

## 3.5 BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

Building partnerships and networks with other communities and organisations can strengthen the work your community does to prevent violence against women. You can learn from each other and combine to work together as well as advocate for change to peak faith bodies. There is great benefit in sharing.

This section gives ideas about how your community can build partnerships by, for example:

- Connecting with other faith leaders.
- Connecting with other interfaith networks.
- Connecting with other community groups.

### Examples of partnerships from the community:

#### **Interfaith Forum on Family Violence (Victoria)**

To recognise International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Islamic Council of Victoria organised an interfaith forum on family violence. Leaders from various faiths including Islam, Jewish and Christian came together to speak about the issue of family violence and bring their own perspectives.

**Connecting with other faith leaders and communities:** Connecting with other faith leaders and their communities shows that, while different faith traditions have different beliefs and practices, all faiths are committed to promoting equality between men and women.

#### **Collaborating with interfaith networks:**

Interfaith activities can be organised through local or state interfaith (or multi-faith) councils. Think about arranging a time to present your community's activities to promote equality to the council(s) or attend interfaith events to encourage support from diverse traditions.

Consider contacting the lead inter- or multi-faith agency in your state (e.g., Faith Communities Council of Victoria) or the lead agency representing your faith tradition (e.g., The Buddhist Council of Victoria) to tell them about your activities. Ask them to send information about these activities in their mail-outs or newsletters.

#### **Connecting with other community groups:**

Some local communities have 'action groups' involving community members who are working to address gender inequality to prevent violence against women.

You could arrange a meeting with local community groups to work together on activities.

**Advocating for change:** As a faith leader, you can advocate for change by connecting with peak faith or interfaith bodies. You can advocate for the need to change practices and systems to be more inclusive of women. You could present the actions that your community has been taking to encourage equality between women and men.