



Quarterly

Spring
2020

Add “sure to rise” to “shovel ready” for the best COVID recovery for women and the planet

What are political parties saying?
Gender Justice Collective finds out

Procurement policy to support
gender equity? Watch this space

Add “sure to rise” to “shovel ready” for the best COVID recovery for women and the planet

Unsurprisingly, Covid-19 has hit women's jobs hard and fast – over 90% of those who lost their jobs in the first three months of Covid-19 were women. In tourism – one of the hardest-hit industries – the number of women workers dropped 8 per cent in the June quarter, compared to the year before. For [Māori women in tourism](#), StatsNZ data show the drop was twice as steep: a whopping 20.5 per cent, or 4000 people.

Yet disappointingly, “shovel ready” projects fast-tracked by government to provide employment are drawn mostly from sexist and male-dominated industries

– and we know employers are often actively hostile to employing women, and/or have family-unfriendly conditions (which are not good for men either). So women are faced with a COVID double whammy: more likely to be fired, less likely to be hired.

This unequal and intersectional burden on women was predicted by [Auckland Women's Centre](#) and many others. It's not acceptable to allow women to bear the brunt of the recession. Wāhine Māori and women of colour should not be used as “[shock absorbers](#)” for the economy.



But this is our [default setting](#) and it gets entrenched in our thinking when [Treasury directly refuses](#) to analyse the effects of government policy on women. This is the white patriarchy at work, folks.

Here at Auckland Women's Centre, we think the answer is two-fold: first, use this opportunity to pressure (and support) shovel-ready sectors to shed their patriarchal ethos and hire women. We are pleased Warwick Quinn,

head of the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation [agrees](#) this recession is a “golden opportunity to fast-track diversity in the sector.” Any culture change is a long-term challenge, but this means decision-makers shouldn't put ingrained sexism in the “too hard” basket; they should start work on it *now*. A follow-up pandemic response needs to protect all women, and only fund those projects

and businesses which contribute to collective, long-term well-being, including [looking after Papatūānuku](#), and increasing gender and ethnic equity. (There is potential good news on this front: see our article on new procurement rules).

Second, the pandemic response should invest in people as well as in their built environment – investing in health, education and community development also creates jobs.

Add “sure to rise” to “shovel ready” for the best COVID recovery for women and the planet continued

As [one commentator](#) puts it: “Aotearoa can make different productivity gains by investing in healthy kids and thriving communities.” This would not only be better for women’s paid employment, but it would also be better for women overall – better for everyone.

Let’s support community-based, not-for-profit, job-creating initiatives with social goals for women, such as [The Wise Collective](#) of women with refugee backgrounds. Let’s address the critical shortage of mental health workers – and ensure that kaupapa Māori and culturally appropriate services are the key goal and destination of those workforce increases.

On twitter, [teachers recommend](#) increasing teacher aides, and expanding the school meals programme even further to create jobs; E Tu unionist [Sam Huggard](#) calls for a full “green new deal for working women”: accelerate pay equity; fully fund social service NGOs (yes please!); fix funding disparity between Māori and state services; ensure government contractors pay a living wage via the procurement process; ensure safe staffing ratios in aged-care – the list of great ideas goes on.

Many of Sam’s recommendations are already prepped and ready to roll: implement the disability employment



The government needs to provide more support for not-for-profit initiatives that create employment like the Wise Collective

action plan; carry out Whakamana Tāngata – the Welfare Expert Advisory Group recommendations. And happily, a few of them have become campaign promises for some of the parties.

The Ministry for Women now has a COVID-19 response unit. Although we’re waiting for their first move, it’s pleasing

that Minister Genter [acknowledges](#) “Over the past decade we’ve underestimated the importance of work in the public sector as well as unpaid work that’s often undertaken by women.”

But actions speak louder than words. In the same [Spinoff article](#), public policy expert Jennifer Curtin notes “They’ve just come out to invest in material stuff while ignoring the social world. They didn’t envision an economy that looks different.”

For every policy and project, Auckland Women Centre would like the next government to ask: how will this assist with the long-term wellbeing of [Papatūānuku](#) and all her people?

That will ensure all initiatives, whether shovel-ready or not, are “sure to rise” into a thousand blooms of promise and potential for future generations. ■



Investing in health, education, community development, etc creates jobs for women and benefits the community

What are political parties saying?

Gender Justice Collective finds out



Auckland Women's Centre is proud to be part of the new, awareness-raising Gender Justice Collective, along with researchers, practitioners and other organisations. This is our paraphrase of [an article](#) by The Workshop's Jess Berentson-Shaw.

