

GENDER EQUITY VICTORIA



Back on Track Victorian Gender Equity Investment

20/21

**STATE BUDGET
SUBMISSION**



ADVANCE EQUITY. PROMOTE HEALTH. PREVENT VIOLENCE.



GENDER
EQUITY
VICTORIA

Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC) is the Victorian peak body for gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women.

Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC) delivers and supports coordinated action on gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women across Victoria. It's the only peak body working across all three areas.

Our member organisations are Victoria's leaders on gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women.

Our membership reaches every region and community in Victoria.

OUR VISION

Equality, wellbeing and freedom from violence for every woman and girl, in every community of Victoria.

OUR PURPOSE

To advocate, influence and collaborate to improve outcomes in gender equity, women's health and in the prevention of violence against women.

GEN VIC MEMBERSHIP

GEN VIC represents organisations and individuals across Victoria who support our vision for health, equality and freedom from violence for every woman and girl in Victoria.

www.genvic.org.au

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1. PARTNERING FOR GENDER EQUITY



“GENDER EQUALITY IS THE KEY TO ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN.”

Coalition of Australian Governments, Fourth & Final Action Plan to Reduce Violence against women and their Children 2010-2022, August 2019

The Coalition of Australian Government’s Fourth and Final Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022, has placed action on gender inequality, the underlying cause of gendered violence, as a key outcome for the next four years of government intervention and investment.

The COAG plan commits all governments, including Victoria, to:

- Advance gender equality and respect for women through effective initiatives
- Improve coordination of primary prevention activities
- Design and implement tailored prevention activities for specific cohorts
- Address intergenerational trauma of First Nations peoples
- Promote healthy, safe and equitable relationships and values amongst children and young people

Victoria has been leading the way in many of these areas. The Royal Commission into Family Violence, the Free from Violence Prevention Strategy, the Victorian Gender Equality Strategy and the Victorian Sexual & Reproductive Health Policy have all contributed to ensuring Victoria has an innovative policy framework to address the causes of violence against women and children.

While plans and goals have emphasised the importance of gender equality, investment in services, initiatives and programs which advance gender equity and respect for women have not kept pace with other increases in funding for family violence service response.

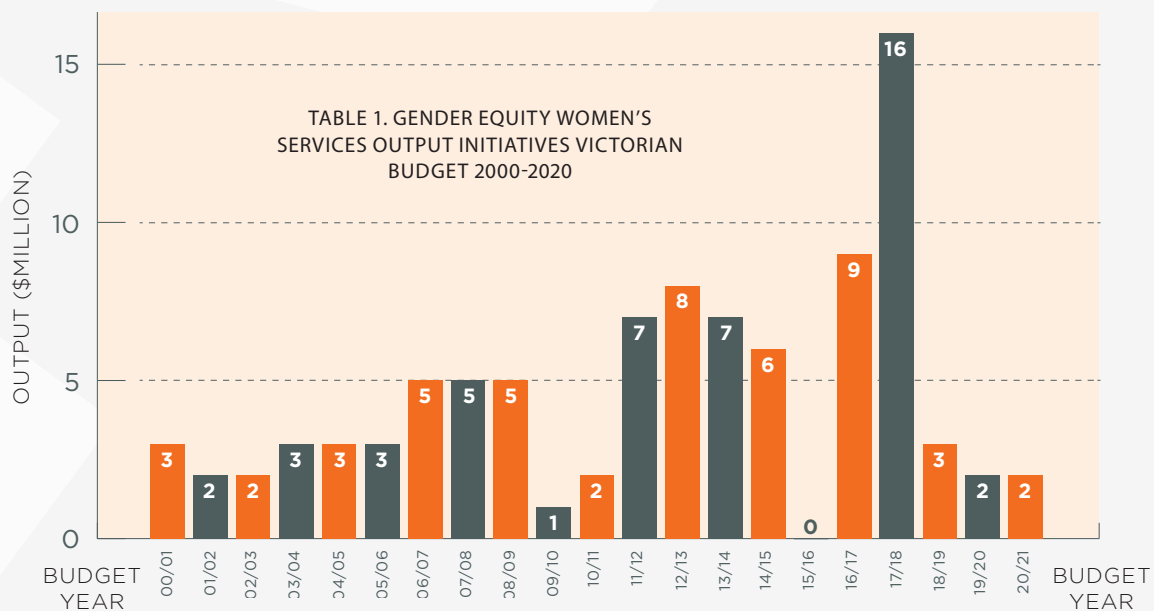
Funding for gender equality, women’s health services and others working towards gender equality has been stagnant for many years. And in some circumstances has been going backwards.

