
**AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY
WHITE PAPER SUBMISSION**

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DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
1. AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS	1
2. GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES AND GLOBAL TRENDS.....	4
3. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS	8
4. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, TRADE AND INVESTMENT	11
5. STRATEGIC, SECURITY AND TRANSNATIONAL CHALLENGES.....	16
6. ASSETS AND CAPABILITIES TO PURSUE OUR NATIONAL INTEREST	19
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.....	22

INTRODUCTION

“Empowering women is one of the best ways to promote economic growth and to achieve peace and security.”

Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Women’s Day 2014

International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA) is the leading Australian agency entirely focussed on women’s rights and gender equality in the Asia Pacific region. We are international, feminist and independent. Our vision is gender equality for all and our purpose is to advance and protect the rights of diverse women and girls.

IWDA commends the Commonwealth Government for undertaking this strategic review and intelligence gathering process into Australia’s Foreign Policy. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the White Paper process. Our submission addresses the six key issues identified by DFAT in the White Paper’s Terms of Reference. IWDA also consulted with our partners in the region about what Australia should do differently in our foreign policy and overseas aid program.

1. AUSTRALIA’S NATIONAL INTERESTS

‘National interests’ look different in an interconnected, interdependent world

We are at a point in history where trade (goods and services), movement of people and capital, economic systems, climatic systems, dispersal and uptake of technology and innovation, systems of communication, virtual communities and social movements contribute to and underpin unprecedented levels of interconnectedness and interdependence among nation states. Australia’s national interests have an intrinsically global, interconnected character in 2017, challenging traditional definitions of “national interest”.¹

In this context, rule of law, strong multilateral forums that provide nations and peoples with equal voice and representation, opportunities to collaborate, equitable and sustainable economic development and trade, and respect for human rights and diversity are essential to sustaining a global order that is conducive to Australia’s ability to realise its interests. Interconnectedness also increases the importance of collaboration with like-minded states as a means of pursuing Australia’s national interests.

Securing the interests of a diverse populace is at the core of Australia’s national interests

A primary responsibility of the nation state is to ensure the security of its people. Citizens are entitled to expect that their contexts and concerns, relationships and risks, and the interests that flow from this, are informing policy-making. These needs and interests are not homogenous. Citizens are differently positioned, socially and economically, and this shapes how and to what extent their interests are protected and progressed by particular policies. Factors such as gender, age, disability, geography, sexual orientation and gender identity, social-cultural background and religion shape opportunities, priorities and outcomes. Seeing and understanding this is essential if Australia’s foreign policy is to promote the needs and interests of a diverse citizenry – in Australia and in the countries with which we engage. Some interests and priorities are common and shared, others specific and

¹ Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2014), *Policy Challenges for the Next 50 Years*, <http://www.oecd.org/eco/lookingto2060.htm#WKP>

particular. A diverse, pluralist Australia requires a foreign policy that is informed by and relevant to the totality of these interests. This requires analytical capacity, and processes that enable ongoing input and feedback from diverse communities as an integral part of Australia's foreign policy architecture.

Historically, the idea of 'national interests' has been assumed to be gender neutral – that in pursuing Australia's national interests, the interests of all Australians are progressed. However, while gender inequality persists in every country and shapes opportunities and outcomes, failure to consider gender as a routine part of foreign policy – i.e. being blind to gender – will hide issues of importance to Australia's bilateral and regional relationships. The consequence of a gender blind approach is sub-optimal policy that misses opportunities to align with needs, interests, contexts and priorities. Gender analysis is essential if policies and programs are to contribute to positive economic and social outcomes that benefit women and men and address the constraints facing women and girls. Further, considering how gender intersects with age, disability, rural/urban location and socio-cultural background is essential to understanding the factors shaping economic, social and political development, to identify whose interests are affected, in what ways, by specific policy options, and to promote security, prosperity and justice.

Recommendation 1: The Australian Government takes account of the needs and interests of a diverse citizenry - in Australia and in the countries with which we engage - including considering how gender intersects with age, disability, rural/urban location and socio-cultural background.

Recommendation 2: Gender analysis forms a routine part of Australia's foreign policy to ensure policies and programs contribute to positive economic and social outcomes that benefit the interests of all Australians.

Gender equality is central to Australia's national interests and to securing peace, prosperity and sustainable development

The 2016 Australian Government *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy* identifies gender equality as essential to sustainable development: "One of the best ways to achieve economic growth and prosperity in the region is to empower women. Empowering women benefits all of society."² The evidence for investing in gender equality is compelling. "Countries with more gender equality have better economic growth. Companies with more women leaders perform better. Peace agreements that include women are more durable. Parliaments with more women enact more legislation on key social issues such as health, education, anti-discrimination and child support."³ Countries with greater gender equality tend to have lower poverty rates.⁴

There is similarly "overwhelming quantitative evidence that women's empowerment and gender equality are associated with peace and stability in society. In particular, when women influence decisions about war and peace and take the lead against extremism in their communities, it is more likely crises will be resolved without recourse to violence."⁵

Australian Government policy recognises that persistent gender inequality among our nearest neighbours continues to undermine economic growth, human development and poverty reduction in the region. Countries in our region cannot reach their potential when women face significant barriers to their ability to lead; if they cannot live free from violence; contribute to the economy; access education and health services and secure their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Australia's national interests lie in accelerating progress towards gender equality.

The Australian Government is committed to fully integrating gender equality into Australia's foreign policy, and IWDA sees this as fundamental to securing Australia's interests going forward.⁶

Gender equality is about equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities for women and men, girls and boys. ...Gender inequality is a result of unequal power distribution between women and men, exacerbated by ongoing discrimination, weaknesses in laws, policies and institutions, and social relations that normalise inequality... Work on gender equality therefore aims to address unequal gender norms that constrain women and men, as well as transgender and intersex people. It is a global issue, relevant to Australia and the economic, social, welfare and foreign policies of all countries.⁷

The Australian Government Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy 2016

² Commonwealth of Australia (2014), *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability*, p. 26

³ UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, *Message for International Women's Day*, 28 February 2014, SG/SM/15676-OBV/1303-WOM/1977 <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sgsm15676.doc.htm>

⁴ World Bank (2011), *The World Bank and Gender Equality: At a Glance*, 11 November 2011, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2011/04/11/the-world-bank-and-gender-equality-at-a-glance>

⁵ Marie O'Reilly (2015), *Why Women? Inclusive security and peaceful societies*, Inclusive Security, p.2

⁶ Commonwealth of Australia (2016), *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy*, p. 5

⁷ Commonwealth of Australia (2016), *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy*, p3

This focus is reflected in investments in targeted programs to support women's participation and leadership. In the Pacific, where the under-representation of women in leadership is globally significant, a long-term approach such as the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Program is vital. However, the importance of gender equality for peace and prosperity is not yet consistently driving Australia's foreign policy priorities or reflected across foreign policy structures and processes. Complementing policy and investment with a requirement of equitable participation in the mechanisms and fora within the Government's control will accelerate change towards gender equality, support more informed and representative decision-making and position Australia as a leader on this agenda.

Currently, the Government's focus on gender equality as a cornerstone⁸ of development is reflected in a performance target that requires more than 80 per cent of all investments made in the Australian aid program effectively address gender issues in their implementation.⁹ This benchmark is a key tool for linking policy and implementation. The White Paper process is an opportunity to extend the spirit of this requirement to foreign policy more broadly, consistent with the Government's effort to integrate diplomacy, trade and aid.

Improving the Government's ability to track progress on this benchmark will strengthen performance and outcomes. Currently, Australia's aid program only tracks and reports actual expenditure on gender equality and women's empowerment where this is a specific budget line item. Where gender equality is integrated in mainstream programs (for example, in infrastructure, education or health initiatives), expenditure information is only available about overall program value, rather than what is actually spent on specific activities to progress gender equality. This masks how much is actually spent, leaving decision makers with inadequate performance information on a primary strategy. Strengthening the connection between gender equality policy, implementation and resourcing will improve the Government's ability to link its intentions to action and change. Publishing comprehensive, relevant performance information will help both government and other stakeholders to assess how policy commitments are being implemented and adjust efforts accordingly.

Recommendation 3: Australia's foreign policy reaffirms women's human rights and gender equality, as outlined in the 2016 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy, as central to Australia's national interests and to securing peace, prosperity and sustainable development.

Recommendation 4: The performance target that requires more than 80% of all investments made in the Australian aid program effectively address gender issues in their implementation is extended to include Australian Government expenditure across the trade and foreign affairs portfolios.

Recommendation 5: The Australian Government further develops its systems and tools for tracking expenditure on gender equality and women's rights and empowerment so that it can report publicly about progress on the 80% benchmark.

Human rights, voice and participation are essential to regional stability and security

Australia played an important role in the establishment of the current international human rights conventions and institutions. Australia's continued support for human rights architecture is reflected in the current campaign for election to the United Nations Human Rights Council. This campaign comes at a crucial time, when human rights are under sustained attack. Fully representative political systems; prosperous, truly sustainable economies; and stable, conflict-free societies across Australia's region of influence cannot be realised without a stronger focus on enabling formal rights and equitable outcomes for all people. Practical support for participation, equal voice and representation, freedom from violence and bodily integrity will help to realise a primary ethical obligation for states: to not reinforce discrimination and disadvantage, and to support the realisation of human rights by all individuals, within their borders and in partner countries. Australia's recent commitment to International Planned Parenthood Federation's work in our region is an exemplary example of promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights in our region.

Investing in democratisation from the grassroots up promotes more inclusive and representative political systems that support the rule of law. In the Pacific, globally significant gender inequality in civil and political leadership, and the demographic youth bulge, underlines the importance of investing in the civil and political leadership work of women-led and youth-led organisations.

⁸ Senator The Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women, Fifty-eighth session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, 11 March 2014

⁹ Commonwealth of Australia (2014), *Making Performance Count: enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of Australian aid*

Recommendation 6: The Australian Government recognises that human rights and equal voice and representation are essential to regional stability and security and takes active steps to engage both diverse women and men in meaningful consultations on priorities in our region.

Recommendation 7: Australia's foreign policy promotes more inclusive and representative political systems that support the rule of law including investing in the civil and political leadership work of women-led and youth-led organisations.

2. GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES AND GLOBAL TRENDS

Geographic priorities

In building its foreign policy, it will be essential for Australia to work more strategically with its closest neighbours and emerging powers in the Asia Pacific region, with a particular focus on the promotion of gender equality and women's human rights. IWDA concurs with the strategic analysis in the Australian Defence White Paper that prioritises a focus on the Asia and Pacific regions, recognizing this as being in our best national interest and sphere for engagement. In both regions, as current Government policy recognises, Australia's security and prosperity is weakened by inequality and the barriers that prevent women in the region from participating fully in political, economic and social life. As highlighted elsewhere in this submission, the Women, Peace and Security agenda is also integral for promoting Australia's security interests in the region.

