GLOBAL SISTERS **BACK HER BRILLIANCE**

Domestic Violence & Women's Financial Independence

November 2020

The Issue

Financial independence is a critical factor for women to get out, and stay out of domestic violence and abuse.

Financial abuse is defined as controlling a victim's ability to acquire, use and maintain financial resources. It is where someone takes away their access to money, manipulates their financial decisions, or uses their money without consent. Financial abuse is a type of family violence. It often happens alongside other types of violence, such as physical or emotional abuse (Moneysmart).

> **"Financial issues, including the prospect of leaving property or assets behind, are major factors in women's decisions about leaving or staying in violent relationships, and the economic difficulties arising from violence, including loss of wealth upon separation, reverberate through women's lives and increase hardship in the long-term[1]."**
>
> ANROWS

There are a lack of jobs for women that provide sufficient income and flexibility for child care responsibilities. The economic downturn from COVID has only increased this job shortage for women and exposed structural issues around women's economic participation (National Foundation for Australian Women). There is a need for alternative income sources for women, and micro business should be one of those alternatives.

Flexible income generation, and connection to a supportive community, are vital for women to build the confidence and resources to escape domestic violence. Building economic security is key to staying out of domestic violence.

The majority of interventions in Australia focus on financial counselling and capability, which is of course needed to protect access and management of their income, but does not address earning an income.

[1] Cortis, N., & Bullen, J. (2016). Domestic violence and women's economic security: Building Australia's capacity for prevention and redress: Final report (ANROWS Horizons, 05/2016). Sydney: ANROWS.

Financial Independence

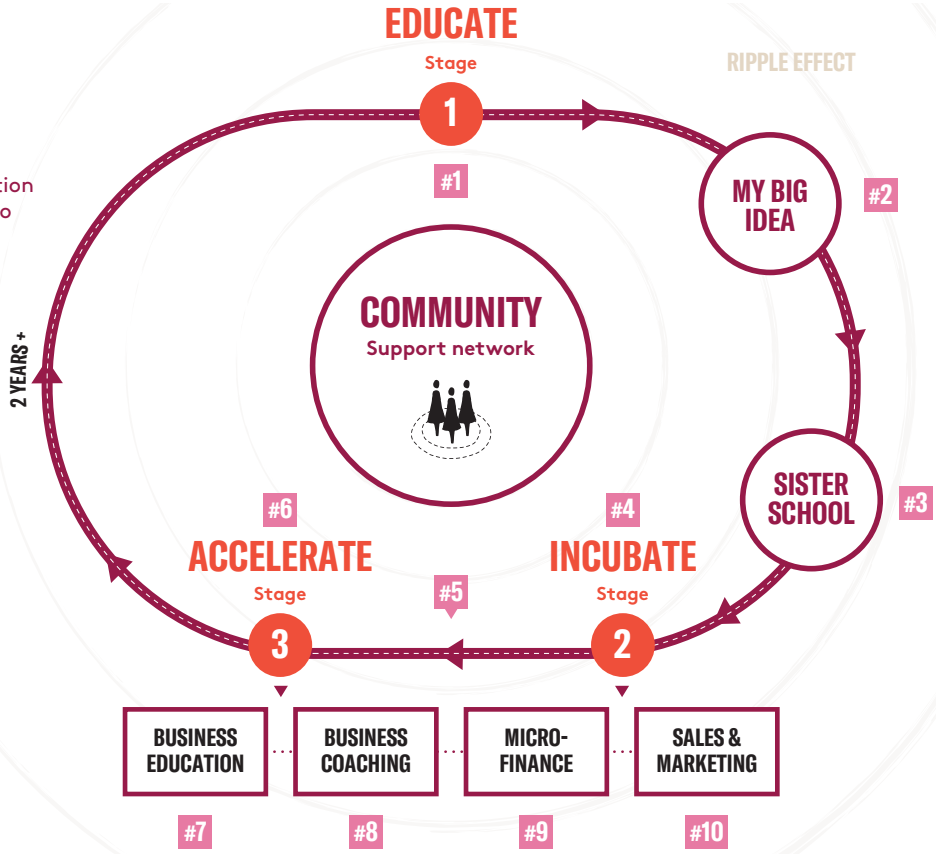
How Global Sisters supports women who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence to become financially independent

Global Sisters focuses on supporting women to earn a flexible income, and connecting them to a supportive community that builds their confidence and resilience. By making business a genuine possibility and supporting women into sustainable self-employment, Global Sisters is playing a vital role to get women out of domestic violence, and stay out.

Global Sisters provides women with a "roadmap" of long term support to help them ideate, launch and grow a sustainable business. The ways that we specifically support women that may have experienced domestic violence to get out and stay out are shown on the diagram below:

Global Sisters Roadmap

Long term business incubation and development support to improve women's financial independence



TOUCHPOINTS

#1 Entry into the **Global Sisters Community**, that exists to #BackHerBrilliance. The Community is about connection and confidence building, both of which are critical for women to escape DV.

#2 **Educate 1:** My Big Idea workshop is available to ANY woman, ANYTIME and ANYWHERE in Australia. Importantly, it can be done online, and helps her to identify how she will earn an income (whether that be business or via a job). This first step to becoming financially independent is just as much about building confidence as it is about the actual business idea or job identified.

#3 **Educate 2:** Sister School is our foundational business education program and can be accessed either face-to-face or online. Both formats are facilitated and place value on community and connection as they move their business idea forward, from concept to set up stage. Sister School includes money mindset and financial foundations, which exposes any financial control they may be experiencing in DV relationships.

#4 **Incubate** support includes our First 10 Customers Program, which is facilitated 1:1 by a "Momentum Coach". A term of 1:1 coaching provides the support, mindset and motivation to launch the business and start generating an income. This is not a counseling program but enables women to take the practical steps to start generating an income, which in turn boosts their confidence and self-belief.

#5 **Business Viability Check** supports Sisters to assess the financial viability of their business model before moving to Accelerate stage.

#6 **Accelerate** support includes "Industry Circles" where Sisters are connected to expert support and a group of peers in the same industry or sector. Sisters learn from each other and industry experts to overcome barriers to business and income growth.

#7 **Financial Education** continues via regular Business Meet Ups, online business education and Q&A sessions and access to content in our digital Knowledge Centre.

#8 **Business Coaching** includes pro bono consulting to Sisters in the Accelerate phase.

#9 **Microfinance** includes access to our Start-Up Purse and Growth Wallet business loans and micro business insurance via Suncorp/AAMI.

#10 **Sales & Marketing** program is an online shop and digital marketing in the Global Sisters Marketplace. On-boarding includes pricing, sales, digital payments and bank accounts.

When women have increased financial independence, confidence and self-belief, they are in turn in a better position to leave DV situations, and stay out of them. As of Q4 2020, Global Sisters had the following impact:

3975

Women Supported

3226

Future Income Ideation

787

Businesses Planned

609

Businesses Supported

$2.2M+

External Support Facilitated

We aim to reach 40,000 women over 5 years and create over 17,000 new businesses. Ultimately we want to see women improve their financial wellbeing so they have economic security now and into the future. This means not only increasing their income but securing assets for the future such as superannuation, savings and housing.

Sister Impact

Global Sisters does not ask Sisters to report experiences of DV in our formal impact data collection, however through the course of supporting women, many have disclosed how DV has affected their life and how Global Sisters is helping them to be financially independent and live free of violence.

Sister from Regional VIC

"Annie" is an Indigenous woman who grew up living with violence, fear & believing her only future was prostitution. Much of her life was spent being controlled financially & psychologically. Annie took back control of her life & "reset at 50" putting her talents to a skincare products business.

> **"I am starting to find out what I want life to look like...Through Global Sisters, I am starting to make sense of things. I have made new friends & I am starting a business, a dream of mine...where I can help others like myself."**

Annie is currently filling custom orders for two luxury Australian brands, one of them an international business.

Cindy B from QLD

Cindy is the founder of Lil Bug Love, an inspiring social enterprise set up to create comfort kits for kids whose mother/caregiver is escaping domestic violence. Cindy found herself in a relationship that quickly turned to domestic violence. After escaping she was determined something good would come out of the trauma her daughter and her experienced. Global Sisters support has included business education, coaching & a fundraising initiative via a team member raising $70k+.

An, QLD

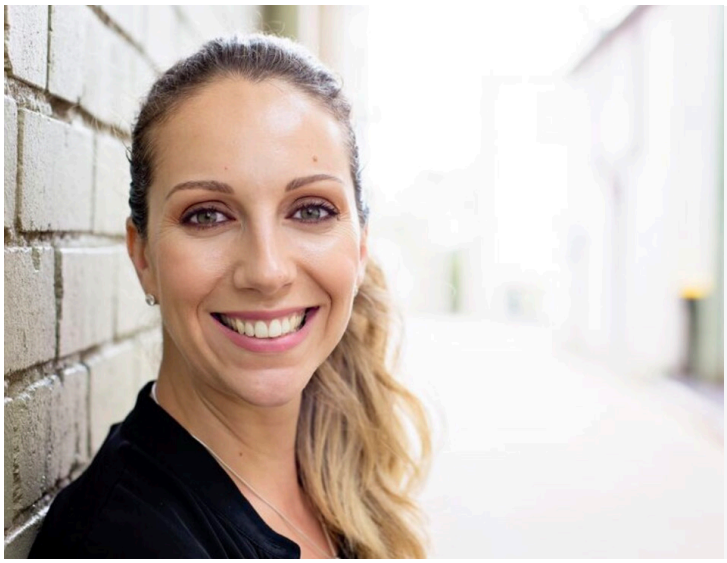
An was raised by refugee parents & cultural pressures where a wife never leaves her husband. Trapped in a marriage where all finances were controlled by her ice addict husband, she escaped and moved 2 states with her two young daughters after their lives were threatened. An has found hope, confidence & inspiration in starting a gifting business, while working to support her girls & get on top of the financial debts her husband accrued in her name. An pitched in Sister Pitch 2018 receiving seed funding & support from Pandora.

"being a part of our Sister Community was life changing"

Sister from the ACT

"Ruth" is a woman over 50 and lived in a marriage of domestic violence for twenty years which she escaped after raising her children but is now plagued by debilitating health issues. Her passion for art and unlocking the potential of others by connection culminated in a wish to start a business. Ruth completed My Big Idea and Sister School, saying she "died and went to heaven" when she found Global Sisters.

Amy, founder of Zen Tea Lounge
Zen Tea Lounge exists to support socially and economically vulnerable women into employment and build their confidence.



Nina from Sydney, NSW

Nina migrated to Australia from Serbia with her husband who had family here. Isolated she found herself trapped in a marriage of domestic violence. After finally escaping to a refuge where she lived for 6 months, Nina followed her passion for beauty and took a course with the dream of starting a business providing hair and makeup services. She joined Global Sisters who supported her in setting up the foundations for her own business, provided a community and also assisted her in obtaining employment.

Sister from SW Sydney, NSW

"Sally" was in a violent, controlling marriage from age 15 until 30. She believed she was not worthy of having money & could never support her children. A natural entrepreneur, Sally joined Global Sisters to launch her business. Passionate about caring for her own children & providing a supportive workplace for new mums, Sally made the most of her love for baking, launching a successful business. Sally is now financially independent and safe.

"Global Sisters played a very big part in changing my mindset and helping me to accept my worth"

Cindy C from SW Sydney, NSW

Cindy's childhood was as a Cambodian refugee in camps on the Thai border. Living in Australia in her early 20's, uneducated & tied to cultural norms she escaped from one marriage & then more recently a second, both where DV prevailed. Determined to help other Khmer women in her situation she started a Cambodian catering social business. Cindy has been supported to be awarded an AMP Tomorrow Maker & participated in Sister Pitch 2018 receiving $120k of support from Clemenger.

"Global Sisters have given me a voice... it is like a family"

Cindy, founder of AMOK Sisters
AMOK Sisters exists to support Cambodian women in Australia to be financially independent.