pew sheets/e-newsletters about the parish's prevention activities, issues related to gendered drivers, and where to get help for family violence.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

CAPACITY BUILDING



Emerging connections with Specialist Family Violence Services

Faith leaders increased confidence to prevent and respond to family violence related to emerging signs that faith leaders are making connections with specialist family violence services.

The evaluation found that:

- The involvement of specialist family violence services in training sessions was highly beneficial for participants as they were able to establish initial connections with their local service providers and learn how to make contact for referrals and advice.
- 15 churches, including the five pilot sites, as well as both Anglican colleges, reported that they are establishing relationships with specialist family violence services, thus meeting this target impact indicator (Appendix B).

While data collection with specialist family violence services was limited, key informants associated with these services reported an increased uptake in secondary consultations and referrals from faith leaders, particularly in the weeks immediately following training.



Strengthening gender equality and women's leadership

The evaluation found that the program contributed to strengthening a culture of gender equality and women's leadership that has been growing in the Diocese and the Anglican Church more broadly over several years. While these changes are not solely the result of the program, key informants noted examples of where the program helped to:

- Legitimise concerns about over-representation of men in leadership roles in some churches;
- Create opportunities for women to deliver sermons, lead ministries, join the parish council, and take up positions as church wardens or Family Safety Champions;
- Engage women to lead on program implementation, including within culturally-specific congregations; and
- Increase the visibility of equal gender representation and teamwork in church services and activities.

Some key informants described the connection between these emerging changes and the evidence-based actions required to reduce violence against women.

“I think [the program] has given me the evidence to say ‘look, the research says these are the sort of cultures where family violence thrives, and we don’t want to be that sort of the culture. We need to have women involved in decision making.’” – Faith leader key informant.



Interestingly, the program also contributed to visibly promoting women’s leadership through an exhibition at St. Paul’s Cathedral in central Melbourne entitled *Reframing the Story*. The exhibition presented a series of photographs depicting women who played a part in the history of the Diocese and the Cathedral. The Diocese and the Cathedral worked together to organise the exhibition on a temporary basis. However, after participating in training, the Cathedral leadership decided to install some of the photographs permanently, marking a change from the previous male-dominated imagery. Additionally, this outcome inspired a group in the Diocese of Brisbane to organise a similar exhibition at St John’s Cathedral celebrating Anglican women in their own context.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

CAPACITY BUILDING



Developing a culture of safety and care

Overall, the promising outcomes previously noted also contributed to developing communities of safety and care within the Diocese. Key informants reported an emerging sense of openness to talk about violence against women within their parish, where previously this may have been difficult due to cultures of silence, denial, or concerns about stigmatisation.

In addition, the evaluation found that:

- Baseline and post-training survey data showed that the majority of participants strongly agreed with statements that promoted the Anglican Church's role in preventing and responding to violence against women and family violence.
- 169 faith leaders signed on to the Statement of Commitment to act as agents of change in preventing violence against women, exceeding the impact indicator target set at 150 faith leaders (Appendix B).
- Some clergy considered how they could integrate prevention/early intervention into their pre-marriage meetings with couples by raising awareness about family violence and engaging in discussions about healthy, caring relationships.

Key informants also noticed victim-survivors sharing their stories to find healing in their faith community.

“I’ve got a personal experience of violence... I don’t usually talk about it, but in this context, I have felt able to do that. There’s been an individual healing for me personally because of the lovely people and the way that everyone talks and supports each other... it feels very specific to a church context that I’ve had that individual profound experience.”

– Faith leader key informant.



Combined capacity-building approach for change

One of the key evaluation questions asks about the particular program activities – or combination of activities and resources – that had the most impact in bringing about change (see ‘Evaluation approach’).

The evaluation found that change likely comes about from the combined contributions of the following activities and resources:

- The training sessions, which affirmed and embedded faith leaders’ knowledge and skills about violence against women and increased their confidence to undertake prevention and response activities.
- Coaching and peer learning, which sustained capacity building after training, supported local-level implementation, and enabled faith leaders to develop their own intentional prevention and response messaging.
- Resources that make the program visible, engaging and safety-focused, which were most often cited by key informants as:
 - Visual aids, such as physical and digital posters, program branding, website, and social media;
 - The Bible Studies Series, which may require updates based on feedback described in the following section, but has the potential to engage parishioners in understanding and reflecting on violence against women issues; and
 - Family Safety Champions (or other trained faith leaders), which is a role that requires further monitoring, but has the potential to prioritise parishioner safety within the church environment.

“I have upskilled incredibly this year. I’m obviously still a novice in so many ways, but I feel confident that if I were to move parishes, I would have the skills to be an advocate for this program elsewhere. That really speaks to the value of the training and mentoring that I’ve had this year. I would absolutely walk into another parish and say, ‘hey, would you think about doing this? I will lead this.’ I think that’s just a tremendous resource...in terms of the Diocese investment in us as leaders, it’s money and time well spent.” – Faith leader key informant.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

CAPACITY BUILDING

Areas for improvement



Considering changes to training content and format


The evaluation found opportunities to improve the training content and format to address participants' post-training knowledge gaps and address implementation issues.

Overall, the training participants showed high baseline knowledge of violence against women and increased their confidence to prevent and respond to this issue, however, analysis of the training survey data found that there were some persistent knowledge gaps after training. This was not representative of the majority of participants, yet some continued to:

- Believe that violence against women is less common in the Anglican Church compared with Australian society more broadly;
- Agree that it is acceptable for a man to control his partner by refusing her access to money;
- Believe that women make up claims of family violence in child custody disputes;
- Justify physical violence if a woman makes a man angry or jealous; and
- Agree that men, rather than women, should be the head of the Anglican Church.

It is unclear why participants continued to hold these views after training, however, changes in the training content may assist to address these issues, including:

- Drawing on research that specifically discusses violence against Christian women, such as the results of the forthcoming National Anglican Family Violence Project by NCLS Research investigating the nature and prevalence of family violence in the Anglican Church of Australia;
- Providing additional information about the seriousness of financial control as a form of family violence and reinforcing factor for gender inequality;
- Discussing the high prevalence of violence within family law child custody cases;
- Further reinforcing that using violence is a choice made by the perpetrator and victim-survivors are not responsible or at fault for abuse; and
- Considering ways to address theological tensions related to gender equality (see 'Implementation barriers').



In terms of the training format, post-training surveys showed that the majority of participants rated the one-day training as an appropriate length, however, qualitative data showed that some key informants felt the training:

- Moved too quickly, which was particularly overwhelming for participants who were new to the subject matter and unfamiliar with prevention language and concepts;
- Was met with opposition from some participants who were either confronted by the information or held more conservative beliefs;
- Did not sufficiently engage with culturally diverse congregations and people with limited education;
- Lacked Biblical depth up front that could help participants connect their Christian beliefs with the subject matter from the start; and
- Circumvented the theological tensions on gender equality issues.

In three pilot sites, adaptations were made to the training approach to address and/or pre-emptively manage some of these issues. At two sites, faith leaders worked with culturally-specific congregations to adapt and translate the training materials for their context, although the results of these changes were not yet available for this evaluation. At another site, faith leaders worked with the Diocese to reformat the training agenda into a cycle of learning and reflection with local parish stakeholders over several weeks (see 'Implementation enablers'). Key informants who participated in this process highlighted the benefits of engaging in a participatory and reflective process, which helped overcome initial implementation challenges and enabled them to find their own collective motivations for project implementation.