As outlined in Section 1 of this submission, full and effective participation of women across all sectors of society is essential to enabling inclusive economic growth, more effective and representative decision making and human security. The extent of gender inequality in Pacific Island Countries is globally significant, in terms of political under-representation and epidemic rates of violence against women and girls, and remains a core foreign policy priority. In Asia, Australia's economic and security interests will be advanced by removing barriers to women's equitable participation and benefit in sustainable development. The informal sector must remain a priority as the largest source of employment throughout Asia.¹⁰

Australia's sustained commitment to Pacific Island Countries must remain a cornerstone of our sustainable development and human security agenda. Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) are at the forefront of action on climate change, in large part because they are disproportionately affected. Their leadership in global forums on mitigation strategies is helping to progress global action. Australia also shares interests with other nations with large coastlines, most particularly as we work to mitigate the impact of rising sea levels, acidification of the oceans, and increased extreme weather or natural disasters. Supporting transnational actions to address climate change will be critical to working collaboratively with these nations to manage and mitigate risk.

Recommendation 8: The Asia and Pacific regions remain the priority focus for Australia's foreign policy, with a particular focus on the promotion of gender equality and women's human rights to enable inclusive economic growth, more effective and representative decision-making and human security.

Recommendation 9: Australia's sustained commitment to Pacific Island Countries, cooperation with other nations with large coastlines and support for transnational actions to address climate change is cornerstone of our sustainable development and human security agenda.

Demographic priorities

High fertility rates in many countries in Asia and the Pacific are driving rapid population growth, with an estimated 19 per cent of the region under the age of 25.¹¹ In Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), 56 of the population is under 25. This presents huge challenges for the education system, for generating sufficient work, and for subsistence systems in rural areas. Combined with lack of opportunity and the desire for higher living standards and better work, these pressures are contributing to urban migration within and between countries. Advancing gender equality including effective reproductive health and rights is central to reducing population growth over the medium to long term. For countries in Asia such as Japan and South Korea, where the birth rate is below replacement, policy settings that enable women to combine productive and reproductive work is an essential part of addressing the challenges associated with population decline and associated pressures.

¹⁰ World Bank (2013), *Gender at Work, A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs*, The World Bank <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/884131468332686103/pdf/892730WP0Box3800report0Feb-02002014.pdf>

¹¹ UNESCAP (2013), *Regional Overview: Youth in Asia and the Pacific*, p.1, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-regional-escap.pdf>

Global trends

The following evidence of global trends demonstrates the need for gender equality and women's empowerment to be a foreign policy priority across aid, trade and foreign affairs portfolios. Responding to Australia's security and prosperity challenges requires a consistent and coordinated approach to addressing gender inequality across all aspects of Australia's foreign policy in order to position Australia as a leader in the region on this agenda.

a) Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence remains a critical barrier to development and stability in the region and one of the most significant symptoms of gender inequality across Asia and the Pacific. Prevalence rates of violence against women and girls in the Pacific are among the highest in the world: in some Pacific Island countries, more than 60 per cent of ever-married women aged 15–49 years have experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner at some time in their lives.¹² Statistics are disturbingly high across Asia as well, ranging from 38 per cent in Timor-Leste¹³ to 69¹⁴ - 90 per cent¹⁵ in Myanmar. This is evidence of deep insecurity, and of security policy failure, concentrated in particular sections of the community.

Violence against women also has a significant economic impact, undermining efforts to promote prosperity. It affects the capacity of individual women to enter or remain in the workforce, reduces earnings when women are forced to take time off from work, and increases health care expenditure. When aggregated, violence reduces the capacity of a country to fully realise its economic potential.

Preventing and responding to violence against women and girls must be a first order security priority if Australia's foreign policy is to improve security, particularly in our immediate region. Australia increasingly incorporates discussion on prevalence of violence against women in bilateral engagements, supports the development of global and regional norms on eradicating violence, funds support to victim/ survivors, and pursues cultural and attitudinal change. However, violence against women and girls is still primarily addressed as a gender equality issue rather than a core security issue. This White Paper must make prevention and response to violence against women a central component of Australia's efforts to improve security, especially in Asia and the Pacific.

Recommendation 10: Violence against women and girls is addressed as a core security priority with prevention and response to violence against women a central component of Australia's efforts to improve security, especially in Asia and the Pacific.

b) Inequitable leadership, decision-making and political representation

Women in Asia and the Pacific continue to be under-represented in leadership and decision-making. Women are largely excluded from the executive branches of government, senior-level civil service roles and private sector leadership. Diverse women continue to participate unequally as both voters and candidates for rural and urban councils. Attempts to increase political participation face ongoing barriers; for example, an attempt in May 2015 to register the 'Women's Party' in Myanmar with the Union Election Commission was rejected as having a name that was 'too general'.¹⁶ The rates of participation by women in national parliaments across the region are well below the global average of 23 per cent. In 2017 Pacific women's representation in single or lower-house parliaments stands at just 6.4 per cent, while representation of women in Southeast Asian parliaments is only 18.7 per cent.¹⁷

While Australia is supporting valuable work in our region, addressing under-representation of diverse women in decision making as a key priority for long-term regional security and stability demands a comprehensive, consistent and better-resourced approach. This requires a focus on the barriers (legal, practical, attitudinal) preventing women from being in leadership positions and support for temporary special measures. For example, in Papua New Guinea, parliamentary gender quotas are contributing to gradual transformation of community attitudes to women's leadership, and Australia's aid program complements this by supporting women candidates to stand for election and funding research to document experiences and challenges and to inform subsequent action.

¹² World Bank (2012), *Toward Gender Equality in East Asia and the Pacific: A Companion to the World Development Report*, p.11 <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/12598>

¹³ National Statistics Directorate, [Timor-Leste], Ministry of Finance, and ICF Macro, (2010), *Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey 2009-10*, p. 225

¹⁴ Nilar, K. et al., (2005), "Prevalence, antecedent causes and consequences of domestic violence in Myanmar," *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 8 (3): 244-271

¹⁵ Palaung Women's Organisation (2011), *Voices for Change: Domestic violence and gender discrimination in the Palaung Area*,

¹⁶ S Naing, Y. (2015) 'Woman's party won't budge on name change, risking UEC approval,' *The Irrawaddy* 11 May 2015,

<http://www.irrawaddy.org/burma/womans-party-wont-budge-on-name-change-risking-uec-approval.html>

¹⁷ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016), *Women in National Parliaments*, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>. Based on percentage of women in single or lower-house parliaments as of 1 December 2016. Pacific Island countries: Fiji, Palau, Samoa, Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Southeast Asian countries: Timor Leste, Laos, Vietnam, Singapore, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and Thailand.

Recommendation 11: Addressing under-representation of diverse women in decision-making is key to long-term security and stability in our region. This requires a comprehensive, consistent and better-resourced approach across all aspects of foreign policy to address the barriers to women’s full and effective participation.

c) Climate Change

Climate change and environmental disasters pose an increasing threat to the region, with a profound and gendered impact. Higher temperatures and sea level rise will increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, and ocean acidification threatens the health and productivity of natural systems. These effects will exacerbate the challenges of population growth and environmental degradation, contribute to food shortages and undermine economic development.

Pacific Island countries rank among the most vulnerable in the world to natural disasters of all kinds. Gender inequality compounds the impact of climate change on women. Inequitable decision-making, control over financial resources, land ownership, distribution of household tasks and access to technology and information pose critical obstacles to women’s access to and control over housing, food security, water and energy. The situation is exacerbated in natural disasters and emergencies. A study of 141 countries found that more women than men die from natural hazards.¹⁸ Social systems break down in contexts of disaster and lead to higher rates of violence. Yet women are not equally represented in decision-making related to climate change, often miss out on information about disaster preparedness and response, and their capacities and social networks are under-utilised. Ensuring women can contribute as agents of change in low-carbon development and climate change adaptation is critical to effectiveness.

Current projections from the OECD say that global growth will slow from 3.6 per cent in 2010-2020 to 2.4 per cent in 2050-2060¹⁹ in part due to the impact of climate change, which will flatten “global GDP by 1.5 per cent on average and almost 6 per cent in South and South-East Asia before 2060, unless increases in CO2 emissions are curbed.”²⁰ The costs of climate change, combined with the risks of stranded assets²¹, fundamentally challenge the centrality of extractive industries to Australia’s national interests. The global economy is already being disrupted and it is in Australia’s national interest to reorient towards a renewable economy. Supporting full cost accounting, in Australia and the region, will provide more comprehensive information to governments and citizens about the costs and benefits involved in this shift, supporting more informed decisions towards inclusive sustainable development.

Australia’s national interests need to be defined within the context of a global commitment to mitigating the consequences of adverse climate change and the need for a reorientation towards a renewable economy. The Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change provide a global framework for charting the pathway forward. Investing in the development of a clean, safe and sustainable energy sector, in Australia and in countries in our region, is critical to our national interest. Ensuring that this presents inclusive economic opportunities will progress gender equality and sustainable development objectives.

Recommendation 12: The Australian Government ensures that women can contribute as agents of change in low-carbon development and climate change adaptation and as equal decision makers in relation to climate change responses.

Recommendation 13: Australia’s national interests aligned with global commitments to mitigating the consequences of adverse climate change and take guidance from the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

d) Displaced persons and refugees

With over half of the world’s poor expected to live in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence by 2030, the global displacement crisis has become a critical part of the world’s fragility. The last few years have seen a spike in conflicts with an increase in casualties, with an estimated 65 million people displaced globally – the highest level ever recorded.²² Addressing the drivers through conflict resolution and prevention is a critical component of security. In a context of unprecedented levels of displacement, Australia’s immigration and

¹⁸Neumayer, E., & Plümper, T. (2007). The Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters: The Impact of Catastrophic Events on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy, 1981–2002, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(3), p. 551–566.

