

2025  
Annual  
Impact  
Report  
Summary



Women's  Aid

## Women's Aid

5 Wilton Place, Dublin 2, D02 RR27

womensaid.ie

toointoyou.ie

dvatwork.ie

info@womensaid.ie

+353 (01) 678 8858

24hr National Freephone Helpline: 1800 341 900

Registered Charity No. 20012045

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# Women's Aid



CUAN

An Ghníomhaireacht um Fhoréigean Bailte,  
Gníomhach agus Inseanbhunaíthe  
The Domestic, Sexual and  
Gender-Based Violence Agency



government supporting communities





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# Chairperson's Welcome



It is a privilege to welcome you to this summary of Women's Aid's impact in 2025, the first year of our Strategic Plan 2025–2029. This plan sets out a clear ambition: an equal Ireland with zero tolerance for domestic violence and abuse.

Last year, Women's Aid responded to **37,790 contacts and 62,275 disclosures of abuse**. These figures are stark. They reflect not only the scale and persistence of domestic violence, but also the trust placed in Women's Aid as a vital national service. Behind every number is a woman or child seeking safety, dignity, and support.

In 2025, Women's Aid continued to strengthen its work across frontline services, advocacy, research, training, and public engagement. This integrated approach is essential, ensuring immediate support for those experiencing abuse, while driving the long-term change needed to prevent it.

A key milestone was the launch of the Women's Aid Centre for Learning and Practice Development, which will support more consistent, trauma-informed responses across sectors. Our advocacy also contributed to growing recognition of domestic violence as a driver of women's homelessness, an important step forward in shaping national policy.

At the same time, the reality remains urgent. The violent deaths of seven women in Ireland in 2025 remind us of the most serious consequences of domestic violence and the need for sustained, collective action.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our CEO, employees, volunteers, partners, and supporters for their dedication and leadership.

Much progress has been made, but significant challenges remain. Together, we must continue to build a society where all women and children can live free from violence and fear.

Ailbhe Smyth  
**Chairperson**  
June 2026

# CEO's Introduction



As we reflect on 2025, the first year of our Strategic Plan 2025–2029, this overview highlights both the scale of domestic violence in Ireland and the intensity of the response required.

Demand for Women's Aid services remained unprecedented and deeply concerning.

Behind every contact is a woman or child navigating fear, coercion, and harm, often within complex circumstances shaped by housing insecurity, financial pressure, and systemic barriers.

In response, we worked intensively to strengthen and expand our services. Our 24-hour National Freephone Helpline remained a vital lifeline, while our Instant Messaging Support Service continued to grow, providing safe access for those unable to call.


Our face-to-face supports in Dublin offered essential one-to-one engagement, advocacy, safety planning, and court accompaniment, supporting women

through some of the most difficult moments in their lives. Specialist programmes also played a critical role, including the High-Risk Support Project and our Maternity Outreach Service, addressing particularly complex and high-risk situations.

We also provided practical, immediate assistance, distributing over €86,000 through our Internal Emergency Fund for Women and Children, often enabling crucial steps toward safety.

Alongside frontline work, 2025 saw important innovation with the launch of the Centre for Learning and Practice Development, strengthening expertise and consistency across the sector. Our research and advocacy continued to influence national debate, particularly in highlighting the links between domestic violence, homelessness, and challenges within the Family Law system.

Despite progress, significant barriers remain. Leaving an abusive situation is still often dangerous and uncertain.



I want to thank our employees, volunteers,  
partners, and supporters for their commitment.

Most importantly, I acknowledge the courage of  
the women and children we support.

Their strength drives our work, and together, we  
will continue to build lasting change.

Sarah Benson

**CEO**

June 2026

## Our Vision

Women's Aid's vision is an equal Ireland, with zero tolerance of domestic abuse and all other forms of violence against women.

## Our Purpose

Women's Aid is a national feminist organisation working to prevent and address the impact of domestic violence and abuse, including coercive control, since 1974.

## We do this by:

Advocating, influencing, training, and campaigning for effective responses to prevent and reduce the scale and impacts of domestic violence and abuse on women and children in Ireland.

*and*

Providing high-quality, specialised, integrated support services.

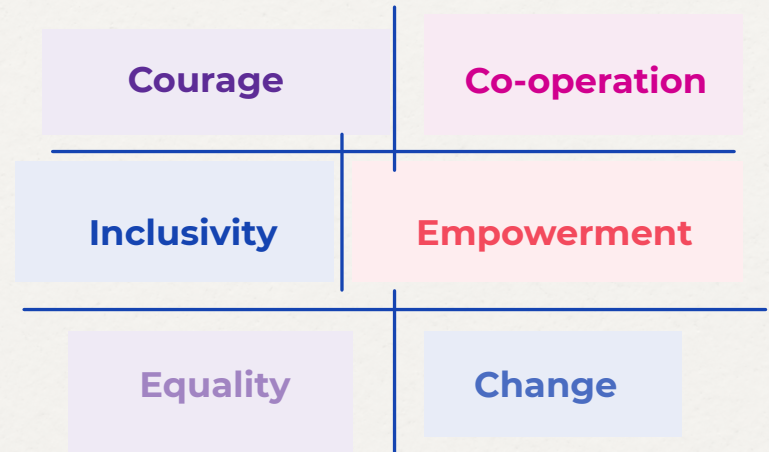
# Our Values

Our organisational values of **Courage, Co-Operation, Inclusivity, Empowerment, Equality, and Change** express the ideals and beliefs that sustain and guide us in every aspect of our work.

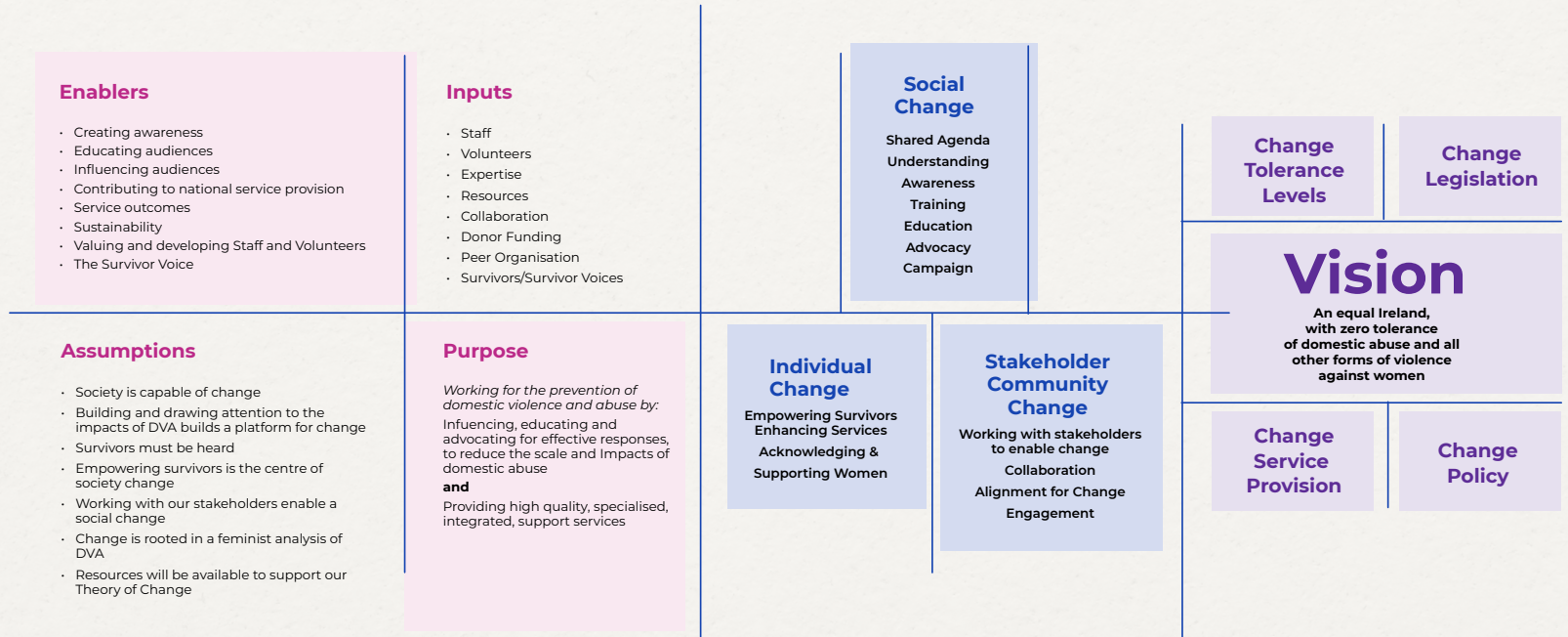
To achieve our vision of zero tolerance of domestic violence and abuse and all forms of violence against women, Women's Aid:

- Acts with **courage** to boldly challenge patriarchal systems, structures, and attitudes in all aspects of our work.
- Works in **co-operation** to share knowledge, skills, and expertise to achieve shared goals and improve responses to domestic violence and abuse.
- Strives to embed **inclusivity**, diversity, and accessibility across all our work.
- Supports the **empowerment** of women to exercise agency on their own behalf as a right, whatever their circumstances.

- Believes that achieving **equality** in status, rights, and opportunities for all women is essential to address the causes and consequences of domestic violence and abuse.
- Works to achieve positive **change** for everyone through a combination of individual, community based, and social action.



# Theory of Change



# What We Do

Women's Aid is a national, feminist organisation working to prevent and address the impact of domestic violence and abuse since 1974. We have five clear areas of focus, based on our Theory of Change, which creates the structure for us to end violence against women in Ireland.

## 1. Promoting healthy relationships

Violence against women is not inevitable. All forms of violence against women are preventable. By preventing abuse and focusing on supporting people to understand and live healthy relationships for everybody, we can build a different world.

## 2. Strategic research

Everything we do is underpinned by fundamental, evidence-based research. Through strategic research and quality data collection, we quantify and measure our impact. Research impact is real change in the real world.

## 3. Frontline services

Women's Aid was set up in 1974 to provide a response for women and children who faced devastating abuse with no support and no laws to protect them. We continue to develop and evolve our life-preserving frontline services to meet the growing needs of women and children across Ireland, including: the 24-Hour National Freephone Helpline, High-Risk Support Project, and a range of specialist Dublin-based outreach and court support services.

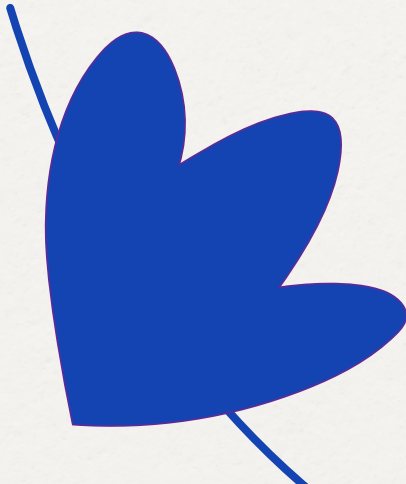
## 4. Specialist training and policy support

Knowing how to respond appropriately can make a significant difference to reducing the isolation and risks to women and children living with the dangers of domestic abuse. Through specialist training, we aim to inform people who may contribute to enhancing the safety of women. We offer training nationally to stakeholders from key sectors, including Health, Legal and Law

Enforcement, Employment, Children and Young People, and Community and Voluntary.

### **5. Whole community activation**

Creating long-lasting change for women and children who face violence means to create fundamental change across society and how we, the people of Ireland, think about domestic violence and abuse. We contribute to this through a combination of public awareness activities, campaigns, and advocacy work to influence and improve national policy and legislation.



# Strategic Priorities 2025–2029

## Strategic Priority 1

### Creating Social Equality

Delivering a coordinated, inclusive and coherent programme of work comprising: direct services, training, advocacy, and educating through awareness-raising work that is focused on prevention, support, and driving positive social change.

## Strategic Priority 2

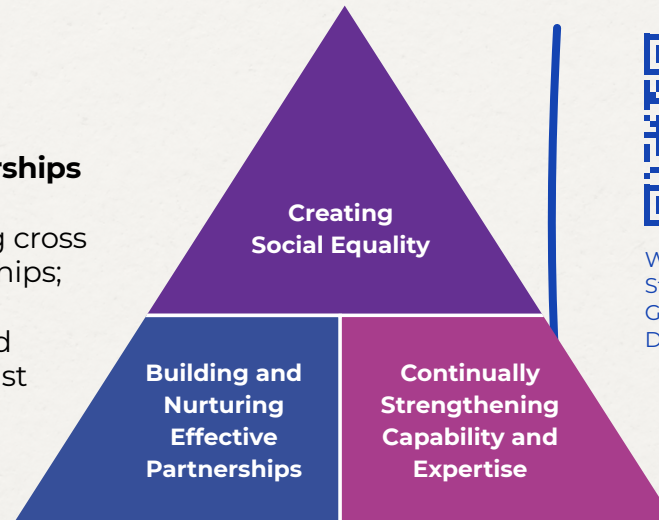
### Building and Nurturing Effective Partnerships

To continue developing and strengthening cross sector partnerships and strategic relationships; enabling Women's Aid to cooperate and effectively contribute to political, social, and other forums responding to violence against women in Ireland.

## Strategic Priority 3

### Continually Strengthening Capability and Expertise

Support the work of the organisation by ensuring that the information, resources, systems, and structures required are in place.



Women's Aid  
Strategy and  
Goals to End  
Domestic Abuse

# Responding to Growing and Deepening Need

Over the past four years, Women's Aid has experienced a sustained and accelerating increase in demand for specialist domestic violence services. This growth reflects both rising levels of violence and abuse against women and the role of Women's Aid as the national gateway to support.

In 2025, Women's Aid responded to 37,790 contacts, representing the highest demand in the organisation's history and a continuation of an upward trend since 2022.

	2025	2024	2023	2022
Total contacts	37,790	33,890	30,337	30,584

These figures illustrate not only increased contact volumes but growing service complexity, with women increasingly requiring longer term, intensive engagement across multiple systems including courts, housing, policing, and health.

Alongside this growth, Women's Aid supported a large number of women engaging with services for the first time, demonstrating the ongoing need for accessible, trusted pathways into specialist support.

## 2025 Summary

# 37,790

Contacts with Women's Aid



# 62,275

Disclosures of domestic abuse  
against women and children

# 28,179

Contacts with the 24hr  
National Freephone Helpline

*(including calls, instant  
messages, and emails)*



# 5,031

Hours of  
National Helpline  
Talk Time

# 57,520

disclosures of abuse  
against women

# 4,755

disclosures of abuse  
against children

# 24,652

Referrals, Provision  
of Information and/or  
Advocacy by Helpline  
and Regional Services  
Support Workers

# 9,611

Contacts with Face-to-Face  
Support Services

*(including one-to-one support, court  
accompaniments, drop-in visits, HRSP,  
maternity outreach support sessions)*



# 24/7 Support, When It Matters Most

## Confidential help, every hour of every day

Women's Aid's 24-hour National Freephone Helpline remains a critical lifeline, often the first safe point of contact for women experiencing abuse. Available around the clock via phone, email, and instant messaging, it provides confidential, specialist support at moments of crisis and decision-making. Demand continued to rise in 2025, reflecting both increased awareness and the growing complexity of women's experiences.

Conversations are longer and more intense, often involving ongoing safety planning and repeated contact over time. The Helpline also plays a vital role in accessibility, ensuring support for women who cannot safely speak or whose first language is not English.

## Key stats:

**28,179**

Contacts (calls, IM, email)

**+15.5%**

increase on  
2024

**799**

Interpreter-supported calls  
across 36 languages

**5,031**

Hours of  
support  
delivered



# Specialist Support in Times of Crisis

## Working alongside women through risk, recovery, and justice

Women's Aid delivers a range of specialist, face-to-face services supporting women through crisis, legal processes, and high-risk situations. These services include one-to-one outreach, court-based support, the High-Risk Support Project, and Maternity Outreach. Women accessing these services are often navigating complex, long-term abuse and require sustained, trauma-informed engagement. Support includes safety planning, advocacy, court accompaniment, and coordination with statutory agencies. Increasingly, women remain engaged over longer periods, reflecting ongoing risk and systemic challenges such as housing and legal delays.

