



United Nations Association of Australia WA Division



UN Matters

April 2025 – July 2025



*SDG Forum on Gross Happiness Index at EY
Perth*

*Young Women's Leadership Program
hosted with St. Hilda's and the
UNAAWA*

*UNAAWA President, Chair of ASEAN Business
Alliance, and members of consular
corps at the ASEAN Day celebration*

Inside This Issue:

From the President	2
SDG Forum	3
ANZAC Day 2025	4
Gender Equality Committee	5
International Art Exhibition	6
Young Professionals Committee	7
Community Partners	9
Special Editorial	12
Members' Corner	16
UN Observances	18
Upcoming Events	19



Chief Editor: Amorith Tan

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From the President

In this mid-2025 period, the UNAAWA continues with expanding its engagement through its committees continuing their efforts to develop bonds, foster long-term relationships, and work towards raising the profile of the good work done in Western Australia in line with the UN Goals.

These efforts are the basis for mutual respect and understanding that we work very hard to build. As I always emphasise, we share far more in common than what divides us.

The SDG Committee ran an event in June on Gross National Happiness & Future of Sustainable Development, with another upcoming event on Stronger Together: Connecting & Belonging Through Sports. Similarly, the Environment Committee is progressing towards an event on Sustainable Cities and the Circular Economy in September, as are the Gender Equality Committee and Human Rights Committee for an event on domestic violence. While seemingly unrelated topics, these all are very much interconnected to our sense of community, belonging, well-being and happiness, which are qualities the UNAAWA seeks to build towards.

On Saturday 2 August, I was very proud to have received, on behalf of the UNAAWA, the Innovation & Education Support Award from AICODE Australia, which recognised our support for the 2025 RoboPro Australia Youth Drone Tournament and our commitment to advancing STEM Education. This encouragement of STEM education, especially for young women, is an important platform that the Gender Equality Committee has dedicated much effort to, which we are all very proud of.

On behalf of the UNAAWA, I also attended the ASEAN Business Association (“ABA”) event on 6 August to celebrate ASEAN Day. This event was attended by the WA Premier the Honourable Roger Cook, as well as Sally

Dawkins, Head of DFAT WA, mayors, members of local government and members of the consular corp. The UNAAWA seeks to encourage multilateralism as well as better international trade and relations. Links were made with, amongst others, the Consuls and consular officials which I will follow up on to work together. I was very proud to witness the ABA Chairperson Dr Sandy Chong (our immediate Past President) and Lucia Chen (our Vice-President for Strategy) playing important roles.

The UNAAWA seeks to encourage multilateralism and better relations for the greater good for society. This altruistic goal is what drives our volunteers, of whom I am very proud of their efforts and commitment. This altruistic volunteer ethic is the spirit the UNAAWA - to Inform, Inspire and Engage!

Randhir Amoganathan
President of the UNAAWA



SDG Forum – Shifting the Metrics of Progress: Gross National Happiness Sparks Dialogue at EY Perth

Over 100 changemakers, students, public servants, and professionals gathered at the EY office in Perth on June 6 for an evening of critical reflection and inspiration at *Gross National Happiness vs GDP: Rethinking Our Future*. Co-hosted by the United Nations Association of Australia WA Division (UNAAWA) and EY Perth, the event explored alternatives to conventional economic measures, highlighting Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index as a visionary model.

The evening opened with a stirring address from **Jamyang Jamtsho Wangchuk**, Bhutanese filmmaker and environmental advocate, who shared his unique campaign, *The Messenger – Ride for Action!* By carrying Himalayan glacial meltwater in a discarded plastic bottle across Bhutan, Nepal, and India, Jamyang illustrated the urgent threat of climate change.

"A quarter of humanity depends on these glaciers," he said. "But GDP fails to capture their loss. Bhutan's Gross National Happiness offers a holistic vision of progress aligned with nature and community well-being."



Renowned panellists expanded on this theme:

Professor Fiona Stanley AC FAA FASSA FAHMS, UNICEF Ambassador and epidemiologist, challenged the dominance of GDP, describing it as "a measure that counts everything—except that which makes life worthwhile." She underscored the importance of Indigenous knowledge and social equity in creating policies that support intergenerational well-being.

Dr Deki Choden, Lecturer at Edith Cowan University and former Bhutanese banker, brought insights from Bhutan's values-driven approach, emphasizing the integration of sustainability and community vitality in leadership and corporate social responsibility.

Bill Scanlan, Partner at EY Perth, reflected on the need for political courage to embed well-being, inclusion, and sustainability into infrastructure and investment frameworks, moving beyond narrow financial calculations.

