



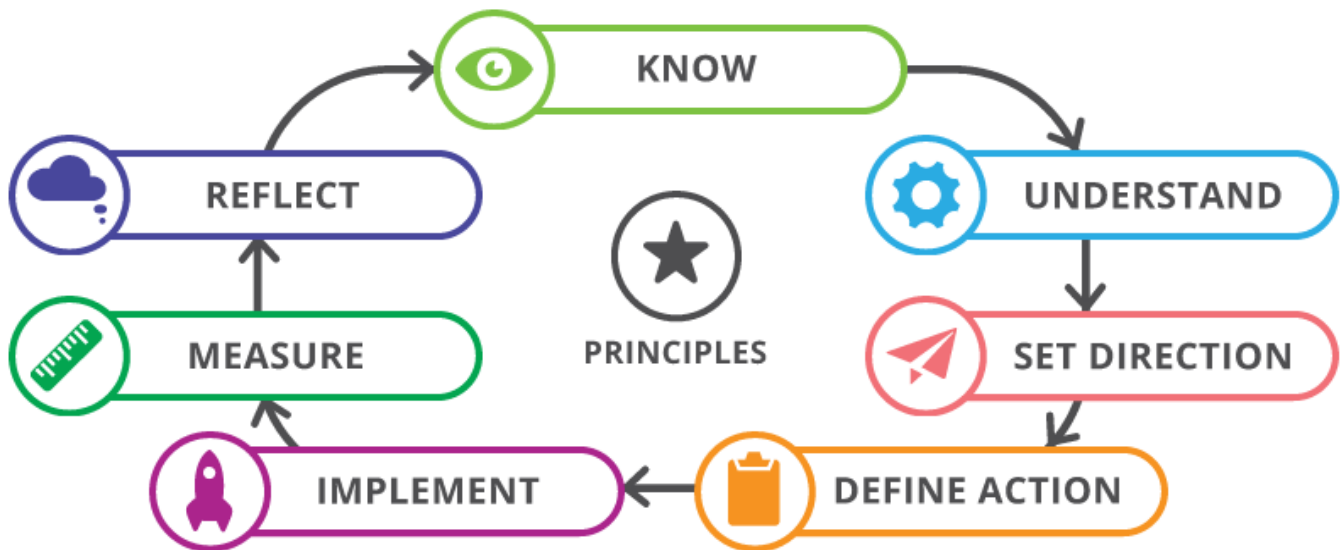
Equality and Safety for Women

A guide for regional planning in prevention
of violence against women



WOMEN'S HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

The Planning Process



About this guide

Equality and Safety for Women is a practice-informed and accessible guide that supports and further strengthens the work of women's health services in collaborating with partners, building community and organisational capacity, coordinating and integrating efforts, and measuring and sharing successes to achieve equality and safety for all Victorian women.

It sets out the principles for action on preventing violence against women, and seven steps for action planning, implementing and measuring primary prevention efforts in the regional context. It also includes a Planning Template designed to support planning process decisions.

Primary prevention is a growing field of practice that has gained considerable momentum in Victoria over the last few years.

Women's health services are well positioned in this field of practice through their focus on gender equity for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for women; their identification of preventing violence against women as an integrated health promotion priority; and their experience leading regional action on the underlying determinants of the problem.

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KNOW



The first planning step is to conduct research and gather information about the problem of violence against women. This will help to identify the options for doing something about it through regional action on the underlying determinants.

We conduct research and gather information in order to make better decisions and take more effective action. Here are some things to consider in this step.

- The questions you ask, the places you go looking for information, and the answers you find all influence the knowledge you gain.
- Evidence from the past and insight and understanding about the future can be brought together into your present context.
- Test your assumptions and understand the lens you are applying to the information you gather – be as objective as possible.

KNOW ESSENTIALS

Conduct research

- Become the regional expert on the root causes of violence against women. Start with [Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women](#), the 'go to' source of evidence on violence against women, its underlying determinants, the factors that contribute to it, and the public health approach.
- Recognise the power and value of the [social ecology model](#) in the way you comprehend the problem of violence against women and approach primary prevention.
- Gain a comprehensive view of the state and national policy context for violence against women and its prevention.
- Map existing efforts in your region that could be integrated and coordinated with a regional action plan. Look at municipal public health plans and other relevant planning documents in local government or the integrated health promotion plans of community health services.

