

**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
2025

**WWD**

**WE ARE AN AUSTRALIA-BASED ORGANISATION, RESOURCING DIVERSE WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS PRIMARILY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, AND CONTRIBUTING TO GLOBAL FEMINIST MOVEMENTS TO ADVANCE OUR VISION OF GENDER EQUALITY FOR ALL.**





## WHO WE ARE

IWDA is an Australia-based organisation, resourcing diverse women's rights organisations primarily in Asia and the Pacific, and contributing to global feminist movements to advance our vision of gender equality for all.

We exist to defend and advance the rights of diverse women and girls.

IWDA was established in 1985, through the initiative and insight of three outstanding women: Ruth Pfanner, Wendy Poussard and Wendy Rose with the aim to progress the rights of women.

Over our 35-year herstory, IWDA has grown from the living room of our founders to become who we are today.

IWDA's roots are in the development sector, as Australia's only development organisation entirely focused on gender equality. This brings strengths in the form of deep, long-lasting relationships with the network of women's rights organisations we support.

And increasingly, our future lies as part of the global feminist movement.

IWDA's approach represents a third way between the models of women's funds and international development NGOs: we resource the work of diverse women's rights organisations, enable them to be more effective by providing support that goes beyond money, and we make our own contributions to

feminist movements through advocacy, knowledge creation and translation.

We recognise that international development has deep roots in the harmful and oppressive structures of coloniality. As an organisation located in the Minority World engaging in the development sector, we take actions to decolonise our approach to feminism and development.<sup>1</sup>

We want to become the best we can be at partnerships across the Majority and Minority Worlds. Decolonisation is not an end state; it is ongoing and unlimited. Through decolonial action, we seek to grow as an organisation, including deepening our capacities and capabilities. This means we seek to understand and leverage our locational power so that we know when to:

**STEP UP** and use our power to leverage resources and access for women's rights and feminist organisations, and make our own contribution to feminist movements

**STAND WITH** feminist movements in solidarity and amplify the work of Majority World actors

**STEP BACK** when others are better placed to take the lead

**SIT WITH** uncertainty, embrace communal learning and deep listening, and accept that time is needed to collectively discern the best course of action<sup>2</sup>

- 1 IWDA chooses to use the term 'Majority World' in place of 'global south', 'developing world' or 'third world', and 'Minority World' in place of 'global north', 'developed world' or 'first world'. This is a political choice, as using this language demonstrates that 'global south' populations and cultures are in the global majority, thereby challenging the problematic hierarchies implied by other commonly-used terminology.
- 2 "Step Up, Stand With, Step Back" is an adaptation of the framework proposed by Shirley Walters and Shauna Butterwick in their 2017 publication *Moves to Decolonise Solidarity Through Feminist Popular Education*. We have added "Sit with" based on feedback provided to IWDA by Alfred Deakin Professor and Chair in Race Relations, Yin Paradies.

PARTICIPANTS AT THE WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FORUM IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE.  
PHOTO: HARJONO DJOYIBISONO



**OUR VISION:**

# GENDER EQUALITY FOR ALL

**OUR PURPOSE:**

## TO DEFEND AND ADVANCE THE RIGHTS OF DIVERSE WOMEN AND GIRLS

**OUR VALUES:**

**Feminist**

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

**Accountable**

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

**Collaborative**

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

**Transformative**

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

LWAY NYAY NWAY ZIN LEADS A COMMUNITY WORKSHOP IN MYANMAR.  
PHOTO: HARJONO DOJYIBISONO



## THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

**Feminism** is becoming more mainstream, but feminist movements are experiencing harsh backlash to progress on women's rights, as well as backlash focused on trans rights organisations and movements.

The international development sector is looking to locally-led approaches, but Majority World movements are calling for it to go much further to grapple with its **embedded colonialism and racism**, and to transform systems of power within the sector and beyond.

**Increasing restrictions** on space for civil society are impacting feminist movements' ability to hold governments, private sector and other actors accountable, and to defend and advance diverse women's rights.

