



Australian  
Human Rights  
Commission

# Indigenous Women and the Development, Application, Preservation and Transmission of Scientific Knowledge

Australian Human Rights Commission

Submission to the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous  
peoples

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# 1 Introduction

1. The Australian Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is Australia's 'A status' national human rights institution established and operating in full compliance with the Paris Principles. Information about the Commission can be found at: [www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au).
2. The Commission welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission to the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people for his report to the Human Rights Council on Indigenous Women and the Development, Application, Preservation and Transmission of Scientific Knowledge.
3. This submission describes the wealth of First Nations women's knowledge across multiple sectors and the work women are doing to protect, revive and transmit their knowledges. It also outlines the need for structural change to ensure First Nations women are guaranteed the spaces to lead with their knowledges and to drive transformative change for the wellbeing of all human and non-human life.
4. In doing so, this submission highlights the key findings of the Commission's recent national engagements with Australia's First Nations women and girls—the Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Project—and signposts parts of the [\*Wiyi Yani U Thangani \(Women's Voices\): Securing our Rights, Securing our Future 2020 Report\*](#) (the Report) and [Implementation Framework](#).
5. In making this submission, the Commission also aims to raise awareness within the international human rights community—and amongst its indigenous representative in particular—of the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Project as a model for elevating the voices of First Nations women. The Report is a rich source of information providing a First Nations gender-lens to a broad range of issues and policy areas, and is a First Nations female-lead roadmap for structural change.

## **2 The Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Project**

### **2.1 Background and overview**

6. Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) is a multi-year systemic change project led by Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO. The aim of the project has been to recognise the rights and lives of Australia's First Nations women and girls, and to elevate their voices to the spaces of decision-making. Through Wiyi Yani U Thangani, Australia's First Nations women have been heard as a collective for the first time in over 34 years.
7. Throughout 2018, Commissioner Oscar and her team travelled to 50 locations in urban, regional and remote areas across every state and territory. They conducted 106 engagements and met with 2,294 women of all ages, including senior elders, girls from 12 to 17 years of age, women in prison and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Sistergirl and Brotherboy (LGBTQIA+SB). Over 100 submissions and 300 survey responses were also received.
8. Wiyi Yani U Thangani has been guided by key international human rights instruments including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC). And the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
9. This submission reaffirms the fundamental importance of First Nations women and girls right to express and practice their culture through the maintenance, resurgence and intergenerational transference of their customs, laws, languages and knowledge systems. The right to culture, expressed in this broad sense, underpins the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report. In this regard the Report and submission highlights Articles 11, 12 and 13 of UNDRIP, which in summary state that Indigenous peoples have the right to develop past, present and future manifestations of their culture and to transmit culture to future generations; to access the

objects, places and lands that enable them to do this; and that States should take effective measures to protect these rights.

10. The Report—which was tabled in the Federal Parliament in December 2020—captures what women and girls consider to be their key strengths and concerns, what principles they think should be enshrined in the design of policies, programs and services, and what measures they recommend to be taken to effectively promote the enjoyment of their human rights into the future.
11. The Report sets out a comprehensive plan for structural reform including seven overarching recommendations to address the systemic issues that apply across all aspects of First Nations women and girls lives. Also included are four pathways forward corresponding to each of the Report's Parts (Supporting strong families and communities, Living and belonging, Healthy and engaged lives, Thriving communities and sustainable economies). These traverse all areas of life from land and country to justice, health, employment and many others.
12. An animated version of the Report's key findings can be watched [here](#).
13. Following the Report, an Implementation Framework has been developed to guide women and girls, communities, governments and decision-makers to take action on the findings of the Report. Across four thematic areas aligned to the overarching recommendations of the Report, the Implementation Framework sets out major priorities, action areas and structural changes that define how women and girls want systems to function, where investments must be made, and provides examples of women-led initiatives.
14. Full versions of relevant major priorities from the Implementation Framework can be found in Appendix A.
15. The Implementation Framework takes a gender-responsive, intersectional and holistic approach. It uses systems-thinking practices to move beyond isolated and sectorised reforms to large-scale structural change focused on addressing the drivers of the inequalities in First Nations women and girls' lives.

