



Designing the National Approach to Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Communities

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About KIN Disability Advocacy (formerly EDAC):

KIN Disability Advocacy formerly (EDAC) is Western Australia's peak not-for-profit organisation advocating for the rights of people with disability, from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background and their family and carers.

KIN Disability Advocacy is a member of the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA).

KIN Disability Advocacy currently receives recurrent funding from the Australian Department of Social Services (DSS) and the WA Department of Communities Disability Services (DS).

KIN Disability Advocacy delivers individual and systemic advocacy services in WA's metropolitan, regional, and remote areas. This includes state-wide CALD advocacy services and individual generalist advocacy to WA's North -West region (Kimberley and Pilbara).

Additional project funding is used to deliver human rights-based self-advocacy training for people with disability and their families/carers.

KIN Disability Advocacy operates a Digital Communication Project funded by the DSS, which addresses the intersection of disability and ethnicity in relation to various aspects such as services, policies, legislation, and more.

KIN Disability Advocacy generates additional income by providing cultural competency training to the disability services sector. The delivery of this training adheres to the National Disability Services Standards.

KIN Disability Advocacy expresses its gratitude for the opportunity to offer comments in response to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Plan.



Executive Summary

This submission presents a detailed analysis of the challenges and opportunities for addressing Family, Domestic, and Sexual Violence (FDSV) within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, emphasising the importance of culturally safe, community-driven, and trauma-informed approaches. The insights are informed by KIN's extensive work in delivering disability advocacy services in the Kimberley region, focusing on systemic issues, barriers to reporting, and the intersectionality of challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.

Key themes include the need for community-led responses to FDSV, early intervention strategies, strengthened legal frameworks, and improved service coordination. Recommendations are framed around creating platforms for community action, expanding culturally appropriate programs, addressing systemic biases within the justice system, and fostering holistic, intersectional support that considers the broader socio-economic context. Additionally, the submission underscores Australia's obligations under international human rights conventions and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aligning these with the national commitment to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.



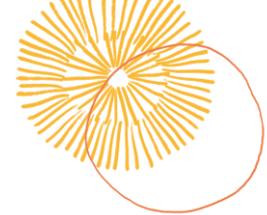
1. Submission Questions and Responses

1.1 Question 1: What are the key priorities and actions the Family Safety Plan should focus on to create real and sustainable change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families?

Achieving real and sustainable change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families entails investing in culturally appropriate and community-led solutions that address the barriers and challenges faced. Cultural relativism provides the necessary lens to identify aspects that must be prioritised in the development of Family Safety Plans and highlights the importance of traditions, values and connection to land and community. The delivery of culturally safe services ensures that the prominent position held by culture is recognised and serves as a driving force. Given that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children are disproportionately affected by family violence, prioritising their safety, wellbeing and empowerment is paramount. The completion of a Family Safety Plan for and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities demands the acknowledgement that there is a right of self-determination. Moreover, intergenerational trauma stemming from colonisation, dispossession of land and ongoing systemic racism is an integral part of the life experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people(s). Attaining change must therefore address this issue by focusing on healing and support by implementing trauma-informed approaches recognising the impact of historical trauma.

Addressing FDSV requires contextualisation and an examination of the nexus between family violence and other social issues that may include housing insecurity, poverty, mental health and substance use. Placing FDSV within broader social, emotional and economic challenges provides the foundation for holistic supports that include wraparound services like mental health care, housing assistance and employment opportunities for affected families.

To create real and sustainable change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, the Family Safety Plan must be community-driven, culturally safe, and holistic in its approach. Addressing the root causes of violence, intergenerational trauma and economic disadvantage, while strengthening legal responses and promoting self-determination, is key to achieving lasting change.



