



Government of Western Australia
Department of Communities



Stronger Together:

WA's Plan for Gender Equality



Mid-Point Review

Overview of actions 2020–2025



Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

We particularly acknowledge the caring strengths, resilience and central role of Aboriginal women within their families.

Language

Within Western Australia, the term Aboriginal is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander may be referred to in the national context.





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Minister's Foreword



Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality 2020–2030 represents the Western Australian Government's commitment to driving meaningful,

systemic change to achieve gender equality.

As we reach the mid-point of this ten-year strategy, this review offers an important opportunity to take stock of how far we've come and to consider the work that lies ahead.

Over the past five years, the State Government has implemented **two action plans** and **148 actions** to improve outcomes for women and girls. We've seen important progress across government, industry and the community sector, progress that reflects the collective will to challenge gender inequity and shift the structures that hold it in place.

This mid-point review outlines achievements made from 2020 to 2025 while acknowledging the persistent barriers many women still face in Western Australia (WA).

Women and girls continue to experience unacceptable levels of family, domestic and sexual violence; WA's gender pay gap is the largest in the country; and while there have been some gains across leadership markers, women, especially Aboriginal women, women with disability, and

culturally and linguistically diverse women, remain underrepresented in decision-making roles across all sectors.

These issues are complex, deeply embedded, and demand a sustained, whole-of-community response. We know that policy alone will not achieve change, and we also know that progress is not always linear. An increasing resistance to gender equality is becoming evident in some attitudes and behaviours within our communities. Structural reform must go hand-in-hand with cultural change, driven by collaboration across government, business and community.

That is why we have strengthened partnerships between government and other sectors through the Stronger Together Implementation Group, and will continue to centre lived experience, evidence and equity in all future action.

As Minister for Women, I am committed to building on this progress and driving the next phase of change. The next five years of Stronger Together will expand on the progress to date and deepen our efforts to create a WA where all people, regardless of gender, can thrive.

We must continue to build upon our efforts toward gender equality and ensure that the vision of Stronger Together becomes a lived reality.

Hon Simone McGurk MLA
Minister for Women

Introduction and Purpose

Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality (Stronger Together) was launched in March 2020, as the WA Government's 10-year strategy to promote gender equality. It provides a coordinated framework for government, business, and community sectors to work together in building a fairer and more inclusive WA. The plan adopts a whole-of-government approach to drive progress toward its vision:

Women and girls in Western Australia live and work safely in a community where diversity is embraced and where access to rights, resources, opportunities and protections is not determined by gender.

Stronger Together Priority Areas



Health and Wellbeing

Women are healthy, active and lead fulfilled lives



Safety and Justice

Women live safely and have appropriate access to adequate legal protections



Economic Independence

Women can be financially independent across all life stages



Leadership

Women's skills, achievements and strengths are valued, enabling them to participate equally in the community, including at leadership levels

This Mid-Point Review reflects on the progress made during the first half of Stronger Together, spanning the first two action plans, providing an opportunity to assess achievements to date, consider lessons learned, and strengthen the foundations for continued progress. Since the launch of Stronger Together in 2020, the social and economic landscape has shifted significantly, influencing both the challenges and opportunities faced in advancing gender equality. The Mid-Point Review includes real-world examples of impact through case studies, and tracks progress on core indicators. This review is part of the WA Government's commitment to transparency, accountability, and ongoing engagement with the community on gender equality.

Timeline of Stronger Together

2020	March	✓ First Action Plan 2020-2021 The initial 12-month plan outlined actions and initiatives by public sector agencies to address gender inequalities in WA.
2021	February	✓ Interim Report on the First Action Plan The report on the First Action Plan, to mark the end of the first 12-month period, was delayed due to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, a brief Interim Report was created, highlighting three key public sector actions and new initiatives under the WA Recovery Plan focused on women's safety and economic security. The report also addressed the specific impacts of the pandemic on women, such as the rise in family and domestic violence during lockdowns.
2022	January	✓ Progress Report on the First Action Plan The progress report on the First Action Plan was published and provided an update on 58 actions being delivered by 16 Government agencies.
	January	✓ Second Action Plan 2021-2025 The Second Action Plan built on progress made in the first phase. It focused on key issues identified by the Stronger Together Reference Group and included 55 community actions, with a number of ongoing actions carried forward from the previous phase. The plan also highlighted additional actions delivered within public sector agencies to support staff and raise awareness of the benefit of gender equality.
2023	March	✓ Progress Report 2022 For International Women's Day 2023, a Progress Report was released covering updates on actions already underway, plus 25 new actions introduced by agencies during 2022.
2024	March	✓ Progress Report 2023 A Progress Report highlighting the 2023 updates and new community actions was released on International Women's Day 2024. This included 18 new gender equality actions being delivered by public sector agencies during 2023.
2025	November	✓ Mid-Point Review This report provides a review of the progress across the First and Second Action Plans from 2020 to 2025, including the 22 new actions introduced by agencies during 2024.



2026 ◀ [TBC]

✓ **Third Action Plan (2026–2029)**

Development of the third Stronger Together Action Plan is in motion, informed by the ongoing work of government, business, community and supported by the Stronger Together Implementation Group.

This next phase will drive coordinated action across sectors, grounded in evidence, lived experience and a renewed urgency to accelerate gender equality.

2029 ◀ [TBC]

✓ **Fourth Action Plan (2029–2030)**

The final year of the strategy will centre on reflection and future visioning. We will consider what's worked, identify what's still needed, and set the course for the next decade of reform.



Overview of Stronger Together actions 2020–2025

Since the release of Stronger Together in March 2020, a total of 148 actions to advance gender equality in the community have been implemented by WA Government agencies. Of these actions, 126 are complete, demonstrating the significant commitment by the public sector to gender equality.



These 148 actions cover all priority areas of Stronger Together and are delivered within the community by a wide range of WA Government agencies. All actions are developed to create cultural change by mitigating the impact of ongoing gender stereotypes, highlighting areas of unconscious bias and leveraging existing systems to inform and raise awareness about gender equality within the public sector.

Many more gender equality actions are delivered within all public sector agencies to better support employees and build the capacity of agency staff to continue to drive gender equality through their engagement with individuals and organisations.

- ¹ 'Implementation completed' includes actions and initiatives that are up and running, and which may be subject to expansion, change of focus, restructure or additional features. Further updates will be provided in future reports.
- ² 'Initiative completed' refers to initiatives or projects under Stronger Together which have been finalised. These actions will not be the subject of future reporting.

Overarching actions

Some programs and initiatives take a comprehensive approach to driving gender equality through creating cultural change across all priority areas. This section outlines some of these actions and their outcomes.

Women's Grants for a Stronger Future

The Women's Grants program is delivered by the Department of Communities (Communities) and funds one-off community-based initiatives that support and empower women by addressing gender barriers which continue to exist. The grant program was launched in 2003 and rebranded in 2022-23 as Women's Grants for a Stronger Future. The program awards grants to community organisations for projects that align with the Stronger Together priorities and address local needs across WA.

The program is flexible, funding projects that respond to emerging issues, such as supporting women during the COVID-19 recovery in 2020-21. Increased funding from 2022-23 has allowed for larger grants, with up to \$250,000 available in 2024-25 for projects focused on preventing sexual violence.

In the first five years of Stronger Together, a total of 143 grants with a total value of \$2.27 million have been awarded through the Women's Grants program³ for projects that address different and intersecting aspects of gender inequality.

³ [Women's Grants for a Stronger Future webpage](#)

Case Study

Women's Grant: Strengthening Financial Futures for Women

In 2022-23, the Financial Counsellors Association of WA was funded \$50,000 through the Women's Grant program to deliver the Strengthening Financial Futures for Women project. The project was designed to empower women who have experienced or are at risk of family and domestic violence by providing them with essential economic education.

A key focus of the initiative was to build sustainable partnerships that would ensure the continuation of financial education beyond the project's duration. Workshops were conducted across rural, remote, and regional areas of WA, reaching women from diverse backgrounds and age groups.

The Financial Counsellors Association of WA collaborated with local community organisations to integrate economic education into their core services, aiming to deliver two workshops in each of WA's nine regions and establish at least one ongoing program per region, supported by financial counsellors.

The project successfully delivered 24 workshops, reaching a total of 192 women. It also fostered connections with 23 community organisations, amplifying its impact through shared information and resources.

Survey results revealed that women gained a clearer understanding of financial abuse, learned strategies for protection, and became more aware of local support services. Many participants reported feeling more confident and empowered to seek help when needed.

Gender Equality in Procurement

The First Action Plan included a key action to use public sector procurement to raise awareness about gender equality in workplaces. Procurement can help address social issues, like gender inequality, by engaging a wide range of organisations. The initiative began with a pilot project in July 2022, involving 19 WA Government agencies.

The pilot took an educative approach, teaching what workplace gender equality looks like and how it benefits both individuals and businesses. Suppliers bidding for contracts were required to complete a gender equality disclosure clause in their procurement documents. This included questions about policies like flexible working arrangements and ensuring a safe environment free from discrimination and/or harassment.

Over two years, suppliers were awarded 577 contracts worth over \$2 billion which included the gender equality clause. A large portion of these contracts were in male-dominated sectors like construction. A preliminary evaluation showed a small but important increase in awareness of gender equality among suppliers and procurement staff.

In July 2024, the Department of Finance (now the Department of Treasury and Finance) issued a General Procurement Direction which requires all state government agencies to include a gender equality disclosure clause in procurement documents for contracts valued at \$250,000 or more. This initiative aims to raise awareness about gender equality obligations and will guide future decisions to improve gender equality in WA workplaces.

Legislative reforms

Since the release of Stronger Together, the WA Government has demonstrated a strong and sustained commitment to advancing gender equality by progressing significant legislative reforms. Legislation is a critical tool for driving systemic change, and these reforms play a vital role in shaping fairer policies, improving access to services, and protecting the rights and safety of women across WA.

