



## ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE NETWORKS IN NEW ZEALAND



This paper was developed for family violence network members, and summarises some of the material that informs the “Coordinated community action” workshops run by the It’s not OK family violence prevention campaign ([www.areyouok.org.nz](http://www.areyouok.org.nz)).

### WHY DO WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER?

- Family violence is a complex social problem that has existed for centuries – but it is preventable
- International good practice shows that interagency partnerships and collaboration are necessary to effectively address domestic violence
- We need effective quality joined up services, but if we want to end family violence we need to do more than help victims and perpetrators
- We need significant social change – a social movement of people working towards violence-free lives
- Change comes from the flax roots – from people getting together – family violence networks are central to working better together.

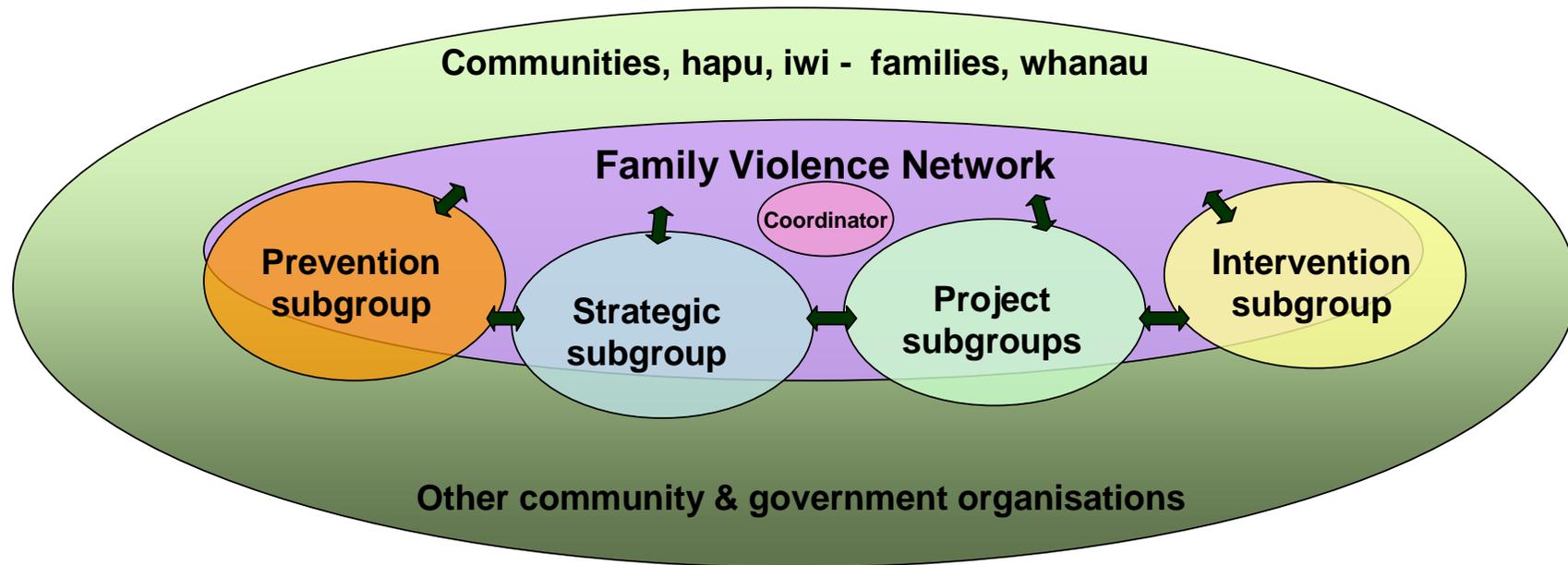
### WHAT DO FAMILY VIOLENCE NETWORKS LOOK LIKE?

This model (below) was developed after talking with many of the family violence networks in NZ. It is not how one particular network looks, but some of the elements that are common to many.

