

Women's Budget 2025 – National Women's Alliances respond

The National Women's Alliances welcome the Federal Government's focus on women and women's health in the 2025-26 Budget. This Budget represents a consolidation of progress made over the past three years in advancing gender equality and preventing gender-based violence. These are not luxury, niche social challenges — they are national priorities that require ongoing, consistent attention and investment.

The Alliances continue to call for transformative reform that improves the lives of women in all our diversity. While there are some positive budget commitments aligned with the Working for Women Strategy, stronger and more targeted action is needed — particularly to address the systemic inequalities experienced by the most marginalised women in our priority populations.

As we head toward the upcoming Federal Election, the Alliances will be looking for clear and ambitious commitments that centre women in all their diversity within national policy and reform.

Key points in response to the 2025-26 Federal Budget:

- **Gender-based violence:**

The Alliances strongly support the Government's continued commitment to ending gender-based violence in one generation. However, we are concerned about the lack of targeted action to address violence against marginalised communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disabilities, women living in rural, remote and regional areas, and migrant, refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse women.

The Alliances advocate for greater attention to reducing barriers in access to justice and support for these communities. This includes by increasing targeted support for individuals from communities with limited English proficiency, low digital literacy or other communication needs; mandatory training to improve responsiveness and eliminate systemic biases in handling domestic violence incidents; specialised training for interpreters (including Auslan) in domestic violence response to ensure clear and trauma-informed communication during police interactions and legal proceedings; and funding specialised officers to work with police and marginalised communities in handling FDSV cases sensitively and effectively.

The Alliances also reiterate the need for emergency accommodation, complex case management and wrap around support services to take into account the nuanced requirements of migrant, refugee and CALD women and those with temporary visas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disabilities, and women living in rural, remote and regional areas.

- **Unpaid and paid care:**

The Alliances welcome the Government's investment in childcare, and increased wages within the care workforce. However, existing childcare programs often fail to address the unique needs of CALD families, particularly in regional and remote areas. The Alliances call for increased investment in culturally responsive childcare services to foster trust with CALD families and create inclusive environments through the employment of bicultural staff, benefitting both children and parents.

Additionally, the Alliances are disappointed that the Government has not committed to paying superannuation on the Carer Payment - despite the 2024 Federal Budget recognising the importance of superannuation on Paid Parental Leave in ensuring a dignified retirement for parents.

- **Economic equality and security:**

We welcome the Government's commitments to pilot initiatives to advance gender equality in gender segregated industries, and respond to the housing and cost-of-living crises. However, we stress the need for targeted measures that deliver safe, affordable, secure, and accessible housing options for women in all their diversity. The Alliances also call for substantial increases to income support to reduce the unacceptable rates of poverty across Australia.

- **Women's health:**

The Alliances commend the Government on its landmark investment in women's health, and investments in making critical healthcare more available and affordable. Increased access to endometriosis and pelvic pain clinics will be life-changing for many patients across Australia. However, more needs to be done to address health inequities for women with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, and regional, remote and rural women. The Alliances call for ongoing consultation with these communities to ensure these health services are culturally appropriate, accessible, and responsive to regional disparities.

- **Women's leadership:**

The Alliances support the continued investment in the work of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, but call for further disaggregated data and specific measures to improve leadership opportunities for women with disabilities,

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, and regional, remote and rural women.

Looking to the upcoming Federal Election, the Alliances will be seeking strong commitments that place women in all our diversity at the centre of public policy.

Statements from the National Women's Alliances

“We welcome significant investments in women’s health, which will increase the availability and affordability of healthcare for many women. However, it’s unclear how these investments will address the barriers women with disabilities face in an inaccessible health system. Women with disabilities are part of every community, but we are largely invisible in the budget commitments that seek to improve the lives of women throughout Australia. WWDA has long advocated for the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in mainstream public policy, including efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. We’re disappointed we haven’t seen targeted action for women with disabilities across mainstream women’s budget commitments.” - *Sophie Cusworth, CEO of Women With Disabilities Australia*

“We are delighted to support the Leaving the Violence Program trials being run by experienced Aboriginal Organisations starting in July 2025 in Broome, Darwin and Dubbo that will support all women in those regional and rural spheres. We look forward to these trials turning into fully funded programs throughout rural Australian to support women and their families. We welcome the three day a week childcare promise to support every child’s access to childcare, no matter where they live, and the 5 billion dollar investment into childcare access and increase remunerations for childcare workers.” - *Keli McDonald, CEO of the National Rural Women’s Coalition*

“NATSIWA acknowledges and welcomes the foundation laid by the Albanese government in advancing women’s safety, economic empowerment, food security, health and wellbeing and a long-term commitment to strengthen service delivery, support services in rural and remote Aboriginal Communities.” - *Wendy Anders, CEO of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA)*

“This budget recognises the pressures Australians are facing, and that is welcome. Heading into the 2025 Federal Election economic justice and gender equality must be central to our national plan for the future- not an afterthought, we are urging all parties to adopt our election platform-a clear, community-driven roadmap for gender equality that puts women’s safety, economic security, and leadership at the centre.” - *Katherine Berney, Executive Director of the Working with Women Alliance*

“This Budget takes important steps toward improving women’s safety, health and economic security—but inclusion must be more than intent. Migrant, refugee and CALD women face distinct and compounding barriers across every system, and

their inclusion must be intentional, not incidental. Equity means designing for every woman, especially those at the margins. As part of the National Women's Alliances, AMWA is committed to ensuring the lived experience of multicultural women is central to policy decision-making so that no woman is left behind."

— *Malini Raj, Executive Director, Australian Multicultural Women's Alliance (AMWA)*

About the National Women's Alliances

The National Women's Alliances are leading voices for gender equality in Australia. We provide evidence based, intersectional gender equality advice and civil society expertise to the Federal Government, to elevate the voices of women in Australia in all our diversity.

