

# *Changing the picture*



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Islander Women and their Children

**Our  
WATCH**  
End violence against  
Women And Their Children

# Today's presentation

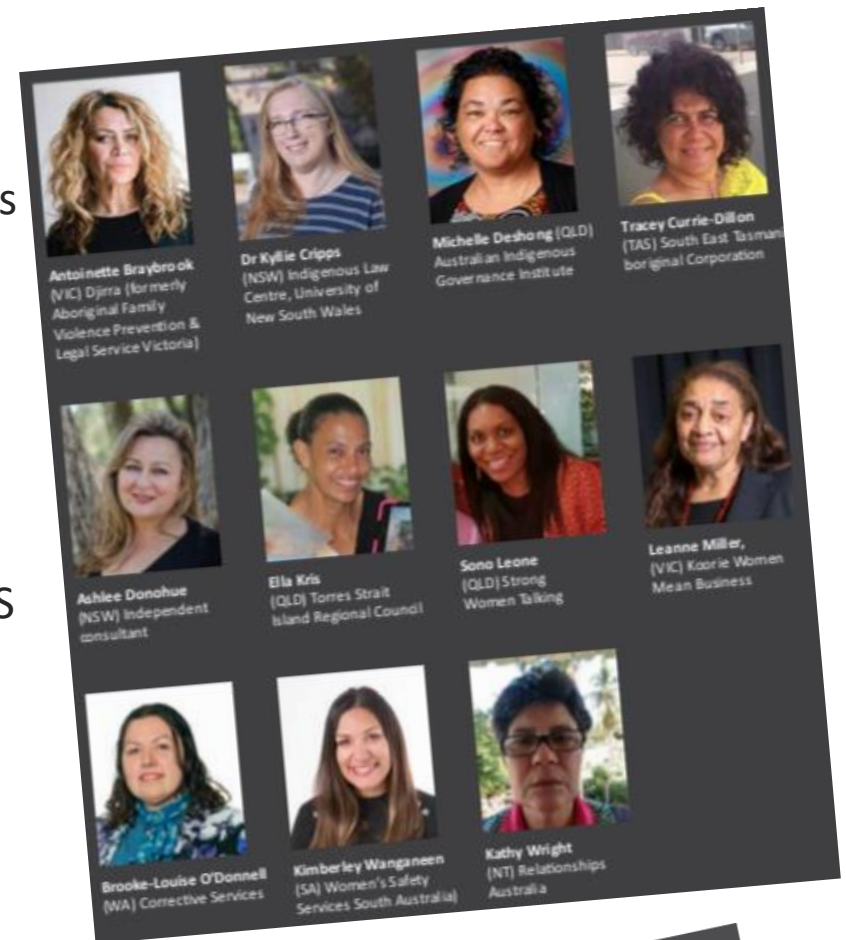
An overview of Changing the Picture: A national resource dedicated to the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women





# Development process

- Advisory Group of 11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (via public EOI process).
- Extensive literature review – prioritizing publications by Indigenous authors and organisations
- Formal review by seven Indigenous academics and practitioners, and ANROWS



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# Aims of the resource

- Inform a deeper, intersectional understanding of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and its underlying drivers; in order to:
- Identify what is needed for effective prevention.
- Guidance to support evidence-informed, intersectional approaches to prevention policy and practice, across jurisdictions and sectors.
- Improve practice effectiveness and resource allocation by articulating principles of good practice.
- Showcase examples of existing work, to offer lessons to be learned, or approaches that could be replicated or adapted in other contexts.