Notably, these adaptations represent attempts to address program acceptability by elevating implementation enablers (e.g. enabling parish ownership) and addressing barriers (e.g. engaging socio-culturally diverse parishioners, concerns about opposition).

EVALUATION FINDINGS

CAPACITY BUILDING



Considering updates or alternatives for pilot resources

The pilot sites tested key resources that aimed to enable a ‘whole-of-church’ approach for preventing and responding to violence against women (see ‘About the program’).

There are some indications of promising outcomes relevant to these resources. For example, the gender assessment tool prompted discussions that informed action planning and may have contributed to strengthening gender equality and women’s leadership. However, the evaluation found substantial feedback from key informants to improve the various pilot resources, as described in this section.

The ‘equality and respect’ sessions developed for the youth group and children’s ministries were not launched and trialed in time for this evaluation, therefore feedback on these resources is not included.

Whole church gender assessment tool

Faith leaders were generally unclear about how they ought to implement the tool. Some thought that only the clergy and/or the parish council should use the tool, whereas others sought input from the whole parish. Differences in using the tool are likely due to the flexibility offered by the program to adapt resources and enable parish ownership, however, the lack of uniformity in undertaking assessments could potentially result in skewed results.

Key informants also advised that the tool is too long at 44 items and the quantitative ‘tick box’ format did not suit analysing issues they perceived to be more qualitative and contextual. For example, one pilot site found that they could not meet the tool’s expectations to implement gender balance in church activities because the majority of faith leaders and parishioners are women. Other sites found that equal gender representation in church activities ebbed and flowed depending on the availability of volunteer lay leaders and parishioners of different genders to participate.

Additionally, the tool was not as accessible for culturally-specific congregations due to language barriers. This resulted in some local changes and translations of the tool, yet it is unclear if this maintained fidelity to the tool’s original intentions.

Overall, given that the tool intended to generate discussion and action, it may be worth considering a different, perhaps more qualitative, approach for systematically and inclusively assessing a parish’s strengths and challenges with respect to addressing violence against women.



Sermon guide on gender equality

While only two clergy actively trialled the sermon guide, all pilot site clergy provided feedback on this resource.

In general, clergy found that the guide had useful prompts and tips for developing sermons that address violence against women, however, the guide was not necessarily compatible with their training and approach for sermon delivery, which tended to work through Bible chapters in some way, either using the Lectionary (a calendar and guide for preaching on Bible passages) or another type of process. This means that, in general, clergy tend to preach in a 'Biblical', rather than 'topical', format, where social issues such as violence against women, are raised through interpretation of Biblical passages and theological scholarship.

Perhaps other aspects of the program, such as the capacity-building activities, were possibly more meaningful for integrating intentional messaging on violence against women into sermons than the guide itself. This could potentially be tested further with clergy representatives and theologians.

Gender justice Bible studies series

Only two pilot sites trialled the adult Bible studies series and could provide feedback on this experience, however, key informants from other sites who reviewed the materials provided feedback as well.

Overall, key informants found that the Bible studies helped establish a connection with their Christian beliefs. Some also found that the layout was useful in terms of addressing each of the drivers of violence against women. However, while some perceived that the materials were sensitive to different Biblical and theological interpretations of gender and the roles of women and men, others felt that the materials did not achieve this at all. Analysis found that quite radically divergent perspectives on the same content, suggesting that a person's theological lens created vastly different interpretations of this resource. Issues of perception may have contributed to at least one pilot site not trialling the resource as it was deemed incompatible with their theological standpoint.

Key informants also advised that it was difficult to use the Bible studies with culturally and socio-economically diverse congregations (see 'Implementation barriers'). This was primarily due to language barriers as the materials are in English and perceptions that the terminology and content are not well suited for people who may have had limited access to formal education. Additionally, there were some concerns that the series is too long and would require adaptation for contexts where a Bible study might only be for a limited amount of time (e.g. half hour sessions).

EVALUATION FINDINGS

CAPACITY BUILDING



Addressing challenges in pastoral care

As described earlier, the evaluation found that most faith leaders reported the program helped them to understand the limitations of their role, including refraining from counselling where violence and abuse is suspected, and making referrals to specialist family violence services. However, data analysis showed some continuing post-training challenges on these issues in the pastoral care context.

Some key informants described challenges making referrals to specialist family violence services, either because the victim-survivor was not ready to contact services, or because the service provider lacked understanding of the faith leaders' pastoral care role. In these circumstances, key informants felt they had to provide case management duties that went beyond the scope and capacity of their role (such as attending court hearings, seeking housing options, and providing material aid).

Despite the training received, some key informants also described continuing to engage in couples' counselling and/or individual interventions with victim-survivors and perpetrators with a focus on prayer and emotional support, without any apparent action to set up role boundaries or seek out professional guidance.

Key informants also described navigating 'grey areas' where involvement with parishioners' pastoral care and various life milestones over many years (i.e. births, deaths and marriages) made it difficult to change the nature of their relationship by raising concerns about unhealthy relationships, violence and abuse.

Related to this, several key informants were concerned about responding to parishioners who were suspected as perpetrators and identified a need for additional support in this area. For example, some faith leaders reported challenging situations where they were asked by victim-survivors to talk to the perpetrator, which sometimes led to tense confrontations with men. Others were highly cautious and concerned about opening up conversations with suspected perpetrators, fearing this would have detrimental repercussions for victim-survivors. Another concern raised by key informants related to the challenges of promoting perpetrator accountability while also navigating Christian beliefs pertaining to individual change and redemption, as exemplified by this quote:

“I think it is important for perpetrators to have people around them because how do they change, how do they know what’s not okay, if there’s not people saying ‘okay, let’s get you some help, let’s get you some support’. Because, as a church, we believe that people can change, and that God can change people, but there needs to be process and support.” – Faith leader key informant.



Encouraging lay male champions

The evaluation found that while many clergy actively supported the program, lay women were generally the most engaged faith leaders in the program overall. This outcome is an indication of women finding leadership roles in the Anglican Church through this program, however, it also demonstrates possible challenges engaging male lay leaders as champions of change.

Key informants reflected on the opportunity for the program to specifically engage with men. They discussed how male lay leaders could demonstrate support for the program by:

- Encouraging other men to get involved in program activities;
- Talking to other men about the gendered drivers of violence against women; and
- Discussing how anti-violence beliefs are connected with their Christian identities.

Key informants also discussed the potential for both male clergy and lay leaders to manage appropriate responses to perpetrators in order to enhance the program's capacity in this area and support the work of prioritising victim-survivor safety. This would require further training and capacity-building support from professional experts in perpetrator interventions.

“The sheer statistical un-healthiness of toxic masculinity is eye opening. And should point us to the need to discover how to live as Christian men in our society, in loving and God honouring ways.” – Faith leader key informant.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

CAPACITY BUILDING



Systematising the capacity-building approach

As previously described, it is plausible that this program enabled change through the combination of resources that make the program visible, engaging, and safety-focused, alongside a package of capacity-building activities (training, peer learning and coaching). It would be beneficial to consider developing a more systematic capacity-building approach to potentially increase program uptake by faith leaders across the Diocese.

