



TO: JOINT VENTURE FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE  
AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

SUBMISSION REGARDING  
NATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANS  
TO ELIMINATE FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**27 JUNE 2021**

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 This submission is from Zonta International District 16 Incorporated (*Zonta D16*).
- 2 Zonta D16 has been active for over 50 years. We are the Aotearoa New Zealand District of Zonta International (which comprises 32 Districts worldwide).
- 3 Zonta D16 is an organisation of professionals empowering women through service and advocacy. We envision a world in which women's rights are recognised as human rights and every woman is able to achieve her full potential.
- 4 Across Aotearoa New Zealand we champion the global "Zonta says NO to Violence against Women" campaign, which aims to end violence against women by changing gender-based attitudes and behaviours.

## MAIN POINTS

- 5 We support the themes of each of the seven Focus Areas to eliminate family violence and sexual violence. In particular, we strongly believe that:
  - 5.1 if the framework for the new system is designed such that it is right for Māori, then it will be right for everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand;
  - 5.2 the new system should support integrated accessible multi-disciplinary teams that provide a "one stop shop" for government and community services for victims;
  - 5.3 a ground up - not top down – approach to leadership in the new system will be critical to its success;
  - 5.4 the new system must be staffed by people with the right training and expertise (including cultural competencies) to make it work;
  - 5.5 an increased focus on prevention is the correct approach;
  - 5.6 education at all school levels and in the community will be key;
  - 5.7 to achieve its goals, the Joint Venture for Family Violence and Sexual Violence (*the JV*) needs to develop its own presence and be better understood. We think it is time for the JV to step up and step out as an agency in its own right;
  - 5.8 the JV should draw upon all available resources to effectively communicate the anti-violence message across the country;
  - 5.9 it will be imperative to build robust, transparent and regularly updated data sets to record the prevalence of family violence and sexual violence.

## PROCESS

- 6 In formulating our submission, we used the material prepared by the JV here: [Where should we focus? word version \[DOCX, 67 KB\]](#)
- 7 We held a Zoom meeting on 15 June 2021 with representatives from Zonta Clubs from across Aotearoa New Zealand. Participants at the meeting were provided with background information in advance and came to meeting having read the “Where should we focus?” material.
- 8 The points below reflect the output of the Zoom meeting, together with additional comments received since that meeting.
- 9 The process worked well. We commend the JV for providing the “Where should we focus?” material to facilitate the consultation.

## KEY POINTS OF OUR SUBMISSION

- 10 We set out below the key points of our submission, grouped under each Focus Area.

### Focus Area #1 – Recognise Te Ao Māori

- 11 We agree that Te Ao Māori frameworks and responses should form the basis of practices. We believe that if the framework for the new system is designed such that it will be right for Māori, then it will right for everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 12 We agree that Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) should be used as the starting point for developing an equal Crown-Māori relationship to reduce violence.

### Focus Area #2 – Bring government responses together

- 13 We support the concept of integrated community services enabled by government services.
- 14 We have a vision of victims’ needs being addressed seamlessly and in one place – for example, with refuge services, Work and Income engagement and community support being delivered for victims by one integrated multi-disciplinary team in a “one stop shop”. Such an approach will need to be accessible in practice and accordingly designed by victims and survivors.
- 15 The new integrated system should clearly signpost the services available, such that the contributing community organisations can focus their energies on delivering their services.
- 16 If NGO stakeholder engagement is needed to assist the government in the design of the new system, the NGOs will need to be funded appropriately so that they can take on this new design role over and above their existing day to day work.

### **Focus Area #3 – Recognise tangata whenua leadership and community-led approaches**

- 17 We agree that decision-making should be shared between Māori, Government and community, using Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the starting point.
- 18 We consider a ground up - not top down - approach to leadership is critical to the success of the new system. We strongly endorse the need to include victims and survivors at all levels in the decision-making and monitoring of the new system.
- 19 There is a real need to harness strong cultural identities across *all* cultures to address family violence and sexual violence.
- 20 We are conscious of the difference between funding as between the regions and the cities. We strongly support consistency of resources across the breadth of the country.

### **Focus Area #4 – Strengthen workforces to prevent and respond to family violence and sexual violence**

- 21 It will be imperative that the new system is staffed by people with the right training and expertise (including cultural competencies) to make it work. Post-COVID, funds channelled into this training will be a sound investment for Aotearoa New Zealand – and should be promoted as such.
- 22 In the context of Focus Area #4, we also recognise the related need that all public and private sector workforces focus on the prevention of sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace.

