



# Welsh Government draft budget proposals for 2020-21

## 1. About the Women's Equality Network Wales:

- 1.1 WEN Wales is a representative women's network<sup>1</sup> and human rights organisation working to influence policy-making and empower women to achieve equal status in corporate and civil life. Our charitable objectives are to promote equality and human rights with specific reference to women and gender equality in Wales.
- 1.2 WEN Wales, in collaboration with Women Connect First, Welsh Women's Aid and Chwarae Teg published 'Equality for Women and Girls in Wales: Our Manifesto'<sup>2</sup>, which sets the agenda in Wales to achieve greater equality for women and girls.
- 1.3 In collaboration with Oxfam Cymru we also produced our 'Feminist Scorecard 2019: Tracking Welsh Government Action To Advance Women's Rights and Gender Equality'.<sup>3</sup> Collectively, we have a vision of a transformed Wales, free from gender discrimination where woman and men have equal authority and ability to shape society and their own lives. We want to ensure that Wales is the safest country in Europe to be a woman, where women and girls can flourish and actively participate in their communities. These two documents set us on the path to achieving this.
- 1.4 WEN Wales gathered feedback from our individual members for this inquiry – these responses have informed our consultation submission.
- 1.5 *Evidence for this consultation was gathered before the launch of Gender Equality Review Phase 2 on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019, which comprises two main reports Deeds not Words and the Roadmap for Gender Equality in Wales.*

## 2. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the Welsh Government's 2019-20 budget?

- 2.1 The impact of Welsh Government's 2019-20 budgets on women in Wales is impossible to measure due to the lack of consistent data and lack of a gender budgeting approach, which should include Integrated Impact Assessments that align with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The issues of the current system makes effective scrutiny of Welsh Government budgets and policies in relation to women and girls very difficult.
- 2.2 Welsh Government has shown real commitment to achieving gender equality through the Rapid Review on Gender Equality. Early findings of the review<sup>4</sup> by Chwarae Teg found that previously the Welsh Government's budget process has not aligned to the policy-making process and budgets have focused on financial pressure rather than impact, which is a barrier to effective cross-government working on all issues, including gender equality.

<sup>1</sup> Over 1,400 individual members and organisational members, including women's rights and allied organisations from across the third sector, academia, international and national NGOs.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf);

[http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-Welsh.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-Welsh.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>

<http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-Cymraeg-Final.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cteg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Rapid-Review-of-Gender-Equality-Phase-One-Summary-Report.pdf>

- 2.3 The way in which Welsh Government consults the Budgetary Advisory Group on Equalities (BAGE), on which WEN Wales sits, at the end of the budgetary process is insufficient. The role and membership of BAGE should be reviewed to ensure equality of outcome. Welsh Government's budgetary process must be subjected to a gender process throughout the process from start to finish.
- 2.4 Welsh women's sector research published this year calculates that full gender equality could add £13.6bn to Welsh gross value added (GVA) forecasts for 2028; while matching the current best performing region in the UK on key gender equality measures could see an increase of £4.4bn to Wales' GVA.<sup>5</sup> Achieving gender equality is not just a moral and social imperative but also makes economic sense.
- 2.5 A gender-responsive budgeting process involves asking key questions about the annual budgets such as<sup>6</sup>:
- *Who benefits from state expenditure and how is the spending distributed between women and men?*
  - *Is the spending meeting both women's and men's needs?*
  - *What impact are budget decisions having on work, including in full-time, part-time or unpaid work?*<sup>7</sup>
- 2.6 Individual WEN Wales members also raised some specific issues in response to this question. WEN Wales' members consistently list inadequate childcare provisions as one of the most significant barriers to women returning to work after parental leave and we do not think that the current childcare offer is fit for purpose, as it creates further barriers for certain women entering the workforce or maintaining employment while supporting a family.
- 2.7 The impact of cuts to social care was consistently highlighted by our membership. There was a sense that austerity has widened the gap between the wealthy and those in poverty in Wales, which has been highlighted through the increased use of foodbanks. It was felt that there should be an emphasis on equity (rather than just equality) and that this should be applied across all budgets. Others highlighted issues in relation to cuts to education, the environment and the third sector. One respondent from a Welsh local authority voiced frustration at the nature of EU Transitional Funding:
- 2.8 ***“Due to its reduced support in the areas of social care and the new structures that Welsh Government required local areas to take on for transitional funding, it has been a lot harder to get funding to those who need it most. The transitional money's in particular have been slow to reach carers and those most in need because of unresolved issues in local governance – the structure is now unnecessarily complicated and the top echelons of the regional partnership boards top slice money's before any grassroots levels see any of it.”***
3. **What expectations do you have of the 2020-21 draft budget proposals? How financially prepared is your organisation for the 2020-21 financial year, and how robust is your ability to plan for future years?**

<sup>5</sup> Cebr on behalf of Chwarae Teg The Economic Value of Gender Equality in Wales Nov 2018 (as seen in Chwarae Teg's 'State of the Nation 2019': [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019\\_english.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019_english.pdf))

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/6462-WEN-Wales-GRB-Briefing-Doc-final.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Rake, K. (2002), "Gender Budgets: The experience of UK's Women's Budget Group", London: London School of Economics and Women's Budget Group, Basel@ Gender Balance – Equal Finance.

<sup>8</sup> Baumgardt, A. (2011) Gender Budget Workshop, WEN Wales.

- 3.1 As Phase 2 of the Rapid Review on Gender Equality concludes, it is imperative that Welsh Government's 2020-21 reflect learning from the review, including through the implementation of a gender mainstreaming approach and gender-sensitive budgeting processes throughout Welsh Government's budgets and policies.
- 3.2 When this question was posed to WEN Wales' membership, respondents raised grave concerns about Brexit and the impact that continued, chaotic uncertainty is having when planning effectively for the 2020-21 financial year, let alone beyond this. One WEN Wales member summed up the current socio-political climate as a **"time of terrible uncertainty from UK politicians."** Members felt that Welsh Government needs to have a clear plan for how lost EU funding will be replaced and more needs to be done to mitigate the impact of austerity – despite Chancellor Sajid Javid's proclamation that austerity is coming to an end.
- 3.3 With the threat of a No Deal Brexit very much a possibility, Welsh Government has been consistent in their messaging that this would be "catastrophic for Wales", most recently stated in the First Minister's written statement *Welsh Government No Deal Brexit Action Plan* on 16<sup>th</sup> September 19, stating that "the most vulnerable would shoulder the burden."<sup>9</sup> It is very likely that those who feel that greatest impacts of Brexit will be those who have felt the impact of a decade of austerity measures from the UK Government, and have not felt significant mitigation from Welsh Government. We know that women have borne the brunt of welfare reform.<sup>10</sup> It is likely they will disproportionately shoulder the budget of the catastrophic impact of Brexit on Wales, regardless of whether a deal with the EU is reached before the UK's exist.
- 3.4 Expectedly, there is deep unrest when it comes to organisations feeling able to financially plan to deliver their services sustainably in 2020-21 and beyond. One member has attributed this to what they see as the piecemeal way in which Welsh Government funds various parts of local authorities' legal duties. For example, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 requires significant changes at local authority level but they judge that sufficient funding to carry out these changes has not been provided.
- 3.5 WEN Wales has benefited from the security of a Welsh Government funded three-year Equality and Inclusions Grant, which comes to an end in March 2020. While there have been some assurances that funding could continue for at least the next financial year, WEN Wales is now in the same position as much of the Welsh women's and equalities' sector organisations of not knowing the total funding that they will receive for the next financial year, making any planning work speculative. This is within the context of the important work that will be required to follow the Gender Equality Review's Phase 2 reporting, including action from Welsh Government, which WEN Wales will support the scrutiny of. This is also in the backdrop of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union and the potential threat of the rolling back of women's rights, workers' rights, disability rights, LGBT+ rights etc. which we will also have to scrutinise.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://gov.wales/written-statement-welsh-government-no-deal-brexite-action-plan>

<sup>10</sup> Between 2010-15, there were £26 billion of UK welfare cuts, £22 billion worth were borne by women. On average, women suffer an annual loss of £940 as a result, almost double that of men. Single mothers, who make up 90% of all single parents, are predicted to face an average loss of £5,250 per year, while disabled single parents who have at least one disabled child will face average losses of £10,000 annually.