**Climate change** poses an existential threat which is further fuelled by an unequal global economic order. Although climate change affects us all, its impacts are felt most strongly by those who are already marginalised, especially people with disabilities and women, trans, gender diverse and non-binary people, and the Pacific.

The COVID-19 crisis and its broader social and economic impacts have further highlighted the fundamental instability and inequality of our world. By shining

a light on these issues, it opens up the potential for **transformation**, where the boundaries of what is possible can shift and expand.

While many nations have failed to meet their commitments to Official Development Assistance under the 2030 Agenda, some donors are stepping up and **funding diverse feminist movements**.

**Technology** is providing new opportunities to convene and mobilise across borders, however a digital divide remains, creating a challenge in access for many.

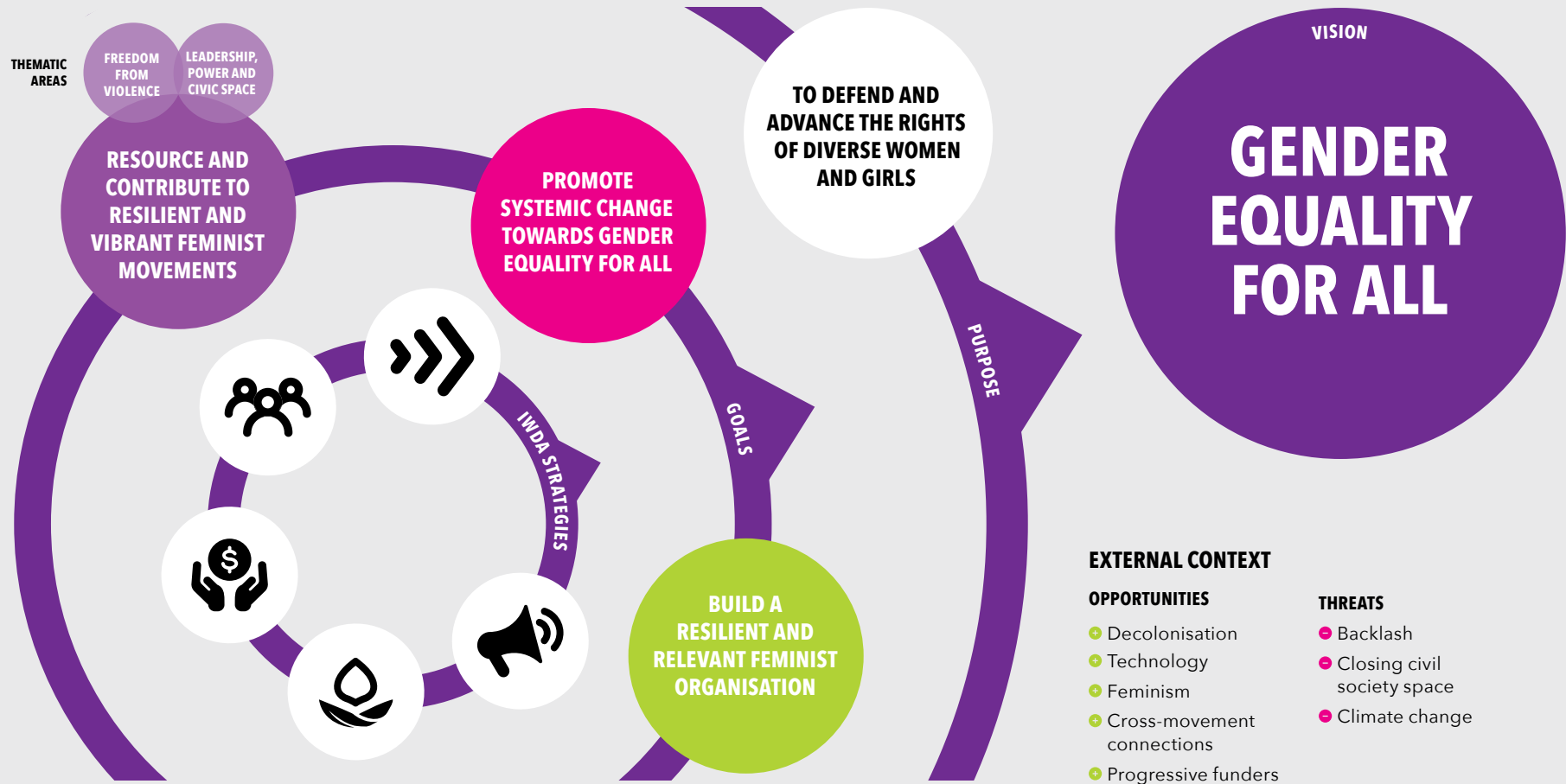
**New and better data** is equipping gender equality advocates and allies with a truer picture of the nature of poverty and inequality so that they can demand action.