- Check out the practitioner resources on the [Action to Prevent Violence Against Women website](#), including information on how to apply an intersectional lens to your work.

Compile data

- Bring together statistics and facts that build a picture of the prevalence and seriousness of violence against women in your region.
- Bring together statistics and facts that illustrate gender inequality, to ensure this is the focus of your regional action planning.
- Use statewide and national data if regional-level data are not available.
- Compile data so that the information is easy to grasp and meaningful.
- Share data with stakeholders and the community in a hard-hitting way.
- A starting point is the [Victorian Women's Health Atlas](#).

Investigate program evidence

- Become the regional expert on what interventions work and in which context. Use [Change the Story](#) and [ANROWS](#) as the 'go to' sources of evidence. Utilise the knowledge of practitioners in the field, especially your colleagues in other women's health services. Join a community of practice if one exists.
- Identify which ones will work best in your region.

Communicate consistently

- Use the [Principles](#), the research you've done and information you've gathered to develop consistent and coherent messaging to stakeholders and the community that will be used throughout the action planning process.
- Consult with your colleagues in other women's health services to agree to core messages that can reinforce each other's work across the State.

TIPS

- International, national, state and other plans are a rich source of applied knowledge. Become familiar with the background thinking, strategies and actions in those plans as a shortcut to what is already known and to help fill your knowledge gaps in a practical way.
- Decide what questions you need answered and choose your knowledge sources based on how best to answer them.
- Distil the knowledge you have gathered by organising it into themes or groups of ideas.

- Test the applicability of proven interventions, programs and approaches to your context.
- Share knowledge with colleagues at other women's health services so that as much information as possible is available for the planning process.
- Identify funding opportunities. This will expand your knowledge by understanding funder organisations' priorities and resources.



UNDERSTAND



The second planning step is to deepen your understanding of stakeholder and community capacity and commitment to preventing violence against women, and to begin the work of connecting and engaging strong partnerships for tackling the determinants.

When it comes to preventing violence against women, working together produces more powerful results than any single organisation could achieve if it set off doing primary prevention alone.

Harnessing the knowledge, experience and expertise of diverse organisations and sectors, and the community directly, generates a broad understanding of the complexity of violence against women and the 'lived experience' of women and gender inequality. Here are some things to consider as you engage with and deepen your understanding with stakeholders and the community.

Always have clear aims and responsive and respectful engagement processes.

Consider how you engage women in your community in a meaningful way. Balanced, considered and objective information will support community understanding of the root causes of violence as well as alternatives, opportunities and solutions.

The community's ideas, insights, concerns and aspirations can provide opportunities to innovate and develop new evidence.

Consider who your stakeholders may be, why you are working with them and where they are at in their understanding of violence against women and how to prevent it from happening in the first place.

Create conditions for trust, openness, transparency, clear communication and respect for differences among stakeholders, particularly in building a common understanding of the underlying determinants of violence against women.

Stakeholders have a lot to offer through their experience, expertise, resources, skills and knowledge; their different insights, political and social perspectives; and questions they bring to the planning process.

UNDERSTAND ESSENTIALS

Share knowledge

- Prepare a fact sheet that covers the evidence, gendered drivers and data at regional, state and national levels to build understanding of the prevalence and seriousness of the problem.
- Design communication and review processes so they include the community as a specific stakeholder.
- Develop good relationships with local media and journalists.
- Engage stakeholders to find out what they know and ask them to contribute to the knowledge effort so you get different knowledge from different disciplines and different perspectives.
- Look for opportunities, gather, use and share knowledge from existing sources, for example, local council consultations or surveys conducted by stakeholder organisations.
- Get to know the policies and plans of other stakeholders that are taking action to prevent violence against women, including Council Plans, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans and dedicated PVAW and gender equity policies.