GEN VIC is committed to partnering with the Victorian Government to ensure that it achieves its COAG commitment to reduce violence against women and children, as well as plans to implement the all recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and actions in the Victorian Gender Equality Strategy.

This 20/21 Budget Bid sets out a plan to fulfill these joint aims by correcting historic under investment in gender equality spending as well as recent budget cuts to women’s services. It gets gender equity investment back on track.

2. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT – METHODOLOGY & ASSUMPTIONS

This is GEN VIC’s first Budget Submission as a peak body representing women’s and gender equity services across the state. Gender equality investment has suffered from the absence of focused analysis and advocacy. With the exception of recent investments in family violence prevention, programs and services that empower women, seek to address women’s economic insecurity, other forms of gendered violence and the unequal health consequences of inequality have been exceptionally modest.



To correct historic underinvestment in gender equity GEN VIC has adopted the following methodologies and assumptions for its 20/21 Budget Submission. It is envisaged that over

time and with further dialogue with the State of Victoria, these approaches will be shared across government and the sector resulting in significant increases in investment.

GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT METHODOLOGIES AND ASSUMPTIONS

1. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT RESULTS IN ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND SUBSTANTIAL FUTURE COST AVOIDANCE FOR THE VICTORIAN BUDGET.

We rely on recent research (2017) reported in the *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*¹, in systematically reviewing the return on investment

of public health investment in high income countries with universal healthcare. The report found that health promotion interventions deliver a median Return on Investment (ROI) of 2.2, in a range of 0.7-6.2, legislative interventions a median ROI of 46.5 and wider determinant interventions deliver a median ROI of 5.6.

2. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT – METHODOLOGY & ASSUMPTIONS

THE VALUE OF THE VICTORIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH SECTOR

Victoria's support of the independent women's health sector is unique in Australia, and provides for coordinated specialist expertise and engagement across all rural and metropolitan regions. The sector strategically focusses on gender as a core social determinant of women's health, prioritising achieving outcomes in gender equity, sexual and reproductive health, and the prevention of violence against women.

Women's Health Services provide an infrastructure that offer a statewide reach and local expertise. They are the backbone organisations in multi-agency, cross sector prevention partnerships across every region of Victoria committed to gender equity and ending violence against women.

The strides that have been made in violence against women prevention in Victoria have been strongly influenced by Women's Health Services (WS work and commitment to gender equity and the prevention of violence against women. Women's health services enable and support regional prevention partners to lead their own prevention of violence against women work – many of which were successful in the Victorian Government's Free from Violence Innovation Grants in 2018.

Health promotion, gender equity legislation and advocacy on social health determinacy are critical gender equity initiatives delivered and advocated for by members of GEN VIC. Based on a median ROI of 2.2, the Victorian Government currently enjoys a \$19Million benefit from the funding it invests in women's health services alone.

Long term investment in local prevention of violence against women partnerships developed over many years by Women's Health Services (WHS) have been effective at building commitment to family violence prevention and gender equality promotion by local councils, community legal centres, local courts, general practitioners and schools, long before the Royal Commission into Family Violence and the establishment of Respect Victoria. The median ROI on public health interventions at a local level is 4.0. The annual return on investment for the state government from the development of local prevention partnerships is estimated at \$38Million, a figure put at risk if these projects are not refunded in full in 2020 and beyond.

In addition, GEN VIC members also assist the State of Victoria bottom line by avoiding future costs through:

a. Sexual & Reproductive Health Education and Awareness.

The education and awareness raising of young women about contraception, pregnancy and reproductive choice performed by Women's Health Services results in future cost savings across the Victorian economy from sustainable fertility. Research into the cost-benefits of reproductive health services, found that cuts to contraceptive services and public health programs across the United States would result in additional expenditure of \$4.40 per woman to cover the cost of extra pregnancies and unwanted births. Extrapolated into the Victorian context, the defunding of current sexual and reproductive health education and awareness would risk burdening the Victorian Budget approximately \$14Million per annum.

2. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENTS INCREASE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT.

