Enabling women's potential

the social, economic and ethical imperative

November 2015

A White Paper from the National Council of Women of New Zealand

Te Kaunihera Wahine O Aotearoa

About the National Council of Women of New Zealand

Te Kaunihera Wahine O Aotearoa

The National Council of Women of New Zealand's vision is a gender-equal New Zealand. We work towards this by building understanding and driving action to enable New Zealanders to have the freedom and opportunity to determine their future. We are a key voice for women across the political, economic and social spheres. We are a volunteer-led organisation that has about 290 member organisations at a national or local level, and 260 individual members. We have 20 branches throughout New Zealand.[1]

Our activity is diverse. We increase understanding of gender equality issues and speak on behalf of our members in community, national and international forums. For example, we consult our members before writing submissions on key government decisions that have a gender impact. We assess our country's performance against international gender equality treaties our government has signed up to by submitting reports to bodies such as the United Nations.

We support the wonderful work our member organisations do to make a difference for women. Our branch-level activity ranges from organising meet-the-candidate events for central and local government elections; discussing and researching issues important to women and girls; running secondary school speech competitions on gender equality issues; and connecting organisations within communities with common interests.

We support the development of a Tiriti-based, sustainable, multicultural future that acknowledges the mana of tangata whenua.

For more information visit www.ncwnz.org.nz and join us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Stay updated on the latest gender equality news and research by subscribing to our e-newsletter On Balance via our website's news page. Get involved by becoming a member, volunteer, supporter or donating money.

Foreword

From National President Rae Duff

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) can see a better way of life for all New Zealanders – one in which we are all happier, healthier and economically stronger.

Many organisations and people work in different ways to achieve this. The government of the day puts in place the policies and programmes it believes will help people and our economy. Business leaders – employers, unions, professional associations – influence corporates to be more socially responsible in our economy and society. The not-for-profits deliver services to support our communities. The watchdogs – such as the media – comment on how we're tracking, and individuals who care enough and are strong enough make a difference all by themselves.

While there are many issues that face New Zealanders as a whole, NCWNZ is focused on reducing gender inequality as our contribution to a happier, healthier and economically stronger New Zealand. This White Paper outlines how gender equality will benefit all New Zealanders economically and socially.

For many women, from the day they are born, their life choices are limited. This inequality has intergenerational impacts as it negatively impacts their families and communities.

This paper highlights how much activity is already occurring around gender equality, and how many people already care. But it also shows the flaws in our approach. To achieve gender equality we need to change the way we think and act around gender issues. We need culture change to remove the entrenched sexism underpinning many of the outcomes we see for women.

People often ask us; "What about the men?" The answer is, "We're different but we should be equal". To help women and gender minorities, we need to help men. To give women the opportunity and freedom to determine their own future, we also need to relax the gender stereotypes men face. The genders are interdependent and what's good for one is also good for the others.

NCWNZ insists on gender equality for all and most particularly for the women who are left behind, economically and socially. We look forward to constructive discussion on our recommendations for what needs to happen.

We need to build a gender equality movement that involves all New Zealanders if everyone is to have the freedom and opportunity to determine their future. Together we can do it!

Rae Duff
National president of NCWNZ

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Executive summary:

Gender inequality persists in all aspects of New Zealand society – from health, safety and economic wellbeing, to education, influence and decision making. It negatively impacts businesses, government, families and the community, as well as individuals.

Research shows we'll be better off socially and economically if we're gender equal. It's a basic human right. Many organisations and individuals already know this, and there is substantial work underway to eliminate violence against women, the gender pay gap, and to increase women in leadership. But the statistics show our progress is slow and patchy and our current approach is flawed.The following paper aims to build understanding of the issue and spark discussion and focus on what needs to happen to achieve equality. It calls for New Zealanders to come together so we can take a big step forward.

What a gender equal New Zealand would look like:

In a gender equal New Zealand all people have the freedom and opportunity to determine their own future. They are free to develop their personalities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices.

Current state:

Key statistics include:

— Women achieve 61 per cent of the tertiary qualifications but they are often for lower paid industries than tertiary qualified men.

— Estimates of our gender pay gap range from women being paid 11.8 per cent to 14 per cent less.

— Women's unemployment rates are higher than men's, while more women aged 15- 24 years of age are not in employment, education or training.

— Only 14 per cent of directors on NZX 100 top companies are women. Nearly 42 per cent of public sector directors are female.

— One in four women experience intimate partner violence or sexual violence in their lifetime.

Explaining our slow and patchy progress towards equality:

Gender inequality in policy terms is a 'wicked' problem which cannot be solved using traditional approaches. It is difficult to define; is unpredictable; and has multiple interdependent factors that need to be addressed at all levels of society.

We use the ecological model to outline ways we can understand and respond to wicked problems. It shows the breadth and depth and interplay of associated issues.

In this paper the Impact Collective has adapted the ecological model for gender equality, including outlining the following prerequisites for success:

— Shared understanding

— Gender positive culture

— Leadership and governance

— Structural equality

— Data and monitoring

What we need to do:

Our white paper outlines 12 key actions that will progress the five prerequisites identified above.

Key NCWNZ actions are:

— Establishing a gender culture taskforce;

— Running nationwide hui in 2016 to support communities to take local action, culminating in a national summit;

— Assessing our country's performance against international agreements our Government's committed to;

— Producing an annual monitor to show whether we're tracking towards or away from equality; and

— Influencing and commenting on gender equality issues, via the media, through submissions, and in various forums.

We're also calling for more:

New Zealanders to speak up against sexism and limiting gender stereotypes. Let's set some standards and help each other to stick to them so we treat each other as equals.

Leaders to champion gender equality within their sectors, industries, communities and families. The gender equality movement is growing and we'll be providing more ways people can get involved.

Employers, professional associations, and employee representative groups to mitigate unconscious bias, ensure pay and employment equity, and supporting victims of violence.

We're asking the Government to:

Produce a national plan of action for gender equality. The UN has called for this as do many groups working for gender equality within New Zealand. Strengthen gender analysis in policy making and programme design. This is another UN request.

Establish gender equality indicators and outcome measures, and a platform for regular reporting of data. These need to endure over time to inform policy and ensure wise investment.

Introduction

The economic, social and ethical case to take more action to enable women to reach their potential has never been so strong.

Internationally, world leaders are increasingly speaking out about the economic benefits of unlocking women's potential, while high-profile global forums are reinforcing the need for gender equality as a basic human right.

United States of America President Barack Obama stated in his support for the United Nations #HeForShe campaign that, "Lifting women up lifts up our economy and lifts up our country… We've got to make sure that someone is standing up for them…"

In March, governments from around the world, including New Zealand, committed at the United Nations Commission on the Status for Women session to work for gender equality by 2030. Our government's representative at that forum, Minister for Women Hon Louise Upston, said in her statement to the commission:

"Addressing gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls in the post-2015 development agenda is essential and necessary to achieving other goals, be that poverty eradication, reduction of inequalities or inclusive economic growth.

"Women play an important role in the political, social and economic fabric of New Zealand. Our first-hand experience tells us that empowering women and girls, and achieving gender equality, is critical to the development of a peaceful, secure and prosperous nation.

"We also know that investing in women and girls pays off – there is a flow-on effect for families, communities, the workplace and the wider economy."

Her voice joins an increasing number of New Zealand's government, business, union and not-for-profit leaders and influencers extolling the economic, social and ethical need for society to do better for women.

However, despite the groundswell of support and the numerous initiatives aimed at equality, statistics show we're failing women, and in particular our most vulnerable women. We need to stop treating many of our women, consciously or unconsciously, like second-class citizens.

The statistics in this report reflect slow and patchy progress towards equality. We have written this document because it's obvious we need to do more, and we need to do it differently if we're to achieve the United Nation's vision of equality by 2030 – a vision we share.

Purpose of this document

This paper aims to build understanding of the issue, to spark discussion and greater focus on what needs to happen to achieve equality.

This document calls for New Zealand to come together at all levels – from the community, within institutions and sectors and at the highest level of government – to give gender inequality the focus it needs so we can take a big step forward.

This paper challenges all New Zealanders to do better through outlining:

— the current situation

— the economic, social and moral case for investment in gender equality

— the challenge gender inequality presents due to the issue's complexity

— five prerequisites we need before we can improve gender equality as a way to deliver a more sustainable society and economy

— actions we can take to hasten gender equality.

Developing this document

In November 2014 NCWNZ members were asked to input into the preparation of this document. They were asked what a gender-equal New Zealand looked like, where we are currently, and what it would take to bridge that gap.

The membership was consulted over the draft White Paper during April 2015. We also went outside our membership to elicit wider feedback from different parts of our economy and society.

We are grateful for all contributions. The resulting report may not reflect the views of all of our members as we are fortunate to receive diverse perspectives on all our work.

Accuracy and alternative views

This paper has at its heart that we are a volunteer-driven membership organisation. While we have made efforts to ensure the accuracy of the paper's information, we welcome your feedback and provision of other useful statistics and research we can use in our work and communications.

The area of gender equality generates differing and deeply held views on what is the current state and what type of action would best make a difference for women. We acknowledge this and invite people's ideas either directly to us or in the public forum.

Contributions can be emailed to office@ncwnz.org.nz.

What is gender equality

Gender equality can be defined as:

"Equality between men and women, entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices.

Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female." [2]

To achieve equality of outcome – what is also known as substantive equality – it is also important to have equity. Gender equity is defined as:

"Fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities." [3]

Simply having equality of opportunity is not sufficient for women, as equal opportunity fails to recognise that equal treatment will not produce equitable results, given the different life experiences of genders.

To use the analogy of a running race, equality of opportunity is making sure that everyone gets to the starting line of a race, and then it's up to them what happens.

NCWNZ believes we also need to look at the factors that then affect how well a person can race – factors such as gender, age, ability, ethnicity. We seek support for participants who struggle during the race due these factors, which are out of their control.

Gender equity recognises that women are not a homogenous group. Differences in socio-economic, ethnic, educational opportunity and health mean women do not have the same sense of equal opportunity as each other.

NCWNZ embraces equity and substantive equality in its use of the term 'gender equality' throughout this paper.

Gender diversity

Gender identity refers to the gender with which someone identifies; an individual's sense of being a man, woman, neither or a combination.

This document uses statistics referring to men and women however this is a simplification as gender is more complex.

We acknowledge the discrimination and inequality often experienced by people who are trans, intersex or who identify outside of the gender binary.

