



2010 – National Year of Women in Local Government

YoWILG: What's in it for us?

www.lgwomen2010.org.au – for blogging, forum and updates

On 12 November 2009, WPILG Coalition's fourth Expert Forum focused on 2010 Year of Women in Local Government - what is being planned and ideas about how you can make something happen in your municipality; in your region; in your State.

The panel included:

Roni Beauchamp, National Director of Program Development LGMA (Local Government Managers Association), Secretariat for the National Year of Women in Local Government

Jenny Merkus: Director Social Development, City of Moreland and President LGCDSAA (Local Government Community Development and Services Association of Australia)

Mayor Lisa Price: City of Latrobe, part of the first Victorian Local Government region to adopt the Local Government Women's Charter.

Discussion was facilitated by WPILG Chair Councillor Beth Ripper and Roma O'Callaghan of LGPro and National Steering Committee of YoWILG.

Look out for the tick boxes below. Simply tick the box for what suits you, then make it happen or create your own opportunity to join us for the 2010 year.

The 2010 year belongs to us all.

The Year does not belong to either the LGMA Secretariat or the National Steering Committee, it belongs to us all. It will only happen if individual local governments participate and find opportunities to add the YoWiLG badge to their events and programs.



Become a 2010 partner: For more info about the campaign, and how local governments, community organizations, businesses and individuals can become bronze, silver or gold partners. Go to www.lgwomen2010.org.au for more details. It's easy and affordable.

“Its not just achieving 50:50 –it’s changing how we do business.”

“We need to change long established cultures: Awards, data and scholarships have their place but we need to change the culture so it is truly welcoming to both genders and different leadership styles.”

Check out Just Communities Project of the Local Government Community Development and Services Association of Australia (LGCDsAA). A national project with 14 local governments implementing “democracy for well being” , with women’s participation a core element: <http://www.clg.uts.edu.au/research/justcomm.html>

Keep gender equity on the agenda all the time - this is the way change occurs. “Make visible what’s already there...”

As soon as we let gender equity slip off the agenda, we go backwards. Keep verbalising the goal in different ways – ask for reports, refer to local government doing its business differently, use jokes. If necessary, put up with groans and have a plan in your collective minds about what you want to achieve. Work together with others, you can achieve a lot more...

Find different ways to give the message that your local government welcomes women's participation

Examples: *Victorian Local Government Women's Charter* worked effectively to gain commitment in six Gippsland local governments. *The Way Forward* worked well in City of Moreland.

Keep asking the questions; and keep learning the system so you can ask the right questions!

Example: "Having elected women really helped us, they asked 'how many women do organised sport?' This resulted in a report to council which recommended that leases for community sport clubs included the condition that they have junior teams, show effort to recruit girls and women as players. "

Men can be great allies.

It's not women against men,....its women and men..

Provocative questions arising from the forum:

What does under-representation have to do with women self-selecting out versus systemic barriers? (glass ceiling/sticky floor??).

Do women do leadership differently?

(Amanda Sinclair link <http://www.mbs.unimelb.edu.au/go/person/amanda-sinclair>

The final word:

Let's make 2010 about the partnership between women in political and community leadership and women employed in Local Government organisations and women citizens.

Background to LGPro - WPILG Coalition member

LGPro is the peak body for Local Government professionals in Victoria. It is part of the National Local Government Managers Association (LGMA) which is providing some secretariat support for the 2010 National Year of Women in Local Government.

www.lgpro.org.au

Enquiries about this e-bulletin and the work of the WPILG Coalition :

WPILG Coalition Secretariat **T:** 9349 7904 **E:** linda@vlga.org.au

W: www.women.vlga.org.au

Background documents and links:

[HERE for link to WPILGC webpage on VLGA's new website.](#)

[HERE for Victorian Local Government Women's Charter](#)

www.lgwomen2010.org.au

[HERE for Just Communities Project](#)

[HERE for The Way Forward](#)

(Amanda Sinclair link <http://www.mbs.unimelb.edu.au/go/person/amanda-sinclair>



See 21 Best Ideas for 2010 - following

21 Best Ideas for 2010



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Using a values approach to drive culture change – love of humanity, empathy, connection (“our secret weapons”)



Develop a living library to highlight women in non-traditional local government roles



Use local government women’s business networks to promote YoWiLG



Find experienced women mayors to mentor women mayoral candidates



Create internal leadership development networks within local governments



Create a weblink to the events calendar on the LGV website



Work regionally AND locally to expand Local government change.



Promote YoWiLG through regional community leadership programs (e.g. Alpine, LoddonMurray, etc.)












Re-badge existing programs to the 2010 Year by (see www.lgwomen2010.org.au)



Create leadership programs (local, regional and internal) to build better cultures for women.



Think “empowerment” as well as “leadership”.

-  **Get your local government to sign up to the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter, as all 6 Gippsland local governments have done.**
-  **Use City of Moreland's Statement of Commitment to Women as a template.**
-  **Use *The Way Forward* to bring the issues to the attention of Council and the Corporate management team.**
-  **Take opportunities that come along, e.g. if you run local Women's Awards, nominate one award winner to Victorian Women's Honour Roll.**
-  **Co-badge your events with the 2010 logo – take any opportunity such as IWD celebrations.**
-  **Arrange for some research – e.g. who applies for what jobs in your local government..**
-  **Make sure your policy tools are very public – women in community can then point to it and ask questions about how their Local government supports participation.**
-  **Use the arts to get your message out -performance, film, web, other mediums.**
-  Offer local government speakers to every Lions and Rotary – either women ambassadors or men champions



More ideas and current activities discussed at the Forum:

“Funny business” program –focus groups with women about their participation in Council; also a men’s group to estimate their views, finding out what people are thinking – an internal committee with a chair to identify women’s needs across Council with reps from across Council. Focus on participation rather than leadership – **Whittlesea**

Encourage./support more women to nominate for Mayoralty; provide prominent links to 2010 year and focus on the “how to” – **VLGA**

Using Women’s Charter as a tool to highlight and act on goals of 2010 year: apply for Awards, recruit Charter champions, badges, etc - **WPILG Coalition**

leadership development for women’s inclusion and promotion into leadership positions; practice family friendly polices – **Knox**

Women supporting women in the workforce : council initiated but also for women in community – lunches, forums, good representation from women at senior management level - **Baw Baw**:

Application for a Women in Leadership Grant to run a leadership program for 30 women from NE Councils for a 6-12 month period. – **Banyule**

A multicultural program for emerging leaders ; 50% are women - **Cardinia** contact Fiona Hodges f.hodges@cardinia.vic.gov.au)

END November 2009