

<b>Key Policy in discussion</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE GENDER LENS ON THE OCT 22 BUDGET</b>
<b>Portfolio and or agency</b>	<b>Overarching</b>
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The first budget of the Albanese Government has signaled welcome changes in direction, particularly in moving toward an evidence-based Women’s Budget Statement and investment in projects that will work to mitigate climate change. It will take time for these initiatives to show changes in women’s economic wellbeing and safety, and this is recognised with costs, for example in child care, climate change and paid parental leave, being acknowledged as an investment in the future.

In this edition of the Gender Lens we have once again focused on the portfolio areas where the Government has made commitments during the election. In this streamlined version of the Gender Lens the usual intersectional analysis of the impact on young women, older women, CALD women and indigenous women is missing as we have not had the capacity to produce a full analysis of this mid-year budget. We also have not examined the detail of the \$1.7 billion allocated to Women’s Safety. We plan to return to the full analysis in the May Budget.

In our review of the Wellbeing Budget Statement we have focused on how this intersects with Gender Responsive Budgeting, with particular reference to the portfolios that we have examined in this pared back Gender Lens. This is the beginning of an important discussion about what we value as a nation. NFAW is ready to engage with Treasury consultations to ensure that gender equality indicators are included and that the Wellbeing Budget is integrated with Gender Impact Statements in the Women’s Budget.

We welcome the increased investment in childcare and the proposed changes to Paid Parental Leave, although important details are yet to be resolved by the new Women’s Economic Equality Taskforce. We have also identified gaps in the data publically available to undertake a gender impact analysis, and we welcome the enhanced capacity of the Office for Women to gather data and undertake research and gather data.

There are some notable omissions in the Budget, significantly the lack of support for people on income support, including energy supplements and Commonwealth Rent Allowance, and there is no commitment to tax reform to raise the revenue needed to provide that support. We recognise the need to limit spending stimulus, but those least able to afford it are the most exposed to the rising cost of living under this budget.

Care workers are also desperately in need of a pay rise, and while we note that the Government has set aside some funding contingent on the outcome of the Aged Care Work Value Case currently before the Fair Work Commission, no such provision has been made for Child Care or Disability Care workers.

The NFAW Gender Lens on the Budget project commenced in 2014 after the Abbott Government abolished the Women's Budget Paper, although the gender impact analysis underlying the principle of gender responsive budgeting had not been evident for many years before that. This Government has signalled that it understands that policies affect men and women differently. It is still early stages, but we look forward to policies that are designed in a way that women are supported and not excluded.