### **3 First Nations women's knowledges**

16. Since time immemorial, First Nations women have transmitted stories, songlines, and languages that carry the knowledges that sustain the health and wellbeing of their people, country and of future society.
17. Wiyi Yani U Thangani provides the evidence that women's knowledges are essential to supporting families and communities. Women's knowledges are critical to raising children, supporting young people through early childhood to adulthood, maintaining social cohesion, healing people from trauma and illness, and caring for land, waters and animals.
18. Throughout the engagements there was great concern that many elements of culture and traditional Law which maintained these knowledge systems were being eroded and lost. There was also strong evidence that women and girls were counteracting this loss with a resurgence of ceremony and language and through active practices are reacquiring intimate knowledge of relationships with kin and country. Women and girls spoke of the importance of engaging with elders as part of this resurgence and re-learning of Law and knowledge across Australia.
19. This recommendation to invest in intergenerational learning and transference of knowledge was so consistent throughout the Wiyi Yani U Thangani consultations that a further set of engagements were embarked on at the end of 2019 to hear directly from senior women Law holders. These engagements took place in far north Western and central Australia. Further engagements were ceased due to COVID-19. The voices of senior women who were heard from are incorporated into the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report.
20. Senior women and First Nations women across Australia described how they are applying their knowledges across diverse sectors and fields including the arts, health, academia and business. Further, with the real threat and present impacts of climate change, women are using their knowledges to understand the effects on ecological systems, to protect biodiversity, and are innovating to mitigate and adapt to new challenges.
21. Through Indigenous Ranger Programs, First Nations women are actively applying their knowledge to care for Country and people, and in the process are strengthening and revitalising knowledge to share with younger generations. For example, the Kimberley Women Rangers are using their unique knowledges in collecting and propagating seeds,

maintaining a provenance seed bank, undertaking revegetation, developing story books to share knowledge, and developing bush products social enterprise.<sup>1</sup>

22. In areas of health, particularly maternal health and early life care, women are revitalising their sovereign birthing knowledges and practices with the establishment of culturally-safe birthing centres and programs. The Caring for Mum on Country project, for example, works with Yolngu women from Galaiwinku in Northeast Arnhem Land to integrate Yolngu and Western medical pregnancy and childbirth knowledge systems. Charles Darwin University has partnered with the Australian Doula college to deliver djakamirr training in Galaiwinku to grow the cohort, and reinvigorate Yolngu maternal health, pregnancy and birthing knowledges and care practices.<sup>2</sup>

## **4 The need for structural change**

23. Prior to the imposition of Western patriarchal structures that force gendered hierarchies, women's knowledges were of equal worth and importance to those of men. Despite its evidenced importance, women's knowledges continue to be marginalised by mainstream society.
24. Throughout Wiyi Yani U Thangani, women expressed deep concern that Western systems continued to disregard and marginalise their knowledge systems, providing minimal support and a lack of recognition to protect them. As a consequence, their languages and knowledges are being lost at an alarming rate.
25. It is estimated that of the more than 250 languages and the hundreds of dialects known to have existed pre-colonisation, fewer than half remain and, of those, 90% are considered endangered.<sup>3</sup> In many remote regions of Australia, it is believed that only a few women remain who hold the intact songs of their ancestors, transferred from pre-colonisation. It has been described that the loss of women's songs—these immense knowledge systems—would be 'a tragedy of enormous proportions'.<sup>4</sup>
26. First Nations women stressed that protecting and restoring their extensive knowledge systems are key to developing their own self-determined social supports, structures and economies, as well as being vital to their positive health and wellbeing.

27. Throughout Wiyi Yani U Thangani, First Nations women were clear that large-scale, gender-responsive structural change is needed to overcome the inequalities they experience. Whilst there have been positive programs and reforms to protect and revitalise their languages and knowledge, there must be a nationally consistent approach that centres women's knowledges and expertise across all areas of life and in all decision-making processes if we are to see substantial and sustained change for the wellbeing of First Nations women and their communities.

#### **4.1 Leadership and decision-making for self-determination**

28. As set out in Thematic Area 1 of the Implementation Framework, actions must be taken to ensure First Nations women and girls are strong in identity to know and practice their knowledges, and are guaranteed the spaces to apply their knowledges across all sectors, including in mainstream settings. This includes:

- Guaranteeing access to lifelong cultural education and growing the political voice of young First Nations women and girls (Action 1.1). Associated structural changes to these actions include urgent reform to the child protection system to guarantee continuation of care and connection to kin and culture for young people and children.
- Reinvigorating cultural governance and investing in place-based leadership (Action 1.2). For example, Yanalangami: Strong Women, Strong Communities offered through Tranby National Indigenous Adult Education and Training, seeks to grow and amplify the sovereign voices, stories, and aspirations of First Nations women Changemakers. Yanalangami is a Darug/Dharug Nation word meaning, we walk together, me and you. The Yanalangami program connects women, cultivating a culturally-safe and supportive community for the Changemakers through a series of empowerment workshops, and professional development opportunities.<sup>5</sup> Ensuring mainstream institutions are both culturally and gender-responsive to embrace First Nations women's knowledges and expertise, and commit to targets and measures for inclusion and participation of First Nations women. This includes senior cultural women leaders (Action 2.1).