# Three part resource



Background paper



Action framework  
(main document)



Exec summary 6-pager

# 2.

## Overview of key content



# Background paper



- How the resource was developed, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement
- Rationale – why this resource is needed
- The current picture: prevalence statistics, specific dynamics and impacts of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- Builds a **conceptual model** for understanding this violence and its underlying drivers
- **Intersectional** approach: combines an understanding of the impacts of colonization, trauma and racism; with a gendered analysis

# Key messages from the conceptual model



- Violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is a national problem, requiring a national solution.
- This violence is perpetrated by men of all cultural backgrounds, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and in diverse settings and geographical contexts
- This violence has '*some similarities, and many differences*' to violence against women generally
- The drivers of this violence (*next slide*) are complex and intersecting



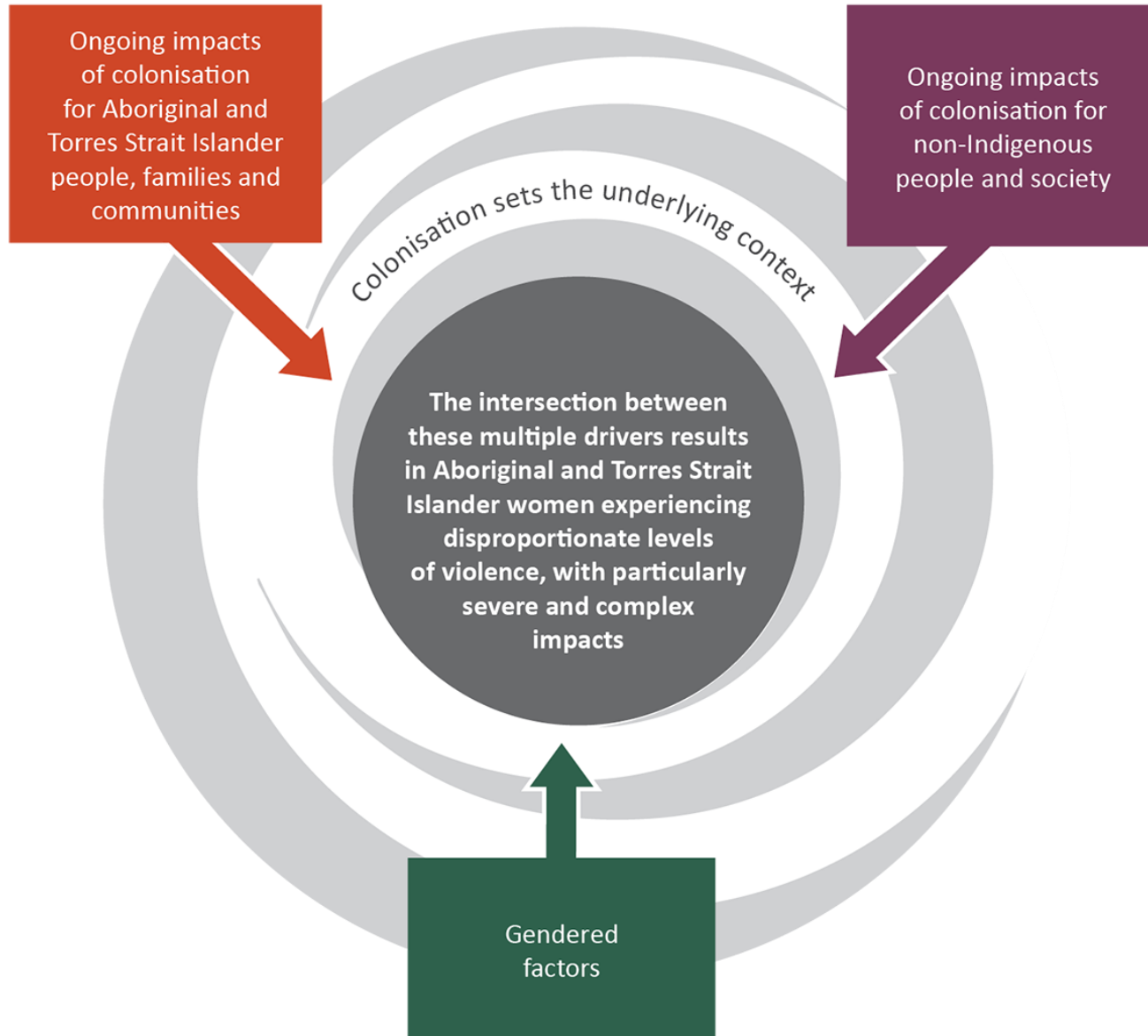
# Understanding Intersectionality

The term '*intersectionality*' was coined by African American woman, Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989 as a way to help explain the oppression of African-American women.