Engage partners

- Understand good partnership practice in relation to what you want to accomplish – VicHealth's [The partnerships analysis tool](#) and VCROSS's [Partnering Guides](#) will guide your thinking about the level of the partnership.
- Establish good governance for your partnerships – consider a Charter, Memorandum of Understanding or Terms of Reference to establish, for example, vision, purpose and values; roles and contributions; policies that might apply; some basic ground rules for participation, decision-making, communication, conflict resolution, meetings protocol; and so on.
- Plan inclusively so that your partners are motivated to bring resources, thinking and know-how to the table.
- Share accountability to reduce duplication and fragmented effort, and to improve outcomes.
- Work across all levels of partner organisations.
- Engage local media and journalists as partners.
- Feed back the results of your engagement through community-based organisations and the media.

Engage the community

- Undertake stakeholder mapping to help identify residents' associations, business groups, religious groups, sporting clubs, arts and cultural organisations and other networks that may provide support in engaging with hard-to-reach communities.
- Design your engagement strategy so the public and stakeholders can participate at different levels – for instance, see the [IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum](#): *inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower*.
- Tailor your engagement so that differences in capacity, culture, dynamics, politics, resources and social capital are recognised and respected.
- Make the aims of your engagement clear, inform people how the information they provide will be used, and provide feedback to participants at the end of the process.

TIPS

Use existing networks or events that provide ready access to parts of the community. For example, conduct surveys at local events where the community has gathered.

Fast track community engagement using partners that have ready access to parts of the community.

Map hard-to-reach people who may be at risk of being excluded and tailor your engagement approach. Consider transport options, translators and environments that are conducive to sharing stories.

Use everyday language that is accessible and user-friendly. Consider community languages, large print and adapt communication for people with disability.

Ensure frequent and open communication with your partners.

Develop strategies and responses to local 'hot issues' so the overall engagement process isn't derailed.

Use an empathic, skilled facilitator to achieve full engagement and the opportunity for an open flow of ideas.

- Create an environment of trust that encourages participants to express their views.
- Be proactive in encouraging input from those less willing or able to speak up.
- Beware of tokenism or reactivity – don't just inform and placate.
- Guide discussion to what can be learned for the future.
- Be aware of, and manage, any tensions that already exist or might arise.

Establish governance structures that are 'fit for purpose' – that are as simple and efficient as possible and minimise the impact and demands on stakeholders.

Build partnerships on agreed values captured in a Charter or Memorandum of Understanding that sets out intentions and shared purpose. It is just as, or more, effective than a detailed Terms of Reference.

Develop partnership and stakeholder processes that encourage shared leadership and accountability.

Use the planning process to build a 'partnership agenda'.

Recognise the interdependence of organisations and sectors in your planning to maximise coordination of primary prevention actions.

Build flexibility and adaptability into partnership processes that accommodate differences and focus on the achievement of results.



SET DIRECTION



The third planning step supports the development of a vision and goals that inspire and motivate partners and the community towards achieving greater gender equality and better safety and health outcomes for women.

A clear, agreed direction is the backbone of your regional action plan. Here are some things to consider as you develop a vision and goals.

- A vision provides partners and the community with greater clarity and motivation about the need to address the gendered drivers of violence against women.
- A vision that articulates the social transformation needed to prevent violence against women over the long term empowers participants to think more deeply about the range of actions and the role everyone can play in contributing to change now.
- Provide opportunities for partners to understand and engage the language and concept of equality between women and men in setting the vision and goals.
- Ensure goals express changes that are achievable in the longer term through the accumulation of shorter-term impacts over time, such as the direct improvements you are seeking from your regional action plan (these will be expressed in your Objectives, see the next planning step).

SET DIRECTION ESSENTIALS

Involve partners

- Involve partners in the development and review of the vision and goals to ensure they are committed and participate for the duration of your regional action plan. Partnership workshops are a good way to do this.
- Prepare and openly share information that's been gathered, analysed, interpreted and crystallised into themes in an easy-to-read format to inform the process of visioning and goal development.

- Support strong collaboration throughout the visioning and goal-setting process by honouring the administrative and management practices agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding, Charter or Terms of Reference.
- Determine whether you need a strategy to build the capacity or capability of partners so that appropriate action can be planned and delivered.

