

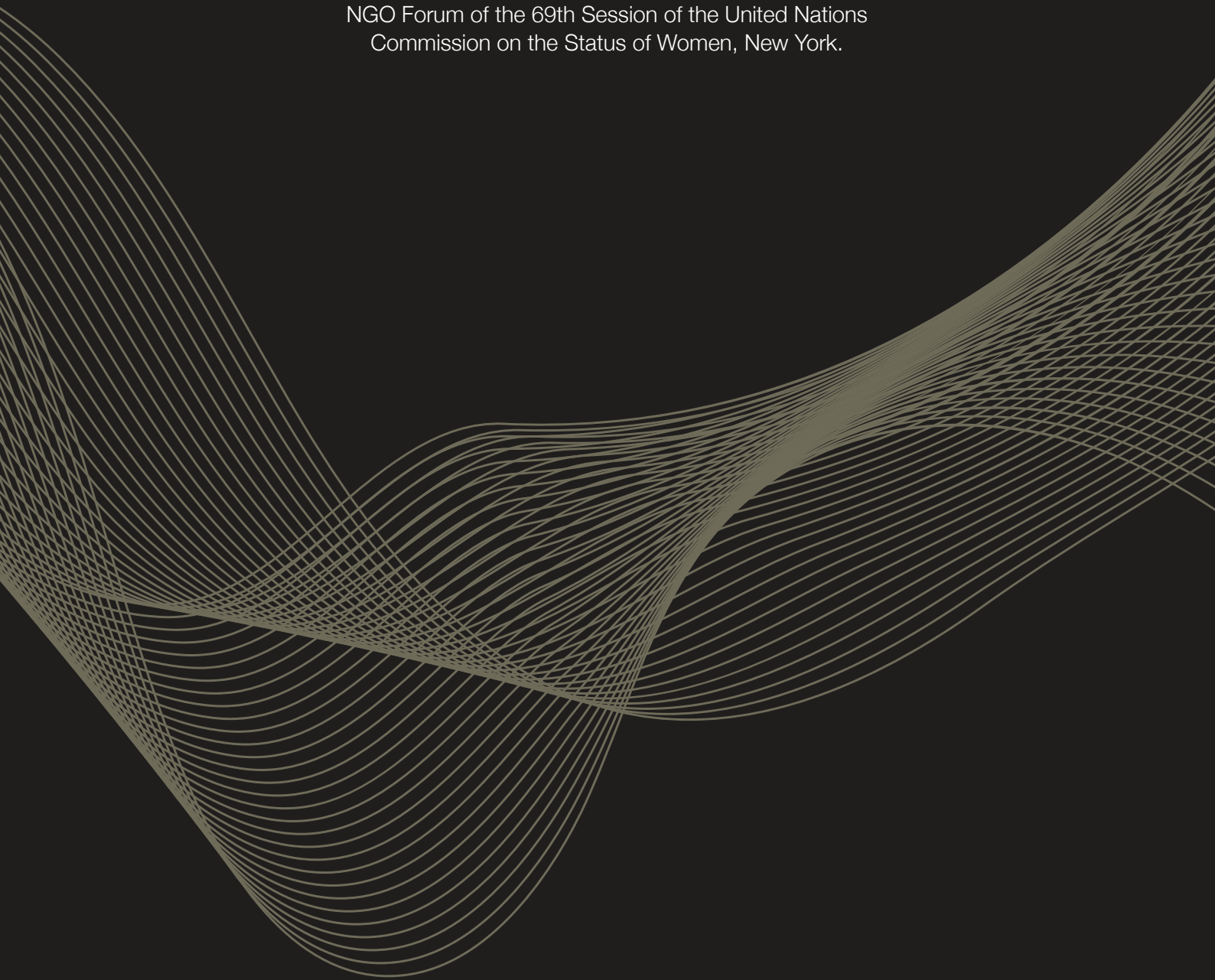
MUTTI

MUSEUM OF
UNDERSTANDING
THROUGH
TOLERANCE &
INCLUSION

UNSEEN Women

Testimonial Justice for women with lived experience of violence, disability and homelessness.

A report about our attendance and presentation at the 2025
NGO Forum of the 69th Session of the United Nations
Commission on the Status of Women, New York.



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We would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of this land on which we work, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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When knowledge is learned and processed - change begins. Holding onto anger and resentment isn't worth it.

No one person can be what you need to be or feel what you need to feel. Find safety within yourself.

- Aunty Dixie Link Gordon

”



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March 10-21, 2025

MUSEUM OF
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Executive Summary



The Museum of Understanding Through Tolerance and Inclusion Ltd (MUTTI) is a charitable organisation committed to using the transformative power of art to foster social cohesion, empathy, and justice. Led by individuals with first-hand understandings of marginalisation and discrimination, MUTTI creates inclusive platforms for meaningful dialogue between those with lived experience, policymakers, and the public, aiming to inspire societal change and strengthen human rights advocacy. MUTTI's mission is to break down the stigmas marginalised individuals face that prevent their voices from being heard, believed, and respected. We believe that amplifying these voices is vital for communal healing and fostering an inclusive society where dignity and belonging are upheld.

