



THE SALVATION ARMY AUSTRALIA

# Gender Inequality & Inequity

## The Issue

Gender inequality refers to the unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. It encompasses social, economic, political and cultural dimensions, and often results in discrimination and disadvantage for individuals based on their gender identity or expression. Ignorance and discrimination against people who are non-binary or transgender are also examples of gender inequality and inequity. Discrimination can happen against people of any gender. The most common form of gender-based discrimination is against women, but any discrimination on the basis of gender is harmful.

Although women make up over half the population in Australia, they are underrepresented in almost all places of influence. Across every industry in Australia, women are paid less than men,<sup>1</sup> and they are also disproportionately more likely to be doing unpaid work at home.<sup>2</sup>

Gender-based violence – including domestic violence, sexual harassment, and harmful traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation, are significant manifestations of gender inequality.

Discriminatory laws and social norms can perpetuate violence and limit survivors' access to justice and support services. Gender equality promotes and protects the safety and wellbeing of people of all genders.<sup>3</sup>

Gender inequality is also harming our economic and social interests. Discrimination and unsupportive workplace practices deprive our society of the full contributions of women, especially in leadership roles.<sup>4</sup> Gender equality and women's economic security has the

<sup>1</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2024). What is the gender pay gap? [Link](#).

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2022, October 7). Females do more unpaid work, males do more paid work [Media release]. [Link](#). females-do-more-unpaid-work-males-do-more-paid-work

<sup>3</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2020). Gender Equality in Australia – A Guide to Gender Equality in 2020. [Link](#). UN Women. (2018). Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment. [Link](#).

<sup>4</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2022). Australia's Gender Equality Scorecard. [Link](#).



potential to benefit boys and men too, through increased personal wellbeing, happier relationships, greater economic growth and more peaceful societies.<sup>5</sup>

## How can I get involved?

- [Commit to calling out sexism](#) - both overt and covert - when you come across it in your own life and in your interactions with others. We can challenge language and images that suggest that women are 'less than' men.
- Make an intentional effort to [learn](#) more about gender inequality in Australia and around the world.
- [Call on our government representatives](#) to commit to actively implementing policies that promote women's independence and decision-making. For example, policy changes that allow for a more even distribution of childcare responsibilities have the potential to enhance women's workforce engagement and reduce gender inequities.
- [Consider what influence you can have](#) on gender inequality in your own workplace, ministry or day-to-day life.

## For more information...

- [Goal 5 - United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [The Salvation Army Australia's Social Justice Stocktake](#)
- [Australian Human Rights Commission - Statistics about Gender Equality](#)

---

<sup>5</sup>Hudson, V.M., Ballif-Spanvill, B., Caprioli, M., and Emmett, C.F. (2014). Sex & World Peace. Columbia University Press Schieman, S., Ruppner, L., & Milkie, M.A. (2018). Who Helps with Homework? Parenting Inequality and Relationship Quality Among Employed Mothers and Fathers. Journal of Family and Economics, 39, 49-65. [Link](#). McKinsey Global Institute. (2015). The Power of Parity: How advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth. [Link](#).