

FEATURE

The 'shadow pandemic'

FAITH TALK

Don't mess with the midwives

MY STORY

Beyond the comfort zone

Choose to challenge

Everyone has a role to play in achieving gender equity



SALVOS

MAGAZINE



“Attention is the rarest and
purist form of generosity.”

Simone Weil,
French philosopher and political activist





The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

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Gender equity

'Choose to Challenge' is one of the themes for International Women's Day on 8 March. As we read the national and global statistics around women and their access to equal pay, education and employment opportunities, as well as the skyrocketing rates of family violence and assaults, it is dramatically clear that many issues need to be challenged.

In western nations particularly, advances have been made through the decades, but progress is slow. In many other countries, it's almost non-existent. Women's rights are human rights and, for the status quo to change, the mobilisation against patriarchy, misogyny, sexism and entitlement, must continue.

In this edition, several people share what they are personally choosing to challenge to help bring about a gender-equal world.

At the time of Jesus, women were not equal with men either. However, he challenged the cultural and religious norms of the day by including, enabling and empowering women. There is no doubt that women and men are equal in the eyes of God.

For all these stories and information on where to get help, go to salvosmagazine.org.au

Simone Worthing **Assistant Editor**

Choose to challenge

Everyone needs to play a role in achieving gender equity

International Women's Day (IWD), marked annually on 8 March, is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity and to raise awareness of gender bias.

There is still a significant way to go in achieving gender equity.

Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, the World Economic Forum predicted that, at current rates of progress, it will take 257 years to close the economic gender gap. The 2020-21 Reykjavik Index – that measures whether people think men or women are better suited to leadership positions in certain industries or sectors – also shows that there is very little improvement in perceptions of equality.

Outside the United Nations observance of IWD, the theme for IWD is #ChoosetoChallenge. Change comes from challenge, and everyone has a role to play in calling out gender bias and inequality and helping to forge a gender-equal and inclusive world.

Below, a range of people share how they plan to play their part.

NO LESS WORTHY

Ultimately, I would choose to challenge the idea that a woman is worth less than a man.

There are a range of measures that I could provide to demonstrate this reality, but, to put it simply across the globe, women are paid less, killed more (even as foetuses), are

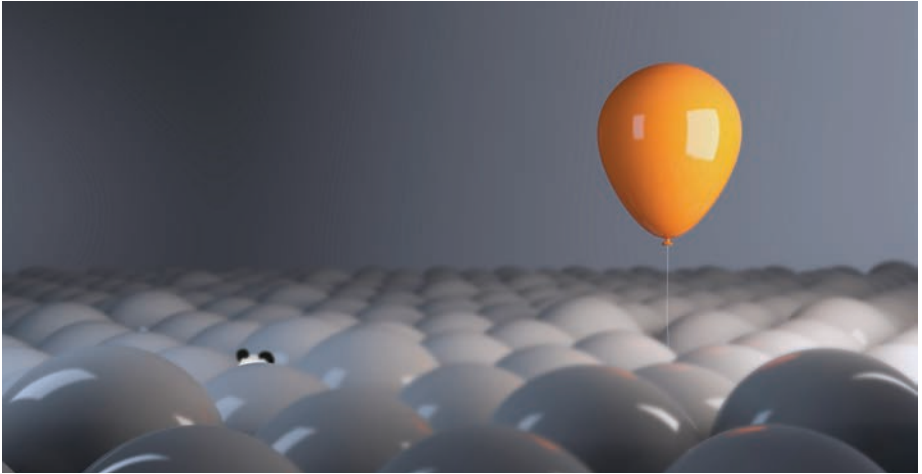
more likely to experience violence from an intimate partner or family member, more likely to receive reduced healthcare, retire with less superannuation and financial assets, are more likely to experience workplace discrimination, and are more likely to reduce their working hours to care for children and elderly parents.

Women are also less likely to find themselves in significant positions of power.