Key informants suggested that this approach could involve:

- Engaging faith leaders in training opportunities as a first step into the program;
- Inviting faith leaders immediately after training to join the regular calendar of peer learning opportunities to promote their continuous learning;
- Providing post-training resources, particularly those that support faith leaders to promote the visibility of the program, develop their own intentional prevention messaging, and recruit Family Safety Champions; and
- Offering faith leaders post-training coaching sessions either as a set number or by request (depending on program resources and feasibility) to support local parish engagement and implementation.



Recommendations

5. Consider changes to the training content and format to address participants' knowledge gaps and promote program acceptability by enhancing implementation enablers and reducing barriers.
6. Consider feedback on pilot resources to make changes that improve their acceptability and feasibility and/or develop alternative resources that may achieve similar aims of promoting a 'whole-of-church' approach to preventing and responding to violence against women.

7. Consider ways in which faith leaders could be better supported to manage pastoral care challenges, including for engaging with perpetrators. This would ideally involve further relationship building with specialist family violence services and their peak organisations.
8. Collaborate with male faith leaders (lay and clergy) to strategise ways to increase the engagement of men as champions for preventing and responding to violence against women.
9. Systematise the 'capacity-building package' to sustain faith leaders' knowledge and confidence and ensure the program is engaging, visible and safety-focused.



EVALUATION FINDINGS



Photo: Shutterstock

ADVOCACY AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The program's activity and outputs pertaining to advocacy and organisational development focus on securing commitments to embed the program in the Diocese and Anglican agencies and colleges. The intention is to produce the following desired changes as per the program logic (Appendix A):

- The Diocese has invested in prevention by committing to fund the ongoing work.

- The colleges and Anglican agencies see this as core to their future business.
- The Diocese is seen as a leader in the prevention sector and the Anglican Church of Australia.
- The Diocese has family violence policy and procedures that have been disseminated and communicated.

This evaluation found several promising outcomes and areas for improvement relevant to these desired changes.

Promising outcomes



Early integration into colleges

Overall, key informants from both colleges acknowledged the importance of integrating the program into their core business. To progress this, the colleges have already taken action to:

- Develop policies and procedures for supporting students experiencing family violence and orienting students to these policies as part of their induction and
- Connect with specialist family violence services to understand referral processes.

Key informants from the colleges expressed interest to continue this work and develop their partnership with the Diocese to:

- Regularly offer the program's training to staff and faculty and
- Integrate prevention and response content into course subjects, which could potentially involve establishing a dedicated elective subject, or perhaps more feasibly add relevant content about violence against women into existing subjects (e.g. subjects on ethics, leadership, pastoral care, and trauma).

While the commitments and actions taken by the colleges indicate emerging changes, the impact indicator pertaining to this issue is described as 'in progress' as key informants noted that further integration will require approval by the college leadership and could potentially involve putting the topic on the agenda of faculty conferences where course subjects are discussed. Achieving this will also require ongoing commitment from the Diocese to engage colleges in further partnership work (see 'Areas for improvement').

EVALUATION FINDINGS

ADVOCACY AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Partnerships with Anglican agencies

Data collection with key informants from Anglican agencies was limited to representatives involved in governance processes, however, it is evident that these agencies offer an important partnership, advising and funding role for the program.

Key informants from Anglican agencies noted that the program:

- Assisted them to better understand how to support someone from a faith-background experiencing family violence and
- Provided opportunities to strengthen their own prevention responses through a faith lens, in addition to the response-based work they currently deliver.

These early signs of change are promising, however, further work is required to continue to build on these outcomes going forward (see 'Areas for improvement').



Perception of Anglican leadership

The impact indicator relevant to external perceptions of leadership was met as the evaluation found that the program is well regarded by stakeholders in the broader Anglican Church and the prevention sectors in Australia and overseas (Appendix B). This is evident in the positive stakeholder feedback documented by the Diocese over the years, as well as the numerous invitations the program receives to share learnings and contribute to faith-based prevention efforts in other settings.

“The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne’s Preventing Violence Against Women Program is one of the leading faith-based interventions in the prevention space in Victoria. The program is having impact in the Anglican community, as well as externally in the sector. To shift the attitudes and behaviours that drive violence against women, programs like this in a faith-based setting are vital. I commend the work the Diocese has started and encourage you to keep building on this foundation.” – External program stakeholder.



The program documented positive feedback from a range of stakeholders, such as:

- Specialist family violence services involved in the training sessions;
- Department of Premier and Cabinet;
- Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria;
- University of Melbourne, Gender and Women's Health Unit (Centre for Health Equity, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health);
- Multicultural Centre for Women's Health;
- Catholic Social Services Victoria; and
- Anglican Church of Australia General Synod Family Violence Working Group.

Faith leaders at the parish level also shared their hope that the program continues to lead prevention work, not only within Christian contexts, but in the community more generally.

“I would love to be known for our culture that prevents violence against women, and that we would be known for our response too...I would love all of our clergy to be trained and to stand out in the community for that.” – Faith leader key informant.



Family violence policy package

The impact indicator relevant to establishing family violence policies and procedures is noted as ‘in progress’ (see Appendix B) as aspects of this work are in different stages of implementation and outcomes pertaining to impact are not yet ascertained. That said, substantial progress has been made to achieve progress change in this area.

Firstly, a family violence ‘policy package’ was developed and disseminated to support employees at the Anglican Centre. It includes policy, procedures, and guidelines outlining expectations for responding appropriately to people experiencing family violence and support available for victim-survivors who are employees, including family violence leave and flexible working arrangements.

Development processes for the Anglican Centre policy package included reviewing similar resources and templates found in other faith communities and secular workplace settings and consulting with an internal policy development committee, victim-survivors, specialist family violence services and other key stakeholders.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

ADVOCACY AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Dissemination activities to date have involved publishing the package on the staff intranet and providing training to senior staff and line managers. Further communications and information sessions for staff will commence in the near future.

Secondly, similar policy resources for parishes across the Diocese are currently in development in alignment with the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM). These resources were not yet completed at the time of evaluation.

Areas for improvement



Securing sustainable funding commitment

The impact indicator relevant to ongoing program funding is not yet met as the Diocese and funding partners are awaiting the findings of this evaluation and other decision-making mechanisms to consider financial requirements going forward (Appendix B).

Funding provided over the past three years has allowed the program to build on ten years of smaller-scale project work and make considerable headway toward achieving several promising outcomes identified in this evaluation. Sustainable funding commitments are required to further embed, scale up and maintain the program across the Diocese.

Indeed, while the training had considerable reach into 84 churches, approximately 120 churches have not yet participated in training, thus signifying a large cohort of faith leaders and parishes who have not yet experienced the benefits of the program.

Furthermore, training alone is insufficient for producing the types of changes that contribute to preventing and responding to violence against women. This evaluation found that the Diocese's role in producing such changes likely requires a combination of capacity-building activities (training, coaching and peer learning) and resources that make the program visible, engaging, and safety-focused (see 'Capacity building'). Additionally, the Diocese's commitment to appropriately respond to victim-survivors and perpetrators of violence requires ongoing support and partnership work with the specialist family violence services sector.

Ultimately, undertaking prevention and response work to address violence against women is a multi-generational effort requiring an ongoing commitment by the Diocese, as well as funding resources (whether internal, external or a combination of both) to sustain staffing, governance, program implementation work and evaluative capacity to monitor change.



