Executive summary: Measuring outcomes in family, domestic and sexual violence services

A practice-informed framework from The Salvation Army



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Research Team, Centre for Mission Impact

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Family, domestic and sexual violence services do work—but how well, for whom, and how do we do better?

Refer to main report (Parts 1–3) for further information.

Family, domestic, and sexual violence (FDSV) services do extraordinary work providing critical, individualised support to victim-survivors.

The value of FDSV services is commonly captured through outputs and some qualitative evidence. While insightful, **robust evidence is needed to understand what is working (and to what extent), where improvements are needed, and where gaps persist.** This evidence is important for service improvement, efficient resource distribution, and successful sector innovation.

Systematic outcomes measurement provides a solution. It is used across the social service sector, but uptake in the FDSV sector has lagged due to concerns over high client vulnerability and a lack of sector-appropriate, evidence-based outcomes measurement approaches.

This report helps address this gap by sharing the recently developed Outcomes Measurement Framework for The Salvation Army's (TSA) national FDSV services.



Building a national approach to outcomes measurement

In 2025, The Salvation Army launched its national FDSV Outcomes Measurement Framework. The four-year project involved:

- **The Centre for Social Impact** (University of Western Australia)
- An **advisory network,** including **lived experience representatives,** internal stakeholders, service representatives, peak bodies, and national, state and territory **government representatives**
- **Victim-survivors, practitioners** and **managers**

The framework included the development of **'The Salvation Army Wellbeing and Recovery Indicator'**—a purpose-designed and validated outcomes measurement tool.

Report aims

1. **Provide insights for governments and funders** regarding the outcomes measurement needs of FDSV service providers and how these needs can be supported.
2. **Share resources and learnings with service providers** to assist them in developing and implementing their own outcomes measurement frameworks and advocating for service needs.
3. **Contribute to outcomes measurement in the FDSV sector** by offering a working example that may support improved outcomes for victim-survivors across Australia.



The Salvation Army's FDSV services

Refer to main report (Part 3) for further information.

Each year, specialist practitioners deliver holistic, flexible, and trauma- and violence-informed case management to over 10,000 individuals and families across Australia.

Services are tailored to the complex and evolving circumstances of victim-survivors, guided by a national **Model of Care** and **Case Management Practice Guide.**

As a national service, the organisation addresses diverse government requirements, including evidence of impact.

Framework scope

The Outcomes Measurement Framework centres on FDSV accommodation and outreach services with case-managed adult clients. Future work will include children and other service types.

Developing our Outcomes Measurement Framework

Who and what informed our framework?

Refer to main report (Parts 4–5) for further information.

Evidence-based literature and government plans and strategies

Stage 1 pilot learnings: Our initial pilot (2021–2023) established the foundations of our Program Logic Model and findings highlighted the need for FDSV-specific validated measurement tools.

Advisory Network, inclusive of lived experience representatives, government representatives, service representatives, peak bodies and academics, provided sector insights and feedback on core framework components.

The Centre for Social Impact (University of Western Australia) provided evaluation expertise and conducted validation testing on The Salvation Army Wellbeing and Recovery Indicator (TSAWRI).

Stage 2 pilot tested the purpose-designed TSAWRI with victim-survivors accessing services. Insights informed tool validation testing and improvements.

Core framework components

Refer to main report (Part 4) for further information.

Program Logic Model outlined service inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes (short- and medium-term outcomes, and longer-term impacts).

Data Matrix listed indicators, measures and data sources providing evidence for outcomes within the Program Logic Model. The Data Matrix mapped available data and identified data required from outcomes measurement tools.

Outcomes measurement tools provided evidence for priority outcomes for measurement, as identified by the Advisory Network.

Tailored measurement tools:

TSA Wellbeing and Recovery Indicator (validated, pre-post tool)

Feedback Survey, incorporating retrospective outcomes measurement questions and service satisfaction questions

Advisory Network

Refer to main report (Part 5) for further information.

Participants[1]

11 Lived experience representatives, including those from culturally diverse, First Nations, differently abled and/or neurodiverse communities.

National, state and territory government representatives including but not limited to:

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Department for Families Fairness and Housing (Victoria)
- Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (Queensland)

Representatives from peak bodies, academia and FDSV services including Zonta House, developers of Australia's first[2] FDSV-specific validated tool, the *Life Matrix*.

Internal stakeholders including national FDSV managers, specialists, program managers, practitioners and policy and advocacy representatives.

Purpose

Bring together subject-matter experts to:

- Provide **guidance** on developing the Outcomes Measurement Framework, ensuring it reflects the needs of:
  - Community members accessing TSA FDSV services
  - Governments and other funders (including current and future data requirements)
  - The FDSV sector
  - The broader Australian community services sector
- **Share insights** on sector projects and initiatives
- Identify effective information-sharing channels to further **strengthen sector-wide evaluation, communication and learning**

1 Participants' input across contribution areas varied depending on their experience and expertise.
2 To the knowledge of The Salvation Army at the time of publishing.

The Salvation Army Wellbeing and Recovery Indicator

TSAWRI (pronounced 'sah-ree')

Refer to main report (Part 6) for further information.

TSAWRI tool and domains

Purpose: holistic self-reported wellbeing measure designed for FDSV service contexts.



Figure 1: TSAWRI sub-domains.

TSAWRI in practice

Timepoints

- **Intake:** shortly after casework begins
- **Review:** midway or regularly throughout a case
- **Exit:** as a victim-survivor prepares to leave the service

Delivery method

- With a case manager and/or by a client independently
- Recorded within client management system, fillable PDF and/or paper copy

Embedding outcomes measurement as business-as-usual

- Practitioners:
  - Review client responses in context of case plans
  - Discuss results with victim-survivors, including changes over time (if beneficial)
- Regularly review service results relative to intended outcomes and improvement opportunities

Validation

TSAWRI was validated by the **Centre for Social Impact** at the University of Western Australia.

'Validation' is an indication of tool:

- **Reliability**—when respondents answer the same way each time under the same circumstance
- **Validity**—the tool measures what is intended

Psychometric testing (n = 72) found TSAWRI demonstrated adequate reliability and validity as a proxy indicator for client wellbeing. Total scores can be used with case management, with three distinct domains (see above) suitable for pre and post program and cross-demographics analysis. Testing on larger sample sizes will enhance the precision and generalisability of psychometric findings.

Trauma-informed and strength-based considerations

The tool administration process is as important as its content.

TSAWRI should:

- Be conducted within services' trauma-informed and strength-based case management practices, distress protocol and safeguards
- Be clearly explained to victim-survivors, including purpose, use in case management, and tool content
- Have flexible participation options to ensure clients maintain choice, agency and control.

TSAWRI use with diverse groups

Culturally suitable processes and tools are being explored, including use with First Nations clients. TSAWRI's simple language supports victim-survivors with lower English proficiency. Future work will consider translated and Easy-English versions, including for people with intellectual disabilities.



Implementation considerations

- Position TSAWRI as value-adding, highlighting benefits for clients, services, and funding sustainability
- Secure strong leadership support and identify champions
- Provide resources that model trauma-informed responses to challenging scenarios

Recommendations and next steps

Refer to main report (Part 7) for further information.

Recommendations

Embedding outcomes measurement within FDSV services and the sector strengthens understanding of what works and supports evidence-informed decision-making. Its success relies on shared responsibility for safeguarding clients, supporting the workforce, and maintaining data quality—everyone has a role:

Government

- Embed flexibility and agility within outcomes measurement reporting frameworks
- Invest in services' outcomes measurement capability and sustainability
- Prioritise outcomes, not just outputs
- Build on existing service-level practice
- Ensure outcomes measurement delivers value to services and victim-survivors
- Centre victim-survivor voice in outcomes measurement
- Provide clarity and lead time on service-level data requirements

Services

- Strengthen peer-to-peer outcomes measurement learning across the sector
- Develop fit-for-purpose, service-specific frameworks
- Advocate for agile and proportionate outcomes measurement reporting
- Identification of appropriate feedback loops including knowledge translation for different audiences and contexts

Sector

- Advance fit-for-purpose approaches to outcomes measurement
- Bridge research, policy, and practice
- Centre lived experience and community knowledge
- Support sector capability and collective learning

TSA next steps

- Identify culturally suitable outcomes measurement processes and tools for First Nations community members in TSA FDSV mainstream services.
- Analyse and utilise outcomes measurement and client information systems data in annual reporting, community advocacy, service improvement decision-making, and funding applications.
- Expand the framework to include children and young people, and other service types.
- Determine feedback loops including knowledge translation for different audiences/contexts.


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