*The Fawcett Society, Where's the Benefit? An Independent Inquiry into Women and Jobseeker's Allowance 2015; Poorest hit hardest by tax, social security and public spending reforms, 2017, EHRC Independent report.*

4. Approach to preventative spending and how is this presented in resource allocation (preventative spending = spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early), particularly in relation to the financing of local health boards and health and social care services

4.1 ‘The way that funds are given out (i.e. given to health boards to manage, when the majority of local authorities are the ones that have the largest duty of them to change seems counterproductive. We are fortunate [in one Welsh local authority] that the health board is fairly partnership focused and that they do make some of that money available for working jointly with the local authority, but other local authorities have almost no relationship with their health board and there’s no partnership working at all in these areas.’ – WEN Wales member

4.2 Several WEN Wales members raised preventative spending and climate change as the most important issues in this consultation. As well as a moral obligation, there is a financial imperative to invest in life-saving preventative and early interventions, such as those to prevent homelessness and violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The Health budget needs to invest in preventative violence against women services, and programmes such as the Change that Lasts Model<sup>11</sup>, as prevention and early intervention could save women and children’s lives, as well as a huge amount in hospital costs and other public services.<sup>12</sup> It is not acceptable that specialist VAWDASV services are under threat due to austerity and because a model for sustainable funding for these services has not been implemented. This model should align with the ‘Istanbul Convention’. Welsh Government must commit sufficient resources to successfully implement its VAWDASV National Strategy across all departments, including delivery of the ‘Istanbul Convention’ in Wales.

4.3 More needs to be done in terms of preventing and tackling homelessness in Wales, including ‘invisible’ homelessness. The nature of women’s homelessness is often hidden and links with domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls.<sup>13</sup>

4.4 WEN Wales members also spoke about the benefits of free prescriptions which help “to prevent future problems e.g. treating hypertension effectively leads to fewer strokes, heart attacks and renal failure and thus to lower healthcare costs in the future. Many people in the middle-income bracket could not afford all the necessary prescriptions when charges were in place.’

5. Sustainability of public services, innovation and service transformation

5.1 ‘The NHS and social care are inadequately funded as are all forms of education (including libraries) with too much emphasis on universities and insufficient on vocational training; Germany is a good example, where there is greater emphasis on vocational training and involvement of workers on company boards.’ – WEN Wales member

5.2 There is stark inequality in many different aspects of healthcare in Wales. Disabled women living in Wales do not have equal access to health care and disabled people are more likely to die younger, and experience health inequalities and major health conditions than other people.<sup>14</sup> With an ageing

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/our-approach-change-that-lasts/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Yasmin-WEB.gif>;  
<http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/our-approach-change-that-lasts/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.llamau.org.uk/what-is-homelessness-for-women>; <https://www.mungos.org/app/uploads/2017/07/Rebuilding-Shattered-Lives-Update-Nov-2015-1.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> [Being Disabled in Britain: A journey less equal](#), EHRC

population, there will be increased demand for care. Public Health Wales estimates there will be 184,000 people in Wales aged 85 or over by 2036, an increase of 145% since 2011.<sup>15</sup>

- 5.3 Proper investment in women's general health as well as specific issues such as endometriosis and the menopause is essential, and must lead to better diagnoses, provisions and services. Women's health and well-being must be prioritised, with high quality sexual reproductive health services available across Wales and reproductive rights upheld. We need to know more about women and girls sexual, reproductive and maternal health, ensuring that health information and services are available and accessible to all.
- 5.4 **'Generally, with purely statutory provision we are in danger of losing community assets that have taken a century of struggle to amass.'** – WEN Wales member
- 5.5 One member's recommendation was to create a voluntary thinktank using the talents of small and medium size businesspeople to analyse the possibility of private public partnerships to sustain community assets such as youth clubs, open spaces, library spaces and community hubs.
- 5.6 **'Funding for the support of unpaid family carers needs to be ringfenced in future; we've not seen enough change in culture with partners such as health boards to make carers part of the mainstream yet – more still needs to be done.'** – WEN Wales member
- 5.7 Our economy and society cannot survive without the paid and unpaid care and household work that is done by women across Wales. Unpaid care work for disabled, seriously ill or older people is mainly done by women and amounts to £8.1 billion a year in Wales – almost doubling in the last 15 years.<sup>16</sup> Women disproportionately take responsibility for unpaid child care and this inequality has been identified as a contributory factor to the gender pay gap.<sup>17</sup> Further support and acknowledgement of this contribution is needed from Welsh Government, as well as an increase in caring carried out by men in Welsh society so that care is both valued and shared out equally.

