



# Strategy

## 2024-2027



# Lighting a path forward for women impacted by domestic abuse.

## Acknowledgment of Country

The Zahra Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on across Australia and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We want to acknowledge First Nations Peoples' extraordinary cultural authority and their journey to healing and commit to continue learning from and including the voices of First Nations women and other survivors of violence and abuse. We support female, female-identifying and non-binary folk impacted and recovering from domestic abuse and are committed to helping people of all ethnicities, religions, ages, physical ability and the LGBTQ+ community. We acknowledge the voices of survivor advocates who have shared their experiences with us to ensure our programs are responsive to their needs.



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01

# The Zahra Foundation

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The Zahra Foundation supports women recovering from domestic abuse to build a more empowered life and gain financial independence.

## Our Values

### Hope

To instil hope and optimism in the lives of women and children.

### Partnerships

To build meaningful relationships and partnerships with stakeholders and community.

### Opportunities

To provide women and their children with a range of financial and educational opportunities.

### Empowerment

To deliver services that promote women's economic empowerment.



## Our Mission

**Every woman in Australia impacted by domestic abuse is economically empowered and safe.**

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# Strategic Narrative

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This narrative forms the foundation of our purpose, positioning and mission.



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Because</b>	women who have experienced domestic abuse can feel trapped in relationships without resources or financial capabilities to leave, or post separation the impacts of ongoing abuse and violence has limited their resources and capabilities to break the cycle of abuse and be safe and economically empowered.
<b>Strategic Response</b>	<b>We believe</b>	economically empowering women and providing trauma and violence-informed programs will give women the confidence and resources to permanently leave relationships that are characterised by domestic abuse and assist them to rebuild their lives after domestic abuse and be safe and economically empowered.
<b>Activities</b>	<b>So we deliver</b>	specialist trauma and violence-informed financial counselling (in person, via phone and virtually), empowerment group adult education programs, access to financial empowerment grants and other information, referrals, support and workshops that are delivered in a safe and supportive environment.
<b>Participants</b>	<b>To/for</b>	women and non-binary people in Australia who have been, or who are, impacted by and recovering from domestic abuse.
<b>Outputs</b>	<b>That results in</b>	participants (i) breaking free from isolation, (ii) developing their resources and capabilities for financial independence and (iii) reconnecting with their hopes, values and dreams (iv) creating pathways into education, training and/or employment (v) and being safe and economically empowered.
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>That results in</b>	participants leaving and not returning to violent and abusive relationships due to fear of falling into poverty or homelessness while also maintaining financial independence, economic empowerment and stability for themselves and their dependent children.
<b>Impact</b>	<b>And leads to</b>	women and their dependent children going on to live economically independent, empowered, safe and fulfilling lives.

# Strategic Pillars

The following strategic pillars are the key areas of focus and priorities for The Zahra Foundation to achieve its mission.





## Creating Safe & Economically Empowered Futures

We grow and develop our innovative trauma and violence-informed services, financial counselling and group education programs to empower women and non-binary people to rebuild their lives after leaving domestic abuse situations, via pathways into education, employment, training and build skills to work towards financial independence.

We will achieve this through:

- Sourcing funding to ensure women and non-binary folk recovering from abuse have access to our programs, when they want them and for as long as they require them.
- Co-designing our programs and services with people of lived experience to ensure we respond to the trauma of domestic abuse and improve resilience and self-esteem, while empowering women and non-binary people to fulfill their potential, and set plans for future education, training, employment and financial independence.
- Providing psycho-social education to ensure our participants can identify red flags and unhealthy relationships in the future.
- Developing our innovative service models and sharing best practice through partnerships and programs, and via collaboration with industry partners, government and philanthropy organisations.
- Developing volunteer engagement centered on lived experience, ongoing awareness and understanding of evolving types of domestic abuse and to provide direct support, opportunities and mentoring to women experiencing domestic abuse.
- Working with crisis industry partners to bolt on our services and programs to provide integrated and ongoing support post crisis and into recovery and healing.
- Ensuring our services are culturally responsive to priority groups, prioritising First Nations people, individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIA+ community members and individuals with disabilities, as well as both younger and older populations.
- Listening to, learning from, and centering the voices of lived experience in co-design of programs and services, policy and external collective impact projects.



## Creating Greater Access to Our Services

We work towards being able to provide access to women who require our services across Australia into our programs when they need them and for as long as they need them.

We will achieve this through:

- Starting from our foundation in South Australia, we actively seek opportunities to expand the availability of our programs and services to all states and jurisdictions across Australia.
- Collaborating closely with industry partners, we deliver our programs in a co-location and co-design model ensuring integrated support from crisis to recovery.
- We implement a work-from-home model allowing us to facilitate the expansion of programs and services nationwide and expanding without the constraints of physical presence.
- Harnessing contemporary practices and cutting-edge technologies, we explore digital programs and virtual access options, enhancing our reach and impact to people in rural and remote areas.
- Conducting thorough research into needs and gaps within diverse geographical locations ensuring that our programs and services remain accessible to those who need them the most.
- Employing digital marketing, strategic campaigns and thought leadership, we promote and expand our programs and services, while raising awareness of the need for recovery and healing programs focused on financial abuse and economic empowerment for women and non-binary people impacted by domestic abuse.

# Creating Change Through Collective Impact

The Zahra Foundation will continue to enhance our collective impact model nationwide via collaboration and partnership with organisations that are aligned with our strategy and mission. This will pool resources and expertise to deliver integrated services for people impacted by domestic abuse, from crisis support to recovery and healing. Within our collective impact model we will co-locate our programs and services, work on collaborative projects and initiatives, host changemaker events and utilise campaigns, advocacy and government submissions to influence policy makers, community and corporate organisations.

We will achieve this through:

- Enhancing existing domestic abuse services through collaborative projects and joint service delivery nationwide.
- Co-locating our programs and services with industry partners to maximize impact.
- Leveraging partnerships to raise awareness and educate corporations, government entities, community organisations, and individuals.
- Roll out Change-maker events nationwide to educate the community and drive attitude and values change.
- Engaging with philanthropy, corporations, government, community services, and industry partners on collective impact initiatives.
- Utilising campaigns, advocacy, digital marketing, and policy influence to achieve working towards an Australia where women and non-binary people impacted by domestic abuse are economically empowered and safe.

# Creating Opportunity

We are an employer of choice, with a focus on creating opportunities for those facing barriers to employment to join our team.

We will achieve this through:

- Ongoing development of our team as professional specialised trauma and violence-informed domestic abuse workers with 100% of frontline staff holding accredited specialist DFV qualifications.
- Clinical supervision to ensure our staff have quality access to professional growth development and guidance rooted in our values, emphasising innovation and collaboration and client-centered practice.
- We will ensure we foster an environment that embraces diversity, equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism.
- We will actively break down barriers for employment for single working mothers, carers, and people living in regional and remote areas through hybrid work arrangements and flexible time agreements.
- We will value, nurture, and empower staff and volunteers as leaders, advocates and drivers of change, supporting the delivery of our mission.

# Theory of Change

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The following theory of change identifies the bench-mark long-term and short-term outcomes for participants through the activities provided at The Zahra Foundation. This leads to better planning, in that activities are linked to a detailed understanding of how change actually happens. It also leads to better evaluation, as it is possible to measure progress towards the achievement of longer-term goals that goes beyond the identification of program outputs.



# Intended Impact:

Women impacted by or recovering from domestic abuse are economically empowered and safe.

## Long-Term Outcomes *Women impacted by or recovering from domestic abuse...*

### Safety

Maintain a place to live that is safe, stable and affordable.

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Do not return to unsafe relationships due to fear of poverty or homelessness.

### Empowerment

Have greater financial and economic stability and independence.

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Implement coping and safety strategies.

### Recovery & Prevention

Move forward with healthy relationships.

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Dependent children are in a thriving and safe environment.

## Short-Term Outcomes *Women impacted by or recovering from domestic abuse...*

Have access to financial resources.  
 Receive legal representation.  
 Are provided grants.  
 Maintain primary care of their children.  
 Can identify strategies to enhance safety.  
 Have knowledge about the justice process.  
 Can identify their needs.

Feel more hopeful and less isolated.  
 Have an awareness of how the abuse has impacted their lives and their children's lives.  
 Have awareness of how trauma affects their life.  
 Are connected to employment, education and training opportunities.  
 Can identify coping skills.  
 Have a plan for the future.  
 Have increased life skills.

Can articulate their values and behaviors associated with healthy relationships.  
 Can identify red flags in unhealthy relationships.  
 Have knowledge, resources and strategies to support on going recovery.  
 Have increased money management skills.  
 Understand boundaries and have confidence in asserting them.  
 Are connected to community.

## Activities

Financial Counselling	Psychosocial Education	Planning for Employment, Education, Training
Information and Referral	Financial Literacy Workshops	Community Education and Awareness
Group Adult Education Program	Safety Planning	
Grant Administration	Advocacy	

# Priority Impact Areas

Our impact areas alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).



Sourced from United Nations: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

The Zahra Foundation's priority impact areas align with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's):



**No Poverty - end poverty in all its forms, everywhere. Domestic abuse is the leading cause of homelessness in Australia.**

Our programs, services, education and grants promote economic wellbeing and financially empower participants to build a life that is free from poverty and abuse. We work towards reducing the risk of entering into poverty after escaping domestic abuse.



**Gender Equality - achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**

The Zahra Foundation programs and services are underpinned by the value of empowerment to advance gender equality. Gendered violence is a by-product of structural inequities that advance males and oppress women and girls. Creating a society which has more justice, and is equal, is the only way to end violence against women and girls in our communities.



**Reduce Inequalities - aims at reducing inequality within and among countries.**

This SDG calls for reducing inequalities in income as well as those based on age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status within a country. The Zahra Foundation program promotes and creates gender equality and equal access to employment, income and education opportunities.