NCWNZ's work seeks equality for all genders. Our use of women throughout the document includes trans women and other gender minorities. We commend Statistics New Zealand for its recent world-leading inclusion in statistical standards of 'gender diverse' as an option alongside 'female' and 'male' when collecting data.

What a gender-equal New Zealand would look like

Our vision for a gender-equal New Zealand is that: "All New Zealanders have the freedom and opportunity to determine their own future."

We asked our membership to tell us about a gender-equal New Zealand. Common responses were that all people:

— Are encouraged to pursue whatever hobbies, subjects, careers and lifestyles they choose, unhampered by societal expectations based on gender.

— Feel valued for the unique mix of personality, skill, perspective and experience they contribute.

— Rise up the career ladder (if they wish) without bias against their gender reducing their chances of success.

— Are safe from violence in their homes, workplaces and public spaces.

— Are surrounded by diverse role models in the community, media and workplaces.

— Receive equal pay for equal work.

— Are similarly financially prepared for their retirement.

— Share unpaid work, such as household duties and caring.

— Are sexism free – as people mitigate their own sexist words and actions, and call out the sexist language, jokes, attitudes and behaviour of others.

Our members said in a gender-equal New Zealand:

— It is as acceptable for men to take parental leave, full-time parent and work part time or flexibly to balance paid and unpaid interests and responsibilities.

— New Zealand leads the world with its low rate of violence against women and people feel safe.

— All forms of discrimination against women and girls would be eliminated.

— Organisations make sure their policies and practices, services, information and programmes don't have an unintended negative impact on women.

— Our communities are strong due to the valuing of unpaid work of carers and volunteers.

— There is gender balance in Parliament.

— Our economy thrives due to workplace and leadership diversity and the utilisation of all willing labour. The higher standard of living means more support for our most vulnerable.

— Our New Year and Queen's Birthday Honours Lists contain gender balance reflecting the true paid and unpaid contribution of people from all genders.

— We're proud that international measurement shows we're gender equality champions.

Why gender equality is both good and necessary

There is a social, economic and moral case for a gender-equal New Zealand.

The moral case

It is a basic human right. A woman should not be born into a society that tells her on a daily basis through stereotyping, sexualised media images, a smaller pay packet, and additional hurdles to climb the career ladder that her role is a lesser one and her options are limited.

The economic case

There is also a strong economic case for New Zealand having gender equality. Equal Opportunities Commissioner Jackie Blue, in a speech on International Women's Day in March 2015, said:

"Looking to our own situation, population statistics predict that in 15 years, more than half of New Zealand's population will be over 40 years old. An ageing population, improved longevity, reduced fertility and an expected negative net migration means if we want to sustain our economy we'll need to make use of everyone who can and is willing to work. Equal participation of women in the labour market is essential to the future of our workforce."[4]

In this speech she cited the 2011 Goldman Sachs[5] report stating New Zealand could boost its Gross Domestic Product by 10 per cent if it maximised the working potential of all its women.

World Bank research has shown a positive correlation between economies with greater equality and economic performance.[6]

There is considerable literature showing the benefits to businesses of having diverse workforces and leadership. Several reports show having women sufficiently represented at board or top management level improves organisational and financial performance. For example, Catalyst and McKinsey & Company found women provide diversity of decision making as they focus on different aspects and look at risk differently.[7]

Meanwhile, successful venture-backed start-ups have more than double the median proportion of female executives than failed ones.[8]

Successful business leader Diane Foreman said in August that: "International research shows that companies that have a gender-diverse board make more money, so at the end of the day if your job as the CEO is to return more money to your shareholders then your job should be to have a gender-diverse board."[9]

As well as the benefits of achieving equality, there is significant cost attached to inequality. Violence against women is an outcome of sexism. A 2014 report estimated the cost of New Zealand's family violence at between $4.1 billion and $7 billion a year[10], which gives an idea of the cost of violence against women to society.

At the NCWNZ, Zonta and Graduate Women Wellington annual debate in Wellington in July 2015, report author and economist Suzanne Snively said employers lose at least $368m annually due

to a lack of effective workplace protections for victims of violence. She highlighted the huge focus government and business has put into seeing how New Zealand can improve economically by lifting its productivity rate. She suggested workplaces can lift productivity by caring about victims of violence. We have just seen The Warehouse Group offer victims of violence amongst its 12,000 staff up to 10 days in extra leave, as well as provide unpaid leave for employees needing time off to support a family violence victim.

Gender should be a factor in the government's investment approach. For example, in 2012 the then Minister for Social Development, Paula Bennett, said the lifetime cost of the current beneficiary population was $78 billion. In a media release she pointed out that people on invalid benefits, sole parents, and those who go onto benefits as 16 and 17 year olds were the largest cost. Given that women are over-represented as teenagers who aren't in employment, education or training, as sole parents and as registered jobseekers, greater investment in helping women achieve equality is warranted.[11]

The social case

That's just the financial cost. The social cost brings even more misery for all genders because we all have to live in the world this inequality creates.

The women and girls who are limited and hurt by gender inequality are the ones who are paying. The countries that have the best gender equality have lower rates of violence against women.

The work to progress gender equality will help men given the interdependence between sexes. Men are also affected by limiting stereotypes that normalise macho culture. Boys are told to harden up, not to cry, pink is for girls and playing with dolls is not acceptable. Men can unknowingly buy into our sexist culture, reinforcing the norms that limit the women and girls around them.

Statistics in this report show the most disadvantaged groups in our society include sole mothers, disabled women and women of particular ethnicities. Helping the women who face the greatest inequality will reap benefits for their children, families and communities, and lead to intergenerational gains – for all of us.

It's worth noting that most women who face inequality are influential, however their influence often serves to reinforce inequality. For example, their children view them as role models of how life is.

Stronger, non-violent, better people build stronger, non-violent, better communities.

Our current state

A snapshot of New Zealand

The purpose of this section is to provide a range of statistics to highlight the pervasiveness and seriousness of the current state of inequality. We have grouped statistics into the following four areas:

— Safety and health

— Education

— Economic wellbeing

— Influence and decision making.

Alongside the statistics we have provided examples of initiatives underway to progress equality. These in no way seek to list every group involved or project underway, but they provide a flavour of the efforts from a wide variety of players to counter the negative statistics that seriously impact many women.

Safety and health

New Zealand women face inequality with regard to violence,[12] sexual and reproductive health,[13] access to healthcare,[14] mental health,[15] and homicides.[16]

Safety

Every six minutes our police attend a family violence incident[18] and the majority of victims in these are women.[19] Only an estimated 13 per cent of intimate partner violence is reported to Police.[20]

Violence against women is experienced more by some groups of women than others. For example, in 2011 Women's Refuge noted disproportionately high levels of Māori clients (50 per cent) and that young women and Māori women are twice as likely to experience sexual assault.[21]

International comparison

New Zealand shows high levels of domestic and sexual violence compared to other countries. For example, of the OECD countries who provided data to UN Women regarding sexual violence, New Zealand reported a higher rate than any other, with 14 per cent of women reporting having experienced sexual violence between 2000 and 2010.[22]

New Zealand General Social Survey data shows that women of all ages are four times more likely than men to feel very unsafe at night.[23] Another survey found that 41 per cent of lesbian and bisexual women have experienced verbal abuse, 32 per cent have been threatened with violence because of their sexuality, and 13 per cent have been physically assaulted.[24]

Initiatives underway to reduce violence

Violence against women (including family violence) has received an increasing public profile, and there have been a number of significant reports (referenced throughout this White Paper) calling for sweeping change in order to improve the situation.

Government initiatives include the Are You OK? and Are you that someone? campaigns, and there are ongoing initiatives announced.

In July the government announced a Ministerial Group on Family Violence and Sexual Violence, and in August, Justice Minister Amy Adams launched a family violence legislation discussion document. At the launch the Minister said: "In the same time it takes to order a coffee, one traumatised victim somewhere in New Zealand is taking a courageous step and reporting to police the abuse they've endured, often countless times before."

A priority for the Ministry for Women is reducing violence. Earlier this year it completed and released "Wāhine Māori, Wāhine Ora, Wāhine Kaha: preventing violence against Māori women", a report on the factors that keep Māori women safe from ever becoming victims of violence. Hui to discuss the report were held throughout New Zealand and some government and non-government organisations have indicated their interest in working further with the Ministry to apply the research findings. This report will ensure that the safety of Māori women and girls is well understood and well applied in government policy and service provider practice.

NCWNZ believes the current level of violence against women is abhorrent and we welcome the latest government initiatives. They need to result in a reduction of violence. Much more needs to be done. A number of NCWNZ members, such as Women's Refuge, work tirelessly to both prevent violence, effect change and support victims.

Beyond our members there are many other groups and individuals involved in initiatives to prevent and reduce violence, such as the men involved with the White Ribbon campaign. This year's White Ribbon Day on November 25 will focus on healthy relationships.

Figure 1: Safety and Health Statistics for Women [35]

Health

Biological differences between the genders – our anatomy, physiology, metabolic processes and genetics – cause differing responses to illnesses and disease. Improving women's health requires recognition and respect for women's menstruation, fertility, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and menopause.[25]

The Ministry of Health 2013/14 Health Survey[26] found that women had a greater unmet need for primary health care than men (33 per cent of women versus 22 per cent of men).

