



Statement of Claim toward a

NSW Local Decision Making
Regional Accord Agreement

And

Commonwealth Empowered Communities
Regional Development Agreement

18 April 2018

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	- 2 -
Background	- 3 -
Central Coast Aboriginal Community Demographics	- 3 -
Aboriginal Community identified priority issues on Central Coast.....	- 4 -
Community Survey Results	- 5 -
Employment Strategy	- 8 -
Trauma Informed Services	- 8 -
Structural Reform and Program Specific Priorities	- 8 -
Empowered Youth First Priority Development Agenda.....	- 9 -
Regional Structural Reform Priorities	- 10 -
Objective 1: Aboriginal Community Led Decision Making	- 10 -
Objective 2: Tailored services based on local and regional community identified need – Pathway to Empowerment Model	- 11 -
Objective 3: Regionally Driven Investment.....	- 12 -
Objective 4: Regional Accountability	- 13 -
Structural Reform Outcomes & Actions	- 14 -
Program Specific Priority Issues, Outcomes & Actions	- 16 -
Regional Agreement Governance, Monitoring, Review	- 18 -
Implementation Steering Committee & Project Team	- 18 -
Monitoring & Reporting.....	- 18 -
Independent Review & re-negotiation process	- 18 -
References.....	- 18 -

Background

This Statement of Claim has been developed by Barang Regional Alliance Ltd ('Barang') to guide joint negotiations with the State and Commonwealth Governments to agree a NSW Accord Agreement (under the Ochre Local Decision Making initiative) and Regional Development Agreement (under the Commonwealth Empowered Communities initiative) which will deliver on Barang's 'Empowered Youth' first priority regional reform agenda.

In accordance with advice from the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, it has been structured to outline the priority issues identified by the Central Coast Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ('Aboriginal') community to be addressed as its first priority under these initiatives, what outcomes are desired, what needs to change and what actions are needed to make this change happen.

Central Coast Aboriginal Community Demographics

The NSW Central Coast boasts one of the fastest growing Aboriginal populations in Australia. Between 2006 (7,012) and 2011 (10,935) the population grew by 56% and this trend was repeated with the 2016 census data (12,485 people, an increase of 38% from 2011).

It also has one of the youngest Aboriginal populations in Australia with 2,521 Aboriginal people between the ages of 15 and 24 (up from 1,893 in 2011). The median age for Aboriginal people on the Central Coast is 21 compared to 42 for non-Aboriginal people.

The unemployment rate for Aboriginal people on the Central Coast is 13.9% (compared with 6.5% for the non-Indigenous population) and the youth unemployment rate is recorded between 31% to 39%.

Aboriginal Community identified priority issues on Central Coast

During 2017, Barang Regional Alliance undertook an extensive survey amongst the Aboriginal population on the Central Coast, attended numerous community events and conducted a number of strategic reviews and regional workshops to identify and confirm its community led, first regional reform agenda priorities (Figure 1).