Develop a vision

- Provide partners with clarity about the planning hierarchy – vision, mission, goals, objectives, strategies, actions – and use planning templates to support the thinking.
- Build a vision that clearly describes ‘where’ you want to be and ‘what’ you want to become to ensure you direct resources and focus action to achieve that desired future state. Avoid the ‘how’ in your vision statement – this is your mission or purpose.
- Design an inclusive visioning process:
 - Provide sufficient time and opportunity for all issues to be considered by stakeholders in the development of the vision and goals. Visioning tools may assist in this process.
 - Begin with a conversation about ‘where you are now’ and what your strengths and achievements have been before considering the future. The inclusion of past and present before moving to future makes it easier for people to engage in thinking about a different future and the changes that are needed to get there.
 - Put people into small groups to discuss the vision so all voices are heard. Ask them to tell the story of their thinking behind the vision, and when all have presented, synthesise the common themes.
 - Circulate the draft vision and goals for refinement and comment. Workshop brainstorming provides a good foundation but reflection is also important so that any new thoughts or emphases can be considered.
 - If partners are skeptical about a ‘vision’, work together on a ‘purpose’ that can describe the place in the future you want to collectively arrive at. Generally, a vision is more motivational and inspiring.

Set goals

- Analyse the research and crystallise the local experience into themes to inform the areas where you might set goals that contribute to achievement of the vision and best outcomes for your region.
- Develop the identified themes into statements that reflect the changes that you want to see in the longer term. These are the goals of your regional action plan.

- Consider the feminist framework, gender equality, primary prevention and health promotion in setting your goals that result in population change over a longer term (3-5 years post intervention).

TIPS

A vision is a clear statement of your desired future state. A mission or purpose is the way you will achieve it – your role and core competence in taking action towards the desired future.

Question and clarify people's ideas and thinking as they consider the vision – it often leads to a richer development process.

Avoid word-smithing a vision statement in a workshop with partners – its takes too long and you lose the intent of the work that's been done.

Workshops are good for brainstorming and tapping the wisdom of partners but it will always be necessary to review and revise the outputs.

Circulate the revised and refined outputs and ask for agreement.

Personally call any partners that you think need more encouragement to participate or whose views may not be included in the draft.

'Less-is-more' – develop a limited number of goals – no more than four so that you don't spread your effort too thinly.

Agree a direction that allows for maximum contributions from partners.

Involve people from different levels of your organisational partners in the planning process to achieve maximum buy-in and understanding.



DEFINE ACTION



The fourth planning step engages partners in deciding on measurable objectives, strategies and actions that align with and support achievement of the vision and goals.

Defining action involves cascading objectives, strategies and actions in a planning hierarchy that clearly sets out what you are going to do, how you are going to do it and who is responsible. Here are some things to consider as you define action.

The strengths, resources and ingenuity of all partners will make a difference to preventing violence against women from happening in the first place.

Evidence is your main guide – evidence-based action adapted to your local and regional context will deliver much greater return for your efforts.

Primary prevention practice is growing so it's important to be able to measure efforts and use those findings to contribute to what works. This means planning for evaluation and putting evaluation processes in place from the outset.

Keep the action plan brief. Use a template and record other processes such as consultation reports and summaries of the evidence separately, either online or in hard copy form.

Maximise your effort and scarce resources by aligning your action planning processes with other organisations in your region that are working to prevent violence against women; for example, local governments and community health services.

DEFINE ACTION ESSENTIALS

Align the approach

- Involve all stakeholders in defining action – they will bring different perspectives and strengths to identifying mutually reinforcing strategies for your actions.
- Consider:
 - What you need to achieve (objectives) to realise your vision and goals.
 - How you are going to achieve it (strategies); for example, 'Implement an organisational bystander program' or 'Develop a gender inclusive policy'.