**Feminist movements**, made up of networks, organisations and activists are fighting for the rights of women, trans, gender diverse and non-binary people in all their diversity. Cross-movement connections with LGBTQIA+, anti-racism, First Nations justice, disability inclusion and climate justice movements are critical to achieving a safe and equal future for all people.

By working together, we can achieve **gender equality for all**.

CROWDS MARCH AT AN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY RALLY IN TIMOR-LESTE.  
PHOTO: HARJONO DJOYIBISONO

# IWDA THEORY OF CHANGE



## RESOURCE

We resource diverse women's rights organisations primarily in Asia and the Pacific with money, skills, and access



## CONVENE

We support convening and strengthening of movements to advance gender equality



## TRANSFORM

We transform discourse on gender equality through knowledge creation and translation



## LEVERAGE

We leverage our locational power for advocacy and influence



## SUSTAIN

We ensure our own organisational sustainability, wellbeing, diversity and feminist practice

**THREE GOALS  
FIVE STRATEGIES  
ELEVEN OBJECTIVES**



**GOAL 1:  
RESOURCE AND  
CONTRIBUTE TO  
RESILIENT AND  
VIBRANT FEMINIST  
MOVEMENTS,  
PRIMARILY IN  
THE AREAS OF:  
POWER, LEADERSHIP  
AND CIVIC SPACE AND  
FREEDOM FROM  
VIOLENCE.**

TEAP MAY, A WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVOCATE FROM CAMBODIA.  
PHOTO: HARJONO DJOYIBISONO



**RESILIENT AND VIBRANT FEMINIST MOVEMENTS ARE CRITICAL TO DEFENDING AND ADVANCING THE RIGHTS OF DIVERSE WOMEN AND GIRLS. THIS WILL MOVE US TOWARDS ACHIEVING OUR VISION OF GENDER EQUALITY FOR ALL.**

IWDA is part of the global feminist movement and contributes to progressive change towards gender equality. We also resource others in the movement, primarily women's rights organisations in Asia and the Pacific, to do their work.



RESOURCE



CONVENE

**STRATEGY 1: WE RESOURCE DIVERSE WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS PRIMARILY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC WITH MONEY, SKILLS, AND ACCESS**

Well-resourced women's rights and feminist organisations, firmly rooted in local communities and context, are most effective at defending and advancing rights. IWDA will build on our track record of partnership with women's rights and feminist organisations, and keep doing the things they tell us work best: multi-year funding relationships that support organisations to cover their core costs, with the greatest flexibility possible. IWDA will work collaboratively with women's rights and feminist organisations to identify effective support that goes beyond money, taking actions to decolonise our approach and focus on feminist methods of mutual learning and accompaniment. We will be led by the women's rights and feminist organisations that we partner with and support them in strengthening their capacity to integrate climate response and climate justice into their work.

**OBJECTIVE 1: To sustain and improve flexible funding, which includes multi-year, core support for diverse women's rights organisations.**

**OBJECTIVE 2: To enable and support diverse women's rights and feminist organisations primarily in Asia and the Pacific to achieve greater impact through organisational and technical accompaniment.**

**STRATEGY 2: WE SUPPORT GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONVENEING AND STRENGTHENING OF MOVEMENTS TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY**

When women's rights organisations work together they are a force to be reckoned with. Supporting women's rights organisations to leverage their contextual knowledge and feminist power analysis contributes to strong feminist movements. These movements are then better placed to advocate for transformative change in: (a) individual consciousness; (b) access to resources; (c) structural laws and policies and; (d) norms and exclusionary practices. IWDA will leverage technology to facilitate online convening, and will provide funding and accompaniment to support feminist movements to navigate power dynamics, resist backlash, strengthen relationships, learn from each other and undertake joint work. We will make our own contribution to feminist movements and engage in cross-movement solidarity with disability inclusion, LGBTQIA+, anti-racism, First Nations justice and climate justice movements.