Key legislative changes include:

- **Public Health Amendment (Safe Access Zones) Act 2021:** Established a 150-metre zone around abortion clinics to protect the safety, dignity, and privacy of those accessing services.
- **Abortion Legislation Reform Act 2023:** Modernised abortion laws, decriminalising abortion and improving access in WA, supported by new websites, information, and a helpline.
- **Road Traffic (Vehicles) Amendment (Offensive Advertising) Act 2023:** Gave the Department of Transport (now the Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure) power to cancel vehicle licenses for those displaying offensive or discriminatory advertisements on vehicles.
- **Family Violence Legislation Reform Act 2024:** Requires electronic monitoring of certain offenders to increase safety and protection for victims of family violence.
- **Evidence Act 2025** Introduced to strengthen protections and support for victims of family and domestic violence.
- **Family Court Amendment (Commonwealth Reforms) Act 2024:** Streamlined Family Court of WA processes to focus on the safety and wellbeing of children, and better protect victim-survivors of family violence.

Stronger Together Priority Areas

This report sets out the actions and initiatives under the four priority areas of Stronger Together.

Many of the actions deliver significant outcomes that impact on multiple areas of women's lives. For example, creating safer workplaces for women can improve their economic independence across the lifespan, in addition to delivering safety outcomes.

The intersection of actions across some or all of the priority areas expands their impact and highlights the value of holistic approaches to progressing gender equality.

Intersection of Actions





Priority Area: Health and Wellbeing

Women's health in WA encompasses a diverse range of issues across the life course, from reproductive and maternal health to mental health, chronic conditions, and the impact of gender-based violence.

The Stronger Together framework has driven significant improvements in women's access to health services through coordinated and gender-responsive policy development, investment, and service delivery across metropolitan and regional WA.

Under Stronger Together, we have seen 92 actions contribute to this priority area.

Average life expectancy for all women in WA was



85.8 years

in 2020-22,

but for Aboriginal
women it was

72.6 years.



Nearly



28%

of women in WA

**experience common
mental health conditions**

(anxiety, depression, stress-related problems),
compared with



14.2%

of men.

<https://womensreportcard.communities.wa.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing/>

Key Actions Delivered (2020–2025)

Policy Foundations

The Women's Health and Wellbeing Policy and Public Home Birth Program Policy set strategic direction for coordinated and accessible health services tailored to women's needs.

Maternity Services Reform

Major investments include the \$1.8 billion Women and Babies Hospital project, new Maternity Assessment Unit at Osborne Park Hospital and the \$2.6 million Birth Centre at Bentley Health Campus. Two new midwifery group practices opened in regional WA, with services covering Margaret River, Bunbury, Warren Blackwood and Collie, and a 12-month trial in Karratha.

Regional Health Initiatives

New and expanded programs have launched across the state to address service gaps in regional WA. This includes a new women's health service in the Peel region, re-establishment of a permanent cervical screening clinic in the Goldfield's Women's Health Care Centre, and a pilot project providing health and support services and information in Karratha.

Culturally Safe and Inclusive Care

Projects like Birthing and Growing on Country, and partnerships with providers such as Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Centre enhance care for Aboriginal and CaLD women.

Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs

Commissioning of beds for mental health, eating disorders and alcohol and other drugs withdrawal services, available only to women to facilitate access to gender-specific treatment in a safe and supportive environment for recovery.

Eating Disorders

Expansion of eating disorder treatment services, including the establishment of the state-wide Eating Disorders Specialist Services Hubs, increasing access to community-based specialist eating disorder treatment.

Menstrual Equity

Over 2 million free period products have been distributed to public schools and TAFEs, reducing barriers to participation in education for girls and young women.

Emerging Focus Areas

Work is underway on pelvic health services, menopause care, female genital cutting awareness, and a birth trauma service.

Women in Sport and Health Promotion

Programs are leveraging increased visibility of women's sport to promote health, participation, and leadership, particularly among CaLD women.

Case Study

Alcohol. Think Again Alcohol and Pregnancy campaign stream – Preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Priority Area:



Health and wellbeing

Alcohol use during pregnancy can lead to serious and lifelong harms, including impaired fetal development, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and stillbirth. The Preventing FASD Project was developed to raise awareness about the risks of drinking during pregnancy and reduce alcohol use among pregnant women in WA.

A key part of the project is the Alcohol. Think Again (ATA) public education program, which the Mental Health Commission delivers in partnership with Cancer Council WA. ATA uses a mass reach social marketing strategy to deliver three campaign streams that align with the National Health and Medical Research Council's Australian Alcohol Guidelines for reducing risks from drinking alcohol. The Alcohol and Pregnancy campaign stream aims to reinforce the third guideline, that women who are pregnant should not drink alcohol. The most recently delivered ATA campaigns are described here.

One Drink

The One Drink campaign was launched in January 2021 and ran across major media channels targeting the general population, particularly women aged 18–44 years. Its goals were to:

- Reduce the number of people who consider a small amount of alcohol to be okay at any stage of pregnancy.
- Increase awareness of the potential lifelong harms to babies from alcohol use in pregnancy.
- Increase the number of people who are aware that it is recommended that women who are pregnant or planning pregnancy should not drink alcohol.