- Actions you are going to take to deliver your strategies; for example, 'Secure funding to deliver the organisational bystander program' or 'Identify a sports club that is ready for gender inclusive policy work'.
- Start your action planning with clear, measurable objectives. A good objective provides a shorter-term view towards achieving the longer-term goal and provides the focus for strategies and actions.
- Where possible, use verbs that support measurable objectives; for example, 'decrease', 'increase', 'improve' or 'reduce'. Weaker words like 'enhance' do not convey the same level of measurability.
- Pitch your goals, objectives, strategies and actions at consistent levels using consistent language. Different people use different planning language; for example, goals can be called 'strategic priorities' or 'key result areas'; strategies can be labelled 'programs', 'projects' or 'initiatives'.
- Keep strategies and actions at an appropriate level so that responsible partners have the 'elbow room' to carry them out in a way that best suits them.
- Identify SMART indicators of success so that you will know whether you have achieved what you set out to achieve and to understand whether the strategies and actions have been effective. This process is described more fully in the Measure step in this Guide.

Select objectives, strategies and actions

- Select objectives based on regional and local need, and the opportunity and capacity revealed through data analysis and community engagement.
- Select strategies and actions that achieve your objectives and deliver the most gain towards achieving your goals.
- Take a strengths-based approach to selecting actions in local areas recognising the importance of people's environments and the multiple contexts that influence their lives. Focus on the potential, strengths, interests, abilities, knowledge and capacities, rather than limits.
 - Tap the strengths, ideas and local knowledge of partners to seed strategies and actions.
 - Consider variables such as:
 - The interaction, combination and reinforcement of strategies and actions across individual/relationship, community/organisational and social levels of the social ecology.
 - The range of social, political, legal and economic levers that are available to achieve the changes you seek.

- Subgroups in the community who are hard to reach. Primary prevention is universal so be prepared to tailor your strategies and actions so your work is as inclusive as possible.
- Prioritise your actions to provide a more objective, methodical and interactive approach.
- Ensure stakeholders can see their contribution in the action plan and agree to be accountable.

Use evidence

- Use evidence-based strategies and actions wherever possible.
- Invest time in adapting theoretical models, or borrow from other disciplines or other programs of social change when evidence-based programs are not readily available to match your prevention needs. Evaluate your approach to build new evidence.
- Invest time in adapting evidence-based strategies and actions to the local context – don't just apply them without this essential consideration.

TIPS

- Invest time in gaining knowledge about the planning hierarchy so you can clearly see where the vision, goals, objectives, strategies and actions fit.
- Plan for [evaluation](#) and establish evaluation processes at the same time as you define the objectives, strategies and actions.
- Write in plain English and consider translations, if appropriate, to your local context.
- Don't be prescriptive and detailed about the actions and the supporting tasks.
- Less is more – select actions that will provide the greatest return on investment.



IMPLEMENT



The fifth planning step focuses attention on delivery – creating an environment for joint action and accountability that makes a difference to the equality and safety of women.

Effectively harnessing the attention, energy and commitment of partners to implement the action plan is ‘where the rubber hits the road’. Here are some things to consider for optimal delivery of your action plan.

- Processes are important. How people work together has a significant influence on the results of everyone’s efforts.
- Deep levels of trust between partners, a common vocabulary, agreed leadership styles and skill and determination will drive success.
- Personal relationships can be helpful but do not sustain partnerships between organisations as personnel change. Be sure to work on organisational commitments that can withstand such changes.
- Leverage the full value of partnerships at the implementation stage through joint problem-solving, shared learning, and developing skills, knowledge and competence to deliver.
- A cluster of projects delivered together can have a transformative effect – use [project management](#) tools and discipline to achieve coordinated effort.
- Celebrate success together. Recognise the value of partner contributions and the challenging nature of the work by celebrating milestones and achievements.

IMPLEMENT ESSENTIALS

Commit to deliver

- Review your action plan’s progress regularly so all partners can see how things are progressing.
- Revise your action plan with partners as new evidence-based practice or programs emerge.

- Create a small group that is responsible for providing robust and predictable management practices including regular meetings with ample notice and the provision of agendas and minutes.
- Stay on purpose. Keep the vision, goals and objectives in focus at regular meetings with partners, particularly when energy and attention wanes.
- Keep meetings on track by setting clear expectations – use why, when, how and who at the start of the conversation and regularly return to it as the meeting progresses. Stay out of the detail.
- Support implementation and partnerships through regular attention including phone calls or coffee meetings, for example.

