





OUR HERSTORY

IWDA was founded in 1985 to progress the rights of women and address their absence as beneficiaries of, and decision makers in, development. Our purpose was to prioritise partnership and respect for women's capacity, agency and human rights in all areas of development -priorities which remain at the core of our work today.

Over our 30-year history, IWDA has worked with 194 program partners across 36 countries and territories. Today we focus our partnership work in countries across the Asia Pacific region and collaborate on research, advocacy and policy through national, regional and global platforms, and coalitions. Our work is evidence-informed and evidence informing. It seeks to promote changes in policy and practice towards gender equality and the full realisation of women's rights, and to empower women as agents of this change.

IWDA continues to respect and acknowledge the life cycle experiences of diverse women and girls. IWDA has always understood that women are not a homogenous group and that gender-based discrimination intersects with other sources of discrimination including race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion and sociocultural background, which can further limit access and deepen inequalities.

OUR VISION

Gender equality for all

OUR PURPOSE

To advance and protect the rights of diverse women and girls

OUR VALUES

Feminist - We respect women's diverse experiences, identities, knowledge and strengths and strive to empower women to realise their full and equal rights.

Accountable - We are honest and transparent and are committed to evaluating and communicating the outcomes of our work with integrity. We are accountable to our partners, our supporters and, most of all the diverse women we work with.

Collaborative - We build trusting relationships and strong partnerships as we believe that advancing together with women's rights organisations and networks is crucial for achieving progressive change.

Transformative - We are determined to make real, lasting improvements in women's lives by working to transform the root causes of gender inequality and holding governments and decision makers accountable.

Cover: IWDA staff and partners. Photo by Gemma Carr

Left: Francisca Alves Taolin from Alola Foundation. Photo by Anna Carlile

OUR GOALS 2016-2021

1. Promote women's leadership and participation
2. Strengthen women's safety and security
3. Accelerate women's economic empowerment
4. Advance systemic change
5. Ensure organisational sustainability and accountability

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

IWDA's 2016-2021 strategy was developed through a six-month process of intelligence gathering. This included internal and external evaluations along with national, regional and international consultations involving our international partners, supporters, government, peers and colleagues.

Our previous five year strategic plan set strong growth and thematic targets which we surpassed in both quantity and quality. Looking forward, the environment in which IWDA will be working is characterised by substantial change in the political, economic, social, technological and environmental spheres. IWDA's strategic intelligence gathering identified the following factors as having major significance to gender equality outcomes and IWDA's impact:

- **The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** will drive the global development agenda for the next fifteen years. Gender equality is both a stand-alone goal and embedded in all other goals. For the first time, the SDGs are universal and apply to all countries.
- **Gender equality is now front and centre in national, regional and international policy agendas** and will continue to catalyse new collaborations for women's rights and gender equality. However, conservative governments and fundamentalist movements will increasingly and actively generate reaction and backlash against feminism, posing physical and political threats to women as individuals and in organisations.
- **The current accountability to gender outcomes in development practice** means that many new actors are now compelled or committed to address gender equality. It remains to be seen whether their present focus can or will be sustained. Given our 30-year focus and herstory, the challenge for IWDA will be to ensure we are best positioned to continue in our advisory and driving role in delivering best practice.
- Although women's empowerment and gender equality remain central objectives for many donors, **specific funding for women's rights has decreased globally in recent years**. Gender specialists in many agencies are struggling to preserve a women's rights discourse and secure resources for women's rights organisations, despite the evidence that mobilising women is a powerful engine for positive change.
- **Overseas Development Assistance budgets will most likely stagnate**, increasing competition for funding of gender and development initiatives and potentially undermining or sidelining women's rights organisations (as large-scale initiatives are usually given preference). The policy commitments to gender equality, and investment tied to measurable outcomes, offer significant opportunity for a gender specialist agency like IWDA to focus on research and analysis on the impact of aid policy on diverse women and girls.
- **Climate change and environmental disasters pose an increasing threat** and will have a profound and gendered impact. Pacific Island countries rank among the most vulnerable in the world to natural disasters including the possibility of cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, flooding, landslides and droughts. Women account for only 15-20% of delegation leaders in UN climate negotiations.
- **Inequitable leadership, decision-making and political representation between women and men continues to be severe** and highly visible in formal arenas of power. Diverse women are largely excluded from the executive branches of government. Female Heads of State or Government are still the exception, although the number has increased slightly over the past 20 years. Only 18% of appointed ministers are women, and are usually assigned to portfolios related to social issues. Women are underrepresented among senior-level civil servants, and seldom represent their governments at the international level. Women's representation among corporate managers, legislators and senior officials remains low at about 30% of managerial positions. In Southeast Asia and the Pacific, the percentage of women in national parliament is only 5.4%, well below the global average of 22%.
- **Shrinking space for civil society both in Australia and overseas** is seeing movement building activities, funding and personal safety threatened for individuals and organisations with an influential public voice on civil issues, including gender equality.