In March 2025, MUTTI was proud to become an official sponsor of the NGO Forum of the United Nations (UN) 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. This annual two-week event brings together representatives from UN Member States, civil society organisations, and UN entities at the UN headquarters in New York to discuss and document the lived experiences of women globally, shaping international standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Approximately 13,000 people attended this year, representing 8,800 civil society organisations along with the 165 governments that are signatories to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Our event was only one of three held at CSW69 by representatives from Australia. Led by women with lived experience of disability, violence and

homelessness, our in-person and livestreamed event was a collaboration between MUTTI, Breaking Silent Codes Network and Australian Graduate Women Inc. We are proud to learn that the livestream recording of our event has been viewed over 370 times since the event.

We are deeply grateful to the supporters who believed in the significance of marginalised women's voices; without them, the women's participation at this global event would not have been possible. MUTTI wishes to thank and acknowledge the financial support of Code Green, Knierim Productions, Veolia, Domestic Violence NSW, Bonnie Support Services, Curtin University, Women & Girls Emergency Centre, The Mastermind Group, Sorooptimist Hornsby, Khun Khao Foundation, Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, MGM, The Hatchery plus many private donors who financially contributed to make this possible.

We would also like to thank all the men involved in bringing this project to life as advocates and allies who have often worked unrecognised behind the scenes. As friends, colleagues, partners, brothers, sons, grandfathers and uncles, they have stood beside the women they care about in their quest to seek equitable rights. In these uncertain times, it is essential to remember that gender equality cannot be accomplished without the whole of community commitment that leaves no one behind. The following report provides insights into our participation at the prestigious international forum on women's rights.

Our Event



MUTTI's event, 'UNSEEN: Testimonial justice for diverse women with lived experience of homelessness', showcased diverse Australian women with disabilities who are survivors of homelessness, representing First Nations, LGBTQIA+, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities. Their courage and tenacity brought Australia's housing crisis to the global stage. These women, who have rebuilt their lives after homelessness, now lead advocacy efforts in their communities, demonstrating resilience and the power their knowledge brings to driving meaningful change. By sharing their ground-level perspectives and their solutions for change through personal and powerful storytelling, they highlighted the urgent need for housing security and policy reform that can shape global standards on gender equality and women's empowerment. The women's participation brought the personal impact of Australia's housing crisis to an international audience, offering key insights into the challenges faced by marginalised women who have experienced unexpected homelessness caused by both social and systemic barriers. An exhibition of their artworks accompanied their presentation, further demonstrating their resilience and the powerful advocacy they undertake in their communities.

Representing MUTTI's UNSEEN Women Artists Group, six women shared their stories and artworks about the social and systemic injustice they experience as diverse

women with disability who are survivors of violence and homelessness. This was followed by a yarning circle led by Breaking Silent Codes Ambassador Aunty Dixie Link Gordon, who highlighted how, with collaboration, safe places can be created for women to find the courage to speak freely about their experiences of sexual assault and family violence and that greater support is needed to support such approaches. You can listen to and view our presentation:

HERE: <https://www.youtube.com/live/xMjq9ZdOoVc>

Our event was promoted through strategic national and international traditional and social media campaigns targeting advocates, service providers and journalists whose focus areas are disability, homelessness, and/or domestic violence. A highlight of the media response was an interview of Kelly Campbell and Monique Wiseman by Nas Campanella from ABC Radio National. The social impact of the event was measured by QR code surveys of participants and audience members, and you will find the responses are presented throughout this document as quotes including these quotes from participants and an attendee.

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Creating the artwork based on my emotions connected to my life around homelessness was deeply immersive for me. It was my first experience to share my emotions of trauma through expression and not be judged directly. I love the freedom that this allows through having a voice and using art. Through my experience of public speaking, I welcome this opportunity for sharing the voices of lived experiences.

- Participant

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Homeless women are not anonymous statistics. We are mothers, sisters, Aunties, Grand-mothers. As a community, we have a responsibility to ensure that their voices inform, are heard and that these women are SEEN and their needs addressed through policy reform.

- Jai Jaru

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“

Art creates this bridge. Looking at the artworks you don't know the background of who created them and what the story behind each one is. When you look for the answer, you realise that anyone can become homeless - they're not any different kind of human. They're just like you.'

- Event Attendee

”

Our Delegates



Our speakers were Australian women who identify as First Nations, LGBTQIA+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, and/or have disability who have survived homelessness and now work or volunteer in the domestic violence and homelessness sector. These women are members of MUTTI's UNSEEN Women Artists Group, Auntie Dixie Link Gordon's Breaking Silent Codes Network, Australian Graduate Women and/or participants in Belinda Knierim's PhD research on the testimonial justice of women with lived experience of homelessness.



