

Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025

First Progress Report
2022 – 2023

TERRITORY FAMILIES,
HOUSING AND
COMMUNITIES



GLOSSARY

AGD	Department of Attorney-General and Justice
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
DCDD	Department of Corporate and Digital Development
DCMC	Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet
DEPWS	Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security
DIPL	Department of Industry, Planning and Logistics
DITT	Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDAHOBIT	International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia
IMD	International Men's Day
IWD	International Women's Day
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Androgynous +
MCNT	Multicultural Council of the NT
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NTPFES	Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Sector
NTWWC	Northern Territory Working Women's Centre
OCPE	Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
OGED	Office of Gender Equity and Diversity
STEAMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Music and Medicine
UMNT	United Muslims of the NT
UNAANT	United Nations Association of Australia – NT Branch
WGEA	Workplace Gender Equality Agency



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A message from the Minister



The Hon Ngaree Ah Kit MLA

Minister for Youth, Seniors and Equality

I present to the Northern Territory community, the first progress report of actions under the Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025.

The first ever Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan (2022-2025) seeks to lay the foundations for improved gender equality in the Northern Territory through sustained and collaborative approaches across government and in partnership with Northern Territory community organisations and individuals.

In this first progress report, we see what activities and actions Northern Territory Government agencies are undertaking to improve gender equality and where community is being supported to undertake this important work. This is the first progress report for the 3-year action plan and is the first across government audit of activities. I am heartened to see the number of initiatives and look forward to further progress towards gender equality in the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of the late Member for Arafura who was the Assistant Minister for Men's Policy and who passed away in December 2023. He was a strong role model, who dedicated his life and career to seek

better outcomes for all people and to make a positive change in his community. He was proud to be part of this government's commitment to achieving gender equality – to more equal partnerships and more shared responsibility between people. He was committed to all Territorians having access to the same rights and opportunities in life and equally sharing the benefits of these. His valuable contribution to the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly, to the electorate of Arafura, to his community and to all will be remembered and not forgotten.

Gender equality is a human right and fundamental if we are to progress social wellbeing, social justice and community cohesion. The Northern Territory has a diverse and unique population and as a community we must recognise that everyone experiences gender equality differently. Gender norms and stereotypes are interrelated with, and often compounded by other forms of disadvantage and discrimination.

We will continue our efforts to improve gender equality in the Northern Territory because it is necessary for improved outcomes for everyone, because this is important work and because to not do so is to accept the status quo.

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Ms Emma White

**Chief Executive Officer
Department of Territory Families,
Housing and Communities**

I am proud for the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities to lead the work to improve gender equality in the Northern Territory through the Office of Gender Equity and Diversity.

Actions to improve gender equality also have a positive impact on the work this agency undertakes to address, provide services for, and to prevent domestic, family and sexual violence in the Northern Territory.

This Department is a multi-functional human services and community-focussed agency that works to provide responsive, safe and quality services and programs that empower communities and improve social outcomes for Territorians. We have a very broad remit providing comprehensive community services including emergency management; urban and remote housing; child protection; youth justice; family and financial support; domestic, family and sexual violence

prevention and response; sport and recreation; heritage; arts; culture; disabilities; indigenous essential services; interpreting; libraries; multicultural affairs; seniors; youth as well as gender equity and diversity. Applying a gender lens to these policy and service areas can lead to improved outcomes for all of our clients.

Social change does take time and this work has many positive impacts on our community. We must maintain momentum and continue to progress towards a more gender equal Northern Territory. Actions under the Action Plan are being progressed across all government agencies. Some of these actions will take time requiring a long term commitment to change.

I look forward to working with all Northern Territory government agencies and with the Northern Territory community to progress towards a more inclusive, healthy, safe and resilient Territory for everyone.

“We must maintain momentum and continue to progress towards a more gender equal Northern Territory.”

Northern Territory Gender Equality Statement of Commitment

The Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 seeks to implement the Northern Territory Gender Equality Statement of Commitment.

The Statement of Commitment is underpinned by the idea that gender equality is fundamental to improving the lives of women and girls, men and boys and gender-diverse people and to creating an inclusive, safe and thriving Northern Territory.

This government has committed to reducing gender-based disadvantages and that approaches to improve gender equality will be grounded in the lived experiences of Territorians.

The NTG lead for this work is OGED

Principles

All actions to achieve this vision are guided by the following principles:

- Encourages inclusive and intersectional approaches.
- Supports the inclusion of gender equity measures.
- Builds evidence to find what works to improve gender equality in the Northern Territory.
- Challenges rigid gender norms and stereotypes.
- Focuses on long-term systemic, attitudinal and behavioural change.

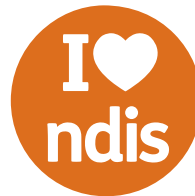
Vision

Territorians enjoy an inclusive, healthy, safe, fair and economically secure Northern Territory where gender is never a barrier to full participation and inclusion.

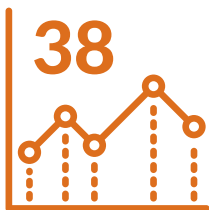
Population statistics



Darwin is the only capital with more males than females (with a sex ratio of 105.8 males per 100 females), while females outnumber males in the rest of the Northern Territory (99.3).¹



The Northern Territory has 5,522 NDIS participants of which, 50.5 per cent identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 6.3 per cent are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse.⁴



The median age for Northern Territorians is 38. Darwin has the youngest median age of all Australian capitals at 34.5 years.²



In Australia, 3-4 per cent of the population are gay, lesbian or bisexual. This figure is higher for people under 25, rising to 4 percent of males and 7 per cent for females.⁵



Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people make up 26.3 per cent of the Northern Territory's population with an equal 50/50 gender split between males and females.³

In Australia, up to 1 per cent of people identify as transgender or gender diverse⁶ and up to 1.7 per cent are intersex or have an intersex variation.⁷



22% of the NT population is born overseas⁸

Progress 2022 to 2023 – actions and activities

Overarching actions

The overarching actions of the Action Plan seek to address the limitations in the availability of research, baseline data and understanding about the nature and drivers of gender inequality. The actions focus on increasing and improving the collection and reporting of sex disaggregated data, increasing the evidence base to support policy and program design as well as increasing the understanding of the nature, extent and drivers of gender inequality.

A. Increase NTG’s collection and reporting of gender and sex disaggregated data.

Northern Territory Social Outcomes Framework

The Northern Territory Social Outcomes Framework has been developed to measure, summarise, monitor and report the wellbeing of Territorians over time. This work is being led by the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (DCMC) in partnership with demographic researchers at the Charles Darwin University’s Northern Institute.

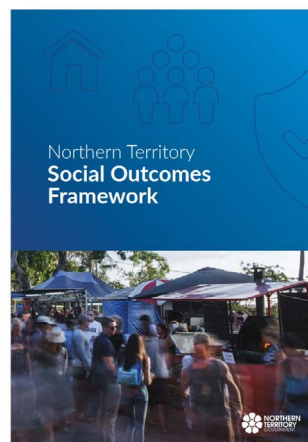
Part of this work involves the creation of a Social Outcomes Framework data dashboard, which is designed to be used to inform policy and service delivery decisions, and allows these indicators to be measured, monitored and reported over time. Where the data is available, the measures will be reported by gender.

In 2022, the Northern Institute undertook the My Territory Connections Survey to better understand social networks, community participation and perceptions about what it means to be a Northern Territorian.

The Northern Territory’s first Social Capital Index, which was informed by the My Territory Connections Survey, was launched in April 2023. The Social Capital Index gives values to the importance of community strength in making a good life for everyone in the

Territory. The Index puts a value on how communities come together when things get tough and is an important tool for tracking positive social outcomes across our population and over time. The Social Capital Index is available from the My Territory Connections website. The Social Capital Index will inform part of the Social Outcomes data dashboard which is anticipated to be released in 2024.

OGED is currently working with the demographic researchers and Charles Darwin University Northern Institute to develop suitable datasets and indicators that will underpin and monitor progress under the Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan through their work to inform the Social Outcomes Framework Data dashboard and Social Capital Index. This work is ongoing and it is anticipated that datasets and indicators will have been developed for inclusion in the second progress report of the Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan.