Advancing collaborative work with Anglican colleges and agencies

As previously described, key informants from the colleges expressed commitment for integrating the program into core business and providing education about violence against women to staff and students. Further support from the Diocese is likely required to support the colleges with this work in a manner that enables effective integration within theological education context, particularly in line with recommendation 163 from the Royal Commission into Family Violence regarding pre-service training for faith leaders.

Furthermore, while it is promising that the colleges have developed family violence policies and procedures and have reached out to specialist family violence services, the impacts of this work within the college environment are unclear. As such, further partnership work between the colleges, the Diocese and specialist family violence services may be required to ensure that policies and procedures are appropriate and referral pathways are effective.

Additionally, Anglican agencies may benefit from further collaborative work with the Diocese to develop a two-way learning exchange that enhances both parties' expertise in violence prevention in Anglican settings and responses to victim-survivors and perpetrators who are part of the Anglican Church.



EVALUATION FINDINGS

ADVOCACY AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Further developing accountability structures

The program used a non-compliance, values-based approach to engage faith leaders' own intrinsic motivation to lead prevention and response work. Within this context, some accountability systems emerged, such as the aforementioned policy developments and pilot site action plans.

Key informants advised, however, that there is a need to further develop accountability structures to ensure the program meets, and holds fidelity to, its objectives across the Diocese. The program may not necessarily need to steer toward a more compliance-based approach, however, building accountability structures may enable systematising and embedding the program. This will be especially important if the program secures further funding and expands its reach.

Key informants provided a range of suggestions for developing accountability structures including:

- Integrating the program into future strategic planning for the Diocese;
- Supporting parish councils to include the program in their own mission planning;
- Providing a template to guide action plans at the parish and/or college level;
- Ensuring that the program is a standing item for reporting and information sharing at clergy conferences and deanery meetings; and
- Strengthening the relationship between the program and child safety initiatives (e.g. Safe Church programs) taking place in the Diocese and at the parish level.



Recommendations

10. Secure funding commitments from the Diocese and other sources (as required) to enable further program development and scale up to reach a wider audience.
11. Continue to work collaboratively with Anglican colleges to help them to integrate prevention work into core business, including offering training to staff and faculty,

supporting them further to develop policies and procedures in consultation with specialist family violence services, and integrate prevention education into relevant courses, particularly in line with recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence regarding pre-service training for faith leaders.

12. Continue to work collaboratively with Anglican agencies to build a two-way information and learning exchange that enables the Diocese to further program achievements and support Anglican agencies to enhance their own prevention work.
13. Consider feedback provided in this report to improve accountability structures within the program's values-based approach.



EVALUATION FINDINGS



Photo: Benjamin Andréo-Boosey

GENERATING AND SHARING EVIDENCE

The program's activity and outputs pertaining to generating and sharing evidence focus on making contributions to the prevention evidence base through evaluation and sharing learnings and resource with other faith communities. The intention is to produce the following desired changes as per the program logic (Appendix A):

- The program has contributed to the broader evidence base about what works in faith communities.
- Other faith groups have access to our resources and learning.

The evaluation found the following promising outcomes and areas for improvement relevant to these desired changes.

Promising outcomes



Contributions to the evidence base

The program met the impact indicator relevant to their contributions to the evidence base for prevention work in faith settings (Appendix B). Indeed, the Diocese has documented and shared program learnings since commencing prevention initiatives in 2011 (Bodde, 2013, 2014; Holmes, 2012; Redwood, 2016). This current evaluation will add to this evidence base, demonstrating the implementation issues and program outcomes and challenges that emerge from undertaking a prevention program in the Anglican Church. Additionally, the Diocese is contributing to a broader evaluation undertaken by the University of Melbourne pertaining to the Victorian government's *Faith Communities Supporting Healthy Family Relationships* initiative.

Notably, the Diocese is also involved in the *National Anglican Family Violence Project* conducted by NCLS Research and managed by the Anglican General Synod Family Violence Working Group. This project aims to understand the nature and prevalence of family violence within Australian Anglican communities, which will assist to address this gap in knowledge, as noted in the training survey data (see 'Capacity building').

Furthermore, the program demonstrates strengths with respect to emerging evidence-based principles for preventing violence against women in faith settings (see 'About the program', and Vaughan et al., 2020). In particular, the findings show that the program aligns well with the following principles:

- 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;

EVALUATION FINDINGS

GENERATING AND SHARING EVIDENCE

- 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; and
- Principle 7: Engage senior leadership in faith communities early and sustain engagement.

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

- Principle 5: Recognise intersectionality to inform prevention efforts with diverse communities; and
- Principle 8: Strengthen the evidence base to build understanding of violence against women and improve responses for victim-survivors and perpetrators in faith settings.

Importantly, principle 6 ('Provide tailored delivery mechanisms in different faith communities') addresses the evidence base pertaining to *interfaith* prevention work (Vaughan et al., 2020), however, the findings of this evaluation show that this principle is also relevant to *intra-faith* contexts as program staff and faith leaders navigate challenges pertaining to complex theological, ideological, and cultural tensions. This is likely an issue in other faith-based prevention programs and presents an opportunity for further research and contributions to international learning.

Finally, the Diocese has developed its own internal evaluative capacity using a program logic and monitoring system to track progress and impacts. This provides ongoing data for continuous program improvement and enhances the potential for future contributions to the prevention evidence base more broadly. Recommendations to further develop evaluative capacity are described under the 'Areas for Improvement'.



Sharing resources and learning

The evaluation found that the Diocese often shared program resources and learnings with both secular and faith community stakeholders involved in the prevention sector. This includes:

- Delivering presentations and participating in panel discussions about the program at government forums, prevention sector and interfaith webinars, and domestic and international conferences, including the 65th session of the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Violence against Women;
- Participating as a member of the Partners in Prevention initiative, including a Community of Practice and the Partners in Prevention Advisory Group, run by Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria;
- Participating in the Faith for Change Community of Practice alongside other faith-based prevention programs;
- Contributing to consultations organised by the General Synod Family Violence Working Group, including about the *National Principles for the Prevention of and Response to Domestic and Family Violence in Anglican Communities*;
- Collaborating with Common Grace and the Australian College of Theology to support the development of a strategy on violence against women;
- Providing advice, resources, and training content/materials to other Anglican dioceses and Christian organisations developing their own response and/or prevention programs;
- Participating in faith-based podcasts and radio programs in Australia and the United Kingdom; and
- Contributing to national surveys collating information about prevention initiatives across Australia.

Notably, the Diocese also shared expertise with the Bishop of the Diocese of Gloucester (United Kingdom) to support her advocacy to the UK Government to develop a national primary prevention framework. This is outcome indicates the program's influence on prevention work overseas.

It is likely that the Diocese's proactive approach to sharing resources and learning is perceived as helpful by other faith communities. However, as this evaluation did not investigate this specifically, the relevant impact indicator is noted as 'unknown' (Appendix B).

EVALUATION FINDINGS

GENERATING AND SHARING EVIDENCE

Areas for improvement



Ascertaining the views of parishioners

The program is primarily aimed at increasing the prevention and response capacity of faith leaders within the Diocese. As such, the Diocese does not yet systematically monitor the views and experiences of parishioners about the program. Ultimately, further involving parishioners in the program and collecting data from them will further assist to evaluate the program's impact.

