



SNAICC
National Voice for our Children

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National Voice for our Children

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025–2028

Our story of change



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SNAICC shows respect by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connections to land, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and Elders past and present. We acknowledge and respect their continued connection to Country, care for community and practice of culture for generations uncounted.

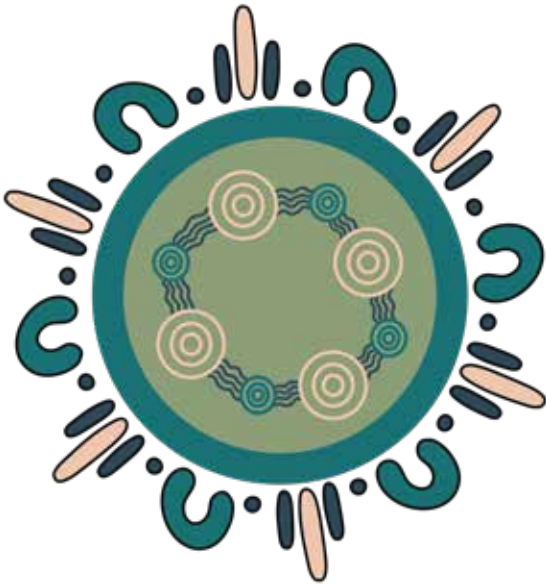
We also acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, parents, families and kinship carers who are the custodians of caring practices that have kept children safe and thriving for more than 65,000 years.

OTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SNAICC would like to acknowledge and thank our members, Council, Executive, staff and partners who have generously provided input into this Strategic Plan. Your insights and care for our work is deeply appreciated.

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ABOUT THE ARTIST & ARTWORK

Tovani Cox is a proud Bunuba, Gija and Karajarri woman from the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

Born in Broome, Tovani is passionate about art and design and often her inspiration is from her long standing commitment to self-determination and rights of first nations people and communities.

She was predominantly raised in Noongar country in Perth, and since early 2017 has been living in Melbourne on Wurundjeri country, and travels home to the Kimberley as often as she can to connect with kin and country.

Marulu

Marulu is a Bunuba word. It means precious, worth nurturing. Every child is precious, and each child deserves to be loved, nurtured, supported, and safe.

As the national peak SNAICC continues to pursue and strive for a society where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s voices and needs are prioritised in a community, program, and policy setting.

SNAICC is represented as the main circle image in this piece. The inner circle images are the core business and work of SNAICC through its people, both its workers and the governing board. The outer layer images represent the various existing State and Territory Peaks and lead organisations.

The flow of this piece speaks about our journey, ensuring that our children are loved, nurtured, supported and safe, and they are represented by the small dots.

The larger circles and dots are representative of the various programs, policies, and reform priorities that SNAICC works with or is leading as their role as the national peak and voice for our children.

Our story of change

As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we are the first storytellers. Our stories bring to life our past, they connect us to a point in time, they open up ways of thinking and deep meaning.

SNAICC’s Strategic Plan 2025–2028 is our story of change which speaks to our vision and aspirations for our children, carrying the legacy of our communities and leaders who have carved this path on which we walk.

Our Strategic Plan 2025–2028 takes us through the core components of our story of change – a map which reflects the shifts in landscape and the continual growth of SNAICC.





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Opening

SNAICC's story as the National Voice and peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children has been formed through a journey of over 43 years. Since 1981, we have been working for the fulfilment of the rights of our children, and the self-determination of our communities to ensure their identity, wellbeing, safety, development and connection to culture.

SNAICC champions the principles of community control and self-determination as the means for sustained improvements for children and families, which has been at the heart of SNAICC's work.

In the four years since the signing of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap in July 2020, SNAICC and our members have experienced significant growth and demand for our expertise, knowledge and services. The work being done under the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap, and specifically the priority reforms, underpins

our focus at SNAICC. Our landscape continues to shift and change yet our purpose remains as urgent and relevant as before. It is our birthright that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are thriving in culture, raised within strong families and self-determining communities, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Our strategic plan 2025–2028 outlines this vision for our children and young people, as well as the strategic steps we will take over the next three years to get there.

OUR MEMBERS ARE OUR STRENGTH

SNAICC's national membership represents over 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-based child care agencies, Multi-functional Aboriginal Children's Services, crèches, long day care child care services, pre-schools, early childhood education services, early childhood support organisations, family support services, foster care agencies, family reunification services, family group homes, services for young people at risk, community groups and voluntary associations.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ACCOs) have been the leaders of holistic childhood supports for decades, and Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander communities have provided connected and holistic care for our children for millennia. We know that when our families enjoy equitable access to high quality, culturally safe supports – and when our communities have control over the decisions that affect us – our children will thrive. Building strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through enabling self-determination is the critical underlying factor in achieving holistic, wrap-around reform for our children and families. Continuing to build and prioritise the community-controlled sector across the nation is key to our children's futures and core to the strengths of SNAICC as the national voice.



MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

As we unveil our three-year strategic plan, I am filled with optimism and determination. Over the last three years, SNAICC has grown in size, reach and influence – we have never been better placed to agitate for change.

As such, we are at a pivotal moment, as we recommit our efforts to amplifying the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, their families, and communities. Together, we stand resolute in our determination to see a future where our children are safe, empowered, and deeply connected to their cultural identity.

We face challenges in that journey. This strategy comes at a time where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are caught in the crossfire of political manoeuvring, with their needs obscured by inadequate policies and services. Where the true outcomes for our children are veiled through the smoke and mirrors of inquiries and reports. It also comes at a time where we have a wealth of knowledge and evidence to show the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector takes care of our children and families best. It is unacceptable that our young people continue to bear the brunt of systemic failures in maternal health, early education, child protection, and juvenile justice. At SNAICC, we are determined to change this narrative.

This strategy is not just a document, it is our guiding compass. Over the next three years, we will deepen our engagement with communities, build meaningful partnerships with decision-makers, and advocate fiercely for the rights of our children. By sharing insights, stories and evidence of what works, we will drive meaningful change in policy and practice, ensuring that the voices of those we serve are heard and respected.

To realise our ambitious goals, we must also evolve our internal structures and operational model, aligning them with best practices that foster resilience and sustainability. SNAICC will stand as a leader in the sector and leverage the collective voice of our members to influence critical policy decision that put the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families at the forefront.

As we continue this journey with renewed focus, I invite you to embrace our mission with passion and dedication. The road ahead is filled with opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and impact. Together, we will pave the way for strong, safe, and self-determining futures for our children, connected to their families and culture.

"When we talk about stories relating to the rainbow serpent, which brings this incredible structural change with it, we are not only talking about weather patterns, we are talking about things in today's world you would call transformation and we are also describing how you might feel during the process of transformation, what you might look forward to once you get to the end of it and why you shouldn't be afraid of it because while the landscape may never look the same again it will be refreshed and it will be renewed and it will be ready for a new journey and a new story."

Catherine Liddle



MESSAGE FROM OUR *Chairperson*

For more than four decades, SNAICC has stood as a passionate national voice advocating for the rights and wellbeing of our children and communities.

Our legacy is built on a foundation of resilience, cultural pride, and a steadfast dedication to creating a brighter future for our children. We continue this legacy with our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan.

In reflecting on where we have come from, it is clear that our work has never been more vital. While we celebrate our achievements, we must also confront the pressing issues that continue to impact the lives of our children and families. The ongoing crisis of child removal disrupts the very fabric of our communities, and current system responses often fall short of delivering the outcomes we desperately need. However, the new Closing the Gap Agreement presents a watershed moment, offering SNAICC the opportunity to drive real, lasting change.

Our strategic plan focuses on critical areas that resonate deeply with the heartbeat of the organisation. With this plan we will engage and work with our sector leadership to strengthen the safety and wellbeing of our children, to transform the outcomes of children engaged with child protective services and enhance the accessibility and sustainability of ACCO-led early childhood education and care services. We are committed to fostering Indigenous-led solutions that honour the unique value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices and promote the importance of cultural identity and exposure to culture in building resilience and in strengthening wellbeing.

Closing the Gap starts with our children. Family remains the cornerstone of social, cultural, and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and we must ensure they have access to the integrated supports and resources they need.

With this strategy, SNAICC is poised to continue its vital role as an effective national peak body, advocating for the collective voice of our communities. I am excited about the future and the impact we will create through this strategic plan to see a reality where all our children thrive, our communities flourish, and our cultural identity is celebrated.

Muriel Bamblett

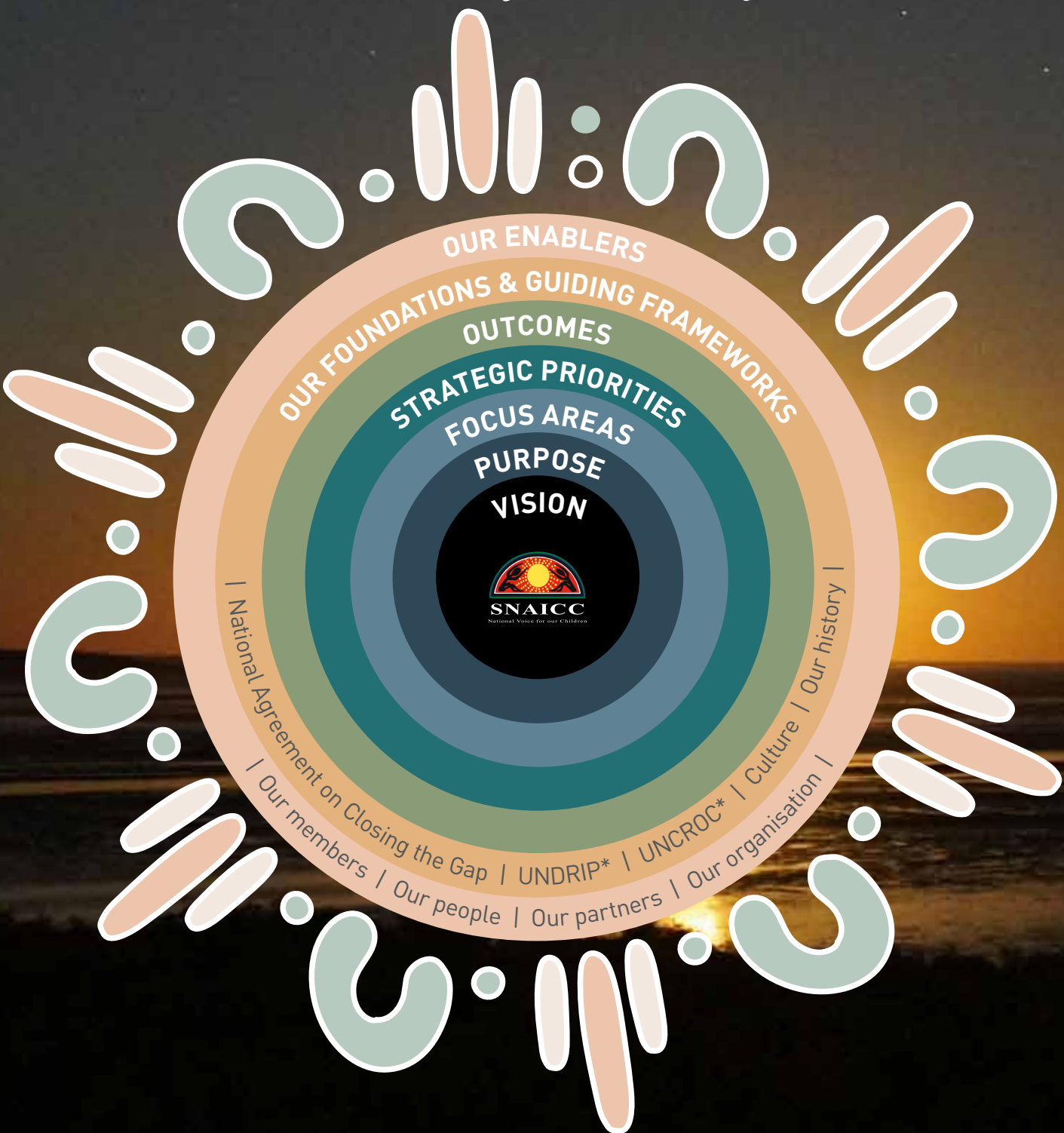
“Our call for the future is for our children to be proud of their heritage, be empowered and strengthened by their culture to speak their truth, to have a say on matters important to them and in the decisions that impact their lives.”

Muriel Bamblett - SNAICC Chair

OUR PLAN ON A *Page*

SNAICC STRATEGIC PLAN | 2025—2028

Our story of change



OUR VISION COMES FROM OVER 65,000 YEARS OF CARE AND NURTURE OF OUR FAMILIES

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people thriving in culture, raised within strong families and self-determining communities, empowered to reach their full potential.

OUR PURPOSE ADVANCES THE LEGACY OF OVER 40 YEARS OF SNAICC AND OUR MEMBERS' WORK

SNAICC is the national voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

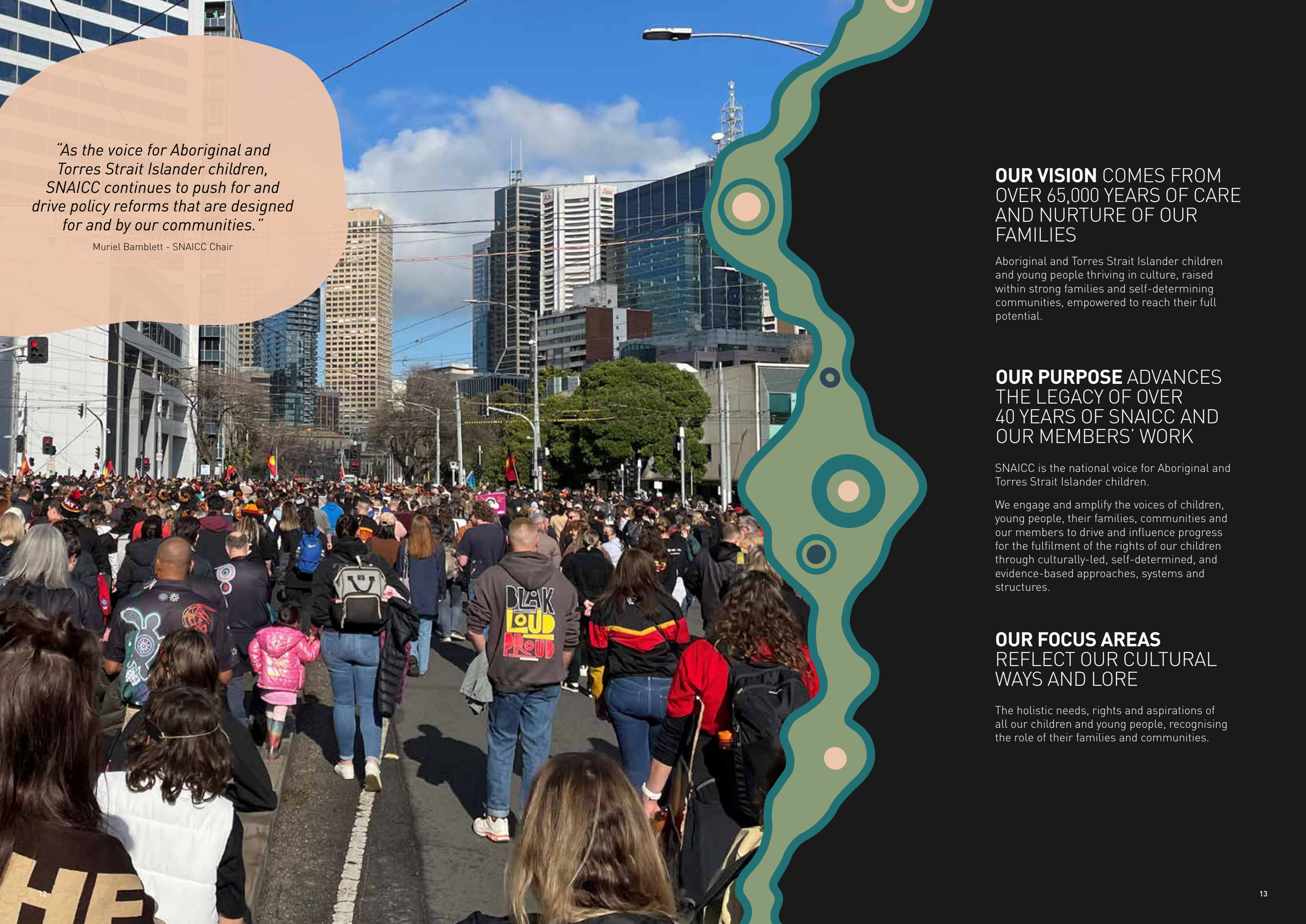
We engage and amplify the voices of children, young people, their families, communities and our members to drive and influence progress for the fulfilment of the rights of our children through culturally-led, self-determined, and evidence-based approaches, systems and structures.

OUR FOCUS AREAS REFLECT OUR CULTURAL WAYS AND LORE

The holistic needs, rights and aspirations of all our children and young people, recognising the role of their families and communities.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1**
Strong national voice driving action on systems & structural change
- STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2**
Building a further strengthened community-controlled sector
- STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3**
Leading knowledge, evidence & data practices



“As the voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, SNAICC continues to push for and drive policy reforms that are designed for and by our communities.”

Muriel Bamblett - SNAICC Chair

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OUR *Strategic* PRIORITIES

Through our strategic priorities we are responding to what our members, communities and leaders have identified as critical building blocks of change towards our vision, aligned to the four Priority Reforms under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap as the roadmap for systems transformation.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Strong national voice driving action on systems & structural change

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Building a further strengthened community-controlled sector

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Leading knowledge, evidence & data practices



Strategic PRIORITY 1

STRONG NATIONAL VOICE DRIVING ACTION ON SYSTEMS & STRUCTURAL CHANGE

For change to happen at the community level we need our voices front and centre in decisions that impact us, to shift decision-making power back to our communities where it belongs, to be changemakers in the systems and structures that are failing us, and be strong partners holding all accountable to better outcomes for our communities.

This means SNAICC will: Drive implementation of systemic and structural change which supports and advances the development, education, safety & wellbeing of children, through leadership, partnerships, advocacy and accountability.

KEY ACTIONS:

- **Dynamic and proactive influence at the interface with government to continue to shape the supportive environment for change** including responding to emerging community needs in a coordinated way and building the capacity and accountability of government to work consistently with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander ways of working.
- **Maintain strong partnerships and shared decision making with governments to progress the further design and implementation of policy and practice commitments** including commitments under Safe & Supported, National Plan to End Violence Against Women and their Children, Early Childhood Policy Partnership, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.
- **Support the implementation of structured transitions from mainstream to ACCO service delivery** including frameworks and guidance, transition support to ACCOs, expectations on resourcing and infrastructure investment, and partnerships with mainstream organisations in transition of funding to ACCOs.
- **Continue to develop and support the implementation of effective accountability mechanisms**, including the National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People, and coordinated work across the Children's Commissioners, Guardians and Advocates.
- **Continue to strengthen two-way engagement** between our membership, communities, families, children and young people and SNAICC for a collective voice.
- **Support and guide the further integration and clarity across the layers of members, Commissioners, Guardians, Advocates, State Peaks and SNAICC** to increase coordination and complementary efforts.
- **Contribute to increased collaboration** across the Coalition of Peaks for joined-up responses and increased influence to advance the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.
- **National systems and standards leadership** for early childhood education, care and development, and child safety & wellbeing.

[Supports National Agreement on Closing The Gap – Priority Reform 1 and 3]

“There is no substitute for Aboriginal voices representing Aboriginal people. Decades of staunch advocacy from SNAICC, Members, and the ACCO sector was instrumental in the establishment of a National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People.”

Muriel Bamblett - SNAICC Chair

Strategic PRIORITY 2

BUILDING A FURTHER STRENGTHENED COMMUNITY- CONTROLLED SECTOR

Our community-controlled organisations are an act of self-determination, with their expertise and capabilities being a critical factor in achieving holistic, wrap-around supports for our children and families. Growing and supporting a stronger community-controlled sector with the decision-making power and resources we need to deliver for our people is key to progress.

This means SNAICC will: Enable sector growth, strengthening & sustainability, from the national to community level, to build the sector of the future.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Continued implementation of community partner role, to further strengthen communities and services to deliver coordinated responses and integrated services for families, including Early Years Support, Connected Beginnings, CCCFR expansion program, Aboriginal Transition Leadership Framework and Improving Multidisciplinary Responses program and other emerging areas and priorities.
- Support and enable ACCO sector strengthening across areas of workforce, capital infrastructure, service delivery and governance to increase service delivery, coverage, capacity, quality and resources.
- Continue to increase the proportion of child and family services funding to ACCOs across jurisdictions & the Commonwealth, including in line with the recommendations of the Stronger ACCOs, Stronger Families Report and Family Matters Reports.
- Guide the development and implementation of ACCO funding models and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-led, place-based commissioning models which meet the needs of the sector and local communities.
- Support communities and the sector to establish peak bodies across jurisdictions and nurture sector growth, including through facilitating cross-sectoral learning.
- Further develop SNAICC's sustainability including through diversified funding sources and strong operating models.

(Supports National Agreement on Closing The Gap – Priority Reform 2)

"SNAICC has been really helpful to us, to help us provide better services for our children and families. To be able to have some culturally responsive and safe resources to show our children and families that they are valued and respected is a game-changer."

ACCO ECEC service provider



"We're really grateful to have SNAICC involved in our service, we have a strong connected relationship with them. We feel that they advocate strongly for us. We have had SNAICC support us [on the ground and] also receive some beautiful natural resources that were really rich in culture."

ACCO ECEC service provider

Strategic PRIORITY 3

LEADING KNOWLEDGE, EVIDENCE & DATA PRACTICES

As story-tellers and knowledge holders, we continue our rich practices of sharing our wisdom and passing on the lessons that speak to our strength in culture and excellence in caring for and nurturing our families. This sharing will support further changes in policies, systems, ways of working and understanding that better reflects our ways of knowing, doing and being.

This means SNAICC will: Provide leadership across knowledge, evidence and data to support transformative action founded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander excellence, culture, and data sovereignty.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determined knowledge creation and dissemination within the sector.
- Advance knowledge, awareness and understanding amongst the broader population through impactful communications and accessible knowledge sharing.
- Lead the coordinated development of the research agenda and priorities, evidence guidance frameworks, national training and communities of practice bringing together Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander researchers.
- Commission Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and evidence development on identified research priorities including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led models of care and service delivery.
- Lead the development of data governance and data sovereignty approaches, practices and systems across the sector and broader landscape relating to children and young people, including improved data accessibility and capability, informed by our communities based on their own priorities.

[Supports National Agreement on Closing The Gap – Priority Reform 4]

“Being an Aboriginal service, it can be isolating at times, but being involved with SNAICC has opened up wonderful opportunities to meet other like-minded early childhood professionals, who work in a unique space like us.”

ECEC Service



OUR *Outcomes*

SNAICC's overarching outcomes integrate our work, from the grassroots to the national policy tables, as we work towards our vision.

As we move along our journey of impact measurement, our outcomes will continue to frame our progress and provide direction. These outcomes will also be used for SNAICC to measure our progress and share back with our members and communities.

"Seeing and hearing Catherine (Liddle) (SNAICC CEO) speak in mainstream media gives us confidence that we are being heard on the ground."

SNAICC Member





OUR *Partners in Change*

We continue to walk this path with our members, communities and partners as we together build a powerful story of change.

These intersections remain as critical as ever to the achievement of our vision and fulfilment of our purpose. They represent many parts of the complex and layered systems in which our work exists. We honour this work and recognise the influence and impact it has across this story.

OUR *Enablers*

OUR ENABLERS INCLUDE:

Our members & sectors

- Our members, other services, jurisdictional Peaks and Commissioners, who together advance the fulfilment of the rights of our children, from the individual to the national level.

Our people

- Who work to deliver our strategy and demonstrate our values, working in a trauma-informed, culturally strong and responsive manner.

Our partners

- *Coalition of Peaks working to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap*: Our strength in collaboration across the community-controlled landscape and mutual support for joined-up progress.
- *Government, universities, non-Indigenous organisations, philanthropists*: Our broad range of partners contribute to achieving our purpose and vision, actively engaging and supporting our work.

Our organisation

- *Structures, systems & processes*, including a developing data culture and supportive technology systems.
- *Resources* including diverse resources within SNAICC and our members, supporting financial sustainability.



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www.snaicc.org.au