Lead with purpose

- Develop conscious collaborative leadership through:
 - mentoring and coaching
 - building a vision-guided values-driven culture
 - inspiring partners and their creativity, commitment and enthusiasm
 - empathy and consideration of others
 - high levels of authenticity and trust
 - accountability, responsibility and adaptability.
- Develop dialogue and team-directed learning skills – facilitate, ask questions and allow participants to gain insights into the prevention of violence against women and the solutions they can bring to achieving it.
- Ask for feedback on your leadership style to develop high levels of awareness of how you lead.
- Adopt a solutions focus, don't dwell on problems. A solutions focus keeps the group focused on the importance of preventing violence against women and keeps people out of the detail and the drama. It also provides the opportunity for shared problem-solving.
- Be mindful of how you bridge differences, resolve disagreements and ensure fairness across the diversity of stakeholders. Prepare your thinking before you act and use the Charter, Memorandum of Understanding or Terms of Reference as a fall-back.
- Seize opportunities when they arise – be flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances.

TIPS

- Pick up the phone or arrange to have coffee to sustain active participation and longer term relationships.
- Schedule meetings, prepare agendas and complete and circulate minutes in a timely way.
- Establish a shared monitoring process and feedback loop among partners to keep everyone in touch with progress.
- Identify opportunities for shared learning about primary prevention by attending conferences, seminars, workshops and other relevant events with partners.
- Include partners in problem-solving.
- Ask for help when you need it from partners – they will often be more generous than you expect.
- Don't make assumptions about what is going on – ensure your relationships are open, transparent and based on mutual understanding.
- Be aware of your own strengths and weaknesses and those of partners.
- Listen actively and ask clarifying questions when things aren't clear.
- Facilitate rather than manage to get the best out of people.
- Use project management methods to deliver strategies and actions.
- Be clear about your women's health service's role in guiding the progress of the action plan – develop processes of shared accountability.



MEASURE



The sixth planning step supports the measurement of primary prevention efforts through establishing the means for sound evaluation.

It is important to measure objectives, strategies and actions so that there is reliable information about what has been achieved and so there can be informed decisions about it. With evaluation in place, data can be collected on what's working well or less well; whether there are unintended consequences; which aspects of implementation need to change; and what to do for the next iteration of the action plan. Here are some things to consider when planning for evaluation.

- It's critical to have stakeholder buy-in to an evaluation culture that values learning and improvement. Evaluation isn't only about accountability: it's a friend to implementation.
- There are different types of evaluation that can be applied at different times during implementation of your action plan.
 - Process evaluation should be done throughout implementation
 - Impact evaluation measures the immediate to medium-term changes resulting from your strategies and relates to whether or not objectives have been met
 - Outcome evaluation is for measuring change over a much longer period of time and relates to whether or not goals have been achieved.
- Given the long-term nature of much primary prevention, evaluating outcomes over the first few years of a regional action plan may not result in measurable changes – it is more useful to focus on impact evaluation.
- Evaluation supports accountability at two levels – by reporting the progress of implementation, and understanding the achievement of objectives.
- A mix of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection will yield a rich source of information for decision-making.

MEASURE ESSENTIALS

Structure measurement

- Develop an integrated measurement framework that includes both process and impact evaluation and can accommodate annual reviews with partners. See [VicHealth's Concise Guide to Evaluating PVAW](#).
- Build evaluation as early as you can in the action planning process so the foundations are laid for learning, improving and accountability.
- In consultation with partners, agree to SMART indicators of success to measure your primary prevention efforts: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**imely.
- Establish different SMART indicators for process and impact evaluation because you'll be using them to look for different things. Process indicators will point you to how well your strategies have gone; impact indicators will point you to the changes your strategies have made to those involved – not just individuals but organisations, communities and possibly society.
- Select the data collection methods – qualitative and quantitative – that will get the information you need for your process and impact evaluation. There might be established local or regional level data sources that fit this bill, but use them only if they do.
- Be sure the data collection methods you've selected are within the funding and resources that you have set aside for evaluation.
- Share your data collection activities among partners so the task of evaluation is not a burden for you.
- Evaluation is an essential part of regional action planning to prevent violence against women, not an optional extra. Invest in it by dedicating a proportion of funding or resources to setting it up and doing it.