**OBJECTIVE 3: To provide diverse women's rights and feminist organisations with financial and technical support for convening, mobilising and learning to increase their collective impact.**

**OBJECTIVE 4: To participate in global feminist movements and engage in cross-movement solidarity to amplify the priorities of our region, and to translate outcomes back in regionally contextualised ways.**

# GOAL 2: PROMOTE SYSTEMIC CHANGE TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY FOR ALL

**PROGRESSING CHANGE TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY FOR ALL REQUIRES TRANSFORMATION OF THE FORMAL AND INFORMAL STRUCTURES THAT UNDERPIN INEQUALITY INCLUDING RESOURCES, LAWS AND POLICIES, NORMS AND EXCLUSIONARY PRACTICES, AND INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS.<sup>3</sup>**

IWDA contributes to systemic change through our own knowledge creation and advocacy which seek to transform discourse on gender equality, and by resourcing the work of others in the movement. We collaborate with feminist movements and other strategic partners, adding our voice to collective efforts towards systemic change and gender equality for all.



**TRANSFORM**



**LEVERAGE**

## **STRATEGY 3: WE TRANSFORM DISCOURSE ON GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH KNOWLEDGE CREATION AND TRANSLATION**

To achieve gender equality for all, we must transform discourses by strategically building, shaping and advancing alternative visions for gender equality. IWDA will create knowledge that supports transformational discourse for gender equality and the rights of diverse women, trans, gender diverse and non-binary people. We will refine and promote our existing knowledge products, and equip feminist movements and gender equality allies with the evidence that they need to make change. We will support locally-owned knowledge creation processes that are culturally relevant to women's rights organisations and their communities.

**OBJECTIVE 5: To resource, produce and encourage uptake of feminist and decolonial knowledge that transforms discourse and gender norms.**

## **STRATEGY 4: WE LEVERAGE OUR LOCATIONAL POWER FOR ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCE**

Formal and informal systems of power must be transformed if we are to move towards gender equality for all. IWDA will build on its track record of advocacy, using its feminist voice and expertise to undertake advocacy in spaces where we have unique access and influence, in particular with the Australian government and through multilateral forums. We will pursue this as an expression of decolonial practice - using our locational power in service of transformational systemic change. We will build coalitions and work with feminist movements on advocacy for diverse women's rights and gender equality issues. We will continue to highlight connections between gender equality issues in Australia and globally, as part of our contribution to the feminist movement. We will advocate for core, flexible, multi-year funding that enables the sustainability of feminist movements.

**OBJECTIVE 6: To use our locational power to transform formal and informal systems of power on issues at the forefront of feminist and decolonial debates.**

<sup>3</sup> The Gender at Work Framework designed by Aruna Rao and David Kelleher supports efforts to make visible the formal/informal and structural/individual dimensions of change towards gender equality.

# GOAL 3: BUILD A RESILIENT AND RELEVANT FEMINIST ORGANISATION

**TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ALLY, IWDA MUST BE RESILIENT AND ABLE TO WITHSTAND FINANCIAL SHOCKS, WITH A STRONG ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE THAT PROMOTES WELLBEING AND DIVERSITY.**

We must sharpen our capabilities for intersectional feminist analysis and expertise to ensure that we continue to be relevant to the women’s rights organisations we support and the broader feminist movement.



