



## WAVE in 2017

**As a WAVE member you're part of a national network that advocates on behalf of women and girls in adult and vocational education and training. Your membership lends strength to our advocacy.**

2017 has again been an active year for WAVE on both the domestic and international scenes. We partnered with Adult Learning Australia in a forum around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and plan to undertake further work in this space.

### Lobbying

WAVE members continue to lobby around issues relating to women and girls and adult education. The lobbying involves letter writing, submissions and visits to MPs. Following the Federal elections, WAVE wrote to the new Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills Karen Andrews, and the new Shadow Minister for Women Tanya Plibersek, and their responses can be found on the WAVE website. We visited the Shadow Minister, discussing careers education and support, transitions between VET and university, and expanded apprenticeship opportunities. We participated in Federal Labor's national conversation with Australian women.

### The Gender Lens

The National Foundation for Australian Women again brought together a number of women to analyse the Federal Budget and its impact on women. WAVE members were involved in writing up some of the reports including around vocational education and training, and Disabilities. Find the report at <http://www.nfaw.org/gender-lens-on-the-budget/>

The following are recommendations from the report:

NFAW recommends that the issues around gender implications of Skilling Australians Fund be clarified with the Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills with the aim of ensuring that the major public provider, that is TAFE, receives adequate funding to provide the quality training critical to industry, small business, regions and local communities. This includes high level training and workforce development as well as foundation skills for disadvantaged learners in all equity groups, especially women, entering or re-entering the workforce.

#### 4.3.2

NFAW recommends that funding be allocated for Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE) and other relevant women's organisations to work with the new projects to ensure that women and girls are involved and receive appropriate mentoring and support.

#### 4.3.3

NFAW foreshadows further campaigns to highlight the significant role of TAFE in delivering a range of programs for women and girls.

#### 4.3.4

NFAW foreshadows action to pressure the government and the Assistant Minister to address continuing concerns about the discriminatory outcomes resulting from its approach to funding skills training focused on apprenticeships and skills shortages, without any positive funding intervention to redress the sex segregation entrenched in many industries.

### International Women's Day – 8 March 2017

International Women's Day (IWD), celebrated on 8 March, commemorates women's achievements – socially, economically, culturally and politically. The 2017 themes were:

Empower a woman, empower a nation: together we can empower women across the globe.  
[UN Women Australia]

<https://unwomen.org.au/campaign/international-womens-day-2017/>

and Be Bold for Change [International Women's Day]

### Women's March Global

On 21 January marches were held around Australia, sparked from Washington to the world by the launching of a global human rights event of women's protest, post-election of Donald Trump as President of the US. In Sydney, women held placards saying "*Feminism is my Trump card*" and "*fight like a girl*." The local organiser Ayebatonye Abrakasa told *Guardian Australia* she saw the march as an "empowering crusade". "*It's bringing women – or all marginalised people, people feeling marginalised and disenfranchised by the current state of affairs – to fight for our rights and to realise we can stand and take action to change things,*" Abrakasa said.

### International matters

WAVE actively advocates for and contributes to work that links our interests nationally into global & regional arenas through a number of avenues- and we have again been very busy in this area. Thanks to Elaine Butler for her amazing work, yet again.

### Commission on the Status of Women – CSW61 (2017)

The sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 13 to 24 March 2017.

The themes for the 2017 meeting were:

- Priority theme:  
Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work
- Review theme:  
Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls (agreed conclusions of the fifty-eighth session)

- Emerging issue/Focus area:  
The empowerment of indigenous women

Background documents are available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw61-2017/official-documents>

WAVE is especially connected to the priority theme, given the close links between education and training, skills development and decent work for women. We contributed to the submissions as a member of Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) and also Women's Major Group.

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WAVE continues to support the priority themes of women's economic empowerment through our involvement in and contributions to ASPBAE's <http://www.aspbae.org>, and the focus on skills development for marginalised women, especially those in the informal economies in Asia and South Pacific. We also make contributions to advocacy and information sharing through Women's Major Group <http://www.womenmajorgroup.org> and NGO Major Group <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/ngos> around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### **WAVE representation on economic security 4 women (eS4W)**

Tish Champion from AEU South Australia, one of our SA convenors, has taken over as a WAVE representative to the national women's alliance, eS4W, along with Linda Simon. WAVE thanks Elaine Butler for her work with eS4W over many years.

### **WAVE representation on Equality Rights Alliance (ERA)**

WAVE is represented by Sue Salthouse from ACT, Elaine Butler and Linda Simon on ERA's various groups.

### **Gender Segregation in the workplace and its impact on women's equality**

WAVE endorsed the National Foundation for Australian Women (NFAW) submission to the Senate Committee. The submission says:

Gender segregation results in a disproportionate concentration of women and men in particular occupations and industries. In Australia, the persistence of gender segregation has been widely observed and is longstanding. This is despite substantial growth in women's labour supply, growth in educational attainment and growth in combining paid work with raising families and other unpaid care work.

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Occupational and industry segregation represent a significant labour market rigidity and labour market failure.

### **Partnerships**

WAVE is represented on and/or collaborates with a number of organisations both to ensure our points of view are heard and included at strategic points related to the *Education 2030* Agenda

- WAVE is a member of Asia South Pacific Association for Basic & Adult Education (ASPBAE)<sup>1</sup> – a regional association of more than 200 organisations & individuals that operates from grassroots to government and high-level global echelons, thus linking us into our wider region and globally. Information is shared regularly. This year in June ASPBAE recognised WAVE as the member of the month.
- WAVE Executive member Dr Terri Seddon represented Australia at ASPBAE Regional Consultation on Education Privatisation, 29-31 August, Bangkok
- WAVE is a member of the Women’s Major Group (WMG)<sup>2</sup>. We share their communications, endorse relevant documents and submissions, and contribute information relating to our interests, thus sharing on a global level.
- As a CSO (civil Society Organisation) we are also a member of the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM)<sup>3</sup> – “APRCEM is a civil society platform aimed to enable stronger cross constituency coordination and ensure that voices of all sub-regions of Asia Pacific are heard in intergovernmental processes in regional and global level. The platform is initiated, owned and driven by the CSOs, and has been set up under the auspices of UN-ESCAP and seeks to engage with UN agencies and Member States on the Post-2015 as well as other development related issues/processes.” "

Apart from the above, we post and share international news, comments and posts related to education and training, work and of course gender issues on our Facebook page. Our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/womeninadultandvocationaleducation/>) can also be accessed through our website (<http://wave.org.au/wave/>) where information is regularly updated.

### WAVE/ALA Forum 2017 - Making the SDGs real in Australia’s adult and vocational education

On 10 August WAVE partnered with Adult Learning Australia, and with the support of the European Union (EU) Centre at RMIT University, held a forum ‘**Making the SDGs real in Australia’s adult and vocational education**’. The focus of the forum were the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly those focused on adult and vocational education, and gender. These were SDGs:

4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Further information on the SDGs is provided in the link at the end of this report, enabling you to read about these 17 global goals that have been signed up to by the 193 Member States of the United Nations, including Australia. Australia, like the other members, is expected to report on policies and progress towards these goals and their targets.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aspbae.org>

<sup>2</sup> For information about the Women’s Major Group see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/women> and <http://www.womenmajorgroup.org>

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.asiapacificrcem.org>

We had a wonderful line-up of speakers at the forum, as you can see from the program on the link:

- Robbie Guevara, Associate Professor at RMIT University explained the SDGs under: “Education 2030: The Incheon Declaration & Framework for Action”. His presentation is available via the link;
- Sally Moyle, Chief Executive CARE Australia spoke of the gender issues relating to the SDGs and Australia’s responsibilities;
- Elaine Butler, WAVE Ambassador, considered the feminisation of VET, and the need to step up the progress toward gender equality and women’s economic empowerment;
- Dr Sue Webb from Monash University addressed social inclusion and the SDGs. Her presentation is included;
- Professor Sue Shore from Charles Darwin University gave us a rural and regional perspective, around building alliances;
- Stephanie Yung from the Brotherhood of St Lawrence presented research around participation of young people in post-school education;
- Dr Caroline Lambert, Director of Research, Policy and Advocacy at the International Women’s Development Agency, spoke of working with the SDGs with and for women and girls: education and economic empowerment. Her presentation is included;
- Bernie Lovegrove from ASPBAE, looked at linking Australia and the Asia/Pacific region in SDG4 related advocacy. His presentation is included.
- Professor Bruce Wilson, Director of the EU Centre at RMIT University looked at implementing the SDGs in Australia, the imperatives, issues and examples from the European Union.

The report and presentations will be on WAVE’s and ALA’s websites. Follow the link for further information: <https://ala.asn.au/making-the-sustainable-development-goals/>

### The Plenary session

The Plenary session provided an Action Plan and some suggested next steps, which will form part of our work in the coming year:

- 1. Goals and Programs:** To reaffirm SDG 4 with a long term vision for skills development for the future. This could include collaborative teaching models and extended use of the apprenticeship model.
- 2. The role of WAVE and ALA:**
  - To contextualise the SDG Indicators
  - To talk with peak bodies and bring them on-board – pool resources
  - Work with others to develop targeted packages for dissemination of information, recognising that strategic collaboration is most important
  - To undertake the recommendations below in 3.
- 3. Next steps**
  - **A public awareness campaign – ask the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet about a public awareness campaign**
  - **Work to ensure that education sectors support each other**

- **Use the language around the SDGs to raise awareness eg. funding applications**
- **Write to relevant Ministers asking what they are doing in their Portfolios to align with the SDGs**
- **Support the work of the National Women's Alliances in this area – Equality Rights Alliance and National Rural Women's Alliance**

**Thanks to WAVE Executive members for their work over the year on behalf of all WAVE members.**

**Public Officer** – Elinor Buckley  
**National Secretary** – Robyn Woolley  
**National Treasurer** - Annette Bonnici  
**Past National Convenor and WAVE Ambassador** – Elaine Butler  
**Executive Member** – Terri Seddon  
**Rural and Regional Liaison person** – Cecilia Blackwell  
**State and Territory Convenors**  
**ACT** – Sue Salthouse and Denise Madden  
**Northern Territory** – Sue Shore  
**Queensland** – Jane Newton  
**South Australia** – Angela Dean and Tish Champion  
**Victoria** – Kira Clarke and Demmi Paris  
**Western Australia** – Sue Thompson  
**NSW** – Amanda McMillan

#### **WAVE Resources**

WAVE has developed:

- \* a flier about WAVE, its organisation and its work
- \* a membership card to be handed out at events
- \* a postcard outlining our main aims for these two years.

We send Newsletters to our wider group of members 4-5 times a year. To join WAVE and receive our Newsletters, go to the website [www.wave.org.au/wave/](http://www.wave.org.au/wave/)

#### **Website**

Our website continues to be a great resource and focus of interest. Thanks to Claudia Stamel and Angel Griffiths.

#### **Social Media**

Thanks to Elaine who continues to do a great job with Facebook, with help from others. Thanks to Kira and others who tweet.

**Linda Simon – National Convenor**  
**25 September 2017**