The main points from this model are:

- It’s helpful to have a model of the structure of your network, so that people know how it works, what members do and where decisions are made
- The network is responsible to the community – the wider community needs to know what you do and be able to contribute ideas/issues – the network can take local leadership around preventing family violence in YOUR community
- Networks are made up of working parties, project groups or subgroups that do the work (organise training, do media releases, organise campaigns, collate research etc) *between* the monthly meetings. The Coordinator can not do all the work of the network – the members need to be actively involved
- Information needs to be shared between the working groups and across the network so that everyone has the best possible information to help them make decisions about what is needed in their community
- Networks benefit from having a range of people from across the community – many networks now have members that are not from family violence services. These people may be more interested in leading work with the media, promotion of services, changing attitudes and behaviours and community action, or working with particular ethnic communities.

## Family violence networks



**Role of Network** - information sharing, professional development, training, relationship building, leadership,

**Role of Prevention subgroup** – changing social norms, campaigns, media, community education, promotion, training.

**Role of Strategic subgroup** - systems monitoring, problem solving, community vision & strategy, strategic advocacy, management of Coordinator.

**Role of Project subgroups** – ad-hoc groups that develop and implement specific collaborative projects eg. service gaps analysis

**Role of Intervention subgroup (FVIARS or similar)** – data analysis, sharing information, risk assessment, case management, referrals, monitoring response to reported violence, systems monitoring, professional development.

**Role of the Coordinator** – building relationships, communication, media, project management, administration, data analysis, referrals, implementing network's strategic plan

## WHAT FAMILY VIOLENCE NETWORKS DO?

- **Coordinating local agency responses and services** – e.g. Interagency case referral (FVIARS or similar)
- **Improving practice of organisations** – e.g. training; developing good practice; collaborative policies; monitoring & research
- **Supporting projects that help survivors and perpetrators, children, family and whanau** – e.g. identifying service gaps, developing new collaborative services
- **Promotion** – e.g. engaging with media; promoting available help and services
- **Working to mobilise communities and prevent family violence (primary prevention)** – e.g. activities to increase understanding of family violence, encourage people to ask for help and ensure community members take it seriously and offer help to others. This includes campaigns; community education; and working with businesses, churches, marae, sports groups, schools, ethnic community groups to prevent family violence
- **Building relationships inside and outside the sector** – building the network and encouraging new members, as well as working with people who are not family violence service providers to ensure they can provide effective support to people experiencing family violence, and contribute to preventing violence.

Networks work best when they develop an **Action Plan** that sets out what change they are trying to make in their community, and what actions they intend to do over the year that will contribute to that outcome. A good place to start is gathering information – look at data from the local area about family violence, and information from the community about what key issues require action.

For more information on what happens within networks, see the last section on good practice in family violence networks.

### What's the point of a network meeting?

Network meetings need to be a **means to an end** – people want to know why they are coming together, and see some action follow.

To make positive change in your community, the meeting has to be more than a talk-fest and a catch-up.

The network will flourish if people can see that:

- they are making a difference
- something is changing in their community
- being part of the network improves their work
- working together makes them feel supported, inspired and energised.