Richard McKenzie, Head of ESG and Investor Relations at Western Australian Treasury Corporation, discussed the rise of ESG metrics in finance and the challenge of promoting credible green bonds in a resource-driven economy like Western Australia.

The panel was moderated by **Dr Sandy Chong**, a member of the World Economic Forum Expert Network, Founding Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Goals Forum series in WA, and Principal of Verity Consulting. Dr Chong guided an engaging and thought-provoking dialogue on how public sector innovation can reduce inequality, build resilient infrastructure, and foster sustainable economic growth aligned with the SDGs.

Audience members also participated in an interactive quiz on happiness metrics and heard a heartfelt letter from 12-year-old Bhutanese student imploring world leaders to act on climate change.

“You’ve made the Earth sick through thoughtless actions. We are the ones who will live with the consequences,” the letter stated poignantly.

Despite sharp critiques of GDP and governmental inertia, the atmosphere was hopeful. Professor Stanley reminded attendees,

“It takes leadership and vision—but also community conversations. Ask people what they value for their children.”

The forum closed with a clear message: redefining progress to include happiness, equity, sustainability, and collective well-being is not only possible—it is imperative.



ANZAC Day 2025 Memorial Commemoration Services Bunbury



Once again, I had the privilege of continuing as an honorary RSL inductee member to attend ANZAC Day memorial services and wreath-laying ceremonies, representing UNAABA in my hometown, the City of Bunbury. As we come together in solemn remembrance to commemorate the 110th anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli, we honour those who have dedicated their lives in service to defending our nation and the freedom and way of life we share today, as well as those providing essential support to communities and families of veterans.

To recapture that — this day in history 110 years ago:

In late 1914, over 41,000 Australian and New Zealand troops, in two large marine convoys of 50 vessels, departed from a small piece of paradise on the Albany coast in South West Western Australia, steaming toward their destination: the First World War (WWI). For many of these young men and women, this would be the last time they saw Australian soil... What would they have been thinking, looking back at the diminishing coastline of King George Sound?

This sacred ANZAC Day is a commemoration of the 110th anniversary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand troops at Gallipoli, Turkey, on 25 April 1915.

My earlier 2022 poignant RSL Guest of Honour address, delivered on behalf of UNAABA, is appended for reflection on the supreme valour and honour of all our ANZAC servicemen and women.

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As I also reflect with somber sadness on the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, especially in regard to my colleagues who were called to Vietnam — some never came home. It is globally, supremely evident: the world's call for peace has never been greater. We must commit to advancing the essence of global peace.

Lastly, and historically, the record numbers of Australians of all ages who attended national, state, and regional memorial services are to be commended for honouring and continuing the flame of eternal remembrance.

There is no greater call for peace in today's world order.

Lest we forget.



Joseph A Caruso
UNAAWA Global Representative

Gender Equality Committee – Reflections on the Young Women Leadership Program (Metropolitan)

What an incredible two days it has been for the Young Women Leadership Program (Metropolitan), proudly hosted by the UNAAWA Gender Equality Committee. As the newly appointed convenor of this committee, I feel deeply privileged to witness the unfolding of this meaningful program—one shaped not only by hard work but by heart, vision, and a shared purpose.



A few months ago, I stepped into this role with the hope of gathering a group of women whose stories, values, and passions I knew could shape something special. And they did. Each committee member

brought her own spark—an idea, an energy, a perspective—that made this program more than just an event; it became a platform for possibility.

The program opened with a series of remarkable women leaders whose words stayed with us long after they left the room. On day one, Lorna Clarke MLA urged our participants to aim high, especially when the world doubts their capability. Dr. Sandy Chong spoke of standing firm in one's values as a compass for life and leadership. Janie Plant reminded us that leadership is not a title but the impact we have on how others feel. Tanya Hallett emphasized the quiet power of active listening in building empathy and connection. Myriam Baghnaoui explored the balance between resilience and mental strength—how important it is to check in with ourselves and manage our emotional wellbeing. Lien Duong highlighted the life-changing importance of financial literacy for women's independence and freedom. Kate Kirwin invited everyone

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to find fun in technology and not to fear trying. Roslyn London pointed out that STEM skills are timeless tools, and Madelene Kawitzki encouraged young women to follow pathways that build valuable life skills.

Day two brought fresh wisdom from new voices. Sid-dier Chambers reminded us of the hard-won rights and privileges we enjoy—and how small, daily actions can make a difference. Cema Athayde Santos shared the mindset of treating life itself as a career—one shaped by action and authenticity. John Chappell taught the power of simplicity and repetition in mastering skills. Mahbuba Afrin shared insights on how to use AI responsibly. We also heard rich perspectives on sustainability and youth leadership in the net-zero era from Dr. Silvia Lozeva, Louise Tomlin, Olivia Pinto, and Sophie Tse. Finally, Fiona Johnston GAICD spoke about learning from role models with open eyes and ears—because leadership changes with every stage of life.

Behind this program stood the quiet but unwavering support of our partners and sponsors. The Department of Communities WA, St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls, Curtin Faculty of Business and Law, and Curtin Photography Club made this vision possible. Without their generosity and belief in gender equality and youth empowerment, none of this could have happened.

And of course, I must thank my extraordinary colleagues on the UNAAWA Executive – Randhir Amoganthan, Dr. Sandy Chong, Amanda Cumberbatch, Melanye Wawrik, Lucia Chen – and every member of the Gender Equality Committee: Lien Duong, Anita Cheng, Katherine Zhao, Eleanor Cork, Myriam Baghnaoui, Tanya Hallett, and Madalena Sande Lemos. Each of you made this program shine.

This is only the beginning. As we celebrate this moment, we also look forward—with respect for the past, presence in the moment, and hope for the future.

Boordawan.



Dr Shuang Li
Gender Equality Committee Convenor

Nature's Symphony – International Art Exhibition



Co-organised by UNAAWA, The Lantern Collective, and WA Zhejiang Association, the international art exhibition Nature's Symphony was held from 15th - 18th May at Perth Town Hall.

The exhibition celebrated cultural diversity, sustainability, and international collaboration through the universal language of art — bringing together artists and communities from Australia, China, and beyond.

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Two interactive workshops explored leadership, creativity, and cross-cultural exchange, adding depth to this meaningful initiative.

Thank you to all partners, volunteers, and supporters who helped make this event a success!



Lucia Chen
UN Day Chair



Pathways to Global Impact: Inspiring Careers in the UN and Public Sector

Curtin University came alive last week as around 120 students and early-career professionals gathered for Pathways to Global Impact: Careers in the UN and Public Sector, hosted by the United Nations Association of Australia WA Division (UNAAWA): Young Professionals Committee in collaboration with Recruit Curtin for Curtin University's Jobs and Employability Week.

The event featured two powerhouse speakers: Christine Tonkin, former United Nations (UN) International Civil Servant in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and former Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Western Australian (WA) Parliament; and Sally Dawkins, WA State Director for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Drawing from extensive global experience in peace-keeping missions, diplomatic service, and government leadership, both speakers provided attendees with

candid insights into the opportunities and challenges of working in the United Nations system and the Australian public sector.



The event aimed to inspire the next generation of global leaders by highlighting meaningful career pathways and the impact of public service at both international and national levels.

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Voices from the Field

Christine Tonkin shared powerful reflections from her time supporting democratic elections in Afghanistan following the fall of the Taliban, and her role in Darfur navigating complex peace negotiations with the Sudanese government.

“Education for girls is absolutely crucial,” Tonkin told the audience. “With an education, they are more likely to contribute to their country’s development, and less likely to be trapped in cycles of poverty.”

Sally Dawkins highlighted the extraordinary story of Dr Barry Kirby AO, an Australian carpenter who, after witnessing the preventable death of a woman during childbirth in Papua New Guinea, retrained as a doctor. He now flies a seaplane across the country, delivering essential maternal and neonatal care to remote communities.

“We talk a lot about institutions and systems,” Dawkins said, “but ultimately, we all need to look for ways we can personally make a difference.”

Lessons for Changemakers

Beyond their personal stories, the speakers offered practical advice for those aspiring to build meaningful global careers:

- **Follow your passion**, rather than chasing titles.
- **Invest in relationships** - mentors and colleagues can open unexpected doors.
- **Be flexible and open** to opportunities that come in disguise.

- In a world rapidly shaped by artificial intelligence, young people must **read and write extensively** to build critical thinking and communication skills — not just rely on technology.

“Opportunities often come in disguise - be open to saying yes,” Dawkins encouraged the audience.

The discussion also delved into pressing global challenges, including climate change, gender equality, and the urgent need for reform within the multilateral system.

Tonkin acknowledged the limitations of international institutions but reaffirmed their importance: the UN, despite its imperfections, remains “the only effective mechanism to bring nations together on the toughest issues.”



Angelica Reyes
Young Professionals Convenor



Game Changer Awards 2024: Empowering WA's Young Innovators for the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The 2024 Game Changer Awards (GCA), held in Perth, celebrated the creativity, innovation, and leadership of Western Australian students as they tackled the world's most pressing challenges through STEM. Aligned with all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), GCA empowers students from Years 3-12 to become global citizens and changemakers.

Last year, over 400 students from 17 schools – including metro, regional, Indigenous, neurodiverse, and low socio-economic backgrounds, with strong female participation – formed 127 teams to develop solutions addressing critical issues such as health, education, climate action, gender equality, and sustainable cities. These students spent months researching the SDGs, ideating, and prototyping innovative projects that directly respond to both local and global challenges.

Award Highlights

- Best Overall (Years 3-4): Mount Claremont Primary School - *Team ASK*
- Best Overall (Years 5-6): John XXIII College - *The Radical Riders*
- Best Overall (Years 7-8): Rehoboth Christian College Secondary - *Project Disaster*
- Best Overall (Years 9-10): Harrisdale Senior High School - *Verba!*
- Chair's Award: Harrisdale Senior High School - *Ecolution*
(Also presented at the West Tech Fest Young Entrepreneurs Showcase)

Impact by the Numbers

- 400+ students empowered as innovators

- 127 student teams supported by 90 industry judges, 25 volunteers, and 15 sponsors
- Development of critical skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking, all of which are highlighted by the World Economic Forum as essential for the future
- Projects addressed all 17 SDGs, from clean water and energy to reducing inequalities and promoting innovation

A standout moment of the event was a keynote by Dr Sandy Chong, GCA Ambassador and former President of the United Nations Association of WA. Dr Chong inspired attendees with her message on the power of youth to drive the SDGs forward, reaffirming the strong alignment between GCA's mission and the global goals.

The GCA's strong partnership with the UN SDGs ensures that every project not only solves a real-world problem but also inspires lifelong commitment to sustainability and social impact. Looking ahead to 2025, the launch of the Game Changer Academy promises to broaden access even further—ensuring that every young person, regardless of background, can play a role in building a more sustainable and equitable world.

We invite the UNAAWA community to explore the full impact report and join us in celebrating WA's next generation of game changers.

For more information, full winners list, and the impact report, please visit the Game Changer Awards website.

Premila Jina
Vice President
2024 Game Changer Awards

City of Melville - Tutoring English brings volunteer Suzanna joy

When Suzanna Olsen was looking for ways to give back to her community, she wanted something that would fit into her busy schedule and make a meaningful impact, so volunteering as a Conversational English tutor at AH Bracks Library was the perfect fit.

Teaching has always been more than just a skill to her; it's a passion that fills her with purpose. The chance to create engaging lesson plans, guide students and witness their growth firsthand was exactly what she had been searching for.



However, little did she know that the experience would bring her as much joy, as it did to her students.

She says each class is a whirlwind of discovery, laughter, and connection. From written exercises to interactive games, Suzanna loves finding creative ways to keep her students engaged.

She said it's not just about the lessons but also the people. From the moment she steps into the library, Suzanna feels a sense of belonging.

Research by Volunteering Australia validates that sense of belonging, revealing it shows volunteering supports mental health by giving a sense of purpose, reducing stress and creating meaningful social roles.

"The class is uplifting - I always leave feeling energised and inspired," said Suzanna.

"Volunteering has added so much value to my life.

"It's time that I wouldn't trade for anything, especially when you find a role that truly resonates with who you are."

In National Volunteer Week, Suzanna hopes her story encourages others to take the leap to meet new people, share skills, and make a real difference.

City of Melville Mayor Katy Mair said the City's 10-year plan (released in 2024) places a strong emphasis on building a healthy, safe and connected community and its volunteers play an important role in that.

"That focus is reflected in 2025 National Volunteer Week theme which is Connecting Communities," said Mayor Mair. "Here at the City, we're lucky to have the support of more than 150 internal volunteers across our libraries, museums, community centres, and environmental programs. They are passionate individuals who generously give their time and help the City provide a range of inclusive local community services, events and cultural activities."



Kerry Faulkner
Communications Officer, City of Melville

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St. Hilda's – Creating opportunities for those who need it most

Education plays a critical role in future success. Creating opportunities for young people with potential to find an academic environment that nurtures their talent is an obligation that St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls takes seriously.

Since partnering with the UNAAWA to host its recent Young Women's Leadership Development Program, St Hilda's is offering needs-based bursaries for young women who excel in their studies and would benefit from an environment where academic excellence is encouraged.

Principal Fiona Johnston spoke to the attendees at the Young Women's Leadership Development Program in April to encourage them to lean into leadership opportunities and take risks. Her international research on female leadership informed her presentation, and these findings are now being applied to developing bespoke programs at St Hilda's.

The needs-based bursary program offers girls in Years 7 and 10 paid tuition and, in the case of regional students, boarding fees. More details about these scholarships can be found online: [Scholarships and Bursaries - St Hilda's](#) or email enrol@sthildas.wa.edu.au. The applications close 30 June this year.

St Hilda's is a strong supporter of the UN's Sustainability Goals and thanks to philanthropic support is able to provide scholarships and bursaries to further educational opportunities for deserving girls.

"It was a pleasure working with the members of the Gender Equity Committee who hosted the UNAAWA's Young Women's Leadership Development Program. Being part of an inspiring program such as this, is a commitment we make to furthering diversity and inclusion," Mrs. Johnston said.

St. Hilda's Anglican School for Girls



Myanmar Earthquakes Emergency

Two months have passed since the Myanmar earthquakes devastated our regional neighbour, claiming more than 3700 lives and injuring at least 5000 people.

The disaster has disappeared from headlines, but the country is still in emergency response mode.

UNICEF has been on the ground since 1950 and has been helping lead the emergency response.

With three warehouses stocked with essential supplies, UNICEF teams were first responders, working around the clock with local partners to do whatever was humanly possible to save children's lives.



UNICEF was also the first humanitarian plane to land in Myanmar after the earthquakes to deliver more desperately needed supplies, including medical kits, shelter materials, and water purification tablets. And within 72 hours of the disaster, UNICEF teams were the first to reach affected communities in Pynmana, restoring clean access to water and a lifeline for families.

With the monsoon season approaching the country is now on the brink of a disease outbreak and it has one of the highest rates of unvaccinated children in the

world. As we know, disease has no borders, so this isn't just a national issue, it's a regional concern.

If you would like to donate to UNICEF's emergency response you can do so here: Myanmar Earthquakes Philanthropy Appeal | UNICEF Australia All gifts are tax-deductible, and no money goes through the de facto authorities.

UNICEF's Perth-based Senior Partnerships Manager Nicolette Casella (ncasella@unicef.org.au) and Philanthropy Manager Elaine Jung (ejung@unicef.org.au) are always available for a conversation.

Myanmar Insights with Julie Bishop

The Myanmar earthquakes disaster has disappeared from headlines, but the country is still in emergency response mode.

In her role as UN Special Envoy to Myanmar, the Hon. Julie Bishop witnessed firsthand the scale of the disaster and last month shared her insights at an event at the State Buildings, in partnership with UNICEF Australia.

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Nicolette Casella
Senior Partnerships Manager, Philanthropy
UNICEF

The Silent Pandemic: Mental Health and the Youth

Mental health, in my opinion, is and will continue to be the backbone of well-being in a person. It is sometimes underrated as an issue, while its impacts continue to persist in our society. Many times, mental health can go unnoticed in the early stages due to the underlying issues not being paid attention to in the day-to-day life of the youth.

Mental health is a silent pandemic, since the youth, in this case, battle with the disease on a personal level without disclosing the challenges to anyone. The reasons for this can vary, depending on the individual, each of whom may be fighting a range of issues and a long list of known mental illnesses.

Youth, by nature, in many generations, have been termed as the future. This, in turn, leads to the exertion of pressure from society, family, and friends, among others. This makes them constantly question

themselves to see if they measure up to societal expectations and their own. While doing things, they become overwhelmed by the need to become perfect, and this begins to take a toll on their emotional well-being.

Often, people in general might look after themselves physically, socially, and spiritually, but neglect their emotional well-being, which should be the primary goal.

Mental health continues to affect the youth because instead of addressing their mental well-being through the right channels, they suppress it and resort to other means like drug use, which offers a temporary solution.

The way forward is through educating and influencing the youth via mental health campaigns, which can be done in a number of ways. The internet, for instance,

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can either be used for good or bad. Therefore, it is prudent for the youth to know which content to consume, as this is where it all begins.

This is preferable to using it to compare themselves and doing things out of bad influence, which is a misuse of the internet.

The youth should be on the frontline of helping each other become better versions of themselves to be able to deal with the triggers of mental health, like family issues, underlying illnesses, and the way of life.

It is important for them to be self-aware and know when to seek help in order to address the unmet

needs of the youth: suppressed feelings, high cost of living, undiagnosed mental illnesses, and stress in general.

Generally, we should strive to help the youth find solutions and deal with their situations and differences from a non-judgmental approach. This is because dealing with such issues is better done collectively as a team, rather than carrying the burden alone in an overwhelming situation. The services needed in this journey should be within reach to effectively target mental health and raise awareness.

Mercy Kigen
UNAAWA Member

Why Education Needs to Teach Sustainability, Not Just Maths

Education is our most reliable tool for creating a more sustainable future. We are at a turning point as our education system is evolving beyond traditional topics of rote learning like algebra to prepare students for tackling complex challenges. In Western Australia (WA), a state rich in biodiversity, resources and cultural diversity, we are also facing water scarcity and a nation that has one of the highest producers of waste per capita globally and the Australian state with the lowest waste recovery. Embedding sustainability education across all curriculums is crucial for fostering resilient communities and a healthy planet.

National and State Frameworks Supporting Progress

In 2009, the National Action Plan for Education for Sustainability laid a vital foundation for embedding sustainability across Australian education. It advocates for a holistic approach that equips learners with the values and skills needed to address interconnected environmental, social, and economic issues.

This national framework supports WA's initiatives, including Sustainable Schools WA and university programs, ensuring sustainability is integrated at every education level.

In addition, the new Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025-2034, emphasises student wellbeing and cultural safety, highlighting the importance of social unity alongside environmental education. These policies encourage schools to foster inclusive, equitable learning environments that prepare the next generation to be active and compassionate citizens.

Sustainability in Primary and High Schools

Western Australia begun steps integrating sustainability into primary and secondary education through initiatives like Sustainable Schools WA. This whole-school approach aligns with the Western Australian curriculum and can be applied across core subjects. Schools engage students in action-based learning across twelve sustainability categories — ranging from

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biodiversity and energy to cultural diversity and student and staff wellbeing. Through programs such as bushland protection, reconciliation activities, and waste reduction projects, students develop practical skills and a sense of responsibility for their local communities.

Teachers are supported with resources and professional development to embed sustainability throughout subjects, including maths, science, and humanities, making learning more relevant and impactful for the future. Despite this progress, many schools still face challenges in fully implementing this whole-school sustainability plan due to resource constraints and further teacher training.

Sustainability at University Level

At the tertiary level, WA universities are increasingly embedding sustainability into curricula and campus operations, fostering collaboration, innovation and leadership aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and sustainability industry bodies. Universities collaborate with industry to provide outreach programs that inspire graduates and create careers in renewable energy, business resource efficiency, green finance and social equity. Sustainability topics are integrated into traditional degrees such as finance, human resource management

and engineering. And for those students wanting to specialise in education, analysis and governance of sustainability, degrees such as Bachelor of Social and Environmental Sustainability, Bachelors of Sustainability Development and Master of Sustainability and Climate Policy are available.

The Road Ahead

While WA has made progress, more work is needed to fully integrate sustainability into education. There is still much progress to be made to ensure better mental health, community wellbeing, and cultural inclusion by bringing the WA population along on this journey. There is much to be done in improving environmental stewardship in business supply chains and operations. We need sustained investment in teacher professional development, curriculum innovation, and stronger collaboration between schools, universities, government, experts and local communities.

Embedding sustainability education within subjects transforms learning to tackling real world problems and meaningful action. It cultivates critical thinking, empathy, and problem-solving skills essential for navigating and shaping a sustainable future.

Louise Tomlin
UNAABA Member



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Young Professionals Convenor – Angelica Reyes



Angelica holds a Double Masters in International Law and International Relations from the University of Western Australia, along with a Bachelor of Arts in Japanese and Korean Studies. In 2016, she studied at Seoul National University as an exchange student.

Passionate about international relations, cultural diplomacy, and Australia's global engagement, Angelica has been mentored by senior officials from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. She represented Australia and the City of Perth as an Australian Student Ambassador during her studies and was actively involved at university, fostering stakeholder relationships and mentoring students from diverse backgrounds.

With strong organisational and stakeholder engagement skills, Angelica delivers high-impact results in diverse settings. She currently works for the State Government of Western Australia, supporting investment and trade facilitation and ministerial initiatives to drive economic growth.

Environment Committee Secretary – Comfort Onyaga

My name is Comfort Onyaga, I am a postgraduate student of Food Security at Murdoch University. I joined the United Nations Association of Australia (WA Division) because I believe that the global goals are meaningful when they are rooted in local actions, and collective effort can accelerate progress and achieve lasting impact. I am passionate about promoting conversations that connect food systems, circularity, resilient communities, and climate change. I see these as foundational building blocks for achieving socio-ecological balance and navigating the complex challenges of sustainability transitions.

Over the past decade, I have served on several boards of both local and international organisations, with a deep commitment to policy advocacy, sustainability, inclusive food systems, innovation and climate action. I also led nonprofit organisation and private organisations, gaining experience spanning market systems development, Agritech, project design, project management, stakeholder engagement, and fundraising while also advocating for inclusive policies.

Climate change is already disrupting traditional rural-urban supply chains, cities are absorbing more people

but producing less food and at the same time putting pressure on already strained urban food systems. In Australia, we waste 7.6 million tonnes of food every year and generate around 17.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂-e) emissions annually (End Food Waste Australia, 2024). Beyond being an economic failure, it is also an environmental one.



To address these, I am currently driving systemic change in the urban food system through the circular economy principle in Australia and in Nigeria. One of the ways I am achieving this is by leading a project, the Grow Your Food & Thrive project, funded by Murdoch University through the Student as Change Agent initiative. The project aims to empower students with

hands-on skills on how to grow culturally appropriate food in small spaces, upcycle excess produce, compost food scraps, and most importantly, reimagine food waste as a resource rather than a problem. This project is directly linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2, 3, 12, and 13. The momentum has reached beyond Australia's borders. In April, I was awarded a grant through the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to replicate this model in Nigeria, supporting urban food security and circular practices in one of Africa's most rapidly urbanising regions. It demonstrates how localised action through partnerships with local organisations and student groups can shape global food systems thinking while strengthening the Australia-Nigeria bilateral relationships.

My goal is to take this work further, and I am seeking opportunities to advance this effort in contributing to Australia's circular economy transition. My call to action is – I would love to connect with like-minded organisations like OzHarvest, End Food Waste Australia, and others interested in scaling this to connect with me. Western Australia, with its cultural diversity, innovative mindset and sense of environmental urgency, has everything it takes to lead Australia in building a circular food future. We just need to connect with the right people, and I hope this story starts with one of those connections for sustainable change in our food systems.

UN Observances

September

5: International Day of Charity
7: World Duchenne Awareness Day
7: International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies
7: International Day of Police Cooperation
8: International Literacy Day
9: International Day to Protect Education from Attack
12: United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation
15: International Day of Democracy
16: International Day of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South
16: International Day for Interventional Cardiology
16: International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
17: World Patient Safety Day
18: International Equal Pay Day
20: World Cleanup Day
21: International Day of Peace
23: International Day of Sign Languages
25: World Maritime Day
26: International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
27: World Tourism Day
28: International Day for Universal Access to Information
29: International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste
30: International Translation Day

October

1: International Day of Older Persons
2: International Day of Non-Violence
4-10: World Space Week
5: World Teachers' Day
6: World Habitat Day
7: World Cotton Day
9: World Post Day
10: World Mental Health Day
11: International Day of the Girl Child
12: World Migratory Bird Day
13: International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
15: International Day of Rural Women
16: World Food Day
17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
20: World Statistics Day
23: International Day of the Snow Leopard
24: United Nations Day
24: World Development Information Day
24-30: Disarmament Week
24-31: Global Media and Information Literacy Week
27: World Day for Audiovisual Heritage
29: International Day of Care and Support
31: World Cities Day



**United Nations
Association
of Australia
WA Division**

<http://www.unaa.org.au/divisions/western-australia/>

Upcoming Events

UNAAWA UN DAY Celebration 2025 –Tickets now on Sale!

🌐 Join Us for the 80th Anniversary of United Nations Day Gala! 🌐

Dear Members,

We are delighted to invite you to the **80th Anniversary of United Nations Day Gala**, a milestone evening dedicated to celebrating 80 years of global unity, peace, and cooperation.

Event Details:

📅 **Date:** Friday, October 17, 2025

🕒 **Time:** 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM (AWST)

📍 **Venue:** Duxton Hotel, Perth

This prestigious event will feature:

✦ Keynote address from distinguished guest speakers

🎭 Inspiring multicultural performances

🍷 Drinks & Canapés

Networking with leaders and advocates of international collaboration and peace

Spots are limited, so please secure your tickets soon to avoid missing out.

👉 Book Your Tickets [Here](#)

Dress Code: Smart or Traditional Attire

This gala is not only a celebration of the **80th anniversary of the United Nations**, but also a reaffirmation of our shared commitment to the UN's values and principles. Join us as we commemorate this historic occasion and stand together for a more peaceful and united world.

We look forward to welcoming you!

<http://www.unaa.org.au/divisions/western-australia/>



UN Day Awards 2024 Nominations – Now Open

The UN Day Awards honour individuals, organisations, and businesses that have made outstanding contributions to Human Rights, Gender Equality, Environmental Stewardship, and the empowerment of Young Professionals. Guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), our nominees, finalists, and award recipients embody the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which marks its 80th

anniversary this October 2025. Join us in recognising the selfless advocates of our generation. Nominate someone who is creating meaningful change.

For more information on the UN Day Awards and for nomination forms, [click here](http://www.unaa.org.au/divisions/western-australia/).

<http://www.unaa.org.au/divisions/western-australia/>



UNAAWA ENVIRONMENT ACTION AWARD 2025

Recognising individuals, organisations and businesses that have made an outstanding contribution to the protection, advocacy and restoration of the natural environment. The Environmental Action Award acknowledges excellence in raising awareness or impact towards the environmental UN SDGs.

WE ARE SEEKING NOMINATIONS WITHIN THE BELOW CATEGORIES:

- > Life Below Water
- > Life on Land
- > Circular Economy
- > Sustainable Agriculture
- > Renewable Energy
- > Climate Change
- > Sustainable Urban Development
- > Ecosystem Restoration

DIRECT ALL ENQUIRIES TO ENVIRONMENT@UNAA-WA.ORG.AU

Further information on UNAAWA UN Day Awards is available at:

<https://www.unaa-wa.org.au/un-day>

TIMELINE FOR THE AWARD:

APPLICATION OPEN: 16th July 2025

NOMINATION CLOSE: Sunday 7th September 2025

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINALISTS: September 2025

PRESENTATION OF AWARD: 17th October 2025 at the UN Day Gala Evening

EMAIL NOMINATIONS TO: undayawards@unaa-wa.org.au



UN GALA EVENING 2025

EXCELLENCE IN GENDER EQUALITY PROMOTION AWARD

AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN

The UNAAWA Gender Equality Committee works toward a sustainable future through advancements in gender equality and female empowerment. The Excellence in Gender Equality Promotion Award recognises local individuals and/or organisations who demonstrate an outstanding contribution to the promotion of gender equality.

Any individual or organisation may submit a nomination or be nominated by someone.

NOMINATION PROCESS:

NOMINATION FORM: Complete the nomination form, outlining the details of the nominee and their referees.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: Attach the nominee's resume, a high-definition photo, and a document outlining their contributions.

SUBMIT: To the Gender Equality Committee Convener via email at gender.equality@unaa-wa.org.au.

TIMELINE FOR THE AWARD:

APPLICATION OPEN: 16th July 2025

NOMINATION CLOSE: Sunday 7 September 2025

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINALISTS: September 2025

PRESENTATION OF AWARD: 17th October 2025 at the UN Day Gala Evening

EMAIL NOMINATIONS TO: undayawards@unaa-wa.org.au



UN GALA EVENING 2025

EXCELLENCE IN HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION AWARD

AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN

The UNAAWA Human Rights Committee works towards increasing the awareness, greater understanding, and responsiveness towards human rights issues of local and global interest. The Excellence in Human Rights Promotion Award recognises local individuals and/or organisations who demonstrate an outstanding contribution to the promotion of human rights.

Any individual or organisation may submit a nomination or be nominated by someone.

NOMINATION PROCESS:

NOMINATION FORM: Complete the nomination form, outlining the details of the nominee and their referees.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: Attach the nominee's resume, a high-definition photo, and a document outlining their contributions.

SUBMIT: To the Human Rights Committee Convener via email at human.rights@unaa-wa.org.au

TIMELINE FOR THE AWARD:

APPLICATION OPEN: 16th July 2025

NOMINATION CLOSE: Sunday 7 September 2025

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINALISTS: September 2025

PRESENTATION OF AWARD: 17th October 2025 at the UN Day Gala Evening

EMAIL NOMINATIONS TO: undayawards@unaa-wa.org.au



UN GALA EVENING 2025

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS WA EXCELLENCE AWARD

AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN

Young Professionals are invited to enter the 2024 UNAA Young Professionals (WA) Award. This year's award is dedicated to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are aimed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges that we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace and justice.

The criteria for this year's award will be as follows:

- Demonstrated experience and achievement relating to one or more of the UN SDGs (see reverse)
- Outstanding contribution to inspire a culture of achievement and improvement for those around them
- Contributing and giving back to their community
- Spirit of volunteerism
- Exemplary leadership and mentoring others to succeed

Entrants must provide a document (up to three pages), attending to the above criteria

NOMINATION PROCESS:

NOMINATION FORM: Complete the nomination form, outlining the details of the nominee and their referees.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: Attach the nominee's resume, a high-definition photo, and a document outlining their contributions.

SUBMIT: undayawards@unaa-wa.org.au

TIMELINE FOR THE AWARD:

APPLICATION OPEN: 16th July 2025

NOMINATION CLOSE: Sunday 7 September 2025

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINALISTS: September 2025

PRESENTATION OF AWARD: 17th October 2025 at the UN Day Gala Evening

EMAIL NOMINATIONS TO: undayawards@unaa-wa.org.au



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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