An evaluation of the campaign in 2022 found it had a strong impact. Among the primary target audience, 70 per cent of those aware of the campaign believed that drinking alcohol during pregnancy is a problem, compared to only 45 per cent of those who were unaware of the campaign.

The proportion of the primary and secondary target audiences who agreed that it is likely that drinking while pregnant can negatively affect the baby increased from 38 per cent to 55 per cent over the lifespan of the campaign. Respondents who believed it was important for them to avoid alcohol while pregnant increased from 75 per cent to 84 per cent over the lifespan of the campaign.

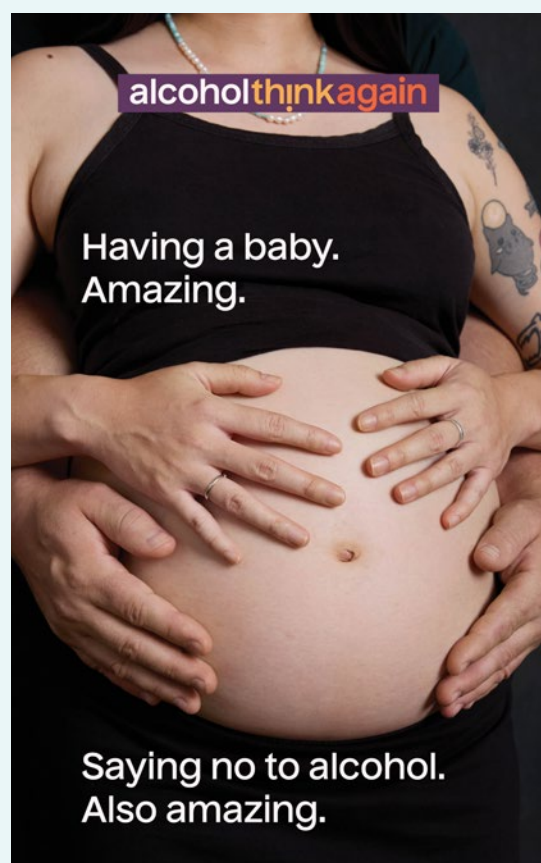
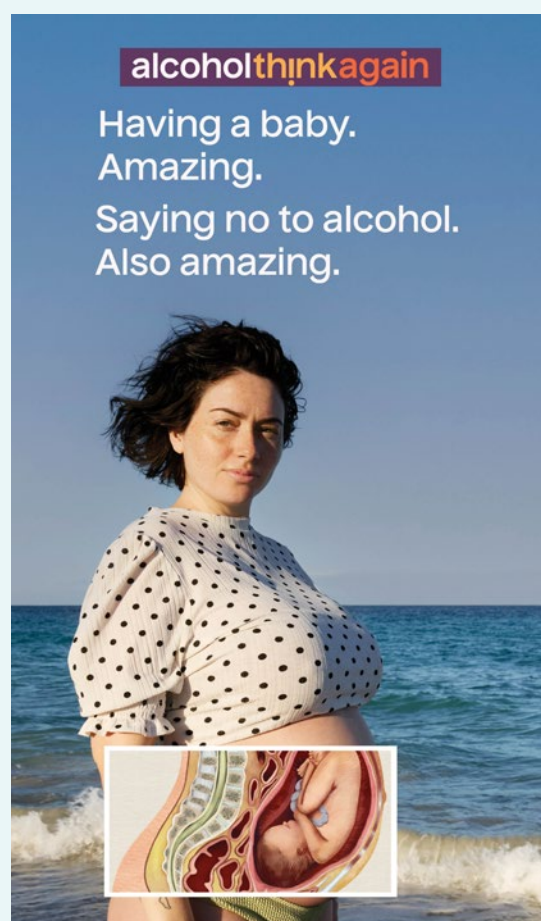
Between 2020 and 2022, the proportion of WA women reporting alcohol use in early pregnancy dropped from 2.9 per cent to 1.8 per cent. While this decline can't be directly linked to the campaign, it likely contributed to the trend.

The campaign ran again from October 2023 to January 2025 and continued to reach women of childbearing age effectively.

Amazing

The Amazing campaign launched in March 2025 as a strategic evolution of the successful One Drink campaign, with the aim to further increase the proportion of the WA community who are aware that there is no safe amount or time to drink alcohol when pregnant.

The campaign is in market across all major media channels until April 2026 and continues to target WA women of childbearing age as well as their support networks. It highlights the importance of a pregnant woman's support network, with more emphasis on the ability of partners, family, and friends to support women to abstain from alcohol during pregnancy. Amazing will be comprehensively evaluated, with results expected in late 2026 following the first year of campaign activity.