¹⁹ OECD, *Policy Challenges for the Next 50 Years*, accessed at <http://www.oecd.org/eco/lookingto2060.htm#WKP>

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Carbon Tracker Initiative & Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and The Environment (2013), *Unburnable Carbon 2013: Wasted Capital and Stranded Assets*, <http://www.carbontracker.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Unburnable-Carbon-2-Web-Version.pdf>; R Baron & D Fischer - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2015), *Divestment and Stranded Assets in the Low-carbon Transition: Background paper for the 32nd Round Table on Sustainable Development*, <https://www.oecd.org/sd-roundtable/papersandpublications/Divestment%20and%20Stranded%20Assets%20in%20the%20Low-carbon%20Economy%2032nd%20OECD%20RTSD.pdf>

²² UNHCR (2015), *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015*, p.2, accessed at <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7.pdf>

foreign policies must speak to each other to ensure respect for human rights and international legal obligations is visible in Australia and demonstrated externally.²³

Australia has been a leader globally in progressing the women, peace and security agenda, which offers a comprehensive approach to prevention and conflict resolution. The Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018 (Australian NAP) is the Australian Government's primary mechanism for fulfilling its commitment to turn the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda into action. UNSCR 1325 formally acknowledged that women's participation, protection and a gender perspective are essential to the maintenance of international peace and security. The White Paper is an opportunity to integrate this understanding fully into Australia's foreign policy, with the development of Australia's second NAP as the vehicle to establish a clear framework for a coordinated, whole of government approach to implementing Resolution 1325 and related resolutions. There is "overwhelming quantitative evidence that women's empowerment and gender equality are associated with peace and stability in society. In particular, when women influence decisions about war and peace and take the lead against extremism in their communities, it is more likely crises will be resolved without recourse to violence."²⁴ This evidence now needs to drive Australia's foreign policy.

Recommendation 14: Australia's immigration and foreign policies must speak to each other to ensure respect for human rights and international legal obligations are visible in Australia and demonstrated externally.²⁵

Recommendation 15: The White Paper integrates the understanding that Women's participation, protection and a gender perspective are essential to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Recommendation 16: The development of Australia's second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security is emphasised as the vehicle to establish a clear framework for a coordinated, whole of government approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions.

e) Rising inequality

In 2015, the World Economic Forum identified inequality as the number one global trend, noting, "*The inherent dangers of neglecting inequality are obvious. People, especially young people, excluded from the mainstream end up feeling disenfranchised and become easy fodder of conflict. This, in turn, reduces the sustainability of economic growth, weakens social cohesion and security, encourages inequitable access to and use of global commons, undermines our democracies, and cripples our hopes for sustainable development and peaceful societies.*"²⁶

Current estimates of global inequality "understate true inequality,"²⁷ further amplifying the significance of inequality as global issue. Standard statistical measures of inequality (and poverty) are based on expenditure data collected at the household level, assuming equal distribution of resources and assets (given challenges of allocating to individuals the benefit of household public goods). This suppresses intra-household inequality, which we know is significant, resulting in an underestimation of overall inequality by around one third. It also makes it impossible to see who in the household is poor, in what ways, to what extent – and therefore where efforts to reduce inequality are best targeted. Failure to consider intrahousehold inequality also overestimates the relationship between growth and poverty reduction.²⁸ This is "one of several reasons for the seeming disconnect between improvements in official poverty data and ground level perceptions of civil society which tend to be more cautious."²⁹ A rise in populist expressions of frustration by citizens left behind by economic development underlines the political importance of accurately assessing and addressing inequality.

The Australian Government is playing an important role in improving measurement of inequality and poverty through funding a program to ready the Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM) for global use. The IDM is a new

²³ UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants (2016), *End mission Statement by the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants on his official visit to Australia (1-18 November 2016)*, accessed at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20885&LangID=E#sthash.KJvT4h1R.dpuf>

²⁴ Marie O'Reilly (2015), *Why Women? Inclusive security and peaceful societies*, Inclusive Security, p.2

²⁵ UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants (2016), *End mission Statement by the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants on his official visit to Australia (1-18 November 2016)*, accessed at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20885&LangID=E#sthash.KJvT4h1R.dpuf>

²⁶ World Economic Forum (2015), *Top 10 Trends of 2015*, accessed at <http://reports.weforum.org/outlook-global-agenda-2015/top-10-trends-of-2015/>

²⁷ Ravi Kanbur (2015) 'Intrahousehold inequality and overall inequality', Presentation to conference, The Welfare State and the Fight Against Inequality, Columbia University, 8-9 November <http://www.kanbur.aem.cornell.edu/papers/Intra-Household%20Inequality%20and%20Overall%20Inequality-Paper.pdf>; Ravi Kanbur (2017) 'Intrahousehold inequality and overall inequality', Presentation to World Bank Individual Poverty Measurement Workshop, 1-2 February 2017.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ravi Kanbur 2010, cited in Ravi Kanbur (2015) 'Intrahousehold inequality and overall inequality', Presentation to conference, The Welfare State and the Fight Against Inequality, Columbia University, 8-9 November <http://www.kanbur.aem.cornell.edu/papers/Intra-Household%20Inequality%20and%20Overall%20Inequality-Paper.pdf>

gender-sensitive, multidimensional measure that assesses poverty at the individual level in a way that can reveal intrahousehold inequality. Continued strategic support for the IDM's uptake and use as part of Australia's foreign policy, including supporting the IDM's use in partner countries, will over time generate more accurate data on poverty and inequality, and enable better targeting of policy and programming. This is key to reducing inequality and realising the global commitment to leave no one behind.

Priorities for reducing inequality through economic opportunities, trade and investment are addressed in section 4 of this submission.

Recommendation 17: The Australian government generates more accurate data on poverty and inequality to enable better targeting of policy and programming. This includes sustained investment in the Individual Deprivation Measure.

f) The re-subjugation of women and rising fundamentalisms

In recent years, we have seen attacks on universal human rights in multiple forums and the reassertion of sovereignty over universality. A new "Like-Minded Group" brings together otherwise divergent geo-political interests around resistance to progress on women's rights, driven in part by an increase in religious fundamentalisms. We are presently witnessing a concerted effort to use domestic and foreign policy to challenge advances in women's human rights. For example, we have seen decriminalization of domestic violence, restrictions on access to sexual and reproductive health and rights and criminalization of homosexuality.

In a context where women's rights organisations are facing increasing backlash and the space for civil society is increasingly being restricted in some countries, Australia's foreign policy has a key role to play in amplifying existing international agreements and agreed language on women's rights and supporting the efforts of women's rights organisations and networks. It is vital that Australia continue its strong leadership role, standing with others to promote and protect human rights for all in diplomacy, economic policy, and development programming. Australia's investments in health and education programs can help to reduce the reliance on religious institutions in order to access primary services, and increase social cohesion by reducing inequality and marginalisation. Programs that support social cohesion and gender equality can also assist communities to challenge rising fundamentalisms and the influence of religious bodies opposed to women's rights.

Recommendation 18: Australia's foreign policy plays a key role in amplifying existing international agreements and agreed language on women's rights and supporting the efforts of women's rights organisations and networks.

Recommendation 19: Australia continues its strong leadership role, standing with others to promote and protect human rights for all, in diplomacy, economic policy, and development programming.

3. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Diversifying Australia's transnational linkages and supporting coalitions and movements in addition to long-standing institutions will assist Australia to secure its national interest and global influence.

Australia's engagements with regional and global organisations need to reflect what is required to secure the interests of diverse, pluralist Australia in a dynamic, interconnected, interdependent world. Strong multilateral forums that provide nations and peoples with equal voice and representation, opportunities to collaborate, support equitable and sustainable economic development and trade, and respect for human rights and diversity, are essential to sustaining a global order that is conducive to Australia's interests.

Australia will need to extend its foreign policy intelligence through wider transnational networks and coalitions. This will enable rapid sharing of experience and evidence about policy options, gender mainstreaming initiatives, and successful strategies in specific contexts. Consolidating evidence to inform action is vital in complex development contexts where change involves many players. Diversifying our transnational linkages to incorporate individuals, networks and coalitions that support gender-sensitive foreign policy, including in academia and global governance leadership positions, will help Australia to secure its national interest and global influence. [Sweden's Action Plan for Feminist Foreign Policy](#) is recommended as guidance. Similarly, Australian Government support for the Development Leadership Program is an example of how investing in understanding the political dimensions of developmental change can assist Australia to progress policy priorities. The ten-year Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development program is also generating knowledge and demonstrating in practice how transformational change towards gender equality is happening in our region.

Women's movements and women's organisations are crucial to build the necessary consensus for progressive policy and legal reform.

Research confirms that strong, autonomous women's movements are essential to realising women's rights. For example, the World Bank's Voice and Agency research concluded that women's movements are crucial to build the necessary consensus for progressive policy and legal reform.³⁰ The Australian Government recognises that autonomous women's organisations and movements are a critical factor in changing discriminatory policy and legislation and progressing gender equality,³¹ and enabling approaches that are firmly rooted in local communities, contexts, needs and experiences.³²

IWDA's work with partners across the Asia and Pacific region provides direct evidence of the importance of coalition building for change in contexts where women remain significantly under-represented in formal decision-making roles. In the Solomon Islands, networks of women were instrumental in seeing the Family Protection Bill passed in 2014 and implementation of this is a focus of the Solomon Islands Women's Forum established in 2016. In Fiji, the Fiji Young Women's Forum was a driving force behind youth policies being included in candidate platforms in the 2014 election, a considerable outcome given the youth bulge in the Pacific. In Timor-Leste, networks of women were successful in seeing the Law Against Human Trafficking passed in February 2017, a process which commenced in 2012 and required the engagement of a coalition of civil society actors. The same coalition will support the Government of Timor-Leste in drafting a National Action Plan to complement the legislation.

Women's rights coalitions and networks can be a key driving force behind new policy approaches and partnership solutions. For example, in the UK, in partnership with the National Federation of Women's Institutes, Women's Environmental Network put together the *Women's Manifesto on Climate Change* asking the UK government do more at both national and international levels to enable women and others to live and act in ways that reduce their carbon emissions. The manifesto was officially endorsed by Green Party MP and WEN ambassador Caroline Lucas, and has hundreds of signatories, including international organisations. Women's rights organisations are also playing a crucial role in mitigating conflict and building peace, and mobilising women to advocate for change at the local, national and international levels (outlined in Section 5).

These examples illustrate the need for Australia's foreign policy to embrace more diversified linkages and integrate broader consultative mechanisms and processes, particularly as it pursues policy goals that involve multiple stakeholders and require sustained long-term engagement. This must include flexible long term sustainable resourcing for women's organisations, coalitions and networks. Current funding trends often constrain the ability of these organisations to access funding.³³ Women's organisations are essential dialogue partners if Australia's bilateral relationships are to reflect diverse needs and priorities when formal decision-making structures and processes are not representative. Resourcing and promoting a central role for women's rights organisations, networks and gender machineries will also contribute to securing peace and prosperity, particularly in relation to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Recommendation 20: Australia's foreign policy extends transnational network linkages and broadens consultative mechanisms as it pursues policy goals that involve diverse stakeholders.