Analyse and interpret

- Don't take the results of your data collection at face value:
 - interrogate the data
 - analyse what is going on
 - interpret why it is going on
 - synthesise your findings into an insightful story about primary prevention in your region.
- Analyse and interpret the data to throw light on the relationship between data and any contextual factors that provide new insight and learning.
- Share your findings with partners and the wider community; think about using the media as a vehicle for getting your findings out widely.

- Remember, preventing violence against women is an emerging field of practice so plan for evaluation, measure the work and get your findings out as widely as possible to contribute to the evidence base of what works.

TIPS

Make measurement part of the regional action planning conversation from the beginning – check out people’s thoughts on process and impact evaluation for learning, improving and accountability.

Develop a short measurement plan with key headings – Measuring Objectives and Strategies (impact evaluation), Progress (process evaluation), and Evaluating New Programs. You may wish to establish a baseline for the measurement of the longer term achievement of your goals (outcome evaluation).

Engage partners in their view of the data and the analysis and interpretation they bring that throws new light on the results.

Always evaluate when you don’t have the evidence. There are a range of evaluation methods that use either quantitative or qualitative methods or both.

Select an evaluation method that is ‘fit for purpose’ – it can be modest and participatory (journaling for example) so that the resourcing is shared.

Set up the evaluation of any strategy before it is implemented so that baseline data can be collected and an agreed evaluation strategy can be put in place.

Set up a simple spreadsheet or develop a reporting template that is easy to populate and share.

Translate the ‘by whom’, ‘by when’ columns on the planning template to a reporting template for regular reporting of progress measures.

Use the media to celebrate success not only with partners but also with the wider community and to keep the spotlight on preventing violence against women.



REFLECT



The last planning step feeds all the learning from the action planning experience into the next action plan.

Reflection is the practice of thinking about and considering what has been done and how well it will address the future. Here are some things to consider when reflecting on all the experiences of action planning.

- Reflection provides the opportunity for continuous learning and dialogue when it is integrated into the governance group's activities.
- Reflection allows different views and perspectives to be understood and seen more clearly for their contribution to the prevention of violence against women.
- Consciously stepping outside the hurly burly of the everyday and asking probing questions helps to mitigate risk and provide opportunities for deeper insight and new learning that can be applied to the future.
- Reflection takes many forms and can be conducted at different levels including the rational and logical experience and the emotional journey of partners, stakeholders and the community.
- Reflection is both a relatively informal and private process, for example regular journaling in a diary, as well as a structured process.

REFLECT ESSENTIALS

Practice reflection

- Identify a simple [reflection model and tools](#) that works for you and the governance group.
- Incorporate reflection into the Charter or Memorandum of Understanding.
- Reflect on and record your experience of the process of planning and of implementing your strategies and actions.

- Introduce reflective practice from time-to-time in your meetings and look at both *what* was done and *how* it was done – use dialogue and avoid debate to enable connections to the experience and shared understanding.
- Engage in a range of personal and shared reflection processes such as debriefing, peer learning and exchanging feedback and deeper, guided group processes as well as journaling and diary keeping.
- Understand how your learnings from specific strategies apply more generally to others.

Establish trust and openness

- Make trust and openness an active component of your reflections.
- Build skill in reflective practice to overcome discomfort among partners.
- Continue to build trust and openness across the governance group to garner all the dimensions of the experience of planning and implementing together including assumptions, views and behaviours.
- Invite others into your reflective practice once trust and openness have been established and the group is settled to provide different insights and new learning.

Ask questions

- Establish a list of probing questions in agreement with the governance group based on *how?* And *what?* Rather than *why?*
- Consider using Borton's model of *the what?* – a description of the who, what, why, when and where; in order to ask *so what?* – making sense of the general meaning, the significance, positions and viewpoints, actions and emotions; and *now what?* – making connections from the experience or incident to further actions.
- Ask open questions that encourage descriptive responses – this allows groups to stay with the issue and avoids the blame trap.
- Employ a self-questioning approach that raises awareness of your own and other perspectives and viewpoints, and the particular nature and context of your discipline.
- Use critical thinking to examine and consider practice and ideas.