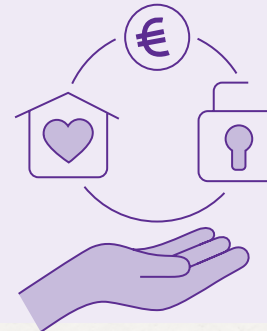
### Key stats:

**9,611**

Face-to-Face Services

**1,575**

Women supported



### Service breakdown:

Outreach  
**3,698**

DAIS (court drop-in)  
**823**

High-Risk Support  
**3,383**

Maternity Outreach  
**1,707**

# Building Safer Responses Through Training

## Equipping professionals to respond with confidence and care

Training is central to strengthening responses to domestic violence across Ireland. Women's Aid equips professionals, organisations, and communities with the knowledge and skills needed to respond safely and effectively. In 2025, this work was significantly enhanced by the launch of the Centre for Learning and Practice Development, marking a shift from one-off training to embedded, trauma-informed practice across sectors. Training and awareness initiatives support earlier identification of abuse, better risk assessment, and more consistent, survivor-centred responses across health, justice, and community settings.

### Key stats:

**1,680**  
people reached through  
training and awareness

**378**  
professionals  
trained across  
**64**  
organisations

**48**  
training  
events  
delivered

**21**  
awareness  
sessions reaching  
**1,280**  
participants

# Changing the Conversation Nationally

## Raising awareness, amplifying voices, influencing change

Strategic communications plays a vital role in making domestic violence visible, informing public understanding, and influencing national debate. In 2025, Women's Aid reached millions through integrated media, digital platforms, campaigns, and public engagement. Communications activity focused on amplifying survivor voices, challenging harmful narratives, and positioning domestic violence as a societal issue. This work supports both immediate awareness and long-term cultural change, ensuring that the realities of abuse remain visible in public discourse and policy conversations.

### Key stats:

**382,573**

website visits

National reach through campaigns and public engagement

**156,000+**

social media followers

**2,977**

media coverage items



The 'One in Three' flags flying along the River Liffey, Dublin, to mark the 16 Days of Activism, November 2025.

# Too Into You



## Engaging young people to build healthy relationships

Too Into You is Women's Aid's national prevention programme focused on young people aged 18–25. It helps

young people recognise unhealthy relationship behaviours, understand coercive control, and access support early. By meeting young audiences where they are, online, socially, and culturally, the programme plays a critical role in preventing abuse before it escalates. In 2025, Too Into You expanded its reach significantly through digital campaigns, in-person engagement, and the launch of its podcast, creating new spaces for open, informed conversations about relationships, consent, and control.

**Above:** Launch of the Too Into You Podcast at Hens Teeth, Dublin, February 2025

## Key stats:

**19.7M**

social media impressions

**95,710**

website visits

**22,249**

Relationship Quiz completions

**6,543**

podcast downloads (11 episodes)

# Driving Systemic Change

## Influencing policy, strengthening protections, improving responses

Women's Aid plays a leading role in shaping national policy and public debate on domestic violence. Grounded in frontline evidence and survivor experience, advocacy in 2025 focused on addressing systemic barriers in justice, housing, and protection systems. Key achievements included influencing national recognition of domestic violence as a driver of homelessness, advancing calls for the reform of the family law system and convening a coalition to eradicate the harms of pornography. Through research, submissions, and public engagement, Women's Aid continues to push for coordinated, trauma-informed responses and stronger accountability for perpetrators.

### Key stats:



Domestic violence recognised in housing policy

6

formal policy submissions



**Above:** Launch of Women's Aid Irish Family Law System in Guardianship, Custody and Access Cases research in Trinity College, Dublin in June 2025



**Left:** Women's Aid Strategic Think- In, supported by Community Foundation Ireland, on tackling the harms of pornography, Athlone, May 2025.

