

# NOTICE OF REMITS for Conference 2019



National Council of  
Women of New Zealand  
Te Kaunihera Wahine o Aotearoa

## *List of Remits*

Remit 1: Recognising all genders, including trans people

Remit 2: Transparency of information

Remit 3: Period poverty and sanitary products

Remit 4: Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030)

Remit 5: Equality in Education

---

## ***Remit 1: Recognising all genders, including trans people***

***That NCWNZ acknowledges the rights of people of all genders, including those who identify as female, male or non-binary and further, NCWNZ recognises trans women as women, and trans men as men.***

**Proposer:** Parliamentary Watch Committee

**Secunder:** NCWNZ Hutt Valley Branch

### **Rationale:**

NCWNZ is a leading feminist organisation, advocating for gender equality. Although there has been some progress in gender equality for women, there is still gendered discrimination against those who do not neatly fit into a gender binary of women/man, and prefer not to define their gender, and those people who transition from one gender to another.

Non-binary people face discrimination as much as women do, if not more. A gender-equal Aotearoa New Zealand will not be achieved if non-binary people are not able to express their identity fully and freely. While men do not face the same levels and types of discrimination, gender stereotyping also limits men's potential to express themselves. This has been recognised in the Gender Equal NZ film *The Good Guys*, taken from the 2017 Gender Attitudes Survey.

Trans people are those that experience gender dysphoria, which is the term for substantial distress felt by people who do not feel a match with the gender they were assigned at birth. This is a more fundamental issue to challenging gender norms. For some people, gender dysphoria is strong enough that they undergo medical intervention so that they may socially and physically identify with their chosen gender. The Human Rights Commission and the CEDAW Committee in 2018 have both advocated for better recognition of the rights of trans people. Some feminists seek to exclude trans women from their organisations. This remit seeks to include trans people within NCWNZ, as gender equality will only be achieved when everyone is free from discrimination.

The front page of the Gender Equal website states some gender equality fundamental principles, including that "all genders are visible, valid and respected" and "trans women are women and trans men are men". This remit seeks to make these human rights principles into official policy for NCWNZ.

### **Further information:**

- Desmarais, F. (2018, November 15). Non-binary finery: The Kiwis whose gender doesn't fit in a 'neat little box'. *Stuff.Co.Nz*. Retrieved from <https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/life/108178948/nonbinary-finery-the-kiwis-whose-gender-doesnt-fit-in-a-neat-little-box>

- Gender Minorities website: <https://genderminorities.com/>
  - Gender Equal website: <https://genderequal.nz/>
  - Human Rights Commission Inquiry into discrimination experienced by transgender people: <https://www.hrc.co.nz/our-work/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity/inquiry-discrimination-experienced-transgender-people/>
- 

## ***Remit 2: Transparency of information***

***That NCWNZ support the Official Information Act 1982 provisions to ensure equitable, public access to official information through both individual and group requests.***

**Proposer:** Parliamentary Watch Committee

**Secunder:** Council of Jewish Women

### **Rationale:**

NCWNZ believes that transparency and freedom of information are essential to the health of open, accountable and democratic government. This includes:

- Access to, and transparency of, information is essential to the development of informed decisions and to holding governments, decision-makers and institutions to account.
- Public participation in the development of legislation and policy is heavily reliant on broad, easy access to official information.
- Public trust in government decision-making around policy and legislation is enhanced through the maximum disclosure of relevant information.
- At present, the release of OIA information is driven by individual cases, rather than a legal requirement to publish, which structurally discriminates against those already disadvantaged in society.
- Actions to improve practice on the Act must include specific actions to make women more aware of the Act, its relevance to them and wide and easily understandable dissemination of information that can be obtained under the Act.
- Open, transparent government underpins a democratic society.

The Government is currently considering a review of the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) and NCWNZ has made a submission to the related consultation. NCWNZ has acknowledged improvements made to the operation of the OIA, including the improvement of its practice and actions to encourage increased participation.

NCWNZ has recommended that: the Act be reviewed; that it further reflect the increasing diversity of New Zealand society; that it should include a more proactive disclosure of information rather than only responding to specific requests; and that, as with all legislation and policy, include a gender-specific rather than a gender-neutral approach.

---

## ***Remit 3: Menstruation Poverty***

***That NCWNZ urges the Government to provide funding for sanitary products for those in need to end period poverty in New Zealand.***

**Proposer:** NCWNZ Christchurch Branch

**Secunder:** TBC

**Rationale:**

Period poverty is a considerable problem in New Zealand with almost a quarter of respondents to a KidsCan survey of around 5,000 Kiwi women stating that they missed school or work because of their period. Additionally, over half stated that they had had difficulty accessing sanitary products at some point due to cost. This impacts severely on the education, welfare, and dignity of women in New Zealand. Sanitary products of different types should be partially or wholly funded by the Government to enable women to continue in education and work.

KidsCan performed a survey in 2018 of approximately 5000 Kiwi women and girls.<sup>1</sup> 23.6% of women responded that they had missed school or work due to a lack of access to sanitary products. Approximately one in three respondents stated that they had to prioritise food over sanitary products. Of those respondents under the age of 17, 29% said they had missed school or work due to having their period and a lack of access to sanitary products. KidsCan also revealed that some girls take the contraceptive pill simply so they do not have a period.<sup>2</sup> Beyond education, women who have suffered economic abuse have also stated that money to access sanitary items was routinely withheld or restricted.<sup>3</sup>

There are numerous charities working to alleviate period poverty in New Zealand through a range of initiatives. My Cup has a Buy One Give One programme which funds the distribution of menstrual cups to those in need.<sup>4</sup> Dignity NZ also has a buy one gift one scheme where businesses can purchase a subscription to have sanitary products delivered to their workplace, while an equivalent number are gifted to girls in schools.<sup>5</sup> KidsCan also provide sanitary products to schools.<sup>6</sup>

Green MP Golriz Ghahraman stated in 2017 that period poverty in New Zealand should be treated as a Human Rights issue.<sup>7</sup> This was echoed by the Human Rights Commission's Dr. Jackie Blue who said that "women and girls should not be facing preventable barriers".<sup>8</sup> Applications to Pharmac were also made to fund sanitary items but were rejected as sanitary items were not deemed to be either medicines or medical devices and thus did not fall under Pharmac's umbrella.<sup>9</sup>

Period poverty in New Zealand is a major issue affecting the ability of girls and women to get an education, to go about their day-to-day lives, and affecting their dignity as human beings. No one should have to use toilet paper or cardboard or socks because they cannot afford sanitary items and yet this is routinely happening in this country.<sup>10</sup> We believe it is necessary for the Government to fund sanitary products in schools and education centres to help to alleviate this problem.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kidscan.org.nz/news/kidscan-survey-exposes-extent-of-period-poverty-in-new-zealand>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/some-girls-now-take-pill-stop-their-bleeding-charity-says-period-poverty-forcing-kiwi-desperate-sanitary-measures>

<sup>3</sup> <http://goodshepherd.org.nz/media/1975/economic-abuse-in-new-zealand-gsnz-2018.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mycup.co.nz/our-social-mission-mycupnz/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dignitynz.com/what-we-do>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12151438](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12151438)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/period-poverty-human-rights-issue-says-green-mp-golriz-ghahraman-some-girls-miss-school>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/period-poverty-human-rights-issue-says-green-mp-golriz-ghahraman-some-girls-miss-school>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/91695342/pharmac-rejects-funding-bid-for-sanitary-items-on-grounds>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/103341262/women-in-period-poverty-using-socks-as-sanitary-pads>

Measures to end period poverty, also provide the opportunity to raise awareness of the environment impact of current products.

Currently the most popular types of sanitary products are also the most detrimental to the natural environment, as they are single, disposal and particularly due to the amount of hidden plastic in them. A national plan provides an opportunity to raise awareness to facilitate a change to more sustainable products, such as reusable pads or cups.

