ON HER WAY

PRIMARY PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA

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Another world is not only possible, she is on her way.

On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

Arundhati Roy (Indian novelist, essayist and activist)
Confronting Empire

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
AMWCHR	Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CMY	Centre for Multicultural Youth
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
ECCV	Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
EU/EEA	European Union/European Economic Area
FVPs	Family Violence Provisions
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
	(now known as the Australian Human Rights Commission)
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IWDVS	Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service
	(now known as inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence)
IWWCV	Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria
	(now known as the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights)
JTAFV	Jewish Taskforce against Family Violence
MCWH	Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
MRC	Migrant resource centre
MRCSA	Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia
NES	Non-English speaking
NESB	Non-English speaking background
NGO	Non-government organisation
PACE	Participate, Advocate, Communicate, Engage (name of MCWH program)
RERCV	Russian Ethnic Representative Council of Victoria
SILC	Self-esteem, Identity, Leadership and Community development (name of IWWCV program)
TAFE	Technical and further education
TCF	Textile, clothing and footwear
TC-TAT	Transforming Communities: Technical Assistance, Training and Resource Centre
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VICSEG	Victorian Cooperative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups
VIRWC	Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition
WDVCS	Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service
WYPIN	Western Young People's Independent Network
WRHC	Western Region Health Centre

BOXES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence against women is a significant global public health issue that impacts negatively on women's and children's physical and mental wellbeing, limits access to human rights, and is multi-dimensional, occurring in the home, general community, workplaces, educational institutions, or at the hands of the state. In the Australian context, violence against women occurs among all cultural, religious and socio-economic groups, but women marginalised by age, culture, ethnicity, sexual identity and visa status are more vulnerable to violence and are less likely to have the resources to act to report it.

Violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia can be prevented. Due to significant diversity in women's life stages and circumstances, which make a difference to their exposure to situations in which violence is more likely to occur, there is a need for violence prevention strategies that recognise the complex dynamics of violence against different groups of women, including those who are newly-arrived, from well-established communities, in precarious employment, or from visible minority groups.

Primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia will involve major cultural and social change, so long-term stakeholder commitment (particularly from governments) is essential to generating and maintaining change. Numerous actions are required, including:

- A solid evidence base on the prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women needs to be developed. More specifically,
    - High-calibre research which provides an overview of the prevalence and dynamics of violence against immigrant and refugee women is required;
    - High-quality and in-depth formative research into effective violence prevention strategies, underpinned by well-designed evaluation frameworks, is necessary, but strategies require long-term funding to ensure comprehensive evaluations are undertaken. Evaluation should be mandatory and not tied to competitive funding processes. The evaluation capacity of agencies and organisations engaged in violence prevention efforts also needs to be developed to enable thorough evaluation of strategies;
    - A comprehensive mapping exercise designed to collect information about previous or existing violence prevention strategies across Australia would enable greater understanding of the extent and dynamics of violence prevention efforts;
    - A central clearinghouse which collates and maintains evidence on violence prevalence and effective prevention strategies would reduce the need to locate data from a variety of sources, allow for the wide dissemination of research findings to agencies and organisations involved in violence prevention efforts and ensure future strategies are evidence-based;
- Genuine leadership is required to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women. A representation of influential and respected immigrant and refugee community leaders—female, male, youth—from a range of backgrounds are required to publicly denounce violence against women and contribute to community education efforts;

- Immigrant and refugee women and their representative groups and organisations should be the instigators of cultural change and spearhead violence prevention efforts, whilst collaborating with all identified community leaders to collectively advocate for an end to violence against women;

- Leadership development programs should be utilised in violence prevention efforts to support and enable community leaders to acknowledge the occurrence of violence against women in their communities; encourage their communities to respond; promote respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships; and demand respect and equality for women;

- Violence prevention initiatives must deliver constructive messages about, and present positive images of healthy relationships, families and communities, and not of abused women and children;

- Consultation with individual immigrant and refugee communities is essential to ensure that violence prevention messages, visuals, language and strategies are tailored to each community;

- Utilisation of a variety of communication and social marketing strategies, such as community forums, electronic media, printed communication materials and multi-media communication campaigns, will ensure increased access to significant proportions of ethnic communities;

- Direct participation programs are needed to capitalise and expand on the messages of communication and social marketing strategies. Education programs for children and young people in schools and youth-oriented settings, bilingual health education for women and men, and parenting programs need to respectively provide knowledge and skills required to engage positively with others; develop and maintain respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships; and raise children in a constructive manner;

- Efforts designed to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women should be the responsibility of, or greatly involve multicultural and/or ethno-specific agencies and organisations. Mainstream agencies and organisations seeking to engage in violence prevention efforts must be required to do so only in equal collaboration with multicultural and/or ethno-specific counterparts;

- Organisational capacity to address violence prevention could be achieved through the delivery of professional training and resources, and through collaborative networks, to facilitate dialogue about strategies and lessons learned from violence prevention efforts;

- Workplace interventions, such as greater workplace regulation and monitoring, training for employers and information sessions for employees, are needed to prevent workplace violence against immigrant and refugee women; and

- Relevant legislation and policies that may affect immigrant and refugee women's experiences of violence need to be identified, reviewed, amended, created or ratified.

Adherence to good practice principles will ensure culturally-appropriate violence prevention efforts that are effective in the long term. These principles include: balanced and representative leadership, with immigrant and refugee women at the forefront of violence prevention efforts; regular community consultation; specifically-tailored messages, visuals, language and strategies for each individual community; positive messages, visuals and language; message reinforcement via different mediums; extensive involvement of female and male bilingual community workers in violence prevention strategies; recognition of all facets of social diversity; and ongoing improvement of strategies.

CHAPTER 1:   INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is a significant public health issue worldwide. Defined as *'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life'* (United Nations, 1993), violence against women impacts negatively on women's and children's physical and mental wellbeing, and limits their access to human rights. Violence against women is multi-dimensional, occurring in the home, general community, workplaces, educational institutions, or at the hands of the state.

Frequently, the large majority of perpetrators of violence against women are men, many of whom are known to their victims. Unequal power relations between men and women support gender inequality, discrimination and the oppression of women. In the Australian context, violence against women occurs across all cultural, religious and socio-economic groups. However, as gender relations are intersected by factors such as age, culture, ethnicity, sexual identity and visa status, women who are marginalised by these factors are more vulnerable to violence and are less likely to have the resources to act to report it. Language and cultural barriers also limit access to support services for many immigrant and refugee women. Within some ethnic communities, issues such as forced early marriage and child-bearing are a concern for young women. Women who have experienced war, civil unrest and/or dislocation in their countries of origin have also been more vulnerable to rape and sexual assault at the hands of the state.

Violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia can be prevented. However, the complexity of women's experiences of violence highlights the need for culturally-appropriate strategies that address the core issue of gender equality by working to improve the status of women. In this regard, it is equally important that violence prevention efforts address the specific and diverse situations of immigrant and refugee women, within the cultural, religious and socio-economic contexts of their lives.

Traditionally, efforts to prevent violence against women have been secondary and tertiary in nature. *Secondary prevention*, or early intervention, targets individuals and groups that demonstrate early signs of violence (such as controlling behaviours), with the aim of preventing these behaviours escalating into violence. *Tertiary prevention*, or intervention, is implemented after violence has occurred and provides support and assistance to victims and perpetrators to address the aftermath of violence, avert serious consequences of violence and prevent future episodes of violence (VicHealth, 2007). Whilst it is essential that women experiencing violence are supported as best as possible, addressing violence in its early stages, or after it has been perpetrated, maintains women's overall risk of violence and its negative health outcomes, doing little to change the culture that allows violence against women to occur in the first instance. In recent years, there has been a shift towards the primary prevention of violence against women. *Primary prevention* targets whole populations and/or high-risk groups with the aim of preventing violence before it occurs (VicHealth, 2007). This approach is the ideal form of prevention—albeit the most challenging and time-consuming—as it cultivates a safe environment for women, a world where violence against women is not an option because women are valued, respected and treated equally.

1.1   Introduction to *On Her Way*

The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH) is a women's health organisation committed to improving the health of immigrant and refugee women across Australia. The centre is for all women from new, emerging and established immigrant communities, including refugees and asylum seekers.

As part of its mission, MCWH undertakes research on issues relevant to immigrant and refugee women. In 2009, during the development of the policy *A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010-2020* (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2009)*,* MCWH was engaged to prepare a background paper on the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Victoria, recognising that violence prevention efforts would only be effective for certain groups if tailored strategies were employed to address their specific context and risks. This background paper detailed good practice programs and principles and recommended future strategies for the Victorian government to consider in violence prevention efforts. In 2011, MCWH revised, updated and restructured the background paper into a more comprehensive publication, *On Her Way,* so that it was relevant for all of Australia. Underpinning discussion in *On Her Way* is *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria* (VicHealth, 2007). This VicHealth publication highlights preventative actions, including research, monitoring and evaluation; advocacy; community strengthening; communication and social marketing; direct participation programs; organisational and workforce development; and legislative and policy reform. These actions stem from three guiding themes: promotion of respectful relationships between men and women; promotion of non-violent social norms and the reduction of the effects of previous exposure to violence; and improvement of access to services and systems of support.

On Her Way is based on a strong commitment to culturally-appropriate violence prevention strategies. It is not based on the view that violence against immigrant and refugee women is more common, or that immigrant and refugee men and boys are more violent than others. Quality evidence to support these views is insufficient as research that has been conducted into men's attitudes towards violence does not assume a broad interpretation of violence-supporting attitudes.

An advisory committee guided the preparation of this publication, the methodology of which included:
- A review of literature on effective strategies used for the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women. Literature (journal articles and reports) was sourced from peer-reviewed journals, websites, and agencies and organisations engaged in violence prevention efforts;
- A half-day service provider workshop was held with individuals and professionals with knowledge of and/or expertise in dealing with immigrant and refugee women, particularly women experiencing violence. Discussion during the workshop focused on women's experiences of violence, groups of women that need to be prioritised in violence prevention efforts, as well as strategies that could be considered for inclusion in this publication; and
- Individual consultations, either face-to-face, telephone or email, were also conducted, primarily with representatives from agencies and organisations across Australia implementing violence prevention strategies.

This publication is divided into four chapters. This first chapter has provided a brief introduction to violence against immigrant and refugee women, violence prevention approaches, MCWH and this publication. Chapter 2 identifies the key groups of immigrant and refugee women that need to be prioritised in violence prevention efforts. Chapter 3 presents primary prevention strategies, based on available evidence, which could be considered in violence prevention efforts. Key recommendations for action are highlighted in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 2: PRIORITY GROUPS FOR PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Immigrant and refugee women in Australia are not a homogenous group. Whilst there are many similarities across this population, there is significant diversity in women's life stages and circumstances which make a difference to their exposure to situations in which violence is more likely to occur.

This chapter provides an overview of the various groups of immigrant and refugee women that should be considered in violence prevention efforts, and the nature of violence perpetrated against these women, including the factors that may increase their exposure to violence. It should be noted that immigrant and refugee women may be defined by the country of birth, languages spoken at home, English proficiency, or birthplace of their parents. This chapter also briefly highlights the opportunities for violence prevention.

Throughout this publication, the terms *immigrant and refugee* and *ethnic* are used interchangeably to minimise repetition.

2.1   Newly-arrived women on permanent and temporary visas

It is impossible to calculate the exact number of newly-arrived immigrant and refugee women in Australia. The task is complex due to the various government agencies involved in the collection of data on the number of immigrant and refugee women in Australia, the different data collection methods used by these agencies, the different groups of women, and the significant overlap in women moving from temporary to permanent visas, or even across temporary visas. Instead, data on visas issued over the five-year period from 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2010 (where possible) was obtained for this publication and thus is presented and discussed in this chapter.

From 2006 to 2010, at least 844,684 visas, permanent and temporary, were issued to women aged 16 years and over from non-English speaking (NES) countries (primary visa holders only)—excluding Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom and United States of America—to settle in Australia (DIAC, 2011a and 2011b). However, the exact overall figure is more likely to range from 1.1 million to 1.15 million as Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) data on student and bridging visas was only available for the three-year period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2010. The overall figure also includes women from South Africa. Whilst South Africa is categorised as an English-speaking country by several Australian government agencies, primarily due to the number of South African arrivals who are proficient in English, there is significant cultural and linguistic diversity in the South African population that warrants the inclusion of newly-arrived South African women in the overall total number. Women in Australia as secondary visa holders are not included in the overall figure.

Under the permanent migration program, a total of 292,406 visas were issued to women from NES countries from 2006 to 2010. Of this number, 19,763 visas were issued as part of the program's humanitarian stream. The remaining 272,643 visas were issued to women arriving in Australia under the

non-humanitarian streams, namely skilled (144,910) and family (127,733) (DIAC, 2011a). However, the most substantial increase in the number of visas issued in recent years has been for temporary immigrants, with women in Australia on temporary visas constituting the majority of newly-arrived immigrant and refugee women. From 2006 to 2010, at least 552,278 temporary visas were issued to women from NES countries (DIAC, 2011b). Of these, 320,460 were student visas (only for three years from 2008 to 2010), 157,068 were Subclass 457 visas, and 74,750 were bridging visas (only for three years from 2008 to 2010 and excluding asylum seekers). There is significant overlap between women on temporary and permanent visas as many on temporary visas move to permanent visas after their temporary visas expire. For example, from 2007 to 2008, over 20,000 Subclass 457 visa holders were granted permanent residency (Deegan, 2008). Furthermore, other women on temporary visas may move to other temporary visas. Table 1 summarises the number of permanent and temporary visas issued to women from NES countries arriving and/or settling in Australia from 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2010 (primary visa holders only). This table has been compiled using data from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC, 2011a and 2011b).

Newly-arrived women share some common issues that impact on their experiences of violence and their potential access to violence prevention programs. These include:

- settlement demands, such as education, immediate health concerns and employment, that often take priority over prevention programs;
- difficulties accessing affordable and suitable housing;
- financial issues due to the high costs associated with migration and concentration in low-paid employment;
- limited access to English language classes;
- limited transport options;
- the imperative to work; and
- limited suitable and affordable childcare.

Some groups of newly-arrived women live in circumstances that impact adversely on their capacity to prevent violence. For example, temporary residency can increase women's social isolation from the community and their vulnerability to violence in the workplace, family home and community. This appears to be a growing concern, evident in service utilisation data from the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS) which shows that 47.6% of the immigrant and refugee women accommodated in refuges in Victoria in 2009-2010 were women without permanent residency (WDVCS, 2010). Also, access to health and community services is variable for women on temporary visas. Each visa category carries different entitlements and these entitlements change regularly. Whilst some agencies and organisations will provide services to all women irrespective of their visa category, others restrict their services to those permanently settled in Australia. This complexity and confusion may impact on the development and implementation of violence prevention strategies for women temporarily settled in Australia.

Table 1: Number of permanent and temporary visas issued to women from NES countries arriving and/or settling in Australia from 2006-2010 (primary visa holders only)

Type of permanent visa	Number issued to women	Top 3 NES countries
Refugee and humanitarian	19,763	Iraq Burma (or Myanmar) Afghanistan
Skilled	144,910	China India South Africa
Family	127,733	
Spouse	*108,889*	China, India, Philippines
Parent	*14,000*	China, India, South Africa
Other	*4,844*	
TOTAL PERMANENT	**292,406**	

Type of temporary visa	Number issued to women	Top 3 NES countries
Subclass 457	157,068	India South Africa Philippines
Student*	320,460*	China India South Korea
Bridging (excluding those for asylum seekers)**	74,750**	China India South Korea
TOTAL TEMPORARY	**552,278**	
TOTAL NEWLY-ARRIVED	**844,684*****	China India Philippines

*   DIAC data on student visas issued to women aged 16 years and over was only available for 2008 to 2010 (3 years)

**   DIAC data on bridging visas issued to women aged 16 years and over was only available for 2008 to 2010 (3 years)

***   This figure is the minimum and may actually range from 1.1 million to 1.15 million if counting an extra 252,000 to 310,000 student and bridging visas issued from 1 January 2006 until 31 December 2007 (on the basis that approximately 126,000 to 155,000 of these visas are issued to women aged 16 years and over from NES countries each year)

2.1.1 *Women on refugee and humanitarian visas*

Of the 19,763 refugee and humanitarian visas issued to women between 2006 and 2010, over half (54.6%) were for women from four countries: Iraq (20.7%), Burma (15.8%), Afghanistan (9.1%) and Sudan (9%). Other countries of origin significantly represented include Iran, Bhutan, Liberia, Sri Lanka and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DIAC, 2011a).

Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program has an onshore component that allows people to apply for asylum (or protection) after arriving in Australia. Protection visas are issued to asylum seekers found to be refugees. Whilst waiting for their application to be processed, asylum seekers are issued with a bridging visa, with the type of bridging visa issued dependent on the type of visa previously held (if held at all) and when their protection visa application was made (DIAC, n.d*)*. The majority of applications are made by male asylum seekers, but primary grant rates are higher for female asylum seekers (DIAC, 2011c). Data on the number of asylum seekers on bridging visas waiting for application outcomes is not available, but the total number of female applicants – including dependents, or dependents only - (irregular maritime arrivals and non-irregular maritime arrivals) from 1 July 2005 to 31 December 2010 was approximately 12,893, or 37.8% of total applications made (DIAC, 2011c). Of the 19,763 refugee humanitarian visas issued to women between 2006 and 2010, approximately 14% were protection visas (DIAC, 2011a).

For many refugees in Australia, settlement is profoundly stressful. Refugees endure many challenges adjusting to life in a new country, particularly one that is vastly different to their country of origin, including language difficulties, unemployment, discrimination, social exclusion and isolation *inter alia*. These complex issues are compounded where refugee pre-migration experiences include family separation or loss of family members, exposure to torture and trauma and deprivation of food and water (Lewig et al, 2009). Settlement can be especially problematic for men concerned with the shift in power dynamics in relationships after women are entitled to increased legal protections and rights in their new country (Simbandumwe et al, 2008). Men feel their traditional role of family breadwinner and its associated social status is under threat, increasing women's vulnerability when men try to assert their authority through controlling behaviours and violence. Refugee parents also experience added stress when traditional parenting styles differ to those in their new country. Consequently, intergenerational conflict between parents and their children, who adjust quickly to life in their adopted country, may occur (Lewig et al, 2009).