## 4.2 Language, land, water and cultural rights are critical to preserving and transmitting First Nations women's knowledge

29. It is vital that women's knowledges, songlines and ceremonies are recognised for their equal worth and importance to men's and together First Nations Laws are upheld, respected, intergenerationally transferred and embedded within local, regional and national governance and decision-making.

30. Thematic Area 2 of the Implementation Framework outlines the actions to invest in and support women to meaningfully exercise their rights to learn, practice and transmit knowledge. These actions and structural changes intersect with the right to language, First Nations education systems, and land rights. This includes:

- Developing and implementing strategies to ensure First Nations languages thrive in and beyond education, to enable language-based economies, and to be integrated into workplaces and practices (Action 3.1).
- Resourcing and supporting the reignition of women's knowledges and songlines through launching a national songlines reignition project to record and archive songlines across Australia and developing a database and online portal with strong safeguards to stores secret knowledges (Action 3.2).
- Guaranteeing regular women's ceremonial gatherings for the protection, reignition and transmission of women's knowledges (Action 3.2). For example, The Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPYWC)<sup>6</sup> organise annual Law and culture camps for women from the NPY region in Central Australia. Ongoing feedback and internal program evaluations consistently show that women view their Law and culture as one of the most empowering, unifying and important aspects of their lives. However, NPYWC does not have reoccurring funding, and every year a significant amount of time is invested in finding philanthropic and government funds.
- Growing women's Law and culture organisations and programs through investing in their Law and culture strategic plans (Action 3.2). For example, the Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Law and

Culture Strategic Plan which outlines a framework to develop specific, targeted and place-based plans for each language group in the region, to protect women's language, Law and culture.<sup>7</sup>

- Developing and implementing frameworks to ensure active use of women's knowledges across sectors and to design new models in environmental protection, sciences, medicine, maternal health, child, disability, and aged care, as well as enhancing emerging technologies in AI and Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT) like Blockchain (Action 3.2). Critical to this is strengthening the protection of Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP) and Indigenous Knowledge (IK) through effective Intellectual Property legislation.
- Ensuring the safeguarding of First Nations women's heritage by establishing a National First Nations Heritage Council, with guaranteed gender parity, as recommended by the Juukan Gorge Final Report<sup>8</sup> (Action 3.2).
- Guaranteeing gender-just treaty and agreement-making for women's access to land and waters, and a reformed gender-responsive native title and land rights process. The current process can marginalise the voices of First Nations women and preference those of men (Action 4.2).
- Improving access to and availability of culturally-responsive on-Country education and training opportunities which leads to meaningful employment, growth in on-Country economies and supports the viability of women and girls living on their ancestral Country (Action 4.3).
- Ensuring women's full and equal participation and leadership in all governance and decision-making in the pursuit of climate just and sustainable solutions (Action 5.1). This also includes the participation of young women and girls and developing the mechanisms to ensure their voices are heard (Action 5.2). For example, Seed Mob<sup>9</sup> is an Indigenous youth-led climate network, creating a space for First Nations young peoples to get involved in climate justice. Their vision is to create a just and sustainable future that meets the needs and aspirations of First Nations youth, combined with strong cultures and communities. Many of their campaigns, including Protect Country emphasise that First Nations

peoples have looked after the land and water sustainably for generations, and that First Nations people can continue to do so in the future. As Country is at the heart of First Nations identities, it is integral that First Nations youth have a role in protecting and demanding climate justice.

### **4.3 Women's knowledges as central to societal healing and intergenerational wellbeing**

31. First Nations women's knowledges and practices, which have sustained healthy ways of being since time immemorial, must be embedded in how people act and the ways in which systems function from education to health and planning for transport and housing.