The Gender Justice Collective was formed this year to encourage a political focus on improving conditions for wāhine, women and those who walk between the binary worlds. Initial findings from a Collective survey of wāhine, women and non-binary people show respondents' priorities for politicians include:

- paid parental leave for all parents, not just one
- pay equity
- protection for women in workplaces...
- ... and in the Family Court
- easily accessible information on domestic violence
- and greater protection of our awa (rivers).

The Collective also asked current parties in parliament about their achievements and plans to advance gender equity in future. Labour, National and the Green parties responded.



From left: Jacinda Ardern, the Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party, Mamara Davidson, Co-leader of the Green Party.

There's small but pleasing news about preventing family and sexual violence: all parties made further commitment to the integrated across-government approach. Still, no party mentions policies specifically designed to overcome harmful masculine stereotypes

(e.g. parental leave for all parents, incentives for men into female dominated industries, or earlier interventions in schools). Yet breaking free of behaviours associated with masculine stereotypes, for example violence and coercive & controlling behaviour, will improve the health and wellbeing of all people.

Jess says Julie Anne Genter (as Minister for Women) and Jan Logie (as Under Secretary for Justice) have *"consistently pushed hard for comprehensive and effective policy changes to improve the lives of women and people in the rainbow community."* The Greens also

mentioned implementing recommendations from the current [Mana Wāhine Inquiry](#) looking into prejudices towards wāhine Māori resulting from breaches to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Labour's responses also *"showed a good understanding of the broad range of concerns and issues affecting different women's lives and opportunity to thrive"*, for example mentioning unpaid labour. National tended to focus on individual level responses: leadership opportunities for women and some policies on women's health, for example cancer treatment, which they suggested would be of benefit to rural women particularly.

Look out for the Collective's "WeChoose2020" matrix, ranking and measuring how well political party policies are supporting gender equity in Election 2020 – due about now! ■



A feminist film night out

rose matafeo matthew lewis

baby done

Sunday 1 November 2020 7.30pm Lido Cinema, Epsom

Tickets available at Eventfinda

All proceeds go to the Auckland Women's Centre

Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau
AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE

Procurement policy to support gender equity? Watch this space

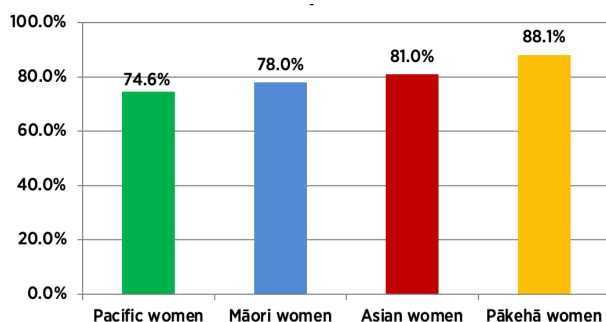
Last month, the Government announced a very interesting new rule: when procuring their annual \$42 billion worth of goods and services, government departments and agencies would now have to “consider how they can create quality jobs, particularly for displaced workers and traditionally disadvantaged groups such as Māori, Pasifika, people with disabilities and women.”

Given the amount of money involved, this has the potential to be a game-changer.

Focussing on multiple groups at once means the rule is more likely to be genuinely effective in empowering those who bear the intersectional burden of more than one disadvantage, such as wāhine Māori, Pacific women, and women with disabilities.

However! Detail on how the rule will be implemented is thin on the ground – so thin, in the case of women and people with disabilities, that it is non-existent. While the Māori Development Minister Nanaia Mahuta and Pacific Peoples Minister Aupito William Sio are quoted in the

Average hourly earnings as percentage of earnings of Pākehā men, June 2020



Pacific women earn less, on average, than any other group; there's hope that the new procurement policy will help change this, but concerns remain about implementation.

announcement, the Minister for Women, Julie Anne Genter, and Disability Issues Minister Carmel Sepuloni are not. In NZ Government Procurement and Property's response to the announcement, “better outcomes for Māori and Pasifika” are mentioned once; but there is no mention at all of women and people with disabilities.

We are concerned that women – including women with disabilities, but also wāhine Māori and Pasifika women – will be forgotten. We've written to both the Ministry of Women and NZ Government Procurement and Property to find out more – and will let you know once we hear back! ■

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Centre Hours

Monday to Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Library Hours

Monday to Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Services

- Women's Support: free support, info, advice and referral
- Community Education
- Community Events
- Counselling
- LGBTQ support
- Low Cost Massage
- Self Defence Classes
- Opportunities to talk and support feminism
- Diversity Forums
- Support Groups
- Support for High School Feminism

Designed by Toni Chase