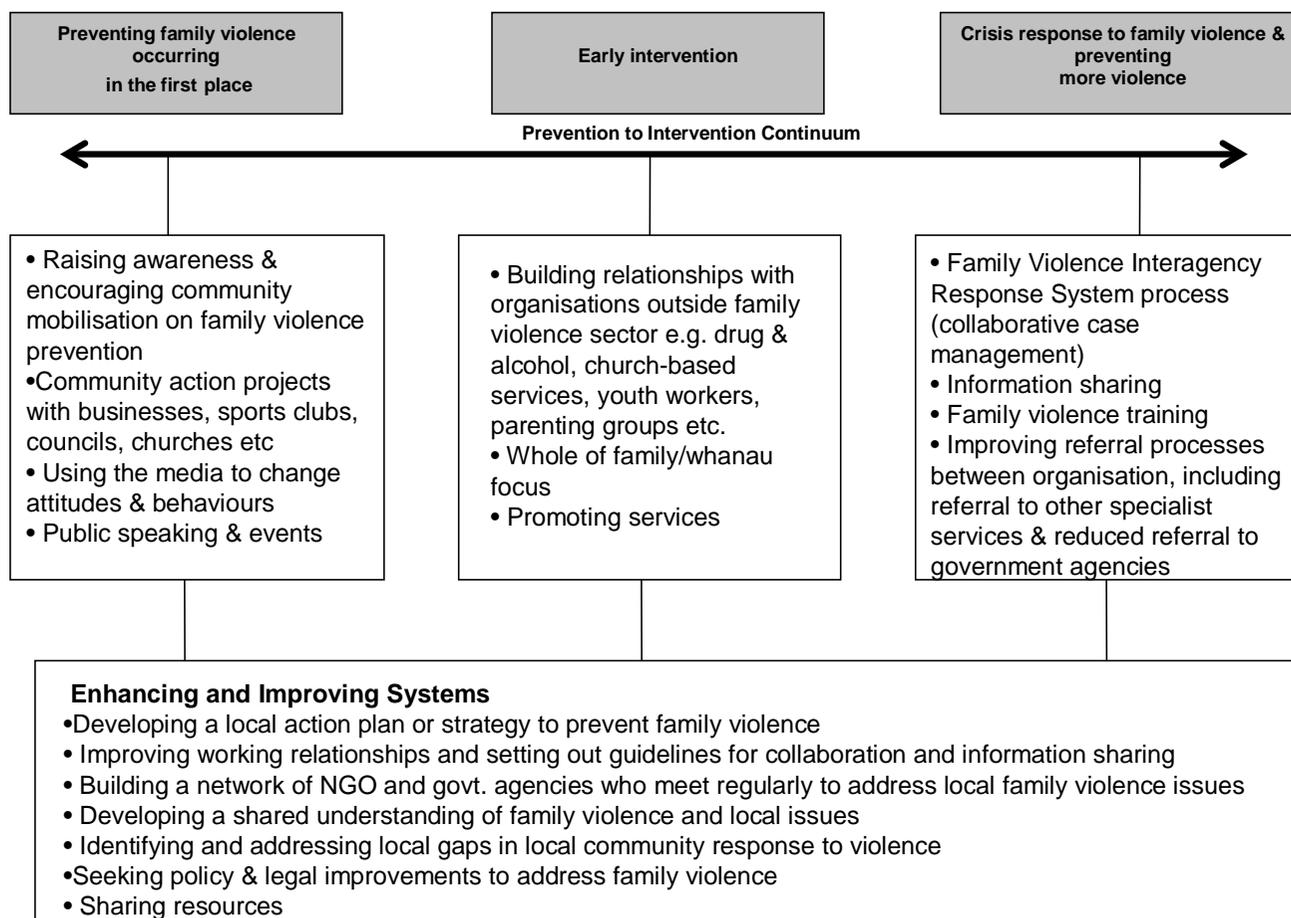
## WORKING AT ALL LEVELS TO END FAMILY VIOLENCE

A key role of family violence networks is to improve practice and coordination of services so that individuals, families and whanau get the help they need to end family violence. However, effective services alone will not stop violence. We need to invest in prevention initiatives that aim to stop violence from happening in the first place and changing social norms that perpetuate family violence.

To address family violence and prevent future violence, work must be undertaken at three levels. These three areas need to be developed simultaneously.

Level of Intervention	When	Target group	Example
Primary Prevention	Before violence has occurred	Whole population	Local campaigns to positively change the way people think and act about family violence; promoting safety, wellbeing and peaceful relationships, and building resilience with individuals and communities;
Secondary Prevention/ Early Intervention	When there is increased risk of violence or early signs of violence	Individuals, families/ whanau and groups at increased risk	Support for pregnant women and new mothers at risk; positive parenting such as SKIP and Incredible Years; support for carers of elderly and disabled people; screening for family violence
Tertiary Prevention/ Service Provision or Crisis intervention	After family violence has occurred	With victims, perpetrators and their families/ whanau	Police and courts response, Refuge safe house and outreach, stopping violence programmes, counselling, relationship counselling, children's services, education programmes for victims and children who witness violence.

## Range of activities of family violence networks



This diagram shows the typical activities of family violence networks or collaboratives, demonstrating how they can work at all levels, from primary prevention to crisis intervention.

Networks make a valuable contribution by building the infrastructure required for effective joined up services and well-trained workforce.

Family violence networks are able to take the lead on developing a whole-community strategy for ending family violence and ensuring whanau/families receive quality services that meet their needs.