Women asylum seekers are particularly vulnerable to violence. Women's rights, entitlements and access to support whilst waiting for the outcome of their protection visa application varies depending on the type of bridging visa women have been issued. Many asylum seekers are ineligible for assistance from programs specifically funded to support people waiting for these applications to be processed. Consequently, they are forced to rely on charities to survive. Women in this situation have poor access to safe housing options, so unsafe rooming houses are the only accommodation option for many women. Women who are dependents on a protection visa application, and are experiencing domestic violence, are afraid of the consequences for their survival if they leave their abusive partner. Women's uncertain future in Australia means that, while sympathetic to these women's plight, refuges are reluctant to provide accommodation to women asylum seekers experiencing domestic violence (Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, 2010).

Refugees link into a relatively well-resourced support system before and on arrival in Australia. Before arriving in Australia, refugees can participate in a comprehensive orientation program about settling in Australia (DIAC website: *Fact sheet 67 – The Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Program*). After arrival, refugees are eligible for federally-funded settlement services and have access to health and welfare services specifically developed for refugee communities. In this regard, violence prevention strategies may link into this established support system. However, pressing settlement needs, such as housing, employment and children's schooling, often take priority in the early years of migration. These competing issues co-exist with low levels of literacy and English language knowledge, which often means that current information and education programs may not always reach all women in the family or the community. Violence prevention strategies, such as bilingual health education and parenting programs, are important during this period as they will facilitate safe and successful settlement for refugee women and men, but strategies must take the settlement context into account in order to be effective. Respected and well-settled refugee women and men could also be identified and trained to assume leadership roles in their communities so they can promote to newly-arrived refugees the importance of respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships during and beyond settlement. School-based education programs and youth-oriented initiatives would benefit younger members of this group. Communication and social marketing strategies could also be used to reach refugees before migration—after acceptance into the Refugee and Humanitarian Program—and during and after settlement. For women asylum seekers, legislation and policy is integral to violence prevention efforts, but communication and social marketing strategies could also be used to reach these women, their partners and children.

2.1.2 Women on skilled migration visas

Of the 144,190 skilled migration visas issued to women between 2006 and 2010, 23.4% were for women from China, 19.1% for women from India and 7.8% for women from South Africa. Other main countries of origin include the Philippines and Malaysia (DIAC, 2011a). The main industries which all visa holders (men and women) enter include health and community services (18%), property and business services (17%), communication services (10%) and manufacturing (10%) (DIAC, 2008).

Women who settle in Australia under the skilled migration program must undergo a two-year waiting period before they can access Centrelink benefits. This waiting period increases vulnerability to violence in the workplace as women may have limited employment options and no financial safety net should they need to leave a workplace due to violence. It also increases women's dependency on their partner for their own and their children's financial security. This is more applicable for women who arrive in Australia as secondary visa holders. Secondary visa holders refer to women whose spouse is the primary visa holder. These women are listed on the same visa as their spouse, but may not be employed. However, due to a lack of knowledge about Family Violence Provisions (FVPs), secondary visa holders may endure domestic violence during the two-year waiting period in order to remain in Australia permanently. Federal immigration laws include FVPs which allow certain visa holders applying for permanent residency, including these secondary visa holders, to continue their application after domestic violence has resulted in relationship breakdown (DIAC website: *Fact sheet 38 – Family Violence Provisions*). Women do not have to remain in an abusive relationship during the two-year waiting period in order to qualify for permanent

residency. In these circumstances, women can apply for Centrelink benefits whilst waiting for their application to be processed and their assurer of support will then be required to reimburse the federal government for the payment of these benefits.

Women in this visa category tend not to link with settlement, health or welfare services as they are generally engaged in employment. Violence prevention initiatives delivered through workplaces are most likely to reach these women and their employers. However, this would not apply to secondary visa holders who are not in the labour force. Communication and social marketing strategies could also be used to reach primary and secondary visa holders, their partners and their children before and/or after arrival in Australia. Leadership programs with a focus on violence prevention, bilingual health education and parenting programs would also be worthwhile for men and women, especially after they are permanently settled in Australia. School-based education programs and youth-focused initiatives could also be considered for the children of these visa holders.

2.1.3   Women on family migration visas

Of the 127,733 family migration visas issued to women between 2006 and 2010, 85% were spouse visas and 11% were parent (including aged dependent relative) visas. Of the 108,889 spouse visas issued, 13.6% were for women from China, 13.3% for women from India and 8.6% for women from the Philippines. Other main countries of origin include Vietnam and Thailand (DIAC, 2011a). Of the 14,000 parent visas issued, the majority were for women from China (40%), but 7.6% were issued to women from India, 6.9% to women from South Africa and 6.4% to women from Vietnam (DIAC, 2011a).

There has been significant concern expressed about the vulnerability to violence of women on family visas. Women on spouse visas must wait up to two years after arriving in Australia before qualifying for Centrelink benefits and other settlement or welfare assistance. Women arriving in Australia on parent visas, most of whom are older, may qualify for Medicare-funded services from arrival, depending on the visa subclass, but are only eligible for Centrelink benefits ten years after arriving in Australia. These waiting periods and their associated financial pressures on sponsors increase women's vulnerability to violence. During these waiting periods, women's primary contact and support is their sponsor (partners and adult children or other relatives for women on spouse and parent visas respectively), although women on spouse visas are allowed to work and so have contact with employers and co-workers. Women settle into the family home, and if not working, are limited by the social networks and neighbourhood ties provided by the family. In this regard, access to services is poor, social connectedness is limited and women are isolated, especially those with low levels of English language proficiency and during the early years. Consequently, women are dependent on their sponsor during the waiting periods. Due to a lack of knowledge of FVPs, which also apply to women on spouse visas, women succumb to sponsor threats of deportation and may endure violence and other abusive behaviours, such as financial control, isolation and long hours of work in the home, in order to remain in Australia permanently. For women on parent visas who are experiencing violence, they can also apply for Centrelink benefits during the ten-year waiting period and their assurer of support will be expected to repay the federal government for these payments.

For women on spouse and parent visas, legislation and policy relating to their visa status will be central to violence prevention efforts, but communication and social marketing strategies could also be used to reach these women before and after arrival in Australia, their partners and adult children or family members. Bilingual health education and leadership programs could also reach this group of women. School-based education programs and youth-focused initiatives could benefit the children of women on spouse visas.

2.1.4   Women on Subclass 457 visa

Federal government policy responses to the skills shortage has resulted in an increasing number of temporary skilled immigrants in Australia. The main visa for these immigrants is the Subclass 457 visa. Women who arrive in Australia on this visa are contracted to work for a specified employer for a maximum of four years. From 2006 to 2010, 157,068 visas were issued to women, with India (14.3%), South Africa (13.5%) and the Philippines (10.8%) the most-represented countries of origin in the total number. Other main countries of origin include China, Japan and Germany (DIAC, 2011b).

The temporary nature of the Subclass 457 visa increases women's vulnerability to exploitation from employers and partners, especially when women are moving toward permanent residency after the visa expires. Exploitation in the workplace, primarily in the form of breaches of workers' conditions of employment, is more common in workers who are not sufficiently proficient in English (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2007). This vulnerability is compounded by the fact that the visa is tied to a specific employer. Should the employment relationship break down with that employer, the visa is no longer valid and the visa holder is required to leave Australia within 28 days after cessation of employment. Consequently, threats of deportation by employers, potential loss of even a limited income, or lack of awareness of complaint mechanisms means that workers are less likely to report violence in the workplace (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2007). Information about work rights and occupational health and safety for Subclass 457 visa holders is available on the DIAC website and is also provided to visa holders via their sponsor-employers, but the onus is on employers to distribute the information to workers (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2009). For secondary visa holders, women's visas are tied to those of their partners or family members, so women can only remain in Australia if their relationship remains intact. This visa condition creates imbalances in relationships, with spouses or family members exploiting the precarious visa status of women to exert control over or to subject women to violence (Orloff and Kaguyutan, 2002). Women tied to spouses and family members in this manner are reluctant to prevent or escape domestic violence for fear of being deported. Family Violence Provisions do not apply to women on the Subclass 457 visa.

Women on the Subclass 457 visa tend not to link automatically with any settlement, health or welfare services unless there is a specific health issue that needs to be addressed. Legislation and policy relating to their visa status is essential to violence prevention efforts, although workplace initiatives are also likely to reach this group of women and their employers. However, this would not apply to secondary visa holders who are not in the labour force. Communication and social marketing strategies could be also be used to reach primary and secondary visa holders before and after arrival in Australia, their employers,

partners and children. School-based education programs and youth-focused initiatives could reach the children of women temporarily settled in Australia on the Subclass 457 visa.

2.1.5   Women on student visas

International education has contributed significantly to the number of temporary immigrants in Australia. Although recent changes to student visa regulations and violent attacks against international students has seen the number of enrolments decline since 2010, international students still constitute the biggest group of immigrants to arrive in Australia over the last three years. From 2008 to 2010, 320,460 student visas were issued to women, with half of these for women from China (27.7%), India (15.6%) and South Korea (6.8%). Other significant countries of origin include Thailand and Vietnam (DIAC, 2011b).

International students are vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and violence in the housing market and the workplace as they have limited options due to housing shortages and the need to engage in casual and contract employment that fits around their studies (Deumert et al, 2005; Rosenthal et al, 2006). The cost of international education and living in Australia requires many international students to seek employment, but language difficulties, lack of supports and poor understanding of their work rights means students' capacity to bargain with employers is limited. Consequently, students accept low-status and low-paid work (usually below the minimum wage) and endure discrimination in the workplace (Nyland et al, 2009).

While media and community attention has focused on male international students and their experiences of violence in public settings, violence against female international students has remained largely invisible despite their increased risk of discrimination, harassment and violence. Female students are more likely than their male counterparts to experience discrimination, physical abuse, sexual harassment and social exclusion during their stay in Australia (Deumert et al, 2005; Rosenthal et al, 2006). In accommodation, educational institutions and workplaces, female students have been offered cheaper rent, higher grades and employment in return for sexual favours (Burke, 2010; Forbes-Mewett and Nyland, 2007; Graycar, 2010; Poljski, 2011a; VIRWC, 2009). The lack of affordable housing for international students means that many students share accommodation with numerous other people, usually fellow students (Turcic, 2008). In this situation, the risk of violence, especially of a sexual nature, is increased where female students are forced to share rooms with male students. Bullying and discrimination also occurs within the international student community. Female students from countries with a pronounced social hierarchy may bully and discriminate against other students from the same country who are believed or known to be from a different social group (Poljski, 2011a).

Female international students are also at risk of violence within personal relationships with male international students and local men (Gloz and Smith, 2004). However, female students living in Australia with partners who are secondary visa holders—that is, men who are not studying themselves and are only allowed to stay in Australia on the condition their relationship remains intact—may have an increased risk of violence due to the shift in power dynamics in their relationships. Men who feel uncomfortable about the altered power dynamics—their partner can have them deported—may try to assert their authority and demonstrate their masculinity through controlling behaviours and violence. For secondary visa holders,

women's visas are tied to those of their partners who are students, so women are only allowed to stay in Australia on the condition their relationship remains intact. As with women in Australia with spouses on Subclass 457 visas, women tied to partners on student visas are reluctant to prevent or escape domestic violence for fear of being deported. Family Violence Provisions do not apply to women on student visas.

Women on student visas are also unwilling to report violence to police because of: their negative impressions of police in their country of origin; fears that a complaint will affect their application for permanent residency; concerns that their partner will retaliate against their family overseas in the event of deportation; reliance on their partner for financial support if their partner is a secondary visa holder and working in Australia; or because of a lack of knowledge about avenues for complaints (Poljski, 2011a).

For women on student visas, legislation and policy relating to their visa status are important to violence prevention efforts for this group. Female international students tend to link in with educational institutions, at which the availability of health and community services, as well as the interest in and ability to provide health education is variable. Generally, public educational institutions, such as universities, are better-equipped to provide these services, while some private colleges provide no welfare assistance whatsoever, thereby increasing students' vulnerability to violence. Educational institutions are the most appropriate settings for violence prevention initiatives for international students. However, these institutions need strong encouragement to better exercise a duty of care towards these students (ECCV, 2010) and provide information and support to newly-arrived students during orientation periods and to all students throughout the academic year. Initiatives for students, particularly those who are newly-arrived, include gender-specific mentoring programs as well as communication and social marketing campaigns and tools. Primary and secondary visa holders, male and female, and their children could also be reached via communication and social marketing strategies before and after arrival in Australia. School-based and youth-oriented education programs could be used to reach the children of women on student visas.

2.1.6   Women on bridging visas

Bridging visas are temporary visas issued to people waiting for the outcome of a permanent visa application, or to people seeking a review of a failed visa application (DIAC, 2010a). Excluding asylum seekers on bridging visas, 74,750 bridging visas were issued to women from 2008 to 2010, with the most-represented countries including China (19.5%), India (18.2%) and South Korea (7.6%) (DIAC, 2011b).

As with women asylum seekers, the rights, entitlements and access to support for women on bridging visas varies depending on the type of bridging visa women have been issued. Work restrictions may also apply. The situation for women on bridging visas is not as dire as it is for women asylum seekers, as many of these women were previously in Australia on another visa (such as Subclass 457, student) and may already be supported whilst waiting for the outcome of their permanent visa application. However, women on bridging visas are still vulnerable to violence in the home or the workplace and may be reluctant to leave violent situations out of fear their application will be affected. Legislation and policy relating to their visa status are important to violence prevention efforts for women on bridging visas, but communication and social marketing strategies could also be used to reach these women, their partners and children.

2.2 Women from well-established communities

Women from well-established ethnic communities constitute a good proportion of the overall number of immigrant and refugee women living in Australia. Well-established communities include those that have resided in Australia for more than twenty years and are more likely to have originated from European nations, particularly those in Southern Europe, and from Asia-Pacific countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines (ABS website: *Australian Social Trends, 2001).*

At the 2006 census, the number of women residing in Australia that were born in a NES country was approximately 1,123,305 (ABS website: *2006 Census Table 2068.0).* However, this overall figure includes all immigrant and refugee women in Australia: temporary, permanent, newly-arrived and well-established. There are no statistics on the number of women who have been settled in Australia for the long term. The five main countries of origin represented in this overall figure are China (10.1%), Italy (8.6%), Vietnam (7.5%), the Philippines (6.9%) and India (5.9%). Of these five, three represent the largest groups of women from well-established communities (Italy, Vietnam and the Philippines). Whilst immigrants from China and India have arrived in Australia from the 1850s to the present, growth in migration from these countries has been most substantial since 1996, with most arriving in Australia as skilled immigrants or international students (Victorian Multicultural Commission, 2008a and 2008b). Consequently, the Chinese and Indian communities are considered emerging. Other large groups of women from well-established communities in Australia were born in Germany and Greece.

Many women from well-established communities are ageing (ABS website: *Australian Social Trends, 2002*), with increasing numbers living in aged care facilities, or in other situations where their independence and autonomy is limited. Additionally, an increasing number of older women are co-residing with adult children (Benham et al, 2000; Gibson, 2010; National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre, 2011). These groups of women are vulnerable to violence that occurs within institutional settings, or to physical and financial abuse perpetrated by children and other family members (IWDVS, individual consultation, 2009; Poljski and Murdolo, 2009; Wainer et al, 2011). Older women who have been victims/survivors of family, workplace-based or war-related violence in the past may not have had the opportunity to access counselling to deal with the mental health implications of violence, and are therefore dealing with long-standing, unaddressed trauma in relation to violence. This would need to be taken into account in the development of violence prevention strategies for these women.

Younger and middle-aged women from well-established communities, but who have been resident in Australia for a lesser period of time, experience social isolation, have limited English language knowledge and limited access to preventative health and welfare services (Gwatirisa, 2009). These women are vulnerable to family and workplace-based violence, as well as discrimination (URCOT, 2005).

Women and men from well-established communities may possess a better understanding of mainstream Australian cultural codes and norms, as well as greater proficiency in the English language, resulting in enhanced capacity to participate in mainstream education programs and increased receptivity to mainstream social marketing campaigns. However, Australian-based media messages may not reach all members of these communities, or some may not be responsive to Australian-based media messages.

Culturally and linguistically-specific communication and social marketing campaigns for communities with highly-developed ethnic media, such as Greek, Italian and Vietnamese, would be more appropriate and beneficial. Other strategies include bilingual health education delivered to ethno-specific women's and men's groups. Members of well-established communities are also in a good position to develop leadership skills in violence prevention and use those skills in order to support culture change in their communities.

2.3   Women in precarious employment

Precarious employment includes casual or contract positions where work is sporadic and uncertain in nature, where dismissals can occur without warning and where entitlements, protections and rights are fewer than in permanent employment.

Immigrant and refugee women are over-represented in low-paid and low-status occupations. They are concentrated in a few select industries, with almost 50% employed in four sectors: health care and social assistance (18%), retail (11%), manufacturing (10%) and accommodation and food services (9%) and in five main occupational groups: professionals (24%), clerical and administrative (21%), labourers (14%), community and personal service workers (12%) and sales (10%). Concentration with these industries and occupations, with the exception of women in the professional occupational group, means that immigrant and refugee women are well-represented among the growing numbers of workers who are employed on contract and casual positions in precarious employment (Bertone and Leuner, 2008). But despite their tenure, casual or contract, women are more likely to work full-time (54% were employed for over 35 hours per week compared to 47% among the Australian-born) and less likely to work part-time (39% were employed for under 35 hours compared with 45% among the Australian-born) (Bertone and Leuner, 2008).

The industries and types of workplaces in which immigrant and refugee women are concentrated have been identified as harbouring a high prevalence of workplace violence. These include workplaces with strongly hierarchical structures: particularly noted are the industries of manufacturing, including outwork where occupational violence is higher than in factories, retail and hospitality (Mayhew and Quinlan, 1998; URCOT, 2005). Manufacturing has been specifically identified as an industry in which tough environments prevail, where aggressive communication and violent workplace cultures are often normalised. In addition, the hierarchical structure is such that, while the shop-floor may be made up of mostly immigrant and refugee women, the management is dominated by Anglo-Australian men (URCOT, 2005).

