

Co-designing a domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) research agenda: Embedding victim-survivor voices in the priority setting process

ANROWS

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

Lived experience acknowledgement

ANROWS acknowledges any victim survivors in the session today. We recognize those who bring their lived and living expertise to their work; and that not all victim-survivors choose to self-identify.



About ANROWS

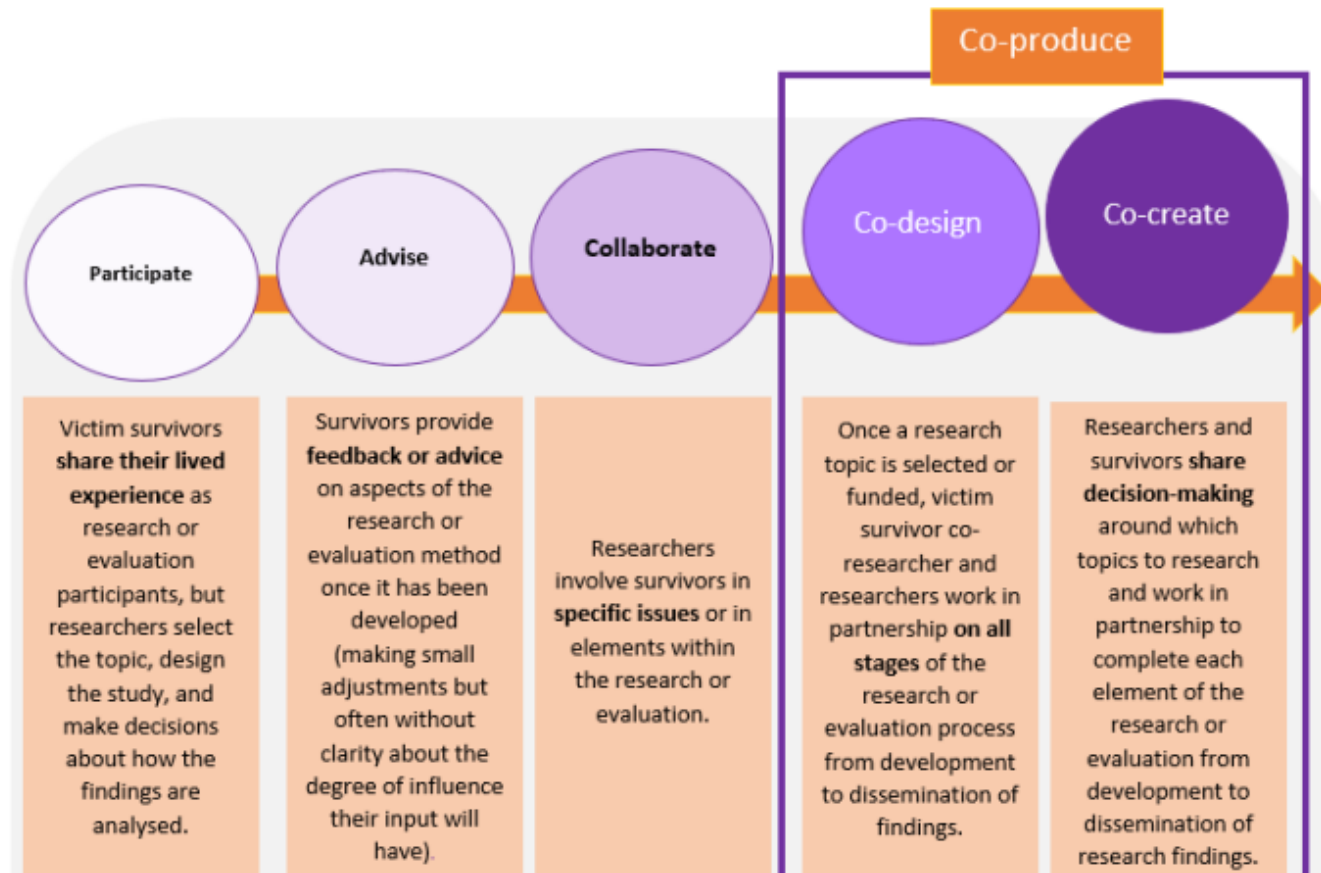
- ANROWS is a national research organisation whose vision is to build the evidence base that supports ending violence against women and children in Australia.
- Established in 2013.
- Not-for-profit organisation, funded by the Australian government and all state and territory governments of Australia.
- We develop research through both commissioned grants programs, as well as conducting our own research and evaluations.
- Published 126 research reports, all freely available, and many supporting resources for policy makers and practitioners.

About the Australian National Research Agenda 2023-2028

- The agenda is Australia's guide to promote and support the creation of research that is needed to end violence against women and children.
- It is the only national research agenda in Australia about gender-based violence.
- The 2023-2028 agenda is the third that ANROWS has developed.
- This agenda identifies what new evidence needs to be created as a priority AND provides guidance on how knowledge should be created.



What do we mean by co-design?



An Australian Framework for the ethical co-production of research and evaluation with victim survivors of domestic, family, and sexual violence (Lamb, K., Dembele, L., Nina and Fiona, Hegarty, K., 2022).

Our methods for developing the research agenda



Research team included paid position for lived experience co-investigator.



We conducted five online focus groups with people aged 18+ with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence (n=18).



Participants were purposively sampled to ensure broad representation.



We used a trauma-informed approach.



The focus group discussions were informed by relevant literature.

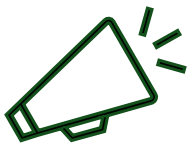
Our methods for developing the research agenda



The focus groups transcripts were coded and thematically analysed.



We held two online co-design workshops with victim-survivors, domestic, family and sexual violence researchers and practitioners (n=13; including four victim-survivors).



The purpose of this design was to share power in decision-making.

Our methods for developing the research agenda

Two rounds of testing the research priorities:



- Co-design participants and a small group of experts were asked for open comment on the draft agenda.
- Online forum with government representatives (n=75)
- Stakeholders (n=120) were asked to rate the agenda's accessibility and the usefulness of the content.

Reflections on co-design and collaboration process

What did we do well?



- Creating safety
- Strengths-based
- Sharing power with victim-survivors to influence the agenda

Where could we improve?



Diversity of voices, especially more culturally diverse and migrant and refugee women and children.

Research priorities

Systems and society

Structural inequities

Gender relations, gender norms and attitudes

Trauma and DFSV-informed, victim-centred systems

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Populations in focus

Children and young people

People who use domestic, family and sexual violence

Types and patterns of violence

Sexual violence

Coercive control

Economic abuse

Systems and society



Structural inequity



Gender relations, gender norms and attitudes



Trauma and DFSV-informed, victim-centred systems

Systems and policies and procedures and legislation and things are purposely created in a way that abandons some cohorts over others.” (Focus group participant 8)

Populations in focus



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (Australia's Indigenous peoples)



Children and young people



People who use domestic, family and sexual violence

We don't know anything about rehabilitating people (who use violence). We don't know how to do it. And punishing people doesn't work ... (Focus group participant 4)

Types and patterns of violence



Sexual violence



Coercive control



Economic abuse

“... anything to kind of strengthen that research agenda can be used by campaigners to say it is completely inappropriate to have sexual violence prosecuted in front of a jury.”
(Focus group participant 7)

Ways of working and ways of knowing

It is not just the research we do, but the way we do it that matters.

“... you come, and we give you – we take your story and then off you go there. Thanks. Pat on the shoulder. We use that to develop our – build our career pathway, but we’ll leave you where you are. No. It doesn’t work that way. It shouldn’t work that way.” (Focus group participant 15)

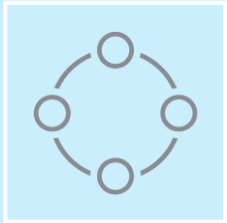
Ways of working

Indigenous research methodologies and methods

There are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, believing and acting that address power imbalances.

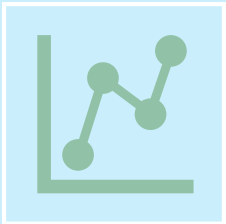
“...the really frustrating thing is that First Nations women are not centered... it's never about ‘What does this mean for you?’ It's always about ‘what can we do to save you?’.” (Focus group participant 13)

The ways of working



Create space for community-led and participatory research

“... it’s about having the community say we want research on this, and this is how we want it done, and this is who we want it with, and having the community as the drivers of that research and then they’re working out how it’s going to be used and how it’s going to be applied.”
(Focus group participant 7)



Make better use of existing data

The ways of knowing

Work with the knowledge of experts by experience

... we're getting more and more knowledge like empirical knowledge and it's incredibly valuable but what we are lacking in that narrative is that lived experience knowledge and I see them as equitable ... they both bring something entirely different to the narrative..." (Focus group participant 2)

Value practitioners' expertise

The ways of knowing



Listen to children when they are children

“Some research that shows that children participating in research is actually not an inherently harmful thing ... it may even have healing outcomes or, you know, recovery outcomes for children.” (Focus group participant 18)

Power

Cross-cutting all of the research priorities and ways of working is the concept of power.



The Australian National Research Agenda 2023-2028

- To read the agenda:

