

# Priority Issue: Gender Equality

## ACT Context

---

There have been a number of government, business and community sector initiatives which have sought to improve the status of women in the ACT. While many of these initiatives have been extremely successful, and whilst there are currently some programs in place to support improvement in this area, we have still not achieved full gender equality in the ACT.

One key role for government in this area is in mainstreaming gender impact assessments across all areas of government policy and decision-making. This should be supported by improvements in the availability of gender disaggregated data, which is necessary to support good policy making which takes into account the needs and experiences of women in our community.

Disappointingly, WEL ACT's recent report into the use of gender impact assessment across the ACT Government, *The Full Picture: An Audit of the ACT's Gender Assessment Processes*, indicates that much more work needs to be done to move beyond high level commitments in this area and into on-the-ground improvements. The ACT Government must ensure that directorates are considering the gender impacts of their policies and programs from the initial development stages through to delivery of programs and services, as well as in procurement processes and internal policies and procedures.

## YWCA of Canberra and WEL Perspective

---

While both the YWCA of Canberra and WEL ACT applaud the commitment to improving gender equality in the ACT, they recognise that there is still a long way to go before equality is achieved in many areas. Both organisations welcome the publication of the audit of the ACT's gender assessment processes, and expect implementation of its recommendations to lead to major improvements in this area.

## Key Recommendations for Political Parties:

---

The YWCA of Canberra and WEL ACT call on political parties to:

1. Commit to improving the status of women in the ACT through the development of targeted policies and programs
2. Commit to ensuring there continues to be financial and other support for programs that assist in improving the status of women.
3. Commit to implement all of the recommendations set out in *The Full Picture: An Audit of the ACT's Gender Assessment Processes*.