1.2 Question 2: If there were no barriers, how would your community address FDSV?

Effective tackling of FDSV combines community-driven leadership, empowerment through self-determination and the opportunity to take full leadership of family violence interventions, policy development and service delivery with Aboriginal-controlled organisations at the forefront. Schools and community centres offering education on healthy relationships, respect and non - violence grounded in traditional values could contribute to preventative education and early intervention. Along with community education programs raising awareness on the impacts of FDSV, Elder-led mentorship could contribute to supporting younger people to build strong family ties and understand their roles in preventing violence and resolving conflicts peacefully.

Without barriers to address FDSV, kinship and community networks could be strengthened, enabling kinship networks and communities to work collectively to support families in crisis. From this perspective, community responsibility is favoured, and family violence would be perceived as a community issue whereby everyone can play a role in fostering a culture of non-violence.

Removing bureaucratic barriers and access to funding and resources minimising “red tape”, may support the implementation of initiatives that improve economic growth, providing opportunities for employment, education and housing hence reducing stressors linked to violence. The absence of systemic barriers such as underfunding and bureaucratic obstacles would allow for meaningful, sustainable change that emphasises healing, prevention, and community empowerment.

1.3 Question 3: What does culturally appropriate and holistic service provision look and feel like?

Culturally appropriate and holistic service provision centres on providing services that are not only responsive to the immediate needs of survivors but also integrated with cultural practices, values, and community support systems ensuring safety needs can be addressed in an environment that fosters healing, and empowerment.



Service providers understanding and respecting cultural protocols; women and children feeling respected, understood and valued for their identity, heritage and customs. Additionally, cultural competency training for all staff would help create culturally safe spaces for women and children.

Appropriate and holistic service provision would prioritise cultural healing practices and integrate these practices into service delivery (such as counselling, therapy and support groups) strengthening cultural identity. Flexible, accessible, and non-judgmental service delivery would promote cultural safety. For instance, mobile services for women and children living in remote or rural areas. Ensuring equity of access to more specialised services such as counselling, legal support, and crisis intervention services is critical.

1.4 Question 4: How can governments and mainstream services best support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (including workforce and clients), services and solutions?

Governments and mainstream services can play a crucial role in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including both workforce and clients, as well as their services and solutions. One of the main issues that the government should address to best support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, is systemic racism and discrimination.

Tackling institutional racism requires a comprehensive review of policies, procedures, and practices to identify and eliminate biases that result in unequal treatment. Systemic bias can lead to mistrust of mainstream services, impacting access to essential healthcare, education, and support services. Governments and service providers need to undertake a transparent audit of their systems to identify areas where discrimination occurs and implement reforms that promote equitable access and treatment. Education for staff across all sectors is critical in challenging issues such as racism, unconscious biases and discriminatory behaviours that impact on Aboriginal people.

Challenges in addressing systemic racism include deep-seated biases, resistance to change within institutions, and a lack of resources dedicated to implementing comprehensive reforms.



Systemic racism is often entrenched, making it difficult to identify and dismantle without strong political and community will.

Possible solutions include the adoption of cultural safety frameworks that prioritise Aboriginal perspectives and leadership in service delivery, engaging Aboriginal people from local communities to lead and guide the process of identifying and eliminating biases. Establishing accountability mechanisms, such as regular monitoring and reporting on progress, can also help ensure that reforms lead to real change. Institutions can promote community-driven approaches, providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people(s) opportunities to have a greater input into how services are delivered and evaluated, fostering trust and collaboration. Additionally, the government must support Aboriginal-led solutions and leadership.

1.5 Question 5: How should the service system respond to the intersectional needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities?

To effectively address the intersectional needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, the service system must be multifaceted and deeply embedded in culturally appropriate practices. This begins with culturally safe and trauma-informed approaches that recognise the historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation, trauma, and systemic discrimination. These approaches involve fostering environments where Aboriginal people feel respected and valued. A trauma-informed service system should not only avoid re-traumatisation but also actively support the healing of intergenerational trauma, ensuring that every interaction acknowledges past injustices and builds trust.