B. Increase the evidence-base to understand how Territorians experience gender inequality.

Support to the Caring about Care: Understanding First Nations Women's Unpaid Caring Roles Research Project

The Office of Gender Equity and Diversity (OGED) has provided support in two grants to the Caring about Care: Understanding First Nations Women's Unpaid Caring Roles Research Project. The research aims to provide an understanding of the full scope and nature of unpaid care work performed by First Nations women in Australia, the complex realities shaping decisions around unpaid caregiving, and the associated impacts on women. The project is working with First Nations women and organisations to understand how First Nations women themselves conceptualise care work, how they value and experience it, including its challenges, how much of it they do, and how and if policy could better recognise and value it. The research project is being undertaken by Dr Chay Brown, Australian National University in collaboration with the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), in response to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner's Wiyi Yani U Thangani ('Women's Voices') Report.

The grant funding from OGED assisted in supporting an Aboriginal researcher to undertake interviews and collect evidence from the Central Australia region to feed in to the Australia-wide project. The research will provide feedback directly to inform the standalone National Plan to End Violence Against First Nations Women and Children and provide empirical evidence to inform AHRC's ongoing policy advocacy.

Sister Girls Project

OGED provided funding to Darwin Indigenous Men's Service to undertake a series of workshops with Sister Girls from the Tiwi Islands to gather information regarding their needs and gaps in services.

The grant also assisted in the formation of a Sister Girl Reference Group which hosts regular meetings to discuss issues and to gather information. The group produced a report of the findings from the workshops which were held in Darwin. The Report will inform work being undertaken by OGED to better understand the experiences of Sister Girls in the Northern Territory and how services to support them can be improved.

C. Increase the understanding of gender auditing in public policy for the Northern Territory Public Sector.

Northern Territory Public Sector reporting to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency

In November 2021, it was agreed that states and territories would commence the work to report public service workforce data to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) against their gender equality indicators. In 2022-23, the Northern Territory Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) worked with all Australian Public Sector jurisdictions

and the WGEA to develop a common approach for reporting public service data. The common reporting approach is intended to provide a minimum level of reporting that can be accommodated by all jurisdictions, which can increase in the future once methodology and differences in data collection can be addressed which is critical for generating a robust and reliable dataset. The OCPE will continue to lead this work for the Northern Territory Public Sector.

Focus area 1: Community engagement

Outcome: Territorian's understanding about gender, gender diversity, the drivers of gendered violence and gender inequality is improved.

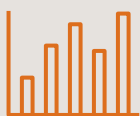
Why we focus on community engagement



The global gender gap is reducing, but at the current rate of progress, it will take 131 years to achieve gender parity.⁹



Half of Australians believe equality between men and women will be achieved in their lifetime, significantly lower than the global average (55 per cent).¹²



In 2023, Australia ranked 26th for gender equality internationally, up 17 places since 2022.¹⁰



42 per cent of LGBTQIA+ people hide their sexuality or gender identity at social and community events.¹³



71 per cent of Australians agree there is currently inequality between men and women. Women are more likely to agree than men (79 per cent versus 63 per cent).¹¹

1.1 Increase awareness, inclusion, and understanding of gender, gender diversity and gender equality.

In 2022-23 NTG agencies have undertaken to increase awareness and celebrate relevant international days to promote gender equality and celebrate gender diversity.

The Commissioner for Public Employment issued a Statement of Commitment to diversity and inclusion that includes support for gender equity and the creation of respectful workplaces free from discrimination and abuse as well as creating safe and welcoming workplace cultures that encourage LGBTQIA+ people to bring their true selves to work. In 2022, the Commissioner issued email correspondence to all Northern Territory Public Service (NTPS) employees encouraging participation and celebration

of International Women's Day, International Men's Day, Darwin Pride Festival and International Day of People with Disabilities.

Various events were held across NTG agencies in support of and to raise funds for International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT), Wear it Purple Day, LGBTQIA+ Pride events, Women's Health Week, Men's Health Week, International Women's Day (IWD), International Men's Day (IMD), International Day of the Girl Child and International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

International Women’s Day

International Women’s Day (IWD) is celebrated each year on 8 March. OGED provides an annual grants program to support activities and celebrations across the Northern Territory for IWD. In 2023, there were 32 events held across the Northern Territory that were supported by the grants program. To celebrate IWD there were marches; murals created; conferences; women’s gatherings; panel discussions; fashion parades; youth events; art and craft workshops and exhibitions; seniors events and expeditions; and quiz nights right across the Northern Territory.

The United Nations Association of Australia - Northern Territory Branch (UNAANT) was supported to host the Darwin IWD March in partnership with the City of Darwin. OGED provided the now famous purple International Women’s Day umbrellas to the Darwin march as well as to the marches held in Tennant Creek, Katherine and at Wagait Beach.



Banner to celebrate IWD created by the women of the Utopia Homelands as part of their IWD celebration activities hosted by the Urupuntja Aboriginal Corporation.



Participants at the UMNT event held for International Women’s Day – Together We Grow Better



Arafura Music Collective performance of Netanela Mizrahi's Hayashida Chizu where the audience participates.

“The Inner Voice – The Music of Women Composers”

One of the IWD activities supported through the OGED grants program, was the Arafura Music Collective 2023 International Women’s Day Celebration “The Inner Voice - The Music of Women Composers” performance which was held on 12 March 2023 in the Northern Territory Supreme Court Foyer. The event celebrated and recognised female composers and the grant supported a rearrangement of an existing work by Larrakia Singer/Songwriter Lena Kellie as a musical recognition of Larrakia country as well as a new work by Darwin-based composer Netanela Mizrahi. This new work is titled Hayashida Chizu and gives voice to the untold story of a young Japanese woman who was brought to Darwin in 1891 as a sex worker. She died young at the age of 22 and was buried in an unnamed grave. Netanela’s composition Hayashida Chizu provides a powerful and emotionally compelling recognition of a young woman who may have otherwise lived a forgotten life, as was the case for countless young women who were sex workers in the early colonial history of Australia. The work includes a section of audience participation to recognise Hayashida Chizu through 200 audience members singing 300 repetitions of her name.

International Men’s Day

NTG supported activities and events for International Men’s Day (IMD) on 19 November 2022. NTG sponsorship and supported attendance was provided to the International Men’s Day Forum held in Darwin. The IMD Forum is the largest gathering of men in the Territory discussing a range of topics relating to suicide prevention, family violence, men’s health and leadership. The former Minister for Equality and Inclusion launched the Men’s Places Policy and Program when she opened the Forum.

For IMD, OGED also sponsored a Multicultural Men’s Soccer Tournament that was jointly hosted by Football Without Borders and the Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) over 2 days. The event focussed on improved mental health outcomes for multicultural men and to provide opportunities to develop new friendships and support networks.



One of the many teams participating in the International Men’s Day Soccer Tournament.

1.2 Decrease unconscious bias, gender-based discrimination, and rigid gender roles at an individual community, institutional and societal level.

Northern Territory Public Sector training

The Northern Territory Public Sector is committed to supporting all employees and creating a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. OCPE releases the State of the Service Report each year, choosing topics of focus aimed at improving human resources in the public service. This report includes statistics and information regarding women in leadership in the NTPS, gender pay gap statistics, updates to the code of conduct and public sector diversity and inclusion activities.

NTG holds special memberships with several peak bodies specialising in diversity matters including the Diversity Council of Australia and Pride in Diversity. These memberships provide the NTPS and its employees with access to resources, training, and expert advice on relevant diversity matters.

The OneNTG Orientation Program is the across government orientation program that provides all government employees with a high-level overview of NTPS values, services and clients. The OneNTG syllabus includes a module regarding equity, diversity and inclusion. All new NTPS staff are required to complete the modules within 3 months of commencement.

In 2022-23, all Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES) personnel completed 'Respectful Workplace' training in Darwin and Alice Springs. Participants were provided with the skills to identify, address and prevent inappropriate behaviours in the workplace; how to handle bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct with confidence and professionalism and were also provided a toolkit of resources to support workplace advocacy.

Statement of Commitment supporting gender diversity and inclusion in educational settings

The Department of Education (DoE) has developed a Statement of Commitment supporting gender diversity and inclusion in educational settings with a specific focus on the need to develop and accept genuine personal identities and positive, healthy equitable and respectful relationships. The Statement of Commitment is designed to support safe, supportive equitable and inclusive learning environments for all children and young people regardless of their sexuality, gender identity and gender expression in education. The Statement of Commitment aims to empower children and young people, achieve inclusive and equitable education fostering a culture of respect, acceptance and appreciation for self and others. It also supports diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics in education.



Inclusion champions

In 2022, OCPD developed the Champions of Inclusion program, comprised of Northern Territory Public Sector Chief Executive Officers who are committed to supporting agency-wide strategies to achieve cultural change, minimise stereotypes and increase diversity competence. The program includes online videos where the Champions talk candidly about inclusion and diversity and creating a workplace where all employees are welcomed and supported regardless of age, gender, background, culture or religion.

The NTPFES recognise the significant contribution of an individual female employee or volunteer on International Women's Day each year through the Patricia Anne Brennan Award. The 2023 recipient was Sergeant Paula Dooley MacDonnell whose 34 years of service has inspired members across the Southern Command with her dedication and commitment to maintaining morale and going above and beyond the call of duty. The NTPFES have also established the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Change Opportunities (DISCO) Steering Committee which meets monthly. The Committee is made up of future leaders within the agency and the overall purpose is to enable high quality service provision that is accessible and supportive, and that provides the best possible outcomes while reflecting the community they serve. Diversity and inclusion encompasses a wide range of factors including gender, disability, mental health, neurodiversity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, religious beliefs, political beliefs, diversity of thought and more.

DoE implement the Australian Curriculum: General Capabilities and Physical Health and Education which helps children and young people to build personal and social capability and develop a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and identity. By the end of Year 10, students critically analyse contextual factors that influence identities, relationships, decisions and behaviours. They analyse the impact that attitudes and beliefs about diversity have on community connection and wellbeing.

Sydney World Pride

OGED's General Grants Program supported Northern Territory representation at Sydney World Pride events in February 2023. In partnership with Arts NT, sponsorship was provided towards a Northern Territory Mardi Gras Float where participants recreated the Northern Sky, with the participants becoming stars and lighting up Oxford Street.

Support was also provided to 6 SisterGirls from Gapuwiyak and Galiwin'ku to attend Sydney World Pride and "Marri Madung Butbut" (translating to Many Brave Hearts) which was the largest Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and global First Nations LGBTQIA+ SisterGirl and BrotherBoy celebration ever to take place in Australia as part of World Pride 2023.

The Territory's own True Colours Choir, Darwin's only LGBTQIA+ community choir, was also supported to attend and perform at the Out & Loud & Proud Choral Festival in Sydney as part of World Pride 2023.

Members of the True Colours Chorus performing at Out & Loud & Proud in Sydney 2023 as part of the World Pride Festival.



Northern Territory artist Matthew Van Roden was supported to participate in the Braving Time Exhibition celebrating the work of artists who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community which had an opening at Sydney World Pride.

These diverse role models and leaders continue to actively challenge rigid gender roles, celebrate gender diversity and educate the Territory community about gender equality. OGED is proud to support the work that they are undertaking through the General Grants program.

The *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993* requires the selection of an employee to be on the basis of merit which is based solely on the person's suitability to perform the relevant duties for employment in the relevant workplace and for

employment in the public sector. The Act incorporates the equality of employment opportunity principle, which is to ensure equal opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote diversity among employees. The mandatory merit selection and special measures training is provided regularly for all Northern Territory Public Sector employees, with refresher training required every 3 years.

Pride events

Pride celebrations continue to address unconscious biases by holding events that challenge rigid gender stereotypes. In 2022, OGED provided funding for Top End Pride's Family Day, Drag Queen Bingo with Humpty Doo and Rural Area Golf Club, and the City of Palmerston's Pride Day.



The Northern Stars of the NT Mardi Gras Float participating in Sydney World Pride in February 2023.

Congolese Community in the Northern Territory – International Women’s Day event

OGED, through the General Grants Program, supported an event for the Congolese community in the Northern Territory to celebrate IWD in 2022 and challenge rigid gender roles. Celebrations included discussions and presentations aimed at increasing community awareness about gender equality, women’s economic security and education, violence prevention and human rights. The celebration included a fashion parade by the Congolese women and traditional food, music and dancing.



Women from the Congolese Community in the NT at the International Women's Day Celebration 2022

Diversification of Milkwood Steiner Library collection

With funding provided by OGED, Milkwood Steiner School expanded and diversified their library collection to address gaps in gender equity representation in their non-fiction history books. The new collection included authors of history and historical figures who were women, LGBTQIA+ and gender diverse. This activity seeks to ensure that students see themselves reflected in the non-fiction collection and continue to foster a curiosity and love of reading and storytelling.

Dads Can Cook

The Tangentyere Council ran the ‘Dads Can Cook’ activity held at Mpwetyerre Community (Abbotts Town Camp). The project collaborated with Bush Wok Cooking who provided a structured educational cooking program. Men from the Tangentyere Men’s Family Safety Group and the men living at Mpwetyerre were invited to join in and challenge the gender stereotypes that foster unequal relationships. The group undertook cooking activities in the common areas in the community which evolved into an informal cooking competition, providing the men with opportunity to engage further.

The program provided men with education on how to cook and provide a healthy meal for their family, giving the men self-confidence, a sense of accomplishment and pride. Men were also engaged in discussions that raised awareness of the unhelpful gender stereotypes that can lead to family and domestic violence and men’s emotional distress. The activity fostered equality in their households by reducing the stigma of men undertaking domestic duties and helped to reverse out-dated, unhelpful and non-equitable stereotypical gender roles within a family. This program was supported with funding from OGED.

Inclusive language

NTG’s content guide is regularly reviewed and aligns with the latest edition of the Australian Government Style Manual. The content guide promotes the use of language that is culturally appropriate and respectful of the diversity of the Territory’s peoples. The inclusive language recommended in the guide conveys gender equality and is gender neutral. NTG respects preferences around gender and sexual identity with pronoun choice, job titles and personal titles.

The Department of Attorney-General and Justice (AGD)’s Commercial Division of the Solicitor for the Northern Territory commenced a project in December 2022 to update precedent and template documents including updating to gender neutral language to increase the inclusion of gender diversity and to decrease gender bias in professional roles.

OGED, through across government engagement, will continue to work with agencies to identify and update NTG documents to include gender neutral references.

1.3 Increase the understanding and awareness of Northern Territory obligations and rights under gender related international human rights conventions.

Amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act

AGD has led significant work to establish amendments to the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1992* which were passed in December 2022. These amendments introduced gender and sex as protected attributes. The amendments also recognise sexual services as a protected attribute. The amendments mark the first time the legislation has been substantially overhauled since the original Act was passed 30 years ago. The reforms aim to ensure the protections offered by the Act meet the contemporary needs of people living in the Northern Territory and address areas where concerns had been raised regarding the operation of the legislation.

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

OGED provided a grant to support an event held as part of International Day of the World's Indigenous People (9 August) in 2022. Celebrations included a Strong Women for Healthy Country Forum which discussed the role of Indigenous women in the preservation and transmission of traditional knowledge. The event was hosted by Antonia Burke Consulting and the Environment Centre of the Northern Territory, with support from Nicole Brown Consulting. The event was held at the George Brown Botanical Gardens.

“Indigenous women are the backbone of Indigenous people’s communities and play a crucial role in the preservation and transmission of traditional ancestral knowledge. Many Indigenous women are taking the lead in the defence of lands and territories and advocating for Indigenous peoples collective rights worldwide.”

Nicole Brown – in describing the Darwin event

Focus area 2: Health and wellbeing

Outcome: Territorians are well and live healthy and active lives.

Why we focus on health and wellbeing



34 per cent of LGBTI people say that they hide their gender identity or sexuality when accessing services.¹⁴



LGBTIQ+ people are nearly 6 times more likely to experience and be diagnosed with depression.¹⁷



Males are 3 to 4 times more likely to take their own life than females. The Northern Territory has the highest rate of suicide deaths in Australia and is consistently above the Australian average.¹⁵



Transgender people aged 14-25 are 15 times more likely to have attempted suicide.¹⁸



Conformity to traditional masculine norms is associated with reduced use of mental health care services among those in need (i.e. those with greater depressive symptoms).¹⁶

2.1 Increase the number of health and wellbeing policies, programs and partnerships that respond to gender inequities.

Northern Territory Sports Awards

The Northern Territory Sports Awards is an annual awards ceremony that recognises and promotes role models and achievements in sport and active recreation by athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers. Managed and delivered by Sport, Recreation and Strategic Infrastructure within the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (TFHC), the ceremony includes the Steve Abala Role Model Award which is presented to an athlete in any sporting field whose whole sporting career has been strongly connected to the Territory and is considered an ideal role model for Territory Young people to aspire to emulate.

Northern Territory Public Service Mentally Healthy Framework

OCPE has developed the NTPS Mentally Healthy Framework that recognises that mentally healthy workplaces are the foundation to creating a genuinely engaged, inclusive and diverse workforce. Through the Framework, the OCPE aims to ensure safe and inclusive workplaces where all employees are welcomed and supported, and can thrive and fulfil their potential. The OCPE is developing a toolkit to support the implementation of the Framework.

Specialist Approach to Domestic and Family Violence at Alice Springs Local Court

To improve the mental health outcomes for victim-survivors, AGD has implemented the Specialist Approach to Domestic and Family Violence at the Local Court in Alice Springs which aims to improve the safety of persons who have experienced domestic family violence and to minimise the re-traumatisation that can occur through involvement in the justice system. The Specialist Approach aims to ensure offenders are held to account and take responsibility for their actions, and increases opportunities for offenders to receive support to change their behaviour. Since the commencement of the Specialist Approach, it has been observed that there is improved consistency in the handling of domestic family violence matters at the Local Court and greater alignment with best practice in prioritising victim safety and defendant accountability. The Specialist Approach has increased the dialogue between the Local Court and stakeholders while promoting flexibility and embracing positive change by both the local court and stakeholders.

Miyalk Mala Women's Group

To support greater social connections and positive mental health outcomes for women and girls in Ramingining, Sarah Atkinson, with funding from OGED, is supporting the Miyalk Mala women's group after her consultation revealed that local women felt that women's stories were disappearing. Sarah worked with the Women's Safe House in Ramingining to create a revamped and stocked up area which provides local women with an organised, safe and welcoming space where they can go with plenty of activities for them to do while building the capacity and capability of the women in the community. The space is also linking organisations with the community and providing a safe place to discuss issues that affect the community, such as sexual health clinics, self-care workshops and disease prevention.

Darwin Fringe Festival

OGED provided funding to the Fringe First Timers Program run by performer, Anna Thomson. This program provides opportunities for greater social connection by offering mentoring for a diverse range of artists to build their capacity to bring their ideas or a show to life at the Darwin Fringe Festival. To ensure positive mental health outcomes, Anna offers this course for free to participants who identify as First Nations, LGBTQIA+, neuro diverse, female, gender non conforming, experience disability or have lived experience of a mental health condition.

NT Health and Wellbeing Index app

The Northern Territory Health and Wellbeing Index App measures and increases the Department of Health's (DoH) employees' self awareness of health, wellbeing and lifestyle behaviours. The App, which is for clinicians at all levels, has over 600 downloads and is available across all regions. The confidential and de-identified data can be accessed by DoH to identify emerging issues and enable preventative measures to be implemented.

It's Men's Time - Mental health self-care for multicultural men

With a general grant provided by OGED, the Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory's "Its Men's Time" project provided an increased awareness about mental health and suicide prevention among multicultural men residing in Darwin and Palmerston. Targeting teenage boys from multicultural backgrounds, the event hosted 3 guest speakers who have expertise in mental health issues and suicide prevention, and experience working with male teenagers and young men.

Updated Code of Conduct for NT Public Service employees

OCPE launched the new Code of Conduct for all NTPS employees. The Code sets out the minimum standards of conduct and ethical behaviour for all NTPS officers to ensure workplaces are respectful of diversity and actively inclusive. The new Code includes professional and courteous behaviour as a central pillar, demonstrating employee's commitment to a NTPS that is free from all forms of bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment and violence. To support the new Code of Conduct, the Department of Corporate and Digital Development (DCDD) also released a new eLearning package.

Gender Transition Leave

OCPE has continued its commitment to workplace supports that are gender responsive. The current Enterprise Agreements that are in force contain the

provision for gender transition leave. This leave is available for eligible employees who wish to undertake gender affirmation processes including psychologist support; hormone therapy or medical intervention; appointments to alter legal status; and other similar appointments to affirm a person's gender.

Mothers, Mentors and Doulas

Charles Darwin University's Mothers, Mentors and Doulas is a creative arts program designed for incarcerated women in Darwin Correctional Precinct. The program was supported by OGED and aimed to meet the needs of system impacted women who would gain value from trauma informed programs that are culturally safe for First Nations women, and those who identify as LGBTQIA+. Two murals were painted by participants: one inside the Correctional Precinct and one at a women's shelter in Darwin.

2.2 Increase the provision of safe services to gender-diverse people in all parts of the Northern Territory.

Training the Northern Territory Public Sector

Through the NTPS partnership with Pride in Diversity, DCDD offers a range of training aimed at promoting gender diversity awareness and inclusion through myLearning.

As part of DoE's Statement of Commitment, DoE offers a Gender Awareness Program which builds an awareness for and support of equality programs throughout the education workforce at key points of teachers employment. This program provides staff with an increased understanding of the impacts of gender and an ability to support equity in the workplace.

The NTPFES Respectful Workplace training focuses on creating workplaces where people enjoy coming to work, can perform at their best and feel free from being subjected to inappropriate behaviours. The aim of the

program is to support employees in taking ownership of their behaviour and performance, looking out for the safety of their colleagues and developing leaders who can deal with inappropriate behaviours effectively and efficiently. This training is mandatory for all NTPFES personnel.

DoH delivered gender diversity training for Top End Regional Health Service staff at Royal Darwin Hospital. DoH's LGBTQIA+ Consumer Committee identified a number of topics as key to increasing knowledge and awareness of gender and sexuality diversity, including transgender awareness and gender inclusion; Primary Health Care; Trans 101 workshop on gender diversity; and Experience and Reflections from Northside LGBTQIA+ Clinic.

Silver Rainbow Training

Silver Rainbow Training is designed to improve the experiences of LGBTQIA+ people as they age and enter the Australian aged care system. In 2023, to support improved service provision to Territorians from LGBTQIA+ communities, OGED partnered with the Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council to deliver Silver Rainbow Training to aged care and allied service providers in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Northern Territory Surrogacy Act 2022

The *Northern Territory Surrogacy Act 2022* commenced in December 2022. The Act provides individuals, and couples with opportunity to become parents through the new surrogacy provisions, which are inclusive and accessible with no restrictions for intended parents based on sex, gender, sexual orientation or marital status.

NT Health Inclusion Strategy Plan of Actions 2019-2022 – Respecting people with diverse sexualities and gender identities

DoH's Inclusion Strategy Plan of Actions 2019–2022 focuses on respecting people with diverse sexualities and gender identities and promotes the health and wellbeing of sexuality and gender diverse people, families and communities. There are a number of initiatives that DoH is undertaking under this Strategy to promote inclusion and provide supportive services to gender-diverse people and communities in the Territory.

A Workforce Wellbeing Coordinator has been recruited to lead, develop and implement sustainable system-wide wellbeing projects and initiatives to support staff across NT Health. The first LGBTQIA+ staff survey was circulated to NT Health staff in August 2022 to identify areas of service improvements in health service delivery for LGBTQIA+ consumers and identify specific gender related staff training needs across the Northern Territory.

In addition, DoH's LGBTQIA+ Committee has undertaken a review of NT Health policies to update the language definitions and refresh the policies to ensure that they deliver a more inclusive, respectful healthcare and workplace for gender-diverse and intersex consumers and staff through improved clinician awareness and service delivery.

Through engagement with the Tiwi Islands Sister Girl community, DoH has created co-designed health resources to address mental and physical health inequities experienced by Tiwi Sister Girls. The resources have improved Sister Girl engagement with NT Health.

Top End Pride events

With funding provided by OGED, Top End Pride hosted the Katherine Pride Festival Family Picnic Brunch on 19 June 2022 and the Darwin Pride Family Day on 25 June 2022. Both events celebrated the diversity of the LGBTQIA+ communities and brought together a multitude of local talent and services to increase the visibility of the LGBTQIA+ communities in a fun and inclusive way. The events connected LGBTQIA+ communities with health, support and education services in a safe place that reduced stigma and violence, encouraged participation in all events from a wide range of people, ages and interests. OGED also provided sponsorship for Darwin Pride in 2023.

Sophie deLightful Trans Visibility event

In 2022-23, OGED provided funding to Sophie deLightful, in partnership with the NT Aids and Hepatitis Council, to host the 'Sophie deLightful presents Gender Equality and Diversity in the Arts' Trans Visibility Day event. The event provided visibility of gender diversity in the community and educated, discussed and explored the lived experiences of gender diverse people in Darwin.

2.3 Increase participation of Territorians of all genders in sport and physical activity.

TFHC's Sports and Active Recreation Strategic Plan 2021-25 aims to build safe, strong and proud communities where every Territorian is valued and able to participate in sport and active recreation. To increase inclusion and participation of Territory women, girls and gender-diverse people in sport and physical activity, under this Plan, the Department supports the policies and resources within the sporting sector that increase participation for identified target groups.

The Office of Youth Affairs funded 9 services to promote and deliver inclusive after-hours programs that engage the diverse interests and backgrounds of young people, which includes:

- Hoops for Health – First Nations Hardwood Excellence which is a basketball event showcasing Territory female sporting role models.
- 'Geektacular' – an inclusive social event for young people to have fun, dress creatively, explore fantasy, digital worlds and showcase many skills.
- Gaming after Dark – a safe event that targets young people with gaming/esports interests that is all inclusive.

To encourage young girls and women to try football, OGED provided funding to the Litchfield Football Club who hosted their first women and girls pre season

development program. The program helped to remove barriers to participation in sport by providing a safe and inclusive space for new players to develop their skills at no cost.

In 2022, TFHC promoted Emma Stark, an AFL superstar, umpiring legend and the 2022 Junior Sports Person of the Year, as a positive sporting role model through social media and news releases.

Mums on Bikes

To promote an active lifestyle in Galiwin'ku, Mums on Bikes provides a social outlet for women and girls to be active in a safe and support program. OGED provided funding for the program to expand by creating a home base for the Mums on Bikes Program which offers cool water, ice and bike maintenance supplies. In creating a home base for the program, Mums on Bikes received a large donation of BMX, mountain and children bikes which enabled them to grow and reach more of the community including school aged boys and girls, and young men. This initiative is a perfect example of the positive effects of active recreation and community based ideas, with the success being highlighted by National Indigenous Television (NITV).

Focus area 3: Safety

Outcome: Territorians are safe, respected and are free from violence.

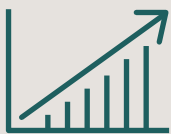
Why we focus on safety



The domestic and family violence related homicide rate in the Northern Territory is **7 times higher** than the national average.¹⁹



Men are more likely than women to experience violence by a stranger. Women are more likely than men to experience violence by a known person.²³



The domestic and family violence related assault rate in the Northern Territory is **4 times higher** than the national average.²⁰



Domestic or family violence is a leading driver of homelessness for women.²⁴



75 Aboriginal women have been killed by a current or former intimate partner in the Northern Territory over the last 2 decades.²¹



Across Australia, one **woman was killed every 9 days** and one man every 29 days, by a partner between 2014-15 and 2015-16.²²

3.1 Increase activities that challenge rigid gender roles and address the drivers of gender-based violence.

Legislative reform

AGD has undertaken significant work on legislative reforms to review and update sexual offences under the Criminal Code. The reforms will modernise existing offences, introduce some new offences and bring sexual offences under the operation of the criminal responsibility provisions. These legislative reforms incorporate recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; advocacy work from the 2021 Australian of the Year, Grace Tame; as well as some law reform initiatives that have occurred in other jurisdictions across Australia.

AGD is also undertaking a review of legislation and justice responses to domestic and family violence in the Northern Territory to improve the responsiveness of the justice system for victim survivor people who commit domestic and family violence. In November 2022, legislative reforms relating to mandatory sentencing were passed. This included the introduction of new community sentencing options and strengthening protections for victim and survivors by increasing the penalties for offenders of repeated breaches of domestic violence orders. These reforms will be used to underpin future resources on safe and consensual sexual practices and respectful relationships.

Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grants

The Northern Territory Office of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction provides the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grants to support primary prevention projects which challenge and change social and cultural attitudes, practices and structures that underpin domestic, family and sexual violence. The aim of the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Grants Program is to increase and strengthen evidence based primary prevention projects in the Northern Territory.

In 2022, the following projects were funded for 3 years under the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grants program:

- Together We Can: Strengthening Safe, Equal and Respectful Relationships for Young People (Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation)
- Malparara Women's Advisory Group (Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council Aboriginal Corporation)
- U Right Sis? Staying Safe Online (Equal Research)
- Dhatam Primary Prevention Program (Galiwin'ku Women's Space)
- Ngalmuka Healing – Time and Place (Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation)
- Safe Venues Program - The All Good Project (MusicNT)
- Nisaa (UMNT Incorporated)
- Respectful Relationships Workshops and Resources for Yuta Yolŋu (Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Aboriginal Corporation)
- Amplifying Voices - A Leadership Program For Young Women With Lived Experience (YWCA Australia)
- Channels of Hope for Gender (World Vision Australia)

Men's Places Policy and Program

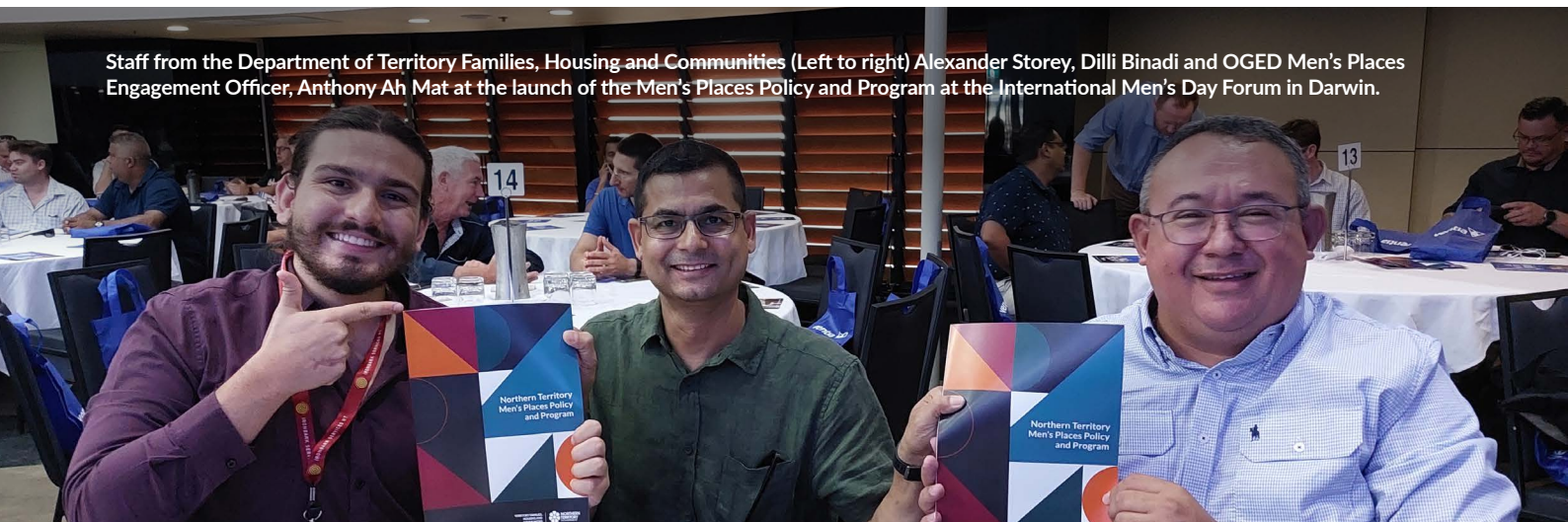
The Northern Territory Men's Places Policy and Program aims to improve the health and emotional wellbeing of men and form community connections and support networks. The Men's Places Policy and Program was launched on International Men's Day (19 November) in 2022. The Men's Places Policy and Program is underpinned by the following principles:

- Men's activities and programs are community-led and community developed and designed to meet the needs of the community;
- social connections, peer support, education and skills development and positive health and wellbeing will be supported through men's activities and programs;
- positive male role models and the positive contributions men can make to their community and for their families will be promoted through men's activities and programs.

The Men's Places Policy and Program includes the establishment of a Men's Network to assist in connecting men's places across the Northern Territory to share resources, exchange knowledge and provide opportunities for partnering and collaboration.

The Men's Places Policy and Program is also underpinned by a grants program that makes available \$100,000 per year for grants up to \$10,000 for organisations and community groups to deliver Men's programs and activities that align with the key focus areas of the Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 and the principles of the Men's Places program. This grants program is delivered through OGED.

Staff from the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (Left to right) Alexander Storey, Dilli Binadi and OGED Men's Places Engagement Officer, Anthony Ah Mat at the launch of the Men's Places Policy and Program at the International Men's Day Forum in Darwin.



Talking Respect

To facilitate discussions around gender roles and drivers of gender based violence, the Women's Safety Services of Central Australia and the Tennant Creek Women's Refuge developed the Talking Respect website to provide a newly developed education resource package to teachers, health workers and other professionals. The Office of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction partially funded this project through the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grants. The website includes facilitator manuals; video interviews with young people in Central Australia; and other supporting materials addressing a range of themes that impact on young people's understandings and experiences of relationships and sexuality. The Talking Respect website was launched with community events in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek that built community awareness of the resources, the issues they address and how the resources can be accessed.

PARt Symposium

The Women's Safety Services of Central Australia were supported by TFHC to host the Prevent Assist Respond Training (PARt Project) symposium that included workshops and learnings that centred on the drivers of gender based violence. On International Women's Day 2023, the PARt Symposium provided a unique opportunity to hear from specialists from across the domestic, family and sexual violence services sector. This included presentations from: Micaela Cronin, Australian Government Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner; the Hon Kate Worden MLA, Northern Territory Minister for Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence; and Michael White, the then Assistant Commissioner for Northern Territory Police.

GO! Girls Only Nights

Funding was provided to Two Two One Mental Health for their Charity GO! Girls Only Nights, a program for vulnerable young women aged 10-17 years. GO! Nights is a fun and innovative youth program that empowers young women to develop wellbeing, autonomy, independence and promote positive decisions through meaningful conversations and workshops. These skills are essential to creating strong women who are confident to follow their ambitions and assert their independence. This program was created to address the lack of safe spaces in the Northern Territory for young women. The program aims to create community connections between young women, positive role models and support services to help them to build healthy strong relationships and bonds.

Contraceptive support

The Family Planning Welfare Association of the Northern Territory, with funding from OGED, supported women's autonomy by providing free reproductive contraception to young, marginalised and vulnerable people. The Northern Territory has the highest rates of unplanned pregnancies per capita in Australia. There are many barriers that prevent access to acceptable contraception for people such as cost, ineligibility for Medicare, access to procedures and public health sector wait times. This program removes the cost barrier to people in need of contraception and aims to reduce the high rates of unplanned pregnancies in the Northern Territory.



3.2 Increase support for employees experiencing domestic, family, and sexual violence and harassment.

Northern Territory Public Sector policies

In 2022, OCPE launched a Policy for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment in Workplace. The Policy aims to provide a safe, flexible and respectful environment for employees irrespective of gender, age, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, culture or religion. The sector-wide Policy is clear that sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated in the NTPS. The next step is to develop training for staff that supports the Policy.

DoH's updated and refreshed Appropriate Workplace Behaviour and Sexual Harassment policies include online training for employees on domestic and family violence legislation and information sharing obligations.

DoH's Clinical Leaders Challenge aims to address the safety and culture of health professions. In May 2022, the Challenge sponsored 2 employees to attend the Medical Board of Australia's Culture of Medicine Symposium. The Symposium, as a collective, explored how the serious concerns of bullying, harassment and discrimination can be addressed and what can be done to improve the culture of medicine.

Respect@Work

NTG is developing an implementation plan, led by TFHC, for progressing recommendations under the Respect @ Work: Workplace Sexual Harassment Report. AGD is implementing training for all staff based on the Human Rights Commission Respect@Work Sexual Harassment education.

Peer to peer Forensics Training Project

TFHC's OGED in partnership with the Office of Domestic Family Sexual Violence Reduction co-funded the Northern Territory Aids and Hepatitis Council to undertake a project that sought to:

- Provide safe pathways for sex workers to transport preliminary forensic kits (PFK) to secure forensics fridges.
- Identify gaps including lack of forensic facilities in hospitals.
- Agreement from key safety service provider organisations to support and maintain pathways and resources for sex workers.

The project was delivered in Darwin, Katherine, and Alice Springs and expanded to Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy. The project included the Northern Territory Police Sex Crimes Unit and the Director of Public Prosecutions. This project will improve the support for sex workers in the Northern Territory who experience sexual violence in the workplace. The use of the kits allow the collection of evidence from a sexual assault that can be used to prosecute the crime. Prior to the introduction of the kits, victims would be required to travel to Darwin or Alice Springs for the collection of evidence.

3.3 Increase responses to gender-based violence experienced by older people in the Northern Territory.

Elder Abuse Project

TFHC's Office of Senior Territorians provides funding to Darwin Community Legal Service to deliver the Older Persons Strategic Advocacy project. The project is aimed at identifying the extent and nature of elder abuse in the Territory, the effectiveness of current responses, raising community awareness and limiting its impact.

This project assists in the prevention of elder abuse by providing a variety of resources from fact sheets about elder abuse, wills, advance personal plans, financial abuse and adult guardianship. Building on these resources, the Darwin Community Legal Service hosted information sessions about wills, advance personal plans and adult guardianship to aged care service providers. Further, a workshop on Elder Abuse Basics was delivered to service providers in Northern Territory regional centres.

In 2023, the Darwin Community Legal Service were provided with a grant to support older Territorians experiencing abuse through a new Outreach Service Model. Building on their past elder abuse work, this service model focuses on information, education and support being provided in community settings. The work aims to raise community awareness, provide support and information for seniors experiencing abuse, and encourages local responses to the problem by building the capacity of community service organisation responses.

The Office of Senior Territorians is also undertaking collaborative planning to ensure that ongoing grant outcomes are maximised in regional and remote areas, and are aligned with the National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019-2023. This planning is anticipated to lead to a competitive grant process to address identified needs and distribute targeted funds across the sector to broaden the range of services and support available to Territorians in need.



Focus Area 4: Economic Security

Outcome: Territorians achieve their full potential and are economically secure.

Why we focus on Economic Security



Australia's gender pay gap is **22.8 per cent** - for every \$1 men make on average, women earn 77 cents.²⁵



Both across Australia and in the Northern Territory, **men are more likely than women** to be employed full time.^{28,29}



The Northern Territory's gender pay gap is currently **15.6 per cent**. This is the second widest pay gap in the country, behind Western Australia at 21.4 per cent.²⁶



Women continue to bear the primary responsibility for unpaid care work.³⁰



The superannuation gap between Australian men and women is around **23.4 per cent**.³¹



The Northern Territory Public Service gender pay gap is **5.19 per cent**.²⁷



Territorians have the lowest average superannuation balance of all the states and territories.³²

4.1 Increase the number of Territorians undertaking non-traditional occupations for their gender.

NTG scholarships

Across NTG, a number of agencies provide scholarships for people entering non traditional occupations for their gender by strengthening their ability to undertake study in their chosen field.

The Minister for Equality and Inclusion Scholarships are funded by TFHC and delivered through Charles Darwin University. This scholarship program encourages people to undertake tertiary education and training to enhance their employment, general life outcomes and long-term economic security. This program includes scholarships for:

- Women in Higher Education
- Women in SITE (Science, Information Technology and Engineering)
- Women in Vocational Education and Training (VET)
- Women in Non-Traditional VET Trades

- Men in Higher Education for Non-Traditional Occupations
- Men in Non-Traditional VET Trades.

The Department of Industry, Planning and Logistics offers scholarships to undergraduate students completing tertiary qualifications in engineering at Charles Darwin University and these are supplemented with paid work placements. The assessment panels are strongly encouraged to consider gender and other diversity groups when assessing applications. The Department's Early Careers Program supports 8 scholarships, 9 Graduates and 6 Technical Trainees, with recruitment for a further 8 technical trainees nearing completion. Successful applicants are eligible for \$15,000 per year which enables them to gain 'on the job' knowledge and experience.

'In the Mix' Workshops

With funding from OGED, Kim Dorfman is working to increase women and gender-diverse people's participation in the professional music industry by providing an 8 week workshop called 'In the Mix' which builds practical skills and self-confidence to become a DJ. These workshops provide a space, specifically for female-identifying, trans, non binary and LGBTQIA+ people who have felt excluded or lacked confidence in the electronic music scene due to gender bias. 'In the Mix' provides participants with the abilities and community support to enter the electronic music scene as artists.