There is a growing body of international research connecting increased gender equity to growth in gross domestic product. The McKinsey Global Institute has estimated that \$12 trillion would be added to the global GDP by 2025 by advancing women's equality. This research has been affirmed and added to by a range of other research projects and reports. The Victorian Gender Equality Strategy has only just begun a statewide dialogue on the value of gender equity to the State of Victoria. The sustained and certain funding of GEN VIC and its members is essential to the State of Victoria if the potential growth in GDP from gender equity is to be realized into the future.

3. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT MUST BE BASED ON INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE.

This means calling for the quantum of government investment to be based on world's best practice in gender equity and the primary Prevention of Violence against Women. Respect Victoria has identified in its first Strategic Plan 2019-2022 that the optimal budget spend for primary prevention, including gender equity, is between 9.5-12% of the response spend annually. Currently, Victorian Government family violence primary prevention investment sits at just 3% of the total response spend and the gender equity component of that is even smaller.

The low spend on violence prevention and gender equity initiatives in Victoria is consistent with Australia's performance in overall health prevention spending. According to recent OECD statistics, Australia's spend

on health promotion and disease prevention is low compared to other OECD nations, with Canada, the UK, US and all the Nordic Countries contributing more per annum.

The OECD has Australia at just 2%, while best practice of other English speaking and Nordic nations is between 3-7%. The Australian Health Prevention Association and the Public Health Association of Australia has heavily criticized Australia's low investment in prevention, assessing it as even lower than the OECD at 1.34%.

GEN VIC advocates for Victoria to lead the way in Australian health prevention expenditure by gradually lifting investment in gender equity and primary prevention of violence against women to meet world's best practice of 5% of total health spend or 9-12.5% of total family violence spend. GEN VIC recognizes that to transition to this level of investment will require periods of phasing to enable women's health and their prevention partners, family violence and other gender equity organisations to scale up projects, programs and other initiatives over time, as well as build workforce capacity.

4. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT MUST TAKE A LIFE-COURSE AND INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH.

Women are impacted by gender inequity across the lifecourse and consequently evidence of gender equity investment in each budget cycle should demonstrate budget allocations and interventions across the lifecourse of Victorian women. Further, gender equity budget investment must be intersectional in its approach, providing for specialist interventions for First Nations women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disabilities and LGBTIQ identifying women.

2. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT – METHODOLOGY & ASSUMPTIONS

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY - HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health's Health Education Program is the only service of its kind in Victoria, run by and for migrant women, and providing outreach, in-language health education to migrant and refugee women in their workplaces, classrooms, community groups and other settings where women gather. Delivered by a team of 20 trained and nationally-accredited bilingual health educators, the Program is tailored to reach women in every region across Victoria who have low English proficiency and who have difficulty accessing the health system.

A program of 4-10 sessions is conducted with groups of women on topics ranging from sexual and reproductive health, to mental health, and violence against women, linking women into the health and social services system. The Program enables migrant and refugee women to take preventative health action, as well as to intervene early so that any potential health problems can be dealt with at an early point.

“” THE PROGRAM REACHES WOMEN WHO HAVE NEVER BEFORE HAD CONTACT WITH A HEALTH WORKER OR RECEIVED HEALTH INFORMATION IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE IN AUSTRALIA...

The MCWH Health Education Program follows a proven methodology that is evidence-based and it is regularly evaluated. The Program reaches women who have never before had contact with a health worker or received health information in their own language in Australia; in 2017 over 94% of Program participants said they would visit a doctor or other health professional as a result of the session. Over 90% said they would discuss their health concerns with their family and 73% said that as a result of the new health information, they would change their health behaviour and/or lifestyle to improve their wellbeing.

5. **GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT SHOULD INCLUDE A COMBINATION OF BASE OPERATING BUDGET AND SPECIAL PROJECTS** designed to reach stretch goals of the VGES and address specific cohorts of disadvantage. Base funding for women's and gender equity services should be set annually using the most current population data, indexed for CPI and incorporating a contribution to address historical gender pay inequities in the community and health sectors.

- 6. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT MUST BE** aligned to the key action areas of the Victorian Gender Equality Strategy and GEN VIC's Strategic Plan.

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY - WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES BUILDING STRONG PLATFORMS FOR PRIMARY PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

The Experts by Experience Working Group comprises of 19 women with disability from a range of diverse backgrounds who assist Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) who provide their advice and expertise across the work of the Workforce Development Team. These Experts will be involved in a number of skill development opportunities during the next year which will mean that they will be a ready workforce of women with disability who can provide consultation, guest speaking and advice in a variety of matters relating to (not exhaustive) gender and disability and violence prevention and response.

Initially the need for this group was identified based on an increased desire for a more comprehensive co-design model for WDV's Workforce Development Program, inclusive of a wider range of lived experiences and diversity. It had been identified that frequently a number of women with disabilities are not provided opportunities to have a voice due to cognitive disability, complex communication needs, living in regional areas, and other barriers. This group aims to provide an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment to facilitate these and other voices have an equitable opportunity to be included in our planning, practice and consultations in the future. The hope is that this program will also provide opportunities for the women to upskill and increase the representation of women with disabilities in the PVAW workforce.

This primary prevention work is complemented by WDV's other PVAW activities. These include policy and member representation through NDIS and Royal Commission reforms, the Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability promoting organisational change in disability services, and Enabling Women building knowledge of rights, self advocacy pathways and community networks.

- 7. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT MUST BE** reported transparently each year in the State Budget Papers, in independently produced analysis of government investment and in other for a.
- 8. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT MUST BE MONITORED ANNUALLY VIA AN INDEPENDENT VICTORIAN GENDER EQUITY REPORT,** measuring performance against an agreed Dashboard of Gender Equity Indicators.

3. HISTORY OF GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT IN VICTORIA

In Australia there has historically been very limited investment in programs and initiatives to address gender inequity. This is not surprising considering there is no national plan to promote gender equality nor is there national and state-based infrastructure to keep governments accountable for gender equality performance.

Although Australia led the way in gender budgeting during the 1990's, the practice of sex-disaggregating budget expenditure fell away for a decade or more during the early part of this century, with a correlating loss of investment in specialist women's services. The practice of gender budgeting was re-established in 2017 as part of the Victorian Gender Equality Strategy.

In Victoria, before the establishment of GEN VIC, there was no funded peak advocacy body for women's services in Victoria, with gender equity service provision in the state focused on individual case work, rather than systemic reform. Funding for the women's refuges and Domestic Violence Victoria, the Women's Information Referral Exchange, Women's Legal Service and the Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission was predominantly for ameliorating the impact of gender inequality on individuals, rather than developing statewide programs for the systemic promotion of gender equality across the state.

Only women's health services were focused on systemic gender equity, and then primarily through a health prevention lens. The Victorian Women's Health Program commenced in 1987 with a specific focus on the sexual and reproductive health of women in Victoria. Women's Health Service focus education and awareness of international and national research connecting gender inequality and poor health outcomes for women. Considerable advocacy work has been devoted to ensuring the social determinants of women's health are

understood by policy makers across Victoria. The following case studies give an example of how women's health service projects currently advance gender equity in Victoria.

THE VICTORIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH ATLAS – WOMEN'S HEALTH VICTORIA

The Victorian Women's Health Atlas is a groundbreaking interactive tool created in 2015 by Women's Health Victoria, tracking women's health, wellbeing and gender equity indicators across all Victorian Local Government Areas (LGA). The priority health areas included in this cutting-edge dashboard are:

- Sexual & Reproductive Health (7 indicators)
- Violence Against Women (6 Indicators)
- Mental Health (6 indicators)
- Cancer (6 indicators)
- Avoidable mortality (8 indicators)
- Gender Equality (21 indicators)

The project has been supported by Spatial Vision, a Victorian Based spatial mapping, data visualization and IT consulting company.

The Atlas is now being used to assist policy makers and advocates in their work supporting gender equality. GEN VIC envisages that the Atlas would also assist in preparing the Victorian Gender Equality Report annually.

GENDER EQUITY TRAINING - WHIN, WHISE, WHE AND OTHER WHS

Women's Health Services provide expert training to the community in gender equity, assisting organisations, local governments, and businesses at a local level to develop gender equity plans, undertake audits and transition towards a more gender equal culture. Gender equity training undertaken by GEN VIC members reached 370,627 people as at July 2019. Women's Health in the North (WHIN) in partnership with women's health services developed the gender equity training resource, which is now used across the state. Women's Health East and WHIN have also adapted these resources to provide assistance to child care providers and other local children's services to promote gender equity in the early years.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY PROJECTS

GEN VIC Members are the primary promoters of recognition and celebration of International Women's Day, presenting an extensive offering of activities in local areas including: film screenings, awards, art projects, training forums, workshops and guest speakers. IWD events are usually delivered in partnership with other community organisations and local government bodies in each region covered by GEN VIC members.