Equally important is the need for holistic and integrated service delivery, which goes beyond addressing a single issue and considers the individual's entire context, including physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. This requires seamless coordination between healthcare, education, social services, and legal assistance to offer comprehensive support that meets a wide array of needs simultaneously. In addition, it's crucial to consider the unique needs that arise from the intersection of gender, age, and disability. The service system must be responsive to these challenges, providing culturally appropriate support that empowers and protects vulnerable groups.



A cornerstone of effective service provision is collaboration with Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), which are best positioned to lead culturally relevant and community-specific solutions. These organisations have a deep understanding of local needs, cultural protocols, and strengths within Aboriginal communities, enabling them to deliver more effective and trusted services.

2. KIN's Analysis and Recommendations

2.1 Communities and Local Actions

As an agency delivering disability advocacy services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Kimberley region, KIN has collected important data on arising and recurring individual and systemic issues within local communities. By harnessing this information, we gained a better understanding of the challenges and complexities facing the communities in this region. Empowering communities to take charge of their own responses to family violence is key to making lasting change. This can be achieved through funding community-led prevention initiatives. These initiatives could provide a foundation to address and mitigate stigma. For instance, it was reported to KIN that a young Aboriginal woman who lived in the Kimberley region lost her life because no one sought out help during a domestic violence incident. This inaction stemmed from a fear of family feuding and payback and led to this tragedy. Considering this, it is our view that efforts should be made to encourage community responses which would also contribute to destigmatising FDSV.

Recommendations:

- Providing grants for community-driven projects that address family violence such as Changing Em Ways Men's Behavioural Change Program. This program delivered in Broome is designed for Aboriginal men who wish to stop using violence.
- Establishing local Aboriginal led decision-making committees in each region to actively shape local family violence policies and services.
- Building partnerships between all tiers of governments and traditional owner groups, ensuring that programs are co-designed with a deep respect for the local cultural context.



2.2 Early Intervention and Prevention

Early intervention programs that provide culturally sensitive support to at-risk families can prevent the escalation of family violence. Prevention initiatives should target not only women and children but also men and boys, focusing on promoting respectful relationships and non-violent behaviour. KIN believes that prevention programs should align with Target 13 by focusing on long-term solutions that address the root causes of violence, such as poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Early intervention strategies should work with at-risk families before violence occurs, offering culturally appropriate parenting support and conflict resolution programs. A proactive approach to the issue of FDSV would contribute to the empowerment and self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Recommendations:

- Expanding existing early intervention programs, ensuring they are culturally adapted to include Aboriginal concepts of family.
- Creating school-based education programs in partnership with Aboriginal Elders that teach respect, conflict resolution, and non-violence to young people.
- Developing parenting workshops that focus on both mothers and fathers, offering tools to resolve conflicts without violence and providing culturally appropriate resources on trauma, substance abuse, and family resilience.
- Developing education and awareness campaigns to educate both men and women about healthy relationships, gender equality, and the impacts of violence on children.

2.3 Strengthening Legal and Policy Frameworks

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap calls for justice reinvestment initiatives that address the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system, which is closely tied to FDSV. Target 13 supports reforming the legal system to make it more accessible and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children. In WA, the Aboriginal Family Law Service (AFLS) provides essential legal support to women



facing FDSV. However, systemic barriers, such as mistrust of the police and courts, remain. Closing the Gap requires working to remove these barriers by introducing community-driven justice mechanisms.

Recommendations:

- Investing in restorative justice programs where perpetrators of violence undergo community-led healing processes, which are centred on accountability, family reconciliation, and rehabilitation.
- Consistent with Target 13, the legal system must be made more accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. This includes reforming processes around obtaining protection orders, making legal support services culturally safe, and ensuring that Aboriginal women are not deterred from seeking help due to fear of child protection interventions, which based on our observations is a considerable barrier.
- As outlined in Priority 4, governments must ensure transparency and accountability in the delivery of FDSV services. Data collection on family violence rates, police responses, and service outcomes should be shared with Aboriginal communities to promote accountability and improve service provision. KIN was informed of an instance whereby it took the police an hour to attend a domestic violence incident. There did not seem to be any plausible reason for this delay, nor any follow up. An illustration of the need for systemic accountability.

2.4 Addressing Underreporting

KIN finds that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women do not report family violence due to fear of child removal, mistrust of police, or shame. The establishment of safe, non-judgmental reporting pathways that offer culturally appropriate support from the moment a report is made is a crucial step to reduce the fear and stigma that surround FDSV.

Recommendations:

- Partnering with Aboriginal health and legal services to establish community-based reporting centres where women can report family violence to trusted community members, such as Elders or Aboriginal health workers, rather than directly to the police.



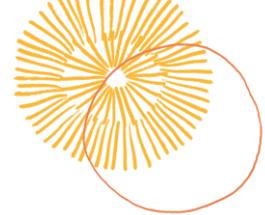
- Developing anonymous reporting tools that can be accessed online or through community hubs, allowing women to report incidents without fear of retaliation or systemic repercussions.
- Training police officers in Aboriginal liaison units to ensure they handle family violence reports with cultural sensitivity, understanding the potential fear of reporting due to historical and ongoing systemic discrimination.

2.5 Intersectionality and Service Coordination

The National Agreement recognises the intersectionality of issues such as housing, mental health, and justice, which are all linked to FDSV. Target 13 encourages reducing violence by addressing these interconnected factors. Many Aboriginal families facing violence also experience housing instability, substance use, and systemic discrimination. Closing the Gap initiatives must provide holistic services that address these multiple challenges.

Recommendations:

- Recognising that intergenerational trauma, colonisation, and past policies like the Stolen Generations are deeply intertwined with family violence, therefore FDSV approaches must be trauma informed.
- Intersectoral Collaboration to addressing family violence cannot be done in isolation. However, KIN finds that services often operate in siloes, neglecting intersections hence increasing challenges in already very complex situations. The case of a client supported by KIN uncovered a lack of collaboration and recognition of intersections. A mother of three children, including one child with a disability having high support needs were residing in the Far North of Western Australia. Due to family and domestic violence, they left this area and by doing so lost all their informal supports. Leaving this area was inevitable for this client because of safety concerns and the potential of having her children removed if she remained in the area. With assistance from a Women’s Family and Domestic Violence service, the family was able to access refuge accommodation. This client self-referred to KIN because whilst there were funded supports and a plan in place for her child with a disability, the client had been advised that she could not access these supports whilst she was “homeless”. The advocate allocated to work with



the family liaised with the funding body to challenge their view that services could not be provided to the client in the current circumstances. The advocate also worked with the funding body to address their concerns about the issue of homelessness. Once that issue had been resolved, the advocate liaised with refuge staff and service providers to ensure that the child had access to appropriate supports delivered with attention to safety planning for all parties involved whilst the family were residing in the refuge. This case provided a clear illustration of the siloed approach adopted by services and a lack of understanding of the intersections involved when it comes to FDSV. Evidently without the support of an advocate, this child would have been deprived of essential supports.

2.6 Long-Term, Sustainable Funding

Referring to the Kimberley region and Broome in particular, KIN observes a lack of Aboriginal-led refuges, shelters, and support services that address FDSV, markedly there is only one refuge in Broome with limited beds. FDSV victims often must move to Perth or the eastern states to be safe. Such a situation implies losing connections to family and Country sometimes permanently. Local governments should prioritise funding for Aboriginal-controlled organisations that provide family violence services. These organisations already possess culturally safe frameworks and have deep community connections, making them better equipped to handle the sensitive nature of family violence in Aboriginal communities. Building capacity within Aboriginal communities for self-determined solutions is key.

Recommendations:

- Increasing financial support for Aboriginal-led services and programs that specialise in family violence prevention and recovery.
- Mandating that all contracts awarded to mainstream service providers require collaboration with Aboriginal organisations to ensure cultural competency and community engagement.
- Expanding funding for Aboriginal-controlled organisations and support Aboriginal women's legal services, community-controlled health services, and culturally specific housing services.



3. Human Rights

Australia's commitment to addressing FDSV affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is guided by its obligations under several international human rights conventions. These agreements, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), outline specific rights and protections against gender-based violence and discrimination, emphasising the need for culturally appropriate and equitable interventions. Additionally, documents like the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) call for self-determination, non-discrimination, and access to justice for Indigenous communities. While Australia has ratified many of these conventions, gaps remain, which limits oversight of institutions impacting Indigenous families. These international frameworks, alongside the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provide a foundation for developing a Family Safety Plan that prioritises culturally safe, comprehensive, and rights-based responses to violence, ensuring that Indigenous women and children receive protection, justice, and support.

3.1 The Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Articles 2 and 5, CEDAW)

Australia, as a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), is obligated to take comprehensive measures to eliminate discrimination and violence against women. Under Article 2, Australia is required to ensure that discrimination is eradicated from all laws, policies, and practices, creating a legal framework that protects women from violence and promotes equality. Furthermore, Article 5 mandates that the country addresses the social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender-based violence, demanding proactive efforts to challenge harmful stereotypes and foster respect for women's rights. This is reinforced by CEDAW's General Recommendation 19 (1992), which explicitly identifies violence against women as a form of discrimination, highlighting the necessity of addressing both systemic and interpersonal violence. In the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, who experience disproportionately high rates of family violence, Australia's obligations under CEDAW are crucial for meeting Target 13 of the



National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which aims to reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in out-of-home care and ensure safe environments for women and children.

Despite these commitments, Australia faces significant challenges in fully implementing CEDAW's requirements. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women continue to encounter barriers to accessing justice and culturally safe services, indicating a gap between policy and practice. Structural inequities, including systemic racism and a lack of culturally informed service provision, hinder the effectiveness of current responses to family violence. To comply with its obligations, Australia must make targeted reforms in law enforcement, judiciary practices, and service delivery. This includes embedding culturally safe, trauma-informed approaches in mainstream and Indigenous-specific services, strengthening community-controlled organizations, and ensuring that policies are co-designed with Aboriginal women and their communities. A Family Safety Plan that aligns with CEDAW's mandates must prioritise these remedies to close the gap in protection and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, fulfilling Australia's international obligations.

3.2 Children's Right to Protection from Violence, Cultural Language and Traditions (Articles 19 and 30, CRC)

Australia's commitment under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) requires the government to take all necessary measures to protect children from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Article 19 of the CRC specifically mandates the protection of children from all forms of physical and psychological harm, placing an obligation on Australia to establish laws, policies, and support systems that safeguard children's well-being. Additionally, Article 30 highlights the rights of Indigenous children to maintain their culture, language, and traditions, emphasising the need for culturally sensitive approaches in child protection. Given the disproportionate rates of family violence affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, Australia must address these issues to meet the objectives of Target 13 under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which aims to ensure safe and nurturing environments for Indigenous children.

However, fully aligning with the CRC's requirements proves to be a challenge for Australia, particularly regarding the accessibility and cultural suitability of child protection services for



Aboriginal families. The overrepresentation of Indigenous children in out-of-home care and the lack of culturally appropriate family support options highlight Australia's shortcomings in fulfilling these obligations. Empowering Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations to take a central role in the design and implementation of the Family Safety Plan can address some of these shortcomings. Furthermore, enhancing training for child protection workers on Indigenous cultural competency and improving access to culturally safe early intervention services are crucial steps.

3.3 Right to Self-Determination and Protection from Violence (Articles 3, 5 and 22, UNDRIP)

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), adopted in 2007, asserts the rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination (Article 3) and to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures, and traditions (Article 5). It also emphasises the necessity of culturally appropriate responses to protect Indigenous women and children from violence (Article 22). These provisions align with the goals of Target 13 under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which seeks to ensure the safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children by promoting culturally informed and community-driven approaches to FDSV. UNDRIP underscores the importance of Indigenous involvement in decision-making processes that directly impact their communities, advocating for responses that are led by Aboriginal people themselves.

However, Australia has not formally ratified UNDRIP, which limits the nation's commitment to fully integrating these principles into domestic law. This lack of ratification has tangible consequences for Indigenous populations, as it hinders the widespread adoption of culturally safe practices and the empowerment of Aboriginal communities in shaping FDSV policies. The absence of a legally binding commitment to the principles of UNDRIP restricts the development of a family safety plan that genuinely centres the voices and needs of Indigenous women and children. Without formal recognition of their right to self-determination, Indigenous communities often face systemic barriers to accessing justice and support services that are culturally appropriate and effective. To address these gaps, Australia must go beyond symbolic support and take concrete steps to integrate the values of UNDRIP into its policies and practices.



3.4 Right to security of Person and Protection against Violence (Article 5, CERD)

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), adopted in 1965, mandates that signatory states take proactive steps to eliminate racial discrimination in all areas of life and to ensure equality before the law. Article 5 specifically requires states to safeguard the right to personal security and protection against violence, emphasising the need for special attention where racial discrimination exacerbates harm. For Australia, which is a signatory to CERD, this means taking comprehensive measures to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who often face intersectional discrimination based on both race and gender, particularly in the context of FDSV. These commitments are closely aligned with Target 13 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

While Australia has committed to CERD's principles, challenges remain in fully meeting its obligations, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Systemic racism and structural inequalities continue to affect access to justice, healthcare, and social services, leading to disproportionate levels of violence and disadvantage among Indigenous populations. To bridge these gaps, Australia must implement targeted strategies that exceed formal equality and actively dismantle systemic barriers. A truly effective family safety plan must prioritise culturally safe interventions, anti-racism training for service providers, and strong accountability mechanisms to ensure that Australia's obligations under CERD are not only acknowledged but realised in practice.

3.5 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5 and 6)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, provide a global blueprint for addressing critical social, economic, and environmental challenges. Two key goals directly relevant to FDSV are SDG 5 and SDG 16. SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality, specifically calling for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including within family contexts. SDG 16 seeks to foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies by reducing violence and ensuring access to justice for all, with a focus on protecting marginalized and vulnerable groups. In Australia, these goals are closely aligned with Target 13 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.



Australia has made strides toward fulfilling the SDGs, particularly in policy development and data collection regarding gender-based violence. However, challenges persist in achieving substantive outcomes, especially for Indigenous populations. Systemic inequities, limited access to culturally safe services, and persistent barriers within the justice system hinder progress. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women remain overrepresented in FDSV statistics, highlighting gaps in Australia's response to SDG 5 and 16. To improve its performance, Australia needs to strengthen its support for Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations, enhance culturally informed practices in mainstream services, and ensure that the voices of Indigenous communities guide the development and implementation of family safety plans.

Concluding Remarks

Australia has made considerable progress in recognizing the need to address FDSV within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. However, significant gaps remain in translating policy into practice, particularly in terms of culturally safe and community-led approaches. To close these gaps, there must be a commitment to long-term, sustainable funding for Aboriginal-controlled services, a focus on early intervention, and a shift toward community-driven solutions that respect Indigenous self-determination. The recommendations outlined in this submission aim to strengthen the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to lead these initiatives and ensure that all interventions are tailored to their unique cultural contexts.

Moreover, fulfilling international obligations under conventions like CEDAW, CRC, and UNDRIP requires concrete actions to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children, ensuring they receive the protection, justice, and support to which they are entitled. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), hinges on Australia's ability to address systemic inequities and enhance accountability in service delivery. The path forward involves a coordinated, intersectional approach that acknowledges the complex interplay of historical, social, and cultural factors contributing to FDSV in Indigenous communities. This submission calls for genuine partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities,



affirming that sustainable and effective change can only be achieved through collaboration and respect for Indigenous voices and expertise.

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