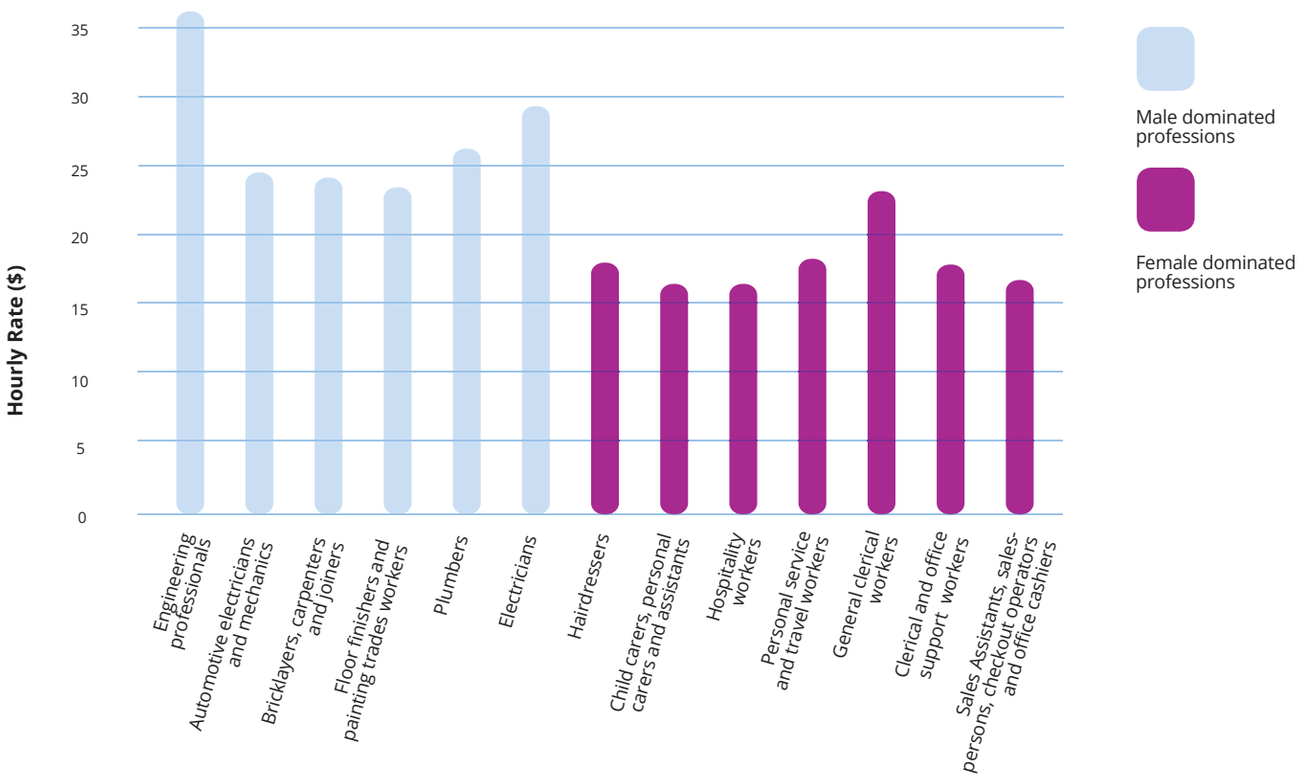
The survey highlighted differences between men and women in health status, health behaviours and health service use. NCWNZ member, Women's Health Action, has written a case for a national women's health strategy to "recognise that sex and gender are basic determinants of health, which give rise to different health outcomes and different health needs for women and men".[27]

Abortion remains a criminal offence, only legal if approved by two certifying consultants. Abortion remains stigmatised in our society, leading many women to conceal their abortion experiences.[28] In the year ending December 2014, 13,137 abortions were performed in New Zealand, an abortion rate of 14.4 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15–44 years.[29]

There are stark ethnic health disparities. Young Māori have much higher rates of sexually transmitted infections and sexual violence and coercion.[30] The New Zealand Nurses Organisation expressed concern that 47 per cent of Māori women had unmet health needs.[31]

Women with disabilities are vulnerable.[32] Women were more likely than men to experience physical disability (20 per cent compared with 15 per cent).[33] In general, there remains a lack of understanding and negative attitudes toward the sexual and reproductive health needs of people with disabilities. This is reflected in policy and legislation that fails to uphold the human rights of women with disabilities.[34]

Figure 2: Gender pay differences [38]



Education and work

— Educational and occupational segregation

A positive trend is the rise in women becoming tertiary qualified. In a March 2015 presentation, the Ministry for Women noted that women took home 61 per cent of all tertiary qualifications in 2013.[36] However, some groups of women did not fare as well. For example, 80 per cent of all girls have NCEA qualifications when they leave school, compared to 74 per cent of all boys, but only 63 per cent of Māori girls leave high school with NCEA.[37]

The qualifications women invest in are also more likely to lead to lower-paid jobs relative to tertiary qualified men. Figure 2 highlights the pay gap.

Initiatives around occupational segregation

This is an area where there are many industry-specific programmes to encourage girls to study a wider range of subjects and women to enter more diverse professions. There are an increasing number of high-profile individuals, including "Nanogirl" Michelle Dickinson, who provides a successful role model in the science and engineering space.

A Ministry for Women focus is on getting more girls and women into education and training. Ministry contributions to reduce occupational segregation include working with employers, industry groups and training organisations in Canterbury to encourage more women into trades. There are now more women in trades training (from 50 in 2011 to 431 in 2014) and more women in construction in Canterbury (3,500 in 2009 to 7,200 in 2014). It helped the Road Transport Forum to put in place a plan to attract, recruit and retain more women in the road transport industry. The Ministry worked with other government agencies and industry training providers to increase trade training opportunities for Māori and Pacific women with low or no qualifications.

— Workplace participation

Women's participation in the workforce has risen over the years to 63.6 per cent, compared to the current 74.6 per cent of men in the workforce for the June 2015 quarter.[39]

The type of participation varies, with more women in insecure work because more women are in part-time, temporary, casual, and low-paid jobs. The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions estimated in 2013 there were 635,000 workers in insecure work, and that women were over-represented in this number.[40]

Women's unemployment rates are higher than men's, and they are over-represented as those not in the paid labour force, while more women aged 15-24 years of age are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) than their male counterparts (see Figure 3).[41]

The Human Rights Commission's Tracking Equality at Work tool says that: "Young Māori and Pacific women are particularly marginalised, as are disabled people, who have higher rates of unemployment and lower rates of labour force participation. Disabled women are more marginalised than disabled men."[42]

Figure 4 shows the marked difference in the percentages of men and women who are employed or unemployed.

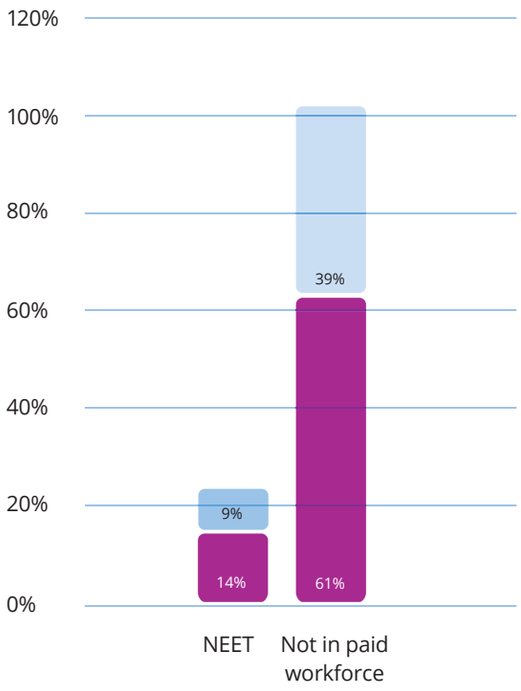


Figure 3: Gender mix of people not in paid workforce [43] and not in education, employment or training (NEET) [44]

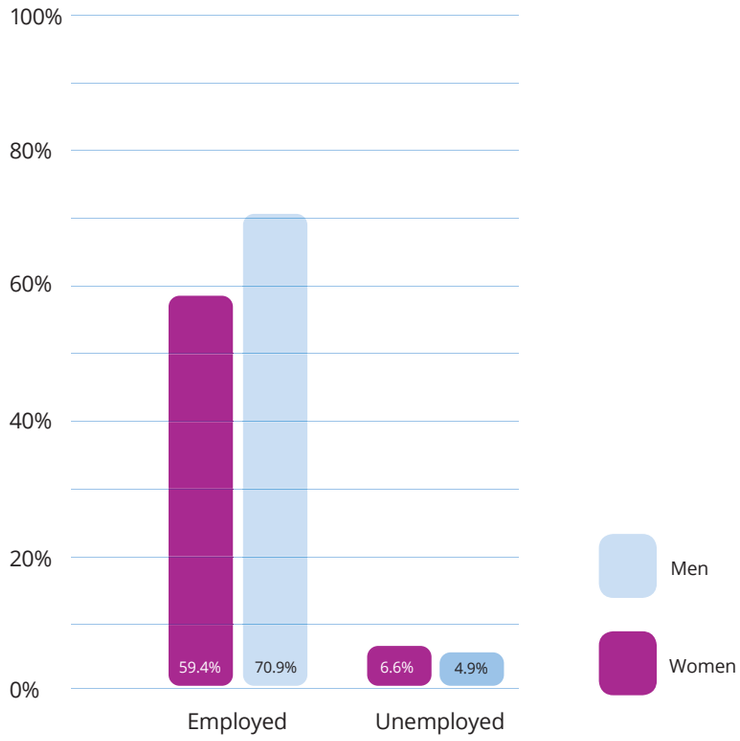


Figure 4: Employment rates of men and women [45]

Factors impacting on work

Sole mothers face more workplace inequities compared to partnered mothers and those without children.

Statistics New Zealand[46] found that when compared to partnered mothers and women without children, "Sole mothers were more likely to be temporary workers, less likely to be professionals, and more likely to work in health care and social assistance, retail trade, accommodation, and food services."

Many sole mothers cannot find jobs with adequate wages to support their families, especially if they have to pay for childcare services.[47]

The Ministry for Women, in a March 2015 presentation analysing Household Labour Force Survey figures, found that 12 per cent of women cited not being able to find childcare as the reason they were unable to join the workforce. No man cited this as a reason.

Women spend twice as much time as men in unpaid work – raising children, running the home and supporting elderly and unwell relatives.[48]

Initiative – Tracking Equality at Work

The Human Rights Commission's Tracking Equality at Work tool provides data on sex, disability, ethnicity and age in relation to employment, pay gaps, leadership and discrimination and harassment.

As part of the launch of its latest data in July 2015, Equal Opportunities Commissioner Jackie Blue issued recommendations for government action to address workplace equality issues. NCWNZ supports the recommendations, which focus specifically around disparities in employment, pay and leadership for women, Māori, other ethnicities and disabled people. Visit www.hrc.co.nz to find out more.

Influence and decision making

Women are under-represented in management, governance, leadership and decision-making roles at both national and local levels, and in political, private sector and voluntary sectors.

In the high-profile and well-paid roles women are significantly under-represented. For example, only 25 to 31 per cent of our judges, senior academic staff in universities, partners in top legal firms, medical specialists and secondary school principals are women.[49]

In the private sector, the percentage of women on the boards of the top 100 companies on NZX (including overseas) went from 7.1 per cent in 2006[50] to 14 per cent in 2014.[51]

In the public sector, 41.7 per cent of directors of state sector statutory bodies are women.[52]

Only 32 per cent of the current 121 seats in Parliament are held by women.[53] This sees us ranked 29th out of 138 countries.