## WHOLE OF COMMUNITY APPROACH TO PREVENTING FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Coordinated Community Action model demonstrates what a whole-of-community response to family violence might look like with different sectors of the community working collaboratively to take actions that promote safety, support those affected by violence, and contribute to stopping violence from happening in the first place.

Not all of us can or should focus on the same thing, as a range of activities are needed to create change. To make the best use of our expertise we need to identify what our role is and how we can best contribute.

The model is a useful tool to workshop with your organisation, project team or family violence network to figure out what is currently happening in your community and what else could be done to engage your whole community in violence prevention.

## DESIRE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

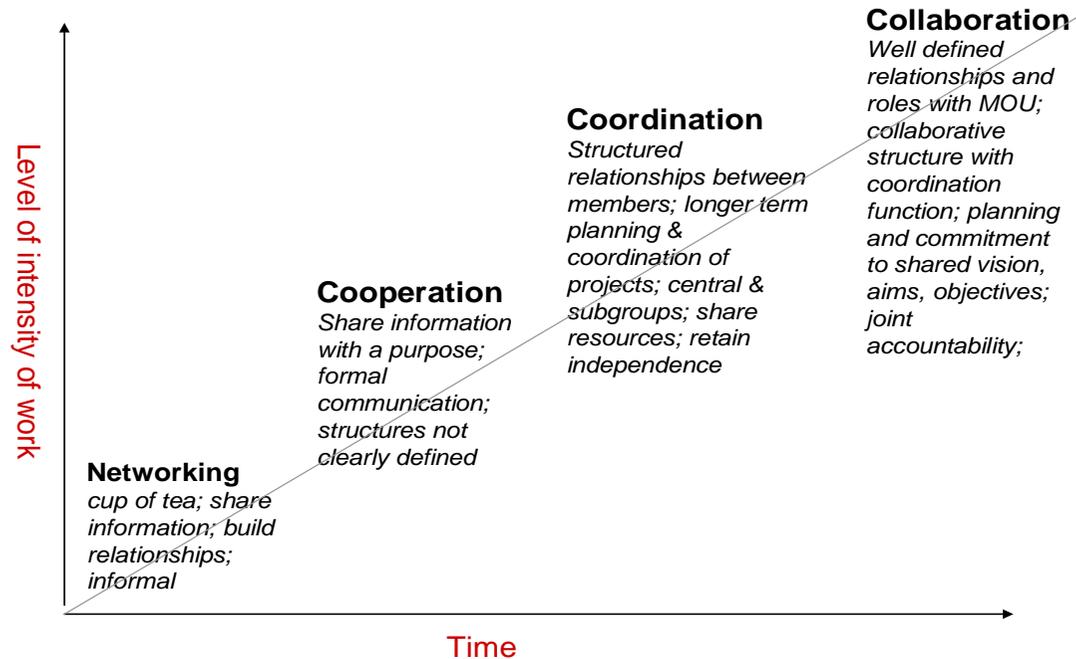
COORDINATED COMMUNITY ACTION FOR PREVENTING FAMILY VIOLENCE (NEW ZEALAND VERSION)



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## GOOD PRACTICE IN INTERAGENCY WORK TO PREVENT FAMILY VIOLENCE

# Levels of collaboration



### What is collaboration?

The term “collaboration” is often used interchangeably with coordination, partnerships, inter-agency, multi-agency, and cooperation. However collaboration is about a higher intensity of joint working.

Collaboration means more than simply working together. It identifies a systemic change.

Collaboration is: “**The practice of combining and leveraging public and community-based organisational resources and power to address difficult problems in the community.**”<sup>1</sup>

### Summary of Success Factors for Family Violence Networks (*identified by the It's not OK campaign*)

- **Safety** – safety, protection & accountability at the centre of all actions
- **Clarity** – about purpose, outcomes, structures & decision making
- **Action** – have an action plan; members get involved to do the work
- **Vision** – focus on the big picture & the steps to get there
- **Community owned** – accountable to, and linked in with wider community including people affected by family violence
- **Diversity** - key NGO & government family violence agencies & beyond
- **Leadership** – buy-in from key leaders; network takes leadership in the community
- **Strategic** – conscious focus; build on community strengths & passion
- **Flexible** – respond to & make the most of opportunities
- **Always improving** – learning from past activities to do it better
- **Wide-ranging** – working from intervention to primary prevention

Complex social problems such as family violence require multi-agency working, joined up services, whole-of-community mobilisation, and a holistic approach that links prevention, early intervention and crisis intervention work. Community collaborations or networks are essential both for effective responses to family violence, and for the prevention of violence.<sup>1</sup>

Below are the findings on success factors for collaboratives from four key sources:

1. *Building collaborations to eliminate family violence: facilitators, barriers and good practice* from the New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse<sup>2</sup>
2. *Better at Working Together* literature review on interagency collaboration from the High and Complex Needs Unit in the Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand.<sup>3</sup>
3. Coordinated Community Response literature from the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, Minnesota, USA<sup>4</sup>
4. Guidance on multi-agency working from the Home Office in the UK<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Michau, L. (2005). *Good Practice in Designing a Community-based Approach to Prevent Domestic Violence*. United Nations; Fanslow, J. (2005). *Beyond Zero Tolerance: Key issues and future directions for family violence work in New Zealand*. Families Commission: Wellington; WHO. (2004). *Preventing Violence: A guide to implementing the recommendations from the World report on violence and health*; Family and Community Services. (2006). *Community Action Toolkit to Prevent Family Violence*. Ministry of Social Development and ACC.

<sup>2</sup> Murphy, C. and Fanslow, J. (2012). *Building collaborations to eliminate family violence: facilitators, barriers and good practice*. New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse: Auckland.

<sup>3</sup> Atkinson, M. (2007). *Better at Working Together: Interagency Collaboration. Part I: Literature Review*. High and Complex Needs Unit: Wellington

<sup>4</sup> The Duluth model prioritises the coordination of a criminal justice response to partner abuse and children witnessing domestic violence. However, the success factors are relevant and applicable to the ways of working in New Zealand where collaboratives are increasingly prioritising a "whole of family/whanau" approach, and are linking the prevention of partner, child and elder abuse together. Shephard, M. (2008). *Mobilizing Communities to Prevent Domestic Violence*. VAWNET.

<sup>5</sup> Home Office. (2000). *Domestic Violence: Breaking the Chain: Multi-agency guidance for addressing domestic violence*. United Kingdom. p3.

## 1. Success factors for collaboratives – New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse

There are a range of benefits to of working together well:

- Better service provision to meet the range of needs of families
- Better referral system for clients
- Improved services through feedback and learning from other agencies and from service users
- Avoid service replication and address local service gaps
- More efficient use of resources through sharing
- People know more about what services are available
- Reduced worker stress through peer support
- 'Louder voice' in prevention projects
- Joint creative and problem solving capacity.

Successful collaboration and coordination does not happen by accident.

Key elements of successful multi-agency initiatives to prevent family violence include:

- Clear shared philosophy and aims
- Using gender analysis, recognising other inequalities, and using the socio-ecological approach
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities
- Creating a climate of trust and respect
- Modelling respectful, healthy, equal relationships (dealing with power and control issues between agencies and between members; having a process to resolve conflict)
- Commitment and buy-in from senior management (in job descriptions and mandated with the agency)
- Open communication and information sharing protocols
- Leadership – local and national drive and vision
- Dedicated coordinator role – to build relationships, take an impartial role, keep collaborative big picture focus, uphold the kaupapa
- Diverse membership of government and community agencies including those outside the family violence sector
- Training and care for staff (collaboration takes time, effort and new ways of working)
- Performance monitoring by governance group, and from service users perspective
- Focus on developing services for unserved groups, and undertaking primary prevention activities.

Barriers to successful functioning of collaborative initiatives include:

- Lack of shared direction and understanding of the issue
- Losing sight of the big picture and complexity of family violence
- Lack of role demarcation
- Lack of trust and mutual respect
- Power imbalances between government and community agencies
- Lack of leadership and mandate at the national and local level
- Lack of clear communication including unsafe information sharing
- Lack of a dedicated coordinator role
- Poor accountability and monitoring
- Lack of conflict resolution
- Inadequate funding
- Time constraints and high workloads
- Lack of mandatory adequate training on family violence.