Auntie
Dixie Link Gordon



Belinda Mason
OAM



Professor
Jaya Dantas



Nicole Lee
OAM



Jai Jaru



Yattungka
Gordon



Kowana Welsh



Monique
Wiseman



Kelly Campbell



Peta
Link



Dieter Knierim



Paula Karydis



Mya Gordon-
Lo



Evie Joy



Tahlia Gordon

Photo Gallery



“

I was able to share, nurture and grow as a person. I had to find myself first, and see what I could offer as to be a unique and collaborative part of our team. The experience of being part of a global community was welcoming. I also felt belonging through non-verbal interactions of kindness with others, when language was a barrier.

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I have found it quite affirming to know and accept aspects of my identity, such as living with disability. This has given me strength in knowing who I am as a person and that with these identities, I can step out and be proud of who I am.

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I didn't have any expectations from participating; however, what I have achieved is a really raw, exposed and at times very confronting look at myself, my existence and giving me the opportunity now to understand through a human rights window, what the things that occurred were. That my desensitisation to them isn't normal but a conditioning of the generational trauma. This has liberated me to understand that instead of fighting for survival, I have RIGHTS!

”





Our CSW69 Schedule



Tuesday, 11 March 2025

- Event: The Māori Women's Welfare League (MWWL)
- Aotearoa New Zealand, Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA)
- Canada, and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA)
- Australia, come together as sister organisations to share their thoughts on ways we can work together to mutually support each other across borders and provide their perspectives on the advancement of indigenous women and girls through the establishment of an international indigenous women's forum.

Wednesday, 12 March 2025

- Event: The Beijing Declaration Through the Lens of Indigenous Peoples
- Event: Defining Wellbeing through the eyes of Indigenous Women and Girls
- Welcome dinner hosted by International Graduate Women Inc.
- Filming in Times Square, interviewing the women about how they were feeling about the days ahead.

Thursday, 13 March 2025

- NGO Forum session: Inclusive Social Policies to Achieve Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and End Homelessness,
- Theatre of the Oppressed site visit
- Group photo at UN headquarters of Australian CSW69 attendees
- Group dinner for UNSEEN Women Artists at Grand Central Station

Friday, 14 March 2025

- Breakfast with Bonnie Brayton from Canada and international disability contingent
 - First Nations meeting, Episcopal Church Center
 - Event: BEIJING+30, SHINING A LIGHT FORWARD: Progress, challenges and emerging threats and partnerships for solutions, United Nations Church Center
 - Event: STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES: Strategies and struggles
 - Service of Remembrance: The 11th annual Interfaith Service of Remembrance at NGO CSW 'for those who have gone before us and who continue to inspire our lives. Everyone is invited to add a name or names to the memory book'
 - Helen Dalley-Fisher and Australian NGO Delegates meeting with Australian Government Delegation, East Lounge UN
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Saturday, 15 March 2025

- Visit to the 911 Memorial and Museum
 - Participation in the Strangers Project (storytelling) at the Oculus Center
 - Metropolitan Museum of Art
 - Lion King Show
-

Sunday, 16 March 2025

- Chelsea Market visit
 - Central Park visit
 - Top of the Rock view of New York
-

Monday, 17 March 2025

- Interviews with women at the UN about attending CSW
 - Helen Dalley-Fisher and Australian NGO Delegates meeting with Australian Government Delegation, East Lounge UN
 - UN Briefing, UN headquarters
 - Barrier Free Living site visit
 - Radio National Interview of Monique Wiseman
 - 'Picking Up Stones: An American Jew Wakes To a Nightmare' a one-woman play representing characters from "all sides" of the conflict, carefully highlighting that neither Palestinians nor Israeli Jews are going anywhere. Their shared and individual traumas are unquestionable.
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Tuesday, 18 March 2025

- Event: UN Office for Partnerships and UN Women, 'Women rise for all: turning hope into action'
 - Interviews with women at the UN about attending CSW
 - Our event: 'UNSEEN: Testimonial Justice for diverse women with lived experience of homelessness', UN Church Center
-

Wednesday, 19 March 2025

- Post-event interviews with the women
 - Event: United Nations Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) and the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender and Disability Inclusion (UNWGDI) 30 Years After Beijing: Promising Practices on Gender Mainstreaming and Disability Inclusion across the Beijing Platform for Action 12 Critical Areas of Concern.
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Thursday, 20 March 2025

- UNSEEN and Breaking Silent Codes post-event briefing
 - UN Briefing with Helen Dalley-Fisher
 - Observations of anti-CSW protests on New York streets
-

Friday, 21 March 2025

- UN Closing Address
 - NGO Summary Event
 - Carnegie Hall performance by the all-ability Rock Choir
 - Leave for Australia
-

Critical Learnings



Reflections on the 30 years after the Beijing Declaration

Overarchingly, the focus of the CSW was on how women's rights have changed since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. When it was introduced, this declaration served as a milestone for women's rights, identifying critical areas such as access to education, labour force participation, political representation, and strategies to combat violence. Although it galvanised momentum around the globe, its core commitments have always been politically rather than legally binding, meaning that each government's implementation depends heavily on national priorities, available resources and socio-cultural perceptions of women's rights.

However, in 1989, prior to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the dangers of siloing or segregating identities were highlighted by Kimberlé Crenshaw, who exposed the need for intersectionality - yet today, this call to action remains largely unheard. Consideration should also be given to the fact that since 1995, global realities have changed dramatically, with multiple crises shifting the focus away from women's rights. These include climate upheavals, increasing militarisation, and the COVID-19 pandemic, all of which threaten to undermine many of the gains made over the past thirty years. But these are only some of the factors that have undermined past gains; discussion and placard-holding protests at the forum and on the streets of New York, particularly on the right to bodily autonomy and expressions of gender diversity, revealed the ongoing efforts to erode of women's rights that women across the globe have fought so hard to secure over the past 30 years.

Once again, the lack of more intersectional approaches to data collection and greater inclusion for marginalised and disabled women, which were widely discussed at this year's CSW, evidence ongoing inaction and stagnation rather than inclusion and equity. Discussions about

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In multiple countries, rights have been rolled back in recent years with anti-feminist rhetoric and policies.

According to UN Women, gender disparities are worsening. They believe it could take another 286 years to close the global gender gaps in legal protections for women and girls. The global scope and scale of this backlash requires attention and response from governments.

- Human Rights Watch 2023

”

‘revitalising the CSW’ with the aim to strengthen its role in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, with a focus on accountability, inclusivity, and meaningful engagement of civil society and youth, cannot be achieved without public consensus on women's rights. This task is a whole of community one. This year's CSW showed us that echo chambers of women's voices only will not result in change and that there is a ‘paralysis of integrity’ that excludes men from conversations on women's rights. The warning signs in recent years which have seen human rights described as ‘woke’ have been ignored or dismissed by the feminist movement.

Nine years ago, UN Women sought ways to address this concern and established the “HeForShe” alliance, a global solidarity movement launched in September 2014 by the then 24-year-old UN Women Global Goodwill Ambassador, British actor Emma Watson, who delivered a speech at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City.

In Watson's speech, she pointed out that in 1995, at the Beijing Conference, less than 30% of the audience was male. I would consider this a generous observation, as at each CSW I have attended since 2014, men would represent no more than 10% of audience members. To regain lost ground, it is vital that the echo chamber of the



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‘We don’t often talk about men being imprisoned by gender stereotypes, but I can see that they are and that when they are free, things will change for women as a natural consequence. If we stop defining each other by what we are not and start defining ourselves by what we are—we can all be freer and this is what HeForShe is about. It’s about freedom

– Emma Watson, British actor and UN Women Global Goodwill Ambassador

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algorithm-driven messaging of gender rights be challenged. Although CSW69 had only five events that addressed this concern, predominately and collaboratively hosted by African and European nations, events about including men in conversations on women's rights were still more than the total number of events focussing on the topics of disability and homelessness. Today, ignoring the concerns of a growing number of young men who are exhibiting anti-feminist views and a reluctance towards gender equality, potentially influenced by online narratives and a perception of societal hostility towards gender, is taking its toll. By ignoring their voices, we are now reaping these seeds of discontent. To regain lost ground, the echo chamber of the algorithm-driven messaging of gender rights must be challenged by voices that foster inclusive and equitable environments for all genders.

In summary, the principal learning gained from attending the NGO Forum of the CSW was the critical role such a forum has in identifying how, as a global community, we collaborate and shape international standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. To achieve this sustainably and in an equitable manner, no one can be left behind. In moving forward, we feel it is important to recognise that the women of UNSEEN became unexpectedly homeless due to various social and systemic factors after living in either social, rental or private housing. We strongly recommend that during the current housing crisis, it is imperative that the competing voices of the social, rental and private housing sectors must collaborate more effectively to find solutions. Should you wish to discuss our findings or learn more about MUTTI's next steps in addressing the housing crisis, please contact us.

Data on Disability & Homelessness



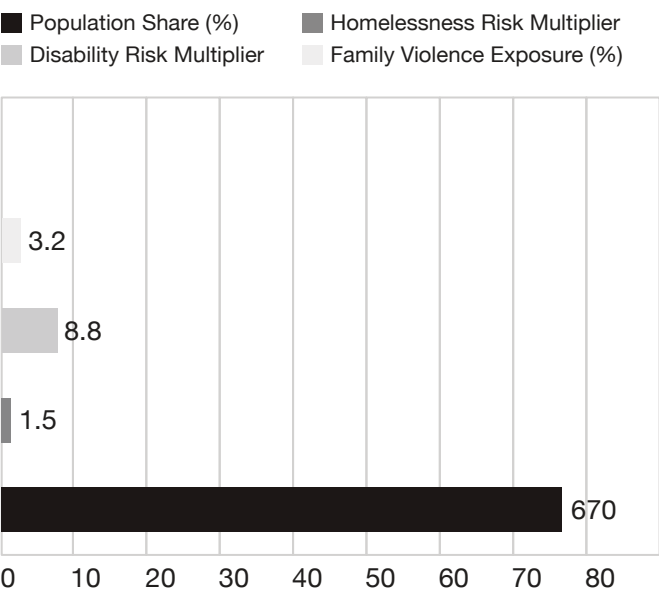
Australian people with disabilities are at an increased risk of homelessness due to a combination of factors, with women with disability being disproportionately affected. These factors include, but are not limited to, discrimination in the housing and labour markets; lack of accommodation modifications to meet the needs of people with disabilities; limited access to housing; limited affordable housing options; lack of social housing; limited capacity to work and sustain tenancies; and low income. Noting that 3.7% of the population rely on the Disability Support Pension (DSP) as their main source of income, living with disability is expensive, with high costs for housing, health care, and transport. There are limited support services, lack of adequate social support services and limited scope to address the situation independently. Other factors include limited engagement with the labour market, lack of secure tenure, and lack of control over personal space.

According to data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW 2023, 24), around 1 in 10 (9.5%) Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) clients in Australia have a disability, with roughly half of those clients reporting homelessness upon first contact with the service; this means that a significant portion of people experiencing homelessness also have a disability. A large percentage (62%) of SHS clients with a disability also reported experiencing a mental health issue. Around 45% of SHS clients with a disability reported experiencing family or domestic violence. In 2023, SHS assisted around 8,300 clients with disability; around 3,800 of these were experiencing homelessness when they first presented to the agency. SHS clients with disability made up 2.9% of all SHS clients and the rate of clients with disability was 3.1 per 10,000 people in the general

population, an increase from 2.9 in 2018–19. Additionally, people with disabilities were most likely to be living alone and not part of a family group, while three in 5 clients (aged 10 years and over) were currently experiencing a mental health issue, and nearly a third were experiencing family and domestic violence.

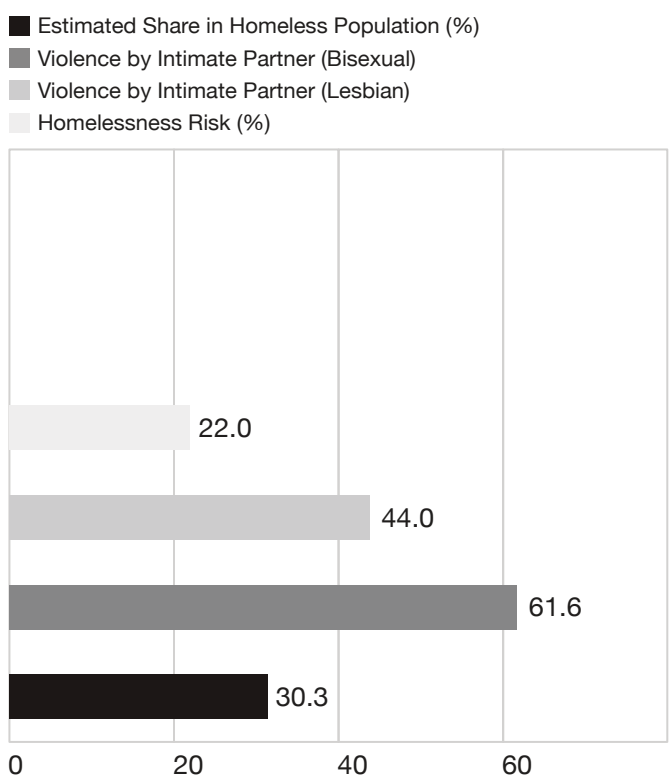
FIRST NATIONS WOMEN: HOMELESSNESS, VIOLENCE & DISABILITY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent 3.2% of the Australian population; however, they are 8.8 times more likely to experience homelessness than non-Indigenous Australians and are 1.5 times more likely to have a disability than non-Indigenous Australians. (AIHW 2024, 2024). More Indigenous-led, culturally appropriate support services are needed.



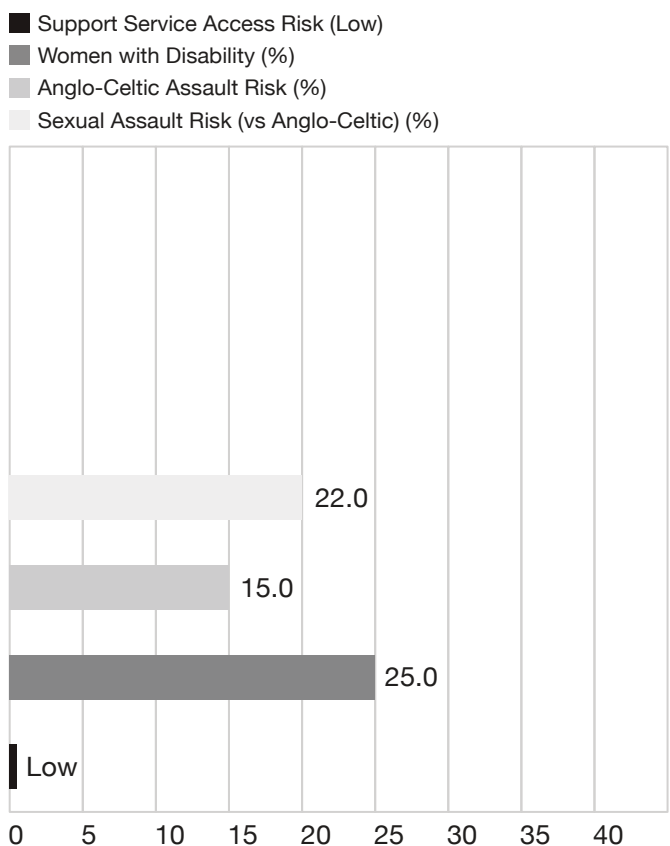
LGBTQIA+ WOMEN: HOMELESSNESS, VIOLENCE & DISABILITY

It is estimated that 22% of the LGBTQIA+ community experience (Homelessness Australia). However, there remain significant gaps in research despite estimates suggesting LGBTQIA+ people comprise 20–40% of the homeless population. Existing studies tend to isolate specific aspects of LGBTQIA+ homelessness, overlooking the complex intersections between violence, ethnicity, disability and mental health, which are compounded by stigma and discrimination (Fraser et al 2019).



CALD WOMEN: HOMELESSNESS, VIOLENCE & DISABILITY

One in every four people with disability in Australia is culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD). As a cohort, they are at higher risk of experiencing violence and abuse when compared to the general population of people with disability and are less likely to access support. They are also at risk of additional and compounding forms of violence and abuse due to factors relating to their CALD identities (PWDA 2021).



Harsh Realities



AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATION AT THE CSW

It is important to note that the Australian Government was unable to host or co-host any side events with other governments or civil society organisations due to the impending federal election, which automatically places the Australian Government in a caretaker role. Until this moment, the Australian Government was considering co-hosting our event in the same format as they had previously done at the United Nations in Geneva and New York in 2013, 2014 & 2016. The Australian Government expressed their strong support by encouraging the Australian Delegation to attend and spread the news about our event. However, we were saddened to learn that key Australian attendees and representatives did not show their alliance by attending our event. We were advised that their inability to attend was due to leaving CSW early, while others accepted a late invitation to attend a non-CSW social event off-site that evening. Additionally, it was disappointing to see Australian attendees at CSW the following day, leaving many of us feeling unworthy and irrelevant by their decision. This was in direct contrast to the words we had heard spoken throughout CSW discussions about accessibility and inclusion for marginalised women with lived experience of discrimination. In saying this, I would like to acknowledge Karen Bently, CEO of WESNET, for her support and attendance at our event. Fortunately, the disability group's briefings and meetings provided the opportunity to bring together women with disability to share their experiences. Thank you to Bonnie Brayton from DAWN in Canada for arranging this.

"I really appreciated the briefings/ gathering of the women with disabilities group. It was interesting to hear how we spoke about what brought us all to CSW (which was varied), and yet we all had disability in common. But that was barely mentioned in any formal setting."

During the NGO Forum of the CSW, the Australian Government delivered its ninth periodic report to the UN Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Documents, including the CEDAW committee's list of issues and

questions for the Australian Government, along with the Australian Government and civil society responses, are available on the UN website. Debates within these documents include law reform, stereotypes, and gender-based violence. Disappointingly, it is important to note that neither CEDAW, the Australian Government, nor Australia's civil society representatives discussed the role men and boys can play in achieving gender equality for Australian women. The CEDAW Committee, Australian Lawyers for Human Rights Shadow Report (AHRSR) and National Women's Alliance (NWA) all acknowledged the existence of intersectional forms of discrimination experienced by some Australian women, including those identifying as refugees and migrants, culturally and linguistically diverse, living regionally and/or being Indigenous along with the need for additional funding. There was consensus that there is a need for more media campaigns that challenge the harmful stigmas and stereotypes associated with each of these identities and which will support prevention and early intervention support services. The need for a federal charter of human rights that guarantees gender equality was also acknowledged. However, the Australian Government responded that existing federal anti-discrimination legislation and state-based Human Rights Acts provided sufficient protections. CEDAW's response to the Australian Government's ability to address the rights of Australian women will be made available in the coming months in their Concluding Observations Report.

INCLUSIVE PRACTICES AT THE NGO FORUM & CSW EVENTS

When 16% of the global population lives with disability, and in Australia, that figure is 18% due to multiple social and systemic factors, it was disheartening to learn that in the event calendar, only four events focussed on disability. Furthermore, although one in four women globally experience violence, there were just 123 events addressing this topic directly. Only twenty events focussed on the rights of the world's approximately 238 million Indigenous women.

As members of Australian Graduate Women (AGW), an organisation with special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), our delegates are part of a network that advocates for women's rights and equality through education. This provided the opportunity for them to contribute in discussions at the UN Headquarters. AGW President Professor Jaya Dantas, was invited to speak on behalf of AGW and Women in Global Health on 19 March at the UN Headquarters' high-level interactive dialogue: 'Accelerating implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action: the role of the Commission on the Status of Women'. Professor Dantas's words powerfully validated the lives of the UN-SEEN Women who had fought so hard to attend this prestigious forum with her call to action:

“We need to enhance civil society and grassroots participation through structured consultations with women’s rights organizations, feminist movements and youth advocates, and ensure that CSW discussions reflect the realities of women at all levels, the grassroots and community level by incorporating their voices.”

Professor Dantas’s words and actions empowered the participating women to believe that it is possible for women in power to share the stage with the marginalised women for whom they are advocating. Those who financially supported the UNSEEN women to attend and speak at this prestigious event played a key role in validating the women’s lives by understanding the social impact it will have and has had on the lives of the women, their families and their communities.

Most concerning is that during what is recognised as a global housing crisis, our event was only one of four that addressed the topic of housing insecurity. Disappointingly, discussions on women’s rights to education and employment did not include the need for safe and adequate housing, a right that is fundamental to achieving this goal. It is paramount that consideration of the right to housing, as defined in both the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, be given when seeking to improve women’s rights as this is a foundational right on which all other rights are built.

Of women experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness, women who identify as being First Nations, Culturally & Linguistically Diverse, LGBTQIA+ and/or having disability are disproportionately represented in data pertaining to homelessness. With many communities facing the same social and systemic issues, it is critical to change the dehumanising attitudes toward marginalised people, which present them as passive evidentiary victims. Sustainable solutions to the housing crisis can only be achieved if the voices of lived experience are valued as knowledge holders capable of contributing as co-designers of law reform and policy change. To create such a paradigm shift that enables marginalised women to attend and contribute their voices, there is a need for more women who hold power to relinquish and share some of that power in a display of actions rather than words.

THE REVITALISATION OF CSW

The revitalisation of the CSW was an important discussion during the two-week session. It was suggested that to improve accessibility and inclusion, CSW events

could be broken up into regional sectors across the globe. However, this approach of regionalising the CSW places at risk the ability of women to engage face to face with women they may never have the opportunity to meet outside this forum. The value of networking during these events is expressed by one of our speakers,

“It has been a huge learning curve for me. Navigating the language used and the various levels of policy/agency/government involvement and learning the roles that lived experience have in contributing.”

As an alternative to a regional breakup of the CSW events, investing funds to ensure marginalised women can attend and contribute to the events will only strengthen the ability of women to collaborate in effecting sustainable change for women’s rights. When discussing the events of CSW69, Sima Bahous, Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN Women pointedly observed:

‘Rising to the challenges and opportunities of gender equality requires collective, decisive action across Member States, now more than ever. At a time when hard-fought gains for gender equality are under attack the global community has come together in a show of unity for all women and girls, everywhere. No nation has yet fully achieved gender equality. This bold Declaration makes clear that the world’s governments recognise 2025 as a pivotal moment, where promises made 30 years ago can no longer be deferred. It is a springboard to ensure that we live up to our commitments to gender equality and women’s empowerment for all women and girls, everywhere, and that we do so together.’

MOVING FORWARD, LOOKING BACK.

Taking place in 2026, the priority theme for CSW70 is “Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls”. This includes promoting inclusive legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, addressing structural barriers, and examining the rights of older women. Taking place at the United Nations headquarters in New York, CSW70 will be the seventh in a multi-year program of work adopted by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Following CSW70, CSW71 (2027) will focus on accelerating the 2030 Agenda, while CSW72 (2028) will highlight the support provided to women and girls in humanitarian emergencies, and CSW73 (2029) examines the transforming of care and support systems.

Key Statistics on Violence in Australia



Prevalence of Violence:

- Around 1 in 4 women (27%) have experienced violence by an intimate partner or family member since the age of 15.
- 1 in 6 women have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or former partner, while for men it is 1 in 16.
- 23% of women aged 18 and over have experienced violence by an intimate partner.
- 17% of women aged 18 and over experienced violence by a cohabiting partner.
- One woman is murdered by an intimate partner every nine days .

Perpetrator Characteristics:

- In most incidents of workplace sexual harassment, the harasser was male.
- Men are more commonly the perpetrators of physical violence, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.
- For women, male perpetrators are more likely to be known persons than strangers.
- 20% of women have experienced sexual violence by a male they know since the age of 15, while 6.1% have experienced it from a male stranger.

Types of Violence:

- Intimate partner violence is a significant form of violence against women.
- Sexual violence is also a serious issue, with a substantial percentage of women reporting experiencing it since the age of 15.
- Although this data speaks to physical and sexual violence, acts of violence occur in social and systemic environments and include coercive control, financial abuse, forced medical treatment and discrimination.

Impact of Violence:

- Domestic and family violence is a leading cause of homelessness. In 2022-23, homelessness services assisted 58,589 women and 37,825 children who had experienced domestic and family violence.
- 1 in 6 women and 1 in 9 men experience physical or sexual abuse before the age of 15.