In its Tracking Equality at Work tool, the Human Rights Commission summed up the leadership picture as follows:

"For women, representation at the top table is either progressing at a snail's pace (in the case of women in the top three tiers of the public service or on boards listed on the stock exchange) or stalled (in the case of public sector boards) or sliding backwards (in the case of women in senior management in the private sector)."

Figure 5 shows the gender diversity picture improves in the community and not-for-profit sectors. For example, women comprise 52 per cent of all members of school Boards of Trustees.[55]

International comparison

New Zealand is now 17th among 36 OECD countries in the representation of women in management roles, having been 4th in 2003. This means more than half of these countries rate more highly than New Zealand.[56]

The Human Rights Commission's "New Zealand Census of Women's Participation 2012"[57] concluded: "New Zealand has lost its role as an international leader in progressing gender equality in terms of women's representation at the top in corporate and public governance, management and aspects of professional and public life."

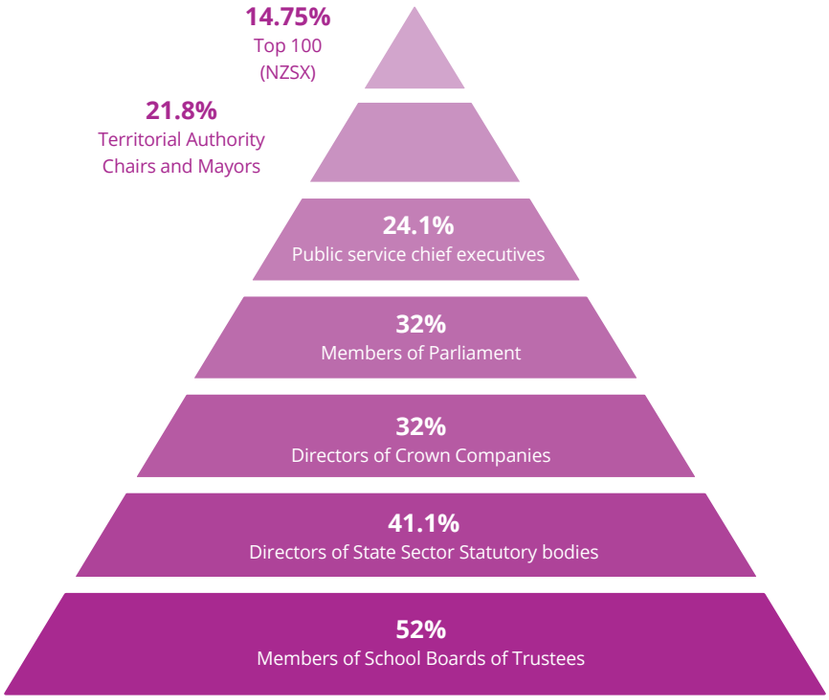


Figure 5: Women in influence and decision making [58]

Workplace initiatives – influence and decision making

Getting more women into management and onto boards is again an area where there are a plethora of initiatives. Some of them are part of wider programmes to boost leadership and workplace diversity. They include the Diverse NZ initiative, set up by Global Women, to provide information and tools to support workforce diversity. DiverseNZ's website says it was founded around the following question:

"How can we build our ability to manage diversity and inclusion – in our workforce, customers, partners, and investors, nationally and internationally – to create a distinctive source of value for our companies, and for New Zealand?"

The Ministry for Women connects emerging women leaders (specifically those aged 25-45) for support and information to develop their skills and talents and realise their potential. It works with leaders in the community, business and government sectors to support their initiatives to grow the pipeline of women leaders. The Ministry assists government agencies to recruit suitable women for state sector boards and committees.

The number of employers signed up to the Women's Empowerment Principles (run by the United Nations National Committee Aotearoa New Zealand) continues to grow. These principles offer guidance on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community.

Meanwhile the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Trust provides EEO information and tools to employers, raises awareness of diversity issues, and runs an annual award series.

Economic wellbeing

This section looks at income, poverty, and retirement savings.

Women carry a disproportionate burden of poverty in New Zealand. Women are more than one and a half times more likely than men to live in a household with a total annual income of $30,000 or less.[59]

Sole mother families have much higher poverty rates than coupled or sole-father families.[60]

At the other end of the scale, three-quarters of people whose personal income is over $75,000 a year are men.[61]

One reason for this is New Zealand's gender pay gap. There are a range of measures around. The Ministry for Women says the gender pay gap is 11.8%. This means women earn $17.64 to every $20 earned by men.

Statistics New Zealand's 2014 Income Survey showed women earn on average $24.70 an hour compared with $28.70 an hour for men. Women earn 86.1 per cent of men's earnings, a gap of about 14 per cent.[63]

The same survey showed women's average weekly earnings from wages and salaries were 74.9 per cent of those of men. The bigger gender pay gap in this figure is due to lower wages in part-time jobs done mostly by women.

The pay gap is felt differently by various population groups. For example:

— Gender and ethnic pay gaps compound so that Pacific and Māori women are paid less per hour than European women.

— Disabled women have lower incomes than disabled men.

— The majority of people on the minimum wage are young people and are more likely to be women.[63]

Specific to the public service, the Human Rights Commission (HRC) reports that women are paid on average 14 per cent less than men[65] and that the explanation provided by the State Services Commission for this difference was: "A higher than average proportion of women work in lower-paid occupation groups and a higher than average proportion of men work in the higher-paid occupation groups."

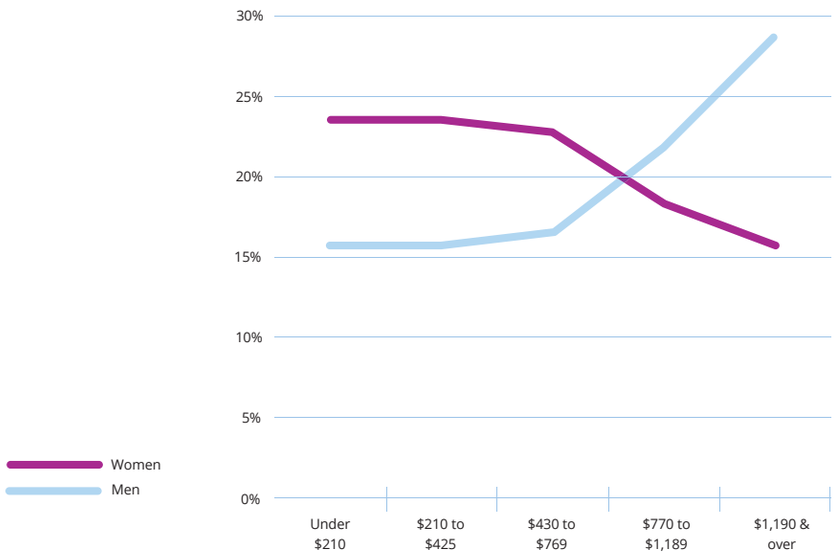
Gender pay gap court cases

At the time of going to print there are two court challenges around structural sexism resulting in gender pay gaps. The College of Midwives is taking the Ministry of Health to court under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act for gender discrimination in pay.

This follows the longer standing case of the Service and Food Workers Union saying care worker Kristine Bartlett's hourly pay of $14.32 was based on her gender, not her skills, effort and responsibilities. The union claim is that the Equal Pay Act covers equal pay for work of equal value – not just for the same or similar work. The Employment Court and Court of Appeal have found for the claimant.

In October the Government announced that a joint working group with union and government representation would develop principles for dealing with pay equity claims across all sectors. This

Figure 6: Weekly personal income (June 2014 quarter) [62]



group will make its recommendations to Government by March 31, 2016. When announcing the group the Government said it would be impractical and inefficient for workers to take court action industry by industry. As a result of Kristine Bartlett's case, more than 2400 claims against employers in the residential care sector have been filed. NCWNZ knows sexism is entrenched in workplace structures, which leads to inequality in pay, conditions and opportunities.

These cases demonstrate that awareness of pay inequality has progressed to such a level it is translating into decisive and positive action. We support the joint working group and industries testing through the courts whether they have faced gender discrimination.

Retirement provisions

A retirement savings survey of close to 700 people conducted in October 2014 found only 34 per cent of women felt very confident or confident of saving enough for their retirement. By contrast, 55 per cent of men were very confident or confident.[66] ANZ bank estimates that New Zealand women are likely to retire with $60,000 less than their male counterparts. This is based on the gender pay gap and the likelihood that women will take time out of work to raise families, and the tendency for them to retire two years earlier than men. In 2015, the average balances for women members of the ANZ KiwiSaver Scheme were almost 28% lower than men (at $8,918 and $11,396, respectively).[67]

Connectedness of the current state

While we have categorised the statistics into four areas (safety and health, education, economic wellbeing and influence and decision making), the issues are connected. Inequalities in one area increase the inequity in another area. For example:

— The under-representation of women in positions of influence and decision making impacts on the gender pay gap and therefore economic wellbeing.

— Girls who are sexually, emotionally or physically abused are more likely to have poor educational outcomes and not be in employment, education or training.

— Women who are in low-paid insecure work are more likely to be living below the poverty line.[68]

— Violence towards women results in serious and sometimes lifelong health effects.[69]

— Women living in poverty are more likely to work in dangerous or physically demanding jobs, live in high-crime areas and engage in risky lifestyles.

— Sole mothers receiving Sole Parent Support (when it as called the Domestic Purposes Benefit) were more likely to be Māori, to have lower family incomes, lower educational qualifications, and to live in more deprived areas. They also found that poor family health restricts their work activities.[70]

Our government's gender framework

We have a strong legislative framework protecting women from discrimination and abuse compared to many other countries. Laws include our Bill of Rights Act 1990, the Human Rights Act 1993, the Domestic Violence Act 1995, and the Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Act 2013.

A number of employment-related laws reference equal employment opportunities[71] and we have an Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner[72] and a Ministry for Women.

The Human Rights Act's intention is to help ensure all people are treated fairly and equally. Discrimination occurs when a person is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances. Under the Act, the Human Rights Commission has the power to resolve disputes relating to unlawful discrimination.

Ministry for Women

New Zealand's Ministry for Women provides policy advice and information on women to all government sectors and to the general public.