Obj 1: Community Led Priorities

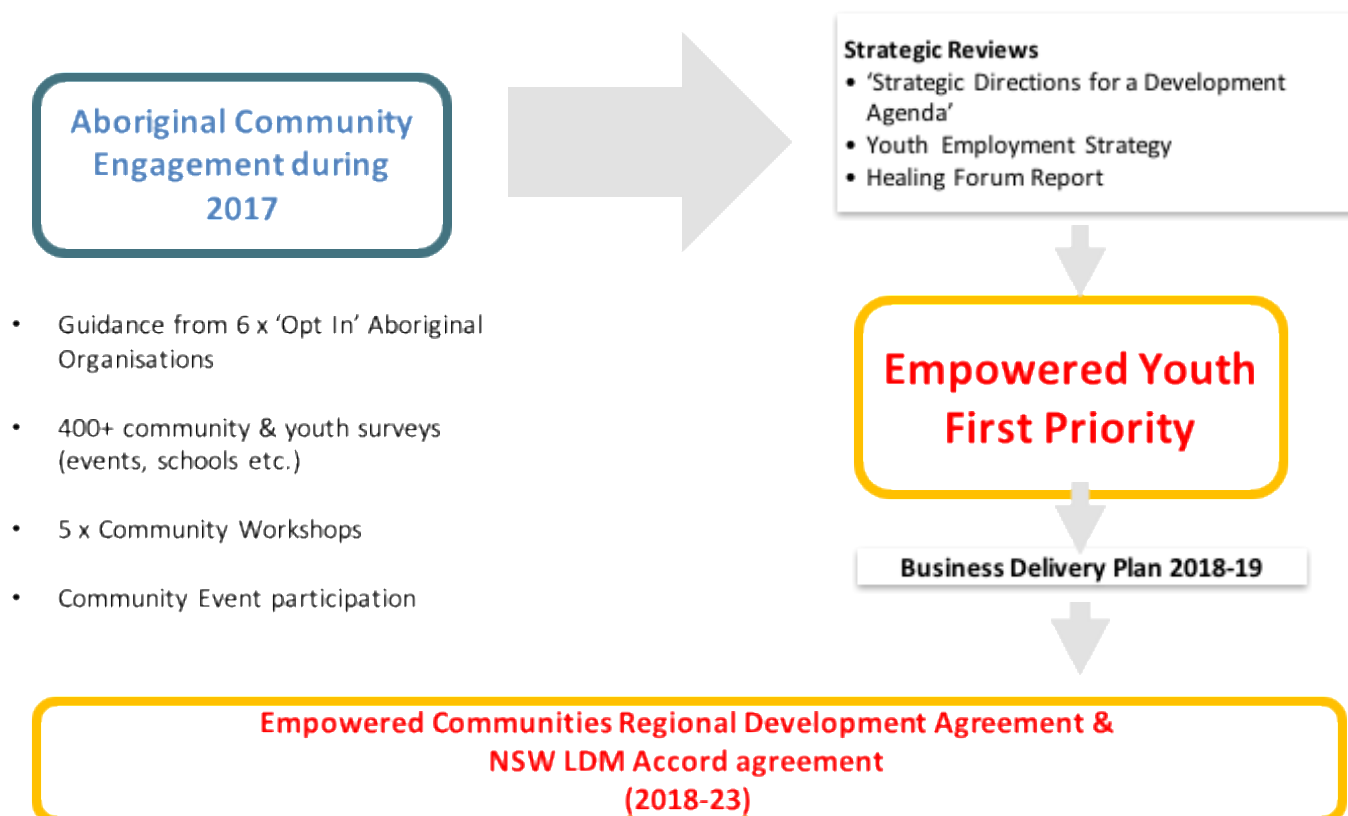


Figure 1: Summary of Barang's Community engagement and planning process during 2017

Community Survey Results

Figures 2 and 3 below provide a summary of the views and priorities which emerged from the 400+ community surveys, namely:-

- the issues of most significance to our young people (162 surveys) were
 - Culture (38%)
 - Health and wellbeing (27%) – with 50% of those citing mental health as their biggest concern
 - Education (19%)
- the issues of most significance to our general community (240 surveys) were
 - Employment (31%)
 - Health and wellbeing (28%)
 - Culture (25%)

In addition, our Aboriginal controlled community backbone organisations providing services to the central coast community identified early childhood intervention and integrated parent & family support programs as having critical importance to the long term empowerment of our youth.

What our Community Says...