Recommendation 21: Resourcing and promoting a central role for women's movements, women's rights organisations, networks and gender machineries as dialogue partners is essential if Australia's bilateral relationships are to reflect diverse needs and priorities.

Reform towards gender-responsive international financial and economic architecture will require continued engagement

Moving gender equality to the centre of Australian foreign policy will require continuing and strengthened engagement with international financial institutions around integrating gender-analysis as a routine aspect of their work. The Australian Government's efforts to promote increased gender-sensitivity in the World Bank's work, including moving from household-level to individual-level measurement of poverty and inequality, is an example of the kind of engagement required to move gender equality from a targeted activity to a mainstream focus.

³⁰ World Bank (2014) *Voice and Agency: Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity*, p.169

³¹ Australian Government *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy*. See also World Bank Group. 2014. *Voice and Agency: empowering women and girls for shared prosperity. Chapter 6: Amplifying voices*

³² IWDA. 2016. *Global Goals: Women's Rights Organisations and Movements*, policy brief, available at: <https://www.iwda.org.au/assets/files/20160308-Womens-rights-organisations-and-Global-Goals-Policy-Brief.pdf>

³³ Analysis in 2015 of AWID's Feminist Donor database, which identifies funders for women's rights organisations, reported that 80% of donors were located in North America and Europe and only 6% gave to countries in the Pacific. Available online: <https://www.awid.org/resources/feminist-donor-list-who-can-fund-my-womens-rights-organizing>

International trade and economic mechanisms also have a key role to play in progressing gender equality as a cornerstone of stability and security. The 58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women reaffirmed that there is global agreement on the need to “work towards ensuring that global trade, financial and investment agreements are conducive to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and human rights of women and girls... including through reaffirming the critical role of open, equitable, rules-based, predictable, non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, and strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system’s support for development by encouraging the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into development policies at all levels in all sectors.” Specific policy priorities are explored in Section 4.

Recommendation 22: Continue to strengthen engagement with international financial institutions around integrating gender-analysis as a routine aspect of their work to ensure gender equality remains central to foreign policy and international development.

The United Nations and its architecture remains a significant platform for Australia

Australia has a vital role as a UN Member State: as a proactive contributor to global norms and frameworks; a funder; a critical friend, seeking reform for greater efficacy; a defender of universal human rights; and an amplifier of civil society organisations and their voices in the UN system. Australia’s recent two-year term on the UN Security Council, and bids to join the Human Rights Council and Commission on the Status of Women, demonstrate the ongoing importance of the UN in Australia’s foreign policy – despite the many challenges. Recent efforts to undermine universal human rights and international law by UN Member States highlight the continuing importance of the UN in global efforts to secure peace and prosperity.

Looking ahead, it is possible that Australia will be called on to play this role more regularly. In particular, the recent announcement by the Trump Administration in the US, reinstating the global gag rule, and informal musings on US funding for the UN system, create a degree of funding uncertainty, with implications that Australia may need to help address. Strategic collaboration with other Member States with aligned interests will be critical as we see the impact of changing global political leadership in the UN. Australia and its allies may need to stand together to defend the rule of law, universal human rights, women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights, sexual orientation and gender identity human rights, and women’s human rights.

At a time when some member states are seeking to narrow the space for civil society, the Australian Government will also be key to maintaining strong and effective mechanisms for civil society engagement with the UN system. At a time when few governments and institutions fully reflect and represent the diversity of their communities, civil society organisations are essential sources of information and key agents for change.

The UN system is at the heart of coordinating implementation of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs), with UN Women the key global institution for ensuring gender equality is central to global progress. The Australian Government has made strategic investments in UN Women to improve gender data, linking this with investment in readying the Individual Deprivation Measure for global use, and policy dialogue with the World Bank. This focus on linking and leveraging diplomatic, economic and development investments to maximise impact is an example of strategic, integrated and coordinated foreign policy that Australia should do more of going forward.

More generally, Australian foreign policy leadership is essential to ensuring Australia supports a coordinated and consistent approach to meeting gender equality-related targets. To deliver on the Global Goals it is crucial to strengthen machineries for gender equality in Australia and the region, in terms of both financial resources and technical expertise. This should include resourcing for coordination mechanisms that reflect the high-level political commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment as central to transformative change. Fully-costed and financed implementation plans that reflect a long-term approach to transformative change should be developed in consultation with civil society. The role of women’s rights organisations (and civil society more broadly) in monitoring progress should be clearly defined, and regional government capacity to bring about gender equality in their countries explicitly supported. Strengthening mechanisms for transparency and accountability will support coordinated action, domestically and externally.

Recommendation 23: Australia advocates for the importance of the UN in global efforts to secure peace and prosperity. Strategic collaboration with other Member States with aligned interests will be critical to defend the rule of law, universal human rights, women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights, sexual orientation and gender identity human rights, and women’s human rights.

Recommendation 24: Australian foreign policy leadership can play a key role in supporting the UN system in its efforts to coordinate implementation of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. This must include the promotion of strong and effective mechanisms for civil society engagement with the UN system.

Recommendation 25: The Australian government strengthens machineries for gender equality in Australia and the region. This includes both financial resources and technical expertise and resourcing for coordination mechanisms that reflect a high-level political commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Supporting regional organisations facilitating collective policy leadership is a priority in the Pacific

In the Pacific, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is facilitating collective regional leadership on key policy priorities, including climate change and gender equality. Australia’s foreign policy should continue to support and engage with and through the PIFS and align with emerging policy frameworks such as the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP)³⁴ 2017 – 2030. This is a timely, integrated approach to address climate change and disaster risk management. It provides high-level strategic guidance to different stakeholder groups on how to enhance resilience to climate change and disasters, in ways that contribute to and are embedded in sustainable development. Australia is encouraged to adopt this framework as a component of foreign policy, supporting the three strategic goals within the FRDP, namely: (i) Strengthened adaptation and risk reduction to enhance resilience to climate and disasters; (ii) Low carbon development; (iii) Strengthened disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Pacific Island Forum Leaders endorsed the FRDP in September 2016 and agreed for it to be fully elaborated and operationalised upon the entry into force of the Paris Agreement.³⁵

Recommendation 26: Australia’s foreign policy continues to support and engage with and through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and aligns with emerging policy frameworks such as the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP)³⁶ 2017 – 2030.

4. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Realising women’s full economic and productive potential will expand economic opportunities.

By virtually every global measure, women are more economically excluded than men.³⁷ Despite wide recognition and persuasive evidence that gender equality has a transformative effect on productivity and growth, women’s full economic and productive potential remains unrealised. Barriers are multiple and interrelated, embedded in attitudes, laws, formal and informal institutions, markets and systems, as Figure 1 illustrates (below). Removing barriers to women’s productive potential in our region will increase prosperity and expand markets. The World Bank has estimated that if women had the same opportunity as men to participate in the formal economy, average output per worker in the Asia-Pacific region would increase by between 7 and 18%, with significant implications for economic growth and poverty reduction.³⁸ Economic growth and women’s economic advancement are not synonymous: “there is no automatic win-win between wider development outcomes and gender equality.”³⁹ New economic opportunities, including opportunities to trade and access export markets, do not necessarily translate into positive outcomes for women. When women are given the space and support to take on different roles and opportunities, and are accepted as having skills and capacities in the economic sphere, it can help to change women’s status elsewhere – including in the household, extended family and at community level. But this is not necessarily so. Much of the broader development literature demonstrates that women’s economic empowerment can have positive and negative outcomes for them, including both increases and decreases in the levels of violence.⁴⁰ In this context, gender analysis must be a central component of Australian Government policy to support economic development in Asia and the Pacific in order to maximise economic and gender equality outcomes.

³⁴ http://www.pacificdisaster.net/dox/FRDP_2016_Resilient_Dev_pacific.pdf

³⁵ The framework succeeds the existing separate regional frameworks on disasters and climate change (respectively, the Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action, commonly referred to as the Regional Framework for Action or RFA, and the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change or PIFACC.

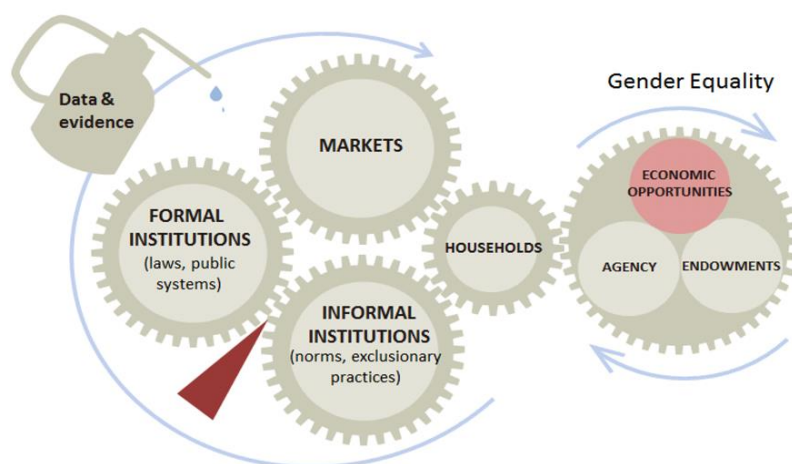
³⁶ http://www.pacificdisaster.net/dox/FRDP_2016_Resilient_Dev_pacific.pdf

³⁷ World Bank (2014). *Gender at Work: A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs*. Washington, DC. World Bank. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/17121>

³⁸ Pamela Cox, World Bank’s East Asia Pacific Vice President (2013), *World Bank East Asia and Pacific Regional Report: Overview: Toward Gender Equality in East Asia and the Pacific: A Companion to the World Development Report 2012*, available at: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EASTASIAPACIFICEXT/Resources/226300-1339798342386/eap-gender-full-conference.pdf>

³⁹ Abigail Hunt (2016), *Five myths about women’s economic empowerment*, ODI, available at: <https://www.odi.org/comment/10421-five-myths-about-womens-economic-empowerment>

⁴⁰ For a summary of this literature see Eves, R. & and J. Crawford 2014. ‘Do No Harm: The Relationship between Violence against Women and Women’s Economic Empowerment in the Pacific,’ *In Brief 2014/3*, Canberra: Australian National University; Hughes, C., M. Bolis, R. Fries & S. Finigan, S. 2015. Women’s economic inequality and domestic violence: exploring the links and empowering women, *Gender & Development*, 23:2, 279-297.



Source: WDR2012

Figure 1: World Bank (2013) *Gender at Work: A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs*, p.9

Tackling barriers to women’s economic potential requires tackling systemic bias. Current ways of defining and measuring economy and economic activity are deeply gendered. Unpaid household and care work is vital to social and economic development and to thriving and resilient communities. Women and girls currently do the bulk of this work, in all countries. In Asia and the Pacific women, on average, spend twice as much time on household work as men and four times as much time on childcare.⁴¹ In Cambodia and Laos People’s Democratic Republic for example, women report doing four times more unpaid care and domestic work than men.⁴² Women also work longer hours than men overall, when both paid and unpaid work is counted.⁴³ This pattern of work limits the extent to which gender equality can be progressed through a focus on formal economic activity alone.

The time, intensity and low status associated with unpaid care and domestic work impacts on women’s and girl’s opportunities to take on paid work and education, to participate in public and political life and to accumulate retirement income and savings. In this way, unpaid care work restricts women’s agency, autonomy and enjoyment of human rights.⁴⁴ The situation is particularly difficult for poor and marginalised women who often have limited access to basic amenities, infrastructure, public services, social protection policies and timesaving domestic technologies. A community survey by IWDA partner, Voice for Change, in Papua New Guinea, revealed that the slave-like burden of unpaid care and domestic work is having a severe impact on women and girls, and was rated by female respondents as one of the most serious forms of violence against women and girls in Jiwaka Province.⁴⁵

Caring work is largely invisible in economic calculation despite its economic significance

The monetary value of unpaid care has been estimated at between 10 and 50 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).⁴⁶ In Australia, unpaid care was valued at \$21.4 billion in 2009-10; equivalent to 50.6 per cent of GDP.⁴⁷ This devalues and renders invisible much of the economic activity predominantly engaged in by women and contributes to a prioritising of formal over informal and unpaid economic activity. Indeed, economies often rely on women’s unpaid care work to meet shortfalls caused by cuts in community services, health services and state-funded care services for children, the elderly, or people with disabilities. Figure 2 illustrates the extent of productive value left out by failing to count unpaid care and household services in GDP (‘extended System of National Accounts (SNA) work’ below).

⁴¹ E. Duflo (2012) ‘Women Empowerment and Economic Development’, *Journal of Economic Literature*, 50(4), 1052

⁴² UN Women (2015), *East Asia and the Pacific Fact Sheet: Progress of the World’s Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*, p.1, available at: http://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20easia/docs/publications/2015/04/eap_formatted_24april.pdf?vs=5617

⁴³ Cook & Razavi, UNRISD (2012) ‘Work and Welfare: Revisiting the Linkages from a Gender Perspective’, p.13, available at: <http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/search/F52656072DF9EBB2C1257AD9004657C5>; ActionAid International (2013) *Making Care Visible*, p.5, available at: http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/making_care_visible.pdf

⁴⁴ M. Sepúlveda Carmona (2013), *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights* A/68/293

⁴⁵ Voice for Change (2015) *Violence against Women and Girls in Jiwaka Province, PNG: An Analysis of the Voice for Change Community Survey*, Report Summary, available at: <https://www.iwda.org.au/resource/brief-voice-for-change-community-survey/>

⁴⁶ IWDA (2016), *Global Goals and Unpaid Care*, <https://www.iwda.org.au/assets/files/Unpaid-Care-and-Global-Goals-Policy-Brief.pdf>

⁴⁷ S.A. Hoenig and A.R.E. Page (2012), *Counting on Care Work in Australia*, available at: <http://www.security4women.org.au/wp-content/uploads/eS4W-Counting-on-Care-Work-in-Australia-Final-Report.pdf>

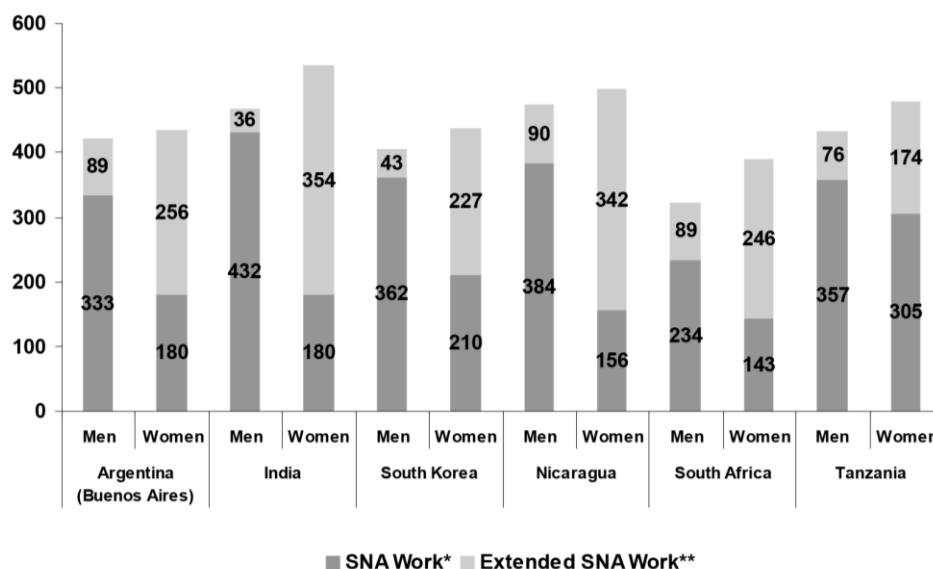


Figure 2: Mean time spent per day on SNA work and extended SNA work⁴⁸ (in minutes, by country and sex)

Going forward, Australia’s social and economic policy dialogues and programs addressing women’s rights and gender equality need to give greater priority to unpaid household and care work, including its measurement. Measuring unpaid care as a form of work is essential to assessing its value, economically and socially. Australia’s approaches must take account of the links between women’s ability to take up formal work opportunities and their involvement in informal, subsistence and unpaid work.⁴⁹ As Australia develops the foreign policy white paper, proposed actions should be assessed for their impact (positive or negative) on care work. Failure to understand the significance and extent of unpaid care can lead to poor policy decisions which misunderstand the economic contributions of women and men as well as the impact of time poverty.⁵⁰

Intervention and action must enable care needs to be met in ways that share the social and economic costs of care more evenly across society, as the benefits of this work are shared. The APEC 2016 Statement recognised that this needs to include “engaging men in the promotion of women’s economic empowerment, including recognition and redistribution of unpaid domestic work, elimination of gender-based violence and advancement of women’s political participation.”⁵¹ This will require more equal sharing of care between women and men; across the key social institutions of family, state and market; and more support to poorer families and households to reduce the amount and intensity of their unpaid care burden and increase the space for subsistence or income generating work.

States have an existing duty and binding obligations to act when the distribution of unpaid care perpetuates gender inequality or interferes with full and equal enjoyment of human rights.

Australia’s approach to generating and responding to economic opportunities should be informed by existing international commitments and language on unpaid care and domestic work. This includes:

- CEDAW (See Articles 5, 2 (f), 11(2) and 16)
- The Beijing Platform for Action (see Strategic Objectives A4, F6 and H3)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

⁴⁸ See FN 36

⁴⁹ Inquiry into the role of the private sector in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in the Indo-Pacific region. IWDA Submission to the JCFADT. 2014

⁵⁰ See discussion in J. Woodroffe & K. Donald (2014), Unpaid care: A priority for the post-2015 development goals and beyond, op cit. R. Eyben (2012) The Hegemony Cracked: the power Guide to Getting Care onto the development agenda IDS Working Paper 411, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, available at: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/Wp411.pdf>

⁵¹ APEC (2016), *APEC Women and the Economy 2016 Forum Statement: Breaking Barriers to the Global Economic Integration of Women in the Global Market*, available at: http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2016/MM/HLPD-WE/16_hlpd-we_dec.pdf

Recommendation 27: Gender analysis is stated as a central component of Australian Government policy to support economic development in Asia and the Pacific in order to maximise economic and gender equality outcomes.

Recommendation 28: Australia's social and economic policy dialogues and programs give greater priority to unpaid household and care work, including its measurement. Approaches should be informed by existing international commitments and language on unpaid care and domestic work.

Recommendation 29: All positions and approaches within Australia's foreign policy white paper are assessed for their impact (positive or negative) on care work including the links between women's ability to take up formal work opportunities and their involvement in informal, subsistence and unpaid work.

Recommendation 30: Foreign affairs, trade and International development actions must enable care needs to be met in ways that share the social and economic costs of care more evenly across society, with more support to poorer families and households to reduce the amount and intensity of their unpaid care burden and increase the space for subsistence or income generating work.

Regional economic issues and opportunities

The economies of Asia and the Pacific are very different, with different prospects for growth and opportunities. Yet, in both regions women continue to be underrepresented in the formal labour force, are denied equal pay for work of equal value, are more likely to be unemployed or contributing family workers, have less access to financial resources, and perform the majority of unpaid work. These patterns indicate that economic systems currently work better for men than women, contributing to unequal economic outcomes for women over the course of their lives and sub-optimal economic performance of the state overall.

In Southeast Asia urbanisation and the transition to an export-led manufacturing economy have presented more formal sector opportunities for women. However, for many women, work is insecure and precarious. In women-dominated sectors of the economy such as the garment sector, working conditions for many women remain poor, risky and exploitative.

In the Pacific, the economic outlook is more varied, volatile and lower on average than in Asia. Papua New Guinea will see economic growth of 2.4 per cent in 2016, dominated by extractive industries (copper, liquefied natural gas).⁵² In other Pacific Island countries, economies are much smaller, relying on a narrow range of income sources with a much smaller private sector, which increases vulnerability to political uncertainties and natural disasters. The World Bank's 2014 report, *Well-Being from Work in Pacific Island Countries*, notes that "even under the best possible business environment, it is not clear that the private sector would be able to generate significant employment through export-driven growth, due to the cost disadvantages of geography."⁵³ Different approaches to economic prosperity and sustainability are required. In this context, removing barriers to women's participation, productivity and entrepreneurship is a first order economic priority. Currently in Melanesia, women occupy only a third of positions within the formal economy.⁵⁴

Remittances is one area where there is scope to improve opportunities for women. Remittances are of considerable significance in small Pacific Island Countries, amounting to more than 20 per cent of GDP in Samoa and Tonga.⁵⁵ Much more can be done to remove the barriers to women's participation in Australia's regional labour migration programs, which remain highly gendered in structure and uptake. Closer alignment between labour programs and development cooperation could open up opportunities, for example, supporting seed enterprises for some women to provide fee-based care and enable other women to take up employment. A gender analysis of the program should be undertaken to identify the most promising opportunities.

Recommendation 31: Closer alignment between labour programs and development cooperation and gender analysis of all programs is undertaken to address barriers to women's participation in Australia's regional labour migration programs.

Trade

Taking account of gender perspectives in macro-economic policy, including trade policy, is essential for pursuing inclusive and sustainable development and achieving fairer and beneficial outcomes for all.⁵⁶ The mixed effects of trade liberalisation and globalisation on women so far demonstrate both the potential and the risks. In many cases, trade liberalisation has exacerbated existing gender inequalities and worsened women's economic and social status. One of the reasons behind these negative effects is that trade policies are often

⁵² World Bank (2016), *East Asia and Pacific Economic Update October 2016: Reducing Vulnerabilities*, accessed at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eap/publication/east-asia-pacific-economic-update>

⁵³ T.G. Packard & T.V. Nguyen (2014), World Bank, *East Asia Pacific at Work: Employment, Enterprise and Well-being*, available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/697281468262144378/pdf/879510PUB0EAPA00Box385214B00PUBLIC0.pdf>

⁵⁴ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2012), *Forum Economic Ministers Meeting: Economic Empowerment of Women briefing paper*, p. 4

⁵⁵ World Bank (2016), *Reducing Vulnerabilities: East Asia and Pacific Economic Update*, October, p.15

⁵⁶ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. 2016.

designed and implemented without consideration of gender issues. The 58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women reaffirmed that there is global agreement on the need to:

Work towards ensuring that global trade, financial and investment agreements are conducive to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and human rights of women and girls... including through reaffirming the critical role of open, equitable, rules-based, predictable, non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, and strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system's support for development by encouraging the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into development policies at all levels in all sectors.⁵⁷

To ensure that more people benefit from trade, the Australian Government needs to integrate gender analysis into all Aid for Trade activities, including research and data collection.

From the perspective of a region in which 60% of the economy operates in the informal sector,⁵⁸ with a significant proportion of these being women traders,⁵⁹ IWDA is concerned about the capacity of the Australian Government's 20% aid for trade target to contribute to gender equality outcomes. DFAT's internal reviews suggest that the aid for trade program has been challenged to meet quality standards around gender equality.⁶⁰ IWDA's experience and available evidence is that trade liberalisation and growth in economic opportunities does not necessarily translate into positive outcomes for women. Moreover, as stated by DFID's head of Aid for Trade "the poverty impact [of aid for trade] is indirect, and we are very clear about that. The assumption is – and there is a lot of evidence to support it – that if a country is able to trade more, it will grow, and that will create jobs and increase incomes and lead to poverty reduction. That's a very long results chain, so we don't try to make a direct attribution of the direct poverty reduction impact. We don't have enough information to do that robustly."⁶¹

Australia's current policy settings fail to adequately acknowledge that global trade agreements have differential impacts on women and girls.

We note the work of UNCTAD which flags simultaneous gains and losses from trade: "women may obtain stable wage employment, but still have low-paying jobs and remain crowded in the lower nodes of the sector; women may gain as consumers when agricultural tariffs are reduced, but may lose as producers when the prices of agricultural commodities fall."⁶²

Despite strong institutional commitments to gender equality, mechanisms to secure a comprehensive gender analysis of trade agreements have yet to be fully realised. While strong steps have been made to integrate gender into Australia's foreign policy, economic diplomacy and development through the *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy*, gender has yet to be fully integrated across DFAT. For example, the PACER Plus negotiations lacked transparency,⁶³ and failed to adequately take into account the different economic and social roles of Pacific women and men. When economic analysis and modelling ignores gender issues it results in missed opportunities, gender inequitable outcomes, and inefficient and ineffective policy. Given existing gender disparities and constraints on women's mobility and time, and labour markets that continue to be segregated along gender lines, women may be disproportionately excluded from new economic opportunities created by trade liberalisation. Trade can be a catalyst for gender equality but this requires routine gender analysis in formulating trade policy if choices are to be fully informed, effective, sustainable and contribute to outcomes that meet the needs of both women and men.

⁵⁷ Joint Statement on Gender Equality in the Financing for Development Process (2015), available at: <http://www.iceland.is/iceland-abroad/un/nyc/statements-and-news/joint-statement-on-gender-equality-in-the-financing-for-development-process/11508/>

⁵⁸ International Labour Organisation (ILO), *Informal Economy in Asia and the Pacific*, available at: <http://ilo.org/asia/areas/informal-economy/lang--en/index.htm>

⁵⁹ Data on the informal sector is limited and dated but in most of the countries where statistics were available, women accounted for between 50 and 90 per cent of informal traders, p.50 <https://www.qdrc.org/informal/women.pdf>

⁶⁰ DFAT (2016) *Gender Equality in Aid for Trade: How can we do better?* April 2016, available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/gender-equality-in-aid-for-trade-how-can-we-do-it-better.pdf>

⁶¹ E. Blunt (2013), *Is aid for trade an effective tool for reducing poverty?*, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/mar/15/aid-for-trade-effective-reducing-poverty>

⁶² UNCTAD (2016), *Trade, Gender and Development: Advocating Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Economic Development on a Global Level*, http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcmisc2016d6_en.pdf, p 5

⁶³ Pacific Network on Globalisation (2016), *Defending Pacific Ways of Life: A People's Social Impact Assessment of PACER-Plus*, available at: <https://pasifikaaffairs.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/defending-pacific-ways-of-life-full-report-final.pdf>

Australia's foreign policy must place women at the centre of individual and collective economic outcomes, including greater ownership of and access to resources

Women's economic disadvantage continues to undermine prosperity in Asia and the Pacific, and traditional policy interventions do not benefit women equally. Our foreign policy must continue to strengthen and promote women's economic empowerment strategies and participation by strengthening women's business networks and increasing consultation and engagement with working women and female entrepreneurs, including in negotiations on free trade agreements. Addressing the participation of women in working life is foundational to economic development and prosperity.

Recommendation 32: The Australian Government must integrate gender analysis into all Aid for Trade activities, including research and data collection to ensure choices are fully informed, effective, sustainable and contribute to outcomes that meet the needs of both women and men.

Recommendation 33: Australia's foreign policy continues to strengthen and promote women's economic empowerment strategies and participation by strengthening women's business networks and increasing consultation and engagement with working women and female entrepreneurs, including in negotiations on free trade agreements.

5. STRATEGIC, SECURITY AND TRANSNATIONAL CHALLENGES

Reframe peace and security from a focus on defence and protection to a focus on conflict prevention and human security

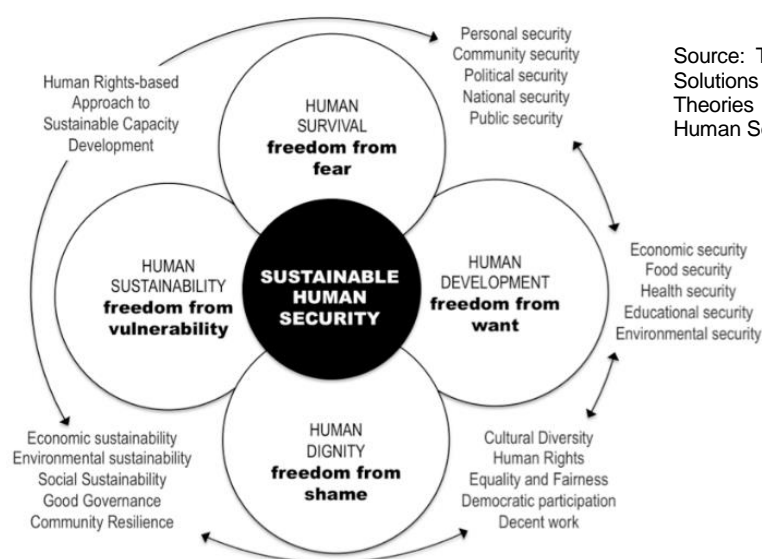
If conflict is to be prevented and human rights respected, there must be a new consensus on security that equally prioritises the social and economic dimensions of people's lives. This requires a coordinated approach across the development, trade, diplomatic and defence portfolios and the acknowledgment that human security outcomes are a shared responsibility.

The intrinsically global and interconnected character of Australia's national interests and the changing nature of conflict and crises require an approach to promoting stability in the region that focusses on conflict prevention and the human dimensions of security. This necessitates a focus on the sustainability of outcomes over the longer term. Addressing gender inequality and promoting women's human rights must be central to this preventative approach.

The world faces new global challenges including climate change, extreme poverty and inequality, armed conflict and widespread human rights violations. With over half of the world's poor expected to live in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence by 2030, the global displacement crisis has become a critical part of the world's fragility⁶⁴. In the face of increasing conflict and violent extremism, women are disproportionately affected by displacement, high levels of sexual violence and increased poverty. The conflict and post conflict context for countries like Myanmar, Bougainville and Fiji require long-term foreign policy responses to state sanctioned violence, sexual violence in conflict, impunity, peace building, conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation and a broader definition of human security that encompasses the economic and social dimensions of security.

⁶⁴ UNHCR (2015), *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015*, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7.pdf>

Figure 3: Frameworks of Sustainable Human Security



Source: Tavanti, M. & Stachowicz-Stanusch, A. Sustainable Solutions for Human Security and Anti-Corruption: Integrating Theories and Practices. *International Journal of Sustainable Human Security*, Vol. 1 (December) 2013: 1-17.

Taking a human security approach to existing defence spending could ensure that this spend achieves a broader range of outcomes. IWDA partners in Fiji note the progress by Australia towards the integration of gender into defence activities. For example, in the disaster risk recovery work following Tropical Cyclone Winston in Fiji, partners reported the focus on gender in every activity, achieved by asking simple questions about impacts on women. The same partners also advocate for broadening naval border patrols to achieve fisheries management outcomes.

Recommendation 34: Australian foreign policy applies a coordinated approach across the development, trade, diplomatic and defence portfolios in the acknowledgment that human security outcomes are a shared responsibility.

Recommendation 35: Australian foreign policy approach promotes stability in the region, which focusses on conflict prevention and the human dimensions of security. Addressing gender inequality and promoting women’s human rights must be central to this preventative approach.

Women’s equal participation and full involvement is essential for sustainable peace and conflict prevention

A reframing of foreign policy towards conflict prevention and human security requires resourcing and expanding the leadership of women in conflict prevention, mitigation, resolution and recovery from conflict and instability. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and seven subsequent resolutions⁶⁵ have reaffirmed the significance of women’s equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Evidence, such as the Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325,⁶⁶ has also continued to demonstrate that women’s participation and inclusion makes humanitarian assistance more effective, strengthens peacekeeping efforts, contributes to the conclusion and implementation of peace talks and sustainable peace and accelerates economic recovery.⁶⁷ We also know women’s experiences of conflict and post-conflict situations frequently differ from men. Up to 80 percent of internally displaced persons and refugees worldwide are women and children.⁶⁸ Considering the interests, needs and priorities of women and enabling their equal contribution makes efforts towards peace and security more inclusive and more effective.

⁶⁵ UNSCRs [1820](#), [1888](#), [1889](#), [1960](#), [2106](#), [2122](#) and, most recently, UNSCR [2242](#).

⁶⁶ UN Women (2015), *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, available at: <http://wps.unwomen.org/~media/files/un%20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf>

⁶⁷ UN Women (2015), *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, available at: <http://wps.unwomen.org/~media/files/un%20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf>

⁶⁸ UNICEF (nd.), *Gender and Emergencies*, available at: http://www.unicef.org/esaro/7310_Gender_and_emergencies.html

Australia's foreign policy must be aligned with the Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2012-2018) and future national action plans. The next iteration of Australia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in 2019 presents an opportunity for Australia to extend its strategy. This could expand the focus from protection to prevention, prioritising the participation of women in the maintenance of peace and security and conflict prevention. It can also reference disability as a new area for exploration and inclusion. By encouraging other governments in the region to adopt national action plans on UNSCR 1325, the Australian Government can also support progress that is more effective across the region.

Women, peace and security is a vital part of the defence strategy but it is invisible in terms of where and when financial resources are dedicated. Although women are playing a more prominent and influential role in Australian Defence Forces operations, engagement with women, peace and security must extend beyond what appears to be a singular strategy of increased female participation in the Defence workforce and in senior leadership. Defence must broaden its access to the considerable skills and capabilities within the Australian community. This may include a more collaborative leadership approach to key institutions such as a model of co-leadership between civil and military sectors for the Australian Civil Military Centre.

Coordinating the comprehensive nature of the National Action Plan will require substantial new investment and resourcing. This will need to include investment in women's rights organisations; women human rights defenders and women centred networks in conflict-affected countries. Engaging with these organisations and networks is key to the success of the women, peace and security agenda. Governments cannot realise their commitments alone. Working with civil society coalitions at national and international levels is particularly critical, as they provide a means for connecting and aggregating the work of many organisations. Strategically engaging local, national and international women's organisations who are working to counter violent extremism, radicalisation, recruitment and violent destructive masculinity, would see Australia's influence in international counter-terrorism forums increase.

Recommendation 36: The Australian Government adopts a foreign policy approach, which places women, peace and security at the centre of its efforts to build stability in the region.

Recommendation 37: Australia's foreign policy aligns with current and future National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security. The next iteration of Australia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in 2019 presents an opportunity for Australia to expand its focus from protection to prevention, prioritising the full and effective participation of women in the maintenance of peace and security and conflict prevention.

Recommendation 38: A model of co-leadership between civil and military sectors is applied to the Australian Civil Military Centre.

Recommendation 39: Substantially increase the investment and resourcing for the comprehensive nature of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security including investment in women's rights organisations, women human rights defenders and women centred networks in conflict-affected countries.

Recommendation 40: Increase Australia's influence in international counter-terrorism forums by strategically engaging with local, national and international women's organisations who are working to counter violent extremism, radicalisation, recruitment and violent destructive masculinity.

Support for existing international frameworks to strengthen a preventative approach

Stronger implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the UN Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (UNPoA) would also strengthen a preventative approach to conflict. The ATT, at Article six (prohibitions) and Article seven (risk assessment), sets out a requirement that States importing and exporting arms must work together to ensure that the weapons are not used to commit or facilitate gender based violence.⁶⁹ Our foreign policy must increase investment and engagement in the implementation of the States Parties' obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty.

Australia has been a strong supporter of sustained, practical and incremental steps to remove the threat of nuclear weapons from our world, particularly through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We are concerned by Australia's recent opposition to UN resolutions supporting negotiations for a nuclear weapons ban treaty, which addresses the disarmament limitations of article six⁷⁰ of the NPT. This places Australia out of step with rapidly growing global momentum to achieve such a treaty, with 123 nations supporting this at the UN First Committee of the UN General Assembly. Biological weapons, chemical

⁶⁹ United Nations (2014), *The Arms Trade Treaty*, pp.5-6, available at: <https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/English7.pdf>

⁷⁰ Available at: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/>

weapons, landmines, and cluster munitions have all been banned. Yet it remains open for a nation to determine that the production and use of nuclear weapons is in its national interest. IWDA partners in the Pacific point to the ongoing humanitarian impact of nuclear testing. IWDA would be very concerned if Australia weakened its long-standing commitment to active engagement with all five NPT nuclear weapon states and its work on the proliferation challenges.

Recommendation 41: The Australian Government sustains engagement and support in negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty.

Recommendation 42: The Australian Government increases investment and engagement in the implementation of the States Parties' obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty.

6. ASSETS AND CAPABILITIES TO PURSUE OUR NATIONAL INTEREST

Increased Accountability, measurement and transparency

Embracing transparency and accountability enables the Australian Government to take the Australian community along the foreign policy journey. While there were many factors at play in the Brexit vote, one lesson is the importance of ensuring that transparency in foreign policy translates into both increased trust of foreign policy institutions and increased knowledge about the positive impact that our foreign policy priorities have on our national interest.

As noted in Section 1, while the Government has established a benchmark that 80% of Australian aid investments effectively address gender issues in their implementation⁷¹, current arrangements for tracking expenditure are partial (see Recommendation 5). Current reporting from DFAT does not provide comprehensive performance information about gender equality, although it is a central pillar of Government policy, key to inclusive and sustainable development going forward, and an area of leadership and innovation.

An annual report from the Minister to Parliament on gender equality outcomes, including from Australia's investment in multilateral development banks and UN organisations, would provide an opportunity to consolidate successes and achievements and identify any patterns or areas for improvement. The information will help government and other stakeholders assess how policy commitments are being implemented; enabling more informed dialogue and planning, and improved accountability. Developing the required systems and processes will support achievement of the 80 per cent target and generate management information necessary to continue to improve outcomes from expenditure. Broadening policy and expenditure tracking to include integration of gender equality goals in diplomatic and trade activities will support coherent and comprehensive action across portfolios and accelerate progress.

IWDA encourages DFAT to develop systems and processes for gender responsive budgeting to measure foreign policy impacts and outcomes, ideally as part of reintroducing gender budgeting across Government. In the 1990s, the Australian Government published an annual *Women's Budget Statement* as a formal part of the Budget process. Coordinated by the Office for the Status of Women, and integrated with Cabinet and Expenditure Review Committee processes, this document required portfolios to report on how policies, programs and expenditure affected men and women. Australia was a pioneer and its leadership continues to be referenced⁷², although a formal gender-responsive budget process was abandoned in the 1990s. Internationally, 15 of 34 OECD countries are now committed to gender responsive budgeting. In September 2016, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, confirmed that the IMF will "push forward our work on gender budgeting, including through policy advice to member countries."⁷³ Re-establishing gender budgeting would enable the Government to link to its early leadership, and benefit from more recent international learning and momentum.

Pending the development of systematic processes as outlined in this submission, progressing gender equality outcomes from Australia's foreign policy will require continued resourcing of gender analysis and gender expertise to support gender integration.

Recommendation 43: Improve the transparency and tracking of expenditure associated with mainstreaming gender equality across Australia's foreign policy.

⁷¹ Commonwealth of Australia (2014), *Making Performance Count: enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of Australian aid*, p 8

⁷² For example, leading feminist economist Professor Diane Elson, Department of Sociology, University of Essex, spoke about Australia's leadership on The Economist radio program on 22 February 2017, <https://player.fm/series/the-economist-radio-all-audio/money-talks-clean-energies-dirty-secret>

⁷³ <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/22/PR16420-Lagarde-Announces-Specific-Actions-on-Womens-Economic-Empowerment>

Recommendations 44: The Minister for Foreign Affairs presents an annual report to Parliament specifically detailing expenditure and programming for gender equality targets in the Australian aid program.

Recommendation 45: Broaden policy and expenditure tracking to include integration of gender equality goals in diplomatic and trade activities and support coherent and comprehensive action across portfolios to accelerate progress.

Recommendation 46: DFAT introduces gender responsive budgeting with systems and processes to measure foreign policy impacts and outcomes, ideally as part of reintroducing gender budgeting across Government.

Data

Big data provides both opportunities and risks. At the level of measuring efficacy of interventions, the ability to capture data sets can present a positive opportunity. It has been suggested that “real-time awareness of the status of a population and real-time feedback on the effectiveness of policy actions should in turn lead to a more agile and adaptive approach to international development.”⁷⁴ Risks include privacy and safety issues, particularly in the context of increased surveillance under the rubric of state security; and in the intersection of big data with racial discrimination and sexual discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation.⁷⁵

In the context of initiatives to transform gender relations, a core issue is gender data gaps. Lack of attention to gender is reflected in and perpetuated by gaps in data. Much data about the situation of women and girls compared to men and boys has not been routinely captured. Of the 230 indicators agreed to monitor the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, 53 are gender-related. However, currently there is either limited data being collected (Tier II) or no agreed existing methodology (Tier III) to collect data for 67 per cent of these.

In other cases, even where data is widely available it cannot be disaggregated to provide information about gender equality. For example, as discussed in Section 2, poverty and inequality is currently measured at the household level, hiding any inequality in the distribution of resources and assets within the household and making it impossible to see who is poor, in what ways and to what extent. It is extraordinary that in 2017 it is not possible to say with accuracy how and to what extent poverty is gendered – despite the extent of known gender inequality underlining the importance of this information.

The Australian Government is to be commended for its leadership and investment in addressing gender gaps, including through UN Women’s Making Every Woman and Girl Count program, and its investment in readying the Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM) for global use by 2020.⁷⁶ The IDM is a new, gender-sensitive and multidimensional measure of poverty that has been developed to assess deprivation at the individual level and overcome the limitations of household level measurement. The IDM has the potential to track the extent to which progress towards the SDGs are leading to change for the most marginalised individuals in our region, including women and girls. This work is of global significance, and essential to realising the commitment to leave no one behind. It will make it possible to closely target gendered poverty and assess the impact of those efforts. Investment in enhancing measurement capabilities and data collection continues to be an urgent priority, particularly in relation to gender and poverty targets that still lack data.

Recommendation 47: The Australian Government maintains its leadership and investment in addressing global gender data gaps, including support for the UN Women’s Making Every Woman and Girl Count program, and its investment in readying the Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM) for global use by 2020.

