



## **Mercy Foundation Australia Report for MGAN meeting**

**October 2018**

### **1. Human Trafficking and Slavery**

- We have commissioned research into the issue of domestic servitude in Australia, looking at the pathways into and out of domestic servitude; who is at risk and why; and at what point or how can we help prevent or assist people caught up in this form of slavery. Final results are due later this year.
- We took part in the inaugural Forced Marriage Conference in May; we have joined the NSW Forced Marriage Network and the NSW Trafficking Response Network
- NSW Parliament passed the first Modern Slavery Act in Australia in June; the Australian Government has introduced legislation to enact a Commonwealth Modern Slavery Act, which will establish a modern slavery reporting requirement to further strengthen Australia's response to modern slavery. The Mercy Foundation made a submission to the federal Modern Slavery Bill.

### **2. Ending Homelessness**

- In conjunction with a number of organisations across Australia, we launched a report at Parliament House, Canberra in late August, around the issue of older women and homelessness. The latest Census shows an increase of 30% in the number of women > 55 counted as homeless. Research shows that many women have led conventional lives, and as a result of time out of the workforce, the gender pay gap, and lack of superannuation, women who do not own their own home and on low incomes are at risk of homelessness. The document can be accessed here: <https://www.mercyfoundation.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Retiring-into-Poverty-National-Plan-for-Change-Increasing-Housing-Security-for-Older-Women-23-August-2018.pdf>
- The 2019 theme of the Mercy Foundation's Social Justice Small Grants program will be Justice for the Environment, prioritizing projects that protect, prevent, restore or repair our environment, including issues such as water conservation and protection; clean and renewable energy, minimizing waste and care for wildlife and threatened species.
- The winners of the Mercy Youth Awards, a photo competition for secondary students focusing on 'What home means to me' were announced. See here for more details: [https://www.mercyfoundation.com.au/latest\\_news/mercy-foundation-youth-awards-2018-winners/](https://www.mercyfoundation.com.au/latest_news/mercy-foundation-youth-awards-2018-winners/). The focus of the 2019 youth awards will be an issue that relates to human trafficking and slavery.

- The Mercy Foundation continues its advocacy, research and work around the issue of ending homelessness, especially for women and children and addressing chronic homelessness.