LEADING THE WAY ON FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Long before the Royal Commission into Family Violence members of Victorian women's health services were at the forefront of advocating for increased investment in family violence prevention and service response. GEN VIC members have long identified violence against women as a detrimental health issue for Victorian women.

Of course, the Royal Commission into Family Violence, along with the direct advocacy of Rosie Batty, has been a game changer for addressing the most serious impact on gender inequality - violence against women. While the reforms in Victoria have been exciting, there is still a long way to go before investment in family violence prevention and response drives down rates of violence against women and children across the state.

GEN VIC is pleased that with the establishment of Family Safety Victoria and Respect Victoria, there is now dedicated and enduring funding and focus on violence against women and children at a statewide level. However, it continues to provide leadership through the following projects at the nexus between violence prevention and the empowerment of women.

3. HISTORY OF GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT IN VICTORIA

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY – LEADING LOCAL PREVENTION PARTNERSHIPS

Effective family violence prevention strategies rely on bringing together disparate services - specialist and generalist; prevention & response - across a range of sectors to engage in collaborative and reinforcing local action. GEN VIC members have been managing local prevention partnerships since 2007, bringing together local government, community organisations, health services, police, neighborhood house networks, schools, health professionals, community legal centres and law courts, specialist family violence service providers and others to develop localised coordinated prevention plans. Local prevention partnerships exist all over the state, with their own strategic plans and collective projects. Disappointingly, in the transition to Family Safety Victoria and Respect Victoria, these partnerships are continuing without any assurance of adequate future funding, rather than receiving a boost to build on a decade of relationship building, local strategies and partnerships.

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY - SPEAKING OUT: ADVOCACY PROJECT AND TRAINING FOR VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE.

Speaking Out is an innovative statewide project, delivered by Women's Health East, training victim-survivors of family violence and sexual assault in advocacy and media. The project was established to shift the public discourse and public policy on violence against women and has increasingly had a role in the implementation of family violence reforms, by empowering those women directly affected by it to speak out and advocate for changes in their best interests.

Graduates of the project provide a unique victim-survivor perspective to policy and service design across the state and have played an **instrumental** role in victim-centred approach to implementation of the Royal Commission into Family Violence by the Andrews Government. Several graduates of the project are members of the Victims Survivors Advisory Council while other women have taken up employment in areas such as policing or social work, or established small businesses educating people about family violence.

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY – ADVERTISING (IN)EQUALITY

The **Advertising (In)equality** project led by Women’s Health Victoria (WHV) is the first coordinated effort in Australia to promote gender equality in advertising industry. The project is working to establish a sound evidence base for action to promote gender equity in the advertising setting; identify community attitudes and responses to gender portrayals in advertising; and engage the advertising industry, businesses, regulators, and community members to support action to promote gender equity in advertising.

Just 12 months in, the project has gathered extraordinary momentum and has gained traction with a wide range of industry players – from large multinational advertising companies through to small boutique firms.

Research by WHV and RMIT University has confirmed that community members feel that advertising portrayals of women and men are stereotyped, and out of step with contemporary society. Community members have raised concerns that these portrayals are particularly disempowering for women and contribute to the devaluing of women in society.

“**“** I THINK ONE AD ITSELF CANNOT BE HARMFUL, BUT WHEN YOU SEE THOUSANDS OF THESE ADS, ESPECIALLY FOR ... YOUNG GIRLS - AND BOYS ... THEY SEE ... WHAT THE STANDARDS ARE FOR WHEN THEY GROW UP...I THINK IT WILL BECOME HARMFUL. [woman participant]”

With new industry partners coming on board, and new guidelines and campaigns emerging from regulators Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) and Ad Standards promoting positive social messaging in advertising, it is clear this project is already contributing to a shift in industry attitudes towards gender portrayals.