Research, evidence and learning

Given a dynamic operating environment, multiple stakeholders, the often long timeframes required to see outcomes from policy, and in some cases uncertainty about what success looks like, it is critical that Australia’s foreign policy prioritises research, evidence and learning, and uses this to inform policy and action. The factors that contribute to the perpetuation of inequality, and gender inequality more specifically, are often invisible. There is frequently a failure to make visible or count, or give specific consideration to how circumstances, interests, needs and priorities vary by gender. While we know that women in the region are disadvantaged relative to men in all aspects of political, economic and social life, detail matters for identifying key drivers and opportunities for change.

⁷⁴ The SDGs, the ‘Big Data’ Promise and What Lies Ahead, Arrow, p2

⁷⁵ Nicole Shephard, 2016, Big Data and Sexual Surveillance, Association for Progressive Communications.

⁷⁶ The Australian Government has invested \$9.5 million over 4 years in a program partnership between IWDA and the Australian National University to ready the Individual Deprivation Measure for global use by 2020. www.individualdeprivationmeasure.org

Recommendation 48: Support strategic investment in research, evidence and learning as a hallmark of Australia’s foreign policy. This includes investment and partnership with the Research for Development Impact Network.

Women’s leadership

As noted in Section 2, inequitable leadership, decision-making and political representation continues to be severe in the Asia Pacific region, and highly visible in formal arenas of power. Women are largely excluded from the executive branches of government, and the rates of participation by women in national parliaments across the region are well below the global average of 23%. Looking beyond our region, only 5% of women in senior diplomatic positions globally are women, with Nordic countries disproportionately represented. International organisations continue to have a poor track record; for example, in the European Union and the United Nations, 92% of all senior positions are assigned to men. This demonstrates a failure in gender mainstreaming and limits the available pool of talent and the range of perspectives informing decision making.

With a current female Foreign Minister and Shadow Foreign Minister, Australia has an opportunity to leverage its leadership, with other like-minded female foreign policy decision makers (for example in Latin America and the Caribbean). This can advance systemic reform towards more equitable representation of diverse women at all levels of the UN. This points to the importance of DFAT also role-modelling equitable practices and resourcing. The Australian Government will also benefit from better reflecting diversity and equality in its human resourcing, and setting benchmarks to ensure 50% of Ambassadors, senior diplomats and advisers are women would support this outcome.

Recommendation 49: Australian female leaders, together with other like-minded female foreign policy decision makers, advocates for systemic reform towards more equitable representation of diverse women at all levels of international institutions including the UN.

Recommendation 50: The Australian Government reflects diversity and equality in its human resourcing, and sets benchmarks to ensure 50% of Ambassadors, senior diplomats and advisers are women.

Civil society

Consultation and cooperation with civil society is integral to implementing Australia’s foreign policy objectives, including through a focus on the SDGs. Australia has a long and proud record of supporting civil society organisations and their role, including within the UN system. Civil society plays a vital role in realising Australia’s foreign policy priorities, and Australia’s democratic legitimacy and global influence will benefit from continued willingness to champion and promote the role and voice of civil society, promoting the inclusion and participation of all actors, including women’s rights organisations and NGOs. As outlined in Section 3, this must include increased flexible, multi-year core funding for women’s rights organisations and networks to support the long-term movement building work which is crucial for gender equality.

Recommendation 50: The Australian Government reflects diversity and equality in its human resourcing, and sets benchmarks to ensure 50% of Ambassadors, senior diplomats and advisers are women.

Recommendation 51: Australian Foreign Policy recognises the crucial role of civil society, in particular women’s networks, movements and gender machineries in the region for effective implementation of the sustainable development agenda. Women’s voices and leadership are deemed an integral part of regional events and platforms.

Recommendation 52: Increase funding support for women’s rights organisations and networks, including lifting aid coded as supporting ‘women’s equality organisations and institutions’ above current levels. This includes providing flexible, multi-year core funding that supports leadership development and movement building.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS

Recommendation 1: The Australian Government takes account of the needs and interests of a diverse citizenry - in Australia and in the countries with which we engage - including considering how gender intersects with age, disability, rural/urban location and socio-cultural background.

Recommendation 2: Gender analysis forms a routine part of Australia's foreign policy to ensure policies and programs contribute to positive economic and social outcomes that benefit the interests of all Australians.

Recommendation 3: Australia's foreign policy reaffirms women's human rights and gender equality, as outlined in the 2016 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy, as central to Australia's national interests and to securing peace, prosperity and sustainable development.

Recommendation 4: The performance target that requires more than 80% of all investments made in the Australian aid program effectively address gender issues in their implementation is extended to include Australian Government expenditure across the trade and foreign affairs portfolios.

Recommendation 5: The Australian Government further develops its systems and tools for tracking expenditure on gender equality and women's rights and empowerment so that it can report publicly about progress on the 80% benchmark.

Recommendation 6: The Australian Government recognises that human rights and equal voice and representation are essential to regional stability and security and takes active steps to engage both diverse women and men in meaningful consultations on priorities in our region.

Recommendation 7: Australia's foreign policy promotes more inclusive and representative political systems that support the rule of law including investing in the civil and political leadership work of women-led and youth-led organisations.

2. GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES AND GLOBAL TRENDS

Recommendation 8: The Asia and Pacific regions remain the priority focus for Australia's foreign policy, with a particular focus on the promotion of gender equality and women's human rights to enable inclusive economic growth, more effective and representative decision-making and human security.

Recommendation 9: Australia's sustained commitment to Pacific Island Countries, cooperation with other nations with large coastlines and support for transnational actions to address climate change is cornerstone of our sustainable development and human security agenda.

Recommendation 10: Violence against women and girls is addressed as a core security priority with prevention and response to violence against women a central component of Australia's efforts to improve security, especially in Asia and the Pacific.

Recommendation 11: Addressing under-representation of diverse women in decision-making is key to long-term security and stability in our region. This requires a comprehensive, consistent and better-resourced approach across all aspects of foreign policy to address the barriers to women's full and effective participation.

Recommendation 12: The Australian Government ensures that women can contribute as agents of change in low-carbon development and climate change adaptation and as equal decision makers in relation to climate change responses.

Recommendation 13: Australia's national interests aligned with global commitments to mitigating the consequences of adverse climate change and take guidance from the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Recommendation 14: Australia's immigration and foreign policies must speak to each other to ensure respect for human rights and international legal obligations are visible in Australia and demonstrated externally.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants (2016), *End mission Statement by the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants on his official visit to Australia (1-18 November 2016)*, accessed at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20885&LangID=E#sthash.KJvT4h1R.dpuf>

Recommendation 15: The White Paper integrates the understanding that Women's participation, protection and a gender perspective are essential to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Recommendation 16: The development of Australia's second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security is emphasised as the vehicle to establish a clear framework for a coordinated, whole of government approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions.

Recommendation 17: The Australian government generates more accurate data on poverty and inequality to enable better targeting of policy and programming. This includes sustained investment in the Individual Deprivation Measure.

Recommendation 18: Australia's foreign policy plays a key role in amplifying existing international agreements and agreed language on women's rights and supporting the efforts of women's rights organisations and networks.

Recommendation 19: Australia continues its strong leadership role, standing with others to promote and protect human rights for all, in diplomacy, economic policy, and development programming.

3. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Recommendation 20: Australia's foreign policy extends transnational network linkages and broadens consultative mechanisms as it pursues policy goals that involve diverse stakeholders.

Recommendation 21: Resourcing and promoting a central role for women's movements, women's rights organisations, networks and gender machineries as dialogue partners is essential if Australia's bilateral relationships are to reflect diverse needs and priorities.

Recommendation 22: Continue to strengthen engagement with international financial institutions around integrating gender-analysis as a routine aspect of their work to ensure gender equality remains central to foreign policy and international development.

Recommendation 23: Australia advocates for the importance of the UN in global efforts to secure peace and prosperity. Strategic collaboration with other Member States with aligned interests will be critical to defend the rule of law, universal human rights, women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, sexual orientation and gender identity human rights, and women's human rights.

Recommendation 24: Australian foreign policy leadership can play a key role in supporting the UN system in its efforts to coordinate implementation of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. This must include the promotion of strong and effective mechanisms for civil society engagement with the UN system.

Recommendation 25: The Australian government strengthens machineries for gender equality in Australia and the region. This includes both financial resources and technical expertise and resourcing for coordination mechanisms that reflect a high-level political commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Recommendation 26: Australia's foreign policy continues to support and engage with and through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and aligns with emerging policy frameworks such as the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP)⁷⁸ 2017 – 2030.

4. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Recommendation 27: Gender analysis is stated as a central component of Australian Government policy to support economic development in Asia and the Pacific in order to maximise economic and gender equality outcomes.

Recommendation 28: Australia's social and economic policy dialogues and programs give greater priority to unpaid household and care work, including its measurement. Approaches should be informed by existing international commitments and language on unpaid care and domestic work.

Recommendation 29: All positions and approaches within Australia's foreign policy white paper are assessed for their impact (positive or negative) on care work including the links between women's ability to take up formal work opportunities and their involvement in informal, subsistence and unpaid work.

⁷⁸ http://www.pacificdisaster.net/dox/FRDP_2016_Resilient_Dev_pacific.pdf

Recommendation 30: Foreign affairs, trade and International development actions must enable care needs to be met in ways that share the social and economic costs of care more evenly across society, with more support to poorer families and households to reduce the amount and intensity of their unpaid care burden and increase the space for subsistence or income generating work.

Recommendation 31: Closer alignment between labour programs and development cooperation and gender analysis of all programs is undertaken to address barriers to women's participation in Australia's regional labour migration programs.

Recommendation 32: The Australian Government must integrate gender analysis into all Aid for Trade activities, including research and data collection to ensure choices are fully informed, effective, sustainable and contribute to outcomes that meet the needs of both women and men.

Recommendation 33: Australia's foreign policy continues to strengthen and promote women's economic empowerment strategies and participation by strengthening women's business networks and increasing consultation and engagement with working women and female entrepreneurs, including in negotiations on free trade agreements.

5. STRATEGIC, SECURITY AND TRANSNATIONAL CHALLENGES

Recommendation 34: Australian foreign policy applies a coordinated approach across the development, trade, diplomatic and defence portfolios in the acknowledgment that human security outcomes are a shared responsibility.

Recommendation 35: Australian foreign policy approach promotes stability in the region, which focusses on conflict prevention and the human dimensions of security. Addressing gender inequality and promoting women's human rights must be central to this preventative approach.

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