

ANROWS

AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL RESEARCH
ORGANISATION FOR WOMEN'S SAFETY
to Reduce Violence against Women & their Children

ANROWS launch speech Shirley Slann, Director

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Ngunnawal people and those that have gone before us.

Domestic & Family Violence does not discriminate regarding culture or race. However, statistics on violence against women show that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and their children, are particularly vulnerable.



Shirley Slann, Director

This is a great source of shame for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and can leave other Australians with inappropriate assumptions about us and particularly about Indigenous men.

Indigenous men and women have expressed their distress at the way reports of these high levels of violence in our communities are often detached from the broader context of extreme social disadvantage in which that violence occurs. This is not to excuse the violence but it cannot be dealt with in isolation.

Many Indigenous men and women have shown great leadership in efforts to address domestic & family and sexual violence. These efforts are celebrated every year in my home state of Queensland at the Queensland Centre for Domestic & Family Violence Research annual Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum.

One of the things this forum highlights is the strength that culture brings to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This is an important factor in services developed by and for Indigenous victims/survivors and perpetrators of violence.

Although we have statistics showing higher rates of violence in Indigenous communities, we have very little evidence of what works for Indigenous people to help close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in violence against women statistics.

I'm very pleased that ANROWS' recognises the need for this evidence and that its research priorities acknowledge Indigenous strengths and perspectives.

I would like to highlight, for example, the research priority area 1.5 “The role of Indigenous cultures, including cultural resilience, healing, and raising children in extended family networks, as potential protective factors in preventing or responding to violence against women”, for which ANROWS is now calling for funding applications.

The focus of this, and other ANROWS projects, is on the strengths, not the deficits, of Indigenous Australians in regards to violence against women.

I am very proud to be an ANROWS Board Director and I look forward to participating in the delivery of evidence to support our work in the field in ways that are truly meaningful, not only for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples but also for Non Indigenous Australians.

As a Domestic Violence Service provider, working with perpetrators and victims of violence, I am looking forward to the research in addressing the violence against women and children by prevention and then in a hope to stopping the violence.

Thank you.