It is important to understand the concept of intersectionality when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o>

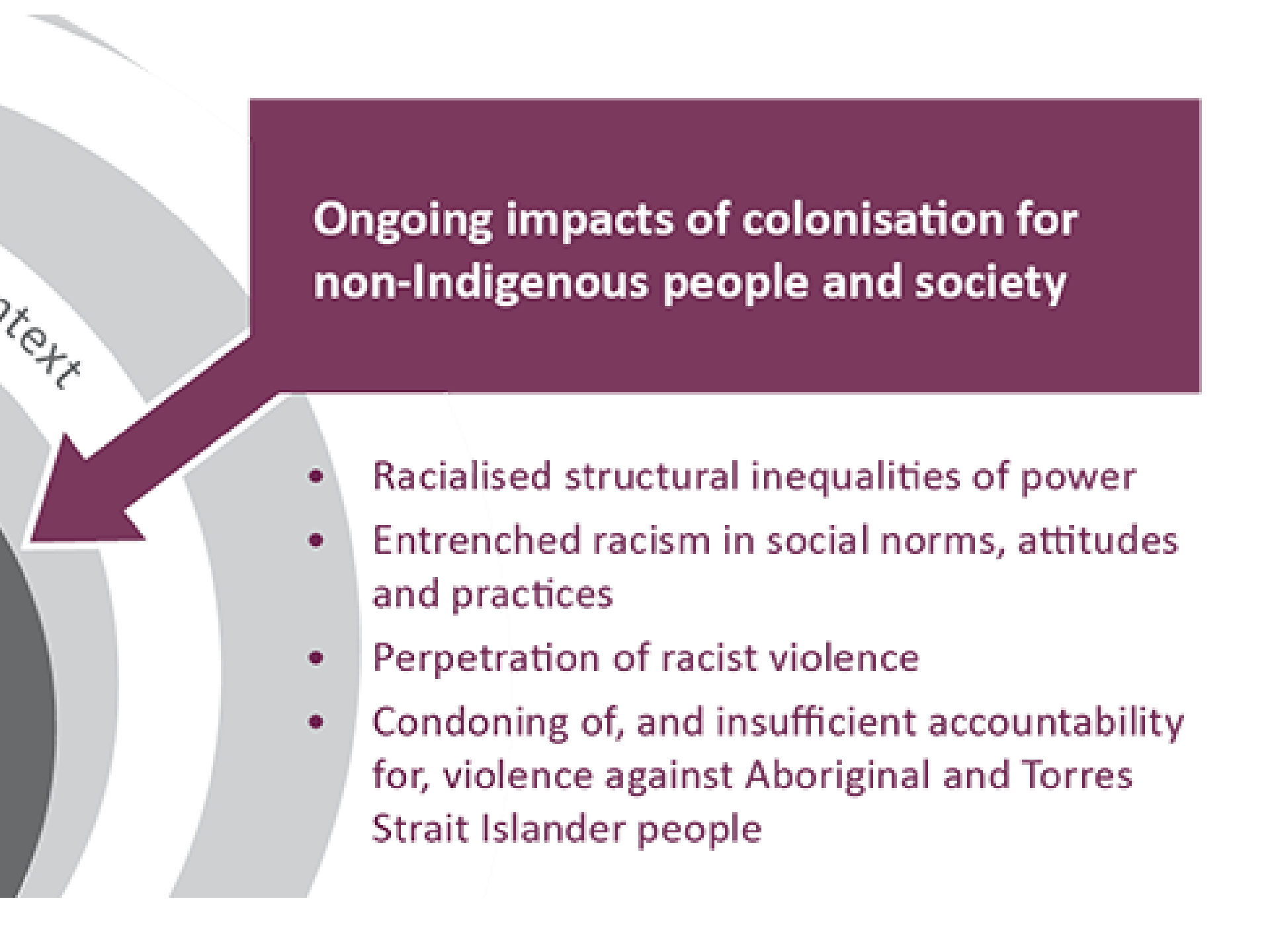
# The underlying drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women



## Ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities

- Intergenerational and collective trauma
- Systemic oppression, disempowerment, racism
- Destruction/disruption of traditional cultures, family and community relationships and community norms about violence
- Personal experience of/exposure to violence
- Condoning of violence within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

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## Ongoing impacts of colonisation for non-Indigenous people and society


- Racialised structural inequalities of power
- Entrenched racism in social norms, attitudes and practices
- Perpetration of racist violence
- Condoning of, and insufficient accountability for, violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people



- Gendered drivers of violence against women in Australia (identified in *Change the story*)
  - » Condoning of violence against women
  - » Men's control of decision making and limits to women's independence
  - » Stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity
  - » Disrespect towards women and male peer relations that emphasise aggression
- Additional gendered drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
  - » Intersection of racism and sexism
  - » Impacts of colonial patriarchy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, gender roles, men, women and relationships



## Describing the issue and challenging misconceptions

- Violence is not part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
  - Serious and real barriers to reporting
  - Violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is perpetrated by Indigenous and non-Indigenous men
  - Alcohol is a contributing factor, and often a trigger for violence, but it is not the 'cause'
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# The action framework



Builds on the conceptual model to identify:

- Essential prevention actions – aligned to each of the three underlying drivers
- Supporting actions – to address reinforcing factors
- Principles for prevention in practice
- Roles for different stakeholders – government and non-government, Indigenous and non-Indigenous
- Examples of existing prevention initiatives

# Action 1



## **Address the legacies and ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities**

- Heal the impacts of intergenerational trauma, and strengthening culture and identity
- Strengthen and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Implement specific initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, boys and men and children and young people
- Challenge the condoning of violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Increase access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

## Action 2



**Address the legacies and ongoing impacts of colonisation for non-Indigenous people, and across Australian society**

- Challenge and prevent all forms of racism, indifference, ignorance and disrespect towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures
- Address racialised power inequalities and amend discriminatory policies and practices
- Challenge the condoning of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

# Action 3



## **Address the gendered drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women**

- Implement intersectional approaches to preventing violence against women across the Australian population
- Challenge the condoning of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women by challenging both racist and sexist attitudes and social norms
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's participation in leadership and decision making
- Challenge gender stereotypes, and the impacts of colonisation on men's and women's roles, relationships and identities
- Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships between women and men, girls and boys
- Engage both indigenous and non-indigenous men to challenge harmful and violence-supportive ideas about masculinity and relationships





# Principles for preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

- Self-determination, community control and leadership
- Cultural safety
- Trauma-informed practice and practitioner self-care
- Healing focused
- Prioritising and strengthening culture
- Holistic:
  - Understanding intersecting issues in people's lives, rather than narrowly focused on violence
  - Engaging whole communities, rather than women in isolation. Women and men, children and young people. Mutual goal of healing, breaking cycles of violence and creating safer, nurturing communities for all
  - Work across whole Australian community
- Non-Indigenous organisations working as allies in culturally safe ways

# Implications for different stakeholders: key messages from the action framework

- Much prevention work must be owned and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people themselves
- But because drivers are deep across society, and because it is perpetrated by men of all backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must not be expected to bear full responsibility for preventing this violence.
- We *all* have a role to play – Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, communities, organisations, and governments at all levels
- Significant work for non-Indigenous people and organisations, to address racism and structural inequalities, the intersections of sexism and racism, and social norms and attitudes condoning violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Policy and practice solutions must go hand in hand

# Our Watch's role

## **Integrate into all our own work**

- A core piece of our evidence base, sitting alongside *Change the story*, its approach and principles informing all our work
- Cross-organizational integration into all Our Watch ongoing work – Policy, Practice, Marketing and Communications
- Identify new opportunities to build partnerships and coalitions that allow us to contribute to implementing some of the actions and to work as an allies to Indigenous organisations

## **Promote understanding, uptake and implementation by others**

- Promote integration of key principles and actions into government policy frameworks and other decision-making processes
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to implement actions
- Encourage other non-Indigenous organisations – to identify actions they can contribute to

# Thank you

[www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)

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