Its website states it "is the government's principal advisor on achieving better outcomes for women in New Zealand… [it] is also the lead agency that manages the government's international obligations in relation to the status of women. In this role it promotes and protects the interests and wellbeing of women through participation in international forums, and promotes the development of domestic policy that is consistent with international responsibilities of New Zealand in relation to the status of women." [73]

The Ministry's current key priorities are:

1. Supporting more women and girls in education and training
2. Utilising women's skills and growing our economy
3. Encouraging and developing women leaders
4. Ensuring women and girls are free from violence.

The international context

Gender equality is an important international human rights issue and New Zealand has signed up to a number of international agreements, conventions and treaties that commit it to achieving gender equality.

Messages from the HeForShe campaign, launched by UN Women, zero in on the sentiments behind the treaties:

"Gender inequality is one of the most persistent human rights violations of our time. Despite many years of promoting gender equality, inequalities among women/girls and men/boys continue to manifest in egregious ways around the world. Gender equality is not only a women's issue, it is a human rights issue that affects all of us – women and girls, men and boys. We all benefit socially, politically and economically from gender equality in our everyday lives. When women are empowered, the whole of humanity benefits. Gender equality liberates not only women but also men, from prescribed social roles and gender stereotypes." [74]

International Comparison

New Zealand women, like most in first world countries, do well when compared to women in developing parts of the world. For example, the World Economic Forum's 2014 Global Gender Gap Index [75] places us 13th of 142 countries. However, the report notes that 2014 is the first time New Zealand has not been part of the top ten best-performing countries.

Three of the key international frameworks covering gender equality follow.

Commission on the Status of Women

In March 2015 the Minister for Women, Louise Upston, represented the New Zealand Government at the United Nations 59th Commission on the Status of Women session. NCWNZ also attended. At the forum the political leaders, including Minister Upston, signed a declaration that committed them to:

— Strengthen implementation of laws, policies and strategies

— Strengthen and increase support for institutional mechanisms for gender equality

— Transform discriminatory norms and gender stereotypes

— Significantly increase investment for gender equality to close resource gaps

— Strengthen accountability for the implementation of existing commitments

— Enhance capability building, data collection, monitoring and evaluation.

UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said in her closing speech that there were "no shortcuts on the road to gender equality". She urged government leaders to start working on their commitments immediately and more intensely.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

One of the agreements New Zealand has committed to is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). CEDAW is a powerful tool for articulating, advocating and monitoring women's human rights. The National Council of Women of New Zealand is one of a number of community organisations that writes reports assessing our country's performance.

These community reports are considered alongside the government's official performance report to CEDAW. The last full CEDAW report was in 2012. The next is due in 2016. The convention committee concluded after 2012 that New Zealand has some way to go to eliminate discrimination, saying:

"The Committee is concerned that the State party has not taken sufficient measures to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into all national plans and government institutions as requested by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/NZL/CO/6, para. 15). In this context, the Committee notes with concern that the State party has not introduced a new national plan of action for women to replace the one which ended in 2009 and that the Ministry of Women's Affairs lacks adequate resources for its many tasks. The Committee encourages the State party: (a) To mainstream gender in all national plans and government institutions; (b) To strengthen the existing national machinery by providing adequate authority, visibility and human and financial resources at all levels and enhancing coordination among existing mechanisms for the advancement of women and the promotion of gender equality by increasing the resources for the Ministry of Women's Affairs; (c) To conduct a comprehensive study on how to improve the situation of women in the State party and develop a national action plan for women accordingly." [76]

The Sustainable Development Goals

United Nations ratified the 17 Sustainable Development Goals at the end of September. These replace the current Millennium Development Goals in 2016. Goal 5 says New Zealand, as a UN member, will "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."

Targets under this goal are: [77]

— End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

— Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

— Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

— Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

— Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

— Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

— Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

— Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

— Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

Goal 4 has targets on educational outcomes for women and girls, and Goal 8 includes a commitment to "decent work for all women and men...and equal work for equal pay."

7 Explaining our slow and patchy progress towards equality

It's clear many organisations and people care about gender equality. How then can we explain our current state? We now turn to policy literature to provide insight as to why our efforts are not translating into equality for women.

Gender inequality is a 'wicked' problem

Gender equality in policy terms can be labelled a 'wicked' problem. Wicked problems resist resolution and cannot be solved using traditional approaches.[78]

Features of wicked problems that are relevant to gender include the following:

— It is difficult to clearly define, and stakeholders have different versions of what the problem is.

— It can't be addressed at one level of society as it is experienced in many different ways by individuals and groups of women.

— It is shaped by multiple interdependent factors that continually change and are deeply rooted in our economic and social structures.

— It requires changing behaviour at multiple levels – society, government, service provision, local community and individual levels.

— There is little agreement or conclusive evidence on what are the most effective solutions.

— The effects of any changes are unpredictable and uncertain, and may take years to show up.

Wicked problems require interventions from many levels of government, the community and private sectors. We can't solely focus on helping one group of women, or on one particular issue – such as achieving pay and employment equity, or decreasing violence against women – and achieve gender equality.

In 2007 the Australian Public Service (APS) published a guide to tackling wicked problems from a public policy perspective.[79] The APS stressed:

"The handling of wicked problems requires holistic rather than linear thinking. This is thinking capable of grasping the big picture, including the interrelationships between the full range of causal factors and policy objectives. By their nature, the wicked issues are imperfectly understood, and so initial planning boundaries that are drawn too narrowly may lead to a neglect of what is important in handling the wicked issues. It is in this unforeseen interconnection that policy problems grow and policy failures arise."

The ecological model – a framework for understanding and action

The ecological model is useful for understanding and responding to wicked problems.[80] It provides a visual key to the complex workings of the various levels of gender inequality. In figure 8, the Impact Collective adapt the ecological model designed by Fanslow for addressing family violence in New Zealand[81] to make it relevant for gender inequalities.[82]

Figure 8: Ecological model for gender equality [83]

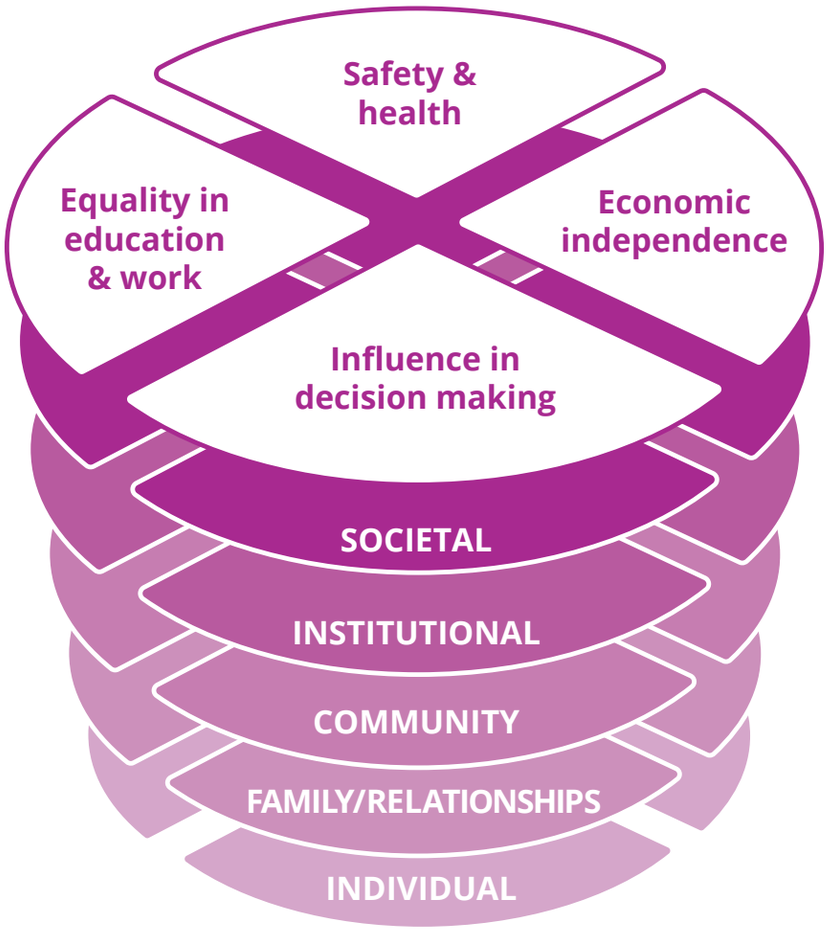
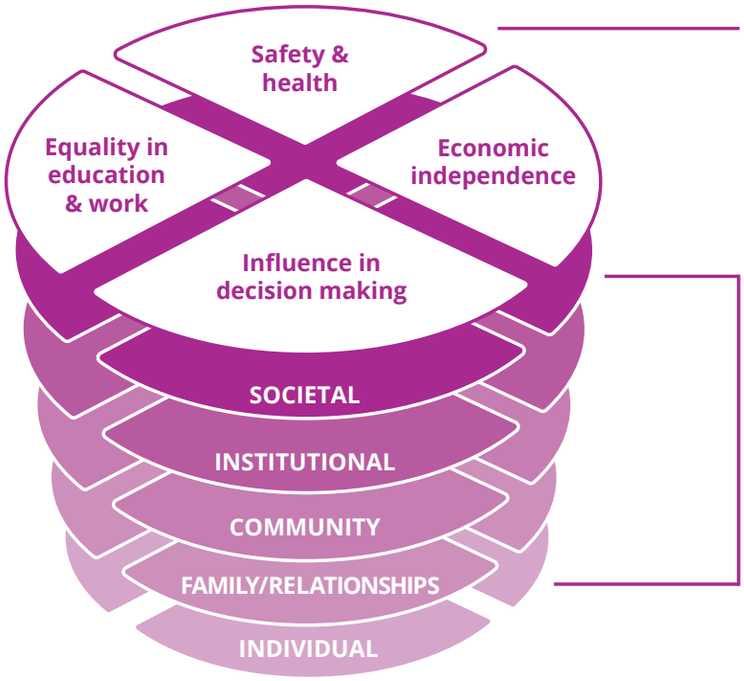


Figure 9: Explaining the model



The vertical quadrants at the model's top are the four areas used earlier to highlight the range of inequalities.

The five horizontal levels relate to the different levels of society which impact on the quadrants. Attitudes, behaviours, policies and practices impact on women in each of the four quadrants at each horizontal level. The horizontal levels influence each other.