**SUSTAIN**

## **STRATEGY 5: WE ENSURE OUR OWN ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY, WELLBEING, DIVERSITY AND FEMINIST PRACTICE**

**IWDA will work to ensure our organisation is financially-resilient with a diverse income base, able to navigate a constantly shifting economic landscape.** We will strive for environmental sustainability, both as a business practice and to ensure our collective future in a climate-affected world. Diversity, wellbeing and a vibrant organisational culture are critical to ensure IWDA is an inclusive and resilient workplace.<sup>4</sup> IWDA is committed to disability inclusion, helping make visible the nature and impact of overlapping sources of discrimination experienced by women, girls, trans and non-binary people with disabilities and addressing the barriers that undermine their full inclusion and participation. We are committed to addressing racial injustice wherever it pervades, including within our own organisation. We endeavour to listen, learn and act to become an explicitly anti-racist feminist organisation. We must first acknowledge that present-day Australia is built on a colonial legacy

of oppression. We acknowledge the deep and painful history of racism in Australia that stems from colonisation and continues to thrive in our institutions and communities today, and commit to advancing First Nations justice. We will continually grow our feminist and decolonial practice so that we can contribute to the feminist movement and achieve our vision of gender equality for all.

**OBJECTIVE 7: To maintain strong financial management and sustain a diverse income base.**

**OBJECTIVE 8: To invest in systems and processes that facilitate our work and enable a resilient, feminist culture and staff wellbeing.**

**OBJECTIVE 9: To improve organisational enablers of diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organisation and continually work towards becoming an anti-racist organisation.**

**OBJECTIVE 10: To invest in and continually develop IWDA’s capacity to implement feminist and decolonial approaches to our work.**

**OBJECTIVE 11: To invest in periodic processes of consultation with and learning from women’s rights and feminist movement actors, subject experts, and relevant allies, to inform IWDA’s understanding and strategies.**

<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to an exemption from Equal Opportunity legislation, IWDA does not employ men.

# THEMATIC IMPACT AREAS

**AS PART OF IWDA'S CONTRIBUTION TO RESILIENT AND VIBRANT FEMINIST MOVEMENTS, WE RESOURCE DIVERSE WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FEMINIST ORGANISATIONS "TO BE", NOT JUST "TO DO." WE RESPOND TO PARTNERS' PRIORITIES AND FUND THEIR WORK, PRIMARILY IN THE AREAS OF POWER, LEADERSHIP AND CIVIC SPACE, AND FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE.**

We advocate for flexible, core, long-term funding. This work happens in the broader context of systemic change, which we know is critical to achieving transformational change towards gender equality for all.

## POWER, LEADERSHIP AND CIVIC SPACE

**Increasing diverse women, trans, non-binary and gender diverse people's access to leadership and expanding space for civil society are critical to transform power and achieve gender equality for all.** IWDA supports work to ensure women, trans, non-binary and gender diverse people who support gender equality have access to leadership and decision-making roles in all spheres, and to connect them with feminist movements. We support women's rights and feminist organisations to challenge ideas about whose voices are heard, and the ways that experiences are shaped by intersecting identities, to advance alternative ideas of what it means to be a feminist leader. We support safe spaces for feminist movements to come together to resist backlash, advance progress on gender equality and advocate for meaningful space for civil society.

These themes are interconnected. Where our funding enables this, IWDA resources work which breaks down siloes and operates at the intersection of issues. We recognise that climate change is the backdrop to all areas of work, and that its impacts are felt unequally across nations, and by people based on their gender and other identity markers. IWDA will be led by the women's rights and feminist organisations we partner with in determining the best ways to integrate climate readiness into their work. Where we are well placed to do so, we will work across feminist and climate movements, and engage in advocacy which leverages our locational power to call for accountability to international agreements.

## FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE

**Freedom from violence requires transformation of the gender norms which underpin violence, as well as the connection between violence at the individual and systemic level.** IWDA supports women's rights and feminist organisations to implement survivor-centred and rights-based approaches to sexual and gender based violence across the spectrum from prevention to response, services, and access to justice. IWDA works with women's rights and feminist organisations on conflict prevention, and to advocate for and contribute to robust reporting frameworks and accountability under national and international legal and policy frameworks relating to gender based violence, including the women peace and security agenda.



# GENDER E FOR ALL

# EQUALITY



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IWDA wishes to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land our office is located on, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.