32. Thematic Area 3 of the Implementation Framework outlines the actions to be taken to embed healing-informed approaches across all areas of life, centred with women's knowledges. This includes:

- Sustainably supporting and resourcing women to carry out critical healing work for families and communities, grow the evidence of women-led healing models, and co-design new and invest in existing healing models with women's knowledges and lived experience at the centre (Action 6.1).
- Embedding healing-informed approaches and training across all sectors to ensure all workplaces are gender-responsive and trauma informed (Action 6.2).
- Investing in First Nations education systems and on-country schools, embracing First Nations knowledges and languages in education systems and ensuring truth-telling, and guaranteeing women's knowledges and experiences are shared equal to those of First Nations men (Action 6.3 and 6.4).
- Embracing and developing women's knowledges in maternal health and early childhood care including through reclaiming sovereign birthing rights, investing in culturally-safe maternal supports and services with a First Nations women workforce, and investing in women-led and family centred early childhood education systems (Action 7.1 and 7.2). For example, Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre in the Fitzroy Valley of Western Australia supports the health and wellbeing of women and their families through a

range of programs including the Baya Gawiy Buga yani Jandu yani u Centre.<sup>113</sup> Baya Gawiy includes both an Early Childhood Learning Unit (ECLU) and a Child and Parent Centre to provide holistic support to women and their children. Embedded with First Nations knowledges and language and their principle of 'many ways of knowing and doing', the ECLU makes learning for children meaningful and connected to community whilst also preparing them to walk in two worlds.<sup>10</sup>

## 5 Recommendations

The Commission recommends that:

1. The Special Rapporteur considers the findings and recommendations of the [\*Wiyi Yani U Thangani \(Women's Voices\): Securing our Rights, Securing our Future 2020 Report\*](#) when designing international and national measures to promote Indigenous women's knowledge,
2. The Special Rapporteur considers the [Implementation Framework](#) as a guide to translating findings into action through an intersectional, holistic, systems-thinking approach.
3. All measures to ensure and protect indigenous women's ability to develop, apply, maintain and transmit knowledge are co-designed with indigenous women to ensure their distinct experiences inform policies and programs.
4. The Special Rapporteur considers the development of guidelines to enable States to develop and maintain national databases to monitor the protection and maintenance of women's knowledge systems including the practice and revitalisation of languages. National databases, or the collection of national data, must be co-designed with First Nations people, have their full free, prior and informed consent, and have strong safeguards ensuring data is owned by First Nations peoples and sacred and secret knowledges are protected.

## 6 Appendix A



## Thematic area 1: Leadership and decision-making for self-determination

### VISION:

First Nations women and girls in all our diversity are in control of the decisions that determine and affect our lives. Our voices and knowledges are respected and we shape decisions across all social, economic, cultural, political and environmental spaces. Intergenerational collective leadership is respected and strengthened through connecting to Country and processes of cultural governance.

Policymakers, representative bodies, and decision-making institutions learn from our processes of leadership while also challenging power relations and norms that create barriers to our participation and representation in these spaces. We have built a movement where many have committed to the empowerment of our women and girls to voice our knowledges and experiences on issues that impact our lives. We have constructed enabling mechanisms so we can stand in our full power and strength in identity to occupy leadership roles.

This empowerment and engagement in decision-making and leadership contributes to and supports us towards a genuine ongoing process of truth-telling, self-determination, healing, and agreement-making in Australian nation building.

### THE RESPONSE:

This priority area puts forward the actions to challenge and reconstruct dominant Western conceptions of leadership and decision-making. It outlines how we must:

- Reshape structural and institutional arrangements with shared accountability, decision-making authority and respect to guarantee our full participation and leadership;
- Embed cultural governance tools within all decision-making spaces, bringing our women to the forefront of policy design, implementation and evaluation;
- Be supported to gather, share knowledge and advocate for our rights as a collective;
- Establish women and girls-led models of leadership and organising, and design the structures that will elevate our knowledges and voices into regional, state, national and international levels of decision-making;
- Grow our women-led workforce to invest in our carer and leadership development; and
- Provide wrap-around healing and empowering supports right from the start of life for our young people to feel safe and strong in their identity.

**ACTION**  
**1.1**

### Collective leadership from the start of life

First Nations women's sense of leadership is place-based and embedded within our Law and kinship which positions us within society and Country and sets out our relationships to all that surrounds us. This structure ensures collective decision-making and responsibility. From an early age we learn to establish reciprocal relationships which remove hierarchy between human and non-human beings—creating balance within entire ecosystems. Our kinship structures and customs of collective care keep children safe, happy, strong in identity and connected to family, community and Country. Values of collective leadership, including interdependence, unity and shared responsibility, are instilled in children from the moment they are born and carried throughout life. Our whole of life approach to leadership heals and unites, connecting governance, decision-making and the life of whole ecosystems.