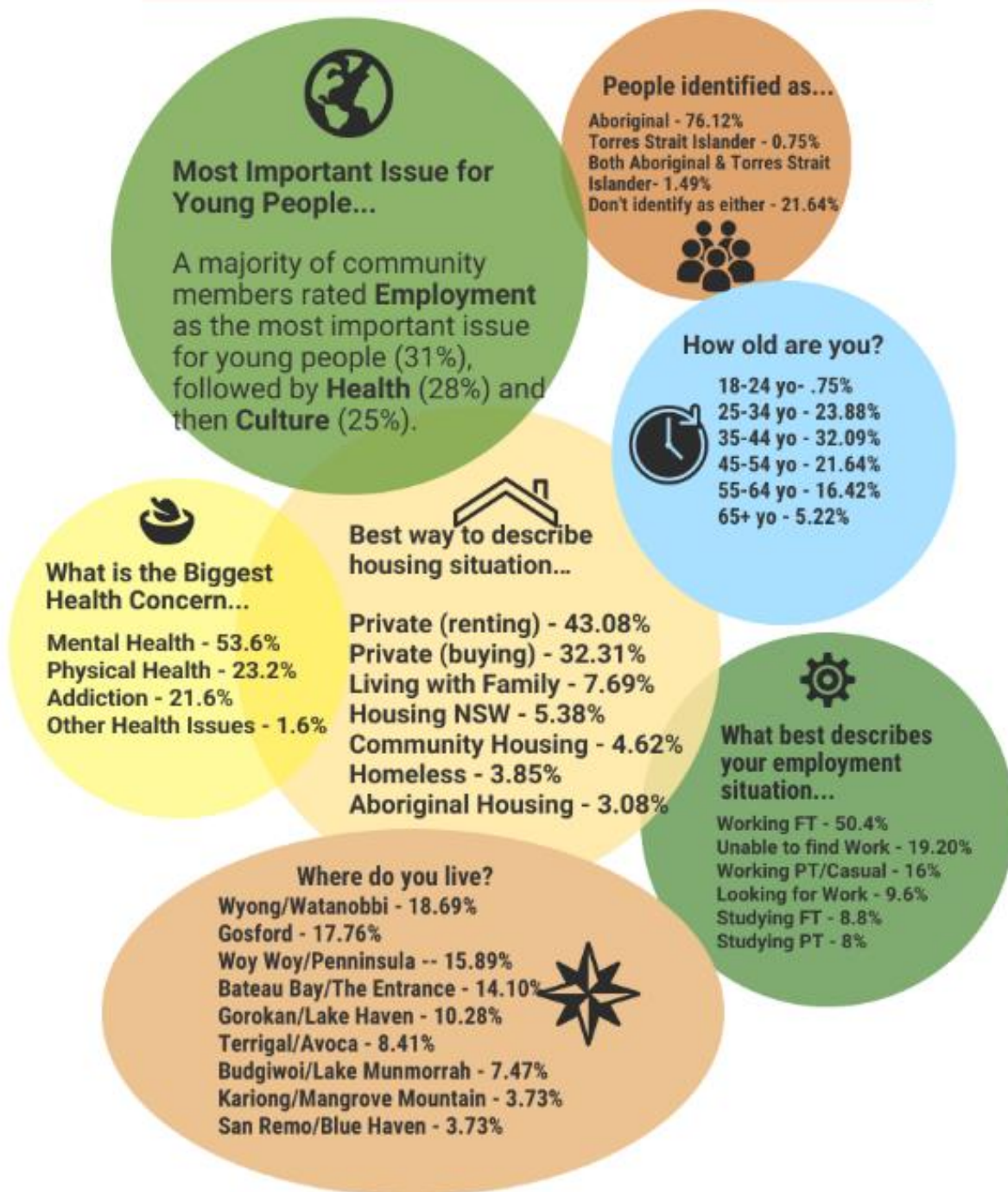


Figure 2: Summary of Community Survey Results

What our Young People Say...