Current needs and opportunities in the family violence sector:

- Develop wider commitment to stopping violence
- Develop the “no wrong door” approach to ensure all that people can get good help from what ever agency they contact
- Build broader partnerships including those outside the family violence sector, particularly for prevention activities
- Engage more men in preventing violence
- Ensure national leadership and mandate including national resources, manuals, policies and strategies
- Consult with survivors and include their voices
- Make sure there is adequate provision of advocacy for women and men
- Ensure communal training is provided on family violence and on working collaboratively
- Ensure that staff are adequately paid and there is consistent funding.

### **Success factors for collaboratives – High and Complex Needs Unit, NZ**

Any collaborative initiative needs to be:

- Clear about the outcomes
- A means to an end (not an end in itself)
- In line with good practice
- Informed by current evidence.

To be successful, collaboratives need:

- Common language and vision, and clarity about history of the project, aims, and responsibilities
- Skills to collaborate (such as communication skills, and conflict resolution) and joint training
- Ability to evaluate and monitor the performance of practitioners and organisations involved in the collaborative work (e.g. collaborative activities need to be recognised in staff training, job descriptions and performance agreements)
- Processes for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the collaborative initiative
- Commitment from individuals and organisations to work collaboratively (support and mandate from management is vital)
- Leaders that have strategic vision, tenacity, organisational skills, and can share power and encourage participation
- Clear membership procedures (including induction); members who have a mandate to make decisions and consistently participate in meetings
- Time spent on nurturing relationships and building strong personal links between members
- Coordination support (a coordination role that is committed, knowledgeable, and informed but neutral to vested interests is needed to facilitate communication among members, provide administration services, and organise activities)
- Power-sharing and joint accountability – conflict, challenges and power differences need to be dealt with openly and positively
- Adequate funding and resources for the long-term (collaborative processes need a considerable investment of time and resources)
- Patience (allowances need to be made for the time it takes to progress collaborative projects)
- To avoid “collaboration fatigue” by being focussed, and clear about links/overlaps with other local collaborations.

Prior to establishing a collaborative initiative, the role of Maori, and how Maori will be represented needs to be considered. A “Treaty-based” collaboration should aim to achieve a balanced power relationship. The process of developing collaborative initiatives with Maori needs to be led by Maori and guided by tikanga. Furthermore, government agencies and well-resourced organisations need to be aware of not taking over the collaborative agenda, and may need to consider how to support the involvement of organisations that are not funded to collaborate.

### **Success factors for collaboratives – Duluth Abuse Intervention Project, USA.**

The Coordinated Community Response to domestic violence was pioneered in Duluth, Minnesota in the United States. The model developed by the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) is the most widely used model in family violence intervention internationally.<sup>6</sup>

According to the 'Duluth model', domestic and family violence can only be addressed and prevented through a collaboration between NGOs and government agencies, which is informed by the needs and experiences of victims and perpetrators. The purpose of all interagency approaches around family violence is to improve safety and autonomy for victims and reduce offender's opportunity and inclination to harm victims.

In a review of factors enabling the mobilisation of communities to prevent domestic violence, Shepard<sup>7</sup> argues that the most effective collaborative models:

- Have a social ecological perspective that looks at the prevention of violence at many levels – individual, family, community, social institutions, cultural environment, and public policy
- Engage community members and organisations outside of sector
- Take an approach that strengthens community assets
- Link different forms of violence together making connections between causes and solutions to partner abuse, child abuse, elder abuse and community violence
- Develop evaluation data to understand the impact of initiatives.

The table below is adapted from the success factors for interagency working which were identified by advocates and researchers at DAIP. The first column includes what is regarded as the minimum level capabilities of a network. The third column describes a well-functioning network that can make a significant contribution to the prevention of family violence in that area.

**The Duluth model makes it clear that networks should be constantly changing, adapting and improving in ways that are informed by evaluation, monitoring and feedback from those affected by violence.**

<sup>6</sup> The Duluth model prioritises the coordination of a criminal justice response to partner abuse and children witnessing domestic violence. However, the success factors are relevant and applicable to the ways of working in New Zealand where collaboratives are increasingly prioritising a "whole of family/whanau" approach, and are linking the prevention of partner, child and elder abuse together.