## 6. Welsh Government policies to promote economic growth, reduce poverty, gender inequality and mitigate welfare reform

- 6.1 **'Evidence worldwide shows that our economy is losing out when there is a lack of parity/equality in the workforce across all levels'** – WEN Wales member
- 6.2 WEN Wales welcomes the Welsh Government's commitment to better understand the gender equality landscape of Wales through the Rapid Review into Gender Equality. It is imperative that these ambitions are translated into policy, budgetary commitments and radical rethinking of how to achieve these systemic goals for the equality of the nation.<sup>18</sup> The Gender Review offers a good backbone to this work. As per our Manifesto<sup>19</sup> and Feminist Scorecard<sup>20</sup>, we are interested in 'deeds not words' and would like to see action as soon as possible.

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<sup>15</sup> BBC News, 23 August 2016

<sup>16</sup> State of Caring 2017 Carers Wales, [www.carerswales.org/stateofcaring](http://www.carerswales.org/stateofcaring)

<sup>17</sup> Gender Pay Gap, Second report of session 2015-16, Women and Equalities Committee, House of Commons.

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf);

[http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-Welsh.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-Welsh.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>

<http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-Cymraeg-Final.pdf>



- 6.3 WEN Wales considers the issue of gender inequality throughout this consultation. However, we remain deeply concerned about poverty in Wales and the lack of mitigation of welfare reform as we know that these problems disproportionately affect women. Fair and fulfilling work is central to tackling poverty in Wales and can also help to address some of the economic inequalities women continue to face.<sup>21</sup>
- 6.4 Welsh Government must strengthen its commitment to reducing poverty in Wales. To do this we have to work together to mitigate the impact of UK Government welfare changes. We must collaborate to find innovative and long-term solutions to enable women to live independent lives.<sup>22</sup>

## 7. Welsh Government's planning and preparedness for Brexit

- 7.1 **'Welsh Government has a passive attitude towards many threatening issues, like Brexit and the climate crisis, waiting for [Westminster] or Europe to lead the way. We are better than this. Welsh Government needs to act immediately and engage and involve all diverse groups in Wales in the discussion.'** – WEN Wales member
- 7.2 With no clear indication of what a post-Brexit Britain will look like, it is very hard to judge how well prepared the Welsh Government can be. There are huge concerns around the chaos and uncertainty of Brexit amongst WEN Wales' membership from both individuals and organisations.
- 7.3 However, the sheer lack of funding available to mitigate against the impacts of Brexit is deeply worrying. It is predicted that women's organisations, including life-saving violence against women specialist services, will be even more under threat than they have been in recent years.<sup>23</sup> If Welsh Government wants Wales to be the safest place to be a woman in Europe and to have a feminist government<sup>24</sup>, women's equality organisations need to have a strong and prosperous future.
- 7.4 Welsh Government budgets need to specifically recognise that EU funding has a direct focus on equalities and that much of the investment that Wales has received in recent times has specifically benefited women, therefore any preparations for Brexit need to factor in how changes to this funding will disproportionately affect people on the ground. Any future funding needs to continue the focus of previous EU funds on tackling poverty and inequality.
- 7.5 Brexit threatens to have a significant detrimental impact on women. EU law has safeguarded many rights of women and girls and the UK's withdrawal from the EU will remove these protections. We already know that Wales will be immediately affected by the withdrawal of European social funding and that women are often the ones who experience the disproportionate impact of cuts, loss of funding and gaps in services.<sup>25</sup> The likely damage to the UK and Welsh economies come in a climate of austerity measures, which have already had significant impacts on women in the UK, and even more so for BAME women.<sup>26</sup> Women have been largely excluded from the negotiation table, resulting in women's lived experiences and voices being ignored and overlooked.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>

<http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-Cymraeg-Final.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>

<http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-Cymraeg-Final.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/WWA-State-of-the-Sector-2017-ENG.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.welshlabour.wales/latest/2018/09/25/carwyn\\_jones\\_speech/](https://www.welshlabour.wales/latest/2018/09/25/carwyn_jones_speech/)

<sup>25</sup> The Fawcett Society, *Where's the Benefit? An Independent Inquiry into Women and Jobseeker's Allowance* 2015.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/PressReleases/Correct%20WBG%20report%20for%20Microsite.pdf>

- 7.6 No longer being a signatory to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights will create gaps in human rights protection.<sup>27</sup> For example the Charter includes ‘a free-standing right to non-discrimination, protection of a child’s best interests and the right to human dignity.’<sup>28</sup> It will also mean there is less power to protect women’s rights.
- 7.7 Losing the protection and arbitration of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) will mean an end to our current safeguards to equalities legislation. EU equalities legislation that has not been finalised or incorporated into UK law will be lost – for example the EU is currently considering new legislation that further protects parental leave, flexible working and breast feeding in work.<sup>29</sup> It will also limit our ability as a nation to stay at the forefront of global equalities legislation and policy as we will no longer be taking an active role to help shape EU equalities law and automatically incorporating this within UK law.
- 8. How the Welsh Government should use taxation and borrowing powers, particularly in relation to the Welsh Rate of Income Tax**
- 8.1 Tax systems and tax rules can have different impacts on women and men. So-called gender-neutral taxation – which appears to be the approach adopted by Welsh Government – can actually undermine women’s economic security. A deliberately progressive tax system can have a positive effect.<sup>30</sup>
- 8.2 New taxation powers to Wales mark a significant moment in devolution – this is an opportune moment for Welsh Government to develop tools for analysing the gender impact of taxation decisions and address shortfalls in the budget process. For example, Wales’ gender pay gap<sup>31</sup> affects part-time working women the most<sup>32</sup>, therefore an increase in taxation could have a detrimental effect on women barely making ends meet now. Gender budgeting is an effective tool that shows how decisions affect people differently and would enable Welsh Government to allocate resources more fairly and efficiently and advance gender equality.
- 8.3 Welsh Government states in its Tax Policy Framework<sup>33</sup> that it “will use the tax system to promote fairness and economic growth” and that Welsh taxes should “raise revenue to fund public services as fairly as possible.” This approach should be applied to all Welsh Government’s decisions about taxation and spending, not just its recently devolved powers to set some small new taxes and the limited Welsh income tax.
- 8.4 Impact assessments must be done to show how such a change would affect women, BAME people and disabled people before this power is used. Any use must lead to a fairer, more equal and more prosperous Wales with a focus on both short and long-term improvements felt across the whole country and throughout Welsh society.
- 9. How evidence is driving Welsh Government priority setting and budget allocations**

<sup>27</sup> Brexit and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights: Our Concerns, EHRC <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/what-are-human-rights/how-are-your-rights-protected/what-charter-fundamental-rights-european-union-0>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> Ensuring strong equalities legislation after the EU exit, Women and Equalities Committee, House of Commons, 2017 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/799/799.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>  
<http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-Cymraeg-Final.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> ONS ASHE 2017 provisional results / Welsh Government Priority Sector Statistics 2017

<sup>32</sup> Office for National Statistics, Annual survey of Hours and Earnings, 2017

<sup>33</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/employability-plan-progress-report-2018.pdf>

- 9.1 WEN Wales hopes that the evidence that has been collected as part of the Gender Equality Review Phase Two and both our Manifesto and Feminist Scorecard will be used to drive Welsh Government priorities in future budgets. For example, Welsh Government should ensure that Wales' local authorities publish their gender pay gap figures and report on the effectiveness of their plans to tackle the issue. We also hope that the Gender Equality Review reports will highlight gender data gaps in Wales, and that better data will be collected and acted upon as a result of the findings of the review.
- 9.2 The evidence gathered in Chwarae Teg's report *Triple Glazed Ceiling: Barriers to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Women participating in the economy*<sup>34</sup>, which highlights the huge lack of data on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women in Wales, should be a catalyst for Welsh Government action on correcting the BAME women data gap. The advancement of BAME women's rights in Wales can and then must be prioritised.
- 9.3 It is imperative that Welsh Government uses the wealth of evidence available to act quickly to safeguard gender equality good practice, particularly to safeguard women's rights as the UK exits the European Union.
- 9.4 While an Equality Impact Assessment of Welsh budgets is carried out annually, anecdotal evidence suggests this takes place at the end of the budget process to show compliance rather than at an early stage to inform decisions. This approach acts as a barrier to effective cross-government working on gender equality. A more proactive approach would be to outline how all Welsh Government spending is being used to advance equality and lead to equality of outcome.<sup>35</sup>

