



WILPF Australia Submission to the Inquiry on International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill

The Australian Section of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee Inquiry on the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015.

WILPF was established in The Hague in 1915 by women determined to bring an end to the First World War. For the past 100 years, WILPF has been committed to working towards peace, justice and disarmament. We believe that gender equality is essential to realising the full human rights of women and girls, and to ensuring a more just and equal world, free from discrimination and violence.

We commend the Minister for Foreign Affairs for elevating gender equality as core pillar of the aid program, and for committing to ensure that 80 per cent of all of Australia's aid investments effectively address gender issues in their implementation. We would like to see methodological rigour and transparency in reporting of this data.

WILPF believe that the Promoting Gender Equality Bill will strengthen the resolve exhibited in current policies, commit future Governments to that same standard, and strengthen processes throughout DFAT now and into the future, towards making this vision a reality.

In Australia WILPF has been a lead partner in producing the first and second Annual Civil Society Report Card on Australia's National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security in 2013 and 2014. We believe that this Report Card provides a good model for what the Promoting Gender Equality Bill stands to achieve.

The Report Card has been an enormously useful and positive contribution to monitoring and improving the Australian Government's commitments to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. This Report Card (attached) provides a clear analysis of the Government's activities, as well as its responses to the recommendations put forward by civil society. This process has been consultative and positive, and, has been graciously and warmly welcomed by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister, Senator Michaelia Cash.

We believe that The Promoting Gender Equality Bill could draw from parts of this process to present a clear and regular stocktake and analysis of the aid program's investment in gender equality, and further strengthen dialogue between relevant stakeholders in the international development sector and DFAT.

We know that quality monitoring, evaluation and learning is essential to improving performance and to achieving better development outcomes. Furthermore we encourage you to consider ways to strengthen dialogue with civil society organisations, which have an enormous amount of expertise, knowledge and tools to contribute to this process to support the work of the aid program.

Attachment 1: Second Annual Civil Society Report Card on the Implementation of Australia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security