

Cohort specific
BARRIERS TO SELF-EMPLOYMENT

GLOBAL
SISTERS

October 2024



Who we are and why we exist

GLOBAL SISTERS

Global Sisters exists to make business possible for women who otherwise would not be able to participate economically and build their financial independence and long-term economic security.

We deliver programs directly to a diverse range of women across Australia via hybrid online (facilitated) and in-person support and lead systems change interventions to address gendered systemic and structural barriers holding women back.

Our target cohort experiences common and distinct barriers to economic participation and self-employment based on their personal circumstances and broader discriminatory structures and systems including policies, legislation, investment & corporate products.

Who are the **SISTERS**

Sisters are women who are experiencing economic insecurity.

Global Sisters supports women who are unemployed, underemployed and with low incomes to be financially independent through micro business and leverage that income to build their long-term economic security.

We have a strategic focus on older women and solo mums.

Sisters also include First Nations women, migrants and refugees, women escaping DVF, women with disabilities and those living in regional, remote locations.

This paper seeks to identify unique personal and systemic barriers for segmented Global Sisters priority cohorts.



Barriers to employment + self-employment for SOLO MOTHERS

 Cohort definition	A woman who has no spouse or partner usually resident in the household, and who forms a parent-child relationship with at least one child (dependent or non-dependent) usually resident in the household.
 Size of the cohort	<u>883,300</u> Solo Mothers in Australia, or 80% of all Solo Parent families (2023)
 Income level	Solo parents have the <u>highest rate of poverty</u> amongst all family types, at 35% 37% of Solo Mothers have a gross annual income of less than \$40K, compared to just 18% of Solo Fathers
 Government payments	31% have government payments as <u>main source of income</u> • <u>Parenting Payment Single</u> - 226,500 Solo Mothers; maximum fortnightly payment is \$987.70 • <u>Jobseeker</u> - 1.24 million people; maximum fortnightly payment for Solo Mothers with children is \$816.90 • <u>Family Tax Benefit</u> - up to \$191 or \$248 per fortnightly (depends on children's age), with a potential \$788.40 end-of-year supplement. Part B offers up to \$158.34 for younger children
 Financial horizon	Typically a very short financial horizon (survival mode). They do not have a stable base of sufficient income from which to gain employment or start a business. The maximum income Solo Mums can report before their support starts to reduce: • <u>Parenting Payment Single</u> - 1 child: \$214.60; 2 children: \$239.20; 3 children: \$263.80; More than 3 children: \$263.80 per fortnight plus \$24.60 per extra child (per fortnight) • <u>Jobseeker</u> - up to \$150 (per fortnight) for single parents/carers of at least one child up to 16 years old • <u>Family Tax Benefit</u> - depends on the <u>family's adjusted taxable income and the number of children they have</u>.

Personal Barriers

- The most common reason women are unavailable to start a job or work more hours is "Caring for children". (Source - ABS Report)
- Limited access to education, especially business acumen and entrepreneurial know-how. (Source - Australian Government)
- Absence of peer and community support networks.
- Financial constraints hindering accessibility to self-employment options - looking after their children is their priority.

Systemic Barriers

- Limited access to affordable childcare is keeping parents out of the workforce. (Source - Productivity Commission)
- Lack of flexible working arrangements to successfully balance domestic and family responsibilities with professional ones. (Fawcett Society and Totaljobs)
- Limited access to resources and connections due to stigma and social isolation
- Welfare system: structural barriers to self-employment (business income reporting and mutual obligations).

Meet Fiona

SOLO MUM | BIRIPI WOMAN | BUSINESS OWNER



Fiona Richards | Bellingen, NSW

Fiona's Sister Business

A life coaching business aimed at supporting women through times of change, combining deep feminine wisdom, ancient practices, and modern coaching.

“

Global Sisters is very specifically targeted to help me build my business. I'd sit through a module of training and then have two weeks worth of intensive work that comes out of that module.

Sister Story

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BARRIERS EXPERIENCED

As a single mom with two children on the spectrum that need to attend several sessions every week plus having faced her own health issues (breast cancer), Fiona found that traditional employment didn't accommodate her needs and childcare responsibilities. She sought support from employment services, but found the training programs were not aligned with her goal of building her own business.

HOW GLOBAL SISTERS HAS SUPPORTED

Unlike traditional employment services, Global Sisters recognised the value of Fiona's business aspirations and offered relevant training and mentorship. Fiona accessed coaching circles, market research modules, branding workshops, and one-on-one coaching sessions. With Sister School, Fiona clarified her vision and established the foundational elements of her business, including setting up a website, obtaining licences, and structuring her offerings.

WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR FIONA

With her business architecture in place and a clear understanding of her target market, Fiona is actively engaged in marketing her services and expanding her offerings. By affiliating with HER Mystery School and collaborating with local Aboriginal elders to put together some retreats for women, Fiona is diversifying her services and tapping into new markets.

LOOKING AHEAD

Fiona's focused on investing in marketing in order to scale her business. She aims to continue offering retreats and rituals while exploring opportunities for collaboration with different partners. Additionally, Fiona plans to expand her mentorship role by becoming a girls' mentor through the Journey of Young Women Training, further contributing to her community and empowering the next generation of women.

BUY FROM HER

<https://fionassisterbusiness.com/>



April 2024

Barriers to employment + self-employment for OLDER WOMEN

 Cohort definition	Global Sisters considers women over 50 years old as older women for the purpose of employment and economic participation (mature age employment)
 Size of the cohort	<u>2.9 million women</u> over 55 years old in Australia (2012)
 Income level	34% of women over 60 years are living in <u>permanent income poverty</u> in Australia. The gender superannuation gap means women retire with significantly less superannuation savings (Australian <u>Human Rights Commission</u>). Older women (>55 years) are the fastest growing group at risk of homelessness (<u>Human Rights Commission</u> and <u>OWN</u>)
 Government payments	• Jobseeker – 120,00 women over 55 made up the <u>largest proportion of JobSeeker recipients last year at 16%</u> (in 2001, it was only 2%) • Age Pension – <u>59% (1.5 million) recipients</u> of the Age Pension in Australia are women
 Financial horizon	<u>For women over 55, mutual obligation requirements differ.</u> Between 55 and 59, if they've been on income support for less than 1 year, they need to work 30 hours per fortnight with paid work, self-employment or a mix of approved voluntary and paid work (at least 15 hours paid). After 12 months on support, they need to work 30 hours per fortnight of voluntary work, paid work, self-employment or a mix. At 60, the requirement is working 30 hours per fortnight of voluntary work, paid work, self-employment or a mix. The closer to retirement age, the more women focus on superannuation balance and secure housing assets. Women at this age typically have a longer financial horizon than younger women and experience high levels of anxiety about old age poverty and homelessness.

Personal Barriers

- Divorce, loss of partner and DFV
- Women in general have lower average levels of optimism and self-confidence, and a higher fear of failure. (Source – WADE Institute report)
- Heavy domestic and family burdens, particularly caregiving duties for children, grandchildren, or a partner.
- Potentially outdated job skills and need for retraining and up-skilling to keep up with tech advancements and industry demands. (Australian Human Rights Commission).

Systemic Barriers

- Limited opportunities to access secure employment, a priority for this demographic
- Ageism/discrimination due to underlying assumptions, stereotypes, in recruitment, etc. (Australian Human Rights Commission).
- Shortage of flexible work options to accommodate work-life balance. (Source – Australian Seniors report).
- Lifetime of lower income and superannuation gap due to feminised work and gaps for childcare.

Meet Glenis

OVER 50 YEARS OLD | AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS | TRAUMA & MENTAL HEALTH | BUSINESS OWNER



Glenis Ingram | Brisbane, QLD

Glenis Ingram Yoga and Meditation

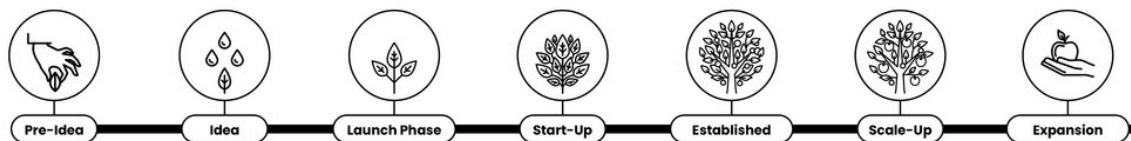
Created her Yoga and Meditation business to support people having experienced trauma to heal.

“

Every program has been impactful because I've been at different stages in my business and life. So, they've just been so apt for where I've been personally and business-wise. I do recall feeling totally supported in every session that I've attended.

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1 SISTER SINCE 2017

BARRIERS EXPERIENCED

After a marriage breakdown and the trauma of losing her son, Glenis was unemployed and at risk of homelessness. As a resident of long-term social housing, BHC (Brisbane Housing Compay), Glenis had the stability needed to rebuild her life. Common Ground introduced Glenis to Global Sisters, where she received the support needed to turn her yoga qualification into a career that she is passionate about.

HOW GLOBAL SISTERS HAS SUPPORTED

Through Global Sisters, Glenis found a network of support that catered to her needs at different stages. Through one-on-one mentoring sessions, she gained insights into pricing strategies, communication skills, and overall business structuring. Seeing the benefits in her business, boosted her confidence. Group coaching provided additional guidance and fostered connections with like-minded women, creating a supportive community. Events like the Sister Pitch offered exciting opportunities for growth and validation.

WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR GLENIS

Glenis expanded her class offerings beyond community housing to diverse venues, including Brisbane City Council, signalling business growth and adaptability. Transitioning from gold coin donations to charging per class underscores her recognition and professional advancement. Introducing one-on-one classes demonstrates a personalised approach, catering to individual needs and expanding her client base. Glenis has recently completed her specialisation in yoga for anxiety, depression, and trauma awareness which led to professionals, like psychologists, seeking her expertise for trauma-aware yoga sessions, highlighting her growing recognition in the mental health community.

LOOKING AHEAD

Glenis envisions a future where she continues to thrive mentally and physically for many years, prioritising health and well-being. Her aim is to liberate herself from reliance on government support, seeking financial freedom through her own business.

BUY FROM HER

f <https://www.facebook.com/glenisingramyogaandmeditation>

@ <https://www.instagram.com/glenisingram/>

April 2024

Barriers to employment + self-employment for DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

 Cohort definition	A woman who has experienced violence in an intimate partner relationship or within the family. This violence can take many forms, including physical, emotional, psychological, financial, and sexual abuse. Some people prefer the term “survivor” (as opposed to “victim”), as it more accurately reflects their experience and resilience
 Size of the cohort	1 in 4 (27% or 2.7 million) women in Australia have experienced family and domestic violence since the age of 15
 Income level	Many women who leave violence are now single mothers and living in poverty. 74% of mothers that fled violence were in the two lowest household income quintiles (up to \$767/week) and 48% in the lowest quintile (up to \$460/week)
 Government payments	- Escaping Violence Payment (EVP) - 45,000 people have accessed a payment up to \$5000 it since 2021 - Crisis Payment for Extreme Circumstances Family and Domestic Violence - between 2016 and 2023, the number of claims granted increased by 60% from 17,400 to 27,700, with a payment up to a week's pay at the maximum basic rate of the income support payment or ABSTUDY Living Allowance
 Financial horizon	The Escaping Violence Payment and the Crisis Payment for Extreme Circumstances Family and Domestic Violence are not affected by increases in income or how much money women are earning but are insufficient to provide a tangible impact on women's ability to economically recover from violence. Typically the financial insecurity women escaping violence face means their financial horizon is very short (ie survival mode).

Personal Barriers

- Psycho-emotional trauma and anxiety that can affect women's ability to seek and maintain employment. (Source - [WomanACT](#))
- Financial constraints and dependence, which leads to issues such as housing instability. (Source - [University of Melbourne research](#))
- Employment sabotage - Survivors might be prevented from working by their abuser. (Source - [WomanACT](#))
- Time spent on legal and bureaucratic matters to keep themselves and their children safe from violence. (Source - [Report UNSW](#))

Systemic Barriers

- Stigma and discrimination in workplace ([Australian Human Rights Commission](#))
- Losing access to assets & base to be financially independent - women are forced to leave behind assets, stable housing, jobs & incomes and community/ support systems. (Source - [Global Sisters Report](#))
- Welfare reliance due to the coercive control and financial abuse women experience whilst in the relationship, and simply to keep safe throughout the process of leaving. (Source - [Global Sisters Report](#))

Meet Lucille

**DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SURVIVOR |
SOLO MUM | BUSINESS OWNER**



Lucille Milne | Wangaratta, VIC

Venus Moves

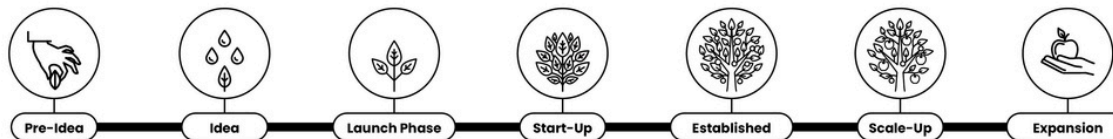
A transformative approach to women's wellness, blending dance, somatic therapies, sexuality education, and feminist therapy. Through workshops and community-building, it empowers women to foster holistic well-being.

“

Global Sisters is very different to any women business, networking event or group that I've been to. It really supports women from all types, of all different backgrounds, whether that be different language, culture, whether you're a rural woman, like myself, or a woman in the city. It's very equal.

Sister Story

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SISTER SINCE 2020

BARRIERS EXPERIENCED

Lucille decided to start her own business when her youngest child started having daily seizures, and she realised she needed the flexibility to care for him as a solo mum. She wanted to create something self-sustaining for her and her family, where her skills and talents from her education, fashion background, and passion for women's mental health could be put to good use.

HOW GLOBAL SISTERS HAS SUPPORTED

Lucille values Global Sisters' nurturing approach that understands the challenges of being a solo mum and an entrepreneur, unlike generalised business training. She has accessed opportunities for networking, training, and conceptual leaps that expanded her vision for Venus Moves from just having a small income-generating business to pursuing mentorship, funding, and positioning herself for growth. Lucille appreciates that Global Sisters creates a non-hierarchical and supportive environment where women come together and share, are allowed to take breaks and are always welcomed back.

WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR LUCILLE

Lucille explains that through Global Sisters, she has been exposed to industry leaders and training programs focused on investments and scaling, which has opened her mind to exploring non-traditional business models beyond just trading time for money through one-on-one therapy sessions. She describes her business as a non-traditional model where she can create income-generating assets like eBooks, courses, and memberships to engage with clients without being present.

LOOKING AHEAD

Short-term, Lucille hopes to launch her business online with systems for booking and payments, and to participate in Pitch events and media opportunities to increase visibility of her brand. She aims to build a workforce of other women to help drive the mission and passion behind her work. Lucille aims to employ other women at Venus Moves, particularly solo mums, to build a platform where women can access suitable feminist therapists for their needs.

ACCESS HER SERVICES

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/venus-moves-therapy-for-women/> **June 2024**

Barriers to employment + self-employment for WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

 Cohort definition	Women with disabilities are those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments, which in interaction with other barriers may hinder their participation in society on an equal basis with others
 Size of the cohort	<u>4.4. million (18%)</u> of Australians have a disability. Overall, there are equal numbers of men and women with disability however this diverges based on age and type of disability
 Income level	41% of people with disability <u>received income from wages or salary</u>, compared with 73% without disability (2018) - Adult Australians with a disability earn, on average, <u>70% of the income of those without disabilities</u> Females with disability (23% or 411,000) are less likely than males with disability (25% or 430,000) to receive <u>wages or salary as their main source of income</u> (2018)
 Government payments	44% of people with disability received a <u>government payment</u>, compared with 12% without disability (2018) - Disability Support Pension (DSP) - <u>29% of all income support payment (adults) recipients received the DSP</u>, from \$608.70 to \$1,116.30, <u>depending on age and number of dependent children</u>(2023) - National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) - <u>534,655 NDIS participants in 2019</u>, of which 62% were male and 37% were female, with variable amounts
 Financial horizon	<u>DSP</u> - the income limit for a single adult is \$204/fortnight, above it, the pension is reduced by 50 cents/dollar. A single adult whose income is higher than \$2,066.60/fortnight is not eligible <u>NDIS</u> - eligibility is based on the individual's level of disability, rather than their income. Gender discrimination in NDIS definitions of disability have meant less women receive NDIS support.

Personal Barriers

- Negative self-perception and lack of self-confidence due to societal stigma or past experiences.
- Health and wellness concerns, some disabilities may limit physical or psychological stamina. (Source - [Australian Human Rights Commission](#))
- Limited skills, due to having faced challenges in accessing proper training and education. (Source - [Australian Human Rights Commission](#))

Systemic Barriers

- Discrimination in the form of negative stereotypes that lead to unconscious biases in hiring processes.
- Many workplaces lack accessibility and accommodations(Source - [Australian Human Rights Commission](#)).
- Systemic barriers to self-employment due to DSP income limit

Meet Michele

NEURODIVERSE | LIVING WITH A CHRONIC ILLNESS | BUSINESS OWNER



Michele Wragg | Perth, WA

Born Awesome

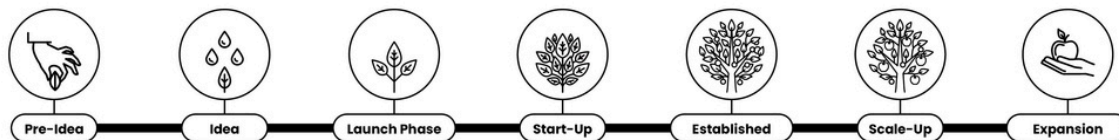
Born Awesome supporting people struggling to recover from the aftermath of life challenges & trauma.

“

Global Sisters, I love it... It's all about supporting women to feel they're enough, that how they're moving forward and building their business is enough for where they are at that moment... it's a rare thing. I'm forever grateful because it really has been such a life changer.

Sister Story

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SISTER SINCE 2023

BARRIERS EXPERIENCED

Michele is a neurodiverse woman living with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a chronic illness that affects connective tissues — primarily skin, joints and blood vessel walls. In the past, she has suffered from the pain associated with her spinal injury. Michelle says it has taken a lot of dedication to recover from it and live an empowered life again. These experiences have been a barrier for Michele working full-time in the disability sector, despite her 25-year dedication to this line of work.

HOW GLOBAL SISTERS HAS SUPPORTED

Since her membership, Michele has actively engaged in various programs aimed at enhancing her business roadmap. Notably, Michele has successfully completed the My Big Idea workshop, First 10 Customers, Industry Circles, and several specialised events to enhance her business acumen. One of the most noteworthy benefits that Michele has expressed is her deep sense of connection within the Global Sisters community. She describes it as a beautiful, safe space where women at different stages of their journeys find encouragement, valuable suggestions, and a sense of camaraderie.

WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR MICHELLE

Michelle has connected to a new network of women in business. The exposure to Global Sisters' corporate partners, including VISA during their support of the FIFA Women's World Cup in August 2023, resulted in her being a recipient of the VISA Player of the Match award for women-owned small business — receiving a USD \$10,000 grant. She plans to use the VISA grant to develop her website and online coaching platform, and to create an accessible space for in-person coaching.

LOOKING AHEAD

Michele is actively engaged in the Global Sisters community and continues to increase her repertoire of business skills and knowledge. She is drawing upon our suite of online programs and events to harness the resources that'll enable Born Awesome to move through its start-up phase.

BUY FROM HER

📷 https://www.instagram.com/bornawesome_/

📘 <https://www.facebook.com/BornAwesome8/>

April 2024

Barriers to employment + self-employment for FIRST NATIONS WOMEN

 Cohort definition	First Nations people are those of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and are accepted as such by the community in which they live. Importantly, they are not a homogeneous cohort, from before colonisation, and now through experiences of dispossession and intergenerational trauma are even less comparable – each First Nation woman's unique cultural, historical, and geographical context means we cannot generalise their experiences as a single group.
 Size of the cohort	Approximately <u>328,000</u> First Nations women (over 15 years old) in Australia
 Income level	30% of First Nations households are in <u>income poverty</u>, which indicates that over 120,000 Indigenous people are living below the poverty line The <u>median adjusted weekly household income</u> among all Indigenous aged 15 and over was \$830 compared with \$ 1080 for non-Indigenous Australians (2021)
 Government payments	285,600 First Nations people <u>received income support payments</u> (48% of the total population of First Nations), • Jobseeker – <u>100,00 First Nations people</u> were <u>receiving from \$762.70 to \$987.70 fortnightly</u> • Disability Support Pension – <u>57,200 First Nations people</u> were <u>receiving up to \$1,020.60 fortnightly</u> • Parenting Payment Single – <u>41,600 First Nations people</u> were <u>receiving up to \$987.70 fortnightly</u>
 Financial horizon	While being a First Nations person does not specifically influence a person's financial horizon, it's essential to recognize other intersecting and connected factors at play such as unemployment, low income and welfare payments, DFV, being a solo mum, etc, that do impact their financial horizon. Understanding these intersections is vital for developing holistic strategies to address the complex economic circumstances faced by First Nations women. For those living in remote communities, their financial horizon is limited due to lack of opportunities for self-determination and financial independence.

Personal Barriers

- Lack of access to high-quality and relevant training, limited access to supportive workplaces, inconsistent mentoring for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers and few long-term job opportunities. (Source – [Australian Government](#)).
- Higher rates of health issues can affect job retention. (Source – [Australian Government](#))
- Family and community responsibilities, including caregiving and cultural practises.

Systemic Barriers

- On-going impact of intergenerational trauma (from colonisation, the Stolen Generations, cultural separation, and racism) affects one-third of the First Nations population. It perpetuates cycles of suffering, substance abuse, mental health disorders, and disrupted family structures. ([Australian Gov](#))
- Racism & lack of culturally safe workplaces experienced by First Nations people at work. (Source – [Jumbunna Institute of Indigenous Education](#))
- Geographic isolation & inadequate transport can limit access to job opportunities ([Australian Gov](#))
- Financial exclusion- limited access to collateral to access business finance ([Minderoo Foundation](#))
- Access to markets, tech and logistics for self-employment in remote locations.

Meet Melissa

WARUMUNGU AND LURITJA WOMAN | BUSINESS OWNER



Melissa Cole | Living in Garramilla (Darwin), NT

Yaye

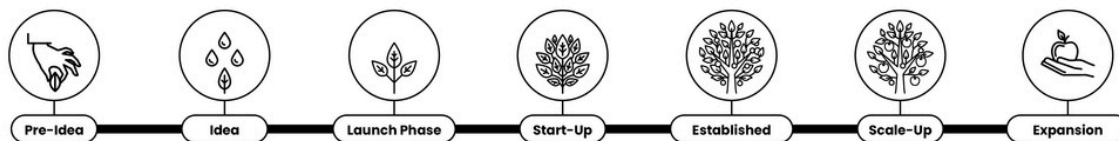
Yaye is a bath and body brand that celebrates and promotes Indigenous language and culture.

“

The opportunity to connect with Mecca and other people that are looking to expand into that space is what impacted me the most. The mentoring from Global Sisters has been pivotal. And again, just being able to connect with other business owners, female led entrepreneurs. That's been the biggest benefits.

Sister Story

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SISTER SINCE 2023

BARRIERS EXPERIENCED

Melissa faced challenges in mainstream employment, particularly in balancing the structured demands of her job with her passion for creating Indigenous-inspired skincare products. Living in a regional area also presented logistical challenges, such as limited access to networking opportunities with other people that could support her in her journey.

HOW GLOBAL SISTERS HAS SUPPORTED

Melissa found crucial support and resources through Global Sisters. Through coaching, financial tools like Xero, and networking opportunities, Melissa gained valuable insights to refine her business strategy and manage her business's finances effectively. Global Sisters provided a platform for Melissa to refine her pitch via the Pitch Perfection Workshop, access funding opportunities, and connect with like-minded entrepreneurs, fostering a supportive community that pushed her business forward. She is part of the Industry Runway with MECCA and is stocked on the Global Sisters Marketplace.

WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR MELISSA

Since its inception, Yaye has achieved significant milestones, including securing partnerships with over 60 stockists and two hotel chains. Melissa's dedication to quality and sustainability has garnered recognition, with Yaye earning a reputation for excellence and ethical practices. Winning grants and expanding her network of manufacturers and suppliers have been great achievements as well.

LOOKING AHEAD

Melissa envisions Yaye becoming her full-time job. She aims to further explore Yaye's innovative product lines, strengthen partnerships and increase national and international market presence. Melissa remains committed to fostering sustainability and fostering economic empowerment within her community, inspiring other Indigenous women entrepreneurs to pursue their dreams.

BUY FROM HER

<https://yaye.com.au/>



April 2024

Barriers to employment + self-employment for MIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

 Cohort definition	A migrant is a person who was born overseas whose usual residence is Australia. A person is regarded as a usual resident if they have been (or are expected to) reside in Australia for 12 months or more. An asylum seeker is a person who has fled their own country and applied for protection as a refugee
 Size of the cohort	<u>4 million</u> women were born overseas (15% of total Australia population) Australia hosts almost <u>60,000 refugees</u> and <u>80,000 asylum seekers</u>
 Income level	The highest <u>median income</u> for migrant taxpayer women sits at \$49,223 as compared to highest median income for migrant taxpayer men at \$78,840
 Government payments	There are over 7.6 million migrants living in Australia and about 91% of their total income was employee income (\$102 billion) • Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) – 12,500 asylum seekers/refugees on this payment, however not everyone receives financial support under SRSS. <u>The exact amount depends on individual circumstances, but in 2019, the financial assistance was approximately 89% of the Newstart allowance, which could be as little as \$35 per day.</u>
 Financial horizon	Most migrants have to wait 4 years before being eligible to most government support programs. Once an asylum seeker has been approved for a protection visa they can begin to access the same Centrelink benefits that other Australians can. For people without status certainty, the high levels of financial insecurity mean their financial horizon is limited.

Personal Barriers

- Lack of proficiency in English language is one of the most cited causes for difficulties finding employment
- Limited knowledge about cultural norms and common employment/ self-employment processes. (Source – [Parliament of Australia](#))
- Lack of social and professional networks that are a key source to access relevant information.

Systemic Barriers

- Overseas skills and qualifications recognition in Australia, leading to low-skilled roles with limited advancement opportunities.
- Discrimination in the workplace, including conscious and unconscious bias. (Source – [Parliament of Australia](#))
- Limited access to training, support and mentoring from federal and state government. (Source – [Refugee Council of Australia](#))

Meet Alies

MIGRANT | BUSINESS OWNER



Alies Bol | Sydney, NSW

Frika Activewear

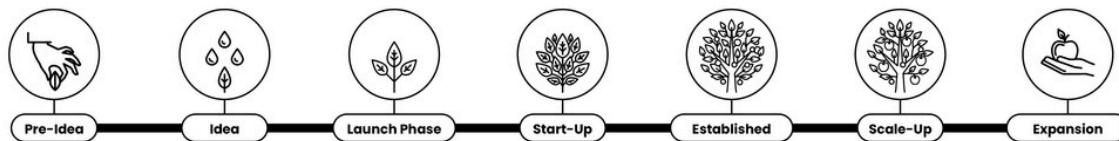
Frika activewear is an emerging new line of activewear inspired by beautiful bold bright African prints.

“

I would send an email and someone would contact me and, even when I didn't ask for help, they would try and find ways to get my business and my branding known. That was really helpful and it played a big role in my business. To be honest, I couldn't have done it on my own: the pitch they've offered, the connections as well, just a lot of support

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SISTER SINCE 2022

BARRIERS EXPERIENCED

Adding to the language barriers and the challenge of assimilating into a new culture, Alies encountered several barriers in traditional employment, especially in the hospitality and fitness industries. Long hours and demanding schedules left her with little time for personal growth or pursuing her aspirations. Additionally, the need for a stable client base in personal training conflicted with her own availability, affecting her ability to establish herself in this field.

HOW GLOBAL SISTERS HAS SUPPORTED

At Sister School, Alies gained foundational business knowledge and skills and connected with a supportive community of like-minded individuals. Through Global Sisters Marketplace, Alies showcased her activewear brand, reaching a wider audience and solidifying her presence in the market. The camaraderie within the network empowered Alies to overcome obstacles with confidence, such as adequately pricing her product and overall understanding the intricacies of running a business.

WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR ALIES

Alies successfully pitched her business at a national Sister Pitch even, gaining recognition and support from influential figures in the industry (e.g., Jennifer Child, CEO of Orotan). She won the 2023 Visa She's Next pitch competition, receiving acclaim from global Visa representatives. She expanded her network and gained insights and advice that propelled her business forward. Alies gained exposure through media features on platforms like SBS, showcasing her designs.

LOOKING AHEAD

Alies aspires to expand her product line, explore new market opportunities, and establish her brand presence locally and internationally, ideally via a partnership with a global brand, such as Nike. She aims to heavily promote her business on social media upon its launch.

BUY FROM HER

<https://marketplace.globalsisters.org/shop/frika-activewear/1152>



April 2024

Barriers to employment + self-employment for WOMEN FROM REGIONAL AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES

 Cohort definition	Women that live outside major cities in Australia, this includes: <u>inner regional areas, outer regional areas, remote areas and very remote areas</u>
 Size of the cohort	<u>3.3 million women</u> live in rural areas – that includes inner regional, outer regional, remote and very remote. That is 28% of all women in Australia, as opposed the 72% (8.5 million) who live in major cities in Australia
 Income level	The <u>gross weekly income for women in rural areas</u> is \$575, vs \$700 in major cities Nationally, <u>the level of poverty (allowing for the costs of housing) was slightly higher in rural, regional and remote areas at 13.1%</u> vs 12.6% in capital cities. When housing costs are not considered, the figures diverge more widely
 Government payments	- Remote Area Allowance: +<u>113,000</u> recipients receive fortnightly \$18.20 (single), \$31.2 (couple), \$7.30 (each child) - Farm Household Allowance: <u>Around 440 recipients (farmers/farmers partners). Variable amounts</u> - Assistance for Isolated Children payments: Between 2010–11 and 2013–14, the Scheme assisted over <u>51,000 students</u>. The <u>amount depends</u> on the living arrangements and the number of eligible children
 Financial horizon	- Remote Area Allowance: Income doesn't affect this allowance. - Farm Household Allowance: <u>for a single, up to \$1217/fortnight, for a member of a couple, up to \$1123/fortnight</u>. The combined personal and farm assets must be <u>below \$5.5 million</u> - Assistance for Isolated Children payments: <u>Depends on parental income and the boarding fees</u>

Personal Barriers

- Family caring responsibilities: Women in rural Australia are more likely to provide unpaid childcare for someone else's children (Census, 2016) than in major cities (Source – National Rural Women's Coalition).
- Women in regional, rural and remote areas are more likely than women in urban areas to experience domestic and family violence (Source – Australian government)

Systemic Barriers

- Remote Australia generally has thin labour markets with a low number of employers and/or a low number of potential employees (Source – Australian Government).
- Challenges in product supply and distribution are significant barriers for women entrepreneurs in rural Australia. Limited access to support networks and profitable markets.
- Significant issues with connectivity and technology infrastructure.

Meet Macarla

**SOLO MUM | FROM A REGIONAL COMMUNITY
BUSINESS OWNER**



Macarla Church | Murwillumbah, NSW

Basera

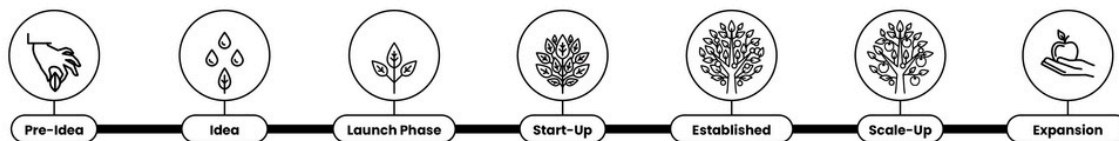
A mum and daughter business that sells handmade goods from over 20 countries, emphasizing artisan craft, slow fashion, and fair trade, inspired by their love for textiles and artisan traditions as well as for women empowerment.

“

I've done the four week course with Kelly Slessor (E-Commerce Kickstart). And it's given me so much motivation in my business and something to focus on each week. I need someone to at this stage of the business to pull me by the hand and say "do this, do that." So it's been wonderful in that regard.

Sister Story

GLOBAL
SISTERS



! SISTER SINCE 2023

BARRIERS EXPERIENCED

Macarla came from a family of business owners, so it felt natural to start her own business. Upon coming back to Australia to have her baby, after living and travelling overseas for an extended period of time, she worked for an engineering company for a short period, but her goal was to be able to stay at home with her baby. Her mom, Lynette, wanted to be able to spend time with her grandchild as well.

HOW GLOBAL SISTERS HAS SUPPORTED

Macarla came across Global Sisters a couple years ago and had it on her to-do list to get products on the platform, but found the process a bit overwhelming at first. She later joined the Solo Mums program but still felt overwhelmed and didn't make much progress initially. She highlights receiving a call from a Global Sisters team member to support her going through the programs and highlights the motivation she felt from having someone support her and her business. Recently, she participated in the 2024 Sister Pitch and secured \$11,000 in funding and invaluable mentorship, positioning her to elevate Basera's impact in the ethical homewares space.

WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR MACARLA

The business vision has grown from initially selling unique traditional products to including more countries and groups. Macarla is proud of her ethical supply chain, long-term relationships with groups, and high product quality and variety. She has learned about design, importing, languages, and refining the supply chain on her own. Post-pitch, she admits everything has changed, as she felt the business was a bit stagnant but is now feeling incredibly motivated and energised.

LOOKING AHEAD

Macarla is excited to pursue opportunities from Sister Pitch around business and marketing strategy, focusing on retail, eCommerce, and wholesale. Future goals include setting up a charity, allowing website donations, running artisan camps, and expand her brand by opening different stores in major cities. Short-term goals include achieving profitability and fair trade wages for Macarla and her mom.

BUY FROM HER

<https://basera.com.au/>



October 2024

Powerful partnerships with
GLOBAL SISTERS

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