Program monitoring and evaluation going forward could include data collection from parishioners about their understanding and perspectives on the program. This may also be relevant to students, staff, and faculty in the Anglican colleges as the program integrates into their curriculum and policies.



Further developing evaluative capacity

The Diocese's evaluative capacity for this program could be enhanced by re-developing the program logic using the findings of this evaluation and best practice guidance for monitoring and evaluating prevention programs.

The findings and recommendations of this evaluation can be used to inform the program design and strategies going forward with the aim of enhancing implementation enablers, sustaining promising outcomes, and addressing implementation barriers and areas for improvement.

Furthermore, while the program shows promising outcomes in terms of addressing the gendered drivers of violence against women, this is less explicit in the program logic. Best practice program logics for prevention work ideally show a causal link toward desired changes that specifically aim to reduce these drivers (Kwok, 2013). This will be enhanced by considering emerging research that provides an intersectional (Our Watch, 2017) and faith-based lens (Vaughan et al., 2020).

Once the program logic is re-developed, the process and impact indicators should also be revised and monitored for continuous improvement and to inform future evaluations, either internally (e.g. through monitoring data aggregation), or through external independent investigation. This may be aided by suggested indicators provided by Our Watch (2017), which are aimed at population-level change, but are also informative of programs designing their own monitoring and evaluation frameworks.



Recommendations

14. Further develop evaluative capacity, including through re-designing the program logic, to specifically address the gendered drivers of violence against women through intersectional and faith-based lenses.
15. Build in processes to systematically monitor the views of parishioners and college stakeholders (students, staff, and faculty) regarding their experiences with the program.



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APPENDIX A: Program logic



Goal

To reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls in all its forms in Melbourne and Geelong.



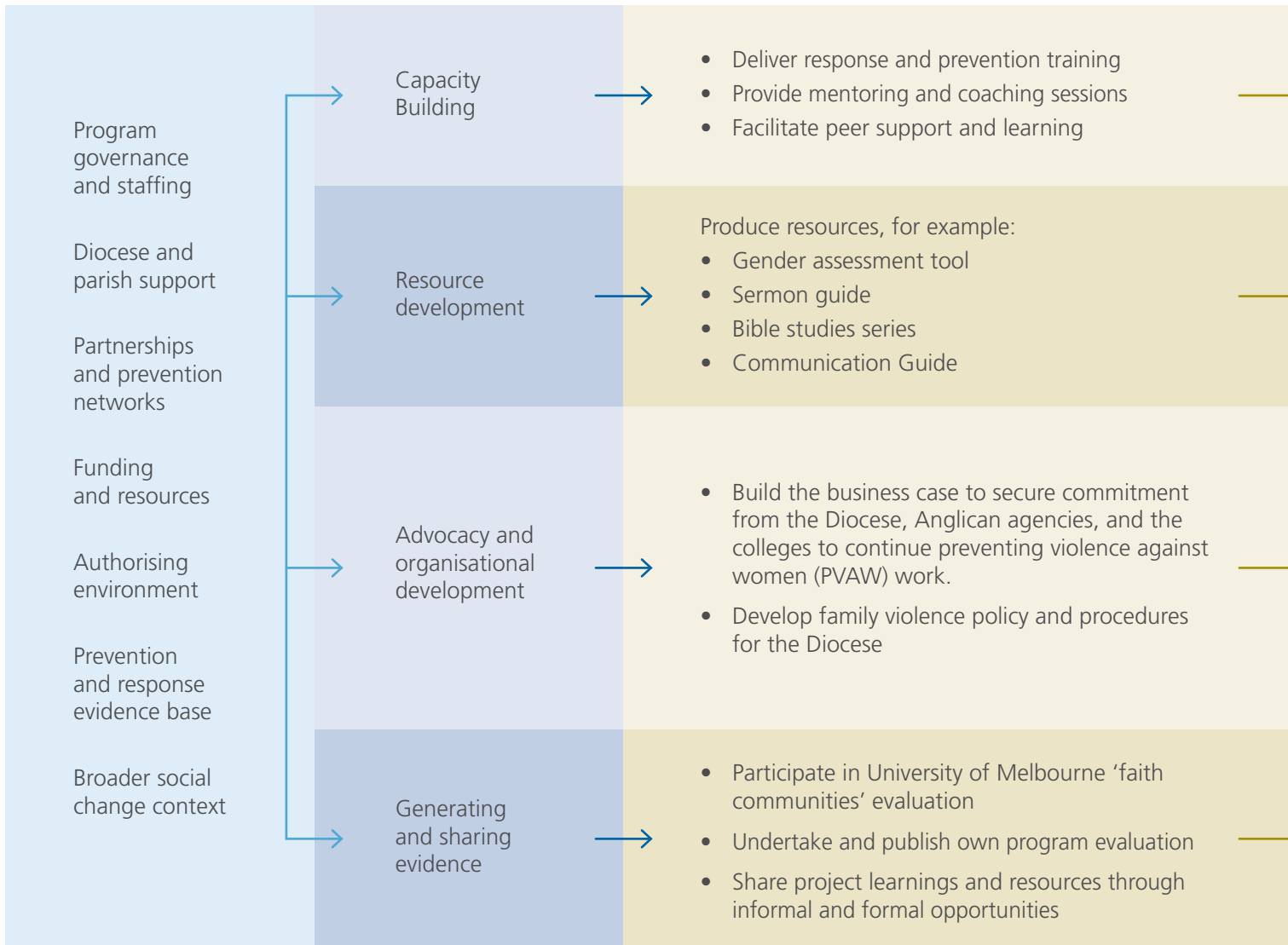
Inputs



Activities



Outputs





Objectives

- Build the capacity and ability of faith leaders in the Anglican community of Melbourne and Geelong to lead change in their parish, organisation, or college.
- Generate and share evidence about what works to build the capacity of faith leaders to prevent violence against women.



Desired changes (immediate to medium term)

- Leaders in the Diocese have improved knowledge, skills and confidence to take action.
- Leaders in the Diocese are convinced of their role and are making personal and organisational changes.
- Leaders access and use resources to build their capacity and their organisation's capacity.
- The Diocese has invested in prevention by committing to fund the ongoing work.
- The colleges and Anglican agencies are taking action to integrate PVAW work into their core business.
- The Diocese has family violence policy and procedures that have been disseminated and communicated.
- The Diocese is seen as a leader in the PVAW sector and the Anglican Church of Australia.
- The program has contributed to the broader evidence base about what works in faith-based communities.
- Other faith groups access and use our resources and learning.



Longer term changes

Across the Diocese:

- There is zero tolerance of violence against women.
- Women have greater decision-making power.
- There is a positive shift in attitudes and behaviours related to violence, respectful relationships and gender equality.
- There is a shift away from gender stereotypes and rigid gender roles.
- Parishes become a safe environment where people feel comfortable to discuss violence against women, including prevention.
- Anglican Church becomes a resource for change in the community.

Beyond the Diocese:

- PVAW becomes an integral part of the Anglican Church in Australia.
- There is a larger body of knowledge and evidence about how to engage faith leaders and communities on PVAW.

Activity: Capacity building



Output:
Deliver response and prevention training.