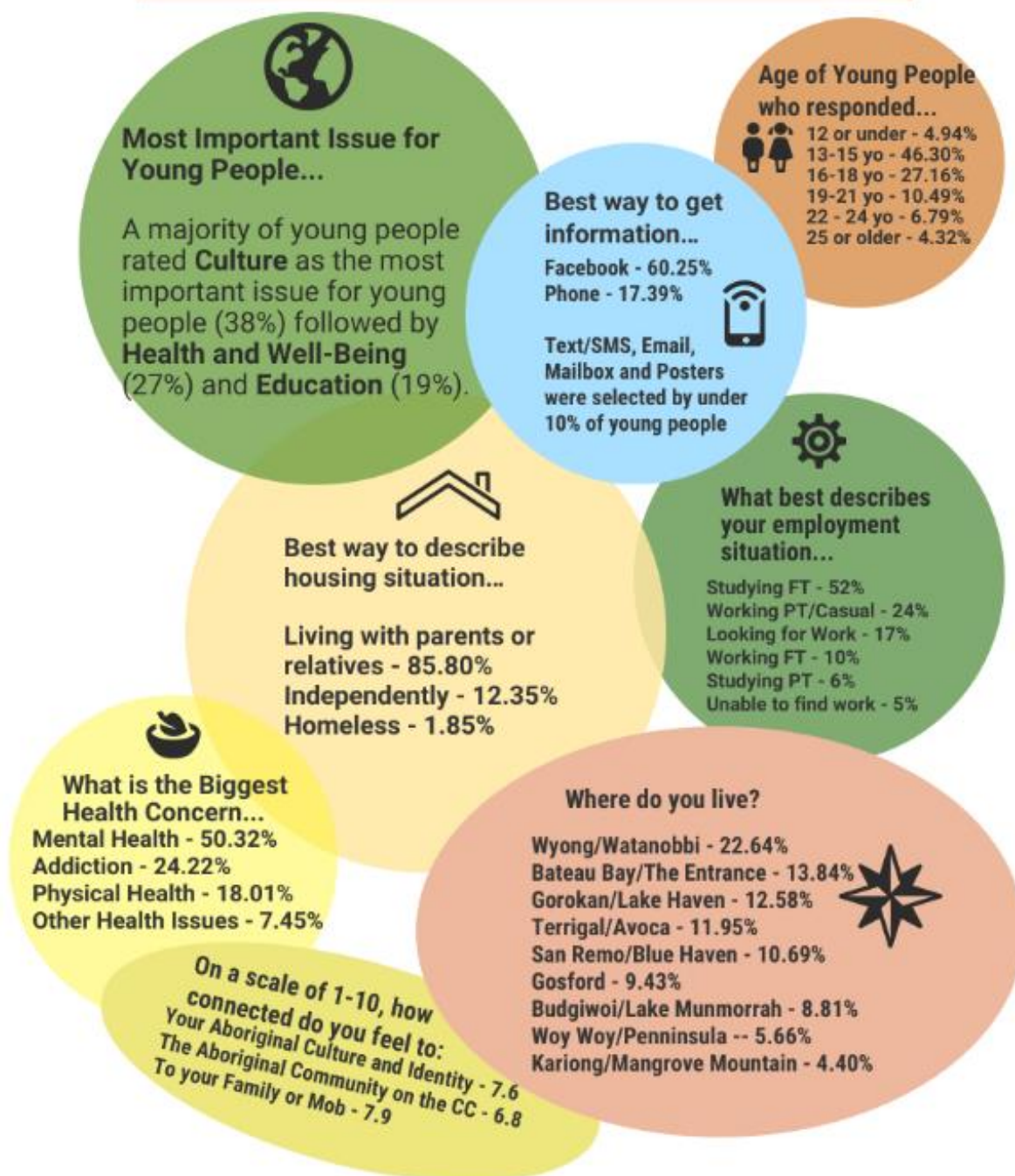


Figure 3: Summary of Youth Survey Results

Employment Strategy

Findings of our key strategic reviews included those from the Price Waterhouse Coopers (Indigenous) Consulting Group Youth Employment Strategy. This strategy highlighted the following key issues which are limiting the uptake and success of employment, traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities: -

- Insufficient school based support for Aboriginal students, including building pathways from school to employment and other career development opportunities;
- Service Providers (Job Actives, training providers etc) have difficulties in engaging with the community to find suitable clients for traineeship, apprenticeship and employment programs and initiatives;
- Limited culturally appropriate pre and post placement induction, mentoring and support for Aboriginal employees (especially in first year of placement);
- Low Employer workplace understanding of Aboriginal culture and issues faced by Aboriginal employees which is impacting on retention rates.

Addressing these issues will be critical in achieving sustainable employment outcomes and there are currently few examples of effective organisations providing these services on the Central Coast.

Trauma Informed Services

Barang, in partnership with NSW Department Aboriginal Affairs and the Healing Foundation held a Healing Forum on the Central Coast in November 2017 which highlighted the need for Trauma Informed Services.

Trauma-informed services are based on a deep understanding of trauma and the impact trauma has on individuals, families and communities. All services are seen through a trauma lens. Across all the organisations there is a high level of congruency, including, but not limited to; governance, management and service delivery levels (Anglin 2002). Responding to trauma, providing opportunities for healing and recovery is understood to be at the core of the organisation's purpose (Atkinson, in press)

As part of the oldest living continuous culture in the world, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people developed sophisticated ways of healing from trauma and loss. By reconnecting with knowledge systems and practices, culture can help heal our pain and create opportunities for harmony and balance that allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate more fully in family and community life in health, safe and confident ways. (Healing Foundation Growing our Children up Strong and Deadly pg7).

Structural Reform and Program Specific Priorities

A common theme that emerged through our community consultation and strategic review process was a collective consensus for the need for 'structural reform' that puts power into the community through greater decision making over the long term, instead of 'once off', piecemeal initiatives. Our statement of claim responds to this through seeking structural reform outcomes that embed community led decision making into the regional governance structures for core and discretionary funding programs driving service delivery in the region.

Service and Program specific priorities under our Empowered Youth reform agenda include culture, mental health, employment, education and child protection services.

Empowered Youth First Priority Development Agenda

The Demographic trends on the Central Coast, the views gathered from our community and our strategic reviews have guided Barang toward an **Empowered Youth** Regional Development Agenda (Figure 4) as its first priority.

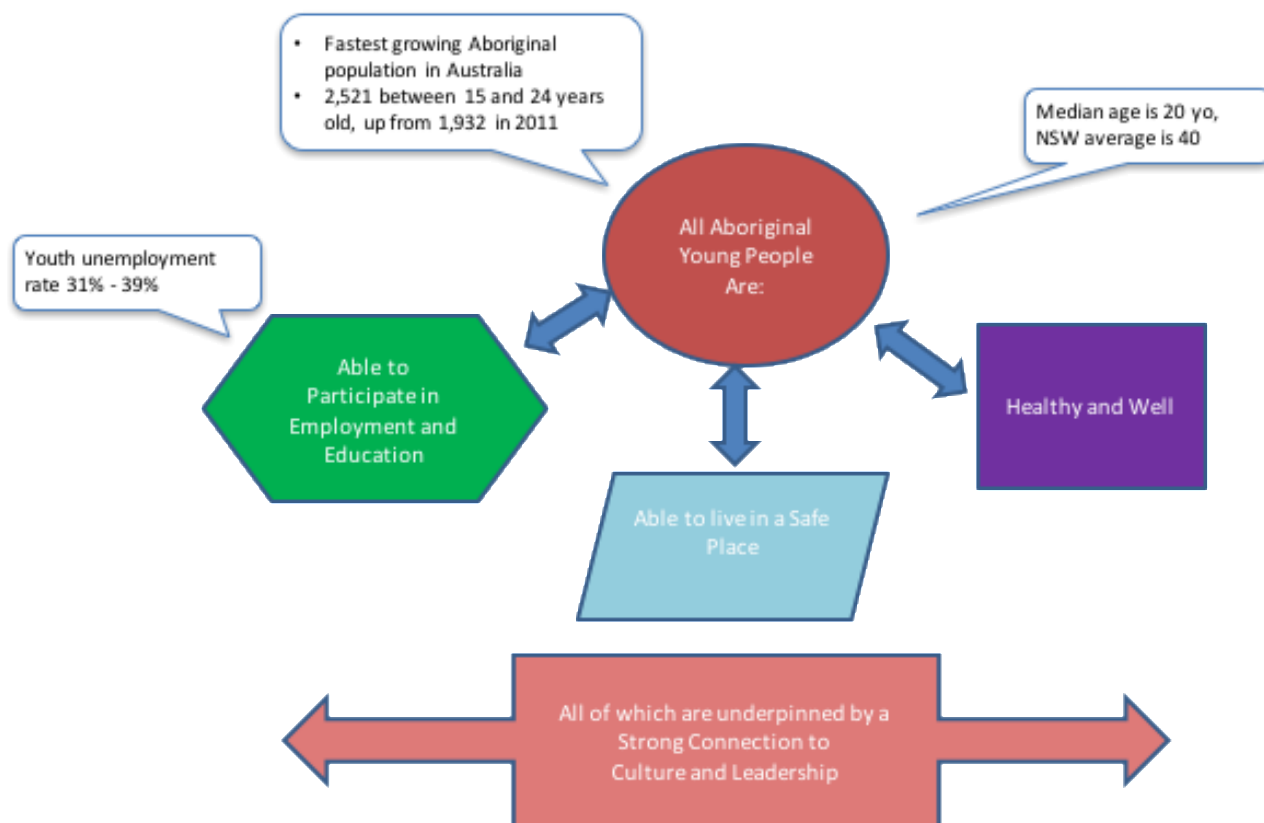


Figure 4: Empowered Youth First Priority Regional Reform Priority

This consultation not only identified the issues to be addressed but also the outcomes, actions and change required to address these issues and confirmed it will require both systematic structural and program specific reforms which we have outlined below.

Regional Structural Reform Priorities

Our Statement of claim proposes outcomes, governance and service delivery reforms, processes and actions aimed at achieving 4 key objectives to enable us to achieve a long term, sustainable shift 'from control to empowerment (Figure 5).



Figure 5: From Control to Empowerment

Objective 1: Aboriginal Community Led Decision Making

Currently the Aboriginal community has limited opportunity to influence and improve the services being delivered to its members. These concerns were repeatedly expressed through our community consultations in 2017 as was the overwhelming support of our empowerment objectives.

Our consultations revealed frustration from both the Aboriginal community and also government agencies and service providers about the lack of effective consultation and limited involvement of the community in regional decision-making forums.

This represents an important missed opportunity to harness the learnings from those with direct first-hand experience of which services are working best and what improvements can be made.

Objective 2: Tailored services based on local and regional community identified need – Pathway to Empowerment Model

The deficit approach of Close the Gap is too heavily weighted on the provision of basic and specialist services. Too often these services tick the boxes without building community capability or aspiration, resulting in individuals cycling through the service system again and again.

This over-investment in ‘band aid solutions’ reinforces a cycle of disempowerment and despair. It removes community control and puts it in the hands of well-meaning mainstream organisations who meet their ‘outcomes’ without actually having any lasting impact on community. We call this recurrent cycle through basic and specialist services the ‘Crazy 8’.

We are seeking a reform process that invests in building a genuine ‘Pathway to Empowerment’ (Figure 6) through a refocussing of services toward community (individual, community and organisational) capability development and creation of more accessible opportunities.

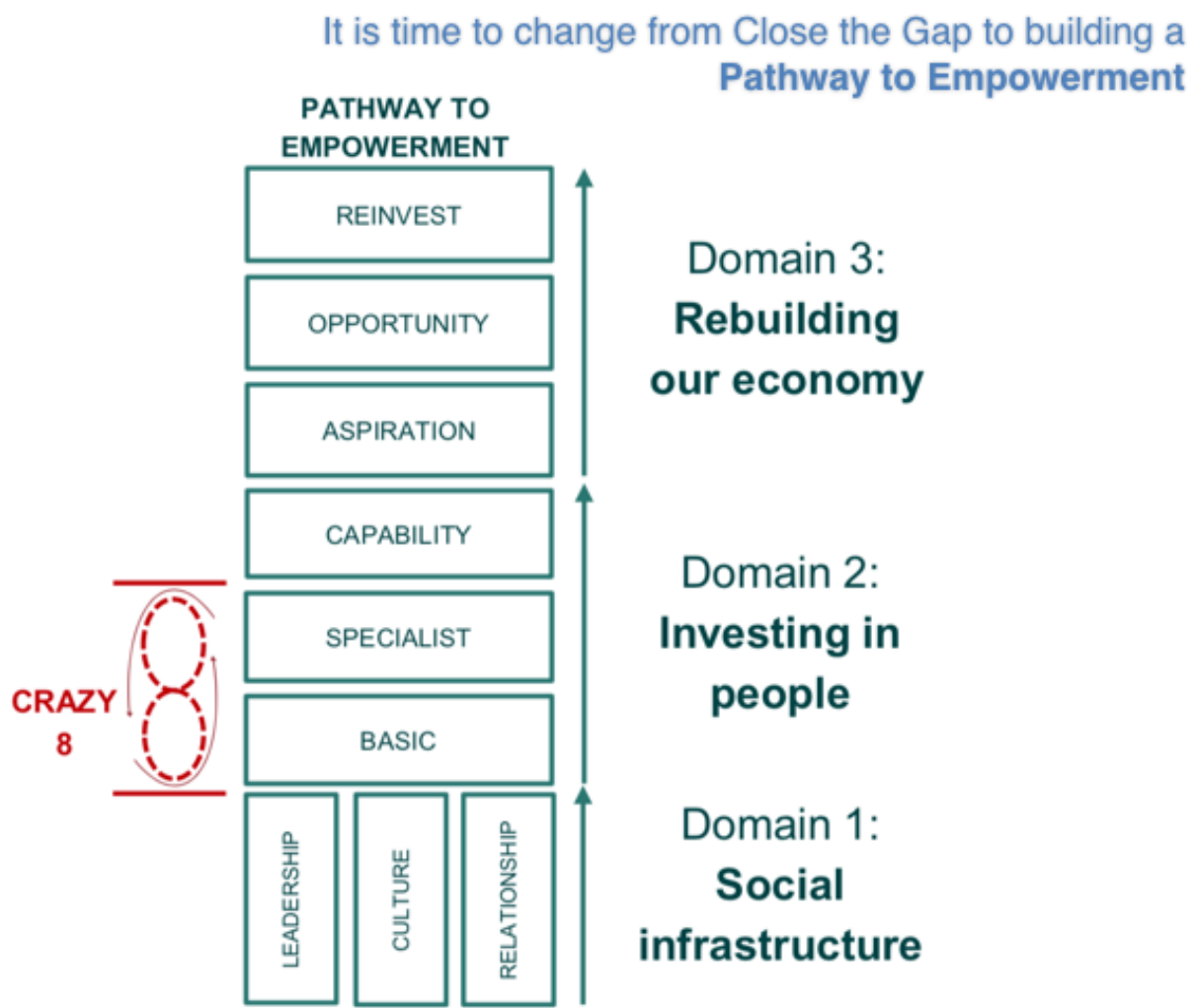


Figure 6: Pathway to Empowerment Model as developed by Inner Sydney Empowered Communities (ISEC), see below.

This pathway to empowerment means: -

- Funding and supporting services that invest in people and organisations through capability and aspiration building as core business activity.
- Rebuilding our regional economy through developing community aspiration and providing transformational opportunities that enables discretionary income and community reinvestment to build intergenerational wealth and business opportunities.

The Barang Development Agenda will provide new guidelines for doing business in the region, ensuring that stakeholders work to the community's priorities and are aligned to the Pathway to Empowerment.

We would also like to formally acknowledge this 'Pathway to Empowerment' model and 'Crazy 8' syndrome was developed by the Inner Sydney Empowered Community (ISEC) backbone organisation in 2017 as a direct response to their engagement with their Redfern and La Perouse communities. It resonates deeply with Barangs backbone organisations and Aboriginal community on the Central Coast.

Objective 3: Regionally Driven Investment

Currently there is limited community involvement in influencing how core program and discretionary government funding is allocated to Aboriginal services.

An important step in realising our structural reform process is the establishment of practical Joint Decision Making (JDM) mechanisms (Figure 7) to support government funded organisations to align their activities to the communities' regional priorities and drive the Pathway to Empowerment.

A recent NSW Government estimate of Aboriginal expenditure in the Central Coast in 2014-15 was \$103m across all State government services. Barang is seeking to build JDM processes around a significant portion of this expenditure over time.

This reform process includes establishing autonomous community-controlled investment mechanisms to accept and distribute funding aligned to our regional development agenda priorities.

This shift places the Aboriginal community in the empowering position of purchaser and co-purchaser of services, transitioning away from the current supply-driven approach to a new demand-driven paradigm.

Structural Reform Process

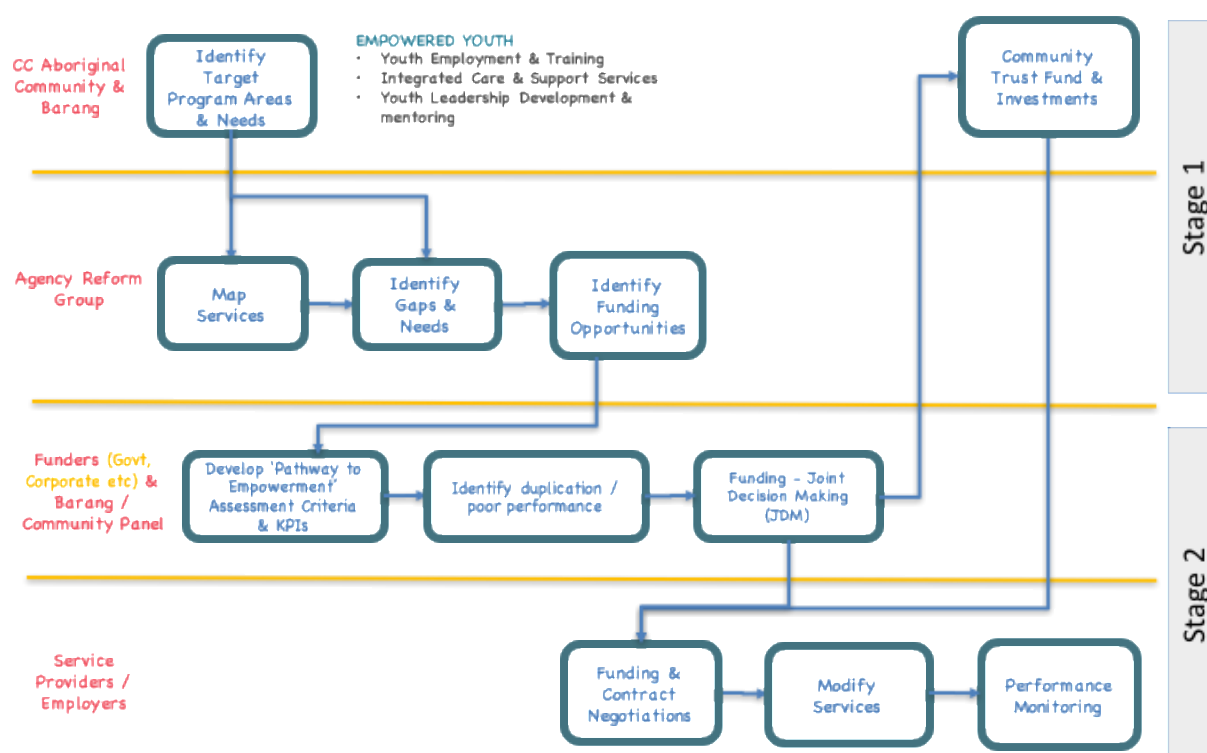


Figure 7: Structural Reform Process

Objective 4: Regional Accountability

Importantly, the structural reform process includes the establishment of new ways of measuring and communicating progress, moving away from the deficit approach of Closing the Gap, and developing a reporting method for tracking progress towards our Pathway to Empowerment.

This will drive improved responsiveness and productivity of services being delivered.

Structural Reform Outcomes & Actions

Outcome	What Would Change	Actions
Community Led Decision Making		<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Community has greater ability to influence the services being delivered to their community, resulting in improved access to and effectiveness of these services	Greater community decision making, and oversight of services being delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing Commonwealth and State regional decision-making bodies to identify and remedy gaps in effective Aboriginal representation Barang representation on the NSW CC Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) and relevant backbone organisation representation on RLE sub-committees Barang representation on regional DPMC decision making mechanism Seek ongoing funding commitments for Barang Regional Alliance to ensure it can represent the voice of the CC Aboriginal community Seek allocation of Senior manager level appointments in key Departments to part time / secondment arrangement with responsibility for implementation of agreements and internal change management. Formalise 2-way reporting into State-wide decision-making bodies (eg. NCARA)
Regionally tailored Services		
Long term, sustainable building of community capability, aspiration and opportunity	Services are re-designed and delivered to support the 'Pathway to Empowerment Model' (Figure 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate formal partnership agreements with State and Commonwealth Agencies to adopt and resource the Empowered Youth regional structural reform agenda (Figure 4) and the 'Pathway to Empowerment' (Figure 6) and Structural Reform Process (Figure 7) to achieving it.
	Trauma Informed Services are being delivered across the Central Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments funding and delivering services review their policies, programs and funding agreements to service providers to ensure they respond to the need for Trauma Informed Services being delivered.
Regionally Driven Investment		<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Funding and contractual decisions for services are assessed against their ability to deliver a 'Pathway to Empowerment'	Funding for services are aligned with the communities' regional development agenda priorities. More funding is available for these services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm agencies responsible for development and delivery of services associated with the Empowered Youth first priority initiative priority programs and seek resource commitments to prioritise the implementation of the 'Structural Reform Process' (Figure 7) for these programs. Establish annual reporting mechanisms to identify funding streams, amounts, opportunities associated with our Empowered Youth priorities Agree a scope, process and timeframe for establishing JDM processes (Figure 7) across these core and discretionary Aboriginal service delivery funding

		<p>streams to drive the Pathway to Empowerment model of service delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regional community-controlled investment mechanisms (eg. Community trust fund) to accept and administer funding opportunities targeted to agreed regional development agenda priorities. • Establish DGR status for Barang Regional Alliance
More accountable Services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Long term improvement to the productivity of services being delivered	Services would be effectively monitored and refined through an agreed, measurable, responsive set of KPI's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify indicators to measure, report and communicate progress towards our Pathway to Empowerment objectives. • Negotiate data gathering, sharing, monitoring and reporting agreements with key agencies

Program Specific Priority Issues, Outcomes & Actions

Extensive community consultation during 2017 (as summarised above) has identified the following specific first priority program areas, gaps and needs to be addressed to progress our Empowered Youth regional development agenda (Figure 4).

All the identified actions and solutions below would be developed by the responsible government agencies and service providers, in consultation with the Aboriginal community and Barang, to ensure solutions and funding priorities align with the Pathway to Empowerment model (Figure 6) and structural reform process (Figure 7).

Outcome	What Would Change	Actions
Career Pathways		
More secondary school children are leaving school into paid employment or traineeships	More Aboriginal students leaving school into formal employment or further education positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund Aboriginal Education Officers (AEO's) and school-based traineeships in all secondary schools. • Fund wrap around Integrated parenting and child focussed care programs (refer below) and mentoring programs for primary and secondary students.
Recruitment & Employment		
More jobs are available and taken up by Aboriginal youth	Better engagement of unemployed youth by JA's and recruitment agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JA's and recruitment agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ employ local Aboriginal mentors and support works (directly or through local Aboriginal service providers) to improve engagement with community. ○ Pre-intake job readiness training and support needs assessments are completed for all Aboriginal clients. ○ Integrated care & support arrangements are negotiated with service providers for new Aboriginal clients.
	More major project developments make commitments to employ local Aboriginal people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure contract and procurement managers for major projects (greater than \$10million) on the Central Coast utilise Commonwealth and State Aboriginal procurement policies that stipulate specific employment targets, pre and post support (provided by Aboriginal employees or organisations) and effective monitoring, reporting mechanisms and penalty provisions into tender documents and contracts. • Clarify government agency responsibility for monitoring and enforcing these major project contracts and increase accountability measures (including back to Barang and the Aboriginal community) to ensure contractual obligations are monitored and met and penalties enforced. • Ensure all workplace managers and staff on these projects have regular, locally delivered cultural awareness training.
	Government agencies with regional offices have employment and career progression targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all agencies with regional offices have appropriate minimum employment, retention, mentoring and career progression targets for local Aboriginal employees and trainees.
Culture & Leadership		

Aboriginal youth have a stronger sense of cultural identity and pride		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies and programs to adequately fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ cultural strengthening programs for Aboriginal youth that is delivered by local Aboriginal community providers. ○ youth mentoring programs ○ Youth leadership development
Parent & Family Support		
Aboriginal children & Young people have the fundamental right to grow up in an environment that affords them necessary protection so they feel safe & not abused; & assistance to ensure their health & wellbeing is maximised.	All Aboriginal families on the Central Coast receive the support they need to raise their children in a safe environment and receive the culturally appropriate health care they need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund strengths based family programs :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That provide spaces in which Aboriginal families feel physically and emotionally safe; ○ Where Children & Young Peoples voices are heard; ○ Provide Integrating care, bringing together all services and supports needed to assist individuals, families and communities to enhance their physical, emotional, social, spiritual wellbeing (eg. The <i>"Integrated Child and Family Centres"</i> initiative). ○ Which Enable recovery – services empower individuals, families and communities to take control of their own healing and recovery and adopt strengths-based approaches ○ Provide an environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening (Williams, Robyn (2008). ○ Examples
Mental Health & Integrated Care		
More youth have access to quality, integrated mental health care services	Improved access to Aboriginal specific mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map current services and gaps and negotiate increased service provision as required.
Aboriginal youth receive integrated support	Integrated, cross sectoral support models are available across the Central Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine scope and design for an effective integrated support model and seek funding opportunities for its delivery (e.g. CC MARC (Multi Agency Response Centre).

Regional Agreement Governance, Monitoring, Review

Implementation Steering Committee & Project Team

- Establish a Community and Departmental regional manager level steering committee responsible for overseeing the implementation of the agreements.
- Establish a project team to drive the implementation that will include formal resource commitments of senior staff (through formal secondment or part time project allocation arrangements) from key Commonwealth and State Departments with responsibility managing the implementation of agreements and internal change management.
- Ensure Department managers and project officers have accountability measures built into their annual performance review processes and contracts.

Monitoring & Reporting

- Establish mechanisms and KPI's to monitor and report back on progress on the implementation and outcomes of the agreements.

Independent Review & re-negotiation process

- Confirm the process for completing an independent review of our first Accord and Regional Development agreements to inform improved future EC and LDM initiatives.

References

Healing Foundation – Growing our children up strong and Deadly

Anglin, J 2002, Pain, normality and the struggle for congruence: Reinterpreting residential care for children and youth, The Haworth Press, Binghamton, New York.

Atkinson, J. (in press). Trauma-informed care for Indigenous Australian Children: Resource Sheet Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.

Williams, Robyn (2008). Cultural Safety: what does it mean for our work practice? Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health. 23(2):213-214.