Immigrant and refugee women, especially when newly-arrived, tend to be unfamiliar with their work rights, and when in precarious employment, are not in a very strong position to enforce them, even if they are aware of them. Workplace violence, including sexual harassment, is more likely to be perpetuated and remain unchecked when women are concerned about losing their jobs. In this regard, women in precarious employment have been threatened (either openly or covertly) with a reduction of allocated work, or even dismissal, if they act on a violent incident (LaMontagne et al, 2009; Mayhew and Quinlan, 1998).

Violence prevention initiatives for women in precarious employment would need to target women in the workplace in order to reach the 54% of women who work over 35 hours. They could also target part-time,

contract, seasonal workers and home-based outworkers in non-work settings. Some strategies that have been suggested include improved regulation and monitoring of workplaces as well as education, training and support for employees and employers (URCOT, 2005).

One group of immigrant women in precarious employment are those who have been trafficked to Australia, primarily to work in the sex industry. Although the exact number of women trafficked to Australia is considered low, their plight, nevertheless demands attention. Most of these women are from Thailand, with smaller numbers of women arriving from South Korea, China, Indonesia and India (Joudo Larsen et al, 2009). Circumstances resulting in women travelling to Australia via trafficking are variable, with some women deceived to work in an unrelated field, whilst others are fully aware of the nature of the work they are expected to perform upon arrival in Australia (Joudo Larsen et al, 2009). Better regulation and monitoring of workplaces of trafficked women, achievable through legislation and policy, are pivotal to preventing violence against these women.

2.4   Visible minority women

Visible minority women include first, second and third-generation Australians who may or may not have strong relationships with their country of origin, but nevertheless are identified as being members of an ethnic group by virtue of their physical appearance. They are vulnerable to racialised violence and hate crimes in public places and workplaces, a phenomenon which is contingent on changing global political circumstances. For example, following the September 11 terrorism attacks in the United States and similar attacks or events around the world, Australian women perceived to be Muslim have increasingly found themselves targets of attack (IWWCV, 2009). Muslim women have reported experiencing discrimination in the media, public spaces and transport, shopping precincts, health services and government departments (IWWCV, 2009; McCue, 2008). Such discrimination has increased Muslim women's social disconnectedness and isolation, hindering their ability to participate in, and experience a sense of belonging in Australian society (HREOC, 2004). Visible minority women also experience higher levels of employment-related discrimination, so are more vulnerable in the workplace. They have also reported experiences of workplace violence combined with racialised comments (URCOT, 2005).

Policy and legislation that consolidates national commitment to the prevention of discrimination and racism, as well as to the strengthening of multiculturalism, are pivotal to reducing racialised violence. Accurate reporting and representation in the community and media of immigrants and refugees could also reduce violence and discrimination directed at visible minority women. Workplace-specific strategies, such as improved regulation and monitoring as well as education, training and support for employees and employers, would prevent workplace violence.

2.5   Young women

Young women include first, second and third-generation Australians who identify as being a member of an immigrant and refugee community. Young women who experience violence are more likely to suffer poor sexual and reproductive health outcomes (Taft et al, 2004). Violence prevention efforts targeted at young

immigrant and refugee women would be more effective if these health outcomes were taken into account and could include communication and social marketing strategies, school-based education programs and other youth-oriented initiatives, such as the identification, development and mentoring of young women community champions. Young women could engage in constructive cross-generational dialogue with older members of their communities and their peers about violence prevention. Messages about respectful relationships with women could be delivered to young immigrant and refugee men through school-based education programs, youth-oriented initiatives, and communication and social marketing strategies.

2.6   Conclusion

This overview demonstrates the complex dynamics of violence perpetrated against immigrant and refugee women, particularly highlighting the relationship between visa status and vulnerability to violence. Primary prevention efforts need to be cognisant of the multi-faceted nature of violence against these women, especially the diversity across the groups highlighted.

CHAPTER 3:   PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGIES

There is a lack of quality evidence on effective strategies which prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia. Whilst the primary prevention of violence against women is gaining momentum in the wider Australian community, initiatives that specifically aim to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women are still lacking in comparison. Several examples of violence prevention strategies focused on, or involving immigrant and refugee women, were identified for this publication. However, in many cases, information about these strategies was deficient because they were either being developed, or were in early stages of implementation, or evaluation was either non-existent, inadequate, in progress, or findings were not publicly available. Due to the lack of quality evidence about violence prevention strategies from Australia, exceptional and/or well-evaluated programs or projects conducted in cross-cultural settings internationally, which have contributed to culture change, and from which much could be learnt about good practice principles for violence prevention, have been included in this publication.

Admittedly, the lack of quality evidence means that making conclusive recommendations about effective violence prevention strategies for immigrant and refugee women is fraught with difficulty. Many strategies appear very promising, so whilst it is not entirely possible to unequivocally recommend certain strategies, nor is it appropriate to dismiss them, unless other evidence suggests otherwise. Strategies that have been well-evaluated, or seem encouraging, or could be viewed as models of good practice, are included as case studies (as highlighted in boxes) throughout the chapter. These strategies are also presented in Table 2, a summary of good practice and promising initiatives for the prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women. Additional initiatives included in this table have either been evaluated, are guided by good practice principles, or are most promising.

The limitations of this publication need to be considered in its review, the most significant of which was the limited timeframe allocated for its preparation (approximately six months). A more extensive search of violence prevention strategies and wider consultation with service providers across Australia was not possible in this time. Despite limitations, a framework for the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women, based on sourced evidence, is detailed in this chapter. This framework is by no means exhaustive or prescriptive, but it does provide a basis for further dialogue and action. As more conclusive evidence about the effectiveness of violence prevention strategies becomes available, the framework can be expanded and revised.

3.1   Research, monitoring and evaluation

Violence prevention actions are dependent on research findings which comprehensively document the extent and dynamics of violence against women and that critically highlight strategy effectiveness (VicHealth, 2007). However, research is also needed to collect evidence that will persuade communities to seriously reflect on sensitive issues (United Nations Population Fund, 2007).

Table 2: Summary of good practice or promising initiatives for the prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women

Preventative action	Good practice or promising initiatives	Page
Research, monitoring and evaluation	• Australian-Polish Community Services research study into the prevalence of violence against women in the Polish community in Victoria	33
Advocacy	• WRHC *STAMP* and African Think Tank's African Leadership Development Program: both initiatives included a representation of community leaders, identified via community consultations	39, 41
Community strengthening	• Centre for Dialogue Young Muslims Leadership Program • CMY youth leadership programs • IWWCV *SILC* leadership program • MCWH *PACE* women's leadership program and Best Practice guide • Women's Health West *Lead on Again* Program for young women	40 40 43 43 43
Communication and social marketing	• Spectrum MRC *Family Men Don't Do Family Violence* media campaign • South Western Sydney Area Health Service and Central Sydney Area Health Service multi-media campaign for four communities	39, 44, 45 49
Direct participation programs	• Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra *Kids Making Choices* program • MCWH health education program for women • EngenderHealth *Men as Partners* ® program	50 52, 53 54, 55
Organisational and workforce development	• MCWH *Points of Departure* and *Setting the Compass Projects* • Maribyrnong City Council *Respect and Equity Project*	57 59
Legislative and policy reform	• Australian Government *The People of Australia* policy • Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry into Commonwealth laws (including immigration) and family violence • AHRC *Minimum Standards for International Student Welfare* • Australian Government's Paid Parental Leave Scheme	60 60-61 62 62-63

The evidence base on violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia is seriously lacking. In particular, consistent, accurate and up-to-date data on the prevalence of violence against these women is limited. Available data needs to be obtained from a number of sources as there is no single location from which data can be obtained. Consequently, the collation and synthesis of available data on violence perpetrated against immigrant and refugee women is a time-consuming process.

Research gaps highlight the need for a comprehensive program to collect quantitative and qualitative data about violence against immigrant and refugee women. Few studies across and within ethnic communities have been conducted in Australia to determine the prevalence and dynamics of violence against women. Research conducted across communities has yielded results inconsistent with domestic violence service utilisation data. For example, the Australian component of the International Violence against Women Survey found that violence against women from NES backgrounds was less prevalent than in women from English-speaking backgrounds (Mouzos and Makkai, 2004). However, statistics from WDVCS show that in

2009, 69% of women accommodated in refuges in Victoria were from ethnic backgrounds (WDVCS, 2010), supporting research findings that demonstrate the over-representation of immigrant and refugee women in Victorian refuges since the 1970s (Murdolo, 1999). Several explanations have been proposed for these statistical discrepancies: the difficulty in collecting data about any issue from all the cultural groups represented in Australia (>100); reluctance of women to discuss taboo issues such as violence; difficulty in accessing women to participate in research about the prevalence of violence; women's variable perceptions of violence; unwillingness of women to report violence out of fear and distrust of authorities (Lievore, 2003). In addition, research methodologies often do not allow for data to be gathered from ethnic communities. Common methodological barriers include the use of written surveys in English only, web-based surveys and/or monolingual interviews and focus groups.

In light of these cultural and methodological issues, high-calibre research conducted within, rather than across immigrant and refugee communities, would provide a more accurate, consistent and reliable overview of women's experiences of violence. An example of this kind of research is an Australian-Polish Community Services study into the nature and prevalence of domestic violence in the Polish community in Victoria and the barriers to seeking assistance (Szczepanska, 2004). The study found that few Polish women possessed the knowledge to access domestic violence services that could assist them, but of those women who did access these services from 1994-2003, 58% were aged 36-50 years; 44% had been resident in Australia for less than two years; and 90% were frequently subjected to violence (daily, weekly, or monthly). This comprehensive qualitative and quantitative study within a specific community could be replicated in other ethnic communities, but additional information could be collected to guide strategy implementation and legislative reform. Data is required about the relationship between immigration-related factors and violence against the different groups of women, particularly how perpetrators of violence exploit immigration laws and regulations to commit violence against women (Raj and Silverman, 2002). Experienced researchers with high levels of cross-cultural awareness, as well as demonstrable and substantial expertise in conducting culturally-appropriate and in-language research, would be better-equipped to conduct this type of research. In addition, researchers should work with immigrant and refugee women's groups and organisations, or multicultural services such as migrant resource centres, or ethno-specific agencies. Research collaborations should also be equitable, with agencies, groups, organisations or services involved in the conduct of this research to be equally funded and resourced to assist. Funding bodies must require funding applications for research into the prevalence of violence against immigrant and refugee women meet these essential criteria.

Further complicating the lack of quality evidence are the few well-documented and/or well-evaluated examples of violence prevention strategies focused on, or involving immigrant and refugee communities in Australia. Information about several strategies located for this publication, namely the dynamics and outcomes, was scant. Evaluation of many of these strategies was also lacking or methodologically inadequate, raising questions about the reliability and validity of findings. However, several strategies were also short-term in nature (up to 12 months), possibly explaining the lack of evaluation capacity factored into project design. For other initiatives, evaluation was given serious consideration, but proved problematic because of the lack of available guidance about appropriate evaluation of violence prevention strategies, an issue that community professionals engaged in violence prevention have previously identified (Clark,

2010). Consequently, evaluation design and implementation was based on trial and error (WRHC, individual consultation, 2010).

High-quality and in-depth formative research is required to determine the effectiveness of violence prevention strategies recommended in this publication. Strategies first need to be piloted to determine strengths, weaknesses and strategy applicability across different ethnic communities. Strategies funded for wider implementation should be underpinned by comprehensive and well-designed evaluation frameworks (including thoroughly-tested evaluation tools such as surveys and guidelines for interviews, focus groups and observational exercises), which will yield findings to facilitate understanding of the dynamics that contribute to successful violence prevention initiatives. However, funding bodies, as well as agencies and organisations implementing strategies, need to recognise evaluation as an integral component of program delivery, not an addendum. Projects funded for a limited period of time do not allow for the measurement of long-term outcomes or the sustainability of immediate outcomes, so violence prevention strategies need to be funded for long-term periods to assist comprehensive evaluation. Also, evaluation should not be tied to competitive funding processes. Previously, ongoing funding for violence prevention projects appeared to depend on favourable evaluation outcomes, possibly skewing assessments of strategies. Severing links between violence prevention funding and evaluation outcomes may ensure evaluation accurately reflects strategy implementation. The evaluation capacity of agencies and organisations involved in violence prevention efforts also needs to be developed to enable thorough evaluation of strategies.

A comprehensive mapping exercise is also required to collect information about previous or existing violence prevention strategies across Australia. Information that needs to be collected includes aims and objectives, target groups, number of participants, collaborative partners, activities, type of information provided, point of intervention, settings, evaluation methods, immediate and long-term outcomes, and lessons learned. This exercise will enable greater understanding of the extent and dynamics of violence prevention efforts in immigrant and refugee communities in Australia and may also prevent duplication of programs and projects.

A comprehensive research and evaluation program on violence prevention for all women, including those from ethnic communities, will produce a substantial amount of data and information, so a central clearinghouse which collates and maintains evidence on violence prevalence and effective prevention strategies is required. The establishment of a clearinghouse may reduce the need to locate data from a variety of sources, and could disseminate findings widely to agencies and organisations involved in violence prevention efforts, so practitioners can understand what is effective and thus base their strategies on evidence. Should a general clearinghouse on violence prevention be established, it is vital that the agency acknowledges and addresses cultural diversity.

3.2 Advocacy

Advocacy involves the identification and support of leaders in government and representatives from communities to call for an end to violence against women (VicHealth, 2007). This topic remains taboo, sensitive and hidden in many immigrant and refugee communities. The success of violence prevention

strategies requires community participation. This will only occur if there is acknowledgement from within these communities that violence against women does occur and needs to be addressed. Recognition of the issue and the call to action requires influential and respected community leaders from a range of professional backgrounds to publicly denounce violence against women and contribute to community education programs. Involving a variety of highly-esteemed community leaders would create balance in violence prevention efforts.

Genuine leadership is required in violence prevention efforts and should involve the identification and support of a balanced representation of persuasive and respected leaders—female, male, youth—from immigrant and refugee communities. However, immigrant and refugee women and their representative groups and organisations need to be the instigators of cultural change and be at the forefront of these efforts, whilst collaborating with all identified community leaders to collectively advocate for gender equality and an end to violence against women. The involvement of youth leaders from immigrant and refugee communities in violence prevention efforts is also crucial. Changing the attitudes and behaviours of young people is integral in generating social change, as it is in adolescence that attitudes on many issues, including violence-supporting attitudes in men, are formed (Barker et al, 2003). The importance of peer relationships in youth suggests that young people can change, or even prevent these negative attitudes and behaviours in their peers through advocacy and education. Young people may also be in a position to challenge violence-supporting beliefs of parents, elders and authorities. Finally, immigrant and refugee men's involvement in violence prevention is paramount. Whilst most men do not perpetrate violence against women, it is mostly men who do (Flood, 2010). Consequently, gender-specific strategies for men, implemented by a variety of influential and respected male leaders, need to challenge violence-supporting attitudes and behaviours, as well as promote positive expressions of masculinity, including respect for women. These leaders are more likely to be seen as credible and listened to by other men (Flood, 2006).

In the VicHealth framework, faith institutions are identified as an important avenue for communicating to faith communities the beliefs, values and norms that either support violence or protect against it. Accordingly faith-based leaders have been identified as playing a role in fostering protective cultural norms and practices to prevent violence against women (VicHealth, 2007). The highly-organised nature of mainstream religions and the existing infrastructure and networks are seen as potentially cost-effective avenues to reach large groups of people with a consistent message (Herstad, 2009). Australian faith-based initiatives have been inspired by overseas approaches, which upon close examination, are not relevant to the Australian context.

Several organisations overseas, mostly based in the United States and in African nations (Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania), conduct violence prevention initiatives in faith-based settings with the assistance of faith-based leaders. These initiatives vary in their approaches, target groups, descriptions of their work as *interfaith* or *multifaith,* or as targeting *faith* or *faith-based communities* and *faith* or *religious leaders,* and understandings of what constitutes a faith or religious leader. Most of the projects engage female faith leaders, or *women of faith*, along with male faith leaders recognised by the religious organisational hierarchy. Some initiatives include community organisations that are established to service women from particular faiths, such as the Muslim Women's League in Los Angeles in the United States, even though

these organisations may not be faith-based organisations. Others have focused on engaging only recognised male religious leaders.

In the United States, the Washington-based FaithTrust Institute, engages, develops resources for, and conducts training programs with faith leaders and advocates from Christian, Muslim and Jewish faith communities (FaithTrust Institute website). The Transforming Communities: Technical Assistance, Training and Resource Centre (TC-TAT), based in California, has developed interfaith violence prevention programs for, and engaged a wider range of faith communities by fostering partnerships between domestic violence advocates and faith or spiritual leaders, and by engaging young people (TC-TAT, 2010). The Domestic Violence Community Council, based in Forsyth County in North Carolina, conducted a faith community-based domestic violence program reaching faith and lay leaders, mostly from the majority Baptist religion (Jones et al, 2005). This program involved training male and female leaders, ministers and lay persons, and supporting these leaders to develop sustainable domestic violence initiatives in their faith communities. Overall, 49 faith and lay leaders participated, 93.5% of whom represented the Baptist faith. With regards to ethnicity, 82.6% were white and 15.2% were African-American.

In the African context, the *One Man Can Campaign* in South Africa encourages and resources a variety of male religious leaders, such as imams, pastors, priests and rabbis, to assume an advocacy role in the prevention of violence against women (Sonke Gender Justice Network website). Based in Kenya and Tanzania, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Health Policy Initiative project, *The Role of Religious Communities in Addressing Gender-based Violence and HIV*, targeted religious leaders, with a focus on women of faith (whether or not officially recognised as leaders by the religious hierarchy), to strengthen the capacity of religious communities to respond to violence against women and enhance faith-based activities in this area (Herstad, 2009). Regional training was conducted for male religious leaders and women of faith from eight countries, after which national action plans were drafted to facilitate a better understanding within faith communities of the intersections between gender-based violence and HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). Following this was a regional leadership forum held for senior religious leaders from 16 countries to raise awareness of gender-based violence and HIV. Resource materials were also developed and distributed to the religious leaders.

