



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

**Thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and
adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)**

New Zealand Progress Report

May 2024

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Section 1: Highlights

This national-level review outlines Aotearoa New Zealand's progress to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action over the last five years across all 12 critical areas of concern.

New Zealand's national-level review

Information from [New Zealand's ninth periodic United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\) report](#), submitted in July 2023, was used as the foundation for this national-level review, as both cover a similar range of issues.

The Ministry for Women worked closely with agencies across government to ensure their contributions are reflected in the relevant areas of the report. The Ministry also engaged with New Zealand non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working to progress gender equality and the advancement of women and girls to ensure their work is also highlighted in this report. Feedback from the International Women's Caucus (a forum for NGOs and government agencies to work collaboratively on international issues relevant to the interests and wellbeing of women) is incorporated in a dedicated section of the report (question 36) to ensure their voices are conveyed independently from Government.

New Zealand has made a range of advances towards implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including improving pay equity, and increasing women in public sector leadership roles. Like many countries, the impact of COVID-19 has exacerbated ongoing and persistent challenges in progressing gender equality and the empowerment of women and achieving the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Challenges include:

- increased rates in women's underutilisation, underemployment, and unemployment
- The gender pay gap
- high levels of family and sexual violence
- addressing gender inequity in health.

Over the last five years, New Zealand has progressed work to address the specific needs of women and girls, including for Māori women, Pacific women, disabled women, women from ethnic communities, migrant and refugee women, women in prisons, and LGBTQIA+ people, acknowledging more still needs to be done. New Zealand continues to work towards improving the outcomes, wellbeing, and overall prosperity of Māori women across all spheres of life.

New Zealand has also established good practices to progress the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 5 to advance gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Good practices include:

- increasing women's representation in public sector leadership

- establishing processes to reduce gender pay gaps in the public sector
- supporting the social, political, and economic empowerment of women and girls in the Pacific.

Section 2: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

Question 1: Over the past five years, what have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?

Question 2: Over the past five years, what have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes?

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 1 AND 2 COMBINED

New Zealand is strongly committed to the protection of the human rights of all women and girls and promoting gender equality, including as set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Women and girls play a pivotal role in the political, social, and economic life of New Zealand. We want all women and girls in New Zealand to thrive and reach their aspirations in all spheres of life, including working to ensure that all women and girls experience economic security. We want to ensure that all women and girls, including those in disadvantaged social groups, such as Māori and Pacific women, women from ethnic communities, disabled women, and the rainbow community, are safe from all forms of violence, and have access to quality housing, health, and education. The Government is committed to working alongside communities to develop a range of solutions that are responsive to different groups of women and girls. These actions are detailed in this report.

Over the last five years, the Government has made steady progress in advancing gender equality. Areas of work that improve the lives of women and girls and supports New Zealand's full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action have been prioritised. By working across government, and with non-government organisations (NGOs), community partners, and private sector leaders, we have made progress towards achieving gender equality.

This includes in areas such as:

- improving pay equity
- increasing women's representation in public sector leadership
- improving health outcomes of women and girls
- Addressing the cycle of family violence and sexual violence.

Improving pay equity

In 2020, New Zealand made legislative amendments to the [Equal Pay Act 1972](#) to enable employees and unions to raise a pay equity claim directly with their employer, rather than having to make a claim in the court in the first instance. This amendment replaced the court-based approach to pay equity claims with a process more aligned with the existing bargaining framework in the [Employment Relations Act 2000](#). It provides a clear process to test whether there is a pay equity issue in women-dominated occupations.

Improving women's representation in public sector leadership

New Zealand continues to make progress in the number of women in leadership positions in the public sector.

The Ministry for Women has monitored the progress of women's representation on public sector boards and committees appointed by Cabinet since 2004. In June 2018, the Government set a target of 50% women's participation on public sector boards and committees. This target was met in 2021, and for three consecutive years the representation of women on boards has reached 50% or above. [As at December 2022](#), women held 53.1% of state sector board and committee roles – the highest ever proportion achieved. [As at 30 June 2023](#), women made up 53.7% (22 of 41) of public sector Chief Executive roles, compared with 24.1% in 2012. The percentage of women in the top three tiers of public service roles is about 56% (up from 41.5% in 2013).

Public sector boards are also becoming more inclusive with the latest data showing more women from diverse backgrounds including greater numbers of Māori and Pacific women. In December 2022, representation of Māori and Pacific women on public sector boards has increased to 14.1% and 4.0% respectively.

This sustained increase in women's representation has been achieved through consistent and deliberate action, including the focus of Ministers appointing women to board roles, annual monitoring and reporting of progress, and sector wide collaboration to support a pipeline of women with strong governance skills and experience. The Ministry for Women runs a nominations service which connects an extensive database of more than 1,600 women with opportunities to apply for public sector boards and committees. It has also launched a Leadership Learning Hub containing a collection of resources designed to develop leadership and governance skills for those seeking appointment to a public sector board.

Underpinning this work is the [Public Service Act 2020](#), which requires public sector Chief Executives to build diverse workforces through inclusive workplace and employment policies and practices.

New Zealand also made history in October 2022 when 53rd New Zealand Parliament marked the milestone of having a majority women Members for the first time with 60 women and 59 men. As at

May 2024, there were 57 women (46%) Members of Parliament elected to the current 54th Parliament of New Zealand.

More information can be found in question 22.

Improving health outcomes for women and girls

In the last five years, New Zealand has taken action to improve health outcomes for all women, including Māori women, Pacific women, disabled women, and rural women.

In 2023, New Zealand introduced its first [Women's Health Strategy](#), setting out four priority areas:

1. Ensuring the health system works for all women, with access to information and services that are culturally and clinically safe for women and informed by evidence and the voices of women.
2. Improving health care for issues specific to women.
3. Creating better outcomes for mothers, their families, and future generations through high-quality maternity care.
4. Ensuring women live and age well through the provision of accessible, safe health information, access to screening, and health services and support.

New Zealand is also working to improve women's health outcomes on women-specific health outcomes. Breast cancer is the most common cancer amongst women in New Zealand. In February 2024, the Government extended the age for free breast screening to women aged 70-74 to detect and address breast cancer earlier.

In March 2020, changes were made to the law to decriminalise abortion in New Zealand. This included removing abortion from the [Crimes Act 1961](#) and making substantive changes to the [Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act 1977](#). These changes modernised the legal framework for abortion services and aligned them better with other health services. Beyond 20 weeks, statutory requirements need to be followed by health practitioners when considering whether the abortion is clinically appropriate.

More information can be found in question 12.

Eliminating family violence and sexual violence

In the last five years, New Zealand has prioritised action to address family violence and sexual violence. In 2021, New Zealand launched [Te Aorerekura, its first National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence](#) (National Strategy). The 25-year strategy is focused on intergenerational change to eliminate family violence and sexual violence. It aims to ensure that women, including Māori women, and others impacted by violence can access integrated and inclusive support to enable their safety. Many of the strategy's actions align with New Zealand's

responsibilities to address gender-based violence under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The six systemic shifts laid out in the strategy aims to support how Government, communities, and specialists work together to address the drivers of violence and achieve positive outcomes for women, including Māori women, and others impacted by violence.

The National Strategy is accompanied by an [Action Plan](#), which provides guidance and implementation support. Work underway in the first Action Plan has focused on laying the foundations for this long-term work. Since its release, significant progress has been made towards delivering all 40 actions set out in the strategy's first Action Plan.

To support its implementation, New Zealand established an Interagency Executive Board model (Te Puna Aonui) to align strategies, policy, and investment across government responsible agencies to effectively drive implementation. Lessons learned from the first action plan are key insights for the development of the second Action Plan, which is currently underway.

Some of the actions completed in the first Action Plan involved:

- implementing new family violence workforce capability frameworks and training for generalist and specialist workforces
- building enduring relationships with communities and strengthening community voice to support the implementation of the National Strategy
- growing the number of specialist Child Advocates in Women's Refuges for children who have experienced family violence
- implementing a suite of digital tools to support people affected by family violence.

The *Action Plan* also included initiatives to address equity, with a focus on identifying and addressing gaps in family violence and sexual violence service provision.

New Zealand is also using cross-agency approaches to ensure the immediate safety of children and people experiencing family violence. This includes the Integrated Safety Response – a multi-agency intervention designed to ensure the immediate safety of victims and children, and to work with perpetrators to prevent further violence.

More information can be found in combined questions 15, 16, 17, 19, and 21.

Challenges in our progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women

Like many countries, the impact of COVID-19 has exacerbated ongoing and persistent challenges in progressing gender equality and the empowerment of women and achieving the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Women, particularly Māori, Pacific, and disabled women, were disproportionately impacted by this global pandemic and experienced negative social and economic outcomes.

Between March and September 2021, women’s employment accounted for over two-thirds of the drop in employment rates. Sectors that experienced the most job losses during that period were in retail, accommodation, hospitality, and recreational services, where nearly one-in-four women work. Women’s unemployment, since the COVID-19 pandemic, peaked at 5.6% in September 2020, then dropped to a record low of 3.3% in September 2021. [As at March 2024](#), it has since risen to 4.8%, rising more quickly than male unemployment over the past year. Underutilisation of women in the workforce remains an issue, which was 13.3% as at March 2024 compared to 9.2% for men.

Women in New Zealand continue to suffer from high levels of family violence and sexual violence and continues to rank high in statistics from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on violence against women. COVID-19 exacerbated the rates of family violence and sexual violence in New Zealand.

[Research conducted by the New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse](#) during New Zealand’s lockdowns found that 9% of respondents had experienced some form of family violence and sexual violence. While progress has been made to eliminate family violence and sexual violence, more work needs to be done, including addressing service gaps in family violence and sexual violence as part of the broader work of implementing the National Strategy.

The health system continues to face challenges, including keeping up with demand in both the hospital and primary sectors. This has been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, the restructure of the health system, and workforce issues. As a result, New Zealand experiences demand pressures across our hospitals, with extensive waiting times and inequities in access and outcomes. Inequities exist particularly for Māori, Pacific peoples, LGBTQIA+, those living rurally, and other high-need populations.

New Zealand has made some progress towards equal representation on private sector boards, but women are still underrepresented in leadership roles. [In 2022](#), women held 28.5% of director positions and 26.4% of executive management roles across companies listed on the New Zealand stock exchange (up from 22.5% and 25.4% in 2020). There are some concerted efforts to change this, through groups like Champions for Change where more than 80 leading Chief Executives and Chairs of private organisations are helping drive diverse leadership in workplaces. Last year, this group achieved a 40:40:20 gender balance at board level – 40% women, 40% men, and 20% any other gender.

While New Zealand has a gender wage gap below the OECD average, there is also more work to be done to close the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap remains more pronounced for certain population groups, such as Māori women, Pacific women, women from ethnic communities, disabled women, and the rainbow community. The causes of the gender pay gap in New Zealand are complex and include factors such as education and occupational segregation, unconscious bias, and unpaid care work that are harder to measure. The cumulative impact of the gender pay gap can also be seen at retirement. The Retirement Commission also found that there is a [25% gap](#)

in the average KiwiSaver balance (a voluntary retirement savings scheme) between women and men. There is a [36% gap](#) between the amount men and women contribute to KiwiSaver each year which is primarily driven by gender and ethnic pay gaps.

Question 3: Over the past five years, what specific actions have you taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls?

Women in New Zealand are diverse and have diverse needs. In this section we set out measures to support specific groups of women.

Māori women

Māori women influence and lead powerful legacy movements that have changed and continue to change society in Aotearoa New Zealand. Such legacies include the role of Māori women in the women's suffrage movement, Kotahitanga (Māori Parliament), Kōhanga Reo (Māori-language immersion schools for children aged 0-6) and Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori-language immersion schools). Māori women are the centre of iwi (large social units in New Zealand Māori society often translated as "tribes"), marae (a complex of buildings and grounds that belongs to a particular iwi), community, and whānau kaupapa (family genealogy). They are Rangatira (leaders) in personal, professional, and vocational fields across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Improving outcomes for Māori women and girls

The Ministry for Women prioritises improving outcomes for Māori women and girls across its work programme.

Current work to improve outcomes for Māori women:

- Profiling and maintaining oversight of labour market outcomes for Māori women to provide gendered evidence and advice and inform policy development and strategies.
- Putting Māori women forward for leadership roles through the Ministry's Nominations Service.
- Contributing to implementing [Te Aorerekura - the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence](#) (National Strategy).
- Collating Government agency data specific to Māori women across areas such as health, education, income, and employment.
- Ensuring the voices of Māori women are represented and reflected at a global level as part of our international engagements.

The Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry

The Waitangi Tribunal is a permanent Commission of Inquiry that deals with significant national issues affecting Māori. In 2018, the Tribunal established the [Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry](#) (inquiry) to examine the impact of policies and legislation on Māori women. The focus of the Inquiry

is in the areas of leadership roles, land rights, social matters, and the economic wellbeing of Māori women.

As part of the Inquiry, the Waitangi Tribunal is hearing over 200 claims which allege the Crown's denial of mana wāhine (the prestige and standing of Māori women within their communities) has had serious consequences for the social, economic, cultural, and spiritual wellbeing of Māori women and their access to leadership roles. Claims are both historical and contemporary.

The Ministry for Women and the Ministry of Māori Development - Te Puni Kōkiri are the co-lead government agencies and have actively provided support to assist claimants to participate in the Inquiry. This support includes funding for research, procurement advice, secretariat support for the Inquiry governance committee and provision of Crown data and statistics. The Government's work programme, which has been developed alongside the Waitangi Tribunal judicial process, is set over four phases: historical hearings (completed in 2022), research, substantive hearings, and Crown response.

The purpose of the historical hearings (Tūāpapa evidence) was to illustrate the role and status of Māori women before the arrival of settlers as a foundation for substantive hearings. The current phase of the Inquiry is focused on collating data and research in the areas of leadership, economics, social matters, and the environment. This will be presented as evidence within the Inquiry and the Tribunal panel will consider all information during the substantive hearings. At the conclusion of this Inquiry, a final report of recommendations will be provided to the Crown for a formal response. The report is expected to be completed following the substantive hearings in late 2025.

Te Ōhanga Wāhine Māori, The Māori Women's Economy – the first major study into the contribution of Māori women to the Māori economy

In May 2024, the Ministry for Women in partnership with Business and Economic Research Ltd (BERL), released the first major research study into the Māori women's economy. The report, titled [*Te Ōhanga Wāhine Māori, The Māori Women's Economy*](#), highlights the economic and wellbeing contributions of Māori women in households, businesses, and communities.

It also details their socio-economic participation, labour market outcomes, business ownership, leadership, and the value of unpaid work, all in relation to overall wellbeing. This report is the first major research study into Māori women's economy, and the first to include a formal calculation and inclusion of mahi tūao (unpaid work) in the total value of a women's economy. It is also one of the first-ever studies of indigenous women's economy internationally.

Key findings from the report include:

- Māori women generated \$5.9 billion NZD value add to all sectors of the economy in 2022. With the inclusion of unpaid work, the size of the Māori women economy nearly doubled to \$12.5 billion NZD, equalling 3.2% of national production GDP.

- Economic contribution by Māori women is underpinned by strong leaders and cultural identity, with Māori women rating culture, spirituality, the environment, kaitiaki practices (a guardian or trustee, typically of an environmental area or resource), and te reo Māori (the Māori language) as important.
- 43% of Māori women are employed in the social services sector.
- Māori women earn, on average, 20% less than non-Māori women.

Pacific women

New Zealand promotes the rights of Pacific women in all spheres of life. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples is the Crown's principal advisor on policies and interventions aimed at improving outcomes for Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

Following the Ministry for Pacific Peoples' [Lalanga Fou Report \(2018\)](#), the [Pacific Wellbeing Strategy](#) was introduced in 2022. The strategy's focus is to increase collaboration across Government to achieve better outcomes for Pacific peoples. The [Pacific Wellbeing Strategy](#) is intended to reflect and represent the diverse voices, needs, and aspirations of Pacific people in New Zealand, and is focused on Pacific women, disabled people, children and youth, rainbow communities, and Realm communities (Tokelau, the Ross Dependency and the self-governing states of the Cook Islands and Niue).

In December 2023, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples supported the launch of the P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A. Inc. report, [A Wellbeing Report – Voices from Pacific Women and Girls in Aotearoa, New Zealand](#). The report draws on the voices of Pacific women and girls to better understand the challenges they face and how best to support them.

In March 2024, the Secretary for Pacific Peoples, as part of a Government delegation, supported P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A. Inc. at the 68th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CWS68) at the UN headquarters in New York. P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A. Inc. was granted special consultative status by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2021.

Since 2021, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples has been delivering the Pacific Aotearoa Community Outreach initiative to build the resilience of Pacific communities and improve access to health and social services. The initiative was originally established to enable more frequent and responsive engagements between government and Pacific communities to keep Pacific peoples informed and supported during the country's response to COVID-19.

Disabled People

Disabled People make up a significant and diverse part of New Zealand, with 1.1 million people (24% of the population) identifying as disabled. Disabled women are more likely to be victims of violence than non-disabled people, are much more likely to have no educational qualification

(34%) compared to non-disabled people (15%). Disabled women were more likely than other groups to earn less than \$30,000 NZD yearly.

The Government released a [Provisional Health of Disabled People Strategy](#) in 2023 as required by the [Pae Ora \(Health Futures\) Act 2022](#). This strategy was developed with disabled people and identifies priority areas of focus for improving health outcomes for disabled people. Work is now focused on implementation and actions, ensuring alignment with cross government work including the [Disability Action Plan 2019-2023](#).

In 2022, the Ministry of Disabled People - Whaikaha was established to work in partnership with the disability community, Māori, and Government for a better, more independent future for disabled people and whānau in New Zealand. The Ministry of Disabled People has a number of obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

\$70 million NZD in contingency funding has been committed for the next four years to allow the Ministry of Disabled People to work in partnership with the disability community and progress transformation of the disability support system. This funding is aimed at providing disabled people, including disabled women and girls, with greater choice and control over the support they are eligible for, improving safeguarding for people who are at risk of abuse, and building capability and capacity across the disability sector. The ongoing evaluation of the disability support system transformation will be designed with disabled people and informed by gender-based outcomes.

The Ministry of Disabled People is also responsible for the implementation of [Te Aorerekura - the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence](#) (National Strategy, Action 28 (Safeguarding Responses for Disabled and vulnerable)). Budget 2023 allocated \$6.11 million NZD over four years to increase access to specialist supports for women and men through the Waitemātā Safeguarding Response, which is based in Auckland. This specialist initiative will be extended to other localities across New Zealand to ensure preventative mechanisms and services are in place as part of the transformation of the disability support system over the next four years.

There will also be a focus on improving access for disabled women to mainstream family violence and sexual violence services across New Zealand. Work also continues to achieve pay equity for women working in caring professions, including those who provide support to disabled people.

Women from ethnic communities

New Zealand promotes the value of diversity and works to improve the inclusion of ethnic communities in wider society. Building social cohesion and inclusive and diverse societies was one of the [overall findings made by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain on March 2019](#).

One of the 44 recommendations included establishing an agency focused on ethnic communities and multiculturalism. In response to this recommendation, the Ministry for Ethnic Communities was established in July 2021, replacing the Office of Ethnic Communities (a unit within the Department of Internal Affairs). The Ministry for Ethnic Communities is the Government's Chief Advisor on ethnic communities and the inclusion of ethnic communities in wider New Zealand society. It supports the wellbeing and development of pan-ethnic women in New Zealand, including through support for the establishment of the Manawaka Ao Network | Women of Colour Network, which aims to create a safe space for ethnic women to network across their communities.

Resettlement of refugees

New Zealand has a long-standing commitment to supporting refugees. There are a number of humanitarian, protection, and refugee pathways under which refugees are resettled. New Zealand's primary pathway for refugees is the Refugee Quota Programme – an annual quota for refugee settlement - which has been in place since 1987. New Zealand accepts up to 1,500 refugees mandated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees per year as part of its quota.

In addition to the quota, the Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship visa is a complementary pathway programme. This programme enables community organisation sponsorship of 150 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-mandated refugees and their immediate family members over three years (2021 – 2024).

New Zealand also facilitates family reunification through the Refugee Family Support Category. This category recently increased from 300 to 600 family members per year and aims to support the successful settlement of refugees by allowing them to sponsor extended family members. Priority is given to those refugees with no family in New Zealand.

In addition to the pathways above, Immigration New Zealand determines refugee and protected person (asylum seeker) status in New Zealand. Successful claimants are usually granted a residence visa to enable them to settle permanently.

Migrant and refugee strategies

In 2023, the [New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy](#) and the [New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy](#) were refreshed. This included changes to the vision statement, outcome areas, and coverage of the Strategies. The strategies are a cross-government mechanism to identify challenges or barriers to settlement for former refugees and recent migrants. It also enables agencies to provide advice to the Government on the effective targeting and delivery of settlement services, including potential interventions to address violence against marginalised groups of women and girls. Engagement with former refugees, migrants, iwi, community groups,

NGOs, and businesses were a critical part of the refresh. Work is underway to fully embed the changes made as part of the 2023 refresh.

Women in prisons

New Zealand is working towards improving outcomes for women in prisons. Women make up around 6.2% of New Zealand's total prison population and have unique characteristics and needs from men in prison. 62% of women in correctional facilities are Māori women. The majority of these are wāhine (women) aged between 30-49 years. In the rare occasion that a young woman is placed in prison, they have access to the same education, programmes, and healthcare as adult prisoners, and safe placements are ensured.

Women's Strategy

In 2021, the Department of Corrections released the second iteration of [*Wāhine – E rere ana ki te pae hou: Women's Strategy 2021–2025*](#). This strategy aims to reduce reoffending through gender and culturally responsive programmes and services that provide holistic support and ensures the workforce can that respond to the unique needs of all women.

The strategy sits alongside other key initiatives and programmes:

- The provision of employment, education, and rehabilitation and reintegration programmes and services across all three women's prisons.
- The provision of social workers, counsellors, and mental health professionals, including dedicated Psychological Services Teams at Christchurch Women's Prison and Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility.
- Women's supported accommodation services to support reintegration.
- Mothers with Babies Units to foster positive attachments between mothers and babies and maintain strong family links, with additional kaupapa Māori (Māori approach) parenting support services provided. Any incarcerated woman can apply to enter a Mothers with Babies Unit if she is pregnant or has a child under the age of 24 months that she normally cares for in the community. There are also feeding and bonding facilities available for women who do not have their children in prison with them to breastfeed and/or maintain attachment and bonding through regular visits.
- New recruitment approaches designed to better identify and select suitable candidates to work with the women in prisons.
- Bicultural rehabilitation treatment for women in prison, combining Te Ao Māori (the Māori world view) and Western approaches, aiming to help reduce their risk of reimprisonment. Going forward this will be delivered in a therapeutic community which has been established at Christchurch Women's Prison to support women completing rehabilitation programmes.

In April 2024, the Department of Corrections moved to a new organisational structure, which includes the establishment of a Deputy Commissioner Women's Prisons, leading oversight of the women's prison network to place a sharper focus on recognising and responding to the needs of women in prison.

LGBTQIA+ people

New Zealand takes an inclusive approach to human rights issues, and the Government recognises the right of all people to self-identify. As the Government's lead advisor on gender equality, the Ministry for Women represents and supports the interests of all those who identify as women, including māreikura (Māori feminine), takatāpui (Māori Rainbow identity) and whakawahine (transgender women).

Te Ngākau Kahukura

[Te Ngākau Kahukura](#) is a national initiative that works to make communities, environments, and systems safer and more inclusive for rainbow people. To achieve this goal, Te Ngākau Kahukura provide rainbow expertise to key decision makers and shares resources with rainbow communities. The initiative was developed in collaboration with rainbow organisations and youth groups across the country.

Conversion practices

In February 2022, the New Zealand Parliament passed [legislation making it unlawful to perform a conversion practice](#) on persons under 18 years of age or lacking decision-making capacity, or if the practice causes serious harm. Complaints can be progressed through the Human Rights Commission for civil claims or can be referred to the police as a criminal claim.

Birth certificate amendments

As of June 2023, takatāpui, transgender, nonbinary, and intersex New Zealanders can amend their birth certificate to align with who they are through a self-declaration model. This means that applicants can amend their sex markers without needing to provide proof of medical treatment in Family Court showing physical conformation with an applicant's gender identity. The self-declaratory model set out in the [Birth, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationships Registration Act 2021](#) provides a meaningful step towards a rights-based model of self-determination and non-discrimination.

Law Commission review of the protections in the Human Rights Act 1993

The Law Commission is undertaking a review to assess whether the current wording of the [Human Rights Act 1993](#) adequately protects people who are transgender, people who are non-binary and people with innate variations of sex characteristics and, if not, what amendments should be made.

Question 4: Over the past five years, how has the confluence of different crises affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what measures have you taken to prevent their negative impact on progress for women and girls?

New Zealand has faced a variety of economic and social challenges over the last five years, in particular due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

See question 9 for more information on factors which have impacted the macroeconomic climate in New Zealand over the last five years.

More information on the impact on COVID-19 can be found in question 14.

Section 3: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Question 6: Over the past five years, what actions has your country taken to advance gender equality in the world of work (including informal and non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship)?

Question 7: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance and strengthen the rights of paid care workers?

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 6 AND 7 COMBINED

New Zealand provides a range of services to support women's meaningful inclusion in the labour market and is committed to ensuring our social and financial structures lift women and girls out of poverty. Further work is underway to lift women out of poverty by providing targeted and effective support to help them into stable employment and training.

Employment is a major focus area for the Government as New Zealand continues to build a strong economy.

As at March 2024, women's labour force participation rate is 67.3%. In the *June 2023 quarter*, it was 68.0% – the highest rate recorded since the Household Labour Force series began in 1986. Despite having increased more than 14 percentage points since 1990, the women's labour force participation rate remains consistently lower than that of men, which is currently 75.8% (March 2024). This difference is largely explained by unequal unpaid work such as housework and care responsibilities.

Women experience higher rates of unemployment and continue to have higher rates of underutilisation and underemployment. Nearly twice as many women as men are underemployed (working part-time and wanting to work more hours than they are working), continuing a persistent trend. As at March 2024, 76,000 women were underemployed compared with 43,000 men.

Empowering women in the world of work

Over the last five years, the following initiatives were undertaken to advance gender equality in the world of work.

Pay equity legislation

In 2020, [amendments](#) to the [Equal Pay Act 1972](#) introduced a new process for individual employees and unions to raise a pay equity claim with their employer. As at March 2024, nearly 176,000 people had their pay corrected as a result of 15 pay equity settlements and one extension.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment holds a data repository with information on comparators and pay equity settlement agreements. The repository is overseen by a tripartite group of Government, business, and union representatives. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment also provides statutory, free, and neutral dispute resolution services (mediation) for parties involved in pay equity bargaining.

Pay transparency

[In March 2022](#), the Education and Workforce Committee released a report recommending by majority that the Government develop pay transparency measures in line with the recommended policy considerations in the report. The Education and Workforce Select Committee made 14 recommendations about what the underlying policy work should consider.

The Government is working with the business sector to explore options for a voluntary, business-led approach to gender pay gap reporting.

Kia Toipoto Public Service Pay Gaps Action Plan 2021-2024

Work has been undertaken to reduce pay gaps in the public sector. In 2021, [Kia Toipoto Public Service Pay Gaps Action Plan 2021-2024](#) was launched to support Government agencies to develop annual agency pay gap action plans to help address pay gaps in the public sector. This initiative runs to the end of 2024.

Kia Toipoto has three goals:

1. Substantially reduce gender, Māori, Pacific, and ethnic pay gaps.
2. Accelerate progress for Māori women, Pacific women, and women from ethnic communities.

3. Create fairer workplaces for all, including disabled people and members of Rainbow communities.

Kia Toipoto builds on the [Public Service Gender Pay Gap Action Plan 2018–2020](#) which saw the public service gender pay gap fall, from 12.2% in 2018 to 7.1% in [2023](#).

A Public Service Pay Gaps Working Group oversees the implementation of *Kia Toipoto* to reduce and close gender, Māori, Pacific and ethnic pay gaps in the public sector. To date, all Government agencies and 80% of Crown entities have published *Kia Toipoto* action plans showing the public sector's commitment to reducing pay gaps. Over the last five years, there have been substantial decreases in the overall public service gender and Māori pay gaps and reductions in the Pacific and Middle Eastern, Latin American and African (MELAA) pay gaps.

Supporting women in trade and export

New Zealand continues to promote international efforts to advance women's engagement in trade and export through initiatives such as the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement. The Agreement was launched by New Zealand, Canada, and Chile in 2020, building on the 2018 Joint Declaration on Fostering Progressive and Inclusive Trade. The Agreement seeks to improve women's access to economic opportunities and support women's equitable participation in international trade. It does so by committing each Participant to advance a more inclusive approach to trade. New Zealand chaired the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement from April 2022-April 2023 and over this period welcomed five new members to the group, taking the total membership to 11 (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru).

As part of the agreed Global Trade and Gender Arrangement work plan over 2022-2024, New Zealand hosted a virtual event to share information and best practices on [promoting women's participation and retention in STEM related export industries](#).

New Zealand also works to ensure women are meaningfully represented in trade negotiations and that gender considerations are incorporated into its Free Trade Agreements. In 2022, New Zealand's trade promotion agency, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise appointed its first Women in Export Lead in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This role assists New Zealand Trade and Enterprise to provide exporter support programmes targeted to women, including tailored training for female exporters, networking events, and investment showcases to connect female-founded businesses with export finance. Additionally, representation of female trade negotiators has increased in recent years and have had an almost equal gender balance on recent Free Trade Agreement negotiating teams. The number of women represented on New Zealand's trade delegations increased from just over 40% in 2022 to 47% in 2023.

In 2022, New Zealand led the development and launch of the APEC [Empowering Change tool](#) – a step-by-step tool for policy professionals to apply gender analysis to their work. The tool is an

adaptation of the Ministry for Women's *Bringing Gender In*, the online gender analysis tool for New Zealand policy makers.

Gender provisions in trade agreements

In our bilateral trade agreements, New Zealand has concluded two recent Free Trade Agreements with substantive outcomes on trade and gender. The New Zealand-United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement has a dedicated chapter on trade and gender equality, which includes obligations that promote gender equality, as well as a commitment to cooperate to advance women's engagement in trade. The New Zealand-European Union Free Trade Agreement also contains an article on trade and gender equality, which is subject to dispute settlement mechanisms.

Inclusive analyses of trade agreements

Data is important for measuring the impact of trade agreements on women, and New Zealand has had a strong focus on increasing the availability and use of gender-disaggregated data in our evaluation of trade impacts and policy. This has included partnering with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to produce its first trade and gender country review, which analyses the impacts of trade for women in New Zealand and how our trade policy can better support outcomes for women in export.

New Zealand also conducted an ex-post review on the impacts of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership for women three years after entry into force. This was part of our commitments as a member of the Inclusive Trade Action Group and covered a range of areas, including Indigenous Peoples, Small and Medium Enterprises, and regional economic development.

Balancing paid and unpaid work

Access to affordable childcare is a major barrier to women's economic empowerment.

A 2017 survey of parents who worked, or who wanted to work, found:

- One in six parents had difficulties arranging childcare, with higher rates of difficulty for all mothers (23%) and sole parents (27%).
- The main barriers cited were childcare not being available at the times needed (38.3% cited this as the main difficulty), and childcare being too expensive (18.6% of parents cited this).
- Two-thirds of parents who had difficulties finding childcare experienced work-related consequences, including turning down paid work, resigning from work, and stopping searching for work.

A [2023 report](#) found that New Zealand mothers with children under three may be foregoing \$116 million NZD in wages each year as a direct result of their childcare access issues. The report found

that this estimated loss is unlikely to represent the full cost to mothers of not working due to childcare access issues.

Childcare assistance

The Ministry of Social Development offers a range of support and assistance to help low-and-middle-income families with the cost of childcare, focused on helping parents and caregivers work and study, and supporting children’s learning and development.

The Ministry of Social Development conducted a review of childcare assistance that identified several issues that parents and caregivers were experiencing including issues with the administrative process when making an application and subsidies not keeping pace with increasing childcare costs.

As a result in 2023, income thresholds for the Childcare Subsidy and Out of School Care and Recreation subsidy were raised, increasing the number of parents and caregivers who are eligible for this support. Additionally, the income thresholds have been indexed to wage growth since 1 April 2022. From 1 April 2024, eligibility for [Flexible Childcare Assistance](#) was expanded and the rate of [Guaranteed Childcare Assistance Payment](#) increased to improve support for young parents.

FamilyBoost

On 25 March 2024, the Government announced that it intends to introduce the [FamilyBoost payment](#) as part of Budget 2024 to help families with young children meet the cost of early childhood education. The FamilyBoost payment will be equal to 25% of early childhood education fees already paid by households.

FamilyBoost will be available for early childhood education fees paid from 1 July 2024, with the first FamilyBoost refunds being made in October. Further details will be released as part of the Budget 2024 announcements on 30 May 2024.

Early Childhood Education

New Zealand places a strong emphasis on early childhood education, recognising its role in preparing children for lifelong learning. Nearly all children in New Zealand attend early learning services before starting school.

The Government provides universal subsidies for all children aged 0-5 that attend a licensed Early Childhood Education service, which will support parents and caregivers to participate in the labour market. This is reflected in the high labour market participation of women with young children.

[The Ministry of Education provides funding for early childhood centres](#) through the Early Childhood Education Funding Subsidy, 20 Hours early childhood education funding, equity funding, and

Targeted Funding for Disadvantage. This funding helps to reduce cost barriers so that more children can benefit from participation in early childhood education.

Modern slavery and migrant exploitation

Globally, it is well recognised that women and children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation, with children making up a majority of those trafficked. The migrant workforce is particularly vulnerable to exploitation and domestic workers can also be victims of exploitative and harmful employment and modern slavery.

New Zealand remains committed to working with regional and international partners through a rules-based international approach to prevent and combat transnational organised crime including trafficking in persons.

New Zealand has a legal framework in place to prosecute those engaging in human trafficking. Since 2015, it has undertaken four prosecutions for trafficking, with 49 victims associated with these four prosecutions. All victims were trafficked into the country from overseas for the purpose of forced labour. Five victims were women, and the remaining 44 were men.

Government agencies continue to investigate situations of exploitation to identify victims of trafficking, with a focus on preventing and disrupting migrant worker exploitation, which can escalate into or indicate more extreme forms of labour exploitation.

The following further protections are continually being put in place to protect against human trafficking.

Worker Protection (Migrant and Other Employees) Act 2023

The [Worker Protection Act](#) came into force on 6 January 2024. The purpose of the legislation is to improve compliance and enforcement legislation to deter employers from exploiting migrant workers. The Act introduces a fit for purpose offence and penalty regime to empower regulators. It also provides a more proportionate and efficient enforcement toolkit for immigration officers and Labour Inspectors to deal with lower-level offending before it becomes more serious and includes provision disqualifying company directors convicted of exploitation or trafficking.

Additional support measures for migrant workers

A package of legislative, policy and operational changes has been introduced since 2021 to protect victims of and prevent exploitation, forced labour and people trafficking.

It includes:

- A new visa to support migrants to leave exploitative situations quickly and remain lawfully in New Zealand.

- Strengthened labour exploitation reporting channels, and support for frontline staff to better identify potential victims.
- A dedicated Trafficking in Persons pilot to review processes associated with the receipt, assessment, identification, and allocation of reported cases of trafficking.
- Trafficking training to frontline officials to increase our capacity to recognise and respond to this crime.
- An updated government webpage to report migrant exploitation to make it easier for non-English speakers to submit a report.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is currently researching and scoping best-practice models for trafficking victim identification and support which will enable more effective collection of data.

Migrant workers and sex work

New Zealand was the first country to decriminalise sex work in 2003.

The [Prostitution Reform Act 2003](#):

- Decriminalised the provision of commercial sexual services (sex work).
- Has the objective of reducing harm through enabling ordinary employment relationships, the enforcement of health and safety laws and the ability to exercise their work rights and safeguarding their human rights.
- Includes measures to aims to protect vulnerable people from being trafficked or exploited for sex work through setting an age restriction and through requiring that only citizens or certain residence-class visa holders can provide or manage or invest in the provision of commercial sexual services. These measures are intended to remove incentives on people who might be vulnerable (for example those lacking English proficiency, of low socioeconomic status, or lacking an understanding of New Zealand’s legal environment) to enter the country to work as sex workers.

In 2018, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women noted in their Concluding Observations on New Zealand’s periodic examination that Section 19 of the Act “may have a negative impact on migrant women; that migrant women engaged in prostitution may be exposed to exploitation and are at risk of trafficking, owing to the ban on engaging in prostitution imposed on migrants, which prevents them from reporting abuse for fear of deportation; and recommended amending section 19 with a view to reduce this negative impact on migrant women.” New Zealand addressed the recommendations raising recent movement in this space.

In November 2022, the Education and Workforce Committee reported back to the House of Representatives on the ‘[Petition of Pandora Black: Repeal Section 19 of the Prostitution Reform Act 2003](#)’. The petition, submitted by activist and sex worker, Pandora Black, requested that the House of Representatives pass legislation to repeal Section 19 of the Prostitution Reform Act and apply

the same rights and legal protections to migrant sex workers who are on a work visa as given to citizens.

The Education and Workforce Committee found that the issue raised warranted meaningful consideration. The report recommended that the Government closely consider Ms Black's petition and the evidence outlined in this report.

This is a complex area, involving immigration settings, noting that amending the Prostitution Reform Act would not in itself change the legal status of many migrant sex workers. This work will need to be balanced against other priorities. While there is no current work underway to reform this aspect of the Act, it could be considered as part of a future review.

Question 8: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce the gender digital divide?

Question 13: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls, including in sectors where they are underrepresented?

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 8 AND 13 COMBINED

New Zealand's education system places an emphasis on inclusivity and equity, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their gender, sexuality, background, or abilities, have equal opportunities to access quality education. New Zealand also has a long-standing commitment to empowering women and girls in education.

Section 33 of the [Education and Training Act 2020](#) guarantees the right of all domestic learners (including pregnant and parenting students) to free enrolment and education at any state school between the ages of 5 years and 1 January following their 19th birthday.

Women and girls have made important advances in education over the last few decades. Fewer girls than boys leave school without any qualification. 77% of school leavers with National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) level 2 or above are girls ([as at 2022](#)).

However, there are still significant disparities in educational attainment for marginalised groups such as Māori, Pacific peoples, disabled people, and rural women and girls.

A range of initiatives have been introduced to increase the accessibility of educational achievement and improve education outcomes for women and girls. This includes providing period products to menstruating students and supporting pregnant and parenting students.

Poor access to period products can affect students' attendance and engagement at school, which can in turn affect their achievement and wellbeing. Research shows that 12% of menstruating students cannot access the sanitary products they need due to financial barriers. Additionally,

research found that nearly 95,000 girls aged 9 to 18 from New Zealand's poorest households may be unable to afford to buy products and could be missing school when they have their period.

The initiative is a Ministry for Education schooling initiative that aims to provide access to free period products for children and young people in all state and state-integrated schools and kura (school) across New Zealand. Over 2,100 schools, kura, activity centres, and alternative education providers have opted into the programme, which is reaching 98% of estimated menstruating students. Over two million period product packs have been supplied to schools since June 2021.

Teen Parent Units

Research shows that young mothers are less likely to finish secondary school and that leaving school with less than NCEA level 2 (or equivalent) qualification has the biggest impact on young mothers who have a 60% chance of being in long term limited employment.

The Ministry of Education has established 25 Teen Parent Units in New Zealand, which are attached to an established state or state integrated secondary school. An early childhood education centre, which caters for the children of teen parents, is located either onsite or close by. Teen Parent Units provide wraparound support to pregnant or parenting learners to minimise the barriers to education. An Individual Learning Programme is developed based on each learner's individual needs. The units also provide secondary education that results in successful transitions to further education, training, or employment. There is also a funding stream for Teen Parents that can be used to support pregnant and parenting students who are still learning in their mainstream classrooms.

Raising Māori educational success

The New Zealand education system seeks to:

- respond to Māori learners within in the context of their whānau
- ensure that Māori learners are free from racism, discrimination, and stigma
- recognise that Māori are diverse and need to be understood in the context of their diverse aspirations and lived experiences
- recognise that identity, language, and culture matter for Māori learners
- recognise Māori should be able to exercise their authority and agency in education.

Education legislation includes provisions that recognise and respect the Crown's responsibility to give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi.

To ensure that Māori can enjoy and achieve education success, New Zealand developed [*Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, the Māori Education strategy*](#). It sets out how government agencies will work with education services to achieve system shifts in education and support Māori learners and their wider families and communities to achieve excellent and equitable outcomes.

[Tau Mai Te Reo, the Māori Language in Education Strategy](#) sets out the goals and provides a framework for supporting Māori language in education. There are also initiatives in place which seek to ensure Māori language, identity and culture is shared and embraced in all our schools.

Wānanga are tertiary education institutions which Māori have been instrumental in establishing. These institutions play the role of guardian of Māori knowledge, Māori language, and Māori customs within the tertiary education sector. In 2023, New Zealand established a Framework to create a new fit-for-purpose administrative settings for these institutions to recognise their strength, leadership, and unique role.

Empowering rural and remote learners

Alongside efforts to support remote and isolated schools, New Zealand offers a range of additional support to help students living in remote areas or facing significant barriers to their education.

These include:

- A boarding allowance to students. When there is no local secondary school for geographically remote learners. Currently, 2,097 learners receive this allowance.
- The Multiple Barriers Boarding Allowance to help learners with multiple barriers attend their local school. Budget 2022 increased allowances by 8%.
- Transport assistance to help more than 100,000 students from rural communities get to school each day.

Empowering disabled learners

New Zealand is committed to ensuring education is accessible and inclusive for all students. Based on 2021 data, disabled girls in the New Zealand Education system comprise a third of all disabled learners. In the last five years, New Zealand taken a suite of measures to improve the support provided to disabled learners.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education launched the [Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025](#) to improve the outcomes for children and young people who need extra support in the education system. Investments into this Action Plan included strengthening capability and increasing flexible funding for learning support services.

New Zealand's continued work to improve how the education system supports disabled learners is informed by a range of evidence, reviews, and voices from disabled people and communities. During 2021-2022, the Ministry of Education conducted a review to understand how best to support learners with the highest level of learning support need in the Education System. In August 2022, New Zealand reported to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and received several recommendations. In September 2022, the Education Review Office, in partnership with the Human Rights Commission and the Office for Disability Issues undertook a

review in looked at how well the New Zealand education system is supporting disabled learners in schools.

Relationships and sexuality education

Learning about relationships and sexuality is part of [The New Zealand Curriculum](#) and is a key area of learning [within Health and Physical Education](#). It is compulsory for New Zealand schools to teach relationship and sexuality education up until the end of year 10. From late primary school onwards, students learn about physical and emotional development during puberty as well as reproduction. In secondary schools, young people continue to learn about relationships, decision-making skills, and learn about how to keep themselves sexually safe. Following *The New Zealand Curriculum* and Ministry of Education guidelines, schools have the flexibility to create their own relationships and sexuality education programme, and it is mandatory for schools to consult with their communities about what is going to be taught.

In 2022, the Ministry of Education developed educational resources to ensure relationship and sexuality education in schools and kura is safe and inclusive. A new teaching resource, [Ka huri i te kōrero | Changing the conversations around pornography](#), discusses how pornography influences choices and reinforces gender stereotypes. The relationships and sexuality education guidelines will be reviewed in the line with the upcoming refresh of the Health and Physical Education learning area.

Reducing the gender gaps in STEM and vocational education

There are a range of programmes and initiatives across schooling, tertiary education, and tertiary education organisations to encourage more young people to opt into vocational education and STEM-related subjects, particularly girls and Māori and Pacific peoples, who are under-represented in technology. These are often in partnership with industry and communities.

Targeted scholarships are available across New Zealand universities and tertiary education organisations to support women in careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Between 2019 and 2021, the Government funded research to better understand the barriers and to boost the number of women in trades. The Tertiary Education Commission has also undertaken a Vocational Education and Training marketing campaign aimed to raise the profile of vocational education so that more people view it as a desirable pathway into employment. The campaign includes dedicated targeting of women and showcases women in non-traditional roles. There are also industry-led initiatives that include deliberate messaging to women about trades careers and training opportunities. Some of these campaigns have received developmental funding from the government.

The [National Careers System Strategy](#) was launched in 2023. The vision of the Strategy is to ensure that people are empowered to understand themselves and their aspirations and can navigate careers opportunities that fit throughout their lives. A key principle to the strategy is ensuring that

the careers system is available to everyone throughout their lives, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or ability. This includes ensuring that Māori and Pacific peoples and other priority groups, including disabled people, youth at risk of limited employment, women, and those likely to be impacted by the changing world of work; can access careers support. This is critical to supporting equitable work and education outcomes for women and girls.

Tertiary Education: training and apprenticeships

The tertiary education system delivers to around 500,000 learners and approximately 15% of New Zealand employers, with over 200,000 domestic learners being women.

The tertiary system is made up of:

- eight universities
- three Wānanga (publicly-owned tertiary institutions that provide education in a Māori cultural context)
- Te Pūkenga New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology (the national network of 25 polytechnic and industry training organisations)
- 396 registered and active Private Training Establishments
- six Workforce Development Councils
- 113 other organisations (including other tertiary education providers, employers, and community education providers).

The Government funds tertiary education organisations and providers via the Tertiary Education Commission, and many tertiary education organisations also receive external funding through publicly funded research contracts.

The [Tertiary Education Strategy](#) sets out the Government's long-term strategic direction for tertiary education. The Strategy includes the economic, social, and environmental goals for tertiary education, along with the development aspirations for Māori and other population groups, and the current and medium-term priorities for tertiary education.

The Tertiary Education Strategy includes actions that both tertiary education organisations and government can take to help achieve the priorities. Tertiary education organisations need to show how they will have regard to the Strategy priorities in their investment plans to the Tertiary Education Commission. Tertiary education organisations are autonomous and therefore responsible for their own operational arrangements, including all financial, employment, and other management practices. This includes the freedom of universities and Wānanga to appoint their own staff, decide the subject matter they teach, and to teach and assess in a way that they consider best promotes learning.

In 2020, and as a response to COVID-19, the Government implemented the Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund and the Apprenticeship Boost Initiative to support more learners to train in vocational education and training.

The Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund which ran from mid-2020 to the end of 2023, supported learners to train in targeted vocational areas without having to pay fees. Alongside work across the tertiary sector to help rebalance participation across tertiary education, apprenticeship support such as Apprenticeship Fund has helped to supported women's entry into traditionally male-dominated fields.

The Apprenticeship Boost Initiative makes payments of \$500 NZD per first- and second year apprentice to employers to help them keep and take on new apprentices, allowing apprentices to keep earning while training towards their qualifications. This initiative has supported more than 66,000 apprentices to stay in or take up an apprenticeship since the initiative was introduced in August 2020. Since its introduction, participation rates for women aged 24 years or younger in apprenticeships have increased by 90%, rising from 7.7% of the total in 2019 to 11% in 2024.

Access to digital technology learning across schools and kura

During COVID-19, the Ministry of Education worked to overcome the digital divide created by the requirement for remote learning during school closures. It provided access to internet connectivity to more than 40,000 households, digital resources, and other learning equipment.

In 2021, research found that affordability of devices and connection was, and remains a barrier to digital inclusion and coordinated and accelerated action on digital inclusion is required.

The Ministry of Education's Digital Technologies and Hangarau Matihiko programme supports teachers and students to confidently and effectively use digital technologies to enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Although not specifically targeted at women and girls, there is support available for schools designed to strengthen digital literacy.

Creating pathways for women and girls' entry into STEM

There are a number of programmes and initiatives led by tertiary education organisations that deliver STEM education to women and girls that also include a technology or digital component.

They include:

- **GirlBoss NZ:** a 13,500 strong network of changemakers who are working to close the gender gap in Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Leadership, Entrepreneurship. GirlBoss has delivered a range of initiatives to support women into STEM.
- **The Wonder Project:** STEM project-based programmes targeted at intermediate and secondary school girls, Māori, and Pacific Peoples.
- **ShadowTech for Girls:** an opportunity for young women in Years 9-11 to experience what working in the tech sector could be like. It connects young women at school with women working in the tech sector, who act as mentors for the day so students can experience a day in the life of a tech professional.

- **Girls in Games events:** run by Media Design School, Senior Girls in Games is an immersive full-day event that covers the basics of Game Art and Game Programming for aspirational game developers in Years 11-13 that identify as female.
- **Women in Engineering:** University of Auckland's Women in Engineering Network builds connections between women studying at the Faculty of Engineering.
- **School to Skies:** a programme for Year 13 young women who have an interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths delivered by the Royal NZ Air Force.
- **P-TECH:** a free, five-year structured programme that combines high school, tertiary university education, and tech workplace experience. On completion, students have both NCEA qualifications, and a New Zealand Diploma aligned to industry needs. In May 2022, Māori and Pacific representation in P-TECH in New Zealand was 83% collectively. Almost 35% of students enrolled in P-TECH in New Zealand are women.
- Targeted scholarships across New Zealand to support women in STEM careers.

Question 9: In the past five years, how has the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what macroeconomic policies has your country implemented in support of a more gender-equal economy?

Macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment

There have been large fluctuations in the macroeconomic environment in the past five years, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Generally, this has meant that the capacity to initiate policy reforms has varied significantly.

Some factors that have impacted this include:

- Over the five years leading up to COVID-19, the economy had been growing at an average annual rate of around 3.5% per year. Restrictions on international travel and domestic activity saw a sharp curtailment in economic activity, with annual growth contracting by 1.4% over the year to December 2020. Following the easing of restrictions, economic activity recovered to pre-COVID trend levels by the end of 2022. However, since then GDP growth has fallen, with 4 of the last 5 quarters seeing declines in the seasonally adjusted measure of GDP.
- Average annual growth in real GDP between the year ended June 2018 to the year ended June 2023 was 2.4%.
- Core Crown expenses have risen as a percentage of GDP by around 4.4 percentage points between 2016/17 and 2022/23, with growth driven by increased spending in Social Security, Welfare, Health, and other components of core Crown expenditure (transport, communications, housing, community development, environmental protection).
- There are long term challenges (demographic, climate and geopolitical) to New Zealand's public finances.

The Treasury undertakes rolling analysis of the economic and fiscal environment alongside releases of the forecasts at each [Economic and Fiscal Update every six months](#).

Trade policies

More information on the evolution of trade policies to support a gender-equal economy can be found in question 6.

Question 10: In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

Question 11: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 10 and 11 COMBINED

The Government is committed to ensuring work to address poverty is responsive to the needs of everyone in New Zealand, including women and girls.

New Zealand has a long-established comprehensive welfare system which provides support to people in hardship. The Government has committed to ensuring the welfare system supports those who can move into employment as the best route out of poverty. While some women in New Zealand still face vulnerabilities to hardship, welfare assistance is administered based on need and does not discriminate based on gender. There are a range of social protection programmes that positively benefit disabled women, older women, female-headed households, single mothers, and young mothers, with programmes aiming to reduce economic hardship.

There are some areas where women are disproportionately represented – for example, in receipt of the Sole Parent Support. We also know that women are more reliant on New Zealand Superannuation than men because of their lower savings and investments. Women also live by themselves for longer, due to men’s shorter life expectancy, and so have higher costs and a longer period to fund after the age of 65. Women who continue paid work after the age of 65 are more likely than men to identify financial reasons for their decision.

Work undertaken in the last five years has included a wide range of measures aimed at supporting low- and middle-income families with children, and this has addressed issues that disproportionately impact women, in particular Māori women. This work can be broadly split into three categories – social assistance, housing, and caring and children.

Social assistance

The [Families Package](#) was introduced in 2018 as part of the Government’s focus on reducing child poverty and ensuring children get the best start in life. The package included changes to several income support payments and introduced two new payments, Best Start (a payment for parents

with newborn babies) and the Winter Energy Payment. The Families Package is delivered primarily through the Ministry of Social Development and Inland Revenue.

In 2021, the [Social Security \(Subsequent Child Policy Removal\) Amendment Act](#) and the subsequent child policy was introduced, repealing section 192 of the [Social Security Act 2018](#). This section had a negative impact on some sole parent families.

Child Support Pass-On

On 1 July 2023, the [Child Support \(Pass On\) Acts Amendment Act](#) came into force, with the first payments being passed on to parents on a sole parent rate of main benefit in August 2023. Previously, child support payments made to parents on a sole parent rate of main benefit were collected by Inland Revenue and retained by the Government to offset the cost of their main benefit or Unsupported Child Benefit. Once the full cost of their benefit was offset, child support payments in excess of that full cost were paid out to them.

The Child Support (Pass On) Acts Amendment Act changed this, so that child support payments made to parents on a sole parent rate of main benefit are now passed on directly to the recipient and charged as income against their financial assistance. Based on child support payments passed on to carers on the regular monthly pay date, to December 2023, these amendments resulted in a median of 45,000 recipients monthly, receiving a median of \$34.32 NZD a week in child support. This translates to a median of \$22.90 NZD a week in additional financial resources after abatement of income-tested financial assistance.

Training Incentive Allowance

The Training Incentive Allowance allows those aged 16 and older on specified benefit types (provided they also meet all other relevant eligibility criteria) to receive assistance. In 2023 the Government permanently expanded the Training Incentive Allowance to cover study up to level 7 on the [New Zealand Qualification and Credentials Framework](#). The Training Incentive Allowance has a disproportionate positive impact on women. It provides extra help to sole parents, carers and disabled people receiving certain types of benefits to undertake approved training and study courses that will increase their skills and opportunities for employment.

The Ministry of Social Development continues to look for ways to improve access to employment support for women.

Better Later Life Strategy Action

The impact of working part-time, gender bias, and gender pay gaps disadvantage women and mean that women have fewer opportunities to financially prepare for retirement via asset acquisition or KiwiSaver contributions. New Zealand annually adjusts the rates of New Zealand Superannuation and Veteran's Pension to reflect increases in the cost of living and the average wage. This supports women who often experience higher rates of financial disadvantage in later life.

Additionally, the Ministry of Social Development is developing work under the Government's [Better Later Life Strategy Action](#) to understand the size, scale and characteristics of older people who experience vulnerability or compounding disadvantage. This work seeks to explore how current supports and services are responding to the unique and complex needs of older people with compounding disadvantage and how overall outcomes can be improved and inequities, including gender inequities, across older communities reduced. An [insights report was published in June 2023](#) that analysed the initial phase of this work.

Housing

Social housing is a critical part of the Government's strategy to provide people in need with a warm, dry place to live as part of broader social support and wellbeing. We know that women are disproportionately supported by social housing – at the end of February 2024, around 36% of those on the Social Housing Register were single parents with children (the majority of whom are likely women). Since June 2017, over 14,000 public housing places and 5,000 transitional housing places have been added.

43% of those in emergency housing are single parent families (compared to 18% in the general population). The Priority One fast-track category for emergency housing, established in April 2024, will help whanau with tamariki (families with children) living in emergency housing for 12 weeks or more, including single parents, largely mothers, be prioritised for social housing.

Changes to the Residential Tenancies Act 1986

In 2020, provisions were added to the [Residential Tenancies Act 1986](#) to enable tenants experiencing family violence to leave a tenancy with two days' notice to seek safety. These provisions took effect from December 2022, making it easier for victims of family violence, including rural women who may face more or different barriers, to leave unsafe living situations.

In 2024, the Government announced proposed changes to the Residential Tenancies Act 1986, which will extend the family violence provisions to ensure people who are partly or wholly dependent on a tenant, such as children or vulnerable adults (this could include disabled people or elderly relatives) are protected. This change will remove barriers in the law that prevent victims of family violence – who are overwhelmingly women – from leaving unsafe situations.

Reducing child poverty

There is broad and longstanding political and public support for reducing child poverty in New Zealand. There is compelling New Zealand and international evidence that reducing child poverty delivers beneficial effects across a range of children's outcomes in both the short and longer term.

There is specific evidence that poverty reduction improves children's cognitive development, school achievement, social and behavioural development, health, and justice outcomes and that these benefits accrue well into adulthood. Reducing child poverty also has wider benefits to

parents and communities by positively impacting parenting and the home environment, improving maternal mental health, and decreasing rates of domestic abuse and parental arrests.

The [Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018](#) guides New Zealand's efforts to reducing child poverty. The Act establishes a suite of measures to quantify child poverty rates and requires regular reporting to both Parliament and the public on progress towards the identified targets and outcomes.

The Act requires 10-year long term targets to be set, as well as 3-year intermediate targets that support the 10-year targets.

As required by the Act, [Stats NZ reports annually on child poverty rates](#) based on the nine measures in the Act. It reports on data obtained from the last year and reports on trends since the baseline year ended June 2018. Statistics from the 2022/2023 year indicate an annual increase in material hardship, indicating that more households were going without some of the essentials due to cost. There was also an increase in the percent of children living in households on low incomes after deducting housing costs.

National Carers Strategy

The [New Zealand Carers' Strategy](#) was launched in 2008. The strategy was developed in partnership by government agencies and the New Zealand Carers Alliance (which represents a network of over 45 not-for-profit organisations). It is supported by five-year action plans that address key priorities identified by carers and the Government. In 2019, the third action plan, [Mahi Aroha: Carers' Strategy Action Plan 2019-2023](#), was released. The latest *Action Plan* is focused on improving the wellbeing of the one in ten New Zealanders who care for a loved one with a disability, health condition, illness, or injury.

Question 12: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

New Zealand's health system is publicly funded and provides free or subsidised healthcare to citizens, permanent residents, and other people on certain classes of visa. Some care for pregnant women is free or heavily subsidised (unless the person chooses to use a private healthcare provider) and includes prenatal, childbirth, and postnatal care and hospitalisation care where necessary. However, pregnancy ultrasounds are not subsidised in all regions of New Zealand creating health inequities and risks for some populations.

However, New Zealand continues to face ongoing health access challenges. This has been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic and workforce issues. As a result, New Zealand experiences demand pressures in the hospital sector, with extensive waiting lists and inequities in access and outcomes. Inequities exist particularly for Māori, those living rurally, and other high need populations. The Government is committed to improving timely access to quality care in the health system for everyone in New Zealand. [New Government targets for the health system](#)

were announced in 2024. The five targets are: faster cancer treatment, improved childhood immunisation, shorter stays in emergency departments, shorter wait times for first specialist assessments, and shorter wait times for elective treatment. The Government plans to publish monitoring results quarterly beginning with Quarter One 2024/25.

Women also face particular challenges with regards to health treatment, access, and outcomes. These include:

- Health issues that are unique to women, such as menstruation, fertility, childbirth, and menopause.
- Biological differences, including anatomy, physiology, metabolic processes, and genetics, which may result in differing biological responses for women and men to illnesses and disease.
- Persistent inequities such as a higher rate of poverty, high rates of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, and disparate access to paid parental leave that can restrict their access to health.
- Some groups of women experience forms of bias that negatively affects their health and wellbeing. This includes gender bias, family violence and sexual violence, housing and homelessness, and economic deprivation and financial stability, racism, ableism, transphobia, and homophobia. Racism in the health system has contributed to Māori, Pacific, and Asian women experiencing disproportionate rates of health risk, poor health outcomes and shorter life expectancy.
- Being excluded from much of the research that guides policy development.

Groups of women who experience poorer health outcomes:

- Māori women are more likely to suffer maternal mortality, and cervical and breast screening coverage for Māori women has decreased more rapidly than coverage for European/Other women over the past 10 years.
- 41% of Pacific women have access to maternity care in their first trimester which results in higher rates of maternal mortality for Pacific Women (from 2006 to 2018, Pacific women had a maternal mortality rate of 22.23 per 100,000 maternities, compared with 11.33 for European women).
- Young women and young Māori women experience higher rates of psychological distress, and people in rainbow communities are more than twice as likely to experience daily feelings of depression, and report high rates of self-harm and attempted suicide). Additionally, Māori women have the highest maternal suicide rate in the world.

Recent legislation promotes the improvement of health outcomes

The [Pae Ora \(Healthy Futures\) Act 2022](#) took effect on 1 July 2022. It provides for the public funding and provision of services to protect, promote, and improve the health of everyone in New Zealand and achieve equity in health outcomes among New Zealand's population groups.

In 2023, New Zealand released five health strategies centred on addressing the health inequities experienced by women and other marginalised groups in New Zealand:

- [*Women's Health Strategy*](#): the first national women's health strategy in New Zealand – which sets the direction for improving the health and wellbeing of women over the next ten years, including for Māori women, Pacific women, disabled women, and rural women.
- [*Pae Tū: Hauora Māori Strategy*](#): an update to the strategic direction for improving the health and wellbeing of Māori, founded in commitments under the Treaty of Waitangi.
- [*Te Mana Ola: Pacific Health Strategy*](#): New Zealand's first health strategy that focuses on Pacific peoples. It was developed with diverse Pacific communities across New Zealand.
- [*Provisional Health of Disabled People Strategy*](#): the first dedicated, health-system-led strategy for disabled people in New Zealand. The strategy recognises that disabled women can face intersecting forms of discrimination relating to gender and disability, as well as other intersecting factors such as age, language, ethnicity, and religion.
- [*Rural Health Strategy*](#): recognises that rural communities are often under-served, particularly in relation to accessing health services, especially for remote communities and rural Māori.

Ao Mai Te Rā: Anti-Racism Kaupapa

The Ministry of Health has also established [Ao Mai te Rā: the Anti-Racism Kaupapa](#), a specific programme of work to support the way the health system understands, reacts, and responds to racism across the health system. Ao Mai te Rā recognises that health outcomes can be further compounded by additional social markers of difference, including gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

Kahu Taurima – Maternity and Early years

Māori women experience inequities in the maternal health care system. They are at increased risk of discrimination, marginalisation, and negative postnatal outcomes compared with non-Māori in many circumstances. They are also more than three times more likely to die by suicide than non-Māori during the post-natal period. Many programmes and supports have been introduced to address these inequities. For example, the Ministry of Māori Development - Te Puni Kōkiri commissions wellbeing outcomes through the [Whānau Ora Initiative](#) providing whānau-centred (family-centred) supports and services to whānau Māori (Māori communities and wider family). This support includes increasing access to culturally relevant services for Māori women.

[Kahu Taurima – Maternity and Early Years](#) programme aims to break down barriers to accessing maternity services, integrate primary care, community, and specialist services to improve the quality and safety of services, and achieve more equitable outcomes. This programme of work will also drive the creation of whānau-centred service delivery models through the redesign of maternity and early years services across New Zealand and increase the capacity and capability of Māori and Pacific providers.

Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora has established a taskforce to develop and prioritise short- to medium-term initiatives and investments, which includes a midwifery working group to examine recruitment and retention barriers. To help attract an internationally trained workforce, nurses, midwives, and mental health professionals have been added to New Zealand's immigration Green List.

Ngā Tini Whetū

[Ngā Tini Whetū](#) is an early intervention support initiative to create safe, healthy, and resilient environments during the first 1,000 days of life for pēpē (baby), māmā (mother), and whānau Māori (Māori families). This supports child and youth wellbeing outcomes, enabling whānau to promote and lead injury prevention and healthy lifestyles, and provides a foundation for improved outcomes from generation to generation.

Ngā Tini Whetū is delivered through cross-Government collaboration that resources whānau Māori to provide their own solutions to best meet their aspirations. The prototype phase, from 2019-2021, provided compelling evidence that Ngā Tini Whetū improved whānau wellbeing across several wellbeing domains.

Ngā Tini Whetū has been supported by additional government funding of \$64.4 million NZD over four years to implement a test phase.

Voluntary Bonding Scheme

The Voluntary Bonding Scheme is a financial incentive programme for several health professions, including nurses and midwives, which aims to retain and encourage health professionals to work in needed communities and specialties. The scheme also aims to increase representation of Māori and Pacific peoples within the health workforce.

Budget 2020 provided \$35 million NZD over four years to support the [Maternity Action Plan](#), which includes initiatives to improve maternity quality and safety programmes, workforce sustainability, and family/whānau support.

New Zealand treats abortion as a health issue

In March 2020, changes were made to the law to decriminalise abortion in New Zealand. This included removing abortion from the [Crimes Act 1961](#) and making substantive changes to the [Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act 1977](#). These changes modernised the legal framework for abortion services and aligned them better with other health services. Beyond 20 weeks, statutory requirements need to be followed by health practitioners when considering whether the abortion is clinically appropriate.

The new [Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion \(Information Collection\) Regulations 2021](#) came into effect in September 2021. Reporting from 2022 onwards indicated an increase in abortion

provision across New Zealand. This increase reflects fewer barriers to accessing abortion services, as was the intention of the legislation change.

There has been an ongoing increase in the number of Early Medical Abortion which are a result of fewer barriers to earlier care. The increase in the proportion of Early Medical Abortion is likely due to the endorsement of training for midwives, an increase in the number of services providers in New Zealand, and the inclusion of new access through the national telehealth service funded by Health New Zealand, [DECIDE.org.nz](https://www.decide.org.nz). This service provides timely and equitable access to people in any region of New Zealand seeking abortion services and directs people to an 0800 number staffed by trained health practitioners who provide information, support, referrals, counselling, and follow-up after an Early Medical Abortion. The service ensures that pregnant women can access Early Medical Abortion with clinical support and associated services such as counselling. It also helps to mitigate ongoing issues related to the small size of the abortion services workforce, and conscientious objection.

The [Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion \(Safe Areas\) Amendment Act 2022](#) enables safe access to relevant services for both pregnant women and health practitioners. There are now 11 Safe Areas enforced across the country, with providers able to apply to the Ministry of Health at any time to progress an application for a Safe Area.

The national abortion services work programme has a strong focus on achieving equitable health outcomes, in particular for Māori and Pacific people, and disabled people. Māori people and people living rurally access surgical abortions at a higher rate compared to other people. This approach aims to ensure there is a sustainable and skilled workforce capable of meeting the healthcare needs of individuals, whilst allowing them a choice in the type of care they receive.

The Ministry of Health has a strengthened focus on the regulation of abortion provision and is looking at further ways to ensure that the changes made in the legislation are embedding. There is also a periodic review and recommendation due no later than March 2025. This review will focus on whether there is timely and equitable access to abortion, as well as whether there is any evidence of abortion being sought for the purposes of sex selection. The Ministry of Health is also exploring a framework to protect the bodily integrity of disabled people from non-consensual, non-urgent, non-therapeutic interventions and procedures, particularly in relation to sterilisation, the Ashley Treatment, and abortion services. Focus areas include legislative mechanisms, workforce disability training, and data and monitoring of bodily integrity violations for disabled people, including disabled women.

Cervical Cancer Elimination work programme

The Ministry of Health is working on the Cervical Cancer Elimination work programme. The programme aims to create a united approach for New Zealand with clear, evidence-informed actions to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem, in line with the World Health Organization's international elimination strategy. The intent of this work is to bring together the

cervical cancer vaccination, screening and treatment targets, associated actions, and monitoring plans. This will enable us to identify any gaps and opportunities across the spectrum of cervical cancer elimination elements.

It is anticipated that increased co-ordination and visibility of prevention and treatment for cervical cancer would accelerate reduction in incidence rates, including incidence gaps between groups of women.

Additionally, Māori and Pacific women are disproportionately affected by cervical cancer. A strategic national approach will enable more robust and transparent monitoring to inform actions to improve equitable access, outcomes, and options.

National Cervical Screening Programme

The National Cervical Screening Programme is a national programme led out of the National Public Health Service in Health New Zealand. It provides cervical screening for women and people with a cervix aged between 25-69 years old. The National Cervical Screening Programme is dedicated to reducing the incidence and mortality of cervical cancer in women and people with a cervix through early detection and treatment of pre-cancerous squamous cell changes.

In September 2023, the National Cervical Screening Programme introduced Human Papillomavirus (HPV) testing as the primary test for cervical screening testing. This includes an option for self-testing. The new test is more reliable than the previous cytology test and has been proven to be more acceptable to many hard-to-reach priority groups (such as women in prison).

Breast cancer screening

BreastScreen Aotearoa is New Zealand's publicly funded national breast screening programme, providing free screening mammograms every two years for approximately 270,000 women aged 45 to 69 years who have no signs of breast cancer. BreastScreen Aotearoa aims to eliminate inequitable outcomes by making sure the service is accessible and whānau centred for eligible women.

The new National Breast Screen System will make it easier for eligible women to enrol and book an appointment online where they can self-register their details and choose a booking time that suits them. They can also reschedule their appointment.

Question 14: What actions has your country taken to ensure that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic closes gender gaps in poverty, employment, social protection, education, and/or health that the pandemic has exacerbated?

Lockdown experiences differed for men and women. For example, women were more likely to carry the burden of increased unpaid work, such as childcare and caregiving responsibilities. Therefore, The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated gender inequities in our society. These

disproportionate impacts generated policy responses which focused on both the immediate needs of women, as well as long-term solutions to systemic issues. This included providing essential services in response to unprecedented demand for income support, housing, employment assistance, and additional community support.

Financial support

The Ministry of Social Development funded services to respond to increased demand in financial support and is undertaking longer term work to address these issues. Schemes such as the [COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Schemes and COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme](#) were made available to workers in New Zealand, including women, in response to the pandemic. The Wage Subsidy Scheme supported employers, including self-employed people, to continue paying their employees affected by changes to COVID-19 alert levels and lockdowns. The Leave Support Scheme helped employers including self-employed people to pay employees who had to self-isolate due to COVID-19. In 2020, 54% of women in employment were supported by at least one of the subsidies, and in 2021 41% of women in employment received at least one of the subsidies.

Women's unemployment since the COVID-19 pandemic peaked at 5.6% in September 2020, then dropped to a record low of 3.2% in September 2021. Underutilisation of women in the workforce remains an issue, and some women face intersectional disadvantages in the labour market.

Financial support was also allocated to community organisations that support women and girls through the COVID-19 Community Fund. The Ministry for Women distributed \$4 million NZD over [2020](#) and [2021](#) from funding received from the [COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund](#), established in Budget 2020. The fund supported 155 organisations in 2020, and a further 160 organisations in 2021.

Successful fund applicants provided services such as:

- support for women and children experiencing family violence
- support for retraining and upskilling
- essential supplies such as food, nappies, and sanitary products.

The Ministry of Māori Development - Te Puni Kōkiri distributed an additional \$23.032 million NZD to Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies as an immediate response to the impacts of COVID-19. Over 730,000 whānau (wider family) members were supported during this time, with a high proportion being Māori women.

New Zealand took a systemic and proactive approach to ensure people continued to have access to family violence and sexual violence services during COVID-19. This included collaborating with the family violence and sexual violence sector, NGOs, and kaupapa Māori (Māori approach) providers to ensure that people who needed help were still able to access it. In 2020, as part of the Government's COVID-19 response and recovery plan, an additional \$5.98 million NZD was directed to the Whānau Protect Service over four years. This service, funded by the Ministry of

Justice, supports victims of family violence to remain living safely in their homes. The Interagency Executive Board responsible for the whole-of-government approach to addressing family violence and sexual violence (Te Puna Aonui) also collaborated with the family violence and sexual violence sector to ensure that people who needed help were able to access it throughout the pandemic.

Support to the Pacific

New Zealand provided budget support to Pacific countries during COVID-19

New Zealand provided financial support to some Pacific Island countries during COVID-19 for priority populations, including women and girls. As part of this financial support, Samoa has begun the ratification process of International Labour Organization Convention 190 (Violence & Harassment). The Office of the Attorney General has recently cleared the ratification of Convention 190, centred around the protection of workers from violence and harassment – including gender-based violence and harassment – and enabling victims’ effective access to gender-responsive, safe, and effective complaint and dispute resolution.

New Zealand provided health support to Pacific countries during COVID-19

New Zealand also provided pandemic preparedness and response support to Pacific Island countries that contributed to economic and social resilience.

This support included:

- public health advice
- surge workforce support
- provision of COVID-19 vaccines
- anti-viral treatments
- rapid antigen tests, equipment, and consumables
- support to strengthen the capabilities of the health workforce to respond to outbreaks and future pandemics.

Public health advice supported Polynesian countries in their planning to ensure their vaccine rollout reached those on remote atolls. As part of COVID-19 vaccine support efforts, New Zealand donated Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines to the Kingdom of Tonga to enable pregnant women to be vaccinated. Donation of COVID-19 adult and paediatric vaccines and antivirals was accompanied by wrap-around rollout support that included vaccine cold chain strengthening, training in safe vaccine and antivirals administration, pharmacovigilance, and adverse event management support.

New Zealand provided core funding to multilateral agencies to support COVID-19 responses

New Zealand also provided core multilateral funding to support the global Pandemic response and recovery (\$36 million NZD). Partners included the COVAX Advance Market Commitment, which supported access to COVID-19 vaccines, including in the Pacific region, the Global Fund, and the

Pandemic Fund. This was in addition to a triennium core funding commitment to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), another key partner in COVID-19 recovery and broader health-system strengthening work (\$18 million NZD).

Question 15: Over the past five years, which forms of gender-based violence, and in which specific contexts or settings, has your country prioritized for action?

Question 16: In the past five years, what actions has your country prioritized to address gender-based violence?

Question 17: In the past five years, what strategies has your country used to prevent gender-based violence?

Question 19: In the past five years, what measures has your country taken to resource women's organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV?

Question 21: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls?

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 15, 16, 17, 19, 21 COMBINED

The Government acknowledges that family violence and sexual violence have detrimental impacts not only on victims/survivors but also in more broadly in families, communities, society, and the economy. New Zealand is committed to creating a system that delivers integrated responses and focuses on shifting to prevention, accountability, and healing.

New Zealand has amongst the highest reported rates of family violence and sexual violence in the OECD. Most sexual assaults and family violence incidents in New Zealand are not reported and data collected is often not inclusive. Data available indicates that family violence and sexual violence disproportionately impacts some communities, and those experiencing compounding forms of disadvantage and discrimination. Available data indicates that family violence and sexual violence disproportionately impacts some communities, and those experiencing compounding forms of disadvantage and discrimination.

It shows that:

- Women were more likely to have experienced intimate partner violence than men (24% versus 10%) and sexual assault (36% versus 13%) in their lifetimes.
- Women are three times as likely as men to experience intimate partner violence.
- Family violence and sexual violence disproportionately affect women, children, young people, Māori, Pacific peoples, people with disabilities, older people, LGBTQIA+ communities and ethnic communities:
 - Māori are more likely to be impacted by violence than any other ethnicity and is the leading cause of harm for Māori women, with nearly 50% experiencing partner abuse in their lifetime.

- Gay, lesbian, or bisexual adults are more than twice as likely than heterosexual adults to be victimised through intimate partner violence and sexual violence.
- Rates of violence against disabled people in New Zealand are much higher than those experienced by the rest of the population. Disabled adults are 52% more likely than non-disabled adults to be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

New Zealand’s National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence

In 2021, New Zealand launched [Te Aorerekura - National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence](#) (National Strategy). The 25-year strategy is focused on intergenerational change to eliminate family violence and sexual violence. [There has been progress on this work since 2014.](#)

The National Strategy takes a long-term approach by setting out a framework to eliminate violence, to drive government action in a unified way, and harness public support and community action. It sets out six systemic shifts aimed at preventing, responding to, and healing from, family violence and sexual violence. These six shifts aim to support how government, communities, and specialists work together to address the drivers of violence and achieve positive outcomes for women, including Māori women, and others impacted by violence.

The National Strategy acknowledges the gendered nature of family violence and sexual violence and aims to ensure that women, Māori women and others impacted by violence can access integrated and inclusive responses to enable safety. Many of the actions under the strategy to address gender-based violence in New Zealand also relate to our responsibilities under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The strategy was developed through significant engagement with different sectors such as victims of family violence and sexual violence, children and young people, Māori, Pacific peoples, ethnic communities, LGBTQIA+ communities, disabled people, and rural and isolated communities. A key pillar of the strategy is mobilising Māori and other communities to lead their responses to family violence and sexual violence.

The New Zealand Government expects the *National Strategy* to have the following impacts on family violence and sexual violence:

- Addressing the underlying social conditions and norms that lead to family violence and sexual violence.
- Communities design, lead, and deliver solutions to affect change.
- Government and communities work better together.
- Workforces are skilled, culturally competent, and sustainable workforces.
- Primary prevention is aligned.
- Services are joined up and easy to navigate.

The *National Strategy* is accompanied by an [Action Plan](#), which provides guidance and implementation support, and an [Outcomes and Measurement Framework](#) that outlines how to

measure progress. Work underway in the first Action Plan has included introducing new family violence workforce capability frameworks and engaging with communities to develop new approaches for addressing family violence and sexual violence.

Supporting children impacted by violence

Under the *National Strategy Action Plan*, the Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki are leading four actions to support the *National Strategy*.

The actions are:

1. Building the specialist workforces for children to understand the needs and experiences of children impacted by violence, and how to respond to them.
2. Implementing a framework for frontline workforces, to lift their skills and knowledge for responding and working with people impacted by family violence.
3. Improving its Family Start services, which provides free, accessible parenting support for whānau with children who are under one-year-old.
4. Developing training and resources for parents, caregivers and whānau and undertaking an analysis of healing services and responses to determine gaps and opportunities.

Ensuring the strategy delivers for Māori and diverse communities

In 2022, New Zealand formed Te Pūkotahitanga, a Māori Ministerial advisory group for family and sexual violence. It is a mechanism for Māori to give independent advice to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence and contribute to high-level decisions. It also plays a significant role in creating systems and supports that are governed, led by, and work for, Māori. The group has developed a framework for measuring and tracking success in addressing family violence and sexual violence. This is a critical piece of work to ensure funding is being allocated to the places that require it most.

Budget 2022 allocated \$4 million NZD to establish engagement mechanisms for communities to work with government in developing approaches to tackle family violence and sexual violence. This involved working with specific groups that are disproportionately affected by family violence and sexual violence, such as the LGBTQIA+ communities, ethnic communities, Māori communities, Pacific peoples, disabled people, and older people.

Initiatives that have been delivered include:

- Research to inform development of a respectful relationships programme and guidelines for LGBTQIA+ young people.
- Establishment of the National Ethnic Communities' Network
- An Expert Advisory Group for Children and Young People

Responding to immediate harm

New Zealand is also using cross-agency approaches to ensure the immediate safety of children and people experiencing family violence, and timely intervention to work with people using violence to prevent further harm.

An example of this is the [Integrated Safety Response](#), a multi-agency intervention designed to ensure the immediate safety of victims and children, and to work with perpetrators to prevent further violence. The Integrated Safety Response takes a whole-of-family and whānau (wider family) approach that puts the risk and needs of family and whānau at the centre. These were first piloted in 2016 and 2017, and in Budget 2019 funding was allocated for two further years.

Approximately 73% of all family violence episodes reported to New Zealand Police are referred to the Integrated Safety Response or a [Whāngaia Ngā Pā Harakeke](#) (a national framework where police, iwi (tribes), and qualified support providers work in partnership to attend to and reduce family harm) that uses the case management Family Safety System.

From 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2022, a total of 132,624 females were involved in episodes that were risk assessed and triaged under the Family Safety System. Of these:

- 33,616 were girls (under the age of 18 years).
- 109,278 females were identified as victims and 15,863 as perpetrators.

A 2019 evaluation of the Integrated Safety Response showed the model is effective, makes a positive difference for many families and whānau, and is responsive to Māori. Māori impacted by violence had an 18% reduction in family violence offence related re-victimisation compared with matched controls from sites without an Integrated Safety Response.

Similarly, a 2019 regional evaluation of Whāngaia Ngā Pā Harakeke, based on recorded events between 2009 and 2018, showed a total reduction in family harm of 15%, immediate reductions in the harm committed by repeat offenders who were seen in the first 12 months, and an increase in requests for service.

New Zealand is working to improve access for disabled women to mainstream family violence and sexual violence services across New Zealand

Budget 2023 allocated \$6.11 million NZD over four years to increase access to specialist support through the Waitematā Safeguarding Response. This specialist initiative, which is based in one city, will be extended to other localities across New Zealand to ensure preventative mechanisms and services are in place as part of the disability support system transformation over the next four years. There will also be a focus on improving access for disabled women to mainstream family violence and sexual violence services across New Zealand.

In addition, \$2.2 million NZD in 2024/25, rising to \$6.7 million NZD in future years, was allocated to improve safeguarding for people who are at risk of abuse within current services. While not specifically focused on women, 2,500 people will experience change over four years.

Safeguarding Adults from Abuse

This programme aims to prevent, identify, and respond to, family violence, sexual violence, abuse, and neglect of disabled people. It is supported by the Interdepartmental Executive Board for Family and Sexual Violence and is a multiagency intervention led by the Ministry of Disabled People - Whaikaha. The evaluation of this project will inform local delivery and contribute to national implementation and continuous improvement of safeguarding approaches.

Social protections and services for those impacted by family violence and sexual violence

New Zealand supports community organisations to deliver family violence and sexual violence support services to those most impacted, including diverse groups of women across New Zealand. The key government agency responsible for delivering this support is the Ministry of Social Development.

The Ministry of Social Development has a violence prevention work programme that consists of community-led and whole of population initiatives that work together to prevent and address violence.

Three well established prevention initiatives include:

1. **[E Tū Whānau](#)**: a Crown/Māori partnership that focuses on building protective factors that prevent family violence, while also addressing local issues and needs in a practical and context specific way.
2. **[Pasefika Proud](#)**: community-led solutions that harness Pacific cultural values and frameworks to encourage violence-free, respectful relationships that support Pacific peoples to thrive.
3. **[Campaign for Action on Family Violence](#)**: a national social change initiative currently focused on supporting behaviour change in men using violence.

The Ministry of Social Development received funding through Budget 2022 to strengthen and expand these initiatives. This investment has also supported the development and implementation of the [Love Better youth campaign](#), the [Prevention of Abuse of Older People work programme](#) and the [Ethnic Communities Violence Prevention work programme](#).

New Zealand funds a range of NGOs which provide culturally competent support and refuge services for women, children and families affected by family violence and sexual violence.

Support in the last five years has included funding:

- Women's Refuges across New Zealand to deliver its largest family violence crisis response service. The service includes safe housing, safety planning, and advocacy support for women and children.
- Elder Abuse Response Services, which address the needs of older people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, elder abuse.

- Whānau Resilience Services, which focuses on providing long-term healing and recovery for individuals, families, whānau, and communities affected by family violence.
- A suite of digital tools to provide nationwide 24/7 access to online services to support people affected by family violence. This includes the www.areyouok.org.nz website, which is focused on meeting the needs of victim-survivors and includes a service finder tool to help locate family and sexual violence services.
- The provision of specialist, child-focused support to children in eight Women's Refuge sites across New Zealand.
- Improvements in accessibility of support to disabled people.

New Zealand also funds services that support victims of sexual violence:

- Crisis providers across New Zealand to deliver sexual violence crisis response service. Sexual Harm Crisis Support services provide immediate support to those affected by sexual harm, including crisis counselling, callouts, and 24/7 support.
- Specialist Sexual Violence Court Support services, which provide victims/survivors of sexual violence with advice, guidance, and support, before, during and after a trial.
- Sexual Violence Long-Term Recovery and Care services, which provide a range of responses including post-crisis counselling, and therapeutic trauma recovery.
- Kaupapa Māori Sexual Violence services, which are cost-free for whānau, and aim to ensure holistic service provision, with services spanning across prevention, crisis support, and long-term healing.

Courts and family justice system

New Zealand is transforming the family justice system to make it more victim-oriented

The family justice system supports children, parents, families, and whānau through significant times in their lives. This includes complex and distressing cases that involve family violence. Research shows that survivors of family violence can face barriers in engaging with the family justice system. New Zealand is also working to reduce the risk of re-traumatisation for victims during court proceedings.

Families and children

The Ministry of Justice has a multi-year work programme underway to promote a better understanding of the impacts of family violence and sexual violence and to improve the court experience for people affected by family violence and sexual violence.

This work includes:

- Reinstating representation in the early stages of [Care of Children Act 2004](#) proceedings in the Family Court with legal aid for eligible parties.

- Establishing Kaiārahi – Family Court Navigator roles in 2020 to help parents and families navigate the family justice system, with the aim of supporting better family justice outcomes. Fifty Kaiārahi roles have been successfully appointed and trained and they are based in 31 courts across New Zealand.
- Providing quality and accessible information resources about the family justice system for parents, guardians and whānau to help them navigate the family justice system. The new webpages help parents, guardians, and whānau understand the options available to them when making decisions about the care of their children after a separation or change in family situation. New print resources were also released, and a resource hub was created where key information has been translated into different languages and accessible formats.
- Funding three forums on family violence dynamics for the legal profession in 2021 and 2022 focused on understanding the dynamics of family violence and understanding family violence in different contexts.
- Passing the [Family Court \(Supporting Children in Court\) Legislation Act 2021](#), which came into force in August 2023, introducing a new emphasis on children’s participation in Family Dispute Resolution and in Family Court cases about caregiving arrangements. The Act also signals that family violence should be considered in all decisions about children’s care. New child specialist roles were introduced to Family Dispute Resolution to support the increased focus on children’s participation, and practice guidance and training were made available for practitioners.

Victims of sexual violence

New Zealand is taking steps to mitigate the risk of re-traumatisation of victims during court proceedings. The [Sexual Violence Legislation Act 2021](#) allows for sexual violence complainants to give their evidence using alternative methods such as the pre-recording of evidence. The Act also requires judges to intervene to prevent inappropriate questioning of witnesses at trial.

In addition, [two Bills](#) are currently being considered before the Parliamentary Select Committee which would strengthen the legal protections for victims of sexual violence.

The Bills aim to:

- Reduce the risk of child victims of sexual violence being questioned about consent while giving evidence. This is done by amending the specific sexual offences.
- Make it easier for adult complainants of sexual violence to have their automatic name suppression lifted.
- Strengthen the statutory powers of courts to protect victims from litigation abuse in family proceedings.

Bullying and harassment in the workplace

New Zealand maintains a robust legislative and administrative system to ensure that bullying and harassment is addressed in the workplace.

The [Employment Relations Act 2000](#) enables employees to raise a personal grievance with their employer relating to discrimination and sexual and racial harassment and provides a means to address bullying at work. Employers have an obligation to employees to, as far as reasonably practicable, maintain a safe workplace. Where this obligation is breached and the employee has been disadvantaged in their employment or is forced to resign because of that breach, they can raise a personal grievance. In addition, under the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#), any person conducting a business must ensure the health and safety of workers, including their mental health and protection from bullying or harassment at work.

The Government provides a free employment mediation service to help resolve employment relationship problems. If mediation is unsuccessful or not wanted, employees can raise a personal grievance with their employer under the Employment Relations Act 2000, bringing proceedings to the Employment Relations Authority and subsequently the Employment Court.

However, reporting sexual harassment can be difficult. It is common for victims of sexual harassment to wait a long time before coming forward, if at all. The [Employment Relations \(Extended Time for Personal Grievance for Sexual Harassment\) Amendment Act 2023](#) allows employees more time to raise a personal grievance, increasing from 90 days to 12 months. For all other personal grievances, the time to notify the employer is unchanged at 90 days.

The change will improve the personal grievance process for victims of sexual harassment which has occurred in their employment by allowing them more time to consider what has happened before deciding to come forward.

Question 18: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

New Zealand is working to eliminate technology-facilitated, gender-based violence. This includes ensuring legislation is fit for purpose and protects against the harmful impacts of this type of violence.

Harmful content is regulated with specific targeted legislation, such as the [Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015](#), which provides remedies for certain online behaviours, and the [Films, Videos and Publications Classification Act 1993](#) (The Classification Act).

[The Harmful Digital Communications Act was amended in March 2022](#) to create a new offence of posting an intimate visual recording without consent. This offence does not require proof of intent to cause harm to secure a conviction (as previously required under the Act). The amendment aims to prevent and mitigate harm caused to individuals by the non-consensual publication of intimate visual images. The amendment recognises that this is in and of itself harmful because it involves a breach of trust and confidence as well as a significant invasion of privacy. Individuals can report unauthorised posting of intimate visual recording either to Netsafe or the Police.

The Classification Act lays out a legal framework for classifying harmful publications. A publication can be ‘objectionable’, and its access either restricted or banned in New Zealand, if its unrestricted availability would be harmful to society and it “describes, depicts, expresses or otherwise deals with matters such as: sex; horror; crime; cruelty; or violence. This includes content that promotes or supports the sexual exploitation of children, sexual violence or coercion, and torture or extreme violence”. Using the Classification Act, the Classification Office assesses harmful content to provide content and age classifications. Addressing gaps in the Act in the wake of the March 15 terrorist attacks, the [Classifications Act was amended](#) to introduce additional regulatory powers such as interim classification assessments and take down notices for on-demand content providers.

Gender-based violence occurs through, or can be amplified by, the use of technology. In May 2024, the Classifications Office released a report, [Online Misogyny and Violent Extremism - Understanding the Landscape](#), which highlights the disproportionate impact of online abuse on women and girls, particularly those in public roles, through gender-based abuse and gendered disinformation. The research shows that misogyny frequently appears in content with a clear link to violent extremism and identifies that misogyny may serve as an early indicator of a predisposition towards broader acts of violence.

The Classifications Office also released a detailed online resource that contains extensive information on online harms targeting women and girls. The resource includes literature organised into several key areas, including intersectionality, online abuse and harassment, violent extremism, technology and online platforms, and government responses.

New Zealand Code of Practice for Online Safety and Harm

The New Zealand Code of Practice for Online Safety and Harm was launched in 2022 and seeks to address key areas of harm online including bullying, child safety, disinformation, harassment, hate speech and misinformation. The Code lays out a set of voluntary commitments for digital platforms that signatories agree to meet to enhance people’s safety and contribute to reducing harmful content online.

Signatories include Google (YouTube), Meta (Facebook and Instagram), TikTok, Twitch, and X (formerly Twitter). The Code is administered by NZTech, a non-governmental organisation.

Signatories commit to providing safeguards to reduce the risk of harm arising from online hate speech (as relevant to their products or services). Safeguards include implementing, enforcing, or maintaining policies, processes, products, and tools that seek to prohibit or reduce the prevalence of hate speech on digital platforms as well as programs and initiatives educating users on how to reduce or stop the spread of online hate speech.

Signatories to the Code commit to producing annual transparency reports, which are independently reviewed, and recommendations are made to the Code’s Oversight Committee to support best practice guidelines for future annual reporting.

Cyberbullying

Young people are particularly vulnerable to cyberbullying and online abuse. In New Zealand there has been a dramatic increase in sextortion (a form of online sexual exploitation) and a number of issues made worse through online platforms, such as youth suicide, body image issues, posting about criminal activities, and the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

New Zealand is committed to fostering a policy of zero tolerance in the digital environment for all forms of violence against women and girls, including cyberbullying and harassment. International evidence suggests that children who are cyberbullied are also bullied face-to-face.

Data on bullying in New Zealand is primarily collected through the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Student Wellbeing survey. This data is collected every three years, with the most recent data showing that, although girls are less likely than boys to be frequently bullied, slightly more girls than boys experience social-relational bullying.

The prevalence of bullying behaviour in New Zealand schools is also monitored through data from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study.

A 2021 report, [He Whakaaro: What do we know about bullying behaviours in New Zealand?](#), shows that students who are more likely to be exposed to bullying identify as male, disabled, gender diverse, New Zealand born, low achievers, and from a disadvantaged background.

Government response

The [Education and Training Act 2020](#) and the [Children's Act 2014](#) provide legislation to cover child safety and wellbeing, as well as broader health and safety legislation.

All students and staff deserve to feel safe at school. The Ministry of Education encourages and supports parents and schools to work together to make sure incidents of bullying are quickly, safely, and effectively addressed to minimise the impact on the wellbeing and learning of the children or young people involved.

The Ministry of Education's Learning Support team offers the following supports to schools:

- **Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) School-Wide:** a whole of school approach to creating positive learning environments, currently being implemented in 1,062 schools across the country.
- **Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Restorative Practice:** a whole of school approach to build and maintain positive, respectful relationships across the school community. This initiative, alongside PB4L School-Wide, can strengthen bullying prevention and response efforts by providing evidence informed and holistic approaches to supporting a safe school culture where positive relationships are prioritised.
- **Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Incredible Years programmes:** provide advice, strategies, and support for parents/whānau and teachers.

- **Teaching for Positive Behaviour:** a new resource which supports primary and secondary teachers and those in kura to understand what works in improving behaviour and increasing engagement.
- **Bullying prevention guidance:** a guide for schools providing practical advice on how to prevent bullying and respond effectively when it does occur.
- **Understanding Behaviour: Responding Safely:** de-escalation training for schools.
- **Behaviour Service:** a support for students who behave in a way that significantly affects their learning.
- **Te Kahu Tōi, Intensive Wraparound Service:** provides support to students for whom existing learning support interventions and services have been fully utilised and were unable to meet the child's needs.
- **Interim Response Fund:** a short-term response to schools to address a significantly challenging behavioural event. It provides funding for a short-term response while a more comprehensive intervention plan is devised.
- **Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB):** we also fund the national school-based RTLB service to support the achievement of students in Years 1-10 who have learning and/or behaviour difficulties.

In addition, the [Bullying-Free NZ website](#) is designed to act as a central hub for New Zealand schools. It provides guidance, resources, and tools to schools to review, plan, and implement evidence-informed bullying prevention approaches.

The Ministry of Education also supports schools to develop their bullying prevention and response approaches that work for them and their communities. The focus of the Ministry's bullying prevention and response work has been to support schools to work with their learners and communities to develop safe, inclusive environments. This approach has been informed by careful consideration of relevant evidence including the real-world insights and advice of the 17-member cross-agency Bullying Prevention Advisory Group.

The Department of Internal Affairs provides advice to parents, young people, and educators on staying safe online. [Keep It Real Online](#) is an interactive online tool that provides information, advice, and resources for people to get help if they, or their child, is the victim of sextortion or online grooming.

The Department of Internal Affairs' Digital Child Exploitation Team works to combat the exploitation of children online. This team focuses on detecting, investigating, and prosecuting individuals who produce, distribute, and possess illegal child sexual exploitation material. This is a significant collaborative effort with local and international law enforcement agencies.

The Christchurch Call to Action to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online

In 2019, New Zealand and France established the multistakeholder initiative, The Christchurch Call to Action to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online.

The Christchurch Call is a commitment by Government and online service providers to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online to ensure a free, open, and secure internet. It has

developed a unique model for coordinating action, bringing together affected communities, civil society, and technical experts, alongside international organisations, industry, and Government.

The Christchurch Call Community – participating governments, online service providers, civil society, and partner organisations in the Christchurch Call – gathers for regular summits and leaders' meetings. At the 2022 Christchurch Call Leaders' Summit, leaders directed the 'Call Community' to progress action on several key priorities. This included understanding how factors such as online misogyny and gender-based hatred can be potential vectors for radicalisation and violent extremism.

In 2023, in partnership with the Institute of Strategic Dialogue, a report on [misogynistic pathways to radicalisation](#) was published. This report examined the trends of online gender-based violence and included recommendations for how online service providers can mitigate the risks of online gender-based violence on their platforms.

At the 2023 Christchurch Call Leaders' Summit, Leaders endorsed working with the multi-stakeholder Call community to eliminate terrorist and violent extremism content online. These efforts included counteracting online misogyny and anti-LGBTQIA+ hatred as a potential vector for violent extremism and continuing multistakeholder engagement on the Christchurch Call Initiative on Algorithmic Outcomes. This initiative will help to identify the algorithmic pathways that a user may experience in the process to radicalisation. These efforts seek to better explain the gendered components of terrorist and violent extremist content online.

Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse

New Zealand participates in the United States-led initiative, the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse, which brings together countries, international organisations, civil society, and the private sector to better prioritise, understand, prevent, and address technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

Question 20: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?

Question 23: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?

Government response to gendered media bias and discrimination

The Broadcasting Standards Authority monitors standards for broadcasters which include and promote 'good taste and decency'. In June 2023, the Broadcasting Standards Authority issued [new guidance for broadcasters and complainants in relation to television and radio coverage of gender identity issues](#). The new guidance acknowledges the right to freedom of speech as well as the need

to balance this against the right of vulnerable communities, such as gender minorities, to be free from discrimination.

Media can play a role in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including through non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive coverage and by eliminating gender stereotypes.

New Zealand has worked to raise the value and visibility of women athletes in the media

From 2020, Sport New Zealand has conducted a [Media and Gender study](#) which is one of the most significant of its kind globally. The study investigates gender balance in sports news coverage in New Zealand. It explores various aspects of coverage, athlete portrayal and the gender balance of media companies in terms of both coverage and bylines. It forms part of the broader Government work to improve the value and visibility of women in sport which is outlined in the [Government's Strategy for Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation](#).

New Zealand's news coverage of women's sport has increased from 15% in 2020 to 28% in 2023. This is now seven times the global average of 4%. Improvements were driven by strong interest in the three world cups hosted in New Zealand throughout 2022 and 2023 (the International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's Cricket World Cup, the Rugby World Cup, and the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023™).

The quality and depth of women's sports coverage continues to grow along with the volume of reporting and media on women in sport, regardless of results. Analysis continues to show minimal framing of female athletes in an unfair or problematic way and sexualised images of female athletes account for less than 1% of all imagery, with sports photography generally placing both male and female athletes in uniforms or training gear, and in a sporting context.

This study is a collaborative approach by media, broadcasters and sports organisations can have on improving the visibility of female athletes and teams in sports news media. Despite this success of increasing the overall visibility of female athletes, a key challenge remaining is increasing the gender balance within newsrooms. As female reporters are more likely to write about female athletes, attracting more women into sports journalism will likely lead to even greater improvements in the overall gender balance of sports coverage.

New Zealand's broadcasting services work to increase diversity, gender balance and wider ethnicity in the workplace

Radio New Zealand and Television New Zealand are New Zealand's key public media broadcasters. Both broadcasters are expected to operate consistent with the Government's support for diversity, boards are encouraged to support diversity and inclusion in the workplace and in leadership teams and to work to close gender and ethnic pay gaps.

While no specific targets are set for either entity:

- Television New Zealand's [annual report 2022](#) shows that women represent 60% of the executive team and 57% of the Board.
- Radio New Zealand's [annual report 2022/23](#) shows that women represent 60% of its Board members and 50% of its Executive Leadership.

NZ on Air is responsible for funding decisions to support broadcasting and creative works. It is an autonomous Crown Entity and is subject to Ministerial expectations regarding diversity and inclusion in the workplace. NZ on Air's [Annual Report 2023](#) notes that it currently has a Board membership of 50 / 50 male to female ratio. The staff gender profile in 2022/23 is 63% female to 37% male.

More information on strengthening women's representation and efforts to increase women in STEM can be found in combined questions 8 and 13.

Question 22: In the past five years, what actions and measures has your country to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?

Women's leadership has been on an upward trajectory in recent years

The New Zealand Government is committed to supporting women in leadership in both the public and private sectors. The Government will continue to work with organisations across the private sector to demonstrate the value of having more women on their boards and at the leadership table.

New Zealand continues to make positive advances in the number of women in leadership positions in both the public and private sectors.

Parliament and local boards

The gender balance of Parliament has improved since the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) voting system in 1996. As at May 2024, there are 57 women (46%) Members of Parliament elected to the current 54th Parliament of New Zealand. 13 out of 30 Ministers (43%) and seven out of 20 Cabinet Ministers (35%) were women.

New Zealand also made history in October 2022 when the 53rd Parliament marked the milestone of having majority women Members for the first time with 60 women and 59 men.

The proportion of women elected to local bodies has risen from 30% to 39% between 2010 to 2022, with the number of women candidates also increasing (to 38%). Local boards and community boards tend to have greater proportions of women standing compared with other electoral positions. In 2022, these were 45% and 43% respectively. The number of women elected Mayors rose from 18% in 2010 to 32% in 2022.

Women in the public sector

In 2018, Cabinet introduced a target of gender-equal Minister-appointed public sector boards and committees. The proportion of public sector board and committee roles held by women has subsequently increased, from 47.4% in 2018 to 53.1% [in 2022](#). Women have held over 50% of roles on public sector boards and committees for the past three years.

Māori and ethnic diversity has also increased steadily since 2019 when data collection for ethnicities on boards began. Māori board members now hold 26.8% of board roles, Pacific board members 7.2%.

All public service organisations are implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies. This programme of work has been underway since 2017 and is supported by the [Public Service Act 2020](#). The Act requires Chief Executives of public sector entities to actively promote diversity and inclusiveness in their organisations.

Data shows that gender and ethnic groups are well represented in the public service, matching their proportions in the wider population or close to them. However, further work is needed to improve leadership diversity.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion data

The Public Service Commission collects and reports data relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion across the public service which is critical to identifying the gaps and the ability of the public service to drive change and monitor progress. The first public service census was conducted in 2021 and the second one is planned for 2024.

The Public Service Commission also monitors women's participation in the public service. Women's overall representation in the public service remained stable between 2012 and 2022. [As at June 2023](#), Women make up 62.2% of the total public service workforce. The number of women Chief Executives has increased in this reporting period. [As at April 2024](#), women made up 48% (20 out of 42) of Chief Executives compared with 24.1% in 2012. [As at June 2023](#), the percentage of women in the top three tiers of public service roles was 55.9% (up from 41.5% in 2013).

New Zealand provides support and information for emerging women leaders to reach their leadership potential

The Ministry for Women has a dedicated Nominations Service that is available to support women to start, or further, their governance career in the public service. Currently over 1,600 women are registered with the Nominations Service. The Ministry for Women continues to assist board-appointing government agencies by nominating and endorsing applications from suitably qualified and experienced women.

The Nominations Service has a range of functions:

- Supporting women to start their governance careers and advises women enrolled on our nominations database about vacancies on public sector boards and committees.

- Supporting public sector agencies with a board vacancy to find high-calibre women candidates.
- Working to maintain women’s representation at a minimum of 50% for Minister-appointed roles on public sector boards and communities.
- Working to increase the gender and ethnic representation on these boards.
- Working with other government agencies and organisations that also provide nominations services to Ministers and government agencies seeking to fill board vacancies.
- Undertaking an annual stocktake of gender and ethnic diversity on public sector boards and committees.
- Maintaining the Leadership Learning Hub, a centralised place showcasing a range of courses and resources to grow candidates’ leadership and governance skills in New Zealand.

Increasing the representation of Māori and Pacific women and disabled women

The Ministry of Māori Development - Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Ministry for Ethnic Communities, and the Ministry of Disabled People - Whaikaha work alongside each other to increase the gender, ethnic, disability, and wider diversity of public sector boards and committees. This includes monitoring progress, building capability in communities, and strengthening cohesion across the system.

Disability community

The National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (a Ministerial advisory body) has recently appointed a Board member who has a disability to ensure there is a direct voice and advocate for future areas of work on women’s employment. The Council will hold a training session on accessibility at its meeting in June 2024.

Māori women

In Budget 2022, the Government committed \$28.5 million NZD over two years towards whānau (wider family) resilience with a focus on wāhine and rangatahi (young adults). The [Strengthening Wāhine Māori Leadership Fund](#) administered by the Ministry of Māori Development enables community providers in priority areas to work directly with Māori women to build their cultural capability, leadership, and influencing skills to help strengthen their place within the whānau structure. The Māori women leadership programme builds leadership based on Te Ao Māori (Māori worldview) leadership models. In 2022/23 more than 600 wāhine have been supported through 15 Strengthening Wāhine (Māori women) Leadership projects.

Pacific people

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples has invested in governance training workshops to increase Pacific women’s representation. In 2021 and 2022, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples supported the Women in Governance Awards and sponsored the Pacific Governance Leader category.

New Zealand will continue supporting women in leadership in both the public and the private sectors

While New Zealand has improved women's representation in public sector governance, there is still some way to go in the private sector. [As at July 2022](#), women hold 28.5% of all director positions and 26.4% of executive management positions across the New Zealand Stock Exchange (NZX)-listed companies.

Private sector groups leading change

In the private sector, over 80 Chief Executives and Chairs have formed a group called Champions for Change that is leading work to achieve inclusive and diverse workplace leadership. Their work programme centres on four focus areas: increasing gender diversity, increasing Māori and ethnic diversity, leading inclusive cultures, and influencing the outside world. In 2023, this group achieved 40:40:20 gender balance at board level –40% women, 40% men, and 20% any other gender.

Other organisations like the Institute of Directors and Women on Boards New Zealand are also focused on increasing representation of women in leadership and governance roles. The Institute of Directors New Zealand provides a range of governance and board training for directors and governance professionals, as well as the Future Directors® programme, which aims to develop the next generation of directors.

The Superdiversity Institute for Law, Policy and Business has also established a top-100 diverse board-ready chairs and directors list, in collaboration with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities. This candidate list aims to help support and showcase the pool of diverse board-ready candidates to improve the diversity of governance roles.

Around 200 businesses across New Zealand are already voluntarily reporting their gender pay gap via the [MindTheGap website](#) and taking actions to reduce them.

More information on strengthening vocational education and training can be found in question 13.

Question 24: Please describe your country's current national women's machinery (government entity exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women) and describe the measures that your country taken over the past five years to establish and/or strengthen it.

The Ministry for Women is a standalone Ministry and the Government's principal advisor on improving the lives of women and girls in New Zealand.

The Ministry provides system leadership, working across government and with stakeholders, including Māori and diverse communities, to improve outcomes for women and girls. It works to

ensure diverse voices and perspectives are included in government policy and initiatives and provide tools and advice to support better results for the communities we are here to serve.

Over the last five years, the Ministry has strengthened its capacity and capability to deliver on its strategic priorities. This includes increasing its policy capability, data analysis, and engagement to provide gendered policy across government and delivers a range of services, tools, and advice. This work is undertaken to support the increase of women and girls' employment opportunities, leadership, participation, safety, and wellbeing in society and to drive improvements for all women and girls across New Zealand.

The Ministry has also increased its engagement with Māori women, government agencies, non-governmental organisations, businesses, and community groups to help make impactful decisions, develop effective initiatives, and inform policy advice.

The Ministry continues to bring gender expertise to New Zealand's voice and presence on the regional and international stage. To do this, the Ministry works to represent the interests of women in New Zealand and promote gender equality for all women in regional and international fora. The Ministry also leads the Government's international reporting commitments in relation to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Another key component of the Ministry's work includes supporting more women into governance and leadership roles. The Ministry works closely with other population agencies to deliver online workshops and provide information on other available training opportunities through the [Leadership Learning Hub](#) – a collection of online resources designed to develop leadership and governance skills for those seeking appointment to a public sector board.

Additionally, the Ministry is working with the Public Service Commission to reduce gender and ethnic pay gaps in the public service through the dedicated [Equal Pay Taskforce](#). Work to progress pay transparency has also been a key focus over the past year, and the Ministry for Women has been working with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, businesses, unions, industry groups, and organisations that support women to progress pay transparency initiatives.

Question 25: In the past five years, what other mechanisms and tools has your country used to mainstream gender equality across sectors? (e.g. gender focal points in the Executive, Legislature or Judiciary; inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms; gender audits, consultations with women's organizations).

The Government is committed to ensuring the voices of all people in New Zealand inform financial, policy and legislative decisions, including women and girls.

Budget analysis

There are various tools that support gender-responsive budgeting and policy development processes, including The Treasury's [Living Standards Framework](#). The Treasury has been iteratively developing the Living Standards Framework since 2011, with the most recent update in 2021. It is a flexible framework that prompts thinking about policy impacts across the different dimensions of wellbeing, as well as the long-term and distributional issues and implications of policy.

The current Framework features three levels to consider in the development of economic policy and advice:

1. The Individual and Collective Wellbeing level captures the resources and aspects of life that are so important for the wellbeing of individuals, families, whānau (wider family), and communities.
2. The Institutions and Governance level captures the role institutions and organisations play in facilitating the wellbeing of individuals and collectives, as well as safeguarding and building our national wealth.
3. The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand level captures national wealth, inclusive of wealth measures such as human capability and the natural environment.

Under the Framework, agencies are encouraged to analyse policy options through distributional, resilience, productivity, and sustainability lenses. When assessing the distributional impacts of an initiative, the Living Standards Framework assesses the gendered impacts with a strong focus on equity.

More information on the Treasury and Ministry for Women's gender budgeting pilot can be found in question 34.

Distributional analysis in policy and Cabinet papers

The Ministry for Women, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, The Ministry of Māori Development - Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry for Ethnic Communities, and the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha are routinely consulted on, and involved in, public sector policy, regulation, and legislative development.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet recommends Cabinet papers include a population implications statement to ensure the interests and needs of diverse populations are considered, including gender considerations.

Bringing Gender In

In July 2019, the Ministry for Women launched an online policy development tool called [Bringing Gender In](#). The tool helps government agencies understand the gender impacts of policies and design gender-responsive policies.

Bringing Gender In provides simple, user-friendly methods to identify the gender implications of a policy and conduct a gender analysis. The online tool prompts thinking with key questions, provides examples of good practice and links to useful data sources and other relevant material.

Since its launch, the Ministry for Women has trained ten government agencies to use the tool. This training encourages agencies to consider gender issues at an earlier stage in developing their policy advice. This leads to a better understanding of the gendered impact of proposed policies.

More information on how the Bringing Gender In policy tool was used in the Gender Budgeting Pilot for Budget starting from 2022 can be found in question 34.

Gender Attitudes Survey

The National Council of Women of New Zealand conducted four [Gender Attitudes Surveys](#) in collaboration with Research New Zealand in 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2023 respectively. The survey gives a biennial snapshot of New Zealand's attitude to gender and helps to measure attitudes towards gender over time.

The survey tests attitudes across a range of issues relating to gender equality, including whether they think gender equality has been achieved, their opinions about gender diversity, sexual assault, and gender roles (at home, at school, at work, and in the community).

The [baseline 2017 survey](#) showed that while most New Zealanders recognised gender equality as a fundamental right for all, a pocket of New Zealanders still held onto traditional views about gender stereotypes. Successive surveys have, overall indicated that positive changes in gender attitudes are slow to develop. For example, while most respondents in [the 2023 survey](#) considered the household chores covered by the survey to be 'suitable' for all genders, there has been little improvement between 2019 and 2023, with some continuing to think they are 'more suitable' for either men or women. The Gender Attitudes Survey results have so far confirmed that there is still a significant way to go before we can genuinely say that gender equality in New Zealand has been achieved.

More information on how gender is mainstreamed into sustainable development and peace and security initiatives can be found in combined questions 27, 28, 29 and 33.

Question 26: If there is a national human rights institution in your country, what measures has it taken to address violations of women's rights and promote gender equality?

Human rights complaints

New Zealand is committed to maintaining and implementing a legal and policy framework that provides universal protection against all forms of discrimination. This includes the [New Zealand Bill](#)

[of Rights Act 1990](#), which affirms New Zealanders' civil and political rights. The [Human Rights Act 1993](#) provides protections against discrimination across a range of areas and establishes and outlines the role of the Human Rights Commission of New Zealand.

The Human Rights Act outlines what behaviours are considered unlawful conduct and the process for protecting New Zealanders' rights. The Human Rights Commission responds to and resolves human rights complaints from the public through mediation. If a complaint is not resolved at mediation, a person can take legal action through the Human Rights Review Tribunal.

The Human Rights Act covers discrimination based on sex and sexual orientation, age, religious or ethical belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, political opinion, employment, or family status. These rights extend to all people in New Zealand, including children and young people.

The Human Rights Act does not specifically designate a commissioner for women's rights but does give provision for other areas of work to be designated as a priority area. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner was designated to lead the work on women's rights at the Board level. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner leads discussion of the Commission in relation to women's rights, provides advice and leadership on it, and engages with activities related to public debate and concerns about this area of work.

Human Rights Commission advocacy and other work

The Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner regularly speaks on gender equality in the media and to a diverse range of domestic groups. This includes engagements at corporate, community, and educational events and public commentary on the progress of gender pay equity and related settlements.

The Commission continues this work internationally, for example, participating in United Nations Commission on the Status of Women events in New York where they regularly host parallel events with civil society groups, including the Maori Womens Welfare League (2023) and Business and Professional Women New Zealand and the University of Auckland (2024).

Other work on women's rights includes (but is not exclusive to):

- General advocacy for, with, about issues related to rural women, Māori, Pacific, disabled women, older women, refugee, migrant, and asylum-seeker women, workers, mothers, and others.
- Gender-based violence against women.
- Access to justice, particularly for disadvantaged groups of women such as Māori, Pacific, migrant women, rainbow women, and disabled women.
- Addressing and eliminating discrimination against women at work, particularly around unfair and inequitable pay, unsafe and harmful working conditions such as bullying and harassment.

- Advocating for pay transparency legislation that accounts for ethnic and gender pay gaps.
- Advocating for the ratification of the International Labour Organization Convention 190.
- Addressing human rights violations experienced by women in segregated housing within prisons across New Zealand.
- Advocating for stronger policies and practices to protect migrant women from exploitation, including exploitation of their partners (and related precariousness of visas) and protection from trafficking and slavery.
- Advocating for health outcomes for women, including mental health, and safe pregnancy and maternal healthcare.

Section 4: National institutions and processes

Question 27: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?

Question 28: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?

Question 29: In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

Question 33: Please describe your country's national strategy or action plan for gender equality, including its name, the period it covers, its priority, funding and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the targets under SDG 5.

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 27, 28, 29, AND 33 COMBINED

The Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Launched in 2015, [*New Zealand's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2015 – 2019*](#) was structured around the four central pillars of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda - Prevention, Participation, Protection, and Relief and Recovery.

The National Action Plan established several workstreams to address the disproportionate impact of insecurity and violence on women and girls and support their meaningful participation in all aspects of peace and security.

New Zealand's National Action Plan recognised that gender equality is critical to peace and security and acknowledges the importance of women's meaningful participation in peace processes.

Actions in New Zealand's National Action Plan included:

- Increasing the number of women deployed in United Nations-mandated peacekeeping missions and promoting women in New Zealand as mediators and negotiators in international fora.
- Creating and maintaining political pressure and advocacy for the full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in international fora, including protecting women and girls' human rights.
- Incorporating gender perspectives and gender-responsive processes in all New Zealand's peace support, development, and humanitarian assistance work.

Despite its expiration, the approach and actions set out in the first National Action Plan continue to be implemented.

New Zealand's National Action Plan Implementation Report

In 2021, New Zealand released its [report outlining the implementation of the first *National Action Plan*](#).

The implementation report outlined New Zealand's efforts implement the four pillars, including:

- Protecting the human rights of women and girls in international fora.
- Supporting women's meaningful participation in peace and security.
- Incorporating gender perspectives into training and resources.

The implementation report also included a dedicated chapter featuring civil society perspectives on New Zealand's implementation of the *National Action Plan* and proposed next steps.

Pacific Defence Gender Network

New Zealand supports partners in implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. In 2019, New Zealand and Samoa co-hosted the Women, Peace and Security Summit in Apia, Samoa. The summit was convened to support the promotion and implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and complementary resolutions, and action under the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2018. Summit participants included representatives from regional defence forces, including the New Zealand Defence Force, Police, civilians, academics, civil society, and youth representatives.

During this summit, New Zealand announced the launch of a Pacific Defence Gender Network to promote the meaningful participation of women and Pacific defence forces through annual seminars and increased collaboration. Current members of the Network include the New Zealand

Defence Force, the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, His Majesty's Armed Forces of Tonga, the Papua New Guinea Defence Force, the Vanuatu Mobile Force, and the Australian Defence Force.

The New Zealand Defence Force Gender Network

The New Zealand Defence Force is on a journey to improve its implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 through its integration plan and leadership of the Pacific Defence Gender Network. At the centre of the implementation plan is a Gender Focal Point Network of advocates who ensure a gender perspective is taken to account in military planning as well as a training integration plan, development of operational systems and process, and knowledge and information sharing with our partners.

The New Zealand Defence Force has a dedicated role (Director of NZDF Women, Peace and Security) to advance the meaningful integration of gender perspectives into defence operational training and procedure. The Director has established an enduring Gender Focal Point Network that effectively integrates gender perspectives throughout the organisation.

Actions completed to date include:

- Running the New Zealand Defence Force Gender Focal Point Course on how to effectively integrate gender perspectives to enhance situational awareness and operational efficiency and advocate for Women, Peace and Security.
- Developing a comprehensive guide for Gender Focal Points, which provides necessary resources, guidelines, and best practices to integrate gender perspectives into their areas of responsibility.
- Developing Military Gender Analysis Training Package and providing mission specific United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 training in pre-deployment training.

New Zealand continues to advocate for Women, Peace and Security issues in regional and international fora. In December 2023, New Zealand delivered a presentation on Women, Peace and Security issues and the New Zealand Defence Force Gender Focal Point Network at the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting. New Zealand also joins statements on behalf of the Group of Friends on Women, Peace and Security at the annual United Nations Security Council Women, Peace and Security Open Debate.

Incorporating gender perspectives in Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle Response

The broader implementation of Women, Peace and Security was highlighted during Cyclone Gabrielle in February 2023, with the deployment of a Gender Advisor to the New Zealand Defence Force cyclone response headquarters to ensure gender perspectives were included in decision making.

The Gender Advisor was responsible for assessing the specific gender dynamics in the affected areas, enabling better coordination with local communities, and ensuring response efforts

considered the diverse needs and vulnerabilities of different population groups. The Gender Advisor also assisted with the New Zealand Defence Force's response to gender-based violence, which tends to increase in disaster-affected areas. Guidance was provided for personnel addressing incidents of gender-based violence and victims were appropriately supported.

More information can be found in combined questions 31 and 32.

Protecting the human rights of women and girls in international fora

New Zealand takes a leadership role on the international stage when advocating for gender equality and women's empowerment, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, maternal mortality and morbidity, leadership, and political participation. This is outlined in [New Zealand's International Human Rights Action Plan 2019-2023](#). Since its release in July 2019, the *International Human Rights Action Plan* has guided New Zealand's multilateral, regional and bilateral advocacy on human rights.

The Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review process, and the United Nations General Assembly provide regular opportunities for New Zealand to engage on our human rights priorities. This is reflected in our engagement on gender-related resolutions, a focus on Universal Periodic Review country recommendations that highlight the protection of women's rights and a continued commitment to leading on resolutions that protect maternal morality and promote equal pay for equal work.

New Zealand has regularly sponsored the Human Rights Council Resolution on Preventable Maternal Mortality and Morbidity and Human Rights since 2009 - the most recent being in 2023. New Zealand successfully worked to protect previously agreed language around sexual and reproductive health and rights and ensure the text was inclusive of all women and girls, particularly Indigenous women and girls. New Zealand also engages in the annual United Nations General Assembly Third Committee to strengthen language on gender equality and women's empowerment.

In 2021-24, New Zealand also provided fully flexible multilateral funding for peace and security, including the Peacebuilding Fund (\$9 million NZD), the International Committee of the Red Cross (\$10.5 million NZD), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (\$18 million NZD).

Increasing Diversity and Inclusion in the New Zealand Defence Force

Alongside the work to implement the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the New Zealand Defence Force is working to support greater diversity and inclusion. Efforts to do so include adopting the United Nations Women's Empowerment Principles in 2020. The principles are now embedded as a framework to support the New Zealand Defence Force's [Wāhine Toa Programme](#),

which is dedicated to increasing the participation of women across the Defence Force and promoting gender equality.

In 2021, the New Zealand Defence Force Executive Committee signed up to a Gender Equality Charter that sets out intentions to achieve gender equality within the Defence Force.

Sustainable Development Goals

New Zealand works to advance sustainable development through its development assistance, trade, environment, diplomatic, and security cooperation as well as providing humanitarian support. In line with New Zealand's Pacific Reset and subsequent Pacific Resilience foreign policy settings, New Zealand's International Cooperation for Effective Sustainable Development Policy Statement is focused primarily on delivering effective social, economic, political, and environmental outcomes for the Pacific Region. This includes deeper collaboration with Pacific partner countries and more ambition for New Zealand's Pacific engagement. New Zealand's priorities with this work align to the Sustainable Development Goal pillars of people, planet, prosperity, and peace and reinforce the global commitment to leave no one behind. The Policy also sets out New Zealand's commitment to deliver development results that are effective, inclusive, resilient, and sustained.

Voluntary national review of the Sustainable Development Goals

In 2019, [New Zealand submitted a voluntary national review](#) on the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report covers all 17 Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on how we deliver outcomes most relevant to New Zealand. It outlines New Zealand's approach to the Sustainable Development Goals and reflects our commitment to productive, sustainable, and inclusive economic development. New Zealand uses data in the [Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand - Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa](#) to undertake this Sustainable Development Goals reporting.

More information can be found in combined questions 38, 39, and 40.

[In 2022, the](#) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [released its report](#) assessing OECD countries implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The OECD found that New Zealand has already achieved 23 of the 126 Sustainable Development Goals targets for which comparable data are available and, based on most recent trends, is expected to meet five additional targets by 2030. New Zealand's main strengths included our performance on several aspects of inclusion, the reduction of some of the main environmental pressures, and having robust institutions and rule of law. Challenges noted for New Zealand, however, included inequality.

Gender Ambassador for Gender Equality (Pacific)

In 2022, New Zealand appointed Louisa Wall as Ambassador for Gender Equality (Pacific)/Tuia Tāngata. This role was created to support New Zealand’s delivery of strategic goals linked to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender equality) and 10 (Reduced inequality) by lifting engagement with Pacific partners and amplifying the voices of the Pacific on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC)-related rights.

During her term, Ambassador Wall connected with governments, intergovernmental organisations, technical experts, rights-based advocacy groups, sporting bodies, faith-based organisations, and community groups. Ambassador Wall also participated in fora focused on SOGIESC-related rights in Buenos Aires, Sydney, and Geneva and supported a range of initiatives to improve equity and inclusion in the Pacific.

This included:

- Supporting the development of a [Te Reo Māori \(Māori language\) glossary of indigenous LGBTQIA+ terminology](#) for sharing with Pacific counterparts.
- Participating in Pacific events focused on empowerment Pacific women and girls.
- Leading New Zealand’s delegation to the Equal Rights Coalition biennial meeting in September 2022 and to Sydney WorldPride in March 2023.

Gender Action Plan 2021-2025

Gender equality and women’s empowerment is a core objective of effective and sustainable development.

In 2021, New Zealand launched its [Gender Action Plan 2021-2025](#) to ensure its development cooperation supported the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5 to advance gender equality and empower all women and girls in the Pacific and beyond. Under this plan, New Zealand has International Development Cooperation investment targets of 64% on gender equality activities, including 4% on principal gender equality investments (where gender equality is the principal objective of the investment), and 60% significant investments (where gender equality is an important objective of the investment).

New Zealand supports women’s leadership and political participation, women’s economic empowerment, and equitable access to health, education, and services in the Pacific through its International Development Cooperation programme core funding and programme funding. This includes funding for sexual and reproductive health and rights and eliminating gender-based violence.

Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration

In November 2023, New Zealand joined with 17 Pacific Island Forum member states to revitalise and endorse the [Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration](#). This will reinforce collective regional efforts to address enduring barriers to gender equality and advance the development of Pacific women and girls in all their diversity.

Providing gender responsive humanitarian assistance

In 2019, New Zealand revised its humanitarian policy to guide how New Zealand responds to humanitarian emergencies. This includes our direct responses, our financial support, and our humanitarian advocacy. One of the four priorities of the [Humanitarian Action Policy 2019](#) is ensuring humanitarian action is inclusive for all, including access to humanitarian support and participation in decision making, and sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. The policy recognises that women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict and disaster and face greater obstacles accessing protection and assistance.

New Zealand plays our part in responding to the world's major humanitarian crises including specifically for the protection of potentially vulnerable groups including women. New Zealand funds partners to implement a range of relevant activities including addressing gender-based violence and supporting sexual and reproductive health services in emergencies in the Pacific, Asia, and beyond. New Zealand has supported the United Nations Population Fund and funded a number of gender responsive NGO activities to provide protection and assistance for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh since 2017. New Zealand invests significantly in peacebuilding initiatives in the Pacific (particularly in Melanesia), in South East Asia (including the Philippines and Timor Leste), and in countries of other regions that have experienced sustained conflict such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ethiopia.

New Zealand's primary humanitarian focus supports Pacific governments to implement disaster preparedness, response, and early recovery activities. Our secondary focus is supporting South East Asia's regional disaster preparedness and response mechanisms. When allocating funding to emergencies outside the Pacific and South East Asia regions, New Zealand considers the scale and severity of humanitarian needs and prioritises the greatest need.

New Zealand provides timely, effective, and well-targeted humanitarian responses. In recent financial years, New Zealand's humanitarian assistance has exceeded \$50 million NZD, contributing \$60 million NZD in 2020-2021 and \$55 million NZD in 2021-2022 across 24 to 25 different countries. Over 2022-2023, New Zealand disbursed \$75 million NZD in humanitarian assistance which was significantly higher than previous years. This provided support across 22 different countries, with 78% going to responses outside the Pacific.

In 2021 to 2024, New Zealand provided fully flexible multilateral funding to UN Women (\$7.5 million NZD), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (\$7.5 million NZD) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (\$18 million NZD).

New Zealand has been a longstanding political and financial partner of United Nations Population Fund, having provided multi-year core funding since 2014. As one of United Nations Population Fund's top 20 donors, New Zealand invests in their delivery of sexual and reproductive health services, education, and commodities in the Pacific. This includes over \$20 million NZD across the last three years through New Zealand's International Development Cooperation. New Zealand also

funds United Nations Population Fund's humanitarian responses, including in Bangladesh, Turkey, and Afghanistan.

Since February 2022, New Zealand disbursed more than \$21 million NZD in humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected Ukrainian communities in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries. Between August 2021 to July 2023, New Zealand has contributed \$24 million NZD in funding to support the United Nations' response to the dire situation in Afghanistan. This has gone to United Nations agencies providing essential assistance to the people of Afghanistan, including women and girls, such as the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organisation, UNICEF, and the United Nations Population Fund.

New Zealand is supporting global legal efforts to ensure accountability for Ukraine, including:

- Intervening as a third party in Ukraine's International Court of Justice case against Russia under the Genocide Convention.
- Joining 40 other countries, in referring the Ukraine situation to the International Criminal Court.
- Providing \$2.615 million NZD to the International Criminal Court's Office of the Prosecutor and Trust Fund for Victims.
- Providing \$1 million NZD to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to support monitoring and accountability for human rights violations being perpetrated in Ukraine.

New Zealand provides funding to international organisations to promote women and girls' access to justice

New Zealand provides regular core funding (\$3 million NZD per annum until June 2024) to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, an organisation which promotes women and girls' equal enjoyment of human rights, including freedom from violence and access to justice.

New Zealand is a longstanding supporter of the Trust Fund for Victims of the International Criminal Court, which provides reparations and assistance to victims as part of the overall International Criminal Court judiciary process. For example, in 2022, New Zealand made a voluntary contribution of \$600,000 NZD to the Trust Fund to support victims of the Lord's Resistance Army conflict in Northern Uganda, a conflict that has disproportionately affected women and girls.

Question 30: In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls?

What About Me?

In late 2018, government agencies led by the Ministry of Social Development commissioned a nationwide health and wellbeing survey of young people aged 12 to 18 years, [What About Me?](#). The survey was commissioned to build on existing information and to fill gaps in what was known about young people by understanding young people, their wellbeing, resilience, strengths and hopes for the future.

What About Me? surveyed 7,209 New Zealanders in Year 9 to 13 (aged between 12 and 19 years old) in school settings between June and November 2021. An additional 502 young people completed surveys in community settings, including alternative education providers and community organisations that support young people.

The survey findings identified areas of strength, resilience, and challenges for girls. It found that most young people feel loved and connected and have a stable home base, and that many young people have a strong sense of identity and aspire to achieve and contribute. However, results indicated that young women consistently experience mental health burdens at rates almost double that of men, and that women and girls feel less safe at work, school, where they live, and in the community, compared to men. It also found that women and girls experienced bullying more often (42.2%) compared to males (30.4%).

Education - safety in schools and early learning

Under the [Children's Act 2014](#), all schools and kura (school) must have a written child protection policy. This describes the procedures that schools will follow to ensure children are safe and incidents of suspected and potential abuse and neglect are appropriately responded to. These policies must be reviewed every three years and compliance is monitored by the Education Review Office.

In 2023, the [Education and Training Amendment Act 2023](#) clarified police vetting of non-teaching employees and contractors in early learning and schools by requiring employers to consider a police vet and assess any risk to children's safety before an employee begins work or, in the case of a contractor, before they have unsupervised access to children. When carrying out risk assessments based on police vets, early learning services will need to take into account guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education.

Protecting the rights to bodily autonomy of girls and young people

Unnecessary medical interventions

New Zealand is developing a rights-based approach to healthcare for intersex children and young people to prevent unnecessary medical interventions. This will include developing guidelines, supporting and upskilling health professionals to provide clinically and culturally competent healthcare, and providing information and peer support for intersex children, young people, and their families to make informed healthcare decisions.

Developing a rights-based approach for healthcare for intersex children and young people will ensure intersex children, young people and their families are treated with dignity and respect in the health system, and enable health practitioners to use their clinical judgement in line with international best practice.

The work builds on the work of the Intersex Clinical Reference Group which included the creation of clinical guidelines for newborns with innate variations in sex characteristics.

Female genital mutilation

In 1996, New Zealand amended the [Crimes Act 1961](#) to criminalise the practice of female genital mutilation in New Zealand, as well as sending a child out of New Zealand for female genital mutilation to be performed. As a signatory to several international treaties that call for action against female genital mutilation, New Zealand made it illegal to perform female genital mutilation because it is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights.

In 2020, the definition of female genital mutilation in the Crimes Act 1961 was amended to ensure women and girls are protected from all forms of female genital mutilation in law. This ensured that procedures carried out for cosmetic or enhancement purposes are not criminalised. It also extended the exclusion for medical practitioners and midwives to include nurses and nurse practitioners performing medical procedures for the benefit of a person's mental or physical health.

There is no documented evidence that female genital mutilation is practised in New Zealand. However, some women immigrating to New Zealand have already undergone female genital mutilation, and some girls here may be at risk of it occurring.

Child, Early and Forced Marriage

The [Crimes Act 1961](#) describes many of the most serious offences in New Zealand and criminalises conduct that causes harm, including physical harm to people. Coerced marriage or civil union is illegal and provided for in the Act. Polygamy and bigamy are likewise illegal under the Act. The [Minors \(Court Consent to Relationships\) Legislation Act 2018](#) requires the consent of a Family Court Judge before a young person aged 16 or 17 years can marry.

New Zealand Police works with ethnic communities to raise awareness of harmful practices, including coerced marriage, through Ethnic Liaison Officers and refugees receive information on this service during their first six weeks in New Zealand.

New Zealand Police's policy on forced and underage marriages has been updated to include information on the criminal offence of coerced marriage or civil union. Frontline staff receive training on this, as do those on the specialist family harm coordinator course.

More information on educational policies and programmes in place to support the educational outcomes of girls can be found in question 13.

Ministry for Children Oranga Tamariki

The [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989](#) sets out the legal requirements that apply to the provision statutory care, protection, and youth justice services. In 2019, [amendments were made to the Act](#). As a result, anyone delivering services under the Act are required to ensure the rights, wellbeing, and best interests of children and young people are upheld in all decision-making.

The Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki must respect and uphold all rights set out in the Conventions which includes the right for children to actively participate, express their views, and have their voices heard in all decision-making affecting them. As Māori, Pacific peoples, and disabled children are overrepresented in the care population, and girls make up almost half of the care population (46% females), the Act reforms ensure that their rights are protected, promoted, and met by the Ministry for Children. Advice is provided on the [Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre website](#) about the importance of recognising rights of children and young people.

The Oranga Tamariki National Care Standards outline what children in care are entitled to expect in terms of the standard of care they receive. The use of these standards highlights a right-based approach to meeting the needs of children in state care and sets out the rights of children and our obligations to meet the standard of care they are entitled to.

Oranga Tamariki Disability Strategy

The Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki developed the [Oranga Tamariki Disability Strategy](#) after 14 months of workshops and hui (meetings) with disabled young people, their champions, family and whānau (wider family), caregivers, providers, and kaimahi (employees). The strategy and accompanying vision, outlines a new approach for supporting disabled people in its care and their champions in a rights-based, transparent, consistent, and disability competent way.

International Child Protection

The Ministry for Children established a specialised International Child Protection Unit in 2020. This Unit specifically addresses and responds to global child protection challenges, including child forced marriage, online sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, and female genital mutilation – all issues where women and girls are overrepresented in prevalence data.

In 2023, the Ministry for Children appointed a migrant and refugee liaison social worker. This role is specifically targeted to assist in addressing child protection challenges and concerns which arise from cultural, customary, and religious beliefs that are harmful toward the girl children. Specifically, practices such as gender-based violence, child forced marriage, and female genital mutilation.

Question 31: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation?

Question 32: In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience?

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 31 AND 32 COMBINED

New Zealand recognises that disasters and climate change have differentiated impacts on women and men, girls and boys and gender-diverse people. Women and girls may be disproportionately affected by climate change due to the exacerbation of structural inequalities, particularly those experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. New Zealand is a longstanding champion for gender equality and strongly supports the integration and mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all aspects of New Zealand’s disaster risk reduction and climate change response.

New Zealand promotes women’s active participation and leadership in climate action and disaster risk reduction

Internationally, New Zealand has a strong history of female representation on its official delegations to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and a long-standing practice of gender balance on our delegations to its Conference of the Parties (COP). At COP, New Zealand has actively participated in the gender and climate change negotiations. New Zealand has also committed to the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan and has made submissions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on progress in its implementation. Similarly, New Zealand participated in the agreement to reduce disaster risks through the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030.

New Zealand has signed on to several initiatives promoting women’s active participation in climate action. At COP26, New Zealand joined the Glasgow Women’s Leadership Statement and the Women leading on Climate Coalition. It also recently signed up to the COP28 Gender Responsive Just Transition and Climate Action Partnership pledge which calls for the full, equal, and meaningful leadership and participation of all women and girls in climate action.

New Zealand works to support climate resilience in the Pacific

Climate finance supports reducing gender inequality and addressing the impacts of climate change. This is a key requirement of *Tuia te Waka a Kiwa New Zealand’s International Climate Finance Strategy*, which was launched in 2022, which has been supported by a climate finance commitment of \$1.3 billion NZD for 2022 to 2025. At 30 June 2023, 84% of the funding has been approved for delivery within the commitment period — and of that, 65% will be disbursed within the Pacific, and more than 50% is for adaptation activities.

The Strategy recognises the need to work inclusively to ensure the equity of benefits, including for women, children and families and states that climate finance initiatives will be consistent with existing development action plans, including New Zealand’s [Gender Action Plan 2021-2025](#). New Zealand continuously monitors the Climate Strategy preference for equity and inclusion, including gender equality.

Examples of New Zealand support for gender equality in climate and environment activities include:

- **Climate Finance for Community Resilience:** Childfund New Zealand works in the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, and Sri Lanka and supports climate resilient water infrastructure and nature-based water solutions for household and agricultural use. It promotes climate smart agriculture strengthening biodiversity and prioritises gender equality and child and youth participation in disaster risk reduction, including Climate Action Committees and training for climate action planning.
- **Climate Resilient Islands:** an activity to strengthen governance and improve gender and social inclusion at community level to maintain and restore ecosystem services for food security, coastal protection, and disaster risk reduction. Live & Learn deliver Climate Resilient Islands in Fiji, Vanuatu, Tonga, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands.
- **EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies Programme:** a project which New Zealand funds in Cambodia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, and the Philippines to accelerate gender-responsive climate change mitigation and scale up enhanced resilience for women and marginalised groups in Asia and the Pacific using renewable energy in businesses and improving livelihoods.
- **Funding to increase Pacific Island countries’ technical and institutional capacity** to effectively engage in international climate change negotiations and increase and sustain gender equitable presence and visibility at international climate-related events.
- **New Zealand also funds Mana Moana ki te Tonga – *Building Gender Equity and Leadership for a Resilient Blue Pacific*** to increase women’s leadership in Tonga and contribute to enhanced climate resilience policies.
- **Governance for Resilient Development (Gov4Res) Project:** a United Nations Development Programme-led programme that works with governments in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu (and progressing work in Vanuatu, Kiribati, the Republic of Marshall Islands, and Samoa) to ensure that resources are being devoted to building governance and leadership capacity for women to have a voice in climate matters. The project collaborates with women-focused Ministries to ensure that the differing needs of women are incorporated into climate responses.
- **New Zealand supports a range of initiatives to build climate resilience through increased water security across the Pacific:** The Reduce Risk of Water Scarcity activity delivers in Cook Islands, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga, and Tuvalu and has a strong emphasis on gender equality, disability, and social inclusion.

New Zealand supports gender responsive approaches to disaster risk reduction and resilience

National Disaster Resilience Strategy

In 2019, New Zealand released the third [National Disaster Resilience Strategy](#) which seeks to enable, empower, and support individuals, organisations, and communities to effectively respond in emergencies, ensuring their safety and wellbeing. This strategy focuses on building resilience, especially for those people disproportionately affected by disaster.

National Adaption Plan

In 2022, New Zealand's first [National Adaptation Plan](#) was released. The adaptation plan recognises that some groups feel the psychological and physical impacts of climate change more than others. Young people and children are more prone to psychological impacts from extreme events, while women are more vulnerable to domestic and sexual violence, which can increase in times of disaster. The mental health of members of farming and rural communities can be affected by the disruptions to livelihoods and reduced social cohesion.

