



Australia Awards

# Embracing diversity in the Australia Awards program: a case study from South & West Asia

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# Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability

Promoting Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction

To achieve

Private sector development

Human development

We maximise impact by being innovative and leveraging knowledge and finance

Infrastructure, trade facilitation and international competitiveness

Agriculture, fisheries and water

Effective governance: policies, institutions and functioning economies

Education and health

Building resilience: humanitarian assistance, disaster risk reduction and social protection

Gender equality and empowering women and girls

We invest in

For each country, the balance of investments will be tailored to country context and reflect Australia's national interest



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability

Empowering women is one of the best ways to promote economic growth and to achieve peace and security.

Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Women's Day 2014

Disability-inclusive development is an issue of human rights and dignity, and an economic diplomacy challenge. If we fail to account for the needs of people with disability in our development program, we are undermining our efforts to drive participation and economic growth in our region.

Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Launch of Disability-Inclusive Development Strategy for Australia's aid program, 25 May 2015





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# Setting inclusion policy on Australia Awards



# Australia Awards

A whole of Australian Government initiative.

DFAT's Australia Awards program is Australia's largest aid investment - \$320 million in 2017-18.

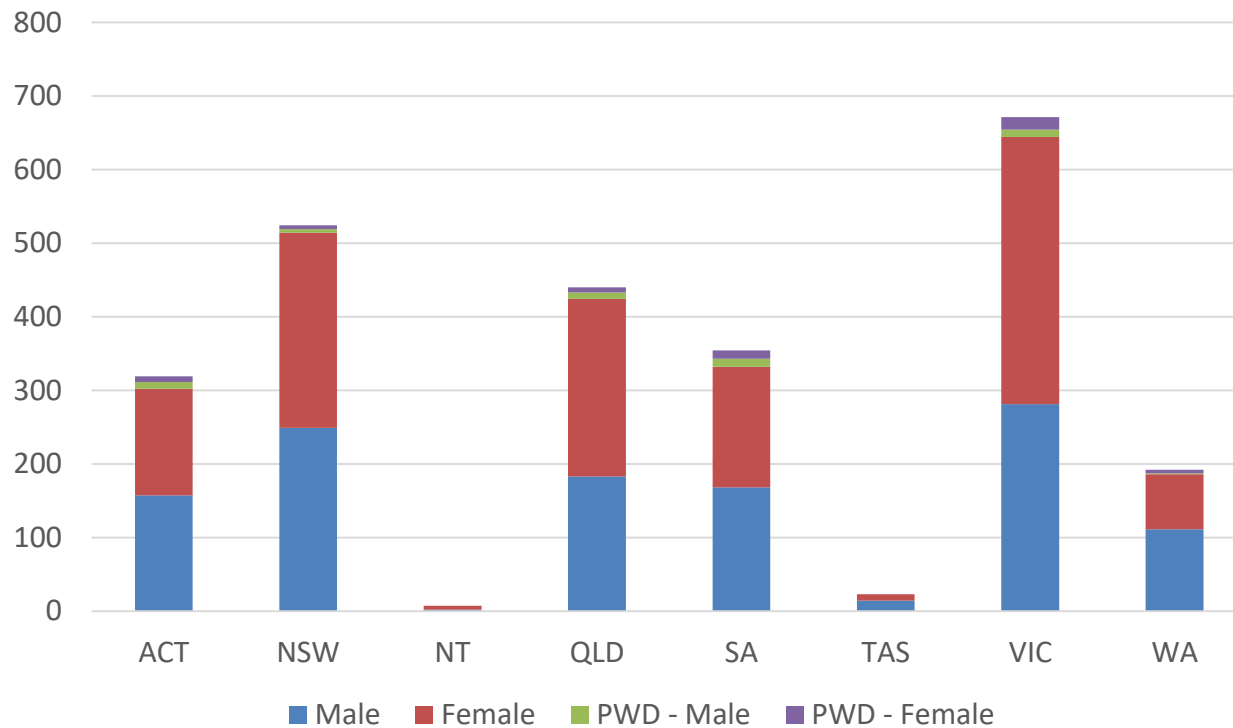
This includes 3 types of award:

- Scholarships
- Fellowships
- Short Courses



# Australia Awards Scholarships

Awardees on Scholarship in Australia



# Australia Awards and Women in Leadership

Office of Development Effectiveness released the *Evaluation of the contribution of Australia Awards to women's leadership* in 2015.

Found that Australia Awards Scholarships contribute strongly to women's professional advancement.