### **Focus Area #5 – Increase the focus on prevention**

- 23 We support the proposal for an increased focus on prevention.
- 24 Initiatives that address the needs of perpetrators in an holistic way will be a critical aspect of the new system. Such needs may include for example, finding work, establishing a routine and improving self-esteem.
- 25 We think education is key. Zonta D16's national support of *Loves Me Not* taught us about the impact that programmes such as this can have in schools. We think that there is a need to start early – and that education at primary school (and pre-school) should be a priority.
- 26 Furthermore, empowering an educated and confident response by the wider community will offer support to children and young people outside of school programmes.
- 27 We are conscious that the focus on prevention will not only introduce new initiatives. The development and resourcing of existing success stories will also be key. In our work, we see numerous NGOs and individuals working in communities across Aotearoa New Zealand. In many cases, they are achieving great results in their work to eliminate violence and care for victims, but are also severely underfunded. The new system should identify the community organisations and individuals that are delivering the best results, fund them, and grow their capacity.

## Focus Area #6 – Develop ways for government to create changes

- 28 We have read the Auditor-General’s report entitled “Working in new ways to address family violence and sexual violence” dated June 2021. We understand that the JV is working on addressing the recommendations in that report.
- 29 As a general comment, we think the JV’s success will largely depend on its ability to engage effectively with all sectors of the community. To do that, we think the JV needs to develop its own presence and be better understood. We think it is time for the JV to step up and step out as an agency in its own right.
- 30 We are not sure what form that agency would take – but we note there is a model for an interdepartmental venture under the Public Service Act 2020. If the JV were an interdepartmental venture, it would have:
- 30.1 a board with appropriate statutory powers and whose members have full responsibility to the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence and Sexual Violence;
  - 30.2 statutory responsibilities in relation to engaging with Māori and understanding Māori perspectives; and
  - 30.3 statutory responsibilities to have an employment policy that recognises the need for greater involvement of Māori in the public service.
- 31 In addition under Focus Area #6, we think there are areas where new legislation could assist with the government’s goals. In this regard, we specifically highlight the need for:
- 31.1 progress to be made on the Sexual Violence Legislation Bill, which appears to have stalled at the Committee of the House stage;
  - 31.2 legislation to criminalise coercive control;
  - 31.3 better laws to address elder abuse.
- 32 Finally under this Focus Area, we urge the JV to think innovatively to spread the anti-violence message across the country.
- 33 By way of example, in 2019, Zonta D16 drafted a letter to New Zealand Rugby (NZR) requesting that the All Blacks take a new role in actively supporting the elimination of domestic violence from Aotearoa New Zealand. The letter was co-signed by 22 women’s NGOs and other anti-violence organisations.
- 34 The letter was prompted by the selection of a new All Black. This young man had pleaded guilty to a charge of "male assaults female" for a drunken attack on his partner only one year before his selection as an All Black.
- 35 The NZR CEO responded favourably to the letter - but we did not pursue this matter in the lead up to and during the Rugby World Cup. With the onset of and in the aftermath of COVID-19, the matter has remained in abeyance.

- 36 There is an opportunity now to revive this initiative – and this is the type of thing that we would see the JV pursuing. When we drafted the letter to NZR, we could see an opportunity for the All Blacks (as role models) to make a real change in Aotearoa New Zealand regarding eliminating family violence. Moreover, we saw this step as aligning with the NZR vision of “Inspiring and Unifying New Zealanders”, their strategic focus, and their commitment to own and live the values of the “The Rugby Way – Te Ara Ranga Tira”.

### **Focus Area #7 – Enable continuous learning and improvement**

- 37 We cannot overstate the importance of initiatives to build robust, transparent and regularly updated data sets recording the prevalence of family violence and sexual violence in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 38 In particular, in times of national crisis (whether economic, health or natural disaster events), incidents of such violence need to be measured against reliable baselines. It is often said “what gets measured, gets done”. Clear and publicly available data needs to be readily available such that responses to any increases in such violence are properly resourced.

### **CONCLUSION**

- 39 We support the themes of each of the seven Focus Areas to eliminate family violence and sexual violence. We commend the work that the JV has done to date to develop an effective new strategy and action plans.
- 40 Delays in this work have meant that every one of the seven focus areas demands prioritisation. However we would caution against trying to do everything at once – a phased implementation of the strategy and plans will be necessary. That said, at this stage, it will not be easy to select the initiatives to be prioritised.
- 41 In the face of the very real challenges faced by the JV, we offer our tangible support. We have 29 Zonta clubs nationwide, comprising nearly 600 members in total. We would welcome the opportunity to contribute in whatever way we are able to assist the JV.
- 42 Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation process.