How can we reconcile this inequality? There are all kinds of justifications for why women are treated unequally. Some theology suggests that women are the 'same but different' ... and argue that, while women hold the same worth as men, they are not equipped with the same skills and, therefore, are better suited to caring rather than leadership roles. Even if this were true, this still doesn't explain why we generously commodify the 'natural skills' of men and not those 'caring skills' of women.

Others argue biology, and assert that men are physically and mentally stronger, and therefore should naturally be seen as the more dominant sex. But surely technology has removed the need for men to hold this domain all to themselves?

Others point to history and argue that, statistically, men are more likely to lead and discover. But surely, we recognise that opportunity and success is directly connected to privilege and rights? How can you demonstrate your ability when you are never given the right means or opportunity to do so, and when your success is dismissed by or miscredited back to men?



So, how do we go about readjusting this unequal assessment of worth? For me, there are two elements: structural and cultural.

First, we need to tackle the structures that allow for women's lives to be discounted.

- The gender pay gap needs to be closed (it has remained stuck at between 15-19 per cent for the past two decades!).
- Quotas need to be in place to ensure women are equally represented in positions of leadership and power. If that can't be achieved because there are not enough women with the right qualifications, then structures need to be put in place to ensure women are not denied the opportunities of qualifications and experience.
- We need to ensure effective parental leave and affordable childcare is in place to allow for an effective and fair opportunity for women to remain in the workforce.
- An assessment of wages needs to be

conducted that moves away from treating traditionally 'male work' as being paid higher than traditionally 'female work'.

Second, we need a massive cultural shift. We have allowed harmful stereotypes to take hold and these assumptions go on to form the basis of our policy and laws. Allowing rigid gender roles increases inequality and violence against women.

Women and girls need to be given the assurance that the opportunities available to men will also be available to women. We create and then embed inequality – directly and indirectly – and we need to be the ones to reshape our community and demonstrate the reality that women hold equal value with men. – **Gen Peterson, Salvos pastor and Gender Equity advocate**

FORGING A GENDER-EQUAL WORLD

I experience the impact of gender inequality in my own thoughts and self-worth, so this year I pledge to stop apologising for being me. I will choose to exist with strength, grace and dignity; owning my space and my right ▶

to speak up in this world. I know that as I become more comfortable in my skin, I give the generations following me permission to be powerful women too. – **Jessica Morris, journalist and podcaster**

YOU ARE ENOUGH

I would like to see change in the way that many women perceive of themselves as being 'not enough'. These feelings and beliefs can come from decades of male and female stereotyping from a young age, from growing up with poor body image due to mass-media stereotyping, or from experiences during childhood and adolescence that have reinforced this unwarranted belief. I will come alongside women, seeking to nurture and encourage them, to speak truth into their lives that they are loved and worthy, just the way they are. – **Lauren Martin, editor and community advocate**

FREE FROM FEAR

One of The Salvation Army's co-founders, William Booth, famously said, "While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight". To me, this line acknowledges a truth that women and girls experience the world with a particular sorrow because of their sex – as violence, fear and discrimination work to curtail their freedom. I choose to challenge language and ideas that would make women's pain and alienation from personhood seem inevitable. I will use my voice, talents and networks to persevere in bringing God's truth – that our sisters are meant for whole, mutual community alongside our brothers and that until the day that happens, The Salvation Army's work is not done. – **Rosy Keane, Salvos pastor, New Zealand**

WISDOM AND OPINION

I want to hear and see wisdom and opinion



PHOTO BY JUKAN TATEISI ON UNSPLASH

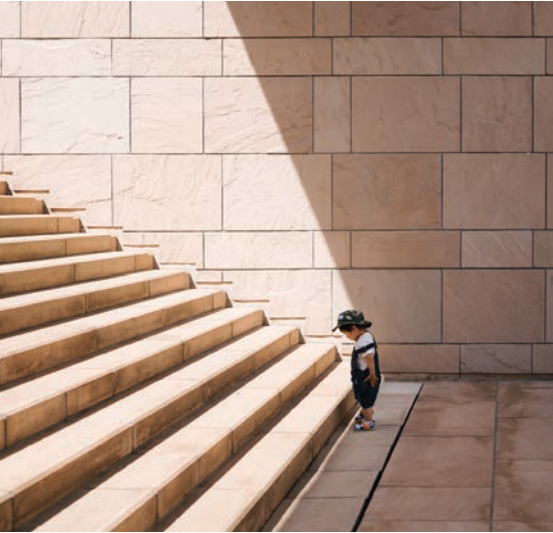
gain much more airplay and traction. So I will continue to encourage and challenge women to share their wisdom and opinions in every possible forum and assist them wherever I can. – **Laurie Robertson, Salvation Army officer (pastor)**

IT'S NOT FUNNY

I have always felt uncomfortable when people tell sexist jokes. I am now choosing to challenge the joke tellers, to explain that it's not appropriate and perpetuates harmful culture and abuse of women and girls. I'm not sure what response I will get but I don't care. These so-called jokes have to stop. – **David White, small business owner**

ACTIVELY CHOOSE

Be alert! That's my key message. So many of life's issues can creep up on us or be allowed to continue, and we can become immune to them. This year's theme for International Women's Day is a timely reminder that as individuals, we do have an important role to



play – to call out inappropriate behaviour; to challenge the status quo; to be brave and stand up for inequities. Have there been times have we ‘rolled our eyes’ and thought that’s not right, when we should have spoken out?

‘Choose to Challenge’ is a great theme for this year’s International Women’s Day. It’s a call to go and challenge, but it will only gain momentum if you and I ‘choose to challenge’. – **Kelvin Merrett, Salvation Army officer (pastor)**



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Special guest visits Darwin family violence refuge



Northern Territory Administrator Vicki O’Halloran holds a gift presented to her at Catherine Booth House in Darwin

The Administrator of the Northern Territory, Vicki O’Halloran, has visited The Salvation Army’s women and children’s domestic violence refuge, Catherine Booth House, in Darwin.

Vicki took the opportunity to speak with staff and stayed for morning tea.

Captain Peter Jones, Salvos Public Relations Officer in the Northern Territory, said Vicki,

who has a background in the family, children and disadvantaged sector, had asked to visit the facility to encourage the clients in the working through of their issues, the staff for their work and the Salvos in running the facility in such an important area.

Peter said Vicki was happy with what the Salvos was doing, how the facility was being run, and enjoyed the opportunity to “get back out and see what’s going on in the community”.

The Northern Territory Administrator performs a similar constitutional role to that of a Governor in Australian states and does not take part in the political process.

Catherine Booth House has secured a \$4.5 million Federal Government Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Grant, which is to see the facility largely rebuilt, which will enable more than 30 residents to be accommodated. – **Darryl Whitecross**

The 'shadow pandemic' – violence against women

Why gender equality matters in crisis response

The theme for the United Nations (UN) celebration of International Women's Day is 'Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world'.

The UN theme celebrates the efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It also highlights the need for governments, communities and individuals to play their part to make this happen.

Petra Jenkins, Salvation Army State Manager – Family Violence NSW/ACT, talks about the issue of Family and Domestic Violence (FDV), showing that gender inequality is still endemic in our communities and needs to be addressed if women and girls are to have equal opportunities, both now and in the future. Petra also highlights the work of Salvation Army female leaders and frontline workers in FDV during lockdowns, and beyond.

WORDS PETRA JENKINS

The aim of violence and abuse is to create a hostile environment for women with the goal of shaming, intimidating, degrading, belittling or silencing them. Any kind of violence and misuse of power is unacceptable.

Violence is a gendered issue. Yes, men are killed, but rarely by women, and the evidence shows that victims of violence, and specifically murder, are far and away over-represented by women.