3. HISTORY OF GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT IN VICTORIA

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY – VICTORIA AGAINST VIOLENCE: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

GEN VIC Members were early adopters of the United Nation’s campaign, 16 Days of Activism Against Gendered Violence. Women’s Health Services have, with extremely modest resources, delivered the following innovations to the community to promote community activism against gendered violence during the intensive period of 25 November-10 December:

- **Don’t Fund Sexism** – Boycott of products portraying women in degrading manner, 16-Actions 16-Days Toolkit (Women’s Health in the North)
- **StandUp** – Education & Poster Project in conjunction with Geelong Night Life on how to be an active bystander; Shopping Bag promotion in the SurfCoast IGA “Why doesn’t she leave. Why doesn’t he stop” (Women’s Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West)
- **#GE4Me** (Gender Equity for Me) social media campaign reaching over 900,000 Victorians Waiting on case study. Community members decorate, colour in, draw on and write their own #GE4Me message and share online (Women’s Health East)
- **16 Days Activist Challenge!** 434 community members pledging to undertake actions to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women (Women’s Health West)
- **Don’t respect disrespect. Call it out!** – Bystander action campaign with 110 cafés in the southern metropolitan region, produced coffee cups, posters and stickers reaching 21, 115 café customers (Women’s Health in the South East)
- **Respectful Relationships Art Exhibition** – Receiving 700 entries from students across over 30 Gippsland Respectful Relationship Schools, featuring successful applicant art at the Gippsland Art Gallery for six months (Gippsland Women’s Health).



GEN VIC MEMBERS HAVE LONG IDENTIFIED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AS A DETRIMENTAL HEALTH ISSUE FOR VICTORIAN WOMEN.

4. FUTURE OF GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT IN VICTORIA

Funding has prohibited GEN VIC members from engaging in other areas of gender equity advocacy, research and innovation. The insidious consequences of gender inequality are impacting on the lives of Victorian women in ways that receive very little attention or funding from the State of Victoria.

If Victoria is to fulfill its commitment to ending violence against women in the home, it must act to address gender inequality in all its forms, lifting investment in GEN VIC Members to enable expansion in the following areas:

- **Addressing the risk of gendered violence and poor health outcomes for women following natural disasters.** Victoria is one of the most bushfire prone areas in the world, with a history of catastrophic loss, most recently during

Black Saturday. Lessons learned from Black Saturday highlighted the long reach of natural disasters into the lives of women, including increased risk of violence, poor mental and physical health. With inevitable climate change increasing the risk of catastrophic natural disasters in Victoria, there is a need for ongoing work to build resilience in communities of women in high risk locations, as well as skill emergency management in identifying gender equity issues.

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY – GENDER & DISASTER POD

The Gender & Disaster Pod (GAD Pod) is a collaboration between Women’s Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE), Women’s Health in the North (WHIN) and Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI).

The GAD Pod has effectively drawn attention to this issue in the emergency planning and management sectors as well as in the community from its leading research in women and disasters after the aftermath of the Black Saturday bushfires, the first of its kind addressing the overlooked effect of gender and disaster affected by climate change.

Recent GAD Pod work includes significant contribution to both The Gender and Emergency Management Guidelines and the Family Violence Framework for Emergency Management

The GAD Pod has developed a wealth of resources, all available from www.genderanddisaster.com.au including training, and has influenced government and sector policy and procedure in relation to women, domestic violence and LGBTI communities’ needs.

Awards have been won at international, national, state and university levels, most recently, the Victorian Resilience Australia Award (Community), and shortlisting for the National Award to be announced in November.

4. FUTURE OF GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT IN VICTORIA

- Responding to the risk of violence against women in public places.** In the last 18 months a series of violent murders of young women by young men on the streets of Melbourne have highlighted deep cultural problems with gendered violence in our state. In particular, the murder of Eurydice Dixon revealed complex layers of male violence which encompassed the acts of stalking, rape and murder perpetrated by her killer, Jaymes Todd, but also the defacing of her memorial site by Andrew Nolch in a clearly vicious and misogynistic backlash to gender advocacy in the wake of her death.
- Focusing on the impacts on economic participation of women at work.** Discrimination and sexual harassment in the workforce and other forms of workplace gendered violence prohibit women from reaching their full potential as active contributors to the economic and social life of the state. This has both micro and macro effects. Individual women are at greater risk of poverty and welfare dependence. The community operates without 50% of its talent pool, contributing to economic losses and increased risk of corruption.
- Assessing the damage to the mental health and wellbeing of Victorian women** by contributing to low self-esteem, value and self-worth amongst women of all ages and backgrounds. There is growing evidence of a connection between gender inequality and a range of health disorders including anxiety, depression, weight gain, metabolic disorders, heart disease and cancer.