---

#### ***Remit 4: Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030)***

***That NCWNZ actively supports the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations in 2015.***

**Proposer:** NCWNZ Board

**Secunder:** Environment & Climate Change Committee

#### **Rationale:**

This remit was raised in urgency at the 2018 AGM and whilst it was not passed it was clear that many supported it.

From 2000 to 2015 the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) provided an important international development framework and achieved success in areas such as reducing poverty and improving health and education in lower income countries. In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the UN's 193 Member States. They expand beyond the scope of the MDGs to apply to all countries, including New Zealand, and embrace 17 inter-connected goals, also known as Agenda 2030. This Agenda recognises "that social, economic and environmental factors, as well as peace and justice are interconnected and vital for sustainable development and the elimination of poverty." To achieve the goal of "no-one left behind" by 2030 requires the public and private sectors, and civil society to work together in new ways.

All the goals have specific targets and indicators and were developed through an inclusive process, involving many communities and levels of society around the globe.

**SDG 5** is to achieve equality and empower all women and girls and is similar in many ways to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). UN Women has recently introduced Step It Up with the tagline "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality". This initiative specifically asks governments to make national commitments to address challenges that hold women and girls back. This is why NCWNZ is leading a call for an SDG 5 fund.

**SDG 13** is to achieve climate action. Urgent action to halt climate change and deal with its impacts is integral to the successful implementation of the SDGs. Collectively the three post 2015 agendas for action, the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction provide the foundation for sustainable, low-carbon and resilient development under a changing climate. Achieving the primary goal of the Paris Agreement to keep average global temperature rise well below 2C degrees and as close as possible to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels - is vital to the achievement of all three Agendas. As President Obama alluded that "Climate change has the power to prevent us reaching all or any of our goals"

Climate change raises significant human rights issues that affect women and children more and including those of other genders. Women as agents for change in climate action and resilience have a key role to "step-it-up" in climate change - both in leadership by women, but also in leadership for women.

An initiative like Step It Up provides an innovative and global framework for New Zealand to use to support much needed national action and thinking in order to achieve gender equality. Key to implementation is the presentation of a National Voluntary Review by each government, with input from NGOs and businesses, to the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) under the auspices of ECOSOC. In some countries like Australia, civil society and others have contributed shadow reports.

Currently NCWNZ has no specific SDG policy or framework. With reporting from New Zealand due in June 2019, we would like to see an NCWNZ policy developed to enable us to have an effective advocacy voice on this important UN framework, with key messages that can be used in all relevant submissions and oral submissions to government and other agencies. This would also reflect SDG 17, to strengthen the implementation of the SDGs and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

---

### ***Remit 5: Equality in Early Childhood***

***That NCWNZ urges the government to address issues of gender equality within the Early Childhood sector to ensure the best start in life for all children and a more gender equal Aotearoa New Zealand.***

**Proposer:** NCWNZ Hibiscus Coast Branch

**Secunder:** NZEI

#### **Rationale:**

As a country that prides itself on being at the forefront of gender equality, there has been no sustained efforts made to address the gender imbalance in the ECE sector. (Dr Farquhar: ChildForum Early Childhood Education Nationwide Network).

In 2015 (latest Ministry figures available), the percentage of male teachers in the ECE Sector was 2% of the total workforce. This actually represents a downward trend from earlier statistics. Consequently children who attend an ECE service are not being exposed to ideas about gender identity and there is little opportunity for them to experience or experiment with healthy concepts of identity.

The ChildForum Survey 2012 reported that an effect of having more men represented in the ECE sector would be for parents to place a higher value on early childhood education. The ChildForum Survey's findings concluded that overall most female ECE teachers considered that an increase in male teachers in the sector would benefit children's access to male role models; benefit dad and male caregiver participation in their child's ECE programme; benefit children's behaviour and social skills; benefit children's physical skills and development; benefit staff relationships /team dynamics; benefit children's learning experiences/outcomes; and benefit the social status of early childhood work.