- **In the face of increasing conflict and violent extremism, women will continue to be disproportionately affected** by displacement, extremely high levels of sexual violence and increased poverty. Up to 80% of internally displaced persons and refugees around the world are women and children, and women are profoundly underrepresented in all peace-making efforts.
- **Engaging men and boys to join women as agents of change** will become implicit in all gender and development practice. IWDA's brand and niche is located in its work for women's rights on the journey towards gender equality. We therefore must consider the gendered relations, structures, institutions and norms that reproduce disparity and discrimination.
- **Economic growth will remain a priority of nation states.** Continued growth in the power and influence of the private sector poses challenges to the insecurity and the precariousness of work, particularly in the informal economy, with the associated risks disproportionately impacting women. Unpaid work continues to be invisible in formal economies, undermining gender-inclusive economic management and decision-making.
- **Labour force participation** across all sectors and occupations continues to show women in full-time jobs earn between 70-90% of what men earn, which translates into large income inequalities throughout women's lives. 50% of women of working age are in the labour force, compared to 77% of men. Among those who are employed, women constitute the majority of unpaid 'contributing family workers' for family businesses.
- **High fertility rates are driving rapid population growth**, with the Pacific population expected to double over the next 28 years. Young women's position and participation in current and future leadership is important given the demographic youth bulge in IWDA's current region, where 56% of the population is under 25.
- **Young people are still significantly impacted by poverty, education systems focused on white-collar employment skills, stagnating economies that do not provide enough employment opportunities, and rural/urban inequalities.** Continuing high population growth, rapid urban expansion, political volatility, under-performing economies and the rising cost of food pose widespread risk for young Pacific Islanders. Investment in young people will be crucial to fostering the next generation of leaders.
- **Digital and global platforms** are increasingly significant in driving social change and mobilisation for equality.



Partners at Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) Inception Workshop.
Photo by Gemma Carr

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY - OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

IWDA works for gender equality and women's rights as preconditions for a just, equitable and truly sustainable world. Achieving gender equality and women's rights will require social, political and economic transformation.

IWDA recognises that transforming entrenched power imbalances is challenging, long-term work involving complex change at many levels.

It requires changes in knowledge and beliefs and in attitudes and behaviours at the individual, household, and community level, as well as in the structures and institutions that shape and reproduce cultures and economies.

IWDA employs a rights-based, feminist approach to our work.

Diverse women have a right to participate in all decisions affecting them. This principle underpins our work with local women's organisations and networks, recognising that they are the most effective agents for change with the deepest understanding of their context. This reflects our experience that strengthening women's ability to act collectively is the key to change in contexts of inequality and marginalisation.

IWDA works within a Gender and Development framework.

We will create change through feminist partnerships, coalitions and movement building; research and policy; and advocacy and communications. We will challenge discrimination to ensure women participate and have power in civil and political life, feel safe and secure, and benefit equally from sustainable economies. IWDA will continue to promote a holistic understanding of the economy that includes informal and unpaid work. We will work to strengthen the capacity, collaboration and commitment of others to increase gender equality. In addition, IWDA will engage with men as targets for change towards women's rights, highlighting their role as potential beneficiaries and champions of this change.

IWDA's approach and understanding of gender equality is informed by evidence-based research and ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning through our program partnerships and alliances.

We will make visible the issues and experiences affecting women, and address evidence gaps (including in routine disaggregation of data). We will generate knowledge of how to do things differently based on feminist learning and exchange. We will influence policy platforms at national, regional and global levels to enable and support systemic change towards gender equality, embedding it in laws, institutional policies and programs. IWDA's advocacy will increase demand for change and make it possible for leading authorities and other development organisations to act in support of gender equality. We will call for resourcing and investment that is consistent with the scale of the problem being addressed. Our stories will engage and inspire, so others can see why this change matters and be moved to act.

IWDA is committed to diversity within our workforce, ensuring we recruit and empower personnel from a range of backgrounds.

As an all-women organisation, IWDA offers significant opportunities to advance women into leadership positions and enhance their career prospects. We recognise the many roles that women play in their professional and personal lives, and reflect this through policies and practices that support staff to manage the intersection of these roles.

Over the next five years, IWDA will grow and become more influential, building on our proud herstory.

We will continue to be respected as a leader and specialist in gender and feminist development practice. We will evaluate our practice and priorities to adapt and learn from the political, economic and social contexts in which we work. IWDA will be innovative and iterative in the implementation of our strategies. Agility in our relationships, structures, functions and technologies will enable us to have the greatest impact in the changing contexts in which we work. IWDA's Strategic Plan 2016-2021 will focus on the following five goals to advance gender equality and the rights of diverse women, while sustaining IWDA as a thriving development agency.

GOAL 1

PROMOTE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION



Diverse women have an equal say in, and power over, the decisions that affect their lives in their homes, communities and countries, as well as in regional and international spaces. Diverse women have full and effective participation in leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and social life.

WHAT OUR SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

1. By 2021, women's civil representation and effective participation in the Asia Pacific region has increased across IWDA program countries.
2. By 2021, women's political representation and effective participation in the Asia Pacific region has increased across multiple levels of government in IWDA program countries.
3. By 2021, IWDA's coalition and movement building programs have aggregated and amplified women's power and priorities.
4. Annually, IWDA generates evidence about how change toward gender equality happens, to inform and influence individuals and institutions.

WHAT WE WILL DO - OUR STRATEGIES

- Address the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles in Cambodia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste and Thailand through partnerships in the cross-regional Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) program, and in Fiji through the We Rise Coalition
- Strengthen feminist movements and gender and development coalitions in the Asia Pacific region
- Support current and emerging women leaders, including young women, to achieve and retain elected office

- Enable greater support and influence for women at all political, economic and social life stages
- Engage diverse male change champions to actively promote gender equality
- Resource and support the internal capacity and development of women's rights organisations
- Resource and participate in learning exchanges and development activities to strengthen partner networks and engagement
- Coordinate joint advocacy, communications and political strategies with partners and networks on women's leadership linked to the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Beijing Platform for Action and Commission on the Status of Women; relevant Sustainable Development Goals; and climate change
- Conduct research and generate evidence to identify barriers and enablers to women's participation in leadership
- Collaborate with Australians in our campaigns for women's inclusion, representation and leadership

GOAL 2

STRENGTHEN WOMEN'S SAFETY AND SECURITY



Diverse women and girls live free from gender-based violence, and are playing powerful roles in peace building and national security.

WHAT OUR SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

5. By 2021, IWDA partner organisations in the Asia Pacific region are strengthened to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.
6. By 2021, IWDA has contributed to greater understanding of the root causes and impact of gender-based violence.

7. By 2021, IWDA has increased collective action and investment for gender-based violence protection, prevention and support services in the Asia Pacific region.

8. By 2021, IWDA's support to women's rights coalitions and Women's Human Rights Defenders networks has enabled gendered approaches to conflict prevention, peace building and security at the local, national and regional levels.

WHAT WE WILL DO - OUR STRATEGIES

- Strengthen and increase access to protection and support services for survivors of gender-based violence, building upon partnerships in Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, Solomon Islands and Myanmar
- Strengthen the promotion and protection of Women Human Rights Defenders in the Asia Pacific region
- Provide funding and organisational development support to local service providers, enabling them to expand and sustain their services addressing gender-based violence
- Partner with NGOs to advocate and increase women's and girls' access to sexual and reproductive information, services and resources
- Sustain partnerships to increase access to equitable and adequate sanitation and hygiene
- Resource partner organisations to foster change in attitudes and behaviours of men and boys towards gender-based violence
- Continue to generate evidence on the nature and prevalence of violence against women with disabilities
- Continue to generate evidence on the interface between gender-based violence and income
- Work with partners to translate evidence into advocacy plans to act on, and invest in, the eradication of gender-based violence
- Ensure our understanding of the root causes of gender-based violence and the multidimensional approaches to protection and the prevention of violence are applied in program design and delivery
- Actively engage and contribute to the Australian NGO Coalition for Women, Peace and Security
- Advocate for and contribute to robust reporting frameworks and government accountability on UN Resolution 1325++ on Women, Peace and Security
- Provide support and resources for meaningful peace and reconciliation processes in Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Fiji
- Sustain partnerships with organisations addressing gender and trafficking or displacement

- Collaborate with partner organisations to raise awareness of the impact of climate change and environmental events on women's security and wellbeing
- Develop a new women's safety and security framework informed by our partner's work and the emerging global evidence base

GOAL 3

ACCELERATE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



Diverse women have equal power and opportunity to make and act on economic decisions and share in economic benefit.

WHAT OUR SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

9. By 2021, women and communities supported by IWDA have a stronger voice and power in individual and collective economic outcomes, including greater ownership of, and access to, resources.

10. By 2021, IWDA has increased investment in, and scale of, partnerships that drive gender-inclusive and sustainable economies in the Asia Pacific region.

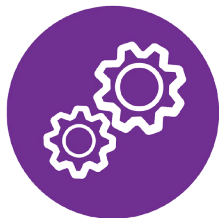
WHAT WE WILL DO - OUR STRATEGIES

- Develop an economic empowerment program framework that addresses women's position in, and/or access to: the care economy, labour rights, reproductive health, environmental resources, migration, regional trade, technology, credit and banking
- Sustain and diversify partnerships that support women-led enterprises and increase individual women's access to safe and equitable employment
- Expand women's sustainable livelihood and saving club models in the Pacific
- Resource women's rights organisations to better engage and influence social norms and attitudes regarding women's work in the formal and informal sectors

- Advocate for increased investment in energy, water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure to reduce women's labour burden and increase women's available productive time
- Consolidate and advocate good practice that supports women's equal participation in, and benefit from, formal sector work
- Generate and communicate evidence highlighting the value of women's unpaid work, reproductive roles and the care economy
- Continue to generate evidence and advocate for gender-responsive budgeting
- Use economic analyses generated from the Individual Deprivation Measure to influence decision- and policy-makers
- Establish new relationships with private sector partners to strengthen women's ability to secure decent jobs, sustainable livelihoods, accumulate assets, and influence institutions and public policies for growth and development across the Asia Pacific region
- Identify local, national and regional points of influence to strengthen policies, laws, and regulations impacting women's economic empowerment

GOAL 4

ADVANCE SYSTEMIC CHANGE



Add value and expertise to Australian and international structural reforms that advance women's rights and gender equality, and have a transformative impact on the causes of gender inequality.

WHAT OUR SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

11. By 2021, the Individual Deprivation Measure is ready for global use as a tool for tracking how development is changing the lives of the most deprived, including children and marginalised minorities.

12. By 2021, IWDA has demonstrably contributed to Australia's effective implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment targets within the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. By 2021, IWDA has expanded our resourcing to women's rights organisations across the Asia Pacific region by demonstrating excellence and value for money in delivering our work.

14. Every year, IWDA's advocacy and evidence has influenced the reform of discriminatory policies and practices, cultural norms, attitudes and behaviours, generating gender equality outcomes in the Asia Pacific region.

WHAT WE WILL DO - OUR STRATEGIES

- Deliver the Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM) partnership to develop and test a robust measure of individual-level, multidimensional poverty that is sensitive to gender and can be disaggregated by age, disability, geography, socio-cultural background and minority status
- Apply the IDM across six countries including Fiji, Nepal and Indonesia to identify how it is best used, its limitations, and how it can contribute to policy and program effectiveness
- Develop an innovative technological platform for collection, analysis and display of IDM data
- Enhance and inform global debate around individual-level, gender-sensitive data for poverty measurement
- Promote the IDM as a tool for tracking the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Join national advocacy efforts through established coalitions and alliances to hold the Australian government accountable to the SDGs
- Convene national and international dialogues on SDG 5, fostering links between domestic and international women's rights organisations to advance action on gender equality and women's empowerment
- Develop a whole-of-organisation Advocacy Plan to support the work of our partners, promote strategic engagement, contribute to inquiries and policy reviews, and disseminate IWDA resources and tools
- Continue collaboration with ACFID and its members to strengthen gender equality outcomes in the Australian aid program
- Sustain high level engagement with DFAT, the Office for Women and other relevant government bodies to advance gender equality and women's rights
- Develop a value for money framework that demonstrates the transformative impact of core funding to women's rights organisations

GOAL 5

ENSURE ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY



IWDA aligns our resources to the goals and objectives of this strategic plan and is accountable to our partners and supporters. IWDA will continue to develop as a sustainable organisation, recognised in Australia and internationally as an expert in gender and development and diverse women's rights.

WHAT OUR SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- 15. IWDA's culture is defined by our values and our people thrive
- 16. IWDA is governed and managed effectively
- 17. IWDA operates with accountability and transparency
- 18. IWDA's reputation grows, our identity and communications are powerful & influential
- 19. IWDA is a financially robust and sustainable organisation

WHAT WE WILL DO - OUR STRATEGIES

People and Culture

- Integrate IWDA's values and the Behavioural Competency Framework into human resource management and organisational culture
- Promote and sustain the individual health, safety and well-being of our people
- Diversify the workforce using IWDA's recruitment and selection processes
- Continuously improve human resource management tools and practices to enhance performance
- Continuously improve professional learning and organisational development to foster culture

and increase capability, enhance retention and strengthen succession planning

- Enhance and promote IWDA's employer brand by highlighting the Employee Value Proposition
- Enhance collaboration with IWDA volunteers, Gender Wise Associates, supporters and pro-bono suppliers

Governance and Management

- IWDA's Board to provide active strategic oversight and effectively apply the Governance Framework
- Collaborate with IWDA partners in international program planning and development
- Leadership to ensure the alignment of financial resources to overall strategic goals and promote effective resource management
- Embrace innovation and agility in relationships, structures, functions and technologies
- Develop and adhere to a whole-of-organisation monitoring, evaluation and learning framework aligned to the strategic plan
- Effectively assess and manage risk

Accountability and Transparency

- Demonstrate the value of investing in and supporting IWDA to funders, donors and supporters
- Apply continuous improvement principles to all our work
- Remain compliant and strive for best practice in all legal and regulatory obligations
- Identify and implement additional standards to strengthen inclusion and diversity at IWDA

Identity and Communications

- Collaborate with a diverse range of supporters to achieve change
- Continue to elevate IWDA as an authority in feminist gender and development practice
- IWDA attracts new supporters through bold, well-targeted and brand aligned rights-based campaigns, appeals and publications

Organisational Sustainability

- Diversify and grow our income and investments with increased support from the Australian community and new business development initiatives
- Secure long-term funding for IWDA and our partners to ensure investment in organisational development
- Continue to assess and improve the environmental impact of our work, internally and externally

To achieve the world we hope for,
women's rights and gender equality
must be at the heart of our efforts



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