

Media Release

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Housing shortage and climate events – cascading and gendered impacts that the federal budget can help fix

Australia's largest alliance of women's organisations, the Equality Rights Alliance (ERA), has called for a massive increase in funding for social housing in this month's federal budget as Australians increasingly feel the impacts of climate events.

"The devastating floods across southern Queensland and northern NSW further highlight the threats of climate change on communities already facing housing distress from years of insufficient investment in housing," said ERA Convenor, Helen Dalley-Fisher.

As International Women's Day events kick-off, ERA has sought to highlight the connected issues of housing and climate change. "Disasters exacerbate the housing affordability crisis and gender gap," Ms Dalley-Fisher said.

"Housing unaffordability and rental stress are well-documented problems in Australia. Homelessness services are stretched to their limits. The pandemic put further pressure on housing markets that were already unsustainable."

"Now we're seeing floods and fires destroy homes. Up to 15,000 homes have been affected by this week's flooding in Queensland and NSW. With an unaffordable housing market and public housing wait lists ballooning, where will those families go?"

"Climate change is a threat multiplier with implications for women and children especially."

"Rates of domestic violence also go up after disasters and we know from the pandemic and the Black Summer bushfires that crisis brings additional unpaid care work for women, limiting their financial ability to compete in unaffordable housing markets."

"Meanwhile, we have known for some time that older, single women are now Australia's fastest growing group experiencing homelessness because of compounding economic disadvantage over lifetimes," said Ms Dalley-Fisher.

"We urge the Commonwealth to meet its responsibility to low-income Australians with a new Social Housing Future Fund to increase supply of affordable housing."

“The fund should be part of a new National Housing and Homelessness Strategy that addresses these critical gaps in Australia’s adaptation plans around climate change.”

In its [budget submission](#) to the Federal Treasury, ERA also calls on the Commonwealth to fund the development of new National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework so Australia is better prepared for disasters and proactive about the needs of people at risk, particularly women and children.

ERA’s submission also asks for a review of JobTrainer to establish if women are benefitting from the COVID-related training and skills development program.

“From an economic security standpoint, we know that women were affected disproportionately by COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, with various factors combining to ensure that women were more likely to lose their jobs, more likely to do increased unpaid work, and less likely to get government support than men.”

ENDS

Find the full 19-page **submission** [here](#).

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Women’s Voices for Gender Equality

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