The societal level includes aspects of our culture, viewed as normal and common sense. The 'norms' shift over time. Fanslow gives an example of how cultural norms support violence against women. Those norms include violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflicts; norms that prioritise parental rights over child welfare; and norms that entrench male dominance over women and children.

The institutional level includes: government policies and legislation; the criminal justice system; health system; child protection system; religions and churches; employers and businesses; the media. Institutions embed social norms in formal ways that impact on us in our community and family settings and as individuals.

Community includes familiar, influential settings like schools and neighbourhoods. Communities and cultures have different levels of stereotyping around gender.

Family/relationships covers relationships with peers, intimate partners and family members. These relationships can be protective and nurturing or violent and unsafe. Families gender individuals from the time our sex is known, which can impact roles and opportunities.

The individual level is about characteristics like gender or ethnicity. When family, community, institutions and society discriminate against these characteristics it can impact the individual's ability to change the more usually fluid characteristics such as education and class.

What this means for our gender equality work

The complex interplay of gender inequality

Earlier we gave examples of the connectedness between the four quadrants (health and safety, education and work, influence and decision making, and economic wellbeing) and how inequalities in one area often increase the inequalities in another.

The ecological model highlights the additional complexity of the wicked problem that is gender equality. It shows that for each of the quadrants, there are individual, family, community, institutional and societal influencers that either help or hinder gender equality.

This breadth and depth of gender experience shows why our country is struggling to make significant headway despite many government, business, community and individual attempts.

The United Nations, when talking about ending violence against women, recommended action across all levels of the ecological model in order for change to occur. It said it is unreasonable for people providing services to expect to be able to work across all levels, but it is important to be aware of the ways levels influence change in other levels:

"Programmes should be mindful of the different levels in the ecological model to achieve results, since each level is interconnected. However, it is not necessary to operate at all the levels, but to choose interventions at one or more level that will influence the risk and protective factors within other levels. For example, the norms at the community level influence behaviours and practices within homes and among relationships between men and women. Similarly, implementation of laws and policies at the societal level, for example, through institutionalization of protocols and training can improve police responses to survivors at the community level and discourage men from perpetrating violence in their homes." [84]

Most of the current activity focuses on one quadrant or one level, and there is not the overarching vision, framework, planning, co-ordination, integration and measurement required to make significant inroads.

We need to step up by better recognising and factoring in the nature of the issue. This means in addition to the specific programmes we have going, we need to look at interventions that work into all areas and levels. We need to take more steps to create the environment in which initiatives will flourish.

To provide an analytical framework for us to do this, the Impact Collective[85] further developed the ecological model to include five prerequisites for gender equality (shown in Figure 10). These reflect what international literature says are the key requirements to understanding and effectively responding to wicked problems.

The five prerequisites for gender equality

The five levers we need to activate for gender equality are:

— Shared understanding

— Gender positive culture

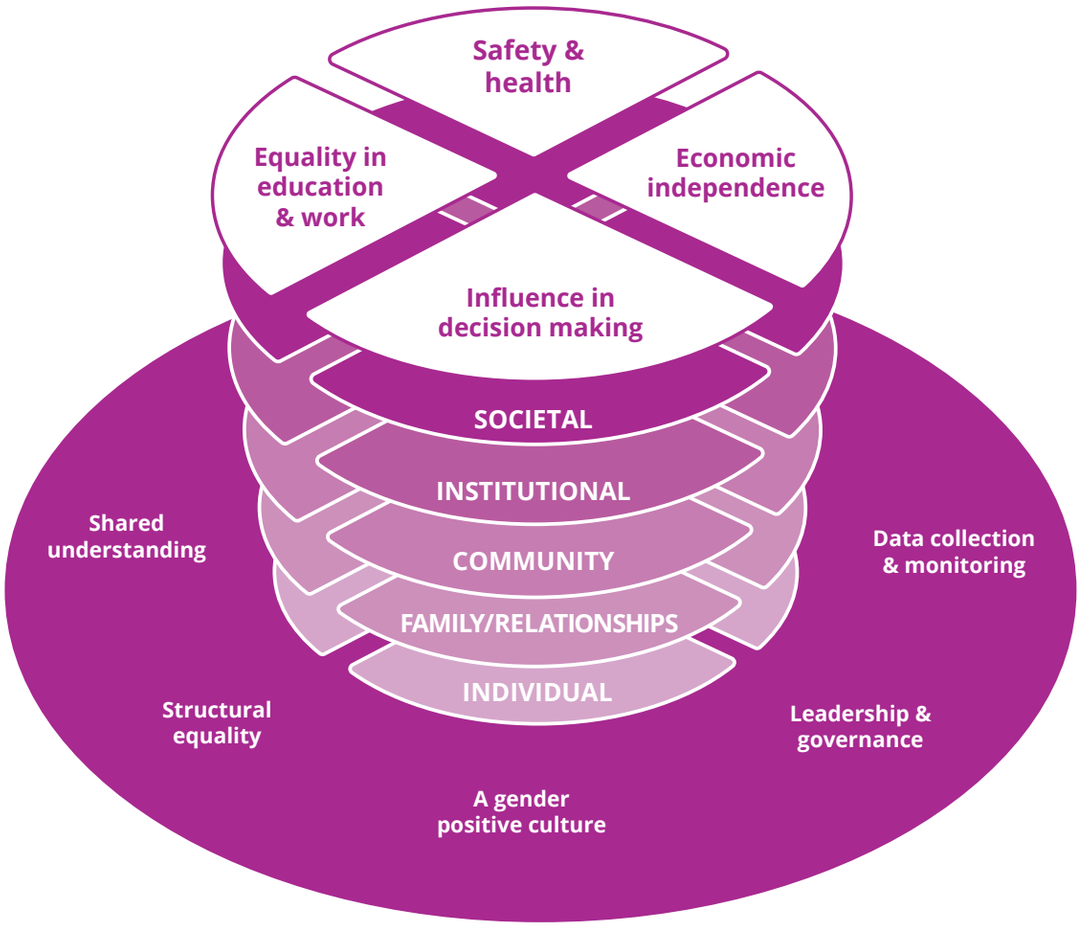
— Leadership and governance

— Structural equality

— Data and monitoring.

The following chapters outline NCWNZ's interpretation of what each of these five contextual issues mean for gender equality, what the current situation is in New Zealand and what we believe needs to happen.

Figure 10: Expanded ecological model for gender equality [86]



Shared understanding

What is shared understanding?

A basic requirement to achieving equality is a shared understanding of the issue – how our lives are different due to our gender identity and where there are inequalities.

We can't take a gender-neutral approach when analysing issues or coming up with strategies as this makes differences between women and men invisible and therefore not understood.

The Australian Public Service is developing a shared understanding between stakeholders as part of its approach to addressing social problems. The approach is based on considering the problems as wicked:

"With the social complexity that accompanies nearly all wicked problems, a lack of understanding of the problem can result in different stakeholders being certain that their version of the problem is correct. It can be extremely difficult to make any headway on an acceptable solution to the wicked problem if stakeholders cannot agree on what the problem is. Achieving a shared understanding of the dimensions of the problem and different perspectives among external stakeholders who can contribute to a full understanding and comprehensive response to the issue is crucial." [87]

Developing a shared understanding will take time but it will ensure much greater success of policies and programmes.

The current state of shared understanding

There appears to be a growing understanding of gender issues. As we see global campaigns like the United Nation's HeforShe[88] reach New Zealand, we are also witnessing greater discussion on the issue in the mainstream and social media, and more large employers signing up through various initiatives to take action to improve their workplaces for women.

A survey Research New Zealand conducted pro bono for NCWNZ found a high level of awareness of gender inequality by both male and female respondents. Respondents said the health and education sectors were the best for equality, with 72 per cent and 68 per cent respectively believing all genders were treated the same in these areas. Thirty-two per cent of respondents felt women and men were treated the same in business, and the percentage for equal treatment in the workplace was 46 per cent. The findings show there is good public awareness of the issue.

However, shared understanding is often at a surface level and is patchy. As a result, the resulting initiatives often seek to mitigate the impacts of inequality (violence against women, health issues, and the pay gap) rather than prevent these inequalities from occurring in the first place.

Our society mostly accepts norms around gender, without thinking of their consequences. For example, everyday sexism largely goes without comment.

People are blamed for their situations rather than looking at the individual, family, community, institutional and societal factors that are strong barriers for them. Many people wrongly think the passage of time will take care of inequality, and are unaware of the intergenerational impact.

So aside from pockets of understanding, we lack the required shared understanding of the state of gender equality in New Zealand, its causes and its solutions. Until we can come together as a society, name the inequality and seek to redress it, many women will continue to individually struggle to experience their basic human rights.

What needs to happen

We need mechanisms and forums to facilitate ongoing dialogue towards a shared understanding. This is so the good work being done in pockets can be shared more widely and informed by the various insights different parties have. The conversation needs to happen at the national and community level, within sectors, industries, workplaces, communities and families.

We need to recognise that this issue is bigger than politics so debate is constructive and sees people from a wide variety of positions and perspectives informing each other with their insight into whatever part of the ecological model or area of inequality they have experienced.

More data, research and analysis of how gender plays out in New Zealand will support shared understanding and commitment to taking action. Research modelling of the economic and social benefits of gender equality is recommended.

Appendix 1 contains a process for developing shared understanding.

Gender positive culture

10

What is gender culture?

Gender culture refers to the dominating beliefs and processes that help shape people with ascribed gender roles, expectations and experiences.

Gender culture is not set in stone and shifts over time, which explains why there are different expectations of people today compared to those of, say, 100 years ago – even 30 years ago. The behaviours and beliefs that make up our gender culture are learned.

Sexism and limiting gender stereotypes exist in both seen and unseen ways. Sometimes sexist attitudes toward women are so normalised it is difficult to notice them for what they are (constructed ideas about how women can and should behave). The normalisation of sexist ideas makes it hard for women to do well in systems that are informed by gender stereotypes, which then become part of the structure of the way systems operate:

"This means that it is not easy to detect cultural bias which can be embedded in organizational structures and practices. In consequence, it is extremely difficult for women to adapt in systems where bias is mobilized against them unconsciously through organizational norms and values." [89]

Sexism influences what we expect of each other and also what we expect of ourselves. One of the most damaging outcomes of a negative gender culture – violence against women – was summed up by the Victoria Government State Premier, Daniel Andrews, when making a submission to the Royal Commission on Family Violence in June 2015:

"There is now widespread understanding that racist attitudes can lead to racially motivated violence and that homophobic attitudes can lead to gay hate crimes. We must now also educate that sexist behaviour and gender inequality, if unaddressed, lead to sexual assault and family violence."

Current gender culture

We have a sexist culture and stereotypes that negatively impact on all genders.

A poll of 1000 girls and young women aged 14-25 found that 75 per cent had been victims of sexist comments and 49 per cent felt that sexism affects their career choice. The researchers explained that sexism is normalised by framing strength, assertiveness and confidence in a negative way – such as an assertive young woman being labelled "Miss Bossy Boots". [90]

When Research New Zealand, on behalf of NCWNZ, asked the public via a survey for the main reason for gender inequality in New Zealand, 29 per cent said it was due to traditional or historical factors; 22 per cent said it was to do with women's gender roles limiting opportunities; and 20 per cent said it was a man's world. Nine per cent said male qualities were most suited to the roles; 7 per cent believed employers saw disadvantages to hiring women due to gender roles; 6 per cent mentioned prejudice and bias as reason; 4 per cent said men are better at promoting themselves and another 4 per cent gave men being stronger or more capable as a reason.

In New Zealand there are a range of ways in which our gender culture impacts negatively on girls and women including the following: [91]

— Highly sexualised representations of girls and women in the media.

— Sexist jokes that make fun of and degrade women's bodies, abilities or roles.

— Rape myths that position women as "asking for it", not taking enough personal care of themselves, wearing revealing clothing, drinking too much, being in an unsafe situation and therefore deserving to be sexually assaulted.

— Vast amounts of violent and demeaning pornographic imagery circulating.[92]

— Limited representations of women as successful or representations with an undue focus on women's appearance.

— Popular culture that celebrates men's achievements over women's (eg, television sport programmes).

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet confirmed in a 2015 Official Information Act response to NCWNZ that since 2009 only a quarter to a third of nominations for New Year's or Queens Birthday Honours were for women. Unsurprisingly the majority of honour recipients are men, highlighting the lack of recognition of women's unpaid and paid contributions, and reinforcing the perception that men's contribution has higher value.

International concern has been raised regarding the negative representation of women in New Zealand. The CEDAW committee commented in its 2012 report:

"The Committee remains concerned about the negative stereotypes associated with men's and women's traditional roles in the family and in society at large. In particular, the Committee is concerned about the negative and sometimes exploitative representation of women in the media which perpetuates discrimination against women and girls. In this regard, the Committee notes with concern that the State party has not developed a national campaign on the importance of equality between men and women as recommended in the Committee's previous concluding observations." [93]

There appears to be little action currently occurring specifically to combat our youth being encouraged into potentially limiting gender stereotypes, and attempts to fight sexism in adult life appear ad hoc or complaint based.

There have been some hard-fought positive developments; for example, to funding for rape culture research and to get patchy sexual consent education in schools. The New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse says the sexual consent education is limited, under-resourced, ad hoc and variable in its evidence base.

What needs to happen

We want a culture that celebrates rather than discriminates against gender difference. We need current sexism, which is normalised and often invisible in our culture, to become visible and unacceptable.

We need people to become aware of harmful and limiting stereotypes. This is a call to action for all New Zealanders because everyone has influence on those around them.

There are particular influencers of culture. Teachers and families can play their part by seeing a person's unique potential, rather than having gender-based expectations around what they might be interested in, good at, or what their likely life pathway might be.

We need a comprehensive evidenced-based healthy relationships education (dating, family and sexual violence prevention) to be rolled out nationally.

We also need far greater investment in other areas of primary prevention of intimate partner violence, family violence, sexual violence. We need to change social gender norms that contribute to violence against women. These include male dominance in the family, using sexual violence as a way to "prove" masculinity, victim-blaming for intimate partner violence etc.

The media and advertising industries need to improve their understanding of the damage their promotion of sexism and stereotypes can do to everyone, and to see the role they can play in positive cultural change.

We want our leaders and influencers of all genders to increasingly speak out and champion gender equality. We need everyone following non-traditional pathways to highlight their choices so people's futures seem broader.

11 Structural equality

What is it?

Our lack of shared understanding and our gender culture leads to structural inequality. This is where there is a bias against women in terms of equal relations in roles, functions, decisions, rights, and opportunities. This bias affects women's relationships with men and other women, and how they individually and collectively experience safety and health, education and work, economic wellbeing, and influence and decision making.

Gender inequality is formalised and institutionalised at multiple levels in politics, workplaces, public services, local communities and individual families:

"Much of the research that deals with gender-related social phenomena recognizes that at the societal level norms and discourses related to gender roles and equality influence individual-level behaviours." [94]

Gender inequality intersects with other factors, such as ethnicity, disability and geographical isolation, to create multiple disadvantages for some women. For example, New Zealand statistics track many ways Māori women are disproportionately discriminated against.[95]

Structural inequality explains how the same rules and opportunities can be applied to all genders but have different outcomes due to life experiences, inequalities, sexual orientation, poverty, deeply embedded practices, or unconscious bias. Some women only experience gender inequality in a small number of areas of their life (like trying to combine unpaid and paid work), while for others it seriously limits their freedom and opportunity.

Current state of structural equality

The statistics presented in Section 6 around the gender pay gap and under-representation of women in influential and decision-making roles are good examples of the current structural inequality.

The Research New Zealand survey conducted for NCWNZ shows the widespread awareness of structural inequality through all our major sectors – health, education, justice system, social, business, and in government policies and programmes.

For example, less than 50 per cent of respondents believed men and women had the same opportunities in senior management, politics, the workplace, professional sports and armed forces.

Workplace structural equality is a dynamic area with both positive and negative developments occurring. DiverseNZ, Women's Empowerment Principles, and the EEO Trust's work are the positives. Set against these is the fact that the bulk of employers are not involved in these initiatives. We need the progress we have made to snowball to reach more workplaces. We need to move quickly to stamp out negative practices that emerge, like the use of zero-hour contracts.

Public sector leadership, too, seems to be more aware of the need for greater action to achieve structural equality in its role as employer. The public sector's gender pay gap and women in leadership were key topics in its Human Resource Capability report released in 2014.

Of major concern is that gender analysis is optional for government policymakers. There is insufficient understanding of gender issues leading to ad hoc and sometimes inadequate analysis of gender in policy and programme development and implementation. Resulting decision making needs to seriously consider the gender analysis presented.

What needs to happen

We need all institutions to understand how their policies and practices may either help or hinder gender equality.

In government, gender analysis needs to be mainstreamed into all government work streams, policies and budgets so any structural inequality is identified and mitigated. This is good for all genders as it will also highlight where each has a special need.

We believe the Ministry for Women should be sufficiently resourced to oversee this work and be responsible for auditing the application of a gender lens within all Ministries.

Employment policy is an area warranting close inspection as it can support structural equality for women, particularly those facing multiple barriers. Employment is an example where gender culture intersects with policy in terms of its effect. Recent legislative change has meant workers have the right to request flexible working conditions, which is seen to benefit women. An improved gender culture would see this provision also being heavily used by men seeking to play a greater role in child-rearing, caring and household tasks.

Employers need to ensure they do not have unconscious bias when it comes to hiring, paying and promoting workers. Workplaces and representative groups within them have an influential role on pay equality and leadership representation. Research also shows employers can make a difference to victims of violence through offering flexible working arrangements, having relationships with services that support victims of violence, [96] and provisions that give victims paid leave.

12 Data and monitoring

What is the relevance of data and monitoring?

An essential part of responding effectively to wicked problems is to learn as we go. We need sources of information to see the impact of our responses. Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all levels of the ecological model will ensure efforts remain aligned, that all parties hold each other to account, and that progress is made at all levels of the model.

Data and monitoring need to apply a gender lens so information accurately tells us the story about gender. Gender-neutral data collections obscure gender inequality as one submitter in our consultation process explained:

"Analysis of the data can reveal underlying causes or trends that are not apparent from a cursory or superficial examination. For example, coronary heart disease is the most common cause of death in New Zealand women. Yet this fact is often overshadowed by statistics which reveal a higher incidence of coronary heart disease in men. American studies have shown that, despite having more severe symptoms, fewer women had significant investigations and treatment." [97]

Current state of data and monitoring

International concern has been raised regarding the lack of data collection regarding women in New Zealand. The CEDAW committee commented in their 2007 report:

"The Committee notes that insufficient statistical data disaggregated by sex in all areas covered by the Convention makes it more difficult to assess accurately the situation and progress of different groups of women with regard to all areas covered" [98]

There have been many ad hoc reports undertaken on the status of women in specialised topic areas (such as the representations on boards, gender pay gaps, workforce participation). However, data collection and monitoring is poor or inaccurate in some areas; for example, violence against women.

"There are gaps and limitations to the data that is currently available. These gaps and limitations affect our ability to tell a story about the big picture of violence that occurs within families. Our view of different aspects of family violence is highly variable, partial and fragmented." [99]

There is no centralised data and monitoring system that collects, collates and analyses data on the status of women in all the areas discussed in this report, and tracked over time.

In 2005 Statistics New Zealand produced a comprehensive report, "Focusing on Women 2005", that looked at the demographic, social and economic characteristics of women in New Zealand.[100] The report provided an overview of the changing status of New Zealand women. It compared their present status with that of men and with women in the past. The aim of the report was to inform policymakers, community groups, students and the public about the current position of women and how that's changed over the past 30 years. It measured the factors affecting women's lives, such as education, family situation, income and health. Unfortunately this report is now 10 years old and nothing similar has been undertaken since its publication.

In 2008 and again in 2009 the Ministry of Women's Affairs (now the Ministry for Women) published "Indicators for Change" reports[101] to provide policymakers, researchers, and planners with a way to track progress for women, and identify areas where more work may be needed. Its website says these reports are a periodical report that provides a snapshot of the current social and economic status of women. However, six years on no further such reports appear to have been produced.

The Human Rights Commission produced the fifth and last New Zealand Census of Women's Participation in 2012. This was a comprehensive analysis of women's equality. The commission has since released a less comprehensive but very useful Tracking Equality at Work tool (various findings from which have been discussed throughout this White Paper).

Statistics New Zealand has a webpage where it links to reports with information about women.[102] They are upgrading this webpage to contain more information. This is useful for people seeking data on women but it is limited as it can only reflect the data and analysis available.