NTG traineeships and recruitment initiatives

To address barriers to women and gender-diverse people in becoming a career firefighter, the NTPFES conducted an internal review of the career firefighter's recruitment process to improve existing recruitment workflows and ensure they are fit for purpose, efficient, effective and open to increasing gender equality.

As part of drafting their strategy plan, the Department of Environment, Parks, and Water Security is identifying ways to increase resources and support for women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workplaces. The Department is also exploring ways to encourage young students into STEM careers.

DCDD implemented a new cross-sectoral ICT traineeship pilot program in 2022 which includes diversified digital industry roles and encourages female representation. In 2022, the DCDD also established and sponsored an award recognising women in ICT at the annual NT Digital Excellence Awards. Run by a committee of representatives from ICT peak bodies, the NT Digital Excellence Awards formally celebrates individuals and organisations for outstanding digital achievement and innovation in the Territory.

Digital Futures

Digital Futures is a NTG program that showcases diversity and aims to inspire women and girls to consider careers in a digital field. The program delivers innovative opportunities and demonstrations to incite greater interest in developing their digital skills and develop their careers in a digital field. Digital Futures events occurred in March, June and October in 2022.

In 2022, the Digital Futures events had a focus on confidence, resilience, and inspirational stories and included:

- International Women's Day 2022 Confidence and Resilience in Digital – held on 3 March, this co presented digital event with the Australian Computer Society (ACS) NT Branch focused on how women working in digital, technical and ICT professions can build confidence and resilience in an ever evolving landscape.
- Paving the Digital Way – a free webinar streamed live from the Darwin Convention Centre on 16 June 2022. Aimed at women aged 18 to 45 considering a digital career and interested in embracing new technology. The webinar featured women keynote speakers who were trailblazers within their fields of technology, STEM and gaming. They presented their inspirational and varied digital journeys and participated in a live Question and Answer session.
- October Business Month – event sponsorship for a 'Women in Business' lunch where guests heard from legendary trailblazer, business woman and former Australian of the year Ms Ita Buttrose AC, OBE via livestream to both Darwin and Alice Springs. A number of women students studying ICT at Charles Darwin University were also provided tickets to the lunchtime event.

4.2 Increase activities that support gender equality in the workplace, and that provide support against bullying and sexual harassment.

Northern Territory Working Women's Centre

The Northern Territory Working Women's Centre (NTWWC) is a not-for-profit organisation that supports women in the workplace. With support from OGED service funding, the NTWWC provides factsheets that educate and support women in relation to discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace as well as information about general protections and adverse action. The NTWWC also provides free support, referrals and advice to women and those that identify as women experiencing sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

NTG initiatives

NTG conducted the bi-annual People Matters staff survey which includes questions on experiences of sexual harassment, including how reports are handled in the workplace. Responses from the Survey provides

evidence base data to inform and identify strategies for improvement.

NTPS staff are encouraged to report incidents of verbal and emotional abuse as well as physical abuse in the workplace that helps to inform management of workplace health and safety issues, in particular those impacting staff in complaint management and customer service roles.

In 2022, AGD progressed amendments to the *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011* to make explicit the need to manage psychosocial hazards in the workplace. The amendments aim to eliminate or minimise, so far as reasonably practicable, psychosocial hazards in the workplace. In addition to the amendment of regulations, an educational campaign is being developed and a model code of practice will be adopted by NTG.

4.3 Increase actions that assist Territorians to be financially resilient across the life course.

Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council

OGED participates on a number of national committees to progress actions to address women's economic security.

OGED and the Office of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction supports the Minister for Youth, Seniors and Equality and the Minister for Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence on the Australian Government's Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council. The Council is co chaired by the Australian Government Minister for Women and the Minister for Social Services. The Council's 2023 Work Plan sets three key priorities, being:

- increasing gender balance across the labour market through setting targets for gender balance across highly gender-segregated industries and utilising a procurement-led approach to gender equality;

- delivering on the National Cabinet commitment to provide public sector workforce data to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency; and
- the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032.

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency is an Australian Government agency established by the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* to promote and improve gender equality in the workplace and support employers in advancing workplace gender equality. OCPE is working on and collaborating at a national level to assist in developing consistent methods for reporting Public Sector data relating to gender equality to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

The Northern Territory Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) supports work being undertaken by the Council of Federal Financial Relations to improve women's economic outcomes such as gendered responsive procurement and gender impact assessments.

Financial literacy

To support Northern Territory organisations to develop resources to increase individual financial literacy, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (DITT) has partnered with the Somerville Community Services in a 5-year funding agreement to provide problem gambling financial counselling services in Darwin, Palmerston and Katherine.

Scholarships and incentives

The Minister for Equality Scholarships aim to provide financial support that improves women's economic and educational outcomes. Delivered through the Charles Darwin University Scholarship Program, the annual scholarships are targeted to women who are studying science, information technology and engineering and those seeking to enter male dominated industries.

DITT provides funding to Territory businesses to attract critical workers as part of the Work Stay Play program. Business can receive a \$1,000 once-off payment for up to 20 eligible workers to assist workers to move to the Northern Territory.

TFHC administers the Northern Territory Seniors Recognition Scheme which provides \$500 each year to Territory residents aged 65 or over to provide recognition for the valuable contribution senior Territorians make to the community. The Department also administers the Northern Territory Concession Scheme, which provides concessions on a range of essential goods and services to help with living expenses for Senior Territorians. Concessions are available in relation to council rates, electricity, water and sewerage, licence and vehicle registration and spectacles.

4.4 Increase gender equality activities focused on education and workforce participation so that Territorians can maintain sufficient income across the life course.

Grandmothers Group Program

TFHC's Grandmothers Group Program provides mentoring support and help to improve young girls' capacity to pursue valuable education and careers by developing their life skills and personal abilities. The Grandmothers Group encourages young girls to make choices that impact positively on their lives.

This group meets regularly at the Ntaria Women's Safe House and each meeting focuses on activities that support long term systematic, structural, attitudinal, and behavioural changes that affect women in a remote Aboriginal community. The group challenges rigid gender norms, stereotypes and also encourages young women to participate in community development activities to address social issues in their community.

Cross jurisdictional working groups for women's economic security

OGED is involved in a number of cross-jurisdictional working groups that have a focus on women's economic participation and opportunities and financial security,

such as:

- Gender Responsive Budgeting Community of Practice which informs the Women's Economic Opportunities Senior Officials Working Group which in turn informs the Council on Federal Financial Relations.
- Joint meetings of the Offices for Women from across Australia whose aims include improving economic outcomes for women.

OGED provided input to the National Jobs and Skills Summit held in September 2022 in relation to barriers to women's workforce participation and economic security.

OGED provides support to the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council. The Council, as part of the work being undertaken in 2023, is looking to address issues impacting and barriers to women's workforce participation.

DTF, in collaboration with OGED, also supports the work that is being undertaken at a national level by the Council of Federal Financial Relations that supports increasing women's economic opportunities such as gender-responsive budgeting, women's workforce participation and gender-wage gaps as well as gender responsive procurement.

Equity Training Program

Providing opportunities to upgrade skills can strengthen older women's abilities to secure employment. DITT's Equity Training Program provides funding for training and employment programs for identified equity groups, including mature-aged people, for programs that are designed to improve the training and employment outcomes for eligible people.

Women's Innovation Network NT

To develop business opportunities for women and gender-diverse people, DITT established the Women's Innovation Network NT which drives outcomes such as increasing the involvement and representation of Women in innovation and science, technology,

engineering and maths (STEM). The Network includes representatives from almost every industry across the Territory and has a dedicated group of women volunteering on the committee to bring value in this area.

The Women's Innovation Network NT is working towards the following outcomes:

- Representation of women in innovation and science, technology, engineering, art, mathematics and medicine (STEAMM) in the Territory is strengthened.
- A pipeline of opportunities and pathways to encourage and attract girls and young women into innovation where STEAMM is embedded.
- Women are empowered to engage with the Territory's innovation ecosystem and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Availability and visibility of support and development opportunities are increased.



4.5 Increase initiatives and incentives that promote equal sharing between genders of unpaid work and caring responsibilities.

Northern Territory Public Service supporting flexible working arrangements

OCPE is responsible for negotiating contemporary and sustainable NTPS working arrangements in accordance with NTG Wages and Enterprise Bargaining policies.

As the statutory employer of NTPS employees, the Commissioner for Public Employment and their office is responsible for negotiating conditions within the NTPS enterprise bargaining framework that includes a range of flexible work conditions for example:

- Flexible Lifestyle (purchased) Leave.
- Flexible work regardless of the circumstances the request can only be refused by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or delegate on reasonable business grounds.
- Home Based Work.
- Short Term absences for family and community responsibilities.
- Job Sharing and career breaks.
- Compassionate Leave has been increased from 3 to 5 days for immediate family or household members.
- Domestic and family violence leave provisions extended to include sexual violence outside the domestic setting.

The inclusion of provisions in approved enterprise agreements support gender equity in the NTPS as women often undertake home care giving responsibilities.

Most agencies have seen an increase in the number of flexible work arrangements approved that enable staff to continue and/or return to work and to reduce gender inequalities typically associated with parental or caring

roles at home. The increased participation of persons, particularly women, in the workforce with family and caring responsibilities builds economic independence and financial resilience.

NTG agencies acknowledge the benefits of supporting and approving requests for flexible work arrangements from employees as need arises to promote work life balance and aim to act as a role model to other organisations in the Territory.

OCPE provides case study examples of managers and the employees who have reached a fair and flexible decision in meeting flexible work arrangements.

Valuing the work of our carers

DCDD and DoH partnered together for International Day of People with Disabilities to promote supports and resources for carers.

The Northern Territory Disability Services Awards offer an opportunity to recognise the exceptional individuals working in the disability sector as well as government and non-government services, organisations, businesses and programs that demonstrate outstanding commitment to improving the lives of people with disability. The Awards recognise and promote the outstanding contributions by individuals, groups and organisations to creating an inclusive Territory where people with disability are valued, respected and can contribute to community.

Focus Area 5: Leadership and Participation

Outcome: Territorians fully participate in all aspects of life and influence the decisions that impact them.

Why we focus on leadership and participation



Women are underrepresented in key decision-making roles across almost all industries in the Australian workforce. Women comprise only:

- **19.4 per cent** of CEOs
- **32.5 per cent** of key management positions
- **33 per cent** of board members
- **18 per cent** of board chairs.³⁴



Women make up **34.2 per cent** of ASX200 Boards as at 30 November 2021.³⁵



In 2023, **22 per cent** of CEO's, across 65 Australian Sports Commission funded National Sporting Organisations, were women.³⁶

5.1 Increase gender balance in leadership and decision-making roles in the Northern Territory community.

Northern Territory Public Service women's leadership initiatives

The NTPS is committed to building a culturally responsive and inclusive workforce, including increasing the representation of women in leadership and Aboriginal employees into more senior levels across the sector. In support of this goal, OCPE centrally coordinates and promotes across government training including leadership courses.

NTG has a range of strategies and resources to increase gender equality in leadership and decision-making internally and externally. To achieve a greater diversity of skills, experiences and knowledge, NTG is committed to achieving gender balance on all government boards and committees. Since reporting commenced in 2016, the percentage of women on NTG boards and committees has increased by 8.6 per cent with women holding 44.6 per cent of positions as at 30 April 2023.

DCMC, in partnership with OCPE, host the Women's Leadership Network. The Network aims to bring women from all facets of the Darwin community together to inspire and be inspired, to encourage cultural change through positive leadership, to promote female role models and to provide women with opportunities to develop, network and share.

DoH supported 36 women to undertake Women's Leadership Training offered by OCPE to improve the promotion and retention of women in leadership positions.

In 2022, DITT highlighted the work of Dr Jana Matthews and Mikaela Jade under the Our Innovation Heroes section of their website. These women are Territory business leaders and their contributions to the Territory are recognised.

Northern Territory Sport and Active Recreation Strategic Plan 2021-2025

The Northern Territory Sport and Active Recreation Strategic Plan 2021-2025 actively encourages equitable and diverse leadership on boards and committees of funded sports organisations in the Northern Territory. To support this, TFHC has created the Women in Sport Network which will address the under representation of women in leadership roles of organised sport and seek to understand and monitor the allocation of resources across women and girls sport to ensure equitable allocation. The Network is will convene its first meeting in 2023.

Under the Plan, an online Sport Integrity Toolkit has been developed which provides relevant resources to increase the capability of administrators to encourage equitable and diverse leadership across the sector. The Toolkit includes an inclusive sport framework resource to assist clubs, associations and peak sporting bodies to develop an overt message that sport does not tolerate discrimination, barriers or disadvantage.

Awards for excellence and achievement

There are a variety of Northern Territory awards that celebrate the achievements, contributions and leadership of Territorians regardless of gender. The awards provide an opportunity to support and promote equality role models.

The Northern Territory Sports Awards offer an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of sporting role models. In 2022, a number of women received awards including for Junior Sports Person of the Year; the Eric Johnson Coach of the Year; Volunteer of the Year; and the Karen Schneider SMA Safer Sport Award. In addition, Dianne MacDonald and Isobel Appo, were inducted into the Roll of Honour.

DoH hosts the Northern Territory Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards which recognise and celebrate the outstanding efforts of nurses and midwives who are exemplars in their profession and who make a difference to the health and wellbeing of Territorians on a daily basis. Leaders in nursing and midwifery are celebrated via the Award for Excellence in Nursing/Midwifery Leadership which highlights outstanding leaders who continually exhibit excellence in leadership.

Big and Deep Rivers: Portraits of Inspiring Women

To promote gender equality role models in the Katherine region, OGED provided funding to the Katherine Regional Cultural Precinct to host the 'Big and Deep Rivers: Portraits of Inspiring Women' event on International Women's Day 2023. Forty photographic portraits of inspiring local women were displayed with a biography celebrating their achievements, contribution and leadership to their community. The featured women were gifted a print of their own and an archival copy was deposited with the Katherine Museum to become part of the social history collection.

Together We Are Better Leaders

'Together We are Better Leaders' was a series of three workshops provided by UMNT Incorporated and funded by OGED. The workshops aimed to encourage young women to find their 'true selves' through

empowerment and support to realise their full potential as individuals. The workshops had an emphasis on leadership, ownership and identity building to dispel internalised doubt and gender inequality presumptions which can be prevalent in women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The multi faceted approach explored the different personal strengths of the women, promoted diverse leadership and tackled gender inequality issues.

STRIVE Women pushing through boundaries

With funding from OGED, Vibrant Diverse Cultures hosted the 'STRIVE Women pushing through boundaries' event provided an opportunity for women in business to network and promote their local businesses and share their successes. The event contributed to culturally diverse leadership through the social empowerment of migrant and minority ethnic women in the Northern Territory.

5.2 Increase gender equality in civic engagement, representation, and decision-making bodies.

First Circles Leadership Program

DCMC's First Circles Leadership Program identifies, mentors and supports Aboriginal emerging leaders from remote communities across the Northern Territory. The program ensures Aboriginal people from remote areas can confidently speak to, negotiate and

influence the government about matters affecting their lives, their families and communities. The First Circles Program annual leadership program is offered to over 30 Aboriginal people ensuring a gender balance across all regions in the Territory is achieved.

Monitoring progress

All NTG agencies are contributing to the delivery of the Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025.

In 2023, each agency provided program outcomes that aligned with actions under the Action Plan, to inform the development of the cross government annual Progress Report. The annual Progress Report provides an update on the actions and activities that are underway to improve gender equality and

improve the collection and reporting of gender and sex disaggregated data across the Northern Territory.

The report includes initiatives and programs that NTG is undertaking internally and externally since March 2022 that reflect the Actions of the Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 or the 5 key focus areas of the Action Plan.

Conclusion

Overall, the first NT Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 Progress Report shows that broadly, activities have been undertaken against each action. While a majority of actions focus on building the foundations for government to be more gender responsive and enable NTG to make improvements that means they are able to be a role model for best practice within the Territory. With many new strategies and policies now in place across NTG agencies we can expect to see a rise in tangible positive actions and new data baselines. In addition, there will likely be a rise in inclusion training across the NTPS.

The next steps for the Office of Gender Equality and Diversity is to focus on capacity building for non-government organisations and industries to enact cultural change and improve equality and inclusion in their organisation and community.

OGED will continue reporting on progress made toward the Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 on an annual basis. The progress reports ensure a more holistic approach to advance gender equality and diversity across the Territory.

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