GEN VIC MEMBER CASE STUDY – FINANCIAL CAPABILITY PROGRAMS (WIRE)

Women's financial health and independence is often at risk due to changes in work patterns following childbirth, the impact of gender inequality in workplaces and family violence. Recognising the need to empower and skill women in financial literacy, WIRE has developed workshops for women over 50, a toolkit for women to help talk about money in their relationships and a new financial capabilities project in partnership with Good Shepherd and the Victorian Government exploring the barriers to women's financial inequality especially for women from CALD, indigenous backgrounds and women with disabilities.



WOMEN'S FINANCIAL HEALTH AND INDEPENDENCE IS OFTEN AT RISK DUE TO CHANGES IN WORK PATTERNS FOLLOWING CHILDBIRTH, THE IMPACT OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN WORKPLACES AND FAMILY VIOLENCE.

5. GENDER EQUITY FUNDING CHALLENGES

GEN VIC and its predecessor, the Women's Health Association of Victoria (WHAV), was established to advocate on behalf of a small collective of organisations devoted women's health and gender equity with a view to expanding the state's gender equality advocacy membership and infrastructure in line with the Victorian Gender Equality Strategy.

As part of its first year of operation, it has conducted a review of women's health service provision to identify the many and varied projects undertaken by women's services, as well as the funding received for same. The results of this review have revealed a number of startling funding challenges for gender equity in Victoria.

Gender equity investment has not been growing at all. In fact, it has been going backwards as the following analysis budget years 11-23 reveal.

BUDGET YEAR GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT

11-12	No increase to base funding to women's health services (beside government indexation)
12-13	5% cut to Women's Health Services (loss \$337,232)
14-18	No increase to base funding to women's health services (beside government indexation)
19-20	Cut to Victoria Against Violence: 16 Days of Activism (loss of \$120,000)
19-20	Cut to Speaking Out: Advocacy Program and Training for Victim-Survivors of Family Violence, a Statewide project delivered by Women's Health East (loss of \$150,000)
20-21	Cut to Local Prevention Partnerships (loss \$500,000)
21-22	Cut to Local Prevention Partnerships (loss \$500,000)
21-22	Unfunded Speaking Out: Media Training for Victim-Survivors of Family Violence A Statewide project delivered by Women's Health East (loss of \$150,000)
22-23	Unfunded Local Prevention Partnerships (loss \$1,200,000)
22-23	Unfunded Speaking Out: Media Training for Victim-Survivors of Family Violence A Statewide project delivered by Women's Health East (loss of \$150,000)
23-24	Unfunded Local Prevention Partnerships (loss \$1,200,000 and thereafter)
23-24	Unfunded Speaking Out: Media Training for Victim-Survivors of Family Violence A Statewide project delivered by Women's Health East (loss of \$150,000 and thereafter)

In addition to the above cuts to women's health services delivering gender equity programs, there has also been a significant population growth which has resulted in women's health and gender equity services delivering projects to more women with less funds per woman than twenty years ago.

6. GENDER EQUITY INVESTMENT BACK ON TRACK

GEN VIC's 20/21 budget submission proposes to get gender equity investment back on track. The below investment represents a very modest investment of 0.53% of the total projected Victorian State Budget Output for 20/21. That's less than 1% gender equity investment.²

20/21 State Budget Output: Victorian Gender Equity Investment (\$ million)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Boost to Women's Health Services	3.9	3.9	4.5	4.5
Strengthening Gender Equity in the Community	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
TOTAL	5	5	5.7	5.7

BOOSTING WOMEN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Under this initiative, women's health services in metropolitan and regional locations would receive a boost to preventative health programs, information and resources, supporting gender equity, reproductive health and the elimination of violence against women. This initiative would also provide specialist health education to women from CALD backgrounds.

A Boost to women's health services over four years will:

• Restore Budget Cuts & lost funding to WHS	\$5,828,928
• Align funding proportionate to population ^{3,4}	\$5,246,557
• Increase CALD Women's Health & Intersectional Prevention of Violence Against Women ⁵	\$4,283,692
• Boost to Women's Health Victoria & the Women's Health Atlas	\$1,539,952
TOTAL:	\$16,849,129

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Restore WHS Budget Cuts annually	\$337,232	\$337,232	\$337,232	\$337,232	\$1,348,928
Restore VAV 16 Days Funding annually	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$480,000
Restore Local Prevention Partnerships	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$3,400,000
Restore Statewide Speaking-Out Project	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$600,000
Population based boost to WHS at \$3 per woman	\$1,311,639	\$1,311,639	\$1,311,639	\$1,311,639	\$5,246,556
CALD women boost to bilingual educators and translation	\$1,070,923	\$1,070,923	\$1,070,923	\$1,070,923	\$4,283,692
Boost to Women's Health Victoria the statewide service & The Women's Health Atlas	\$384,988	\$384,988	\$384,988	\$384,988	\$1,539,952
TOTAL	\$3,874,782	\$3,874,782	\$4,574,782	\$4,574,782	\$16,849,129
TOTAL in Millions	3.9	3.9	4.5	4.5	16.8

STRENGTHENING GENDER EQUITY IN THE COMMUNITY

This initiative would deliver a one-stop shop for gender equity resources, including auditing, planning, training and workforce development for organisations advancing the Victorian Gender Equality Strategy. It would also include the production of an Annual Victorian Gender Equity Report, a partnership between GEN VIC, PerCapita, Women’s Leadership Institute of Australia and academic institutions, to produce a dashboard of comparable data sets.

Strengthening Gender Equity in Victoria over four years will:

- Resource GEN VIC as peak & one-stop gender equity resource \$3,277,732
 - Produce an annual State of Gender Equity in Victoria Report⁶ \$1,400,000
- TOTAL: \$4,677,732**

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Resource GEN VIC as a one-stop gender equity resource	\$819,433	\$819,433	\$819,433	\$819,433	\$3,277,732
Annual Gender Equity in Victoria Report y	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$1,400,000
TOTAL	\$1,169,433	\$1,169,433	\$1,169,433	\$1,169,433	\$4,677,732
TOTAL in Millions	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.8

END NOTES

1. Masters, R, Anwar E, Collins B et al Return on investment of public health interventions: a systemic review, J Epidemiol Community Health 2017;71:827-834
2. Ibid
3. Vlasoff, M Singh, S, Darroch, JE, et al, Assessing Costs and Benefits of Sexual and Reproductive Health Interventions, Occasional Report, No 11, The Alan Guttmacher Institute, Dec 2004
4. McKinsey Global Institute, How Advancing women’s equality can add \$12 Trillion to global growth, September 2015;
5. Madgavkar, A, Ellingrud, K and Krishnan, M, The Economic benefits of gender parity, Stanford Social Innovation Review, March 8 2016;
6. OECD Health Expenditure and Funding Statistics 2019 <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?ThemeTreeId=9>
7. AHPA & PHAA, Health Promotion and Illness Prevention Policy Statement 2018. https://www.healthpromotion.org.au/images/Health_Promotion_and_Illness_Prevention_Policy_Statement_.pdf
8. The strengthening of gender budgeting and gender responsive budget preparation is fundamental to ensuring gender equity in Victoria. GEN VIC supports increased expertise to prepare and analyse the Victorian Budget within the Office of Women and Treasury.
9. Women’s Health Services, Impact at a Glance, July 2019
10. See Table 1.1, 19/20 State Budget Papers, Budget Paper 3 (20/21 Output summary \$3,206.2 million)
11. Current rate of funding across all WHS organisations is \$2.33 per woman. WHO benchmark for primary prevention is \$4 per funded person. GEN VIC claims a 0.67 increase per woman, bringing the per woman figure to \$3. Please note: Future GEN VIC Budget Bids, following the next census, will seek to close the gap between the Victorian primary prevention investment and the WHO benchmark.
12. This figure is based on 3,185,582 Total Female Population in Victoria (ABS Demographic Statistics as at 30 June 2017) x \$3 per woman \$9,586,746 - \$8,643,845 (Current base funding for 11 services) = \$942,901 per year x 4 years.
13. The Victorian population of CALD women has doubled over a ten-year period to 885,061. An additional \$1.21 per CALD woman is required to provide bi-lingual education in workplaces and the community sector, as well as translation of resources and other documents. See also Attachment C, MCWH Budget Submission 20/21
14. See Attachment D Proposal by GEN VIC, PerCapita, Women’s Leadership Institute of Australia and other partners



EQUALITY, WELLBEING AND FREEDOM FROM
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