Process indicator:

200 faith leaders will have attended a training day, ideally consisting of:

- 50% clergy
- 50% lay
- 50% male
- 50% female



Result:

248 faith leaders attended a training day, including:

- 43% clergy
- 57% lay
- 46% male
- 54% female

Status: Exceeded

Process indicator:

12 training days will have been delivered in locations across all 3 dioceses.



Result:

15 training days were delivered in locations across all 3 dioceses.

Status: Exceeded

Process indicator:

80 churches will have had a lay or ordained person from their church attend a training day.



Result:

84 churches had a lay or ordained person from their church attend a training day.

Status: Exceeded



Output:
Provide mentoring and coaching sessions.

Process indicator:

8 faith leaders will have received at least 2 mentoring/coaching sessions.



Result:

18 faith leaders received mentoring/coaching session with 12 faith leaders receiving at least two sessions.

Status: Exceeded



Output:
Facilitate peer support and learning.

Process indicator:

15 faith leaders will have taken part in a peer learning session.



Result:

75 leaders participated in one peer learning session.

17 faith leaders participated in two or more peer learning sessions.

Status: Exceeded



Desired change:
Leaders in the Diocese
have improved
knowledge, skills, and
confidence to take action.

Impact indicator:

Training data shows that 200 faith leaders demonstrated increased knowledge, skills, and confidence to recognise the signs of family violence and respond appropriately.



Result:

Training data showed that 248 faith leaders demonstrated increased knowledge, skills, and confidence to prevent and respond to family violence (noted in the evaluation report).

Status: Exceeded



Desired change:
Leaders in the Diocese
are convinced of
their role and are
making personal and
organisational changes.

Impact indicator:

15 churches have established a relationship with their local specialist family violence service.



Result:

15 churches reported that they have established a relationship with their local specialist family violence service.

Status: Met

Impact indicator:

150 faith leaders have signed a statement of commitment to be an agent for change.



Result:

169 faith leaders (91 clergy, 78 lay) signed a statement of commitment to be an agent for change.

Status: Exceeded

Impact indicator:

30 faith leaders can give examples of a personal and organisational changes in relation to addressing the drivers of violence against women.



Result:

70 key informants (the majority of whom were clergy and lay leaders) provided examples of the most significant personal and organisational changes (noted in the evaluation report).

Status: Exceeded

Activity: Resource development



Output:

Produce resources, to enable program implementation and capacity building.

Process indicator:

5 churches will have conducted a gender assessment.



Result:

5 churches conducted a gender assessment. (See feedback in the evaluation report).

Status: Met

Process indicator:

5 clergy will have used the sermon outline.



Result:

2 clergy used the sermon outline. (See feedback in the evaluation report).

Status: In progress

Process indicator:

5 churches will have piloted the teaching resources for adults, youth and children.



Result:

2 churches piloted the adult Bible studies series. The youth and children's 'equality and respect' are complete, but not trialled in time for this evaluation. (See feedback in the evaluation report).

Status: In progress

Process indicator:

50 churches will have ordered a program poster.



Result:

30 churches ordered 156 physical posters. 315 digital posters were downloaded, particularly after COVID-19 restrictions commenced. It is plausible given the high number of digital downloads that this indicator has been met.

Status: Met



Desired change:
Leaders access and use resources to build their capacity and their organisation's capacity.

Impact indicator:
10 churches report that they have increased access to resources to build their capacity and/or their organisation's capacity.



Result:
18 churches reported that they have increased access to resources for capacity building.
Status: Exceeded

Impact indicator:
Faith leaders from 5 pilot churches report that they would recommend one or two of the resources to others.



Result:
Insufficient data supplied.
Status: Unknown



Activity: **Advocacy and organisational development**



Output:

Build the business case to secure commitment from the Diocese, Anglican agencies, and the colleges to continue prevention work.

Process indicator:

Business case is completed.
Commitments secured from Diocese, Anglican agencies and colleges completed.



Result:

Business case delayed pending finalisation of evaluation report and impacts of COVID-19 on funding partners.

Status: In progress



Output:

Develop family violence policy and procedures for the Diocese.

Process indicator:

Family violence policy and procedures completed using participatory consultation with key stakeholders.



Result:

Family violence policy, procedures and guidelines for the Anglican Centre were completed in consultation with key stakeholders and approved.

Diocese-wide family violence policy, procedures and guidelines were developed and are awaiting approval at the time of the evaluation.

Status: In progress



Desired change:

The Diocese has invested in prevention by committing to fund the ongoing work.

Impact indicator:

The Diocese has made a financial commitment to fund the program beyond this current cycle.



Result:

Pending completion of output.

Status: In progress



Desired change:

The colleges and Anglican organisations see this as core to their future business.

Impact indicator:

Each college and Anglican agency have acknowledged the importance of prevention work for their context.



Result:

College key informants acknowledged the importance of prevention and response work, yet further support is required to integrate it into core business.

Agency key informants acknowledged the program had strengthened their prevention and response capacity. Further work is required to develop a two-way learning exchange between them and the Diocese.

Status: In progress



Desired change:

The Diocese is seen as a leader in the prevention sector and the Anglican Church of Australia.

Impact indicator:

The Diocese has received positive feedback from key stakeholders in the prevention sector and the Anglican Church of Australia, acknowledging its leadership.



Result:

The Diocese received positive external feedback from Anglican, faith-based and prevention sector stakeholders acknowledging the Diocese's leadership.

Status: Met



Desired change:

The Diocese has family violence policy and procedures that have been disseminated and communicated.

Impact indicator:

The Diocese has adopted and disseminated the family violence policy and procedures.



Result:

Partially met, pending completion of all outputs.

Status: In progress

APPENDIX B: Assessment of process and impact indicators

Activity: **Generating and sharing evidence**



Output:
Participate in the University of Melbourne's broader faith communities' evaluation.

Process indicator:

5 faith leaders actively participate in the generation of evidence about what works.



Result:

17 interviews and 17 focus groups took place with 70 individuals, the majority of whom are faith leaders, to inform the Diocese's own evaluation and the broader faith communities' evaluation.

Status: Exceeded



Output:
Undertake and publish own program evaluation.

Process indicator:

Evaluation is completed.



Result:

Evaluation report completed in April 2021.

Status: Met



Output:
Share project learnings and resources through informal and formal opportunities.

Process indicator:

Evaluation is publicly disseminated through formal and informal processes.



Result:

Evaluation dissemination activities are commencing in May 2021, however, program staff and faith leaders have shared their learnings continuously over several years.

Status: In progress



Desired change:
The program has contributed to the broader evidence base about what works in faith communities.

Impact indicator:

The University of Melbourne confirms that the Diocese has contributed to the broader evidence base about what works in faith communities.



Result:

It is evident that the program contributed to the evidence base as described in the evaluation report.

Status: Met



Desired change:
Other faith groups access and use our resources and learning.

Impact indicator:

Prevention sector and peers from other faith groups report that they have found our learnings and resources helpful.



Result:

Insufficient data supplied, however, this impact is plausible given the numerous ways learnings are shared by the Diocese.

Status: Unknown



APPENDIX C: Program activities and resources

The following describes the Diocese-wide and pilot-only activities and resources provided as outputs in the Preventing Violence against Women Program.

Diocese-wide

Violence against women response and prevention training

A key part of the program is delivering training to faith leaders (both clergy and lay) across the Diocese. The training was developed with input from response and prevention sector practitioners and members of the Committee of Management and the Taskforce. It is typically delivered over one day at a range of locations throughout the Diocese, including local churches and the Anglican colleges. During COVID-19 restrictions the training was split into two half-day live online sessions.

The training aims to increase the knowledge, skills, and confidence of faith leaders to respond effectively to family violence in their church community and to undertake prevention activities within and beyond their parish to create a positive shift in attitudes. The training includes two main sessions:

- 1) Responding to violence against women – provides education co-delivered with specialist family violence services about recognising the indicators and risks of violence against women and family violence, appropriately handling disclosures, and making referrals to specialist services.
- 2) Preventing violence against women – provides education about the prevalence of violence against women and the gendered drivers and reinforcing factors outlined in the *Change the Story Framework* (Our Watch et al., 2015). This section also engages participants to strategise ways they can bring prevention work into their parish or college.

Post training information package

An information package is sent to participants after training, including:

- Communications guide for leaders,
- Training day slide pack,
- PowerPoint presentation for faith leaders to inform their parish councils about the program,
- 'How to respond to family violence' flowchart,
- Tip sheets for responding to disclosures, and
- Materials from the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria for identifying, responding to, and preventing violence against women.

Peer learning

Peer learning sessions were held to engage faith leaders in further post-training learning and capacity building on violence prevention and response. Project leaders for pilot churches had peer learning on a monthly basis. Peer learning sessions have covered a range of topics, including:

- Introductory sessions on key pilot resources, including the gender assessment tool and the Bible studies series;
- Pastoral care for family violence during COVID-19 restrictions, with guest speakers from specialist family violence services;

- Reflective practice on having conversations at the parish level about gender equality;
- Reflective practice for Family Safety Champions;
- Developing prevention and response policies;
- Engaging in bystander action when witnessing violence and abuse;
- Applying an intersectional lens to enhance inclusivity, engage with culturally diverse communities, and add depth to gender analysis of violence against women; and
- Engaging men in prevention and reframing masculinities.

Coaching and mentoring

Program staff offer individual coaching and mentoring sessions to support faith leaders on a range of issues, such as:

- Setting and reviewing program implementation goals at the parish level;
- Adapting program resources to enable parish ownership;
- Handling disclosures and bystander action;
- Developing sermons to denounce violence against women and promote equality and healthy relationships; and
- Problem-solving strategies for responding to resistance and backlash.

Family Safety Champions

Family Safety Champions are lay leaders who support the clergy and pastoral care team to promote a healthy and safe church. Their role is to:

- Act as a point of contact for anyone who has questions or concerns in relation to family violence regarding themselves or someone they know;
- Provide information and help to support people to access specialist family violence services;
- Raise awareness in their church about the issue of family violence;
- Work with the parish leadership to put in place relevant policies and procedures;
- Follow child safety procedures where children are involved;
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality as much as possible; and
- Respect the decisions of those who come to speak to them.

All Family Safety Champions must attend program training, register with the program's central office, undergo police checks and working with children checks, and obtain clearance from Kooyoora (an independent organisation that handles complaints, screening, training, and redress management on behalf of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne).

APPENDIX C: Program activities and resources

Communication guide for leaders

The Communications Guide for Leaders provides information to support faith leaders' understanding of violence against women and enable them to talk about this issue in an inspiring and engaging way within their parish or college. The guide was created with input from prevention and response specialists, theologians, and faith leaders from across the Diocese. It combines the prevention evidence base with Biblical scripture and Christian values to promote social change. The guide is also a foundational resource for the program's training and resources and intends to promote program acceptability across the Diocese's theological diversity on gender equality issues.

Bystander Action resource

Bystander Action: Shifting the culture that drives violence against women through small, courageous actions in daily life was created for the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence 2020 and launched on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The resource is an introduction to bystander action and how it can be used to change the culture through simple actions in everyday life. The resource can be used for personal reflection or facilitating a group discussion in churches.

'Love Does No Harm' posters

Physical and digital posters are available for visible display in the church environment or on parish websites or social media. The posters provide contact information for:

- 1800 RESPECT (national sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling and information hotline);
- Triple 000 (for emergencies);
- Local family violence service provider (in the church region); and
- Name and contact information of the locally trained faith leader and/or Family Safety Champion (where a church has implemented this role).

Family Violence policy package

The packages consist of policy, procedure, and guidelines for the Anglican Centre and Diocese-wide churches to respond appropriately to employees, volunteers and parishioners experiencing family violence. It includes information about handling disclosures, making referrals to specialist services, and flexible working arrangements and leave options.

Statement of commitment

The statement of commitment is a pledge taken by faith leaders who have participated in training. Faith leaders who sign the statement are committing to recognising:

- The seriousness, prevalence, and indicators of violence against women and family violence;
- That violence against women and family violence is unacceptable and irreconcilable with Christianity;
- The problematic misuse of Scripture and Christian teaching to justify violence and prevent victim-survivors from seeking safety;
- The importance of supporting victim-survivors, prioritising their safety, and seeking advice from specialist family violence services; and
- Their role in actively promoting gender equality and speaking out on violence against women.

YouTube videos

A range of videos created by the Diocese are available on YouTube for faith leaders involved in the program, including the following topics:

- Sermon about promoting equality and respect toward women;
- Reflection on Father's Day and gender stereotypes;
- Presentation on the Family Safety Champion role; and
- Webinar on family violence and COVID-19.

In addition to all of the above, the five pilot sites tested the resources outlined in the following section.

Pilot only

Whole church gender assessment tool

Pilot sites are encouraged to use the tool to assess and discuss the structures, norms, and practices within their church pertaining to issues of gender equality, roles of men and women, working with specialist family violence services, and promoting victim-survivor safety. This involves holding a workshop with stakeholders from different groups and levels of leadership to rate the church against 44 items within the following categories:

- Leadership and commitment;
- Culture and environment;
- Teaching and learning;
- Professional development;
- Community partnerships; and
- Support for parishioners and staff.

The results of the assessment intend to inform pilot site action plans for undertaking activities relevant to preventing and responding to violence against women.

Sermon guide on gender equality

The sermon guide is provided to pilot site clergy to assist them with developing sermons relevant to violence against women and gender equality issues.

The guide includes information about:

- Biblical passages that promote equality, human rights, and anti-violence beliefs;
- The prevalence and gendered drivers of violence against women;

- How violence impacts women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, women with disabilities, and women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- How gender inequality and stereotyping negatively impacts both women and men;
- Problematic issues of gender inequality in the church;
- Video resources on prevention and response issues;
- Key quotes from clergy and theological scholars addressing violence against women; and
- Reflection questions and prayer examples.

Gender justice Bible studies series

The Bible studies series was developed by the Diocese in partnership with Common Grace's Domestic and Family Violence Justice Team. Similar to the training, the Bible studies series provides education about the gendered drivers of violence against women. There are four interconnected studies in the series with the following key messages:

- Equality: Equality and partnership between men and women is God's plan for humanity.
- Redemption: Inequality between men and women is not part of God's plan. Jesus restores to us what has been lost through sin. We are called to follow Jesus' example and bring restoration and transformation in society.
- Stereotypes: The Bible does not adhere to, or teach, gender stereotypes or that there

is only one way to be a man or a woman. Its instruction for men and women is not to become more like a stereotype of a man or a woman. Instead, it exhorts us all to become more like Christ.

- Power: In God's kingdom, which Jesus ushers in, power is overturned, and used for good.

The Bible studies series is accompanied by a facilitator's guide with tips for leading a study with parishioners, creating a safe space for participation, and addressing opposition and backlash.

Equality and Respect youth group sessions

The youth ministry series was developed by the Diocese in partnership with a Youth Ministry expert. There are three sessions with the following key messages:

- Created equal: God's intention for humanity is equality and partnership.
- Gender stereotypes: Instead of teaching gender stereotypes, the Bible encourages us to all become more like Christ.
- Respect: God calls us to treat each other with love and respect, as equal image-bearers.

The sessions include a facilitator's guide with tips for personal preparation, facilitating the sessions, and modelling respect and equality.

Equality and respect children's ministry sessions

The children's ministry series was developed by the Diocese in partnership with a Children's Ministry expert. There are two sessions with the following key messages.

- Equality:
 - Everyone has equal value because we are all created in God's image.
 - Girls and boys, men and women have been given the joint mission of taking care of the world God made, as equal partners.
 - We are called to treat everyone as people of equal value to us.
- Respect:
 - God calls us to love and respect each other.
 - We need to follow Jesus' example of love and respect and to encourage others to do likewise.

The sessions include a facilitator's guide with tips for personal preparation, facilitating the sessions, and modelling respect and equality.

APPENDIX D: Summary of findings and recommendations

Summary of findings

The evaluation found that the program demonstrated a range of promising outcomes that contributed to shifts in culture, attitudes, and practices within the Diocese by supporting faith leaders to understand and take action to prevent and respond to violence against women and family violence.



The promising outcomes include the following:

- Faith leaders' *confidence* to prevent and respond to violence against women and family violence increased significantly.
- There were emerging signs that faith leaders are *building relationships and referral pathways* with specialist family violence services.
- The program contributed to strengthening the Diocese's *commitment to gender equality* and women's leadership in the Anglican Church.
- The program contributed to developing a *culture of safety and care* where people feel they can openly discuss issues relevant to violence against women.
- The Anglican colleges have *expressed commitment* to educating staff and students about violence against women.
- Partnerships with Anglican agencies showed early signs of a *two-way learning process* about preventing and responding to violence against women.
- The Diocese is *perceived as a leader* in faith-based prevention work by external stakeholders.
- The Diocese developed a *family violence policy package* to support employees at the Anglican Centre experiencing family violence, and will soon have similar resources available for parish communities.
- Contributions were made to the *prevention evidence base* through documenting and *sharing resource and learning* with the prevention sector and other faith communities in Australia and internationally.

These promising outcomes are *reinforced by* a capacity-building package of training, coaching and peer learning combined with resources that make the program visible, engaging, and safety-focused within the Diocese (see 'Capacity building' for details).

Overall, the findings are underpinned by a range of *implementation enablers and barriers* that operate in tension with each other. These shape implementation outcomes related to the program's *reach* across the Diocese, faith leaders' perceptions of the program's *acceptability* and *feasibility*, and their willingness to *adopt* the program at the parish or college level.



The main implementation enablers are:

- *Holistic strategies* that supported faith leaders to engage with and participate in the program.
- The *authorising environment*, which included an internal mandate for change within the Diocese and the influence of broader external social changes pertaining to violence against women.
- Productive *governance, advisory and staffing* structures that enabled program funding, program design and implementation, and combined expertise in Christian faith and violence against women.
- Messaging that connected *Christian beliefs and values* with socially transformative prevention work.
- Flexible support and coaching that enabled parishes to *take ownership* of program implementation.



The main implementation barriers are:

- *Competing demands* faced by busy clergy and volunteer lay leaders.
- Challenges engaging *socially and culturally diverse communities* within the Diocese.
- *Opposition* by some constituents who feel confronted by, or deny, the prevalence of violence against women and/or who are concerned about stigmatisation.
- Challenges *navigating theological tensions* pertaining to differing interpretations of the Bible's stance on gender equality and the roles of men and women.

Notably, the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions on places of worship and in-person gatherings disrupted program implementation during 2020, however, these circumstances were also time-sensitive and not unique or specific to the program. As such, the impact of COVID-19 is considered as contextual to the implementation enablers and barriers described above.

APPENDIX D: Summary of findings and recommendations

Summary of recommendations

The recommendations summarised below are provided throughout this report to support further program development and implementation in response to the implementation barriers and areas for improvement found in the evaluation. Please see the specific sections of the report for further detail relevant to these recommendations.

Implementation

1. Review the program design to enhance the influence of implementation enablers, and address implementation barriers, as a means to promote progress toward achieving outputs and desired changes.
2. Improve the program's reach and acceptability for the Diocese's diverse socio-cultural communities through consultation with relevant faith leaders and experts from those communities and updating program governance, design, activities, and resources accordingly.
3. Provide further guidance to support faith leaders to overcome issues of opposition and navigate the complexities of theological, ideological, and cultural tensions regarding gender equality issues.
4. Consider learnings from online engagement during COVID-19 restrictions to potentially increase the program's reach, particularly as a means to connect with busy faith leaders managing competing demands.

Capacity building

5. Consider changes to the training content and format to address participants' knowledge gaps and promote program acceptability by enhancing implementation enablers and reducing barriers.
6. Consider feedback on pilot resources to make changes that improve their acceptability and feasibility and/or develop alternative resources that may achieve similar aims of promoting a 'whole-of-church' approach to preventing and responding to violence against women.
7. Consider ways in which faith leaders could be better supported to manage pastoral care challenges, including for engaging with perpetrators. This would ideally involve further relationship building with specialist family violence services and their peak organisations.
8. Collaborate with male faith leaders (lay and clergy) to strategise ways to increase the engagement of men as champions for preventing and responding to violence against women.
9. Systematise the 'capacity-building package' to sustain faith leaders' knowledge and confidence and ensure the program is engaging, visible and safety-focused.

Advocacy and organisational development

10. Secure funding commitments from the Diocese and other sources (as required) to enable further program development and scale up to reach a wider audience.
11. Continue to work collaboratively with Anglican colleges to help them to integrate prevention work into core business, including offering training to staff and faculty, supporting them further to develop policies and procedures in consultation with specialist family violence services, and integrate prevention education into relevant courses, particularly in line with recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence regarding pre-service training for faith leaders.
12. Continue to work collaboratively with Anglican agencies to build a two-way information and learning exchange that enables the Diocese to further program achievements and support Anglican agencies to enhance their own prevention work.
13. Consider feedback provided in this report to improve accountability structures within the program's values-based approach.

Generating and sharing evidence

14. Further develop evaluative capacity, including through re-designing the program logic, to specifically address the gendered drivers of violence against women through intersectional and faith-based lenses.
15. Build in processes to systematically monitor the views of parishioners and college stakeholders (students, staff, and faculty) regarding their experiences with the program.

EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team are from the Gender and Women's Health Unit (Centre for Health Equity) in the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne:

- Associate Professor Cathy Vaughan
- Ms Erin Davis
- Dr Lila Moosad
- Ms Claire Sullivan.

The Gender and Women's Health Unit aims to advance the health of women in Australia and internationally, to reduce inequity, and to 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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