TIPS

- Provide tools for reflective practice, including reflective worksheets, systematic questions that are consistent for all participants, and/or a tailored experiential learning diary.
- Use *how* rather than *why*
- Consciously create time for reflection.
- Be as aware and honest with yourself as possible about your experience, contribution and actions.

- Find a reflective model or framework that works best for you and your group.
- Use a [self-reflection checklist](#).
- Methodically maintain your own reflective records – these can be electronic reflections such as sound bites or short videos, or hard copy written reflections.
- Reflect on the group’s experience of the action planning process itself to improve it next time.
- Consider using [appreciative inquiry](#) as a method for reflection.
- Practice dialogue rather than discussion to connect, align, learn and understand.
- Don’t criticise – critical reflection is not about criticising, but providing insight.



APPENDIX 1: PRINCIPLES FOR REGIONAL ACTION PLANNING ON THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Victoria is a leader in the prevention of men's violence against women and there is significant commitment and expertise within the State particularly through women's health services.

Many of the following principles have been adapted from the [joint statement](#) developed by a group of primary prevention experts including Women's Health Services and submitted to the 2015 Victorian [Royal Commission into Family Violence](#).

- Gender equity is at the heart of all primary prevention work.
- Primary prevention needs to address the underlying causes of men's violence against women (gender inequality) and not just its impacts.
- Primary prevention efforts involve men and women working together to achieve the shared vision for an equal and safe society.
- Primary prevention is long-term work requiring integration, coordination and leadership from organisations like Women's Health Services, where it's an ongoing priority issue.
- Primary prevention initiatives should contribute to a coordinated and mutually reinforcing suite of strategies, delivered at a local and regional level, to enable an efficient, effective and consistent approach to primary prevention.
- Primary prevention efforts require a population level approach (universal in scope) and can have 'targeted' components so that *everyone* is included and no one is left out.
- Focussing efforts at changing behaviour at an individual level or undertaking 'good projects' alone cannot prevent the deeply-entrenched social problem of violence against women and gender inequality.
- Primary prevention efforts need defined indicators to measure progress in the short, medium and longer term.

APPENDIX 2: PLANNING PROCESS TEMPLATE

The Planning Process Template is designed to support you and your partners through the development of your regional action plan. It helps you work out *what* you need to do to complete each step of the planning process, prompts you to set out *how* you will undertake each step, and encourages you to assign responsibilities and timelines.

[template over page]

ACTION PLANNING PROCESS TEMPLATE

ACTION PLANNING STEP	ACTION PLANNING ESSENTIALS	STEPS IN DEVELOPING THE ACTION PLAN	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
KNOW <i>Research & gather</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct research • Compile data • Investigate program evidence 	<p><i>How you'll research and gather knowledge, data & evidence-based programs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
UNDERSTAND <i>Connect & engage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share knowledge • Engage partners • Engage the community 	<p><i>How you'll build shared understanding, and engage with partners and the community</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
SET DIRECTION <i>Inspire & motivate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve partners • Develop a vision • Set goals 	<p><i>How you'll involve partners and set inspiring and motivating vision and goals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
DEFINE ACTION <i>Decide & align</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align the approach • Select objectives, strategies and actions • Use evidence • Define measures 	<p><i>How you'll decide measurable objectives, strategies and actions that align with partner plans and activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
IMPLEMENT <i>Commit & deliver</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to deliver • Lead with purpose 	<p><i>How you'll maintain commitment with partners and lead delivery of the Action Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
MEASURE <i>Assess & analyse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure measurement • Analyse and interpret 	<p><i>How you'll assess effectiveness and analyse and interpret results</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
REFLECT <i>Clarity & insight</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice reflection • Establish trust and openness • Ask questions 	<p><i>How you'll gain clarity and insight about the 'who', 'what' and 'how' of the Action Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		