# With Thanks to Our Volunteers, Supporters and Partners

Women's Aid's work is only possible because of the continued commitment and support of our statutory funders, donors, partners, volunteers, and wider community. In 2025, as demand for our services reached unprecedented levels, your support ensured that women and children across Ireland could access safety, specialist services, and hope when they needed it most.

We are deeply grateful to our statutory funders, including Cuan, the Department of Rural and Community Development, and Pobal, whose sustained investment provides the foundation for our national services. This support enables us to deliver critical frontline responses, strengthen prevention and training, and continue influencing systemic change.

We also extend our sincere thanks to our many fundraising supporters, corporate partners, trusts, and foundations, whose generosity and solidarity make a tangible difference in the lives of women

and children. From national campaigns and workplace initiatives to community events and individual giving, this collective effort ensures that vital services remain accessible and responsive.

In 2025, this support helped fund essential services including our 24-hour Helpline, specialist support programmes, emergency financial assistance, and national advocacy work. It also enabled continued investment in prevention, training, and public awareness, ensuring that Women's Aid can not only respond to abuse, but work to prevent it.

Partnership is at the heart of everything we do. Together, we are strengthening support systems, challenging inequality, and building a future where all women and children can live free from violence and fear.

**Thank you for standing with us.**



# Fundraising and Public Support

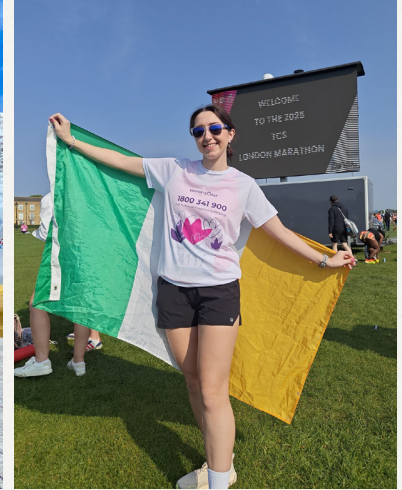
## 2025 Fundraising Snapshot

In 2025, communities, individuals, workplaces, and partners across Ireland and beyond came together to support Women's Aid. Through generosity, creativity, and solidarity, supporters helped ensure women and children could access safety, support, and hope when they needed it most.

- **1,590** people took part in **Cold Swim for Women**
- **1,595** people completed **Walk 80K (February)**
- **1,293** people completed **Walk 100 Miles (September)**
- **850** people took part in **Run 100K (October)**

- **50** people ran the **Dublin Marathon**
- **77** people participated in other races and challenge events nationwide
- **475** International Women's Day Coffee Mornings hosted
- **900+** people giving monthly
- **4,797** supporters engaged through Direct Mail
- **11** legacy and in memoriam gifts received in 2025





**Images left to right.**

Castleknock Lawn Tennis Club taking on their Cold Swim for Women in Portmarnock

International Women's Day Coffee Morning celebrations

Louise McKeever climbing to Everest Base Camp for Women's Aid

Mikayla Curran at the London Marathon

Team Women's Aid at the Dublin Marathon

# Building Trust Through Strong Governance

## Accountability, transparency, and integrity at every level

Trust is fundamental to the work of Women's Aid whether from the women who rely on our services, our funders and partners, or the wider public. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance, transparency, and accountability across all aspects of our organisation.

In 2025, we continued to strengthen our governance frameworks, ensuring robust oversight of our services, finances, risk management, and strategic delivery. Our Board and sub-committees play a critical role in guiding the organisation, supported by strong internal systems and a culture of continuous improvement and compliance.

We are proud that this commitment was recognised through the Good Governance Awards, reflecting the strength of our structures, leadership, and values. This recognition affirms our ongoing focus on best practice and reinforces confidence in how we operate.

Maintaining trust is not a single achievement, it is an ongoing responsibility. Women's Aid remains fully committed to upholding this trust in everything we do.



Mari McCaffery, Financial Controller (fifth from left) receiving the Good Governance Award for Women's Aid, November 2025.

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## Full Annual Impact Report:



