ZONTA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 23
EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

ZONTA SAYS NOW

To gender equality and climate action

Zonta Says NOW News - MARCH 2021 (update)



Fifty Dollar Inspiration for International Women's Day

Zonta Rose Day and International Women's Day (IWD) are both celebrated on 8th March. They are a time to reflect on women's achievements and consider the challenges ahead to achieve gender equality.

It is one hundred years since Edith Cowan was elected to the WA Parliament – and became the first woman in the British Empire to be elected and take a seat in Parliament.

Edith Cowan overcame many challenges in her personal life: her mother died in childbirth when she was six, and she was sent to boarding school, and her father was hanged for the murder of her step-mother. She married a magistrate and had five children. She won her seat in 1921 by 46 votes. She fought against domestic violence, drunkenness and women's legal disadvantage. She spoke openly about venereal disease, prostitution, contraception, illegitimacy, and sex crimes when women did not discuss such matters in polite company. What an inspirational woman! It is no wonder she has a university named after her and is on the fifty-dollar note.

Gender equality and climate action are inexorably linked. This is why Zonta Says NOW is all about creating a gender-equitable, sustainable world by educating girls, advocating for women's rights, and inspiring more female leaders.

This edition shows that the top four countries leading the way on climate resilience are led by women; internationally, women have three-quarters of men's legal rights.

Locally, gender equality in Australia received a boost last week when UN Women launched its 'When Will She Be Right?' campaign on IWD.

Meanwhile, the Climate Change Bill is slowly working its way through the Australian Parliament, with recent hearings demonstrating broad backing from industry groups and investors.

A lot is happening, and there is a lot to do. We have quite a decade ahead of us: we must achieve gender equality and halve our carbon emissions. No pressure!

Enjoy this month's reading, and don't forget to visit the Zonta Says NOW website regularly as new links, leaflets and stories are always being added.

Kind regards

Carole
Carole Theobald
D23 Futurist/Leadership Coordinator



Climate, Parliament and Gender

2Did you know that the four most climate-resilient countries in the world are led by women?

They are Norway, New Zealand, Finland and Denmark and congratulations go to their Prime Ministers Erna Solberg, Jacinda Adern, Sanna Marin and Mette Frederiksen on their nation's achievements. Interestingly, the proportion of women in all of their parliaments is above 40%.

In contrast, the four least climate-resilient countries are led by men and have much lower numbers of women in their parliaments: Eritrea (22% women in parliament), Central African Republic (9%), Somalia (24%) and Chad (15%).

To give humanity the best chance of surviving the climate crisis, we need more women around decision-making tables in community groups, workplaces, and all levels of government.

How does Australia fare?

There are 16.7 million people on our nation's electoral roll, and 51% of them are women. Australia's Federal Parliament consists of 227 members, 86 of whom are women (38%). Women make up 51% of the Senate and 19% of the House of Representatives. **Currently, there are 6 women in the 22-member decision-making Cabinet (27%).**

Recent events in Parliament House will not help to make politics an attractive career choice for women. However, to get fairer representation, we must support more women to take on leadership roles at all levels of society and government.

Action: How can we support women in leadership? Here are some ideas...

- Acknowledge young girls for their leadership potential (replacing the language of bossiness with leadership)
- Encourage young women to be informed and share their views openly and confidently
- Mentor women in your workplace so they are prepared for leadership positions
- Champion women in their careers

- Learn the importance of following a leader.



Women, Business and the Law

Globally, women have just three-quarters of the legal rights afforded to men.

The World Bank Group recently put out its seventh report that monitors global annual progress towards gender equality. *Women, Business, and the Law 2021* measures the laws and regulations that restrict women's economic inclusion in 190 economies. Laws affect women throughout their working lives, and a series of questions is asked against eight indicators: mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, parenthood, entrepreneurship, assets, and pension.

A lack of legal rights can seriously impact women who make up 43% of the agricultural labour force and produce 60-80% of food crops in poorer parts of the world. *Women, Business and the Law* identifies, among other things, the countries where women are unable to obtain credit, sign a business contract, open a bank account, or register a business.

Project Drawdown estimates that if women smallholders had equal access to productive resources, their farm yields would rise by 20-30% and 100-150 million people will no longer be hungry. When agricultural plots produce well, there is less pressure to deforest for additional ground, avoiding emissions. So having equal access to the law is a climate issue.

In only ten countries do men and women achieve the highest score of 100 on the index. These countries are Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Sweden.

Australia scored 96.9 and was in twentieth place. The area that let us down was pensions, as periods of absence from work due to childcare are not accounted for in pension benefits. This is one of the contributing factors to women over 55 being in the fastest growing cohort of people facing homelessness in Australia.

Action: Check out the indicators for individual countries using interactive tools on the World Bank website.



Parliament Receives Thousands of Submissions to the Climate Change Bill

Over 6,500 submissions were received to the Climate Change Bill and over 1,700 of them can be viewed on the parliamentary website along with recordings of two days of public hearings. Feedback stressed the need and economic benefit for the government to take urgent action to limit global warming to 1.5 to 2°C. The Committee is now preparing a report to present to the House of Representatives.

Meanwhile, it is important that the government continues to hear a strong voice from people asking for the Bill to be adopted. Over 95,000 people have registered their support so far - sending a big signal to Government to ramp up its climate action – can we help to make it 100,000?

Action: Sign your support and write to your local federal MP to find out how they stand on this important issue.



When Will She Be Right?

Australians say, “she’ll be right” to dismiss problems we think will fix themselves with time. This hard-hitting campaign points out that it will take at least a century to achieve gender equality globally. UN Women challenges us to achieve gender equality in ten years.

UN Women’s video When Will She Be Right? highlights chilling facts around gender equality in Australia:

- Women are paid 87c to the dollar compared to men.
- Women can’t walk home at night for fear of being raped.
- Australia is ranked 44th on the gender gap index, and women are the boss, only 18% of the time.
- Women have a one in three chance of being assaulted.
- One woman a week is killed by a man she knew and trusted.

Action: Share the UN Women video and check out these 12 small actions with a big impact to achieve 'generation equality'.'



What Will Your Present for the Future Be?

Zonta Says NOW, and the Zonta Foundation for Women Endowment Fund have two things in common: the future and sustainability. Zonta Says NOW focuses on providing an equitable, sustainable future for women and girls. The Endowment Fund aims to achieve long term financial security for Zonta's future programs that support women and girls to achieve their potential.

To minimise the impacts that climate change will have on women and girls, we need to ramp up Zonta's programs and need a healthy Endowment Fund to achieve this.

Zonta International is creating a *Present for the Future* campaign specifically to boost donations to the Endowment Fund.

Remember, the gift you give in the present will help women and girls in the future.

The idea is that you donate to the Endowment Fund instead of giving a traditional gift. The recipient receives an E-card acknowledging the special occasion. This could be a birthday, club anniversary, a member's years of service, or a thank you to a speaker or volunteer or a tribute to honour someone who has passed away.

What is your present to the future going to be? Have some fun with it. The campaign is currently being developed and we will let you know when it will be launched.

Action: Consider giving a donation to the Endowment Fund to celebrate a birthday (including your own!), or special event.

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