The plan contains strategies, policies, and actions to help New Zealanders adapt to the changing climate and identifies specific actions that support women and girls.

Climate Change Response Act 2002

[Amendments in 2019](#) to the [Climate Change Response Act 2002](#) set out the process for assessing and understanding the risks posed by climate change and taking action to manage them. The risk of exacerbating inequities (including gender vulnerability) due to differential climate change impacts has been identified as a significant risk.

Women's participation in emergency management

Women are increasingly entering the disaster and emergency management profession in New Zealand. At the national level, New Zealand's National Emergency Management Agency has a strong gender representation. As of 2024, women occupy 53% of leadership roles in the organisation. Furthermore, 80% of Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Welfare Managers across New Zealand are women.

Question 34: Please describe your country's system for tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting), including the approximate proportion of the national budget that is invested in this area.

Gender budgeting

The Treasury and Ministry for Women first trialled a [Gender Budgeting Pilot for Budget 2022](#). Five participating agencies completed a gender impact assessment template across 19 Budget initiatives. The Ministry for Women supported agencies to complete the gender assessment template, including providing training on how to use its gender analysis tool – Bringing Gender In – to describe the gender implications of their initiatives. The Ministry provided analysis across all the participating initiatives in the Treasury’s advice to Budget Ministers to support decision making on the Budget package.

Gender budgeting was expanded for the 2023 Budget cycle to include 15 government agencies across 27 Budget initiatives. In addition, several other agencies voluntarily conducted a gender analysis and considered their initiatives’ impacts on women and girls. Over 100 initiatives throughout the Budget 2023 cycle included a gender lens. 2023 was also the first year a gender budgeting “snapshot” was featured in the [Wellbeing Budget document](#), which highlighted a range of initiatives that are expected to have a direct positive impact on women and girls.

Following feedback from the pilot, a greater range of wrap-around support was provided to agencies participating in gender budgeting, including an agency guide to gender budgeting, 1:1 support, gender budgeting workshops and a peer review service. The Ministry also provided gender analysis to the Treasury on each budget initiative.

As there is no legislative mechanism for gender budgeting, agreement to its inclusion to the Budget cycle is sought yearly. Further decisions on the continuation of gender budgeting have not yet been made.

Question 35: What formal mechanisms are in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

Question 37: Please describe your country’s action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women.

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 35 AND 37 COMBINED

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

New Zealand has been progressing work to satisfy the 78 recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the Committee). These recommendations were outlined in the Committee’s Concluding Observations made following New Zealand’s examination of its [eighth periodic CEDAW report](#) submitted in 2018.

New Zealand submitted its [ninth CEDAW periodic report to the Committee](#) in July 2023, and its examination is scheduled in October 2024. The ninth CEDAW report responds to a list of questions received from the CEDAW Committee. The issues cover a broad range of areas, including health and wellbeing of women and girls, sexual harassment in the workplace, gender-responsive budgeting, criminalising gender-based violence, and Women, Peace and Security.

While progress towards satisfying the Committee’s recommendations is still underway, New Zealand has made significant progress in many areas. Much of this progress is detailed in this national-level review. New Zealand will provide more information on its progress against each CEDAW Article for its upcoming examination in October 2024.

As part of compiling this report, engagement with the public, including NGOs, was conducted from 16 January – 24 March 2023. Members of the public could provide feedback through an online survey, feedback form, email, post, or during online consultation meetings. Five meetings were run with a range of NGO participants, and 24 written submissions were received. Given the recency of this engagement, their feedback has also been reflected in this report.

International Women’s Caucus

The Ministry for Women convenes the International Women’s Caucus, a forum for NGOs and government agencies to work collaboratively on international issues relevant to the interests and wellbeing of women. The Caucus was established in 2004 and meets up to three times a year. Currently over 30 NGOs participate with membership growing each year.

Members of the Caucus work together to enhance New Zealand’s capacity to participate in and contribute to international fora arising from the United Nations relevant to the interests of women. They share information on issues and institutions, coordinate participation in international fora, and coordinate how to effectively share relevant information domestically.

The Caucus is a central forum that the Ministry engages with on New Zealand’s international gender equality reporting obligations including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and CEDAW. The Ministry also works closely with Caucus in preparation for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). This includes supporting a non-governmental delegate, selected by a panel comprising representatives from the International Women’s Caucus to join the official New Zealand Government delegation to CSW.

Question 36: Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report. In answering this question as part of the narrative report, countries are encouraged to describe participatory process and to reflect on the contributions that different stakeholders have made to the national report.

The Ministry for Women conducted targeted engagement with the International Women Caucus for this report. Recurring and high-level themes and concerns from feedback received are summarised below under these six dimensions.

1. Inclusive development, shared prosperity, and decent work

- More work needs to be done to improve women's representation in leadership in the private sector.
- New Zealand does not have workplace gender and ethnic pay transparency legislation and the Government has not enacted legislation that would mandate pay gap measurement and reporting.
- New Zealand is one of the least affordable countries in the world for childcare. Improving the accessibility of good quality affordable childcare would significantly benefit mothers' and enable more to return to paid work.
- Workforce underutilisation is an issue experienced by women and the Government should pay KiwiSaver on paid parental leave payments to acknowledge women's unpaid work, such as childcare.

2. Poverty eradication, social protection, and social services

- New Zealand needs a social security system that is fair and accessible and that reflects current living patterns particularly those of women and children.
- There needs to be recognition and support for New Zealand Work Research Institute's 2018 report on [Individualising Entitlements in New Zealand's benefit and social assistance systems](#).
- The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the need for mechanisms to support groups worst affected by crises when usual services are not available.
- COVID-19 funding and initiatives disproportionality benefited male-dominated sectors.
- Improving the financial situation of Māori and Pacific women workers by closing gender and ethnic pay gaps will alleviate material hardship in households.
- New Zealand should endorse the findings from the [Human Right Commission's Pacific Pay Gap Inquiry](#).

3. Freedom from violence, stigma, and stereotypes

- Acknowledged the 2023 budget, investment in initiatives to eliminate family violence and sexual violence and recommended continued investment in future budgets.
- Urged the Government to continue strengthening and investing in [Te Aorerekura - the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence](#) (National Strategy), particularly in accountability and reporting.
- Called for legislative changes to improve online safety, particularly for women and children.
- Called for an increase in official development assistance for sexual and reproductive health and rights programmes in the Pacific.
- Called for the cervical screening programme to be fully funded in alignment with all other cancer screening programmes in New Zealand.

4. Participation, accountability, and gender-responsive institutions

- New Zealand is leading the world in media coverage of women’s sport, through innovative, cross-organisation collaborations.
- Women are well represented on public sector boards and committees due to targeted initiatives to ensure this. However, women are underrepresented in private sector governance and leadership.
- There is no overarching strategy or plan for the advancement of gender equality in New Zealand.

5. Peaceful and inclusive societies

- The New Zealand [National Action Plan](#) on Women, Peace and Security 2015-2019 has not been updated to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and subsequent Resolutions that make up the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

6. Environmental conservation, protection, and rehabilitation

- Endorsed the recommendations to governments in the CEDAW Committee’s General [Recommendation 37 \(2018\)](#), “Gender-Related Dimensions of Disaster Risk Reduction in the Context of Climate Change”.

Section 5: Data and statistics

Question 38: What are the most important areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

Question 39: Over the next five years, what are your country’s priorities for strengthening national gender statistics? Please provide a brief explanation and examples of your plans.

Question 40: What gender-specific indicators has your country prioritized for monitoring progress on the SDGs? please also explain any challenges for collecting and compiling data on these indicators.

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 38, 39 AND 40 COMBINED

Data and Statistics Act 2022

New Zealand has made progress towards delivering a robust, future-focused data and statistics system through the implementation of the [Data and Statistics Act 2022](#). This legislation supports a well-functioning data and statistics system that will make the best use of data collected and held by government, while ensuring private and confidential information is held securely and used appropriately.

The Data and Statistics Act 2022 supports higher-quality data and statistics related to gender equality by:

- recognising and respecting the Crown’s responsibility to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi by recognising Māori interests in data and statistics
- enabling Stats NZ to require administrative data, which supports larger data quantities and more complex and informative data
- ensuring diverse groups of people (including women, Māori, Pacific peoples, ethnic communities, disabled people, and rainbow communities) can have input into data and statistical priorities.

Data Investment Plan 2022

The Government’s [Data Investment Plan 2022](#) provides a ten-year map of prioritised investment opportunities in data. It details the top 33 investment opportunities and proposed delivery across a three-year horizon (2023-2025) and investment estimates.

The plan supports strategic investment and improved monitoring of sex and gender-referenced data and analysis, and prioritises investment opportunities in recognition of data gaps and to increase the visibility of specific populations. It was informed by New Zealand’s obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand - Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa

In 2019, Stats NZ published an enduring and comprehensive suite of indicators to measure and track the wellbeing of the New Zealand population and sub-populations, including women and girls. This initiative is known as [Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand – Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa](#).

The indicator framework draws on international best practice and has been developed in an inclusive and collaborative way and tailored to the New Zealand context. This included consultation with the public on what aspects of wellbeing matter most to them and discussion with a wide range of experts from Government, academia, community organisations and local government on the selection of the indicators. The Ministry for Women, Maori Women's Welfare League, and the National Council of Women of New Zealand were involved in these discussions.

The indicators cover New Zealand’s current wellbeing, the wellbeing of future generations, and the impact New Zealand is having on the rest of the world. They go beyond economic measures such as gross domestic product (GDP) and include social, cultural, and environmental topics. To date, more than 100 wellbeing indicators, covering 22 topics, have been developed to measure important aspects of New Zealanders’ lives. This includes 19 contextual indicators that provide information on the size and characteristics of the New Zealand population and the economy, such as age, sex, gender, and sexual identity.

The selection of the indicators was driven by the most important aspects of wellbeing for New Zealanders, rather than data availability. As a result, the initial set of indicators includes gaps in data, ranging from a complete absence of data to limitations to break information down to useful and meaningful levels for different communities.

Many of the indicators on [Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand – Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa](#) support the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 5. This includes education equity, experience of discrimination, family violence, and the value of unpaid work. In addition, many of the indicators developed support the overall goal of a range of Sustainable Development Goals.

Stats NZ is working to understand these data gaps and to fill them as new data sources become available.

More information about New Zealand’s progress on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals can be found in combined questions 27, 28, 29, and 33.

Living Standards Framework Dashboard

The [Living Standards Framework Dashboard](#) is a measurement tool that provides a range of indicators that align with the Living Standards Framework and which Treasury believes are most important to inform wellbeing reporting and policy advice on cross-government wellbeing priorities. These indicators are provided at a national level but can also be disaggregated by a range of demographics, including gender, where data is available. Stats NZ works with the Treasury to supply much of the data for the Living Standards Framework Dashboard. Treasury also sources data from other agencies and internationally comparable indicators from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

More information on the Living Standards Framework can be found in question 25.

Gender and sexual identity variables in the 2023 Census

For the first time, New Zealand’s 2023 Census asked questions about gender, sexual identity, and variations of sex characteristics (generally known as intersex). It is important that everyone is able to see themselves – and take part in – the census. The data will also inform better decision-making and provision of services for LGBTQIA+ populations.

Stats NZ have developed a [Data standard for gender, sex, and variations of sex characteristics](#). This includes the “Gender by default principle” that defaults to the collection and output of gender data as opposed to sex. In the 2023 Census, Stats NZ collected both sex at birth and gender, allowing them to derive information about transgender populations.

Methodologies for filling gaps in the gender and sex at birth variables have been updated for New Zealand’s 2023 Census. If a census response does not contain a useable value for gender or sex at birth then the variable will be sourced from either a historical census response, admin data

sources or statistical imputation. These methods have been informed by engagement with key stakeholders, a public consultation and discussion with Stats NZ's Data Ethics Advisory Group.

National Disability Data Framework

In September 2022, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended in its Concluding Observations that Stats NZ develop a National Disability Data Framework. The purpose of this framework will be the development of nationally consistent measures for the collection and public reporting of disability data, including a focus on sub-population groups such as disabled women and girls. The Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha will work with Stats NZ and the disabled community to progress this work.

The Disability Data and Evidence Advisory Group (DDEAG), co-chaired by the Ministry of Disabled People and Stats NZ, focuses on the types of data required to ensure the development of sound disability policy and appropriate services for disabled people.

A key focus of the DDEAG is to ensure that relevant decisions are informed by the views of the disabled community and the wider disability sector. DDEAG also assesses what data is available and required to measure the indicators selected for each of the outcome domains in the [New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026](#).

DDEAG has worked to ensure data about disabled people (including disabled women) is collected in an increasing number of government-funded household surveys (e.g. the [New Zealand Health Survey](#) and the [New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey](#)).

Question 41: Which data disaggregations are routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

New Zealand routinely undertakes major national level surveys that provide disaggregated data and statistics across a range of topics, including employment, household income, social and economic outcomes, and wellbeing.

Most of these surveys provides the following data disaggregations:

- Geographic location: yes, often at a highly aggregated level.
- Income, age, education, marital status, race/ethnicity, migratory status: yes.
- Sex/gender: yes, new data standard developed.
- Disability: yes, the Washington Group Short Set of questions have been added to major household surveys to enable the disaggregation of outcomes by disability status.
- Sexual orientation: included in census and some but not all social surveys.
- Religion: only in the census. In other surveys, the sample size would be too small to support analysis for most religions.
- Other characteristics relevant in national contexts: labour force status, household composition, and family type.

Section 6: Conclusion and next steps

Question 5: Over the next five years, what are the priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes? In the narrative report, please provide 1-2 pages of key takeaways from the review, including reflections on:

- **Lessons your country has learned from the review process and how it will apply them in the continuing implementation ongoing and future challenges for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in your country.**
- **Priority actions to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda, notably as part of the Decade of Action for sustainable development.**

Despite the significant inroads made towards the advancement of women, there is more to do to ensure New Zealand achieves its gender equality goals. The Government's priorities for women reflect the areas where more work is needed, including in employment, skills, and training, equal representation, safety from violence, and health and wellbeing.

To deliver better results for everyone in New Zealand, including women and girls, the Government recently announced its nine targets to focus efforts on achieving improved results in a variety of areas, including health, education, and employment.

Building a strong economy and supporting women and their families out of hardship

The Government's priority is to build a strong economy to reduce the cost of living, support more people into work and lift incomes for women. One of the key objectives of the Government is to break the cycle of welfare dependency so that women can have access to the opportunities that work provides. Employment is a key pathway out of hardship, therefore it is important to address barriers to employment, which includes the barriers women face in the labour market.

New Zealand is also focused on supporting young people, particularly those who are disproportionately impacted by tightening economic conditions, into employment, education, and training. Ensuring that young people, including young women, can navigate transitions from school to work, education, or training is an important issue, as a significant number of young people face barriers that prevent them from getting work and reaching their aspirations. There is a strong correlation between experiences of limited employment earlier in life and later employment outcomes and shows that women experience higher rates of unemployment and continue to have higher rates of underutilisation and underemployment. The Government plans to refocus the welfare system so that it incentivises people into work while providing support for those who need it most. Welfare dependency has grown in the past five years and so, the Government is working

towards developing a more proactive welfare system, especially for people on the Jobseeker Support (a welfare benefit)

Maintaining the representation of women on public sector board and committees and improving leadership pathways for women in the private sector

Women's economic empowerment requires women to have an equal seat at the leadership and decision-making table. New Zealand will continue supporting women in leadership in both the public and private sectors. While we have improved women's representation in public sector governance, there is still some way to go in the private sector. Currently women hold 28.5% of all director positions and 26.4% of executive management positions across the New Zealand Stock Exchange (NZX)-listed companies ([as at 31 July 2022](#)). Women's representation on boards is better when just looking at the 50 largest NZX listed companies with women holding 36.5% of roles, but only slightly better at executive management with 27.8% of roles held by women.

Organisations such as Champions for Change, Institute of Directors, and Women on Boards New Zealand have been working with great success in this area. The Government is committed to working with leaders across these organisations to demonstrate to businesses and organisations the value of having more women on their boards and at the leadership table.

Increasing women's economic empowerment

Women interact differently with the labour market to men, which can put women at an economic disadvantage and decrease their financial security and overall resilience. Women experience multiple and overlapping challenges in the employment sector, including increased underemployment, unemployment and underutilisation rates compared to men, a persistent gender pay gap, and challenges in accessing affordable childcare.

Women make up the majority (69.3%) of part-time workers. Of all working women in the paid workforce, 28.7% work part-time (i.e., less than 30 hours per week). Westpac New Zealand's 2021 [Sharing the Load report](#) found that sharing housework and care responsibilities more equally could increase the size of New Zealand's economy by \$1.5 billion NZD on average every year, representing approximately 0.5% of New Zealand GDP. It is a priority of the Government to address barriers to women's equitable participation in the labour market to empower more women into work. Furthermore, women's participation in the economy contributes towards wealth-building during productive years, and therefore, contributes towards resources available in retirement. The Government is prioritising issues around access to employment and the economy.

Improving women's health outcomes

Women face significant inequities of health outcomes, including barriers to accessing health services for gender-specific health issues. Some groups of women experience forms of bias that negatively affects their health and wellbeing.

The Government is committed to improving women’s health outcomes over the next five years and ensuring everyone in New Zealand have timely access to quality health care.

[New targets for the health system](#) were announced in 2024. The five targets are: faster access to cancer treatment, improved childhood immunisation rates, shorter wait times in emergency departments and for first specialist assessments, and shorter wait times for elective treatment. The Government plans to publish monitoring results quarterly beginning with Quarter One 2024/25.

Two of these health targets are included in the Government's nine targets to deliver better results for New Zealanders:

1. 95% of patients to be admitted, discharged, or transferred from an emergency department within six hours.
2. 95% of people wait less than four months for elective treatment.

These targets will ensure that all people, including women and girls, are able to receive the support they need when they need it.

Work is also currently underway to ensure women receive timely diagnoses and treatment for some gender-specific health issues. In February 2024, New Zealand extended the free breast cancer screening age from 69 to 74. This will mean around 120,000 additional women will be eligible for screening every two years. As breast cancer is the most common cancer amongst women in New Zealand, this is an important measure to detect breast cancer early. This is part of broader work to drive better outcomes for everyone in New Zealand.

Improving educational outcomes

[2022 statistics](#) show that more girls in New Zealand are leaving school with NCEA level three (56%) than their male classmates (47.6%). However, this number is much lower for Māori learners, with 36.3% of Māori female and 29.4% of Māori male school leavers attaining NCEA Level 3. The Government is focused on lifting educational achievement and has expectations for strengthened educational outcomes and achievement for tamariki and rangatahi Māori (Māori children and young adults).

The Government has set [six education priorities](#):

1. Creating a clearer curriculum.
2. A stronger approach to numeracy and literacy.
3. More consistent modes of monitoring student progress and achievement.
4. Improved teacher training.
5. Learning support interventions for students with additional needs.
6. Greater use of data to drive improvement in achievement.

The Government has set a target to reach 80% of Year 8 (around 12 years of age) students at or above the expected curriculum level for their age in reading, writing and maths by December 2030.

Addressing Family Violence and Sexual Violence

The Government is committed to progressing initiatives that address family violence and sexual violence, which includes acknowledging the harm victims experience, taking action to stop people using violence, providing safer and timely responses, and enabling healing and restorative pathways. [*Te Aorerekura – the National Strategy for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence*](#) (National Strategy) has established cross-agency work to plan and deliver initiatives to tackle family violence and sexual violence.

With the recently announced Government targets to reduce the number of people impacted by serious offending – including sexual assault – to 20,000 fewer by 2029, the second National Strategy intends to focus on prevention, improving system responses and strengthening communities to stop family violence and sexual violence.