The scholarship experience can be particularly beneficial to:

- Women in the early stages of their career
- Women from countries/provinces where:
  - Women are under-represented in leadership
  - Women have limited opportunities for tertiary education
  - Women experience restrictive social and cultural norms





# Australia Awards Global Strategy

Released in 2016, the Global Strategy outlines why DFAT invests in Australia Awards.

Five Principles:

1. Alignment with Australia's development, economic and public diplomacy priorities
2. Equity of access
3. Merit-based selection
4. Value for money and evidence-based decision making
5. Promote the Australia Awards



## Principle 2 – Equity of Access

We will encourage equity of access at the promotion, application, on-award and post-award stages by:

- maintaining equal numbers of Awards for women and men
- ensuring Australia Awards opportunities are promoted widely
- designing appropriate interventions to address barriers to participation
- ensuring equitable access to on-award and alumni activities



# Disability Policy – 2017 Review

DFAT is mainstreaming disability support, whilst recognising that disability support must be tailored to the individual.

DFAT support is two-fold:

- Providing reasonable accommodation to allow awardees to participate in their academic studies on an equal basis.
- Enabling awardees to develop disability management skills, greater independence and personal empowerment.





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# Implementing the policy



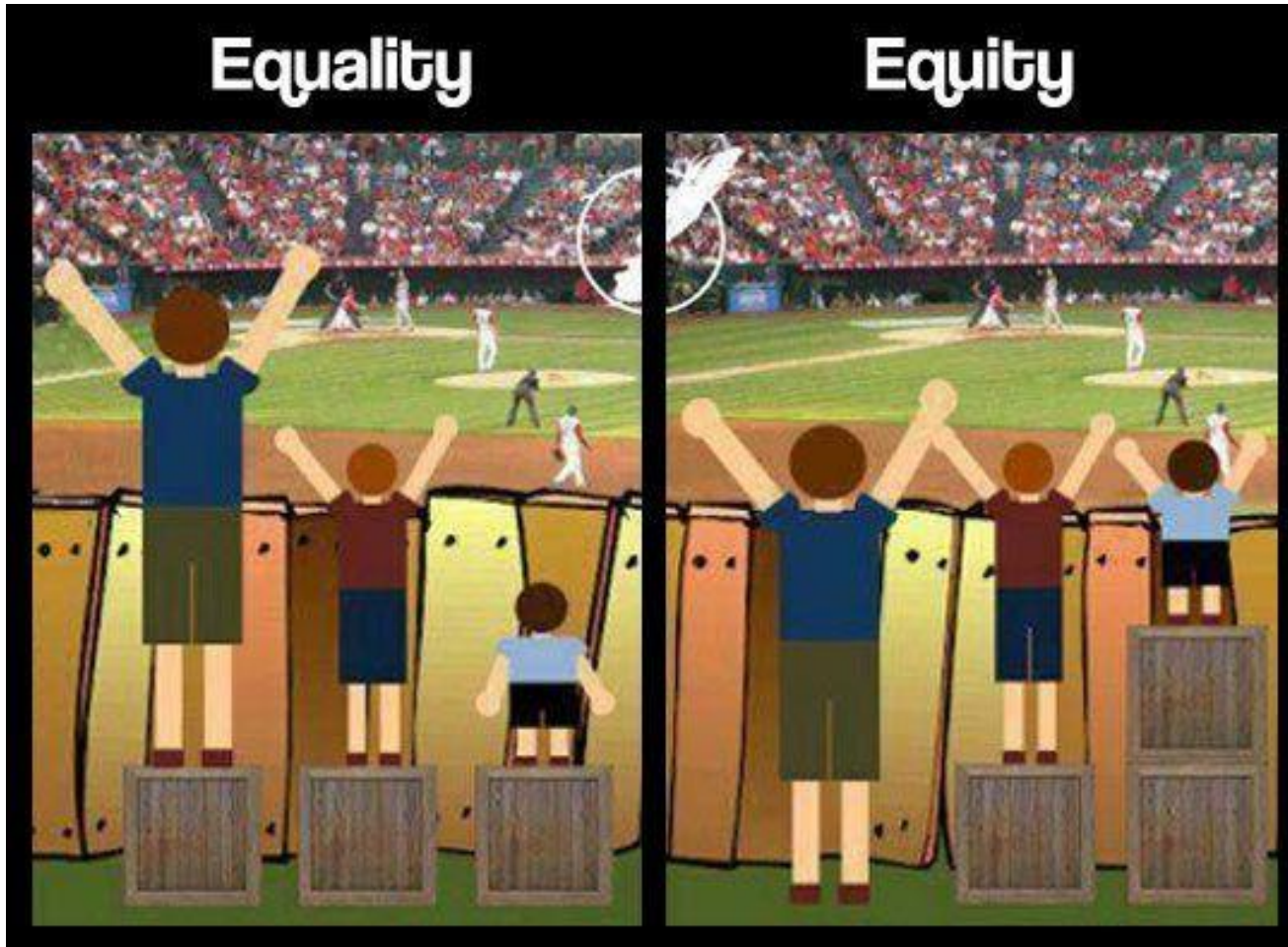
## Definition

“ Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity”

(World Bank 2017)



# Equality vs equity



# Dimensions of exclusion

- **Unequal power relations** → limited access to and participation in decision-making
- **Reduced access to resources** – informational, natural and financial
- **Limited economic, social and political participation**, reducing influence over/ contribution to community, family, workplace



# Dimensions of exclusion

- Gender
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Caste
- Tribe
- Location
- Religion
- Indigeneity
- Sexual orientation





# Regional challenges

- Lower literacy/education participation rates for women
- Under-representation of women in senior levels of workforce
- Women's situation deteriorating with insecurity/rise of religious fundamentalism
- Many people with disability denied educational opportunities
- Social exclusion entrenched, e.g. through caste systems



# Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy target outcomes

- Quality participants from excluded groups successfully participate in program
- Australia Awards alumni have improved knowledge and understanding of social inclusion that they apply in their professional/personal lives
- AASWA is recognised and respected for its high quality inclusive practice



## Scholarship communications

- Clear messaging (verbal, textual, visual)
- Inclusive language
- Accessible communications platforms
- Distribution of material through partners
- Audience-specific information sheets
- Engagement of alumni from target regions
- Program staff role models



# Scholarship selection processes

- Selection criteria anti-discriminatory
- Score adjustments at shortlisting stage for equity groups
- Shortlisting/interview panels briefed
- “Enabling” support may be offered
- Interview set-up appropriate
- Interviews probe commitment to social inclusion
- Selection remains merit-based  
(Do No Harm principle)



## Scholarship mobilisation

- Disability assessments undertaken and Support Agreements put in place
- “Reasonable adjustment” may include assistive devices/carer
- Adjustments to travel/accommodation made where necessary
- Pre-departure briefing provides information on Australian laws and norms regarding discrimination



## 2017 selection outcomes

- Gender-balanced participation from all six countries
- Across the region: 5% of awardees identified as having a disability
- Satisfactory level of regional and ethnic inclusion

However, Program-level outcomes indicate still much to do



## Short Courses

Many course topics support inclusion agenda:

- Inclusive Education (Nepal)
- Investigative Interviewing for Police Officers (Gender-based Violence) (Sri Lanka)
- Women in Policing (Pakistan)
- Women in Leadership (Bhutan)
- Women Trading Globally (Sri Lanka)

All courses are required to incorporate social inclusion elements in course content



# Launch of Women in Leadership Network





# Celebrating International Women's Day in Dhaka



# Regional Alumni Workshop on Inclusive Education



## For marketers: accessing Australia Awards

- Accessibility of campus/accommodation critical
- Accessible communications platforms
- Audience-specific info sheets/brochures
- Don't overlook local women's networks/DPOs/regions in outreach activities
- Share success stories of awardees/alumni!
- Note importance of social inclusion content in Short Course tenders
- Identify appropriate opportunities for Australia Awards Fellowships proposals





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# Australia Awards scholars' voices



# My personal experience

Then

Now

&

What  
Ahead?



# What does the data indicate ?

World Population : 7.442 billion<sup>1</sup>  
Male Population : 3.753 billion  
Female Population: 3.687 billion

**Represents half the world's population**

Total Illiterate Adults: 781 million<sup>2</sup>  
Illiterate Females: 496 million

**Two third of world's illiterate adults are women**

- [1https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL.MA.IN?end=2016&start=1960&view=chart](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL.MA.IN?end=2016&start=1960&view=chart)

- [2https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/oct/20](https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/oct/20)



# Women in leadership

ONLY

- 22% of all national parliamentarians
- 17% of government ministers
- 18% of top managers

<http://dfat.gov.au/aid/how-we-measure-performance/ode/Documents/building-womens-leadership-contributions-of-aus-awards.pdf>

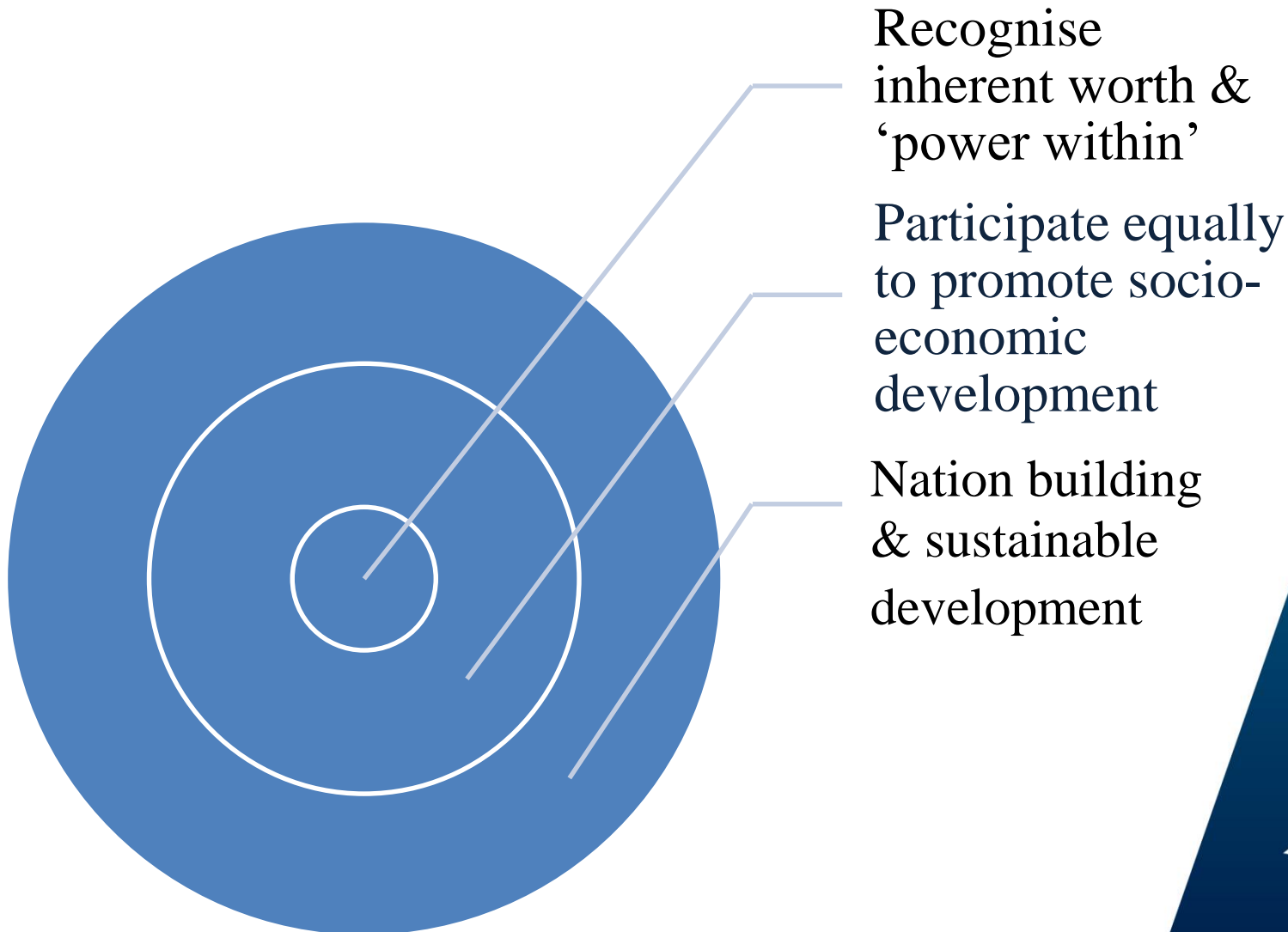
AND

“We cannot transform our world unless the place of women within it is transformed”

-Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia



# Women's empowerment... Why ?





# Contribution of Australia Awards

- ❑ Gender equality & women's empowerment in Australia's development policy
- ❑ Scholarships for tertiary & higher education of women
- ❑ Building women's leadership over 50 years

Through

Personal	Professional
Confidence Independence Open-mindedness	Higher employment chance Promotion on return New opportunities Increases remuneration



# Female alumni...role model & an inspiration

**Honourable Tashi Wangmo** – Member of Parliament and Chair, Good Governance Committee.  
Eminent appointee to National Council of Bhutan  
(University of Wollongong 1997)

**Honourable Dr. Savitree Thapa Gurung** –  
Honourable Commissioner, Commission for the  
Investigation of Abuse of Authority, Nepal  
(Murdoch University 2003)

**Nighat Siddique**-Additional Director-General,  
Election Commission of Pakistan  
(University of Melbourne 2012)



“To awaken the people it is women who must be awakened; once she is on move, the family moves, the village moves, & the nation moves”

-Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Former Indian Prime Minister

Thank You !!!