Sexual or gendered violence is more nuanced than family violence, and includes harassment in the workplace and public and private forums.

Family violence is hidden, but deadly. One or two women are killed every week. Police are called to domestic abuse incidents every two minutes.

In times of crisis, such as COVID-19 or a

natural disaster, the risks of family violence increases exponentially.

“

Any kind of violence and misuse of power is unacceptable.

”

In the early stages of the pandemic, Salvation Army services worked quickly to respond to the complications of lockdowns. Isolation enabled more frequent and extreme violence, especially gender-based violence, as safe exit options diminished. Calls to services began increasing after midnight. Referral services increased, in some cases by 150 per cent.



HOPE FROM TRAGEDY

But, from the COVID-19 tragedy, came hope. People had compassion for fellow humans. People made choices, not just for themselves, but for others.

Accountability came under the magnifying glass. Frontline staff shone a light in the darkness for victim-survivors who did manage to escape. Case managers moved to virtual casework meetings for months. Program managers led with a fierce determination to remain ‘business as usual’, so there was always a safe option for people to leave violence.

The Salvos geared up the workforce with the technology to work from home. Case management, emergency relief and support continued, undeterred by the virus.

The invisible, the marginalised, the diverse and those disproportionately impacted by the lack of resource sharing came into focus as we banded together to protect the community, our families and our older people.

The government resourced Family Violence services to be COVID-19 safe and reach isolated victim-survivors. Women on temporary visas experiencing violence were given access to free medical assistance and emergency relief. Policy change came into effect – animals are now included in AVOs [apprehended violence order] and there is a robust debate

happening right now across the political landscape on criminalising coercive control.

COMMUNITY

There is a long way to go to achieve liberation from inequities, but there is hope, there is collaboration and there is unity. People now know their neighbours’ names, which may bring a layer of protection instead of ambivalence if they hear someone yelling for help. Community and connection fosters safety, and prevention nurtures non-violence.

In 2021, the Salvos continue to meet the needs of people in hardship. The Family Violence team continues to advocate and hold accountable those who choose to use violence or abuse human rights, and work towards a community that is safe and free from violence and modern slavery, and which challenges systemic gendered attitudes.

“The waters are rising, but so am I, I am not going under, but over,” said Catherine Booth, co-founder of The Salvation Army. She was a passionate advocate for women and girls experiencing violence and abuse. This passion, and advocacy, continues today.



Scan here for more on family and domestic violence.

Don't mess with the midwives

Dismantling unjust systems that enable inequality

WORDS STAR CONLIFFE

I love a good birth story! There's something about childbirth that is endlessly fascinating. It's one of the most extreme, amazing things a human body can experience.

You know, birth stories, and many stories that women tell about the way we experience the world, are not often told publicly. Women's stories are sometimes ignored or censored. So, we women tell them to each other in our women's spaces, away from the hearing of men. Some stories we secret away in our hearts, and never tell anyone because they cause us anger or pain or even shame.

On 8 March we observe International Women's Day, a global day celebrating the achievements of women, and for fighting for gender equality. The story in the biblical book Exodus of midwives Shiphrah and Puah, the Hebrew girl Miriam and her mother, and an Egyptian princess, is perfect for this day.

The king of Egypt had ordered the midwives to kill all the Hebrew baby boys as he feared being overtaken by the people he had enslaved. The midwives told him that these women were so strong that they had usually given birth before the midwives had arrived to assist – they were not about to kill the babies of other women!

Violence against women and children is a tool that has always been used in war and peacetime to suppress and control populations. And because women have not had the same social, economic or political power as men,

they have had to rely on strategic thinking and creative non-violence to survive this violence.

The women of Exodus are an excellent example of that.

Shiphrah and Puah use the king's own lack of knowledge about women to protect other women and their babies. A Hebrew mother finds a way to keep her baby safe when she follows an order to put him into the Nile River by using a basket. An Egyptian princess falls in love with this baby and uses her privilege to give him the legal protection of adoption. These women all find creative ways to protect themselves and their children from the king.

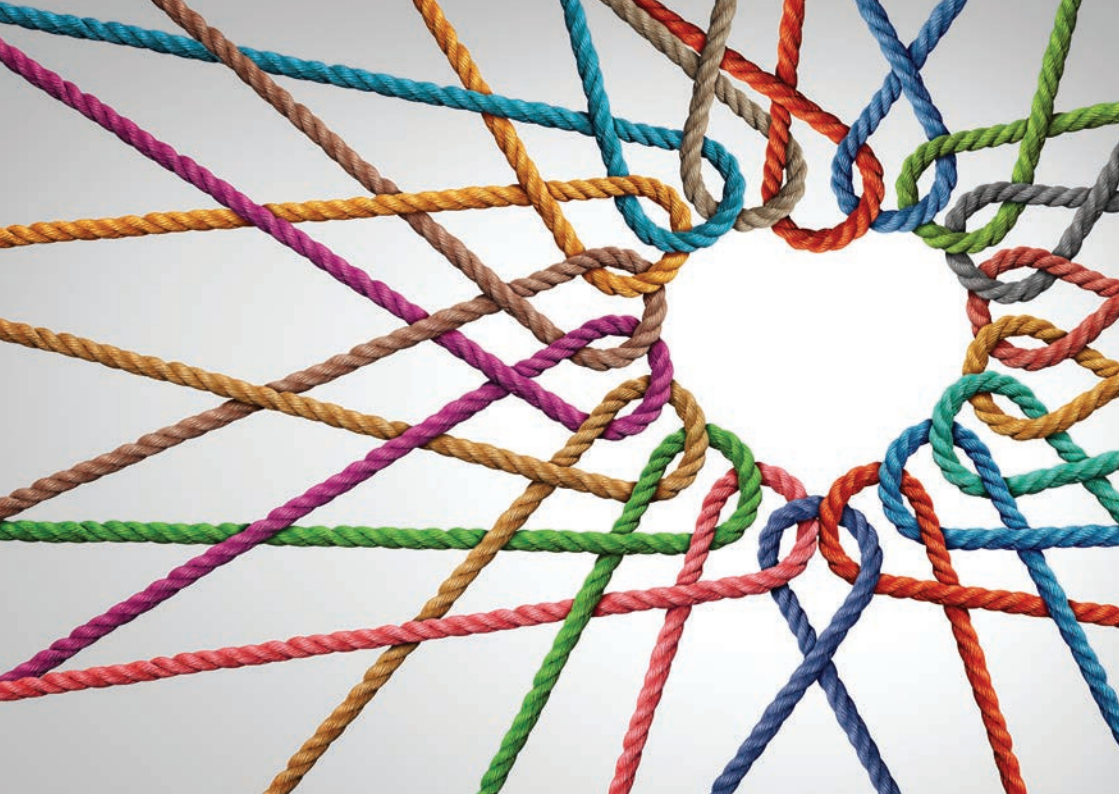
“

**You are a primary character,
in your own right.**

”

Isn't it ironic, that although the king dismisses the baby girls as not worth killing, it is women and girls who undermine his plan to kill the Hebrew boys. He underestimated women's value. He messed with the wrong midwives.

Girls learn very early in life that the way they are permitted to move in the world is different to that of boys. Research suggests that about the age of 11, many girls learn two



things. Firstly, that their bodies are shameful and they must be vigilant if they want to keep their bodies safe. Secondly, that to be accepted they must be good girls, that they should not be too loud or assertive or seek to have their voice heard. And if you are a girl who belongs to a minority, or who has a disability, or comes from a poor neighbourhood, these expectations and risks are worse.

To all the women reading this: To God, your life is not worth less than a man's. Your life is not less important than a man's. Your story is important. Not because women's stories are more important or special than men's, but because we are also human, created in the image of God, and so our lives must not be overlooked.

God doesn't see you as a secondary character whose only identity is in relation to men as a daughter, sister, or wife. You are

a primary character, in your own right. God hears your voice and knows.

I pray that God would help us dismantle the unjust systems and attitudes that contribute to inequality for girls and women. I pray that change would happen, and that we will see women and men, boys and girls, living, working, and striving together, as equals, sharing the gifts, skills and wisdom we have each been given, to bring about real change in the lives of our families, communities and nations.

Lieutenant Star Conliffe is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) in Victoria.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Beyond the comfort zone

Amira* conquers her fears to achieve a long-held goal

Major Bryce Davies is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) who has worked for many years with marginalised communities in Queensland and New South Wales. In this second edition of a four-part series, focusing on the lives of different people Bryce has come across while serving in the often-troubled suburbs of Greater Western Sydney, he tells the story of Amira*, and her courage in starting a new life in Australia. Story printed with permission.

I got the gist of how to teach English to migrants through the Salvos in Western Sydney, where they run a vibrant and effective program.

As it turns out, English conversational classes are more about having a bit of fun and making people feel comfortable than knowing grammar and syntax. The Salvos have great resources for this, and the learning is interesting and fun.

“

My life is so much richer because I know these important people, too.

”

So, I started teaching and absolutely loved it. The class was a mixture of Arabic, Farsi, Korean and Chinese-speaking people. There were a few support workers there to help translate what I was saying and give some ‘one-on-one’ help.

We had fun singing national anthems, playing cricket and even went on a trip to the zoo. Best of all, we got to share culturally unique food each week. I was an enthusiastic

participant in this aspect of the program and made sure people brought generous helpings of falafels and baklava and explained everything about them, as I stuffed myself silly on these delicious treats. All for a good cause.

One lady in the class was Amira, who had recently come to Australia with her family from the Middle East, fleeing the dangers of war. She is a delightful and enthusiastic woman and we got on well.

At a neighbouring centre, the Salvos run a Drive for Life program, which is a driver training and mentoring program that equips people who are experiencing adversity to obtain their licence. The program makes special provision for new arrivals in Australia. I asked if anyone in the class wanted to get some driving lessons, and they all said yes. So, I then volunteered to become a driver for the program and started taking people driving.

This was without doubt the scariest work I did. We often drove up gutters and I regularly had to grab the wheel and save us from a nasty scrape.

Amira was one of the ladies I started driving with. I would pick her up in the Salvos car and off we would go for an hour, driving around the quiet streets of the local neighbourhood. Afterwards, I was always invited into her



home, which seemed to calm my nerves as she placated me with yummy food and delightful hospitality. Her whole family became my friends. Amira's husband, Jamal*, is quite frail – he was injured a few years ago – and I spent many hours sitting with him and chatting. He is a kind and gentle man with a beautiful spirit, despite his significant suffering, and he and I are like brothers. He kisses me on the cheek three times every time he sees me.

When Amira finally went for her driving test and got her licence, my faith in the power of prayer and sense of relief was immense. It was a fabulous achievement. To have a driver's licence – a card with your name and photo on it – is an important way to feel part of Australian society.

It was an absolute delight to engage with this family, and Amira always refers to me as "a very important man". When you are a new to Australia and have very few friends, any Aussie who takes an interest and gets involved is very important.

My life is so much richer because I know these important people, too.

**Names have been changed*



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Dragon fruit sorbet



PHOTO BY ANDREA REDFORD

Ingredients

2 cups frozen dragon fruit chunks, 2 tbs lemon juice, 4 tbs sugar

Method

Place dragon fruit, lemon juice and 2 tbs of sugar in food processor or blender. Process or blend until smooth.

Do a taste test to check the sweetness. Dragon fruit can vary in sweetness, so check to see whether it needs more sugar. If it does, add remaining sugar and process again for a few seconds.

Spread evenly into a shallow container and freeze for at least 6 hours (or overnight).

Once frozen, remove sorbet from freezer and let stand for about 10 minutes at room temperature to soften a little before serving.

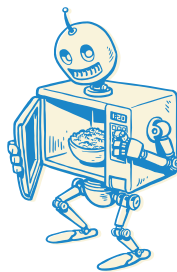
Have a laugh



"Why do you always wear the same tattoos?"



"Some things are too important to go to bed without knowing."



"What's the password to the microwave?"

Bible byte

"So God ... created humanity in His image, created them male and female."

Genesis 1:27

The Voice Bible translation

1				2		5		
		7	9		4			
	9						2	
				3		9		
			1				5	
	8	9		7		2	3	
	7	1	6			4		
								5
	6	5		9			1	

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tum-Tum

On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?



Answers: 1. Katherine Johnson
 2. Junko Tabet 3. Vida Goldstein
 4. Obiageli Ezekwesili 5. Tarana Burke
 on page 5.
Tum-Tum: is hiding amongst the balloons

2	1	5	7	3	1	2	8	6
8	2	4	3	8	1	6	7	5
3	7	1	6	5	2	4	9	8
4	8	9	5	7	2	3	1	6
7	3	2	1	4	8	6	5	9
5	1	8	2	3	5	8	4	7
6	3	8	1	5	2	7	4	9
2	5	7	8	1	4	9	3	6
1	4	8	7	2	3	5	6	9

Quick quiz



WHO AM I?

1. A female mathematician whose complex calculations were critical in sending the first man to the moon.
2. The first woman to successfully climb Mount Everest.
3. The first woman in the British Empire to stand for national election.
4. A Nigerian minister and activist who launched #BringBackOurGirls and called for government reforms and protections.
5. The original starter of the #MeToo movement in 2006.

Did you know?

- Lettuce is a member of the sunflower family.
- All porcupines float in water.
- Most Muppets are left-handed.

GENDER EQUITY

The Salvation Army recognises that although women make up over half the population, they are under-represented in almost all places of influence.

Of the 227 members of the Australian Parliament only 86 identify as women. Among the 23 members of the Federal Cabinet only six are women. Outside the public sector the ratios are even more skewed. In 2019, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency reported that only around 17.1 per cent of CEOs or heads of business were women.

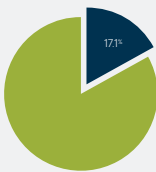
Across all positions, women are paid less than men. In 2018, the average adult weekly female earnings were 69 per cent of average adult weekly male earnings.

In addition, women are disproportionately more likely to be doing unpaid work in the home. The 'typical' Australian man spends fewer than five hours a week doing housework, but the typical Australian woman does between five and 14 hours.

These factors lead to lifelong disadvantage for women. When a woman retires she is likely to have significantly less in superannuation than her male counterpart (in 2017-18, the median superannuation balance for people between 55 and 64 years was \$119,000 for women and \$183,000 for men).

Women are also significantly more likely to experience family, domestic and sexual violence than men.

To view the full report, search 'Pathways' at salvationarmy.org.au



Only around 17.1 per cent of CEOs or heads of business were women



In 2018 the average adult weekly female earnings were 69 per cent of average adult weekly male earnings



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION we can actively implement policies that promote women's independence and decision-making both in public and private. For example, some countries have explored ways of encouraging men to increase their use of paternity leave when their child is born – the increased use of paternity leave has seen a more equal division of labour in the home and better outcomes for parents and children.

AS A NATION, COMMUNITY AND AS INDIVIDUALS we can challenge language and images that suggest that women are less than men. We can also challenge constructions of masculinity that suggest men are aggressive or dominant and constructions of femininity that suggest women are passive or subordinate.