Specific Groups:

- 67% of Indigenous people experience family violence with women and children experiencing higher rates of hospitalisation and death due to violence compared to non-Indigenous Australians
 - 44% of lesbian and 61% of bisexual women experienced sexual and physical violence by an intimate partner as compared to 35% of straight women
 - 1 in 5 CALD women experience sexual assault compared with 15% of those from an Anglo-Celtic background
 - Women with disability are more likely to experience intimate partner violence (36%), compared to 21% of women without disability. 15% of men with disability and 7% of men without disability.
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Without stories, there is silence.

Without our stories told, we are voiceless.
Without our stories heard, we are invisible.
It is even harder when the stories are
difficult to hear and impossible to imagine.

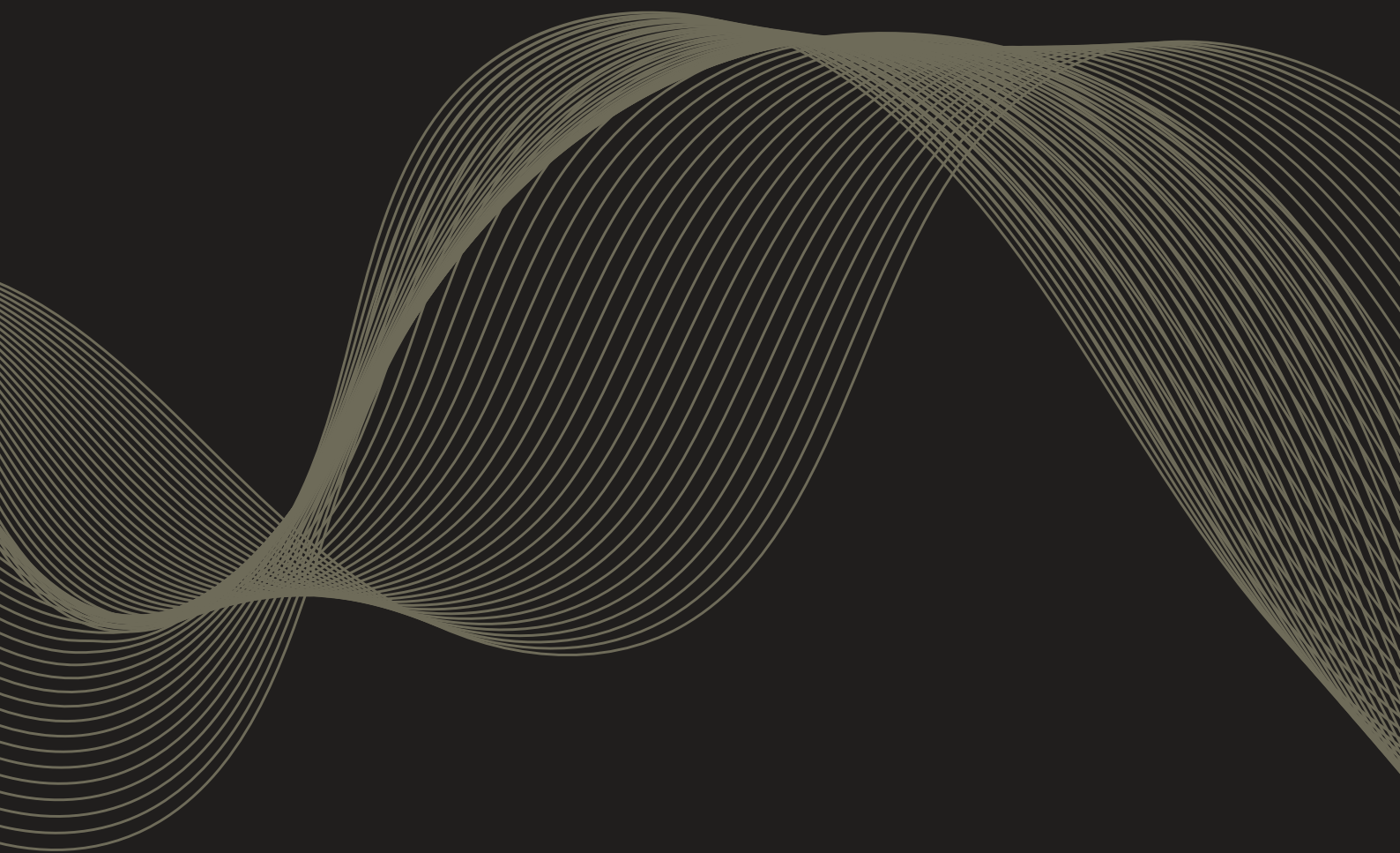
Once the story is told, it is part of our
journey to learn empathy, rather than
compassion. We cannot argue when
someone says, ‘I feel’, it is not our right.

Our own reaction exposes us to ourselves
and our ability to listen when someone
lays their naked soul in our path.

- Belinda Mason OAM, Director, MUTTI

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