However, the evidence to support the effectiveness of faith-based violence prevention initiatives, including those involving faith-based leaders, is extremely limited. Only two of these international initiatives have undergone evaluation and their process and impact outcomes published (Herstad, 2009; Jones et al., 2005). Independent evaluation of the Forsyth Country project, an initiative that did not include immigrant and refugee communities, found improvements in the capacity of faith communities to create safe spaces for women who had experienced violence. However, project shortcomings included insufficient ability to follow the adoption of violence prevention activities during the project's lifetime, as well as the project's limited reach given that it worked predominately with white Christians of one specific denomination (Jones et al, 2005). Plans were underway in the next stage of the project to adapt and translate project materials for other cultures. Evaluation of the USAID Health Policy Initiative project demonstrated the project's success in raising awareness, as well as developing country-based training workshops and action tools in participating countries. The project was a high-level initiative which may be effective in a context where the

political context would be such that countries, or even states within a country, can be engaged through their senior religious leaders (Herstad, 2009). Finally, the violence prevention programs of TC-TAT, which have included various immigrant and refugee communities (Arabic-speaking, Hmong, Korean, Spanish-speaking) and represented several faiths (Buddhism, Christianity and Islam), has published process outcomes, but impacts have not been measured (TC-TAT, 2010). Although the evidence base on the effectiveness of faith-based violence prevention initiatives is developing, there is still insufficient concrete evidence about their impact on the prevention of violence against women. Further and more comprehensive evaluation data may provide clearer direction over time.

Further to a lack of rigorous evaluation of faith-based initiatives, there are expressed concerns about shaping faith-based organisations and their leaders as champions for gender equality (Patel, 2011; Tadros, 2010). Valid questions have been asked about the extent to which religious institutions, which have historically excluded women from leadership positions and roles, and which concern themselves via forceful and public mechanisms with the regulation of women's sexuality, reproduction and conjugal roles and the reinforcement of traditional family relationships, might become effective conduits for change in gender relations (Razavi and Jenichen, 2010; UNRISD, 2011). Even religious institutions that advocate globally for social justice may simultaneously maintain entrenched patriarchal views on issues such as family and abortion (UNRISD, 2011). However, to represent all religions as opponents of gender equality is to negate the complexity and diversity of religions, as well as women's and men's agency within even traditionally conservative religions to act and to effect change. Many women engage with their religions in ways that they find empowering (Phillips, 2009). Clear distinctions must be made in thinking between the organised religion or faith itself, its institutions and organisations, its recognised leaders and the individuals who follow faiths and who might be engaged as either representatives of their faiths or as individuals who, because of their membership of a faith community, might be well-located to effect change from within.

With regard to targeting the individual as a representative of her or his faith, some consideration should be given to better defining the *faith leader* approach to violence prevention. Most of the initiatives that have been conducted among faith-based communities have targeted faith leaders as agents of change. However, each defines the faith leader differently, with some using only recognised official leaders, whilst others engaging various members of the targeted faith-based communities, both male and female. Each faith has a different history and gender hierarchy, which would need to be taken into account when making decisions about appropriate leadership targets. Choices include targeting only recognised leaders within male-dominated religious institutions, or targeting those faiths where women have recognised and equal roles with men. Each choice is a different one, but no current evidence exists to facilitate making that choice. Comprehensive evaluation across initiatives and faiths might provide some direction as to the most effective target in each context.

In the Australian context, limited evaluation has been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of involving faith-based leaders in violence prevention initiatives in ethnic communities. Anecdotal evidence highlights the positive effect of the involvement of faith-based leaders (Darebin City Council, individual consultation, 2010), whilst other reports demonstrate that this approach can be counterproductive, with women's issues only interpreted from a male-centred perspective, thereby increasing women's vulnerability to violence

(MCWH, individual consultation, 2009). One example that highlights the risks associated with faith-based leadership initiatives was an alleged incident involving male faith-based leaders who had participated in training, with a view to improving their capacity to advocate on the issue of violence against women. Instead, the leaders used the information gained in the training to unsuccessfully lobby the government to weaken domestic violence laws in cases where the violence was perpetrated by members of their faith communities (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2011).

This scenario raises some serious questions about the relationship between the state and faith-based organisations operating within that state, particularly about the level of control the state possesses over organised religions, even when the state has provided funding to these organisations. In some legal jurisdictions, including now in some Australian states, faith-based organisations are required to abide by state legislation, with exemptions applying in relation to sex and other forms of discrimination (Phillips, 2009). Faith-based organisations, unlike secular public schools and workplaces, are not regulated or monitored by the state in relation to their treatment of women and other minorities. In the United Kingdom, faith-based approaches to violence prevention and the role of the state has come under scrutiny (Patel, 2011). In particular, the faith-based approach to the management of cultural diversity, through engagement with faith-based leaders, was adopted first and foremost as an anti-terrorism strategy. This approach was also adopted to implement public initiatives intended to benefit women, such as violence prevention. However, the considerable complexity and variation across religions can pose challenges to the implementation of faith-based strategies designed to improve women's rights. Such challenges include the different stances on various gender issues, even within the one faith-based organisation; and the provision of guidance and services to women on the condition they conform to religious beliefs about traditional gender roles and behaviours (Benevolent Society, 2009; Patel, 2011; Tadros, 2010), which may include withstanding violence in relationships to maintain family unity. Women who fail to conform may experience discrimination and/or exclusion from their communities. Thus, the faith-based approach may also be seen as a redistribution of power from the state to institutions within local communities that are not adequately accountable, able or qualified to provide services, thereby forcing women, including those who are not religious, to seek assistance from faith-based organisations where no other options are available (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2011; Patel, 2011).

Further, the faith-based approach can be grounded in the misguided assumption that equates religion with cultural identity (Patel, 2011). Faith-based leaders do not represent entire immigrant and refugee communities and their influence across these communities is variable, evident in research findings highlighting that people do not want to hear anti-violence messages from faith-based leaders alone (Spectrum MRC, n.d). When not equally matched with secular culturally- and linguistically-based initiatives, the engagement of faith-based leaders in violence prevention efforts can exclude cultural groups or individuals for whom religion is not as important, if at all, because members of these groups will not heed the messages delivered by these leaders. Consequently, relying on faith-based strategies can have the unintended effect of shrinking the secular spaces that are available to immigrant and refugee women (Patel, 2011).

Whilst significant leadership within some religious communities has been shown, there is a need to change the focus of leadership in strategies aiming to improve gender equality and to end violence against women. The evidence indicates that, while faith-based leadership initiatives have been successful in two specific contexts internationally, these contexts, one with a focus on a majority religious and ethnic group in the United States and the other at a high level cross-country initiative, are very different to the local immigrant and refugee community context in Australia. The available evidence, combined with some valid expressed concerns from various commentators, suggests that there are considerable risks involved in the engagement of faith-based leaders in violence prevention efforts within ethnic communities. These risks can be exacerbated when agencies and organisations with insufficient understanding of different faiths and their philosophies implement faith-based strategies. Given the potential risks to a very vulnerable group of women, any new faith-based strategies, particularly those that rely on changing attitudes of traditional faith-based leaders, should await further evidence of effectiveness. Ideally, evaluation should be conducted across faiths and initiatives, and include initiatives conducted in a migration context and with minority faiths, to gain the most comprehensive picture of effectiveness. In the event faith-based strategies need to be implemented, immigrant and refugee women with expertise in specific religions and who are knowledgeable about the Australian legal system and its laws, perhaps women of faith, should lead these initiatives. These strategies need to be carefully planned and should employ strong accountability measures and safeguards.

Consultation with individual immigrant and refugee communities is essential in the identification of appropriate leaders within each community to participate in violence prevention efforts. Findings from community consultations undertaken for the development of the *Family Men Don't Do Family Violence* television campaign (see Box 2) highlighted community preference for a variety of male role models in television commercials to impart anti-violence messages. Role models suggested and utilised in the commercials included well-known sportsmen, comedians, community leaders and politicians, all from a range of cultural backgrounds. Community consultations also yielded recommendations for participants in two leadership programs for the African community in Melbourne (African Think Tank, individual consultation, 2010; WRHC, individual consultation, 2010). The community leaders involved in these programs were truly representative of the community, involving women and men from a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds who were identified as individuals that communities respect and listen to.

3.3   Community strengthening

Communities need to be supported in addressing violence against women (VicHealth, 2007). General leadership programs for young people, women and men have been used to support immigrant and refugee communities in Australia. Leadership development programs, with a specific focus on violence prevention, are needed to support and enable community leaders to publicly acknowledge the occurrence of violence against women in their communities; encourage their communities to respond; promote equitable gender relations and healthy family relationships; and demand respect and equality for women.

3.3.1 Leadership programs for young people

Appropriate training and mentoring is required to provide youth leaders with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence required to actively participate in violence prevention efforts. Numerous general leadership programs for immigrant and refugee young people have been developed and implemented across Australia. As a means of facilitating social inclusion, several programs specifically targeted newly-arrived young people to provide them with the opportunity to: acquire the knowledge and skills that enabled participation in and contribution to their local and wider communities; represent their peers at local, state, national and international conferences or forums; and engage with governance structures of local youth agencies, such as boards and committees, in order to advocate for services tailored to meet the needs of immigrant and refugee youth (Brotherhood of St Laurence website; Hobsons Bay City Council, individual consultation, 2010; MRCSA, 2010; Spectrum MRC, individual consultation, 2010). Youth leadership programs were either delivered collectively to males and females, most of who were referred to the programs or were recruited after recommendations from peers or community members, over a set period of time, or continued for as long funding allowed. Generally, information provided during the programs primarily aimed to assist young people with the settlement process, but also included components designed to encourage young people to pursue leadership opportunities. Collectively, the outcomes of these youth leadership programs are very encouraging: positive relationships between young people, including between males and females; increased youth awareness of local services (particularly education, training and employment pathways) and Australian culture; new skills; media attention for program participants; representation at various conferences and forums covering issues specific to immigrant and refugee youth; and meetings with local, state and federal politicians.

Two youth leadership programs have focused on establishing teams of young leaders qualified to address and speak publicly about issues relevant to the prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women. The Young Muslims Leadership Program at the Centre for Dialogue at La Trobe University in Melbourne is an ongoing program that ultimately aims to promote social inclusion for immigrant and refugee communities. Since its inception in 2007, 90 young Muslims, male and female, from Australia and abroad (primarily South East Asia) have participated in the program (workshops, study tours, networking with influential members of the Australian community), which has encouraged and empowered them to publicly challenge and dispel myths about Islam and Muslim communities (Centre for Dialogue, 2010 and 2011). Racism and discrimination was the focus of a youth leadership program implemented at the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) in Melbourne (CMY, individual consultation, 2009). The CMY youth leadership program model was unique as it featured two components. The first was theoretical, involving training sessions delivered over several weeks where the participants (generally 20-25 young women and men) learnt about and discussed a particular issue. The second was a practical component that involved the CMY Project Officer mentoring participants in the application of their newly-acquired knowledge to the development and implementation of youth-led community projects specific to the issue being addressed. The CMY program model has also been successfully applied to environmental sustainability (Bailey, 2010; Moncrieff and Salkeld, 2009). These CMY youth leadership programs have involved young people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, ranging from secondary-school students (years 9-11 and aged 14-17 years) to young adults (aged 18-28 years). The CMY program model could also be applied to violence prevention and sets a benchmark on which future youth leadership programs could be based.

Youth leadership programs are worthwhile for all immigrant and refugee youth, particularly those who are newly-arrived and settling in Australia. These programs appear to be valuable to the settlement process, facilitating social inclusion for participants. However, mixed gender leadership programs need to either ensure each gender has equal opportunities to participate and express their views and/or include gender-specific components so that young women and men can discuss gendered issues separately and freely. Gender-specific leadership programs would also be beneficial.

3.3.2 Leadership programs for women and men

Immigrant and refugee women of all ages also need to be equipped and supported to assume a greater leadership role in violence prevention efforts. Box 1 provides a detailed overview of three leadership programs for immigrant and refugee women. Successful leadership training for women should be tailored to meet the needs of participants, deliver comprehensive and relevant content, be consultative and participatory in nature, be flexible, and allow for mentoring and networking.

Given the importance of men's involvement in violence prevention, immigrant and refugee men need to assume leadership roles in this area. Men require leadership training and mentoring to enable them to participate in violence prevention efforts, but there is little evidence of programs specifically for immigrant and refugee males of any age. Two current leadership programs have been developed for and are being delivered to men and women jointly through the African Think Tank and the Western Region Health Centre (WRHC), both in Melbourne (African Think Tank, individual consultation, 2010; WRHC, individual consultation, 2010). Whilst the African Think Tank program focuses on leadership in general, the *Supporting Traditional African Mediators Project* is a response to an identified need for support by African community leaders, all of who are traditional mediators within their communities and increasingly called upon to mediate over family conflicts. Both programs involve training (attendance is mandatory for graduation) and mentoring for cohorts of recommended and respected leaders from African communities, including women and men from a representation of cultural groups, professional backgrounds, educational levels, creeds and geographical locations in their country of origin (urban, rural, remote). The African Think Tank program also includes a practical component, similar to the CMY youth leadership program model, where participants are required to apply leadership theory to community projects. Participant inclusion in both programs is based on community recommendations as well as informal interviews between participants and program personnel. Past participants have responded positively to these leadership programs, highlighted by attitudinal changes in the desired direction for one program cohort in particular.

Whilst mixed gender leadership training and mentoring programs appear to generate promising results for participants, gender-specific programs with a focus on violence prevention would also be beneficial. Male-led leadership programs for men would demonstrate the importance of men assuming responsibility for ending violence against women (Flood, 2006). However, men's leadership programs must not undermine women's leadership in violence prevention efforts, but rather be guided by women's leadership (Flood, 2006; Pease, 2008). The IWWCV *SILC* and MCWH *PACE* programs could provide a basis for immigrant and refugee men's leadership programs. However, including practical and mentoring components in these

programs would provide participants with opportunities to consolidate newly-acquired knowledge in community-led projects, similar to the CMY youth leadership program model.

The lessons learned from these leadership programs have implications for future programs for immigrant and refugee women and men. These lessons include: identification of suitable community leaders should involve community consultation; program development may be time-consuming but allows for the building of rapport between program personnel and communities; management recognition of the long-term nature of violence prevention and ongoing management support for this work are integral to strategy success; leadership training needs to focus on equitable, respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, not on domestic violence; leadership training should only use language that is culturally-appropriate; mixed gender leadership programs appear to be effective at providing each gender's perspective on the issues being discussed and might improve gender relations, but program facilitators need to ensure equal opportunity is given to each gender to express their views, or consider incorporating gender-specific components within the programs where women and men can freely and honestly discuss gendered issues separately; participants would benefit from ongoing support provided by mentors from their own cultural groups who would understand cultural issues, as well as from mentors from a range of communities who could provide direction on leadership opportunities; and constant evaluation and monitoring needs to be factored into project design, but more guidance on evaluation is necessary.

Immigrant and refugee community leaders could also be supported with written guides that provide culturally-appropriate direction on informing communities about violence against women. The Australian Muslim Women's Centre on Human Rights (AMWCHR) in Melbourne has produced a comprehensive guide, *Islam and Muslims oppose violence against women: A guide for Muslim women,* which draws from Islamic teachings to demonstrate that any violence against women is unacceptable (AMWCHR, 2011a). The guide, which has been translated into Arabic, Dari and Turkish and is also available on audio compact disc, provides an overview of family violence, the Australian legal system's response to family violence, and services that assist women experiencing violence. The guide is specifically for women, but the guide's content would also be useful for male leaders wishing to communicate with their communities about violence against women. The guide could also be used as a template for the development of guides for leaders from other ethnic communities.

Leadership programs would be a worthwhile strategy for women and men from new, emerging and well-established communities. More specifically, leadership programs could be implemented for highly-esteemed refugee women and men who are fully settled in Australia, providing them with the knowledge and skills to promote the importance of respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships during and beyond settlement to newly-arrived members of their communities. Programs for women and men from well-established cultural groups could provide them with the knowledge and skills to support culture change in their communities.

Box 1: Leadership programs for immigrant and refugee women

Leadership programs have been conducted for immigrant and refugee women. In 2002, the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria (IWWCV) launched a three-year project called *SILC* (Self-esteem, Identity, Leadership and Community Development) for Muslim women. Underpinned by the belief in the importance of Muslim women's participation in realising their human rights and generating social change, the project's ultimate vision was to empower Muslim women by improving their capacity to participate in their communities to respond to disadvantage, particularly violence against women. The project's key strategy was a leadership program, which involved the delivery of intensive workshops over 18 months. Overall, 13 sets of workshops were delivered to 162 participants. Workshop delivery was dependent on the nature, needs and interests of each participating group, so each set of workshops was delivered in a series of two-hour workshops or as full-day workshops. The length of each set of workshops ranged from 16-24 hours. A participatory approach for the workshops was assumed, allowing women to actively participate in their own learning. Guided by four principles—self-esteem, identity, leadership, community—workshop content included four modules focusing on general and community leadership, leadership in education and training, leadership in parenting, and leadership against domestic violence. The project was expanded to include media training so Muslim women could communicate with the media about issues of importance to them. The leadership program was extremely well-received and evaluation found the program resulted in increased women's self-confidence, ability to improve family relationships, participation in formal study and volunteer work, and level of activity in their communities.

In 2010, MCWH implemented a leadership program for immigrant and refugee women called *PACE* (Participate, Advocate, Communicate, Engage). Eighteen women from 10 different cultural backgrounds participated in an accredited training program delivered over 40 hours (ten 4-hour sessions held weekly). Tailored to meet the learning needs of the participants, who were consulted regularly throughout the program about issues to be discussed in the sessions, the program covered a range of topics, including self-awareness, effective leadership, communication, team work, community awareness (focusing on the Australian political system, voting, democracy, local government), human rights, and management. Program evaluation was positive, with participants complimentary of the program being tailored to meet their needs as well as its participatory nature. Upon completion, all participants qualified for *Certificate III in Frontline Management*, enabling them to continue with leadership studies if they so desired. After graduation, all participants automatically became members of the PACE Women's Leadership Network, a platform for women to provide and receive support from other members and to be linked with mentors from Leadership Victoria. Another program outcome was the development of a Best Practice Guide that provides a framework for future immigrant and refugee women's leadership programs. The guide was developed for, and distributed to individuals and services (governments, non-government) working with immigrant and refugee women and their families.

Leadership programs have also been delivered to young women. In 2006, Women's Health West established the *Lead On Again* program for young women (aged 16-24 years) from immigrant and refugee backgrounds residing, studying or working in Melbourne's western metropolitan region. The tailored program focused on leadership in general, rather than with a focus on leadership for a particular issue, and aimed to increase leadership skills in young women and encourage these women to participate in leadership activities in their own communities. Over 12 months, twelve participants attended five workshops (covering dimensions of leadership, communication, conflict resolution, political structures, event management), used their newly-acquired knowledge and skills to organise a community event, and received ongoing support from mentors. Evaluation found the program to be effective in facilitating young women's leadership: after six months, 83% of participants were involved in a variety of leadership activities in the community.

References: Camilleri and Howard, 2006; IWWVC, 2005; IWWCV, individual consultation, 2009; Moses and Quiazon, 2010a and 2010b; Women's Health West, individual consultation, 2010; Women's Health West website: *Working with young women*

3.4   Communication and social marketing

Communication and social marketing utilises various media approaches to transfer messages to the wider community (VicHealth, 2007). Community forums, electronic media, printed communication tools and multi-media campaigns have been used to increase ethnic community awareness across Australia about violence against women.

3.4.1   *Community forums*

The community forum is an opportunity to generate public awareness of violence against women, so forums have been commonly used to reach ethnic communities, most likely due to the ability of such events to attract large audiences if organised and promoted well. Arabic, Jewish and Vietnamese communities in Victoria have used this strategy in their violence prevention efforts (Australian Vietnamese Women's Association, n.d; JTAFV, individual consultation, 2009; Victorian Arabic Social Services, individual consultation, 2009). These forums have also been used in educational institutions and student services to inform international students about sexual health issues and respectful relationships (Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health, individual consultation, 2009; Monash University Health, Wellbeing and Development Unit, individual consultation, 2009; Poljski, 2011a). Whilst these forums are usually well-attended and may increase community awareness in the short term, in many cases they are also one-off events. One-off events are generally straightforward and convenient to organise when a project has a limited timeframe, but the ability of such events to generate significant and sustainable outcomes is debatable (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). The community forum is a worthwhile awareness-raising strategy for new, emerging and well-established ethnic communities, but forums need to be conducted on a regular basis to reinforce key messages. Community forums could also be implemented in conjunction with, or as part of other communication and social marketing strategies, such as multi-media campaigns.

3.4.2   *Electronic media*

Electronic media, such as radio and television, has enormous capacity to reach a significant proportion of the wider community, including groups that are marginalised. Consequently, media is a powerful and essential tool in generating the cultural and social change required to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women. Television commercials have been used to inform immigrant and refugee men that family violence is unacceptable. Box 2 details a local media campaign that utilised high-profile men from a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds to dissuade men from their communities from perpetrating violence against their families. Given the number of cultural groups represented in the commercials, the very Australian expression 'Knock it off mate' was delivered in English to transfer the message that family violence was inappropriate. Whilst it might seem that this expression may be culturally-inappropriate, or unable to be understood by people not proficient in English or unfamiliar with Australian culture, feedback about the commercials suggested they were successful in initiating discussion about family violence in ethnic communities (Spectrum MRC, n.d), indicating that messages relevant to violence against women need to be unique, direct and memorable. However, culturally-relevant messages also need to be delivered in a range of community languages to reach immigrants and refugees not fluent in English, as has been done in violence prevention efforts directed at Arabic, Ethiopian, Indian, Muslim, Russian and

Turkish communities (Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria, n.d; IWWCV, 2008; Jurak, n.d; RERCV, individual consultation, 2009; Victorian Arabic Social Services, individual consultation, 2009). Ethnic media is prolific in Australia, with numerous commercial and community multilingual radio and television stations. For many immigrants and refugees, ethnic media is the primary source of information and so should be a vital communication strategy in violence prevention efforts that aim to raise and reinforce awareness of the issue. Ethnic radio and television is capable of reaching members of new, emerging and well-established communities, but a range of options need to be utilised collectively to capture all communities. Ethnic media is particularly worthwhile for those individuals who are socially isolated, illiterate, unemployed, or unable or ineligible to access settlement, health or welfare services.

Box 2: Using media to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women

Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) in Melbourne developed and implemented the *Family Men Don't Do Family Violence* campaign, a media strategy featuring two television commercials that aimed to inform men from different cultural backgrounds that family men do not commit violence against their families. The initial plan was to develop one commercial with religious leaders and target three ethnic communities. The commercial proposal was presented during community consultations for review and feedback. The proposal was subsequently revised in light of consultation findings that revealed community preference for a commercial that: used a range of male role models, such as sportsmen, comedians, community leaders and politicians; was inclusive of all cultural groups to demonstrate that family violence affected all communities; and articulated that family men did not perpetrate violence against their families. Two commercials were produced and featured a number of well-known men from several cultural backgrounds (indigenous, Middle Eastern, Asian, European, Pacific Islander, Australian) telling men to 'Knock it off mate'. Screened on the three commercial television networks and Australia's main multilingual television channel, Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), for three months during peak times, the commercials reached an audience of over 800,000. Consultations following screening found that more than 70% of refugee communities had seen the commercials. Critical to the reach and success of this media strategy was the involvement of prominent men from a range of backgrounds, the factor that increased commercial media interest in screening the commercials.

References: Spectrum MRC, n.d; Spectrum MRC, individual consultation, 2009; Spectrum MRC website: *Family Men Don't Do Family Violence TV ad*

Given the popularity of the internet, especially social networking websites, with young people, communication and social marketing campaigns utilising these strategies are increasingly being utilised to increase youth awareness of violence-related issues, including respectful relationships. Immigrant and refugee youth are targeted in the current communication campaign *The Line,* an initiative of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs that is directed at young people aged 12–20 years. The aim of *The Line* campaign, which includes an interactive website with information, music, art, and opportunities for discussion, a Facebook page, and a telephone helpline, is to educate young people about the dynamics of respectful relationships, promote the positive behaviours required to develop and maintain these relationships and highlight the various forms of violence and its consequences. Immigrant and refugee youth are catered for via the provision of multilingual information on the website (The Line website). Another current interactive web-based project for young people is the Victorian Women's Trust *Be the Hero! Project* (Be the Hero! website). The project aims to inform young men that decent men do not use violence against women and to 'Be a Hero' means engaging in equitable

relationships with women. Designed to facilitate discussion in small groups of young men led by a male leader, the interactive website covers a range of issues including definitions of violence, prevalence of violence against women, myths related to violence against women, relationship stories, and services that can provide information and assistance (Victorian Women's Trust, individual consultation, 2009). Whilst not specifically directed at young immigrant and refugee men, this initiative may still be applicable to these young men if facilitated by male leaders from the same cultural backgrounds and within appropriate and meaningful cultural contexts. These internet-based initiatives suggest that raising youth awareness about violence against women needs to be innovative and utilise media acceptable to young people, but these strategies may only be suitable for immigrant and refugee youth with a reasonable level of English proficiency, computer literacy and access to newer technologies. Ideally, interactive web-based initiatives should provide information in a range of languages, as per *The Line* website, and could be promoted to and/or accessed with young people, including international students, via education programs, mentoring schemes and community forums.

The effectiveness of the internet as a communication strategy for immigrant and refugee adults in relation to violence against women is variable. Internet use is non-existent in people with low levels of literacy and English proficiency, or limited education. Internet access and use is limited to adults who are financially able to purchase computers and internet services for their homes, and even then their internet use is basic (O'Mara et al, 2010). There is limited evidence of the internet being used to reach immigrant and refugee women and men to communicate messages about violence-related issues. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship does provide information about violence-specific issues on its website, but seeking this information requires much navigation. Violence prevention efforts could include internet-based communication strategies to reach immigrant and refugee women and men, but would only reach the better-educated members of this group. Information provided should be available in number of languages.

Other electronic media, such as DVDs, might be more appropriate communication tools, particularly for women and men due to migrate to Australia and those who are newly-arrived. Relationships Australia (Victoria) has produced a short multilingual DVD, *Building strong families: A guide for new migrants to Australia,* which highlights the effect of the migration experience on gender roles and family relationships (Relationships Australia Victoria, individual consultation, 2010). Designed to be shown to women and men from new and emerging communities, the DVD covers the settlement experience, highlighting the services and supports available; relationship, parenting and family pressures; and mechanisms to strengthen families. Community consultation and piloting was integral to the development of the DVD to ensure the messages in the DVD were culturally-appropriate. Consultation findings found the use of positive language in messages was important, with communities less likely to respond to messages using terms specific to family violence. Findings also highlighted the importance of showing the DVD to women and men prior to migrating to Australia. Visual communication tools, such as simple, concise multilingual DVDs, are worthwhile for all immigrant and refugee adults, especially those who are illiterate or semi-literate, and would be best developed for, and shown to those about to migrate to Australia to improve their familiarity with their new country (via Australian embassies, or the Australian Cultural Orientation Program for refuge and humanitarian visa holders), or via education programs for those who are newly-arrived and settling into their new country. The DVDs could cover a range of issues relevant to the prevention of violence against

women, including respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, FVPs (for women on spouse visas, dependents on skilled migration visas) and work rights (for holders of work-related visas such as Subclass 457, skilled migration).

3.4.3   Printed communication

Print communication strategies can provide multilingual information to sufficiently-literate members of immigrant and refugee communities. Printed information materials have been used to inform prospective and newly-arrived young people, women and men about settlement-related issues. The Western Young People's Independent Network in Melbourne produced a survival guide in English for newly-arrived young people to facilitate their settlement process, providing information about youth support services, public transport, employment, education and handling money (WYPIN, n.d). Respectful relationships are not covered in the guide, but could be incorporated into similar communication tools for newly-arrived young people, including international students. Multilingual parenting guides have also been developed for, and distributed to new immigrant and refugee parents from cultures with parenting practices vastly contradictory to those in Australia. The aim of these guides, produced by Spectrum MRC, is to improve knowledge and skills that enable positive parenting in Australia (Spectrum MRC website: *Parenting guides*). The Department of Immigration and Citizenship has produced a comprehensive booklet, *Beginning a life in Australia,* for prospective and newly-arrived immigrants and refugees, temporary and permanent (DIAC, 2010b). Available in 37 languages, the booklet can be accessed from the DIAC website, but is also provided to participants of the DIAC-funded Australian Cultural Orientation Program, a five-day orientation initiative that is offered to refugee and humanitarian visa holders before they arrive in Australia (DIAC website: *Fact sheet 67 – The Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Program*). The sizable booklet covers an exhaustive list of settlement-related topics, including those relevant to violence against women (such as discrimination, domestic violence, equality), albeit insubstantially, but this information becomes lost in the myriad of topics covered. Generally, printed information materials, such as booklets and guides, are only worthwhile in contained formats, but only for people with sufficient literacy. Large resources may only be suitable for people with the ability, time and interest to refer to them.

It is also imperative that printed information materials be directly distributed to intended recipients. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship has an information strategy, consisting of brochures and flyers, about the Subclass 457 visa program to ensure visa holders are fully aware of their rights, employer-sponsor obligations and where to seek further assistance about the visa program (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2009). Whilst these materials have been translated into languages most represented in the community of Subclass 457 visa holders in Australia, it is employer-sponsors that are sent these materials to distribute to their sponsored employees within five days of receipt or of commencement in employment. It is possible that these materials may not reach employees, thereby supporting the need for printed information to be directly provided to visa holders before arrival in Australia.

Other examples of printed communication materials about family violence for immigrant and refugee communities include the Jewish Taskforce against Family Violence *Toilet Door Project,* a current and innovative school-based awareness initiative based on convenience advertising. Posters resembling the

social networking site 'Facebook' featuring messages about the Jewish Taskforce Support Line (a free and anonymous telephone support line) are placed on the back of high school toilet doors in Jewish schools in Melbourne. For those schools where the use of computers is not approved, posters without references to multi-media but still within a school setting are available (JTAFV, individual consultation, 2009). Ethnic newspapers have also been used in wider communication campaigns (see Box 3) and could also be used to raise community awareness of violence against women, particularly in communities with well-developed ethnic media.

3.4.4 Multi-media campaigns

Multi-media campaigns, utilising a variety of communication and social marketing strategies, have been effectively used to increase awareness in ethnic communities of family violence. Box 3 details a comprehensive communication campaign targeting the Arabic, Chinese, Tongan and Vietnamese communities in Sydney. Each community was individually consulted about the messages (including language) to be delivered, images to be used, and the strategies best suited to convey these messages and images to each respective community. Consequently, communities' participation was high and the campaign was successful in positively altering community attitudes about family violence. The campaign emphasised that one-size-fits-all violence prevention initiatives do not work, so these strategies must be culturally-tailored for each immigrant and refugee community.

Multi-media communication campaigns have also been conducted for wider communities as a means of reducing racism and promoting multiculturalism, with local governments across Australia popular settings for the development and implementation of these initiatives. Campaigns in Brisbane, Hobart and Newcastle have used a range of communication strategies to promote respect for cultural diversity and foster social inclusion for ethnic communities, particularly for those that are new or emerging. Strategies included community consultation; radio and television advertisements with accurate and positive representations of people from different cultural backgrounds; development and distribution of resource kits featuring DVDs, fact sheets and booklets with overviews of individual communities and their cultures, as well as discussion about the experiences of, and challenges faced by immigrants and refugees in Australia; community events for local and ethnic communities to meet, interact and learn about different cultures; and the identification and training of refugee presenters to deliver presentations about the refugee experience at community forums (DIAC Humanitarian Branch, 2008; Hobart City Council, individual consultation, 2010). Formal evaluations of these campaigns were not conducted, but these initiatives were considered beneficial. However, to be valuable in the long term, these campaigns need to be implemented on an ongoing basis to reinforce to wider communities about the importance and value of immigrants and refugees to Australian society.

Communication and social marketing strategies are suitable for raising ethnic community awareness of violence against women, respectful gender relations, healthy family relationships, as well as promoting respect for cultural diversity across the wider community. These strategies can also complement and reinforce information provided in intensive education programs for children, young people, and adults.

Box 3: One-size only violence prevention communication campaigns do not fit all immigrant and refugee communities

In response to national research indicating that immigrant and refugee communities were less-informed about violence against women, a reflection that mainstream media campaigns about the issue had not reached these groups, the South Western Sydney Area Health Service and Central Sydney Area Health Service collaborated in the development and implementation of a communication campaign about domestic violence for the Arabic, Chinese, Tongan and Vietnamese communities in Sydney. Community involvement and consultation were crucial to the campaign. A working party involving high-profile and influential community representatives, such as community leaders, was convened for each community to ensure community support and ownership of the campaign, as well as obtain guidance on culturally-appropriate communication strategies for their respective communities. Members of the working parties were also active in promoting the campaign to their communities through forums, information sessions and via ethnic media. The four communities were also involved in baseline research conducted to gain a better understanding of knowledge about and attitudes towards domestic violence. This quantitative research study was followed by a qualitative research component, involving separate gender-specific focus groups for women and men in each community, to learn about culturally-appropriate communication strategies about domestic violence for these communities. This process found that violence prevention campaigns for immigrant and refugee communities must focus on the positive, using images of families and communities that were happy, harmonious, peaceful and strong, and not of abused women and children. The process also found that that one-size only violence prevention communication campaigns did not fit all ethnic communities. Campaign messages and strategies were to be specifically tailored for each community. Consequently, working parties, informed by research findings, devised campaign messages in their first language (rather than translate messages from English) using colloquial terms specific to each community; profiled characters and devised stories to be used in radio strategies for each community; designed campaign messages and slogans specific for each community; and advised about culturally-appropriate images and symbols to be used in billboards targeting the communities. The communication campaign was implemented over a two-month period and consisted of: radio advertisements featuring characters and stories; interviews with working party members on ethnic radio; articles in ethnic newspapers; community events and forums at which working party members presented and chaired discussion panels; and railway station billboards featuring the key campaign messages in English and the four languages. Different strategies were used across the communities and use of these strategies was variable across the communities, but the most successfully-implemented campaign strategy was the community event/forum. Three of the four communities held these events, which were instrumental in reaching large proportions of the communities, facilitating discussion in first languages about domestic violence, and in the case of one community, contributing to musical tradition. In the lead up to its community event, the Tongan community held a song competition where entrants were required to compose original songs about peace and harmony in families. Songs were performed at the community event, with the winner awarded a monetary prize and a place in Tongan music history. All performed songs were subsequently incorporated into the repertoire of songs performed at Tongan community events and continue to be played on Tongan radio programs. Overall, the evaluation found the communication campaign to be a major success, significantly changing knowledge and attitudes. Post-campaign, people were more likely to: recognise domestic violence as the most commonly-perpetrated form of violence against women (51% compared to 40% pre-campaign); strongly agree that domestic violence was a criminal offence (75% compared to 63%); and disagree that domestic violence was best handled privately amongst family (46% compared to 39%).

Reference: Moore et al, 2002

3.5   Direct participation programs

More intense than communication and social marketing strategies which serve to increase awareness of violence against women, the focus of direct participation programs is to provide children, young people, men and women with the knowledge, skills and resources required to develop and maintain respectful relationships (VicHealth, 2007). Education and mentoring programs for children, young people, women and men are examples of direct participation programs utilised in violence prevention efforts in Australia.

3.5.1   Education and mentoring programs for children and young people

The development of positive and negative attitudes and practices occurs in childhood and adolescence. Consequently, targeting children and young people is essential to prevent the attitudes that may result in the perpetration of violence against women. Schools are an ideal setting for the education of children and young people. Innovative school-based programs, including for children and young people from ethnic communities, have been developed and conducted in Australia (see Box 4). The *Kids Making Choices* program did not focus on violence prevention directly, instead focusing on the development of positive attitudes and behaviours which could allow older children to engage with others in a constructive manner.