What needs to happen

The CEDAW committee in 2007 recommended:

"...the State party to consider using measures such as benchmarks, targets, recruitment and support programmes, incentives and quotas with regard to various articles of the Convention and to strengthen its system of data collection in all areas covered by the Convention, in order to enhance its knowledge base about the actual situation of different groups of women and to track trends over time. It also calls upon the State party to monitor, through measurable indicators, the impact of measures taken and progress achieved towards the realization of de facto equality for women. It encourages the State party to use these data and indicators in the formulation of laws, policies and programmes for the effective implementation of the Convention."

We need to gather data, analyse it and share that data widely on a regular basis. A collective picture can be drawn from the many sources of data and will help develop a shared understanding about gender inequality and equality.

As well as the available data, there are publications that contain clear recommendations on what is needed to improve data collection in the various areas of inequality. For example, on the need for population-based surveys on violence.[103]

The 2004 Action Plan for New Zealand Women contained a good example of a comprehensive monitoring framework.

We need a set of national outcome indicators for gender equality and ensure that relevant, reliable and up to date data is collected, collated, analysed and reported.

13 Leadership and governance

What is the relevance of leadership and governance to gender equality

Driving change to wicked problems requires strong leadership and governance to direct, support and measure. Given the breadth and depth of inequality, this leadership and governance requires sufficient resourcing and stamina. Leadership and governance creates a wider mandate for change, and enables all required levers to achieve equality.

Leadership and governance is wider than our government – it refers to business, the media, community and individual leadership.

Current state

New Zealand is criticised internationally for failing to provide sufficient leadership and governance around gender equality. As outlined in Chapter 2, the 2012 CEDAW report said gender needs to be mainstreamed into all national plans and government institutions. It expressed concern New Zealand did not have a national action plan for women, and that the Ministry for Women was under-resourced.

Current Ministry for Women initiatives seek to address particular quadrants and levels in the ecological model. While these programmes may well be effective within themselves and the objectives they set, given the wicked nature of the issue, they are insufficient to lead us to gender equality.

The Pacific Women's Watch alerted the government and CEDAW in 2012 and again in 2014 to the absence of an overarching strategy for women in New Zealand:

"A key point raised and recognised in both reviews [2012 and 2014] is Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)'s call for a new five-year National Plan of Action for New Zealand Women and Girls. There has been no action plan since the earlier five-year plan ended in 2009. The Committee drew the New Zealand Government's attention to the inadequacy of targets and benchmarks to advance women's rights. An action plan, in providing a framework and targets in a timed agenda for progress, and which serves to coordinate intersectionality across all those involved in delivering the outcomes, will remedy this inadequacy." [104]

There are pockets of leadership amongst employers and business as have been highlighted throughout this report, including Global Women's DiverseNZ, and the corporates signed up to the Women's Empowerment Principles.

There is strong not-for-profit leadership in various areas, including groups such as Women's Refuge which works against violence, and unions in the pay and employment equity space.

However, more dynamic and focused leadership is required with greater connection and collaboration between players to support a stronger movement.

What we need

A 'whole of New Zealand' leadership is required. This involves both public and private sectors. A 'whole of government' approach will be inadequate, but without government leading from the highest level efforts will not succeed.

We need government to have a vision for gender equality, and a plan to achieve it. The approach needs to look at the causes of gender inequality – like sexism and stereotypes, and our institutional biases – as well as reacting to their outcomes, like violence, employment and economic inequity.

Progress against those causes will take time, far longer than an electoral cycle, so we need a government with courage to start leading this longer-term cultural change. We need cross-party support for its sustainability.

This plan needs to insist on and motivate our country's leaders and influencers to take action. For example, sector leaders and professional associations need to be aware of what occurs in their patch to harm or help equality, and provide guidance and support for positive change. Our efforts also need to reach out to New Zealanders who influence the gender experience of the adults and youth around them.

NCWNZ will continue to contribute community leadership in a number of ways, including holding member, public and stakeholder meetings to get feedback into topical issues.

14 Conclusion

It's clear we have gender inequality, which has an unacceptable impact on individuals, families and our entire country. It is also fact there is considerable work underway to help this situation, and that many organisations, groups and individuals care.

In this document we have provided insight into why the current activity is not sufficiently progressing us toward equality.

We have shared NCWNZ's advice on the five levers we need to activate to successfully tackle this complex issue. We need to increase our shared understanding of what gender equality involves, and we need to change our words, attitudes and behaviours around gender. We need structural equality, and strengthened leadership and governance, as well as more data and monitoring so all genders have the opportunity and freedom to determine their future.

In the next section we outline 12 actions that need to happen to improve our understanding, culture, structures, leadership and governance, and data collection and monitoring of gender equality. There is a focus in these actions on how NCWNZ will contribute.

However, we need to also call on government to step up in some new areas, in addition to the current focus on violence and equality in employment.

We highlight the importance of employers and service providers to see their impact and recommend ways they can help. As NCWNZ implements the actions listed, we will highlight more specific actions various parts of our society and economy can take.

We need a broader movement. We need all New Zealanders to think harder about how they treat each other, what they say and do.

NCWNZ believes New Zealand is small, connected and caring enough to be a world leader in gender equality. We have stood proud in this position before. There is a growing movement for gender equality, which with some effort can gain sufficient momentum to make progress, and ultimately achieve this goal.

We want to work with any organisation or individual that shares our vision of a gender-equal New Zealand. We welcome partners to help us achieve our vision, including funders to support our projects.

We look forward to your feedback and your ideas as to how to activate the five levers we see as critical to achieving gender equality in New Zealand.

Summary Diagram - the pathway to equality

New Zealand Now

Women's unpaid contribution undervalued

Everyday sexism widespread

Highest rate of domestic violence in developed world

Women feel unsafe at night

Discrimination against women in the workplace, including gender pay gap & barriers to career progressions

Women financially unequal (less lifetime earnings and retirement savings)

Women have high unmet health needs

Economic growth limited by inequality, including lack of skill use, diversity and impact of domestic violence on productivity

Slipping global ranking for gender equality

New Zealand Needs

Shared understanding

A gender positive culture

Structural equality

Leadership and governance

Data collection and monitoring

+

Specific initiatives & programmes in improving women's:

Safety & health

Education & work

Economic independence

Influence in decision making

=

In a Gender Equal New Zealand

Family and community roles are valued

No sexism

Lowest rate of domestic violence in the world

People feel safe at night

Equal pay and opportunity to progress career

Equal economic independence

All genders' health needs are met

Greater economic growth through harnessing and leveraging diversity

World leaders in gender equality

Benefits for All

Resilient communities where people are valued for their uniqueness

Strong families across generations

People freed from stereotyped expectations to achieve their potential

Higher standard of living means more support for our most vulnerable

New Zealanders are proud of our gender equality

Recommendations for action – activating the levers

The following table of actions – our pathway to equality – factors in the current state, the nature of the issue, and its social and economic impact. They are in addition to existing initiatives and the new programmes needed to reduce violence, achieve equal pay, improve women's economic independence and increase women in leadership.

Action	Who	Lever supported	When	Measurement
1.Production of e-newsletter On Balance to bring together gender equality information and increase debate and discussion	NCWNZ	Shared understanding	Ongoing	Number of weekly subscribers and feedback as to usefulness
2.Towards gender equality forums Community forums nationwide to get positive local action and ideas to inform national action The outcomes will feed into a national gender equality forum in September 2016	NCWNZ	Shared understanding	March - June 2016 September 2016	Actions recorded from forums and conference
3. More New Zealand influencers and decision makers champion gender equality – publicly within their sectors, and within their households	UN Women National Committee Aotearoa New Zealand, high-profile and influential New Zealanders	Shared understanding Gender positive culture	HeforShe launch in late November	HeforShe numbers Media monitoring
4.Taskforce develops a plan to improve our gender culture	NCWNZ	Shared understanding Gender positive culture Leadership and governance	Feb 2016 - Nov 2016	Gender culture plan developed
5. Build the gender equality movement and encourage bystander action – people call out sexism and stereotypes when they see them	All NZers NCWNZ supports	Shared understanding Gender positive culture	Ongoing	Media monitoring and anecdotal feedback

Action	Who	Lever supported	When	Measurement
6. Women recognised for their family, community and professional contributions through more Queen's Birthday and New Year Honours nominations and awards	Minister for Women/NCWNZ/Dept of Prime Minster and Cabinet lead NZers nominate more women	Gender positive culture	Annual awards are in January and June	DPMC release percentage of nominations and awards by gender twice a year
7. Strengthen gender analysis in policies: Adequate gender impact assessments are required to be included in all Cabinet papers and key government documents The Ministry for Women provides annual gender analysis training and guidance for government agencies	Government	Structural equality	By Nov 2016	Requirement in action Training programmes NCWNZ analyses a selection of government documents
8. Institutions delivering services and employing staff mitigate against unconscious bias, for example consider gender impact of services, recruitment, pay, promotion	Employers, unions and service providers	Structural equality	Ongoing	More employers signed up to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles Greater use of available tools (through Diverse NZ)
9. Establish an agreed set of gender equality indicators and outcome measures, and a platform for regular reporting of data	Ministry for Women with input from Statistics NZ	Shared understanding Data collection and monitoring	By Nov 2016 then annually	Measurement agreed and publicised
10. Independent assessment of gender equality progress: Annual monitor produced Periodic reports produced assessing progress against international treaties	NCWNZ	Shared understanding Data collection and monitoring	Annual monitor each September CEDAW report 2016	Results and reports publically released
11. Government to produce National Plan of Action	Minister for Women	Leadership and governance	By Nov 2016	Plan produced
12. Leaders and influencers across New Zealand consider how their sector helps or harms equality and takes action	Professional associations, regulators, employer representatives, unions	Leadership and governance	Ongoing	Media analysis, anecdotal feedback, number of initiatives grows

Acknowledgements

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First we need to thank our national and branch-level members for their input and their ongoing support and practical work to advance gender equality. A list of our members can be found on www.ncwnz.org.nz.

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Undertaking this exercise has shown the massive support from all genders and parts of society to mobilise for gender equality.

It is a great example of how we can all work together towards a shared goal – a gender-equal New Zealand.

Appendix One

A process for developing a shared understanding of gender equality

Herbert and Mackenzie have adapted their process model for developing a shared understanding for intimate partner violence and child abuse and neglect to be relevant for gender equality.

Figure 11: Process for developing a shared understanding[106]

Footnotes

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Enabling women's potential

the social, economic and ethical imperative

A White Paper from the National Council of Women of New Zealand
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