<sup>7</sup> Shepard, M. (2008). *Mobilizing Communities to Prevent Domestic Violence*. VAWNET.

Levels of Interagency Response to Domestic Violence (adapted from the DAIP resource "Core Elements of an Effective Coordinated Community Response")		
Minimum Capabilities (Level 1)	Level 2 Capabilities	Level 3 Capabilities
Several key organisations regularly attend interagency meetings and have shared policy/procedures (although there may be some key organisations that are hostile and/or not participating)	Most key organisations in a community are involved in the network and form small working groups to fix gaps or problems	The network has reinvented itself and developed new solutions as previous system changes have become ineffective
Some practitioners take the role of coordination and leadership on top of their regular jobs	A paid coordinator does tasks set by network and facilitates solution-based working groups	The paid coordinator spends less time coordinating meetings & encouraging attendance, & more time on improving systems
There is an action plan for the network/collaborative	Interagency data collection, monitoring and tracking occurs	Each point of prevention and intervention as been examined to ensure that workers are coordinated within and across agencies
Some managers offer informal support	Some managers support the network by freeing up staff to do collaborative problem solving, and seeking funding for the collaboration	Managers support interagency agreements that maximize victim safety and accountability of offenders and system
Shared work happens in interagency group and is based on practitioners' ideas for solutions	The network seeks to address service gaps, particularly marginalized people's access to services	Marginalised community members have their needs addressed and built into the network process
Practitioners are learning more about each others roles (but there may be some ill-feeling when addressing problems with an organisation's performance)	Network members learn the details of each others jobs, and are able to critique others work without it becoming personal or involving public humiliation	Government agencies are trusted by their NGO partners to initiate system changes that improve victims' safety and autonomy, and hold perpetrators and institutions accountable
Relationship building across organisations assists with problem solving around difficult cases/issues	Policy development within individual organisations is informed by critical reflection and promising practices from other communities	Network members share good practice and learnings with other communities
The network has produced some resources and promotes community awareness of family violence	The network continues to grow prevention and awareness raising activities	The network is active in community organising and training, to ensure other social and health services respond to family violence
Representatives from marginalized communities may be invited to meetings	Victims of violence and marginalised community members are invited to assess the network and provide their ideas	Focus groups of diverse groups of people who have experienced family violence are regularly used to evaluate the collaboration and inform improvements in the system response
Everyone has attended family violence awareness training	Training is built around implementing new procedures and is discipline-specific	Organisation members who have been involved in system changes become co-trainers

### **Success factors for collaboratives – “Reducing Domestic Violence ...What Works?” (UK)**

The UK Home Office developed a guidance on inter-agency working for addressing domestic violence which are called multi-agency forum or fora.<sup>8</sup> These networks focus mostly on partner abuse, and multi-agency fora for child abuse operate separately but are linked.

Multi-agency fora in the UK are involved in:

- Coordinating local agency responses and services
- Improving practice of organisations (e.g. through training)
- Supporting projects that help survivors and perpetrators
- Awareness raising among general public
- Prevention work (e.g. in schools).

The Home Office Guidance discusses the following as good practice elements for multi-agency fora:

- Clearly stated principles, aims and objectives which can easily be evaluated, to ensure that the collaboratives are seen as a means to an end and not an end in itself
- Agreed definition of domestic violence
- Effective participation and leadership from community organisations, particularly those working with survivors (multi-agency networks should not be dominated by government agencies)
- Developing resources for their area that provide information for those experiencing domestic violence
- Providing training
- Developing good practice guidance
- Monitoring of information sharing protocols for local organisations
- Working closely with child protection committees and other related fora
- Ensuring that senior managers, policy makers and practitioners are engaged in the fora
- Making use of coordinators by directly employing a coordinator or having one of the member agency staff undertake the duties
- Monitoring and evaluating activities to ensure that they are actually improving the safety of survivors of family violence.

<sup>8</sup> Home Office. (2000). *Domestic Violence: Breaking the Chain: Multi-agency guidance for addressing domestic violence*. United Kingdom. p3.