Box 4: *Kids Making Choices*: a youth-based intervention about positive living

As the formation of violence-supporting attitudes begins at an early age (from childhood and into adolescence), innovative school-based programs can be instrumental in preventing the formation of these attitudes. One such program was *Kids Making Choices*, a three-year initiative of the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra in New South Wales. An early intervention program targeting Grade 6 students, most of whom were from immigrant and refugee communities, the program's focus was positive living. More specifically, the aim of the program was to raise student awareness about the importance of developing personal values, competencies and strengths that could empower them to comprehend and contemplate suitable responses to a range of situations. The key program strategy was a two-day school-based workshop that incorporated a range of activities including discussion, role play, photography and sports. The workshop taught students the importance of values, self-esteem, positive living habits including living with principles, and goal setting. The creative activities encouraged students to artistically consolidate and demonstrate their understanding of a range of difficult situations, responses to these situations and the consequences of their actions. Sports activities, such as an indoor gym circuit course, helped young people develop the ability to engage with their peers in a constructive manner and work as a team. During the program's lifetime, 15 two-day workshops were delivered to 661 children. Program evaluation found that 95% of the students enjoyed attending the *Kids Making Choices* workshops 'lots', 48% stated the workshops helped them think about their values 'lots' and 52% reported the workshops made them think about the healthy choices they could make in difficult situations. The photography and drama activities were the popular with students (76% enjoyed these 'lots'), followed by storytelling activities (48% enjoyed these 'lots') and sports activities (48% enjoyed these 'lots').

Reference: Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra, individual consultation, 2010

Education programs for young people have focused on violence prevention in a more specific and direct manner. Two programs from the United States, the *Break the Cycle* program for Latino youth and the *Promoting Healthy Relationships Project* for American Indian and Latino youth, educated young people in a range of institutional settings (secondary schools, tertiary institutions, juvenile detention facilities) on a

range of topics including domestic and dating violence, healthy relationships, legal rights and responsibilities, communication and anger management (Jaycox et al, 2007; Peterson et al, 2007). However, the programs went beyond the provision of education and included youth development and leadership components as a means of providing young people with opportunities that would foster positive emotional growth, healthy relationships, skills in problem-solving and communication amongst others. As with the youth leadership programs mentioned previously, these programs were delivered to young women and men together. On the contrary, a human relations program for newly-arrived young people in Melbourne assumes a gendered approach to health education. Delivered to three cohorts of young people at an English language school every year (each cohort participates in the program over a five-week period), the program informs participants about sexual and reproductive health issues and provides the knowledge and skills required to engage in healthy, respectful relationships. Education is gender-specific, so is delivered separately to young women and men to facilitate gendered exploration and discussion of these issues (Women's Health West, individual consultation, 2010; Women's Health West website: *Health promotion in schools – WELS).*

Findings from these programs for children and young people suggest school-based education programs are essential in the prevention of violence against women. For older children, education programs need to focus on positive development, increase self-esteem and provide children with the knowledge and skills that enable constructive engagement with others. These programs should also include a range of educational activities to facilitate interest in and uptake of information. Addressing violence prevention specifically and directly, highlighting the importance of respectful relationships between women and men is more suitable for young people. Carefully-planned mixed education programs for young women and men, which involve discussion about relationships, might improve understanding of the each gender's experiences (O'Brien and Rich, 2003), and perhaps facilitate equitable and respectful gender relations. However, gender-specific education programs or gender-specific components within these programs ought to be considered, so that young females and males can easily and freely discuss relationship issues, including sexual health matters (McMichael, 2008). Gender-matched educators are best suited and preferred to facilitate these gender-specific programs or components (McMichael, 2008). Education programs are worthwhile for all immigrant and refugee children and youth, particularly those who are newly-arrived, but could also be delivered in youth-oriented settings such as sports clubs and youth services and via settlement services, such as English language centres and schools.

Mentoring programs for immigrant and refugee young people, including international students, are another useful violence prevention strategy. Numerous programs have been developed and implemented across Australia (CMY, individual consultation, 2009; Lopez Escobar et al, 2010; Monash University website; MRCSA, 2010; South Eastern Region MRC, individual consultation, 2009; VIRWC website). Mentoring programs involve one-to-one relationships between mentors, who are members of the general community screened and trained for their mentoring role, and mentees or young people, usually of the same gender. In programs for international students, mentors are current students (Monash University website). Immigrant and refugee young people, particularly those who are newly-arrived and adjusting to a new culture, can benefit significantly from their relationships with their mentors. Mentors meet their mentees on a regular basis for support, providing young people with new knowledge, skills and confidence to

understand and participate in Australian society (Francis and Cornfoot, 2007; Sawrikar, 2008). Mentors also act as positive role models for their mentees, and so are in a unique position to educate young people about relating with others in a respectful manner. Gender-specific mentoring programs would be useful for all immigrant and refugee young people, but for programs to be most effective for those who are newly-arrived and settling in Australia, mentoring might best be provided in conjunction with other settlement and welfare assistance. Educational institutions are the most appropriate settings for gender-specific mentoring programs for international students.

3.5.2   *Bilingual health education for immigrant and refugee women*

Immigrant and refugee women from all communities, new, emerging and well-established, would benefit from education that highlights the importance of respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships and that articulates that violence is always wrong and unacceptable. Education needs to empower women to prevent violence against them and build their capacity to prevent violence against other women in their communities. Bilingual health education is suitably designed for this aim: an approach that employs trained female educators to provide information in a culturally-appropriate manner to large numbers of women, particularly those with low levels of literacy and who cannot access information provided in written formats or through electronic media, in settings familiar to women. Bilingual health education has been utilised across Australia to educate immigrant and refugee women about violence (see Box 5). However, violence prevention education for these women would best be incorporated into a holistic program on women's health. Programs delivered in this manner over a period of time with the same groups of women allow bilingual health educators to build rapport with, and earn confidence and trust of women, resulting in open and honest discussion of sensitive issues such as violence. One-off or stand-alone violence prevention education sessions for women may be more intimidating, even ineffective.

Gender-specific education must also be provided to refugee women preparing to immigrate to Australia. Currently, the Australian Cultural Orientation Program, a five-day cultural orientation initiative, is offered to refugee and humanitarian visa holders (aged five years and over) before their arrival in Australia, usually in refugee camps and urban locations. This program is the beginning of the settlement process and aims to prepare these visa holders for life in their new country. Consequently, the program is comprehensive and intensive, with trainers covering a range of topics, including travel to Australia, on-arrival assistance, introduction to Australia, cultural adjustment, health, education, employment, money management, housing, public transport, laws, and settlement services available to assist refugee and humanitarian visa holders. The program is delivered to four groups (adults, young people, children and pre-literate) by bilingual trainers or with the assistance of interpreters, and uses a variety of interactive teaching methods to increase participant confidence in coping with the settlement process (DIAC website: *Fact sheet 67 – The Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Program*; DIAC Humanitarian Branch, 2009). However, refugee women in Australia have indicated they could not attend the program when it was offered to them because of their need to care for children while their husbands attended the program (inTouch, individual consultation, 2011). The inadvertent exclusion of refugee women from the orientation program means that women are denied an essential opportunity, before arrival in Australia, to learn about issues related to violence prevention, particularly maintaining respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships

during the settlement process and beyond. This indicates a need for the Australian Cultural Orientation Program to demand mandatory participation of all refugee and humanitarian visa holders immigrating to Australia, as well as provide gender-specific education for women (including young women) delivered by female educators, both in refugee camps and in outreach locations accessible to women. This will ensure women receive essential messages about violence prevention. Multilingual visual communication tools, such as the Relationships Australia (Victoria) DVD *Building strong families: A guide for new migrants,* are preferred education tools for program participants and should be shown during the program to consolidate information provided by educators (DIAC Humanitarian Branch, 2009).

Box 5: Bilingual health education as a violence prevention strategy

The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health has been successfully providing health education and information to immigrant and refugee women in the workplace and community for over 30 years. The centre's education program follows a holistic, peer education model, known as the 'woman-to-woman approach', which is participatory in design and respects women's experiences and knowledge. Trained bilingual health educators conduct health promotion sessions for women in the preferred languages of the participants, covering a range of health issues including sexual, reproductive, mental and occupational health, diabetes, and drugs and alcohol. From July 2009 to June 2010, MCWH conducted 319 multilingual health education sessions in 15 languages, making 4502 contacts with women. The MCWH model is considered a best practice model for family violence prevention.

Bilingual health education has also been used to educate immigrant and refugee women in the Australian Capital Territory and Western Australia. In the Australian Capital Territory, the Women's Legal Centre developed and conducted *The Law in Australia: A community education project for women of non-English speaking backgrounds.* The project aimed to increase women's knowledge about the legal system, particularly family law and domestic violence. Thirty-five bilingual community educators were trained to deliver education sessions in their own languages to women from their communities. Thirteen education sessions were delivered in community settings and information was provided on the radio. The main project outcome was increased immigrant and refugee women's access to the Women's Legal Centre.

In Western Australia, the *CALD Domestic Violence Access Project* aimed to increase immigrant and refugee community awareness of legal issues around domestic violence. Five bilingual community educators were trained to deliver information sessions in the community and on ethnic radio, develop written information and advocate on domestic violence issues to community leaders.

References: MCWH, 2010; Partnerships against Domestic Violence, 2003; Victorian Community Council
Against Violence, 2004

3.5.3   Bilingual health education for immigrant and refugee men

The prevention of violence against women needs to include men (Flood, 2006 and 2010). Bilingual education, led by trained male facilitators (including respected community leaders), is also a worthwhile strategy for men from new, emerging and well-established immigrant and refugee communities, especially those with low literacy. Men's education programs would be most useful for men due to immigrate to Australia, or who are newly-arrived and settling in Australia. It is imperative to provide these men with the knowledge and skills required to cope with their changing gender and family roles in their new country and enhance their relationships with their partners and families. Initiatives within and outside of Australia have

addressed, or currently address these issues. Education programs for newly-arrived men in Australia have been conducted with Arabic, Sudanese and Kurdish men (Migrant Information Centre, 2007; MRCSA website; Spectrum MRC, individual consultation, 2009), whilst another program specifically targeted young men without the traditional social supports that taught them about their family and gender roles (Migrant Information Centre, 2007). Outside of Australia, the Australian Cultural Orientation Program, the five-day cultural orientation initiative offered to refugee and humanitarian visa holders before arrival in Australia, covers family roles and responsibilities during the settlement process (DIAC website: *Fact sheet 67 – The Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Program*; DIAC Humanitarian Branch, 2009). Men's education programs also need to challenge traditional notions of masculinity which endorse violence against women. The *Men as Partners ®* program and the *Guy to Guy Project,* gender-specific initiatives conducted in cross-cultural settings internationally (see Box 6), highlight the need for culturally-appropriate men's education programs that positively challenge traditional notions of masculinity and demonstrate that 'real' men are interested in happy families and respectful relationships with women, and can play a proactive role in the prevention of gender-based violence.

These men's education programs are valuable in the prevention of violence against women, with a comprehensive evaluation of the national *Men and Family Relationships* program finding these initiatives to be successful in delivering services to immigrant and refugee men, but only when guided by cultural norms. Consequently, different strategies are required across different groups of men (O'Brien and Rich, 2003). This finding reinforces that the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to violence prevention is ineffective across all cultural groups, so community consultation is necessary to ensure that education programs are culturally-appropriate and specifically-tailored. Men's education programs also need to transfer positive messages about gender roles, masculinity and family, achievable if respected men supportive of violence prevention and gender equality are involved in the development and/or delivery of these education programs. In some immigrant and refugee communities, direct discussion about domestic violence is difficult due to the belief that family violence is a private matter. Family is paramount in many ethnic communities, but the migration experience results in fragmented families as immigrants and refugees leave or flee one country and travel to another, generally leaving family members behind. In light of this separation, families are keen to enhance family unity, so education programs that initially emphasise building healthy family relationships, especially during settlement, may resonate more with men. Education programs should tentatively progress to discussion about violence against women.

3.5.4   *Parenting programs for women and men*

Parenting programs are yet another education strategy, delivered to women and men together, which represent an additional approach to the prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women.

The difficulties inherent in the settlement process for many newly-arrived immigrant and refugee families, including adjustment to parenting norms and practices different to those in their countries of origin, demonstrate the need for education programs that support child-rearing in a new culture. Delivered to women and men together, these programs aim to improve parenting skills and support parents to raise children in a constructive manner. The ultimate outcome of parenting programs is strong and healthy relationships within family units, although an indirect outcome can be generations of children raised to believe in gender equality. In many cultures, there is a preference for male children. Parents' preferential treatment of male children over female children teaches boys from an early age to believe that males are more important than females, possibly contributing to the development of violence-supporting attitudes. Parenting programs need to highlight the equal importance of female and male children, encourage parents to treat all their children equally and educate their children about the value of respectful relationships. Parenting programs have been delivered in Australia for Arabic, Chinese, Sudanese and Turkish parents (Drummond Street Relationship Centre, 2009; IWWCV, 2008; Spectrum MRC, individual consultation, 2009; Spectrum MRC website: *Parenting and family*). These programs would best be delivered to newly-arrived women and men during settlement, and given that women and men participate

in these programs together, facilitators need to ensure equal opportunity is given to each gender to express their views.

Parenting program messages need to be reinforced to parents. The parenting guides previously discussed could be distributed during these programs to participants, but early childhood professionals that parents encounter, such as maternal and child health nurses, general practitioners, childcare workers, kindergarten and school teachers, can also play a role in this regard. Mentors also represent another opportunity through which program messages could be reinforced, as demonstrated in refugee family mentoring and resource program of the Victorian Cooperative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups (VICSEG). In this current program, culturally-matched mentors from three communities—Assyrian/Chaldean, Karen/Burmese and Sudanese—work with newly-arrived families to facilitate their access to early childhood services (VICSEG website: *Family and children's programs).* Whilst the focus of this mentoring program is improving family access to services, culturally-matched mentors, who are aware of cultural attitudes towards parenting, are ideally suited to constructively challenge any parenting attitudes incongruent with gender equality and highlight the importance of positive parenting practices to equitable gender relations and respectful relationships.

Parenting program messages could also be reinforced and practised through initiatives which involve parent-child interaction, such as playgroups and recreational activities. Multicultural playgroups are conducted in Melbourne for newly-arrived immigrant and refugee families from a variety of cultural backgrounds (Arabic-speaking, Assyrian, Chaldean, Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Samoan, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, Syriac, Turkish and Vietnamese). The aim of these groups is to facilitate early childhood development by assisting parents to consolidate parenting skills and knowledge; fostering closer parent-child relationships; increasing parents' awareness of early childhood services; and increasing contact between newly-arrived families in the community (VICSEG website: *Supported playgroups for refugee and migrant families*). Another program in Melbourne, the *African Dads and Kids Program,* aims to improve relationships between newly-arrived fathers and their children through bonding activities on a camp. This innovative program provides opportunities to fathers and their children to strengthen bonds, and helps men understand the differences and similarities in their paternal roles in their country of origin and their adopted country, thereby facilitating re-examination of their parental role in Australia (CatholicCare website; Walshe, 2011). These gender-specific programs for newly-arrived fathers should be delivered during the settlement stage to assist men struggling to adapt to changes in their culturally-defined paternal roles and to reinforce their relevance as fathers.

3.6   Organisational and workforce development

Organisational and workforce development refers to the strengthening of agencies and organisations to promote and model non-violent and equitable relationships. This may also involve building the capacity of workplaces to engage in violence prevention efforts (VicHealth, 2007). Professional initiatives to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women have included training, collaboration, and resourcing.

Efforts designed to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women should be the responsibility of, or greatly involve multicultural and/or ethno-specific agencies and organisations, such as those representing immigrant and refugee women (including those that assist women experiencing violence), children and young people, specific cultural groups, as well as migrant resource centres. These agencies and organisations already possess the capacity to implement the strategies discussed in this publication, including: greater understanding of the impact of immigration, including visa status, on women's vulnerability to violence as well as other cultural issues; specific expertise in the development and implementation of culturally-appropriate strategies; stronger links with, and better access to different cultural groups; credibility with ethnic communities; and bilingual employees with whom immigrant and refugee young people, women and men would better relate. Funding these agencies and organisations to assume responsibility for violence prevention efforts would be a more appropriate and effective use of resources and would more likely generate positive outcomes for ethnic communities. Mainstream agencies organisations that seek to develop and implement any of the strategies discussed in this publication, or other culturally-specific violence prevention initiatives, should be required to do so only in equal collaboration with multicultural and/or ethno-specific counterparts. This must be an essential criterion for funding applications for violence prevention strategies targeting ethnic communities.

3.6.1 Professional training and resourcing

The capacity of agency and organisational staff to develop, implement and evaluate violence prevention strategies needs to be strengthened and reinforced constantly as more evidence about effective strategies emerges. Professional training is one popular capacity-building method, but there is little evidence of staff training about culturally-appropriate violence prevention strategies. The MCWH advocacy capacity-building program, consisting of the *Points of Departure* and *Setting the Compass Projects*, was a national initiative that aimed to build the capacity of immigrant and refugee women and NGO staff across Australia to advocate on behalf of immigrant and refugee women. The program involved the preparation of a discussion paper highlighting key issues affecting women (of which violence was included); conduct of a national forum with key stakeholders to prioritise these issues; and the development and distribution of an advocacy toolkit in conjunction with the delivery of advocacy skills development sessions across Australia for NGO staff and immigrant and refugee women involved in advocacy (Gwatirisa, 2009, 2010 and 2011; Poljski, 2011b). Other agencies have also developed and delivered staff training programs to build organisational capacity (AMWCHR, 2011a). Professional training could also be supplemented with manuals designed to enhance awareness of cultural issues, such as the AMWCHR guide *Muslim Women, Islam and Family Violence* that was developed to shift prevailing attitudes of Muslim and non-Muslim community welfare practitioners towards Muslim women and violence (AMWCHR, 2011b). Where mainstream agencies and organisations are engaged in violence prevention efforts, ongoing staff training designed to increase cultural competency, as well as the ability to develop, implement and evaluate culturally-appropriate violence prevention interventions, is required. Multicultural agencies with expertise in the development and implementation of these interventions should be funded to provide this training.

Forums with service providers and representatives from immigrant and refugee communities are another professional development opportunity that have been utilised in violence prevention efforts. These forums

were held to explore the dynamics of domestic violence in ethnic communities, learn about and recommend appropriate responses to violence, and encourage collaboration between service providers and ethnic community representatives (ECCV, 2009; Western Australia Department for Community Development, circa 2005). Although considered worthwhile and successful by participants because of the advocacy and networking opportunities provided, these professional forums are usually one-off events, so there is a need for collaboration to continue beyond these events. Statewide networks that bring together service providers and professionals involved in the primary prevention of violence against women have been established to allow members to network, share information about strategies and learn more about effective evaluation of violence prevention strategies (Clark, 2010). However, there is a need for similar statewide networks for representatives from ethno-specific services and mainstream agencies involved in the prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women. Immigrant and refugee women's organisations, with appropriate funding and support, should lead this capacity-building strategy.

Media professionals lack full understanding of multicultural issues in Australia, particularly the impact of the migration experience and the diversity that exists across and within immigrant and refugee communities in Australia. Constant misrepresentation in the media of people from ethnic backgrounds only serves to perpetuate negative misconceptions of these individuals, fuel racism and discrimination, facilitate social disconnectedness and exclusion, and hinder full participation of immigrants and refugees in Australian society. Resourcing and training would benefit media professionals, enabling them to accurately report multicultural issues and portray ethnic communities in the media. The Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria, with significant input from journalists from print, visual and electronic media, produced the *Media guide: Islam and Muslims in Australia* (Bedar and El Matrah, 2005). This guide, aimed at media outlets, clearly and comprehensively explains Islam, including general beliefs and practices and their application, and provides a detailed overview of Muslims living in Australia. Most importantly, the guide focuses on Islam and women, serving to dispel myths about Muslim women and ensuring that Muslim women's expertise is acknowledged and sought in media discussions about the all aspects of Islam, not just those issues relevant to women. This media guide should be widely distributed to media outlets across Australia and serve as a template in the production and distribution of similar media guides about other immigrant and refugee communities in Australia.

A multi-faceted approach to organisational and workforce development, evident in the City of Maribyrnong *Respect and Equity Project* (see Box 7) is required in the prevention of violence against women.

3.6.2 Workplace education

Workplaces are appropriate settings for interventions that aim to prevent violence in the home and the workplace. Successful education programs designed to encourage men, including those from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, to challenge violence-supporting attitudes and violent behaviours have been implemented (Women's Health Victoria, individual consultation, 2010). However, there is little evidence of initiatives designed to prevent workplace violence against immigrant and refugee women. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship plans to conduct pilot information sessions for Subclass 457 visa holders about their work rights (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2009), but there is no indication about the

settings for these sessions. Where possible, these information sessions should be conducted in workplaces across Australia. As part of its health education program, MCWH bilingual health educators deliver multilingual education sessions for women about violence, including family violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment and workplace-based violence, in workplaces that employ significant numbers of immigrant and refugee women (see Box 5).

Further actions required to prevent workplace-violence against women include greater workplace regulation and monitoring, which enable employees to complain about violence without fear of losing their jobs; education for employees about their rights in the workplace and options for addressing violence; multilingual telephone and counselling for women; specific training for employers on the prevention of workplace violence; and legislation that compels workplaces to support diversity in the workplace (URCOT, 2005). Strategies should be implemented in blue- and white-collar workplaces. Unions representing industries with high numbers of immigrant and refugee employers or with significant proportion of members from immigrant and refugee backgrounds could be enlisted to support these initiatives.

Box 7: Building the capacity of organisations to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women

In recognition of evidence that suggests the importance of local government in the prevention of violence against women, the Maribyrnong City Council, a local municipality in Melbourne's western suburbs with a large immigrant and refugee population, established the *Respect and Equity Project*. The project is a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to violence prevention that aims to cultivate an environment where women are safe and can live without the threat of violence. Stemming from the *Gender, Local Governance, and Violence Prevention Project*, the *Respect and Equity Project* specifically works with all municipal departments to explore how each can incorporate violence prevention efforts in their regular operations with population groups with which they target, involve and/or collaborate. The project has involved a variety of strategies including the development and adoption of a Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan; collaboration with secondary schools and community-based organisations; awareness campaigns such as secondary school banners and community forums; an audit of municipal services and facilities to ensure their safety for women; and the inclusion of violence prevention in the community grants program. Immigrant and refugee communities have also been included in violence prevention efforts, with strategies including community consultation, health, wellbeing and positive behaviour education for newly-arrived young people studying at the Western English Language School, immigrant and refugee representation on the Preventing Family Violence Working Group and community grants for ethno-specific organisations to implement violence prevention strategies.

References: Maribyrnong City Council, individual consultation, 2009; Whitzman, 2009

3.7   Legislative and policy reform

Australian federal governments demonstrate commitment to human rights, including the prevention of discrimination, racism and intolerance, through national laws such as the *Racial Discrimination Act (1975)* and the *Sex Discrimination Act (1984)*. Australia is also a signatory to various international human rights treaties such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979),* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)* (AHRC website). But despite government support for human rights at national and international levels, Australia remains the only

Western country in the world without a national Bill of Rights. National human rights legislation that acknowledges and promotes tolerance for all facets of social diversity—age, gender, culture, ethnicity, class, disability, sexual identity, religion—in conjunction with a national racial and religious tolerance legislation (similar to the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* in Victoria), would consolidate Australia's commitment to the prevention of discrimination and racism and to the strengthening of multiculturalism.

In early 2011, the Australian federal government announced a new national multicultural policy called *The People of Australia* (DIAC website: *New strategy in support of multiculturalism in Australia*). The aim of the policy is to build on the government's commitment to encouraging all Australians, irrespective of their country of origin, to participate fully in Australian society. Two key measures featured in the policy include an independent Multicultural Advisory Council that aims to advocate for multiculturalism and advise the federal government on key multicultural issues and culturally-appropriate service delivery, whilst a National Anti-Racism Strategy aims to eliminate racial discrimination. But to be truly effective in improving social connectedness for ethnic communities, as well as encouraging and facilitating their participation in the wider community, this multicultural policy needs to ensure equal access for all Australians to education, employment, health, justice, leadership *inter alia*. Accordingly, ample funds are required to ensure the policy's effectiveness in the long term, but in the 2011-2012 federal budget, only $4.7 million over four years was allocated to resource the policy (Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, 2011), an insubstantial amount for a major undertaking. Whilst the federal government is to be commended for lauding the merits of multiculturalism, only enthusiastic implementation of its policy will generate the level of immigrant and refugee participation in Australian society that the government seeks to achieve.

Multiculturalism in Australia could also be enhanced through positive media representation of ethnic communities and their contribution to Australian society. All too frequently, the constructive contributions of immigrants and refugees to local and wider communities are overlooked, with many media outlets preferring instead to report stories that perpetuate negative stereotypes, stimulate and/or maintain fear in Australians of overseas-born individuals. Consequently, some multicultural organisations refrain from engaging with media outlets due to previous experiences of misrepresentation (McCue, 2008). More responsibility needs to be imposed on media outlets to accurately portray immigrant and refugee communities. Laws and regulations that prevent inaccurate reporting of multicultural issues would be beneficial and ought to be considered.

In 2010, the Australian Law Reform Commission, in conjunction with the New South Wales Law Reform Commission, completed a review into appropriate legal responses for family violence. In early 2011, subsequent to the release of the review's final report, an inquiry into key areas of federal law—employment and superannuation, immigration, social security, child support and assistance—and their treatment of family violence (Australian Law Reform Commission website) was conducted. A consortium of Victorian agencies and organisations, including the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria, Domestic Violence Victoria, inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health and Victorian Women Lawyers, made a joint submission to the inquiry into the impact of immigration law on immigrant and refugee women's experiences of family

violence. Whilst this legal reform process is commendable, the focus is more on addressing violence and its consequences after the fact. Law reform agencies across Australia should further investigate possible legislative changes, especially those pertaining to immigration, to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women before it occurs. This is particularly important for women who are at risk of violence because of their immigration or labour force participation status, namely women on temporary visas (primary and secondary visa holders). The nature of these visas creates a climate of fear that perpetuates women's vulnerability and dependence on their sponsors and/or partners. This is more pertinent for women with low English proficiency. Perpetrators of violence are encouraged and protected by this climate of fear, which is often used to exploit women's lack of knowledge of the immigration system and their lack of access to information and services.

In recent years, changes have been made to Australian immigration law to specifically prevent or protect immigrant and refugee women and children from violence. Federal immigration law was changed in 2005 to prevent serial sponsors, only allowing men to sponsor two partners to travel to Australia on spouse visas in their lifetime, with a five-year interval between relationships. Men are blacklisted from sponsoring a second partner to travel to Australia on a spouse visa if the first sponsored partner applied for permanent residency under FVPs (IWDVS, individual consultation, 2009). However, this law is not strictly enforced. There have been cases of men with a history of violence against their first sponsored partner successfully sponsoring a second partner to travel to Australian on a spouse visa (inTouch, individual consultation, 2011), indicating inconsistencies in checking processes and highlighting the need to further strengthen scrutiny of sponsors. In 2009, the *Migration Legislation Amendment (Worker Protection) Act 2008* came into effect to increase protections to temporary workers on the Subclass 457 visa from unscrupulous employers. The legislation has increased sponsor-employer obligations, improved monitoring of employers and strengthened sanctions and enforcement (Jockel, 2009). In 2010, immigration law was revised to prevent individuals charged with registrable offences, namely registered sex offenders, from sponsoring children under 18 years of age to travel to Australia on family visas (child, spouse), as either primary or secondary applicants (inTouch, individual consultation, 2011).

More changes to Australian immigration law are still required to prevent violence against women. Male Australian citizens, as well as male New Zealand citizens who arrived in Australia before February 2001, are able to sponsor women to travel to Australia on spouse visas. However, immigration authorities only perform background checks into men's history of violence against previously-sponsored women. Scrutiny of men's perpetration of violence against other women is not mandated in these background checks. Given the significant increase in the number of women without permanent residency who are experiencing domestic violence (WDVCS, 2010), laws should be introduced to prohibit men with a proven history of violence against women from sponsoring women to travel to Australia on spouse visas. Changes to Family Violence Provisions are also needed. These changes include revision of the definition of *relevant family violence* to include the threat of deportation as an act of violence; and extension of the FVPs to all women on temporary visas (primary and secondary holders of Subclass 457, student and bridging visas). Australian immigration law should also allow women on temporary visas who are experiencing violence to access relevant supports and/or the right to apply for another visa, where appropriate.

With regard to the growing number of temporary immigrants in Australia for employment purposes (mainly holders of Subclass 457 visa), it would be appropriate for Australia to ratify the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families* (more commonly known as *Migrant Workers Convention*). The *Migrant Workers Convention,* adopted at the United Nations in 1990, highlights the vulnerability of immigrant workers and their families when temporarily based in other countries for employment, and encourages governments hosting these workers to protect workers' rights (Amnesty International n.d). However, no wealthy developed country has ratified the convention, primarily out of invalid concerns that ratification would limit state rights to decide who can enter their territories for employment and that immigrant workers would seek under the Convention to sponsor their families to immigrate to their new country (MacDonald and Cholewinski, 2007). The main signatories to the *Migrant Workers Convention* are the countries of origin of immigrant workers rather than the host countries of these workers. Australia's ratification of the *Migrant Workers Convention* would recognise the important contribution of temporary immigrant workers to the Australian economy; strengthen existing laws to eradicate exploitation of workers; increase protection from violence; and demonstrate internationally Australia's commitment to human rights for all individuals settled in Australia, irrespective of visa status.

Increased protections for another group of women on temporary visas, female international students, have been developed and are being implemented. From 1 July 2011, the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Legislation Amendment Act 2011* came into effect to introduce a new federal agency, the Overseas Student Ombudsman. This impartial and independent service was established to investigate international student complaints against registered private colleges in Australia. Whilst the Ombudsman primarily accepts complaints about unresolved issues between students and private colleges about administrative and course-related matters, complaints about accommodation, employment and work placements, including those that expose students to discrimination, exploitation and violence, can also be investigated (Overseas Student Ombudsman website). The Australian Human Rights Commission is also targeting public and private educational institutions in its development of *Minimum Standards for International Student Welfare*. Still in draft form at the time of preparing this publication, the purpose of the Minimum Standards will be to protect the rights of international students (with a focus on consumer rights, health and safety, accommodation, employment, transport, immigration and information) and highlight the minimum responsibilities of educational institutions towards realising students' rights (AHRC, 2011). Given the increasing calls for educational institutions to better exercise a duty of care towards international students (ECCV, 2010), the Minimum Standards are welcome; however, to be truly effective, the Standards, which will be voluntary when finalised, should be incorporated in legislation.

Legislation and policy may indirectly reduce women's risk of violence, an example of which is Australia's first paid parental leave scheme. Effective from 1 January 2011, the scheme provides women who were in continuous paid employment (including full-time, part-time, casual, self-employed, contracted) for 10 out of the 13 months before the birth of their babies with 18 weeks parental leave (Australian Government, 2009). Research has found that women who were employed early in pregnancy and were eligible for paid maternity leave were less likely to report violence in the first year after birth compared to women who were not employed (Gartland et al, 2010). This is possibly due to access to additional income that reduces the financial pressure and relationship difficulties that ensue upon the arrival of a new baby. This finding

highlights the need to assume a broad view in legislative and policy reform, considering laws and policies directly <u>and</u> indirectly related to violence against women. For example, workplace laws, particularly occupational health and safety regulations, should be reviewed to determine how principles of cultural diversity are incorporated. There is also a need to reform education and employment laws and policies to ensure immigrant and refugee women have equitable access to various education and employment opportunities. In light of reports about landlord exploitation of international students, tenancy laws also need to be reviewed and strengthened.

3.8 Good practice principles for culturally-appropriate violence prevention efforts

Good practice principles for primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women include:

- Immigrant and refugee women and their representative groups and organisations should be at the forefront of violence prevention efforts, whilst collaborating with other identified community leaders in these efforts;
- Leadership in violence prevention efforts needs to be balanced and include a representation of influential and respected young people, women and men from ethnic communities;
- Effective leadership will facilitate community participation in violence prevention initiatives;
- Violence prevention efforts need to be cognisant of each community's level of understanding of violence against women. Education may need to begin tentatively by first focusing on healthy family relationships before gradually progressing to discussion about violence against women;
- Community consultation needs to be a regular component of violence prevention efforts. Communities should be consulted individually to learn about cultural norms and appropriate strategies; identify leaders to engage in violence prevention efforts; and provide feedback during evaluation;
- 'One-size-fits-all' violence prevention initiatives do not work across immigrant and refugee communities. Instead, initiatives must be specifically tailored to each individual community, guided by cultural norms and within an appropriate and meaningful cultural context. Visuals, language and messages should be specific to each community;
- Messages must be positive and focus on the importance of respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships. Messages directed at males should focus on positive expressions of masculinity, including respect for women. Messages targeting children and young people should focus on positive living, development and engagement with others;
- Violence prevention messages need reinforcement using different mediums;
- Bilingual community workers must be extensively involved in violence prevention strategies, with trained male and female facilitators working with men's and women's programs respectively;
- Strategies should recognise all facets of social diversity: age, gender, culture, ethnicity, class, disability, sexual identity, religion;
- A broad view needs to be assumed in legislative and policy reform;
- Strategies need to undergo continuous improvement to remain culturally-relevant; and
- Violence prevention efforts must be funded for the long term to generate lasting outcomes.

3.9   Primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women: a framework

There is a need to think broadly about the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia. Table 3 presents a framework, based on consultation findings and the literature review, which summarises recommended violence prevention strategies for the priority groups of women.

Table 3: A framework for the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia

	Key recommended violence prevention strategies
Newly-arrived women: *Refugee and humanitarian*	• Leadership training, mentoring and resources for settled women and men, identified as possessing leadership potential or who are respected leaders, to provide knowledge, skills and self-confidence for leadership of, and active participation in, violence prevention efforts • Leadership training, mentoring and resources for young people, identified as possessing leadership potential or who are respected leaders, to provide young people with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence to facilitate settlement and actively participate in violence prevention efforts, including constructive cross-generational dialogue with older members of their communities and their peers about violence prevention • Gender-specific bilingual education programs for women and men before arrival in Australia (during the orientation program) and after arrival (during settlement) that focus on changing gender and family roles, respectful gender relations and maintaining healthy family relationships during and beyond settlement; gender-specific education programs for men to model positive expressions of masculinity • Parenting programs, including mentoring, for women and men that support child-rearing in a new culture; playgroups and recreational activities for parents and their children to improve and consolidate parenting confidence, knowledge and skills • Multilingual DVDs shown during education and parenting programs to reinforce key messages • Community forums held regularly to raise awareness of violence against women and promote respectful gender relations and healthy relationships, reinforced by multi-media communication campaigns for wider community (may also reach partners and/or family members of women) • <u>For children of visa holders:</u> school-based education programs for children that focus on positive living, development and engagement with others; education programs for young people (gender-specific or with gender-specific components), with a focus on respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health, delivered in educational institutions; gender-specific education for young men to model positive expressions of masculinity • Gender-specific mentoring programs for young people that model equitable relationships as well as respectful engagement with others • Interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships • Multilingual printed communication materials (guides, booklets) distributed to people with sufficient literacy before and after arrival in Australia (during education programs or at community forums) • Changes to immigration legislation to extend Family Violence Provisions to women asylum seekers on bridging visas and that ensure women experiencing violence can access relevant supports

Continued over page

Table 3: A framework for the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia contd

	Key recommended violence prevention strategies
Newly-arrived women: *Skilled migration*	• Leadership training, mentoring and resources for settled women and men, identified as possessing leadership potential or who are respected leaders, to provide knowledge, skills and self-confidence for leadership of, and active participation in, violence prevention efforts • Community forums held regularly to raise awareness of violence against women and promote respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, reinforced by multi-media communication campaigns for wider community (may also reach partners and/or family members of women) • For children of visa holders: school-based education programs for children that focus on positive living, development and engagement with others; education programs for young people (gender-specific or with gender-specific components), with a focus on respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health, delivered in educational institutions; gender-specific education for young men to model positive expressions of masculinity; gender-specific mentoring programs for young people that model respectful engagement with others; interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships; youth leadership programs • Multilingual printed communication materials (guides, booklets) for people with sufficient literacy and multilingual DVDs respectively distributed and shown directly before and after arrival in Australia (during education activities) to provide information about respectful relationships, Family Violence Provisions, work rights • Workplace regulations that compel workplaces to support cultural diversity and allow employees to complain about violence without fear of losing jobs • Workplace training for employers about prevention of workplace violence • Workplace education for employees about workplace violence, their rights in the workplace and their options for addressing violence
Newly-arrived women: *Family migration (spouse, parent)*	• Leadership training, mentoring and resources for settled women, identified as possessing leadership potential or who are respected leaders, to provide knowledge, skills and self-confidence for leadership of, and active participation in, violence prevention efforts • Multilingual printed communication materials (guides, booklets) for women with sufficient literacy and multilingual DVDs respectively distributed and shown directly before and after arrival in Australia (during education activities) to inform women about violence-related issues such as Family Violence Provisions • Community forums held regularly to raise awareness of violence against women and promote respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, reinforced by multi-media communication campaigns for wider community (may also reach partners and/or family members of women) • Gender-specific bilingual health education programs for women after arrival in Australia • For children of visa holders: school-based education programs for children that focus on positive living, development and engagement with others; education programs for young people (gender-specific or with gender-specific components), with a focus on respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health, delivered in educational institutions; gender-specific education for young men to model positive expressions of masculinity; gender-specific mentoring programs for young people that model respectful engagement with others; interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships; youth leadership programs • Changes to immigration legislation that include threat of deportation under definition of *relevant family violence* and that prevent men with a proven history of violence against women from sponsoring women to travel to Australia on spouse visas; stricter background checks into men seeking to sponsor women to travel to Australia on spouse visas

Table 3: A framework for the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia contd

	Key recommended violence prevention strategies
Newly-arrived women: *Subclass 457 visa*	• Changes to immigration legislation to extend Family Violence Provisions to women who are primary and secondary visa holders and ensure women experiencing violence can access relevant supports and/or the right to apply for another visa, where appropriate • Australia to ratify the *Migrant Workers Convention* in recognition of the contribution of temporary immigrant workers to the Australian economy, strengthen existing laws to eradicate exploitation of workers, increase protection from violence and demonstrate Australia's commitment to human rights • Workplace regulations that compel workplaces to support cultural diversity and allow employees to complain about violence without fear of losing jobs • Workplace training for employers about prevention of workplace violence • Workplace education for employees about workplace violence, their rights in the workplace and their options for addressing violence • Community forums held regularly to raise awareness of violence against women and promote respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, reinforced by multi-media communication campaigns for wider community (may also reach partners and/or family members of women) • Multilingual printed communication materials (guides, booklets) for people with sufficient literacy and multilingual DVDs respectively distributed and shown directly before and after arrival in Australia (during education activities) to provide information about work rights • <u>For children of visa holders:</u> school-based education programs for children that focus on positive living, development and engagement with others; education programs for young people (gender-specific or with gender-specific components), with a focus on respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health, delivered in educational institutions; gender-specific education for young men to model positive expressions of masculinity; interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships
Newly-arrived women: *Student*	• Changes to immigration legislation to extend Family Violence Provisions to women who are primary and secondary visa holders and ensure women experiencing violence can access relevant supports and/or the right to apply for another visa, where appropriate • *Minimum Standards for International Student Welfare* to be made mandatory through incorporation into legislation • Education forums (gender-specific or with gender-specific components) for international students, with a focus on respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health, delivered at educational institutions (such as schools, universities, vocational training colleges); gender-specific education for young men to model positive expressions of masculinity • Interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships • Gender-specific mentoring programs for international students that model equitable relationships and respectful engagement with others • Multilingual printed communication materials (guides, booklets) and multilingual DVDs respectively distributed and shown directly before and after arrival in Australia (during education forums and via mentoring programs) • <u>For children of visa holders:</u> school-based education programs for children that focus on positive living, development and engagement with others; education programs for young people (gender-specific or with gender-specific components) with a focus on healthy relationships delivered in educational institutions, with gender-specific education for young men to also model positive expressions of masculinity; interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships

Table 3: A framework for the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia contd

	Key recommended violence prevention strategies
Newly-arrived women: *Bridging visa*	• Changes to immigration legislation to extend Family Violence Provisions to women who are primary and secondary visa holders and ensure women experiencing violence can access relevant supports and/or the right to apply for another visa, where appropriate • Community forums held regularly to raise awareness of violence against women and promote respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, reinforced by multi-media communication campaigns for wider community (may also reach partners and/or family members of women) • For visa holders with work rights: workplace regulations that compel workplaces to support cultural diversity and allow employees to complain about violence without fear of losing jobs; workplace training for employers about prevention of workplace violence; workplace education for employees about workplace violence and their options for addressing violence • For children of visa holders: school-based education programs for children that focus on positive living, development and engagement with others; education programs for young people (gender-specific or with gender-specific components), with a focus on respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health, delivered in educational institutions, with gender-specific education for young men to also model positive expressions of masculinity; interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships
Women from well-established communities	• Leadership training, mentoring and resources women and men from well-established communities, identified as possessing leadership potential or who are respected leaders, to provide the knowledge, skills and self-confidence for leadership of, and active participation in violence prevention efforts, particularly those that support cultural change in their communities in relation to gender equality • Community forums held regularly to raise awareness of violence against women and promote respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, reinforced by multi-media communication campaigns for wider community (may also reach partners and/or family members of women) • Gender-specific bilingual health education programs for women and men that include discussion about respectful relationships; gender-specific programs for women to incorporate violence prevention education as part of a holistic programs on women's health and wellbeing, while programs for men to model positive expressions of masculinity • Multilingual printed communication materials distributed after, and multilingual DVDs shown during education activities to reinforce key messages
Women in precarious employment	• Workplace regulations that compel workplaces to support cultural diversity and allow employees to complain about violence without fear of losing jobs; workplace training for employers about prevention of workplace violence; workplace education for employees about workplace violence, their rights in the workplace and their options for addressing violence; increased regulation and monitoring of workplaces of trafficked women
Visible minority women	• Leadership training, mentoring and resources for visible minority women identified as possessing leadership potential or who are existing leaders, to provide the knowledge, skills and self-confidence for leadership of, and active participation in violence prevention efforts, especially those that aim to prevent racism, dispel myths about minority groups and promote respect for cultural diversity • Workplace regulations that compel workplaces to support cultural diversity and allow employees to complain about violence without fear of losing jobs • Workplace training for employers about prevention of workplace violence • Workplace education for employees about workplace violence, their rights in the workplace and their options for addressing violence

Table 3: A framework for the primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia contd

	Key recommended violence prevention strategies
Young women	- Leadership training, mentoring and resources for young women, identified as possessing leadership potential or who are respected leaders, to provide knowledge, skills and self-confidence for leadership of, and active participation in, violence prevention efforts, including constructive cross-generational dialogue with older members of their communities and their peers about violence prevention - Education forums and/or programs (gender-specific or with gender-specific components) for young people, with a focus on respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health, delivered at educational institutions; gender-specific education for young men to model positive expressions of masculinity - Gender-specific mentoring programs for young people that model equitable relationships as well as respectful engagement with others - Interactive, multilingual social media-based communication campaigns for young people about respectful relationships - Multilingual printed communication materials (guides, booklets) to young people with sufficient literacy (distributed during education activities)
All groups of immigrant and refugee women	Some strategies are applicable to, or can reach all priority groups of immigrant and refugee women, their partners and families. These include: - High-quality and comprehensive quantitative and qualitative research within immigrant and refugee communities to determine the prevalence and dynamics of violence against women, including the influence of immigration-related factors on women's vulnerability to violence (for women on all visas) - High-quality and in-depth research, underpinned by well-designed evaluation frameworks, to determine the effectiveness of violence prevention strategies - An Australia-wide mapping exercise of previous and existing violence prevention strategies - Regular collation and updating of research findings in a central clearinghouse that acknowledges and addresses cultural diversity; dissemination of research findings to agencies and organisations involved in violence prevention efforts - Multi-media communication campaigns, directed at the wider community, that highlight the value of cultural diversity and foster social inclusion for immigrant and refugee communities, particularly those that are new and emerging - Multi-media communication campaigns, specifically tailored to each immigrant and refugee community, about the dynamics of respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, delivered via ethnic media (television, newspapers, radio) - Multilingual internet-based information for people with sufficient literacy, access to computers and computing skills - Professional development, including regular training, resources and interagency collaboration/networking, for staff in agencies and organisations engaged in violence prevention efforts, that builds capacity to develop, deliver and evaluate culturally-appropriate strategies - Resourcing and training of media professionals to accurately report multicultural issues and portray ethnic communities - Laws and regulations that prevent misreporting of multicultural issues - Federal multicultural policy that focuses on equal access for all Australians to education, employment, health, justice, leadership *inter alia* - National human rights legislation (Bill of Rights) that acknowledges and promotes tolerance for all facets of social diversity (age, gender, ethnicity, class, disability, sexual identity, religion) and national racial and religious tolerance legislation - Broad legislative and policy review that considers laws and policies directly and indirectly related to violence against women (such as workplace, education, employment, tenancy)

CHAPTER 4:   CHANGE IS ON HER WAY

Primary prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women will involve major cultural and social change. A significant challenge is meeting the diverse needs across and within immigrant and refugee communities. The level of understanding about violence against women and the ability and willingness of individual communities to engage in dialogue about and to address this issue differ significantly. Violence prevention efforts must consider this disparity if they are to be effective and will most likely begin at different points and progress at different rates across communities. In time, it is imperative that all communities possess the same level of understanding about violence against women and have equal ability to engage in discussion with the whole Australian community, not only their own communities, about violence prevention strategies.

Changing long-held attitudes, beliefs, policies and practices that maintain the oppression of immigrant and refugee women will not occur overnight. Consequently, long-term stakeholder commitment (particularly from governments) is essential to generating and maintaining change. Furthermore, significant and continuous investment—time, money, human resources—is required for violence prevention efforts to be effective and their outcomes to be sustainable in the long term. Without continued investment, violence against immigrant and refugee women is expected to cost the Australian economy in excess of $4 billion by 2021-2022 (National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009). Investment in the following actions is required to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia:

4.1   Research, monitoring and evaluation

➤   A solid evidence base on the prevention of violence against immigrant and refugee women needs to be developed. More specifically,
   o   High-calibre research, conducted within immigrant and refugee communities, which provides an overview of the prevalence and dynamics of violence against women is required;
   o   High-quality and in-depth formative research (including piloting), underpinned by well-designed evaluation frameworks, into effective violence prevention strategies and their dynamics is also necessary, but strategies require long-term funding to ensure comprehensive evaluations are undertaken. Evaluation should be mandatory for all strategies, and not be tied to competitive funding processes. The evaluation capacity of agencies and organisations engaged in violence prevention efforts also needs to be developed to enable thorough evaluation of strategies;
   o   A comprehensive mapping exercise designed to collect information about previous or existing violence prevention strategies across Australia would enable greater understanding of the extent and dynamics of violence prevention efforts;
   o   A central clearinghouse which collates and maintains evidence on violence prevalence and effective prevention strategies would reduce the need to locate data from a variety of sources, allow for the wide dissemination of research findings to agencies and organisations involved in violence prevention efforts and ensure future strategies are evidence-based.

4.2 Advocacy

➤ Genuine leadership is required to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women. A representation of influential and respected immigrant and refugee community leaders—female, male, youth—from a range of professional backgrounds are required to publicly denounce violence against women and contribute to community education efforts. Involving a variety of respected community leaders would create balance in violence prevention efforts.

➤ Consultation with individual immigrant and refugee communities is essential in the identification of appropriate leaders within each community to participate in violence prevention efforts and would ensure that identified leaders are truly representative of, respected by and listened to by their communities.

➤ Immigrant and refugee women and their representative groups and organisations need to be the instigators of cultural change and be at the forefront of violence prevention efforts, whilst collaborating with all identified community leaders to collectively advocate for gender equality and an end to violence against women.

4.3 Community strengthening

➤ Leadership development programs, which involve theoretical and experiential training, mentoring and resources, should be utilised in violence prevention efforts. These programs will support and enable community leaders to publicly acknowledge the occurrence of violence against women in their communities; encourage their communities to respond; promote respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships; and demand respect and equality for women.

4.4 Communication and social marketing

➤ Culturally-appropriate violence prevention initiatives are necessary to increase community awareness of violence against women. Utilisation of a variety of communication and social marketing strategies, such as community forums, electronic media, printed communication materials and multi-media communication campaigns, is essential in consideration of the diversity within and across immigrant and refugee communities, and would ensure increased access to significant proportions of these communities.

➤ Consultation with individual immigrant and refugee communities is important to ensure that violence prevention messages, visuals, language and strategies are tailored to each community. A 'one-size-fits-all' approach to violence prevention will not work across communities. Initiatives based on community feedback will generate greater participation and uptake of messages.

➤ Violence prevention initiatives for immigrant and refugee communities must deliver constructive messages about, and present positive images of healthy relationships, families and communities, and not of abused women and children.

4.5 Direct participation programs

➢ Direct participation programs are needed to capitalise and expand on the messages of communication and social marketing strategies.

➢ Direct participation programs for immigrant and refugee children and young people that should be implemented include school-based programs that focus on positive development and engagement with others (for older children) and respectful relationships (for young people). Youth mentoring programs could also be implemented to educate young people, particularly those who are newly-arrived, about respectful gender relations.

➢ Bilingual health education should be used to deliver gender-specific education to women and men from ethnic communities. This model of education is culturally-appropriate as trained bilingual health educators or facilitators deliver education sessions to participants in their own languages in familiar settings.

➢ Gender-specific education programs for immigrant and refugee women need to inform them about respectful gender relations and healthy family relationships, highlight that violence is always unacceptable, empower women to prevent violence against them and build their capacity to prevent violence against other women in their communities.

➢ Gender-specific education programs for newly-arrived immigrant and refugee men need to be delivered during settlement to provide men with the knowledge and skills to adapt to changing gender and family roles in their new country. Education programs for all immigrant and refugee men need to positively challenge traditional notions of masculinity. Respected men supportive of violence prevention and gender equality must be involved in the development and/or delivery of these education programs.

➢ Parenting programs need to be delivered to newly-arrived parents during settlement to support child-rearing in a new culture. These programs should focus on constructive parenting practices that cement messages about healthy family relationships and the equal importance of female and male children.

4.6 Organisational and workforce development

➢ Efforts designed to prevent violence against immigrant and refugee women should be the responsibility of, or greatly involve multicultural and/or ethno-specific agencies and organisations. Mainstream agencies and organisations that seek to engage in violence prevention efforts for immigrant and refugee communities should be required to so only in equal collaboration with multicultural and/or ethno-specific counterparts.

➢ Organisational capacity to address violence prevention could be achieved through the delivery of professional training and resources, and collaborative networks, to facilitate dialogue about strategies and lessons learned from violence prevention efforts.

➢ Resourcing and training for media professionals about multicultural issues in Australia would ensure ethical media reporting of these issues and the accurate portrayal of immigrant and refugee communities and their contribution to Australian society.

➢ Workplace interventions, including greater workplace regulation and monitoring, employee education and support, employer training, and improved support for diversity in workplaces, are needed to prevent workplace violence against immigrant and refugee women.

4.7 Legislative and policy reform

➢ National human rights legislation, a Bill of Rights, that acknowledges and promotes tolerance for all facets of social diversity (age, gender, culture, ethnicity, class, disability, sexual identity, religion), in conjunction with a national racial and religious tolerance legislation, would consolidate Australia's commitment to the elimination of discrimination and racism, and to the strengthening of multiculturalism.

➢ Multicultural policies need to ensure equal access for all Australians to education, employment, health, justice, leadership positions *inter alia*; accordingly, implementation of these policies should be substantial to generate equitable immigrant and refugee participation in Australian society.

➢ Laws and regulations that prevent misreporting of multicultural issues need to be considered.

➢ Relevant legislation and policies that may affect immigrant and refugee women's experiences of violence, particularly those pertaining to immigration, education, employment, need to be identified, reviewed and amended. The legal reform process needs to investigate legislative changes that would prevent violence against women from occurring in the first instance.

➢ Possible legislative changes that could be considered include: prohibiting men with a proven history of violence against all women (not only previously-sponsored women) from sponsoring women to immigrate to Australia on spouse visas; including the threat of deportation as an act of violence in the Family Violence Provisions; extending Family Violence Provisions to women on all temporary visas and allowing these women to access relevant supports and/or the right to apply for another visa, where appropriate, if they are experiencing violence; and incorporating the *Minimum Standards of International Student Welfare* into legislation.

➢ Australia should ratify the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families* to: acknowledge the significant contribution of temporary immigrant workers to the Australian economy; strengthen existing laws to eradicate exploitation of these workers; increase protection from violence; and demonstrate internationally Australia's commitment to human rights for all individuals settled in Australia, irrespective of visa status.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: *On Her Way:* **Contributing agencies and organisations**

Individuals and professionals with knowledge of and/or expertise in dealing with immigrant and refugee women, especially women experiencing violence, were invited to contribute to this publication via membership of the advisory committee and/or participation in a half-day service provider workshop or an individual consultation. Representatives from the following agencies and organisations contributed to this publication:

1.   African Think Tank
2.   Australian Human Rights Commission
3.   Australian Vietnamese Women's Association
4.   Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health
5.   Centre for Multicultural Youth
6.   Darebin City Council
7.   Department of Human Services (Victoria)
8.   Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Commonwealth)
9.   Hobart City Council
10. Hobsons Bay City Council (Youth Services)
11. Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service (became inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence in November 2010)
12. Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria (became Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights in April 2011)
13. Jewish Taskforce against Family Violence
14. Maribyrnong City Council
15. Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)
16. Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia
17. Monash University (Health, Wellbeing and Development Unit)
18. Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra
19. Muslim Women's Support Centre of Western Australia
20. Murdoch Children's Research Institute
21. North Yarra Community Health
22. Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE
23. Office of Women's Policy (Victoria)
24. Project Respect
25. Relationships Australia (Victoria)
26. Royal Women's Hospital
27. Russian Ethnic Representative Council of Victoria
28. South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre
29. Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre
30. Victorian Arabic Social Services
31. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)
32. Victorian Multicultural Commission
33. Victorian Women's Trust
34. Western Region Health Centre
35. Women's Health Victoria
36. Women's Health West

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