Case Study

Women's Legal Service WA Health Justice Partnership

Priority Area(s):



Health and wellbeing



Safety and justice

Women experiencing family and domestic violence often face both legal and health challenges. To address this, the Women's Legal Service WA (WLSWA) launched the Health Justice Partnership (HJP) Pilot in July 2023, supported by a \$1,353,000 investment from the Department of Health. The initiative integrates legal support into women's healthcare settings, providing holistic and culturally safe assistance.

The Pilot is currently operating at Luma Women's Health Centre in Northbridge and Goldfield's Women's Health Care Centre in Kalgoorlie.

By embedding legal services within health centres, the Pilot's model supports holistic and seamless co-located responses, optimising service provision and early intervention. This approach improves social determinants of health, creating conditions for women and families to lead healthier lives. It also facilitates two-way learning opportunities, enabling positive socio-legal and health outcomes. The co-located model offers a safe and accessible space for women who may otherwise face barriers, providing in-person, confidential legal support.

Between October 2023 and February 2025, WLSWA supported 616 clients, delivering 903 services. Of these, 420 clients sought legal advice, and 72 clients received ongoing legal representation.



Goldfields Women's Health Care Centre and Women's Legal Service WA staff at the Women's Health Justice Partnership Pilot Kalgoorlie site, celebrating International Women's Day

Women's Legal Service WA and Health Care Clinic staff at the Women's Health Justice Partnership Pilot metropolitan site, Luma in Northbridge



Of all clients supported through the program, and who shared information to support evaluation:

- 97% were experiencing financial hardship;
- 91% were experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, family and domestic violence;
- 41% were experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness;
- 23% are living with a disability;
- 21% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and
- 15% spoke English as a second language.

Independent evaluation found that the WLSWA HJP is a well-designed, high-demand service that effectively meets health-harming legal needs and shows early signs of impact to support vulnerable women in WA. It has been effectively implemented within trusted health settings, with signs of positive outcomes for clients and strong alignment to state and national reform agendas.

As part of evaluation, 95 per cent of clients who shared information reported feeling better equipped to respond to legal issues, and 97 per cent of clients found

the program significantly helpful. The evaluation found:

- That combined legal, counselling and health service in one place makes it easier to receive comprehensive support;
- The program increased awareness of a full range of available supports, services and resources;
- Legal advice increased feelings of safety and empowerment by informing clients of their legal rights and options;
- That clients highlighted the empathy and professionalism of staff, which contrasts their experiences with legal services.

The Pilot has also provided legal education to health centre staff and built new referral pathways. Its collaborative model demonstrates the benefits of integrating legal services into healthcare, especially for women who face barriers to seeking help.

The approach supports WA's broader health reform agenda by reducing avoidable health service use and improving wellbeing through early, coordinated support.

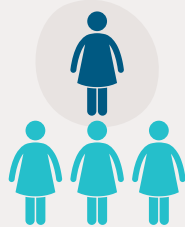


Priority Area: Safety and Justice

Ensuring women's safety and access to justice remains a fundamental priority in achieving gender equality in WA.

The WA Government has delivered a range of reforms and initiatives aimed at preventing violence against women, improving system responses, supporting survivors, and promoting cultural change in justice and community settings.

58 actions have contributed to this Stronger Together priority area.



An estimated **1 in 4** women in WA have experienced **sexual violence** since the age of 15

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Safety, Australia, ABS website, 2023



13.4% of women in WA reported experiencing **sexual harassment** in the preceding 12 months in 2021-2022.

Some industries experience higher rates of sexual harassment including male dominated industries as well as retail and hospitality sectors (for example, 48 per cent of women report experiencing sexual harassment in retail industries.)

<https://www.anrows.org.au/publication/just-another-day-in-retail-understanding-and-addressing-workplace-sexual-harassment-in-the-australian-retail-industry/in-brief-read/>

In 2023-24, **66%** of people **assisted by specialist homelessness services** in WA were women.

44 per cent of clients sought assistance due to family and domestic violence.



<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/state-and-territory-summary-data-and-fact-sheets>

Key achievements include:

System Reform and Coordination

A dedicated Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce was established to identify actions to strengthen responses to family and domestic violence and drive systemic reform. This has seen the 2024 release of the Strengthening Responses to Family and Domestic Violence System Reform Plan 2024 to 2029, and the establishment of a Lived Experience Advisory Group which will ensure that the voices of victim-survivors are at the centre of policy and service design going forward.

Specific reforms include implementing the WA Health Family and Domestic Violence Reform Delivery Plan, outlining actions to support system reform and improve the health system's person-centred response to family and domestic violence.

Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy

Launched by Communities in 2022, this 10-year strategy was co-designed in partnership with Aboriginal communities. A two-year \$6 million one-off grants program has supported Aboriginal-led initiatives aligned with the strategy's four focus areas.

Legal and Support Services

Expansion of Family Violence Restraining Order Conferencing has reduced re-traumatisation and streamlined legal processes. Wraparound legal support services through the Mental Health Law Centre and training for refuge workers have enhanced support for women navigating child protection and legal systems.

Workforce and Community Training

More than 3,000 first responders, including paramedics and emergency call-takers, are being trained to recognise and respond to family and domestic violence.

