

# Mapping UNSW Impact Global Development

<b>Primary SDG</b>	<b>3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING</b>
<b>Broad theme</b>	Family and sexual violence
<b>Research</b>	Evaluating government programs to mitigate family and sexual violence in Indigenous Australia
<b>Impact region</b>	Indigenous Australia
<b>Faculty</b>	Arts and Social Sciences
<b>School/Institute</b>	Social Sciences
<b>Academic</b>	Associate Professor Jan Breckenridge
<b>Project partners</b>	Department of Social Services (Commonwealth) – funding of \$600,000
	UNSW Indigenous Law Centre - Dr Kyllie Cripps
	UNSW Social Policy and Research Centre – Associate Professor Kylie Valentine
<b>Related SDGs</b>	4: Gender Equality

## Elevator pitch

The Federal Government's Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes (KWISTH) program has been up and running for two years, and Jan is helping to evaluate the program's merits and develop a national framework to improve its effectiveness and reduce the high levels of domestic violence, particularly among Indigenous women.

## The Challenge: Very high rates of domestic violence in Indigenous communities

The latest National Personal Safety Survey (2016) has confirmed that domestic and family violence is a significant problem for women, children and some men. The results showed that women were nearly three times more likely to have experienced partner violence than men, with approximately one in six women (17% or 1.6 million) and one in sixteen men (6.1% or 547,600) having experienced partner violence since the age of 15.

According to an article in The Australian ("*Indigenous culture 'an excuse' for violence*", 18 November 2016), almost a quarter of the indigenous population older than 15 reported that they had been victims of physical or threatened violence in the past 12 months. Indigenous females were 32 times as likely to have been hospitalised as non-indigenous females between July 2011 and June 2013; and indigenous males were eight times as likely to have been hospitalised for assault than other males.

## UNSW's solution: Evaluate and enhance the government's program to reduce domestic violence

In 2015 the Australian National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) funded Jan to lead a consortium of researchers from different universities to map the Safe At Home programs across the country. Their findings resulted in the KWISTH program, which aims to support women and children experiencing domestic violence to stay in their homes, when it is safe to do so. Safe at Home professionals provide

assistance in the form of home security upgrades, safety plans, and practical and emotional support around housing, finance and family court matters.

Jan and her team discovered that SAH programs offer an alternative to refuge accommodation but not all women can access the program and the program is not considered culturally safe by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. The Federal Government then funded Jan to evaluate the SAH program over three years, assessing outcomes and developing an operational framework to improve implementation with a focus on the safety and housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women after they leave a violent relationship.

Jan has experience working with companies to reduce the impact of family and domestic violence on people's lives. In 2015, she helped PNG companies adopt corporate social responsibility models in response to endemic family and sexual violence in the country. The idea was to keep victims safe at work and minimise business disruption and productivity. More than ten companies were identified through PNG's Business Coalition for Women and the project was funded by the World Bank (\$143,000).

### **The Impact: Improve the impact of Safe at Home program, improve Indigenous lives**

The evaluation of the Safe at Home program and the development of a national operational framework will improve the program's impact among Indigenous communities. This means more Indigenous women and children will receive the support and advice they need to stay safe in their homes and avoid becoming homeless. The evaluation will also shed light on the program's impact on the high rates of domestic violence, and what further policy steps or actions might be required to reduce these rates.

### **Researcher**

Jan Breckenridge is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Sciences, the Co-Convener of the UNSW Gendered Violence Research Network, and the Convener of the Social Inquiry Cluster. Jan has worked for 30 years to develop appropriately targeted policies and effective front-line responses to gendered violence for women, men and children. She is motivated by a desire to give people the best possible chance to live a quality life by ensuring stable employment and housing, and through education and training.

Ben Falkenmire 01.02.18