

Statement of support and commitment to VAWG Anti-Racism Charter



We are speaking up as the CEOs of second tier membership organisations of the women's sector and particularly the ending male violence against women and girls' sector.

We support the recently launched VAWG Anti-Racism Charter.

Firstly, we acknowledge the critical point in time at which we write; the worldwide public visibility of the murder of George Floyd, the campaigning of Black Lives Matter and the spotlight shone on racial violence and structural inequality.

We also acknowledge the 40th anniversary of the New Cross Massacre of black children and young people without consequence for the perpetrators and the trauma caused by these and continuing acts along the continuum of daily racism.

As we understand the continuum of sexist violence so we understand the continuum of racist violence. Both are woven deeply.

Recent public allegations of structural racism within the VAWG sector have prompted us to speak together now; silence is collusion and a key element of abuse.

We are acutely aware that the issue of racism within our sector is not peculiar to one organisation, it is endemic and it has been left unchecked for decades. It has dismantled much of the independent Black and minoritised women's sector and reduced specialist services available to women and girls who need them and have the right to access them.

The 'professionalisation' and often state collusion growing across the sector also manifests in reproducing structural inequalities experienced by Black and minoritised women through the multiple systemic oppression of racism and sexism.

This endemic racism within our sector must be ended if we are concerned with women's human rights and social justice.

We call upon our sector to support the VAWG Anti-Racism Charter which has just been launched and is the only charter supported by Black and minoritised women and girls' organisations.

We call upon our sector to listen to and hear the voices and concerns raised by Black women, and to acknowledge the need for self-reflection amongst those of us who enjoy the

freedoms and privileges bestowed upon as white women and to take a step forward on a journey of transformation.

We call upon our sector to honour the founding principles of solidarity and social justice and equity and to begin by reviewing approaches to collaboration and partnerships with Black and minoritised womens' organisations.

To begin by choosing not to compete for grants and contracts which are specific in area and or specialism that is not yours.

To begin by supporting Black and minoritised womens' organisations to sustain their independent provision by opening the gates held closed to decision and policy makers.

To begin by stepping back and sharing the power you hold.

The white women CEOs who have signed this letter recognise our own responsibility and pledge to do this work too for ourselves our organisations and our members.

We are committed to working together and invite all organisations to join us on this much needed journey of improvement to ensure we are at the forefront of ending racism within our sector.

VAWG Anti-Racism Charter: <https://www.endingracisminvawg.org/>

Signatories

Baljit Banga, Executive Director, **Imkaan**

Jayne Butler, Chief Executive, **Rape Crisis England & Wales**

Vivienne Hayes, Chief Executive, **Women's Resource Centre**

Sara Kirkpatrick, Chief Executive, **Welsh Women's Aid**

Farah Nazeer, Chief Executive, **Women's Aid Federation of England**

Andrea Simon, Director, **End Violence Against Women Coalition**

Jo Todd, Chief Executive, **Respect**