Primary Prevention

Foundations for Change is a WA Primary Prevention Framework to guide community-wide action to end family, domestic and sexual violence, which disproportionately affects women. Aligned with this framework, a Primary Prevention Grants Program has supported projects that address the gendered drivers of violence. In 2022, \$3 million funded 17 projects across WA. In 2024, a further \$6 million was made available to support two-year initiatives aimed at long-term, systemic change.

Coercive Control Reforms

A phased approach is underway to criminalise coercive control, beginning with education, system preparedness, and victim-survivor support, before introducing new legislation.

Key achievements (continued)

Justice System and Corrections

New trauma-informed practices, leadership roles, and programs such as Wandoo Rehabilitation Prison and Boronia's Pathways to Employment are helping to improve outcomes for women in custody.

Sexual Violence Response

Development of WA's first Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy is underway. New forensic medicine pilots and expanded regional counselling services are improving outcomes for victim-survivors.

Workplace Safety

WA has implemented all 18 relevant Respect@Work recommendations and launched initiatives such as the Respect in Mining Program to address gender inequality and workplace harassment across key industries.

Community Campaigns

16 Days in WA continues to raise awareness and inspire action against violence towards women, while community-led initiatives like Safer Venues WA have helped improve safety and inclusion in hospitality and entertainment venues.

These collective efforts are creating a safer, more responsive and equitable justice system for women across the state.



Case Study

Wandoo Rehabilitation Prison for Women

Priority Area(s):



Health and wellbeing



Safety and justice

Use of illicit drugs has been found to be a primary motivating factor in non-violent property offences, including burglary. According to the 2020-21 Illicit Drug Data Report produced by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, the number of national illicit drug arrests grew by 51 per cent from 2011-12 to 2020-21.

Wandoo Rehabilitation Prison for Women (Wandoo) opened in 2018 and is WA's first dedicated alcohol and other drug rehabilitation prison for women in custody. It is delivered through a partnership between Cyrenian House as the service provider and the Department of Justice.

The prison offers a rigorous 26-week intensive therapy program (Therapy Program) designed to target the root causes of addiction. Women at Wandoo are supported via multi-disciplinary case management teams to address their addiction and improve mental health and wellbeing and are supported with follow-up care upon their release.

In 2021, updates to the Therapy Program included:

- Accreditation against the Alcohol and Other Drug and Human Services Standard.
- Implementation of a dental suite for Wandoo residents.
- Introduction of education courses including Noongar language lessons, fork-lift driving, working at heights and logistics.

Between July 2018 and August 2022, Wandoo has had 235 graduates of the Therapy Program, 23 per cent of whom were Aboriginal women.

An inspection of Wandoo was conducted in 2022 by the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services. On average, surveyed residents ranked their quality of life at Wandoo as being 8.06 out of 10. Almost all respondents stated that their time was spent engaged in meaningful activity.

Identified benefits of Wandoo included personal development, growth and healing. Graduates of the Therapy Program stated that they wished to make change for themselves, their communities and future generations, demonstrating the positive impact the Therapy Program had on their mental health and wellbeing.

Case Study

Respectful Relationships – Schools Expansion

Priority Area(s):



Health and wellbeing



Safety and justice

The Western Australian Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program (Respectful Relationships) is a professional development program designed to train and support teachers in primary and secondary public schools across WA to provide Respectful Relationships education.

Respectful Relationships includes content on family and domestic violence and gender-based violence and aims to implement a whole-school approach through curriculum enhancement; teaching and learning; culture, ethos and environment; partnerships; and policy, plans and procedures.

Funded by the WA Government and delivered by WA-based not-for-profit organisation Starick Services since 2019, Respectful Relationships has reached 91 schools across eight cohorts (at July 2024) through delivery of workshops, online resources and ongoing support.

Evaluations by Curtin University show positive impacts, with increased knowledge and confidence among participating teachers. For example, 70 per cent of Cohort 8 participants reported a notable increase in understanding the Respectful Relationships education curriculum, and 80 per cent of Cohort 7 participants felt more confident responding to family and domestic violence disclosures from parents and carers.

Overall, Respectful Relationships has contributed to school staff feeling better prepared and supported to deliver mandated Respectful Relationships education content in schools, increased communication with the school community, and positive changes in behaviours and attitudes among students.

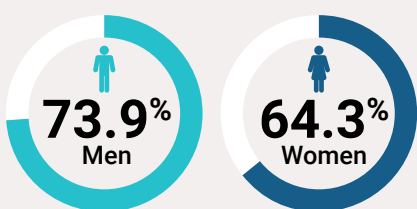


Priority Area: Economic Independence

Advancing women's economic independence is central to achieving gender equality.

The WA Government has progressed a range of initiatives focused on increasing women's workforce participation, supporting entrepreneurship, improving financial capability, and addressing structural and cultural barriers to economic security.

Under Stronger Together, we have seen 80 actions contribute to this priority area.



The **labour force participation** rate for women in WA was 64.3 per cent in July 2025, compared with 73.9 per cent of men.

ABS 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia – Table 8. Labour force status by Sex, Western Australia – Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original



Women spend 30.2 hours per week on **unpaid care and housework**, compared to 21.8 hours per week for men.

ABS, 'How Australians Use Their Time, Table 1 Time Spent', ABS Website, 2022

Almost **69%** of WA survey respondents who reported being **unable to work due to lack of child-care** were women and only 31 per cent were men.



ABS, 'How Australians Use Their Time, Table 1 Time Spent', ABS Website 2022

Key achievements include:

Skills Development and Training Access

The WA Government has expanded access to vocational education and training for women, particularly in areas of economic growth. Fee-free and low-fee TAFE courses in priority industries have supported women to gain qualifications in fields such as construction, engineering, and information technology. The Women in Non-Traditional Trades (WiNTT) initiative promotes pathways into apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships in traditionally male-dominated sectors. Scholarship programs for women in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and initiatives such as STEM Career Taster and Fierce Skills for Women programs have provided targeted financial and wraparound support for women pursuing training in science, technology, engineering and maths. These efforts help to build skills in emerging industries where women are underrepresented.

Key achievements (continued)

STEM and Innovation Initiatives

Partnerships with industry and education providers have delivered programs to support women and girls in STEM, including regional and school-based initiatives to address gender gaps in emerging industries.

Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support

Through the Women's Grants for a Stronger Future Program, women-led businesses have received targeted support to grow and thrive. Initiatives such as the Innovator Booster Grant and accelerator programs have promoted women's leadership in business and startups.

Financial Capability and Resilience

The Financial Toolbox is a free online resource that helps women affected by family and domestic violence build resilience and financial independence through practical tools to manage economic stress and move toward empowerment and stability. Funding allocated through the Women's Grants for a Stronger Future program has included at least 30 projects across WA to deliver financial literacy and financial counselling programs to women since 2020.

Young Women's Engagement Initiatives

Targeted initiatives, including the Deadly Sista Girlz program, engage, educate, and empower girls to improve their academic performance and career pathways.

Aboriginal Ranger Program

The program supports women in regional and remote communities through providing employment and training opportunities and building individual and community capacity in land and sea management, cultural site protection and traditional knowledge transfer.

Workplace Equity and Pay Transparency

The WA Government has introduced measures to reduce the gender pay gap in the public sector and promote flexible work arrangements across agencies.

Recognition and Leadership

Awards and programs, including the WA Women's Hall of Fame, Young Women Leader Award and Women of Achievement Awards, have helped to highlight and support the career and leadership potential of diverse women across WA.

Together, these actions are helping to remove barriers, create opportunity, and build the foundations for lasting economic security and participation for women across WA.

Case study

State STEM Skills Strategy

Priority Area(s):



Economic independence



Leadership

The State STEM skills strategy, Future jobs, Future skills: Driving STEM skills in Western Australia, was released in 2019, and aims to build a globally competitive workforce with the skills to drive WA's technological future and create new job opportunities. One of the goals of the strategy is to break down barriers and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in a STEM future, including those under-represented in STEM such as women and girls.

In November 2024, a mission update to the strategy, Future state, Future skills: Accelerating STEM skills for Western Australia, was released jointly by the Minister for Science (now Minister for Science and Innovation), Minister for Education and Minister for Training and Workforce Development (now Minister for Skills and TAFE), with a targeted approach for the next five years over the following three priority action areas:

- Career pathways and industry linkages
- Diversity and inclusion
- STEM culture and literacy

The approach to diversity and inclusion as a priority action area involves attracting and retaining under-represented groups including, but not limited to, women and girls, people from regional and remote

areas, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) people. Expanding the diversity of the STEM talent pool is crucial for economic growth and social equity.

Through the Strategy, the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (now the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification – DEED) provided a Digital and Technology Skills Program grant of \$179,900 over three years from 2019-22 for Women in Technology WA's (WiTWA) Techtrails STEM and Future Skills Program.

The annual WiTWA Tech[+] Conference and Awards have been supported by WA Government agencies, with the Department of Communities sponsoring the Star Award since the inaugural awards in 2018. For the past three years, the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (now DEED) has also been a WiTWA No Barriers sponsor, which has provided places for 16 women from underrepresented groups to attend each of the Conference and Awards events and contributed to overall operational costs for the Conference. The sponsorship achieved its goal of removing financial barriers and enabling participation by a mix of CaLD people, students exploring STEM careers, people re-entering the workforce, people transitioning into STEM or related industries, and individuals seeking leadership development or mentorship opportunities.

Case Study

Western Australian Group Training Program (WAGTP)

Priority Area(s):



Economic independence



Leadership

The Western Australian Group Training Program (WAGTP) is funded by the Department of Training and Workforce Development. The WAGTP provides funding to group training organisations to provide mentoring and wraparound support to apprentices and trainees from a range of priority groups, including women in non-traditional trades (defined as occupations where women comprise less than 25 per cent of the total workforce)⁴.

Under the WAGTP, incentive funding is made available to group training organisations who employ and support women in an apprenticeship in non-traditional trades, such as oil and gas, electrical, and construction. The aim of this incentive is to increase the financial

independence of women through supporting them to complete qualifications in non-traditional trades.

Since the 2020-21 financial year, 321 women have commenced and 113 women have completed an apprenticeship in a non-traditional trade through the WAGTP.⁵ Each year, there has been an increase in the number of women completing an apprenticeship, from 18 in 2020-21, to 41 in 2023-24.

In 2020, industrial segregation accounted for 20 per cent of the gender pay gap.⁶ Industries with a workforce that is predominantly women tend to have lower wages. In supporting women to commence and complete qualifications in non-traditional trades, the WAGTP assists women to participate in male-dominated industries with higher wages, which consequently improves their financial independence.

⁴ <https://www.northmetrotafe.wa.edu.au/women-non-traditional-trades-scholarship>

⁵ Agencies' Action Monitoring Documents from 2021-2024

⁶ https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/FINAL%20VERSION_She%27s%20Pricedless_2022.pdf



Priority Area: Leadership

Advancing women's leadership and representation remains a key pillar in the State Government's commitment to gender equality. Over the past five years, the WA Government has implemented a range of initiatives to increase the visibility, participation and influence of women in leadership roles across the public sector, sport, regional communities, and local government.

To date, we have seen 51 actions contribute to this Stronger Together priority area.



In the WA public sector, women represented
51.2% of **Senior Executive Service positions** as at March 2025

Women also held 52 per cent of roles on Government appointed boards and committees at June 2025.

Public Sector Commission, Western Australian Public Sector Workforce Report – March 2025

Data provided by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, July 2025.



WA has a relatively **high representation of women judicial officers** in top courts relative to other jurisdictions. For example women make up **52%** of WA Magistrates Court,

compared to 44 per cent in Tasmania,
45 per cent in South Australia and
33 per cent in the Australian Capital Territory.

https://aija.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/AIJA-Judicial-Gender-Statistics-2024_for-publication.pdf

Key achievements include:

Public Sector Leadership Targets

The Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025 included an Action Plan for Women, with a target of 50 per cent representation of women in the Senior Executive Service (SES). This milestone was first achieved in February 2023 and women's representation was 51.2 per cent at March 2025.

Government Boards and Committees

Following the launch of OnBoardWA, the proportion of women on government boards and committees rose from 43 per cent in 2017 to 49 per cent in 2019, with the rate continuing to increase to 52 per cent at 30 June 2025.

Regional Leadership Opportunities

In partnership with the Rural, Regional and Remote (RRR) Women's Network, research and events were delivered to identify barriers and support women in regional WA to take on leadership and board roles. A June 2024 networking event connected regional women with experienced leaders.

Sport and Recreation Governance

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (now the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport) has led gender balance reforms in sport. As of March 2024, 52.1 per cent of board members across State Sporting Associations, State Active Recreation Organisations and peak bodies were women, with approximately 38 per cent holding Chair or President roles.

National Policy Influence

WA contributed to the development of the National Gender Equity in Sports Governance Policy, launched in September 2024 to drive gender equity across sporting leadership.

Celebrating Women's Leadership in Sport

The State Library's 2023 exhibition Game Changers: Trailblazing Stories from WA Women in Soccer highlighted women leaders in sport and their impact across communities.

Local Government Representation

Research and mentoring initiatives such as HandsUp and MentorNet support the leadership development of women in local government. Recent reforms to the **Local Government Act** have also introduced parental leave and other measures to attract more women to council roles.

These initiatives reflect the state's focus on fostering inclusive leadership and ensuring diverse voices are heard in decision-making spaces across WA.

Case study

Women in Executive Leadership Development Experience Initiative

Priority Area:



Leadership

The Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020-2025 has had a significant impact on gender equality in the public sector.

Between 2014 and 2020, women made up nearly three-quarters of the public sector workforce. However, in March 2020, only 42.5 per cent of the Senior Executive Service (SES) were women. To address this, the Strategy set an aspirational target of 50 per cent of women in the SES by the end of 2025. This target was met for the first time in February 2023.

In 2023, the Public Sector Commission (PSC) launched the Women in Executive Leadership Development Experience Initiative, creating temporary Level 9 positions for women to gain executive experience and mentorship.

In 2023-24, 26 women participated, benefiting from executive decision-making roles, mentorship, and networking events. Feedback was highly positive, with participants noting increased confidence, leadership skills, and a better understanding of their agencies.

Initiatives like the Women in Executive Leadership Development Experience Initiative are important in continuing the gradual upward trend in the percentage of women in the SES observed since 2014.

Although originally designed as a one off, it was decided to run the initiative again in 2024-25 renamed as the Women in Executive Leadership Initiative, for a new group of 20 women. Investing in women's leadership not only increases their likelihood of future career success, but it also contributes to better diversity at senior levels, and brings a broader range of experiences to agencies.



Public Sector Commissioner Sharyn O'Neill PSM with 2024 [Women in Executive Leadership Initiative](#) participants.

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