## 10. The Welsh Government policies to strengthen the economy and promote innovation

- 10.1 As stated above, Chwarae Teg's research published this year calculates that full gender equality could add £13.6bn to Welsh gross value added (GVA) forecasts for 2028.<sup>36</sup> Achieving gender equality, through budgetary decisions and strong gender-responsive policies makes economic sense, as well as being a moral and social issue. We encourage Welsh Government to enshrine the principles of the United Nations Convention on all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) into Welsh legislation to strengthen and safeguards its work in achieving gender equality, and a 'more equal Wales'.<sup>37</sup>

## 11. How the Future Generations Act is influencing policy making

- 11.1 While sympathetic to gender inequalities issues, WEN Wales is disappointed that the Future Generations Commission is not planning to scrutinise Welsh Government's budgets in the context of gender, as it does currently in three other specific areas. WEN Wales believes that this is a missed opportunity to do significant work towards using the ground-breaking Act to influence policy making so that Wales can achieve gender equality.
- 11.2 It is imperative that both the Equalities Act 2010 and the Future Generations Act, with its strong commitment to equalities – particularly in relation to the goal of 'A More Equal Wales' – work in conjunction with one another.

<sup>34</sup> [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/TGC-Barriers-to-BAME-Women\\_full-report.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/TGC-Barriers-to-BAME-Women_full-report.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> Cebr on behalf of Chwarae Teg The Economic Value of Gender Equality in Wales Nov 2018 (as seen in Chwarae Teg's 'State of the Nation 2019': [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019\\_english.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019_english.pdf))

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Wales-UN-CEDAW-shadow-report-UK-Jan-2019-WEN-Wales-1.pdf>



11.3 WEN Wales hopes that the new Integrated Impact Assessments from Welsh Government effectively consider women in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (including Goal 5: Gender Equality) and in relation to the Future Generations Act.

**12. In declaring a “climate emergency”, is it clear how the Welsh Government intends to respond and resource the challenge**

12.1 **‘Westminster will decide on the environment laws which will affect energy resources based in Wales. Welsh Government should be the one deciding, with their people’s and country’s interests at the heart of every decision.’** – WEN Wales member

12.2 WEN Wales supports Welsh Government’s declaration of a “climate emergency”. Climate change threatens everyone on the planet, but poses greater challenges for women, who make up the majority of the world’s poor.<sup>38</sup>

12.3 WEN Wales’s members responded to this question by stating that Welsh Government’s declaration of a “climate emergency” is only meaningful if appropriate measures are taken to address the problem, therefore the 2020-21 budget should explicitly reflect this. Even if Welsh Government is doing work that is driven by the climate emergency, it is not being communicated widely enough to reach WEN Wales’ membership of politically engaged individuals, beyond the high profile decision on the M4 relief road.

12.4 Welsh Government must ensure that targets in this area reflect the ambitions of Welsh legislation (namely the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015) and take account of the Paris Agreement commitments. Welsh Government must also place a duty on all ministers to make the changes necessary to meet targets. Ministers and staff must also understand and be guided by the global responsibility goal of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and understand the fact that climate impacts more strongly on women.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Scorecard-Report-2019-English-Final.pdf>

**WEN Wales Recommendations:**

1. Welsh Government should appoint a Cabinet Secretary for Women by 2021, with key responsibilities to ensure that women have an equal share of power at all levels of Welsh public and political life, including budgets.
2. All budgets across all departments should be created using gender budgeting techniques from the beginning of the process and data on the impact of the budget on women and men should be collated after each budget cycle to ensure equality of outcome.
3. Welsh Government to enshrine the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 'Istanbul Convention' into Welsh law to safeguard women's rights post-Brexit.
4. Improvements to impact assessments and practices must ensure that they are used consistently and are of an appropriately high standard.
5. Regarding Health, Welsh Government must invest in women's health as a whole so that girls and women have equal access to quality health services through the NHS Wales, as well as in women's reproductive health such as endometriosis and menopause, and invest in preventative and early intervention provisions for survivors of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
6. Future Generations Commission to scrutinise Welsh Government budgets in relation to gender equality and work in conjunction with the Equalities Act 2010.
7. Welsh Government to invest in long-term funding for the Welsh women's and equalities sectors.
8. Welsh Government to use evidence from the Gender Equality Review and WEN Wales' Manifesto and Feminist Scorecard to shape all future budgets and to commit through their budget to pushing forward women's equality in Wales.

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*WEN Wales would like to thank the Finance Committee of the National Assembly for Wales for the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry.*

*If you have any further comments or queries, please get in touch.*

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