

Priority Reform Two: Building the community-controlled sector

2023 Sector Strengthening Plan Action Updates

Background:

Parties to the National Agreement have committed to joint national strengthening effort through Sector Strengthening Plans which identify actions to build strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sectors and organisations in line with the strong sector elements (sustained investment, dedicated workforce, supported by a Peak Body, with a dedicated reliable and consistent funding model).

Sector Strengthening Plans for Health, Early Childhood Care and Development, Disability and Housing are published at <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/resources>.

Clause 47 of the National Agreement states that 'Government Parties will include in their Jurisdictional annual reports information on action taken to strengthen the community-controlled sector based on the elements of a strong sector, as outlined in Clauses 118 and 119'.

Sector Strengthening Plan actions, have been written by Commonwealth agencies in partnership, to reflect the views of the Coalition of Peaks members and community-controlled organisations.

Housing

[Housing Sector Strengthening Plan](#)

No.	Stream	Action	Description	Responsibilities	Initial Resource Commitment	Timeliness	2023 Annual Report Update
A1	Workforce	Scope current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing and support services and determine projected workforce development needs in line with sector growth.	<p>NATSIHA to work with the Coalition of Peaks for a joined-up approach with Health, Disability etc. to develop an overarching workforce strategy which includes agreement for a campaign to highlight the positive aspects of working in the Sectors. Scoping should include mapping of current and future capacity, coverage, and funding as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population growth corridors, and attention is required to achieving wages equity across the housing Sector, including 'cultural loading' to recognise cultural knowledge and skills in the community-controlled workforce.</p> <p>The NWS will be developed in collaboration with jurisdictional governments, the Sector and other key stakeholders, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. This strategy aims to support the recruitment, retention, wages parity, sustainability, and quality of the Sector's workforce.</p> <p>In addition to the NWS, a targeted implementation plan to meet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce development objectives to be developed that support a national long-term approach to workforce planning and development. This will include facilitation strategies to increase the pool of VET services and adequately qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing and related services and to establish a sustainable workforce for the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector into the future.</p> <p>Utilise existing government programs and, if required, scope potential funding</p>	Coalition of Peaks, NATSIHA, NIAA, all governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander jurisdictional peaks and yet to be identified partners.	To be determined	Medium to long term (3 years)	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024



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			options to support the training and employment initiatives (cadetships and traineeships) across the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander housing sector in partnership with tertiary institutions, employer representative bodies and ATSIICCHOs.				
A2	Workforce	Develop the cultural capability of the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander and mainstream housing sector workforces.	Focus on developing the cultural capability of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and support services who are working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients by continuing to build on existing work across governments and the sector.	NATSIHA, Australian Government in collaboration with state and territory governments and sector representatives	To be determined	0 – 3yrs and ongoing	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
A3	Workforce	Increase the number of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people with disability employed with ATSIICCHOs.	Develop formal working relationships between NATSIHA and the First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN). Strengthen the current disability workforce and provide opportunities that will also benefit the Sector due to the needs of our tenants who have disability. This will enable the housing to be viewed through a disability lens especially as we have a large percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing tenants with disability, who require modifications and related services.	NATSIHA, FPDN, Australian Government (new Disability Employment Support Model) in collaboration with state and territory governments	To be determined	0 – 3yrs and ongoing	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
B1	Capital Infrastructure	Develop a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing data collection project.	It is imperative that true and accurate data is collected in all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing and homeless to determine the extent of support required to address housing related needs, issues and provide solutions. This data collection project will have a positive influence regarding workforce, capital infrastructure, service provision, governance, sustainable funding models and will greatly benefit the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing jurisdictional peaks and their tenants. NATSIHA will scope and plan a data collection exercise to better understand the size and quality of ATSIICCHO housing stock across Australia that can help identify the future needs of the Sector in order to better prioritise future funding. The scoping exercise will include: - Develop an understanding of current data and what data gaps the collection exercise will seek to understand; - Scope and plan the data collection exercise; e.g., what data will be collected, who will collect, how it will be collected and when the data will be collected (one-off or ongoing). Align this project with a number of existing government processes to improve housing data, including work being undertaken by the Data and Reporting Working Group under the Agreement.	NATSIHA, jurisdictional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing peaks, all governments	To be determined	Medium to long term (Minimum of 3 years)	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
B2	Capital Infrastructure	Build the capability and sustainability of ATSIICCHOs through growth and ability to provide new housing. This could potentially include: · A Housing Stock Transfer Program (property management and title). In the	Work with jurisdictional governments to develop a robust, fair and equitable housing stock transfer program. There are several key factors to take into consideration and adhere to: - Governments to have trust and confidence in the Sector, especially registered ATSIICCHOs, to help ensure any asset or management transfers and funding allocations are merit-based and align with the net public benefit principles. - Longer contract management periods (e.g., 20 years) in line with the mainstream housing sector	NATSIHA, state and territory governments, jurisdictional peaks and sector representatives	To be determined	Ongoing	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024



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		short-term states consider property management transfers of viable stock to ATSIKCHOs with appropriate stock and management capacity for long-term leases. In the medium to long-term, and where there has been demonstrated success by specific ATSIKCHOs, consider title transfers.	<p>- Set timeframes for the deeds and titles to be transferred to the Sector</p> <p>- Also has possibilities regarding employment and training outcomes</p> <p>In order to support the growth and strength of the Sector it is important there is control and autonomy over housing assets.</p> <p>This will enable ATSIKCHOs the ability to leverage against their portfolio as well as to determine appropriate maintenance requirements and control over tenancies.</p>				
B3	Capital Infrastructure	Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled housing organisations who are accessing, able to access and are aware of the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) funding programs.	<p>NHFIC administers programs that support community housing providers to access cheaper, long tenor financing and that seek to unlock new housing supply. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator (AHBA) provides cheaper, long tenor finance for NRSCH (or equivalent) registered community housing providers. - The National Housing Infrastructure Facility, a \$1 billion facility that provides finance for eligible housing enabling infrastructure projects to unlock new housing supply. State and territories are eligible to access NHIF, and this funding source can be used to support ATSIKCHOs, to increase housing supply. <p>NATSIHA to engage with NHFIC to understand the application process and develop modelling and guides that can support registered ATSIKCHOs to access available funding.</p>	All governments, NATSIHA in partnership the Indigenous jurisdictional peaks and NHFIC	To be determined	Ongoing	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
C1	Service Delivery	Increase the capability and sustainability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled housing organisations to be able to grow their housing and homelessness service delivery capability.	The community-controlled housing sector will benefit from the development of grants prioritisation policies (in line with Clause 55a of the National Agreement on CtG) with Parties to the Agreement each progressing in their respective jurisdiction. Increasing the proportion of support services delivered by ATSIKCHOs and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisations will have flow on benefits and support tenants in their complex social needs and to strengthen organisations to address mental health and related illnesses stemming from intergenerational trauma etc. Linkages to Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) to be developed and strengthened.	Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments, NATSIHA, jurisdictional peaks and sector representatives	To be determined	Medium to long term (3 – 5 years)	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
C2	Service Delivery	Create best practice models using ATSIKCHOs who have successfully and organically grown their organisation to provide effective services to meet the social and emotional well-being of their tenants and communities.	These case studies can be tailored to guide and encourage ATSIKCHOs who are interested in providing integrated services for the benefit of its tenants. The models can be tailored to suit their location and circumstances and be guided by the: Accessibility Remote Index of Australia (ARIA)	NATSIHA, jurisdictional peaks, the Sector and relevant jurisdictional government agencies.	To be determined	Short to medium term (0 – 1.5 years)	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
D1	Governance	Improve the capacity and skills of existing board members.	Training to be developed specifically for the Sector.	NATSIHA, Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD)	To be determined	To be determined	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
D2	Governance	Build capability of ATSIKCHOs through encouraging and	Continue to build on work already underway in each jurisdiction to support ATSIKCHOs to achieve registration.	NATSIHA, jurisdictional	To be determined	Ongoing	The Commonwealth is committed to working



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		supporting ATSIKCHOs to apply for community housing registration.	<p>Achieving NRSCH registration, or the jurisdictional equivalent, will build the capacity and capability of ATSIKCHOs. This includes performance requirements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fair, transparent and responsive housing assistance to tenants, residents and other clients - Sound management of community housing assets in a manner that ensures suitable properties are available at present and in the future - Increased community engagement and partnerships to promote community housing and contribute to socially inclusive communities - Increased governance standards by ensuring coherent and robust strategic, operational, financial and risk planning - High standards of probity - Management of resources to achieve the intended outcomes of business in a cost-effective manner - Financial viability through ensuring a viable capital structure, maintaining appropriate financial performance and managing financial risk exposure. <p>Achieving community housing registration will affect many aspects of an ATSIKCHO's functions in relation to the Housing - SSP elements in a positive light.</p>	peaks and state and territory governments			collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
D3	Governance	Consider options to expand existing community housing registration processes to better cover and address the requirements of the Sector and ATSIKCHOs.	<p>Feedback from the Sector emphasised the importance of communication; an increased focus on the cultural competency of registrars and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers; clear transitional arrangements; and the need for a modular / segmentation approach that considers the unique characteristics specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing (such as the differences in asset types – both in form and quality (including housing in remote locations)). Relevant jurisdictions that use NRSCH should consider the recommendation in the Review of NRSCH on the “Expansion of the NRSCH to better cover and address the requirements of Indigenous housing and ICHOs” (NSW Government, 2020).</p>	State and territory governments	To be determined	Short to medium term (0 – 3 years)	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
E1	Consistent Funding Model	Develop guidelines and support material to enable Housing and Homelessness organisations to become financially sustainable.	<p>NATSIHA to develop funding models for ATSIKCHOs to implement for reliability, sustainability, accommodates flexibility and provides funding for comprehensive service delivery to ensure a fully operational Sector. To provide sustainability in the Sector there are funding streams that could be utilised, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable rent collection policies that are complemented by Commonwealth Rental Assistance (CRA) where eligible - Integrated services provision - Improved diversification of housing portfolio - In collaboration with the sector and governments, NATSIHA will articulate a vision of the Sector that enables ATSIKCHOs to be financially sustainable. 	NATSIHA and all jurisdictional peaks	To be determined	Research and report finalised by Mid to late 2023.	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
F1	Peak Body	Explore and determine options for the ongoing sustainability of NATSIHA.	<p>NATSIHA was created at a National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander housing workshop in Adelaide in July 2017 due to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people identifying a need for a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing peak. Although unfunded to date NATSIHA has had a significant impact and assisted in supporting and establishing peaks in several jurisdictions and is working closely with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing Sector to establish peaks in the remaining jurisdictions. Established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies, such as the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) etc. offer lessons learned in building sustainability.</p>	NATSIHA, Commonwealth Government, State/Territory Governments and jurisdictional peaks	To be determined	Late 2021 – mid 2022	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024
F2	Peak Body	Build capacity of NATSIHA to support ATSIKCHOs to achieve the relevant jurisdictional community housing registration.	<p>Support for ATSIKCHOs to achieve community housing registration could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop templates that the Sector can use to model their policies and practices, as required for their relevant jurisdictional registration. - Connect ATSIKCHOs seeking registration with registered community housing providers, including registered ATSIKCHOs, who can provide guidance and 	State and territory governments, peak bodies and the Sector	To be determined	Short to medium term (0 – 3 years)	The Commonwealth is committed to working collaboratively with NATSIHA, and other key partners and nominated government



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			mentorship through the process. - Modelling to be done that describes different models of ATSCCHOs for different areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Mix of social, affordable and specialist housing o Scale needed to be viable o Governance models e.g., democratically elected boards, merit-based process and appointed by members, mix of appointments and elected directors. - Undertake a desktop analysis to identify what areas ATSCCHOs need to build upon.				agencies, to develop an implementation plan and strategy in 2024

