



**MULTICULTURAL
AUSTRALIA**

it's who we are

**A Stronger, More Diverse and Independent
Community Sector**

2023

7 November 2023

Department of Social Services
Canberra ACT 2601

Electronic Submission

Re: A stronger, more diverse and independent community sector

Multicultural Australia welcomes the current consultation on strengthening the community sector as a critical and urgent recognition of the front-line role community services play in supporting individuals, families, and communities in Australia. Community Sector Organisations (CSOs) are invested in enabling individuals and communities to thrive and reduce impacts of marginalisation or isolation through supporting community connections and fostering wellbeing. However, the sector as a whole is facing significant challenges in delivering services and supporting increasing community need.

Multicultural Australia welcomes the Australian Government's commitment to strengthening and supporting the sustainability of the community sector. The October 2022-23 Budget announcement providing an additional \$560 million over 4 years from 2022-23 to support CSOs (in recognition of the additional cost pressures from the Fair Work Commission's minimum wage decision, superannuation guarantee and higher inflation affecting CSOs, and their service delivery), ongoing adjustments to the indexation framework in the 2023-24 Budget to better align with changes in economic circumstances, and the \$14.6 billion cost-of-living package in the 2023-24 Budget are all welcome measures, supporting CSOs, their members, clients and communities. We commend the Government in honouring its electoral commitment provided to support a stronger, more diverse and independent community sector.

Multicultural Australia emerged from a community-based social movement to advance multiculturalism and build communities where everyone belongs. Since 1998, we have welcomed tens of thousands of individuals from refugee, asylum seeker, international student and migrant backgrounds, with the goal of creating a more equitable and prosperous society. Today, we are a multicultural for-purpose organisation and settlement provider with a strong and connected physical presence across metropolitan and regional Queensland.

Our clients and community are at the heart of everything we do, and we are passionate about providing care and services in person-centred and compassionate ways. We are also playing our part in influencing the multicultural landscape across Australia. Our journey over the past 25 years has been driven by our unwavering commitment to creating welcome, promoting inclusion, and fostering belonging for all. We achieve this through client service delivery, community development, advocacy, building cultural capability and community events, working with people, community, business and government. We are proud of the difference we make, and we are committed to delivering real impact.

Multicultural Australia considers the current consultation an important opportunity for the Government to hear from service providers, their members, people using CSOs and other experts. CSOs are varied in their reach, programs and service delivery. They are, however, united as essential services, supporting the inclusion of individuals and families in the broader community and supporting those experiencing hardship and disadvantage. Across the broad network of community services, we are keen to see these services better embedded in the communities they serve – through greater independence and ability to advocate on behalf their

clients and members, ability to deliver quality services through better designed and resourced services and improved governance and regulation.

Our intention in providing this submission is to highlight the experiences of diverse multicultural communities – issues that can lead to their social isolation and the barriers they may face in getting help to address these. The community services sector – government programs, grants and services - need to reflect and support an increasingly diverse and multicultural Australia.

Multicultural Australia is committed to highlighting their experiences and advocating the importance of including their voices in these important conversations. For any queries in relation to this submission, please contact [REDACTED], Research and Advocacy Manager, Multicultural Australia [REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission.

[REDACTED]

CEO, Multicultural Australia

Introduction

Multicultural Australia (MA) exists to create a welcoming and inclusive community for all. We strive to create a fairer, more prosperous society for all Queenslanders. We work to develop thriving communities for new and established Australians where everyone feels fulfilled, valued and safe and where others will be drawn to live. MA supports our clients and communities to overcome marginalisation and isolation within their own cultural and faith communities, and within the wider Australian public. As Queensland's leading settlement, advocacy, and community development organisation, we provide a range of programs and events, often in partnership with key services and sectors, to promote inclusion, connection and belonging for all with a focus on the engagement and integration of new arrivals, supporting them to access information, supports, and develop peer networks; subsequently overcoming marginalisation and preventing isolation.

As Queensland's Settlement Service Provider for refugees and migrants, MA is the first point of engagement for many new Queenslanders. We work with clients and communities supporting their development of self-agency, independence, wellbeing, and belonging in the community. Our comprehensive settlement and integration framework works across multiple domains. Our work is also informed by a deep commitment to understanding from our clients and multicultural communities with lived experience on what is important in settlement. This insight highlights that our clients seek a 'sense of belonging' in their local community. A striking and consistent feature of our engagement with clients and communities is the reiteration of the importance of social connections, including connections with the broader Australian community. However, our practice experience has found that people from refugee and immigrant backgrounds face greater barriers to accessing help to join community activities, make social connections, and creating a sense of belonging.

Individual and personal barriers can include limited financial resources, limited English literacy hindering engagement in education and employment and varying levels of competency with the systems and markets that govern service provision in Australia. A lack of rigorous and dedicated approaches to building resources that enable community members to build deeper connections with the Australian community and often unwelcoming (even discriminatory) systems that fail to respond to diverse communities can exacerbate these challenges. Additionally, the effects of the pandemic are still being felt, amplifying the cost-of-living pressures for vulnerable communities, who face particular challenges in accessing affordable housing, and employment opportunities, making their integration into Australian society more challenging.

MA has a long-established presence (25 years) as a community service provider, with State and Federal funded programs and services, and broad regional reach. Our programs cover a diversity of essential functions, including – humanitarian support, community development, job readiness and pathways to employment, youth-focused programs and aged care for CALD communities (Care Finder). Our services reach a diversity of clients including unaccompanied humanitarian minors (UHM), multicultural youth, women at risk, and seniors. Our continued presence and

existence as a leading community service in Queensland is through our commitment to quality services for our clients, our investment in community engagement and partnership, advocacy, and investment in skills and resources for our staff and leadership.

Our submission is based around the five focus areas identified for consultation:

1. Giving the sector the voice and respect it deserves through a meaningful working partnership.
2. Providing grants that reflect the real cost of delivering quality services.
3. Providing longer grant agreement terms.
4. Ensuring grant funding flows to a greater diversity of CSOs.
5. Partnering with trusted community organisations with strong local links.

Voice and respect to the sector through meaningful partnership

MA notes that voice and respect to the sector can only be achieved through authentic, equal and embedded partnerships between the government, the sector and service users (clients and communities). Elevating the voice of clients and service users needs to be a priority in government programs, grants, and services. MA strongly supports the creation of meaningful processes to co-design funding programs and services in close collaboration and partnership with the community sector (including their members and clients), utilising co-design processes. MA strongly supports foregrounding of community and client voices in the design of government services and highlights the benefits a co-design-based community engagement strategy can bring to building equitable, accessible, robust and resilient services that are systematically informed by service user needs, experiences and priorities. This is essential to ensure that government programs and services are accessible, are informed by the needs of their primary beneficiaries, and deliver improved outcomes for clients.

All Australians should be able to access Government programs and services equitably, regardless of their background. As our society becomes increasingly multicultural, we need measures that ensure the needs of all individuals and communities are met. Access and equity are critical, to ensure that individuals can actively participate in, and contribute to their communities and in return, can fully engage in a fair and inclusive society. The CoVID-19 pandemic made evident what is routinely discussed in the multicultural and settlement sector — that there is a systemic barrier of under-servicing for migrant and refugee communities in key areas, especially in the areas of health, disability, mental health, employment, housing, and family support¹. Culturally and linguistically diverse migrants' awareness of services, and the extent to which their needs are met by services, were all impacted by the pandemic. The gaps in service delivery systems for diverse communities (especially for those from non-English speaking backgrounds) suggest domains where current and future need may be building.

Voice and meaningful partnerships can be enabled through equitable opportunities to engage with programs and services – including through communication strategies and the effective design

¹ See, Weng E., Mansouri F., Vergani M. (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on delivery of services to CALD communities in Australia. ADI Policy Briefing Series 2(2). Melbourne: Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University.

of programs and services.

Communication strategies:

MA clients, staff and community members note persistent issues and difficulty around accessing language services and supports as well as the availability of critical government/service information in accessible formats. This is especially true for older adults for whom literacy may be a significant challenge. Resistance to interpreter engagement by essential services remains a critical risk to community health and wellbeing and impedes individuals' capacity for building on existing strengths and capacity for self-efficacy and agency. Key government programs, grants and services need detailed consideration of resourcing to engage the voice of service users – including through appropriate language and communication supports.

Design of government programs and services:

Current government programs and services across multiple sectors (health, mental health, employment etc.) do not address the varying and complex needs of a diverse Australia. As noted above, diverse communities face barriers to service access and equity. They can also face serious risk and harm, when services are not culturally inclusive, safe, trauma-informed or inclusive of the voices and perspectives which come from lived experience. In MA's practice, concepts of individual or consumer-directed service delivery or care does not easily incorporate cultural aspects, including the importance of family and community. Our service systems and approaches can be improved and made fit-for-purpose for our diversity by a careful co-design, consideration and expectation of the inclusion of client/community voice and lived experience.

Client and community voice – Multicultural Australia's model

MA's work is informed by a deep engagement with our clients and diverse communities to provide insight into what is important in settlement from those with lived experience. We have established mechanisms within our organisation to ensure client and community voice is embedded. These include:

Client Voice Reference Group (CVRG): established as a mechanism for persons with lived experience as a refugee or migrant to act as Advisors to our organisation in areas such as case management, employment, housing etc., and provide consultation and input into the design and delivery of our services and community development work. The Advisors are appropriately remunerated for their engagement. The Terms of Reference for the group specify that it is to include a diverse cross-section of ten to twelve representatives of the communities we support.

Future Leaders Advocacy Group (FLAG): comprising a driven group of young leaders who offer valuable insight and advice. Group members ensure the voice of newly arrived young people, their families, and community are heard through contributing to program design and delivery.

Community Leaders' Gatherings (CLG): a forum of leaders and representatives from new and emerging communities across the greater Brisbane region. These gatherings are led for and by community members, and serve as opportunities for training, information sharing and collaboration between community members.

In addition to coordinating established community groups, MA utilises a range of additional

methods in gathering community voices, including practice case studies, client stories and broader outreach at multicultural events and festivals. These engagement opportunities with clients and communities provide insights that may not always be available through a routine service delivery model.

As a priority, MA also engages with mainstream services and sectors to provide cultural capability training to assist their engagement with, and inclusion of diverse communities in their services. We also coordinate regional networks or Local Area Collaboratives (LACs) across key humanitarian settlement regions in Queensland. Key stakeholders at the LAC include services that have a role in achieving sustainable support and settlement outcomes for refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants across Queensland. The LACs aim to improve service coordination and cooperation between key stakeholders and thus, improve services to clients. The LACs provide a structured mechanism for service coordination and are a tool for high level strategic coordination of services.

Culturability Accreditation Framework

MA's Culturability Accreditation² is a framework that ensures organisations reflect the communities they serve and are inclusive, welcoming, and intentional about creating a sense of belonging for staff and service users of diverse backgrounds.

Culturability Accreditation is the first program of its kind in Australia for cultural diversity in the workplace. Through the process of in-depth research, community engagement and practical application, a set of standards have been developed to give organisations guidance on how they can meaningfully achieve welcome, connection, inclusion, and multiculturalism in their spaces — and be recognised for their contribution to building a society that is more equitable and culturally intelligent.

Comprised of 54 indicators under 5 key pillars, the standards provide a structured framework for organisations to demonstrate diversity and inclusion in meaningful ways. Organisations aiming to achieve Culturability Accreditation undertake a process of self-assessment, document preparation, onsite assessment and response to assessment findings – before their efforts are reviewed by an independent decision-maker, and they are awarded accreditation for a three-year period.

Inclusion strategies

MA invests significantly in supporting our clients and communities to build connections with the wider community – with a view to overcoming marginalisation. In our experience, opportunities for building and strengthening connections with the wider community are around – supporting

² See <https://culturability.com.au/>

meaningful community participation, increasing economic inclusion (through employment, training etc). and supporting anti-discrimination/racism and stigma interventions.

MA supports individual and group programs to create opportunities for participation in inclusive activities, events, sports, etc. In addition to our funded activities and programs to support new arrivals and refugees to Queensland, we work to create deliberate and purposeful connections for new arrivals – with communities of interest (spiritual, ethnic, community), and with places of interest (community centres, sporting clubs, libraries, etc.). We support community networks and associations – such as regular Community Leaders' Gatherings (see above) and partner with a network of community centres across Brisbane to create 'Welcome Hubs' where diverse multicultural community members can form connections and links.

Strengthening inclusion and participation in Australian society and economy requires a careful consideration of ways to address the many complex, interconnected and intersectional barriers faced by diverse communities. Through our service experience and community contact, we also remain aware that racism and discrimination continue to regularly occur in our community – with significant impacts on people's wellbeing and on their ability to participate in society. We equally remain aware that these incidents are largely underreported – due to a combination of factors like community confidence in reporting, lack of familiarity or understanding of available recourse etc. MA consistently engages in key national and state inquiries, campaigns and advocacy around the need to address racism and discrimination³.

Multicultural Australia's work to change the conversation

MA delivers key signature community events including the LUMINOUS Lantern Parade, LUMINOUS in the Neighbourhood, LUMINOUS in the Regions, and the MOSAIC Multicultural Festival.

MA's LUMINOUS Lantern Parade is an annual cultural spectacle of solidarity and support by the broader public, for people from diverse backgrounds, especially refugees, migrants and people seeking asylum. From a modest start, LUMINOUS has grown into an iconic Queensland event, hosting thousands of attendees and participants. In 2022, LUMINOUS expanded into Brisbane's suburbs and into the key Queensland Humanitarian settlement regions of Toowoomba, Rockhampton, and Cairns. Through Neighbourhood or regional events, and in partnership with key community centres or agencies, LUMINOUS engaged them in promoting inclusion and belonging, while celebrating the rich cultural traditions of the local diverse communities. The success of LUMINOUS in the Neighbourhood and LUMINOUS in the Regions attests to the importance of local community-based presence through planned and resourced hubs and community organisations and centres. The successful delivery of LUMINOUS and MOSAIC demonstrates that much can be done to bring people and communities together, using existing community assets.

According to the latest cultural diversity statistics from the Human Rights Commission, one in ten Australians believe that some races are inferior, or superior, to others. By promoting diversity as a strength using arts and culture, dance, and music, LUMINOUS is an authentic way to increase intercultural understanding and break down barriers to racial equity. 2023's

³ See Multicultural Australia submissions – Inquiry into Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes (2021); Submission to Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act (2022) and Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework (2023). See https://www.multiculturalaustralia.org.au/publications_and_resources - and available on request.

event survey showed that, after attending LUMINOUS, 86% of attendees believed that multiculturalism is good for Queensland.

Changing the Conversation Events

In 2023, MA in partnership with the Queensland Performing Arts Centre, is hosting Changing Conversations, a series of thought-provoking discussions exploring key issues in our increasingly multicultural society that all Australians must grapple with to create a more inclusive future. Our goal is to bring together thought leaders from academia, government, business and the community to engage in robust discussions about multiculturalism in the Australian context, exploring issues of who and where we are as a nation and what we need to do to create a society that better reflects and cares for all its people.

The range of events and activities highlighted here are only possible with the active support of government, corporate and community partners.

MA notes that there is currently limited Government-funded investment in a focused approach to community engagement and development, especially for migrants, refugees, and humanitarian entrants. There are no dedicated platforms for diverse community members to share their views and experiences and lead the transformation of services, attitudes, and ideas to inform a multicultural Australia. Engagement of community leaders and representatives in government programs, inquiries, discussions etc. can often be tokenistic or not accessible to specific need. Lack of consideration of appropriate remuneration for cultural advice and services is a significant oversight in the current approach to engagement with diverse communities.

The lack of diverse youth voices and perspectives hampers a future-focus to our programs and services. Young people – especially from migrant and refugee backgrounds often experience exclusion and isolation, which can compound trauma related to their displacement. This impacts on their sense of self, identity, etc, and can be a formative experience in terms of their inclusion in Australian society more broadly.

MA recommends recognising the importance of community engagement and community development work (in partnership with migrant and refugee communities); appropriate considerations for cultural voice and advice to inform policy; and a specific focus on youth voice and leadership.

Providing grants that reflect the real cost of delivering quality services

MA strongly recommends securing the future of critical community services through appropriate design of grants and tenders that reflect the real cost of delivering quality services. The cost of delivering community services is increasing – along with the demand for these critical services. Funding community services appropriately at procurement, appropriate indexation and injection of funds at critical junctures (e.g., disruptions to service delivery) is essential to ensure the sector's capacity to continue delivering essential services. Under-representing the true cost to delivering services places vulnerable clients and communities at risk – and also impacts a sector that represents a significant proportion of the workforce, including women.

Research commissioned by a number of peak bodies in Queensland demonstrated that

Queensland's community services sector experiences underfunding in part due to a lack of adequate indexation of government pricing for services purchased. This problem accumulates year-on-year to increase in significance as time progresses⁴. The research noted that the current method of calculating indexation is not fit for purpose for the community services sector in Queensland and does not correspond to the costs incurred by community services (resulting in inadequate levels of indexation being applied to funding). It recommended the creation of a specific indexation rate to reflect real operation costs.

Many community service organisations operate with limited reserves. Continuing to deliver the same quantity and quality of services over time costs more. Labour, accounting, and auditing costs are increasing, and community services retain limited reserves to drive critical investment or innovation. There is limited recognition of the true cost of delivering services and the overhead needed – leading to organisations (including MA) underrepresenting the true cost of service delivery.

MA incurs both direct and indirect costs essential to supporting our mission. To cover the indirect costs, or 'overhead' a contribution of 25% of funding is applied to all programs/activities. This represents the minimum amount required to provide the vital shared resources and infrastructure a program/activity needs to succeed and achieve the impact our funders seek. This includes funding internally facing functions like People, Culture & Safety, Facilities Management, Finance and Procurement, and Risk and Compliance. This contribution allows for critical investment in planning, evaluation, leadership, fundraising, program development, research, advocacy, and governance. Without these functions we could not be effective, nor could we fulfill our obligations to our people, regulators and the broader community from whom we derive our social licence to operate.

Not-for-profits' 'true' indirect costs often far exceed the amount to which they are funded – in fact, the average indirect costs of the not-for-profits analysed in the *Paying what it Takes* report⁵ was 33% of total costs, with significant variation between 26% and 47%, yet funding agreements often only included indirect costs of between 10% and 20%. This is not sustainable and ultimately erodes financial stability which can lead to increased stress, overwork, and burnout for staff. Qualified and professional staff are critical to the functioning of CSOs – and appropriate levels of infrastructure is required to support their important work in serving the community. This can only be provided if programs are adequately funded.

Here MA would note that often grants and funding opportunities are restrictive around the operating costs – deeming certain costs as ineligible (general operating costs or recurring costs, core operating costs etc.). They may place limits on eligible expenses (for example, up to 10 per cent of project administration costs).

Effective community services incur indirect costs that enable them to achieve their impact. MA incurs indirect costs in understanding the impact of our programs and services and investing in measuring our impact. We strongly believe that measuring the difference we make in the lives of our clients and communities is vital. We have implemented *Results Based Accountability (RBA)* framework to ensure the work we do has impact, and we stay focused on our mission. It gives us

⁴ Gilchrist, D. J. & Feenan, C., (2023), Queensland's Cost Indexation for Government Purchasing of Human Services, a report developed by the UWA Centre for Public Value for the Queensland Council of Social Service, Brisbane, Australia

⁵ Social Ventures Australia and the Centre for Social Impact (2022) *Paying what it takes: funding indirect cost to create long-term impact*. Social Ventures Australia

a clear picture of how much we have done, how well we did it, and whether our clients and communities are better off as a result. RBA practices are helping our client service teams clarify the outcomes they aim to achieve with clients, design appropriate performance measures to collect valuable data, and use *Turn the Curve* exercises to develop action plans that improve outcomes. Closely linked to the Results Based Accountability measures, our data dashboard project is an important piece of work that involves the development of a suite of Power BI dashboards for the meaningful review and analysis of our performance measures.

MA recommends fostering of understanding of what constitutes indirect costs for organisations and open dialogue between government and the sector around the true cost of programs and initiatives and the necessary core funding required to create strong, sustainable organisations that deliver long-term impact on complex social issues.

Providing longer grant agreement terms

MA strongly recommends careful consideration of grant agreement terms to ensure stability of ongoing service delivery. CSOs provide critical services that needs to operate with minimum disruptions to service vulnerable clients and communities. We are supportive of the recommendations provided by the ACOSS/Social Policy Research Centre report⁶ that recommends standard contract lengths for community sector grants to at least five and preferably seven years for most contracts; and 10 years for service delivery in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

It also recommends improved transitional funding arrangements – grant rules that ensure service providers are given at least six months' notice of any renewal or cessation of funding (where this cannot be achieved, and services are ceased, a contract extension of at least 12 months). The report also seeks transparency ensuring facilitation of referral of service users (where funding has been transferred from one provider to another).

This research also provides support for the other focus area – ensuring grant funding flows to a greater diversity of CSOs.

Grant funding flows to a greater diversity of CSOs

The research cited above, found that there is considerable concern about the place of small organisations in the community sector. Their challenges are documented around the development of successful funding applications, ability to respond in complex contractual and reporting environments⁷. However, the value of small organisations is in the deep connections with the communities they serve, staff and boards being part of local communities, and with a pulse on local community need and delivery of appropriate services. MA strongly recommends that government grants and funding support the development of (appropriately resourced) collaborative and partnership agreements across diverse providers (including local place-based community groups and associations).

⁶ Blaxland, M and Cortis, N (2021) Valuing Australia's community sector: Better contracting for capacity, sustainability and impact. Sydney: ACOSS

⁷ *Ibid.*

Partnering with trusted community organisations with strong local links

MA notes the significant value in partnering with trusted community organisations with strong local links. Here we provide the example of the significant work we have undertaken in the Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) prevention space.

Over many years, we have partnered with multicultural community groups and members as well as other community service organizations, to develop a community response to DFV.

Our community-led, collaborative 'Family Peace Building' program is an example of a strong and effective community leadership model to respond to DFV. The program seeks to raise awareness and develop skills and confidence to resolve conflict, prevent family violence and promote individual and community transformation.

Family Peace Building

The 'Family Peace-Building' Project emerged in Brisbane out of deep engagement and collaboration between multicultural service agencies and community leaders. Experienced multicultural agencies in authentic partnership with community leaders have developed training and dialogue to up-skill people to become leaders in family and community peace building.

The Peace-Building team (comprising the 'Community Leaders Gathering', the Islamic Women's Association of Australia, Multicultural Australia, Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS), and South Community Hub (SCH) have harnessed their combined years of experience and collaboration with multicultural communities to develop the Peace-building and Family Violence Prevention Training.

The agencies have also worked closely with key domestic violence services, Queensland Police Service and the Dispute Resolution Branch of the Department of Justice. While SCH and RAILS have obtained some limited funding through the Department of Social Services (DSS), the experienced training team and their agencies, along with community leaders, have provided significant additional support (unfunded) to keep this program running. MA has recently obtained additional funds to provide Family Peace Building training to their pool of Bicultural Support Workers.

The first 'Family Peace-Building' Training Program commenced in 2020 following a two-year 'Community Conversations' consultation with 27 refugee-background communities and close collaboration with key DFV agencies and the national research centre, ANROWS. The 'Community Conversations' consultation project found that most in the community were unfamiliar with the full legal meaning of family violence, some accepted family violence as normal, and some men saw the system as threatening their manhood and favouring women. The main reasons given for family violence were cultural, financial and lack of understanding of the law.

The 'Family Peace-Building' program co-designed with community leaders is based on principles of cultural humility and strengths, is trauma informed, and addresses intersectional frameworks that cover:

- Understanding and communicating about conflict, conflict resolution violence and the law

- The extent and causes of family violence
- Ways to prevent family violence
- Getting to know and work more effectively with key services
- Strengthening skills in working with abusers to promote change and accountability
- Resolution and restoration of the community.

Key resources co-designed with community leaders were developed for the training - a Peace Building Leaders Toolkit' and a 'Peace-Building Pledge' which were launched by the State Attorney General in 2021. Short evaluations and reports of the five programs we have run since late 2020 have indicated success in developing community capacity. For example:

- Post-session polls indicated 100% felt more confident to engage with police and to use new communication skills
- Nearly 90% were more confident to speak to men who used violence
- 80% were more aware of when to use Dispute Resolution Branch services.

Anecdotally, post-program reports are also very promising, as the following examples highlight:

- A male religious leader gave pastoral advice which emphasised the woman had a choice to leave her husband if she needed. Previously the leader would have advised to keep the marriage together with little consideration of alternatives.
- A female leader was able to identify, name and explain psychological abuse to a female community member who was being tormented and manipulated by her husband over many years.
- A male religious leader for the first time included a female leader in negotiations between partners in a family dispute; and
- DV Connect developed closer relationships with leaders and services following the training.

The Family Peace Building program has led to the development of further programs by the team, including:

- 'Good Life Learning' family violence prevention programs for adult TAFE classes integrating language learning.
- 'Men Managing Change' framework for diverse cultural based on a series of short videos the team developed with cultural communities at a Men's Shed

MA emphasises the importance of ensuring that communities are adequately resourced and supported to engage in important community services – including, important transformative work such as addressing gender norms and the drivers of gender-based violence. In our experience, community elders and leaders and small community associations are generous with their time and effort in supporting families through complex social issues – including DFV issues. This is a

significant impost on community members, and there is no remuneration available for such roles. We strongly recommend appropriate resourcing commitments to a greater diversity of CSOs – including partnering with a diversity of organisations, including community groups and associations.