#### Reinvigorate early life collective care and kinship

Form the conditions and policy architecture to enable the (re)assertion and preservation of women's antenatal care, collective child-rearing practices and kinship responsibilities.

- See Major Priority 7, Action 7.1 of *Societal healing and intergenerational wellbeing for more information.*

#### Guarantee access to lifelong cultural education

When our women are empowered to know and be all of who they are, they are powerful leaders. This happens through lifelong access and connection to Country, learning and speaking our languages, and engaging in the intergenerational transference of Law through ceremonial gatherings, bush-meetings and cultural-based leadership programs.

- See Major Priority 3, Action 3.2 of *Language, land, water and cultural rights for more information.*

#### Grow the political voice of girls and young women

Empower young women to make decisions for all aspects of their life, alongside challenging harmful systems and inspiring change-making from an early age through supporting access to community assemblies, youth councils, networks and rights-focused education such as Koori Youth Council, National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC), and Deadly Indigenous Youth Doing Good (DIYDG).

### Changing hearts and minds

- Increasing the awareness of the importance of different birthing and child rearing models creating a healthy, strong and empowered start to life for women and babies that sets us up for collective care and leadership.

**Consider:** *Spread the word through sharing the Djakamirr and Birthtime campaigns and community resources such as Growing up Our Way.*

- Media and news networks using their platforms to elevate voices, knowledges and stories of First Nations women and girls in leadership—with inclusion strategies to centre women and girls with disabilities, those living in rural and remote areas, older women, and LGBTQIA+SG women and girls.

### Governance and institutional supports

- Develop funding and assessment and evaluation frameworks to ensure women's oversight in awarding and monitoring funding allocations to women and girls' programs and leadership projects. This should include criteria and guidelines to direct funding to community-controlled initiatives and mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of funding in achieving the priorities and outcomes as outlined by women and girls—for example, measuring increased feelings of political voice, strength in identity and self-esteem.
- Increase transparency around funding allocation and ensure women and girls' leadership, recreation and education programs are given equal funding to that of boys' programs, and that both are raised commensurate with need.

### Policy and law reform

- Reforms to child protection systems to ensure continuation of care and connection to kin and culture for young people, including: accountability mechanisms to ensure authorities comply with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle;<sup>36</sup> greater

transparency around placement decision-making; replacing legal orders for permanent adoption with investment into community-controlled reunification services; and reforming carer assessment processes such as the Blue Card system in Queensland<sup>37</sup> to support women and families becoming carers.

- Strengthen workplace policy infrastructure through setting targets for the representation of First Nations women under the age of 25 years in advisory and decision-making roles in government, business and mainstream and community-controlled organisations and develop gender responsive Reconciliation Action Plans<sup>38</sup> (RAPs) in partnership with First Nations employees, women's organisations and Reconciliation Australia.
- Consider the possibility of Reconciliation Australia working with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner to develop gender-responsive guidelines for developing RAPs.
- Review workplace leave policies and ensure a national standard for gender and culturally-responsive leave including carer, sorry business, compassionate, cultural, maternal and paternal leave. Alongside this should be strong guidelines for how leave policies should be designed and implemented.

### Collaborative partnerships

- Leadership and research bodies such as the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre (AILC), Healing Foundation, NIYEC, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Children's Ground, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) partnering with young women and girls to develop locally relevant leadership and civic engagement activities, programs and multimedia resources. Partnerships could also build on existing programs such as the National Indigenous Youth Parliament or Oxfam's Straight Talk.

**ACTION**  
**1.2**

**Reinvigorate cultural governance and invest in place-based leadership**

Investments must be made into place-based, gender-responsive governance that centres and builds on our inherent leadership skills. First Nations women's self-governed organisations and leadership programs play a critical role in meeting the needs of our women but are highly undervalued and are doing this with minimal resources. They offer safe spaces, gender-responsive services, hubs for activism and advocacy, alongside culturally-safe mentoring, career progression and governance opportunities and mechanisms to build on women's strengths, capabilities and networks. There needs to be a different structure of investment, support and evaluation that understands the efficacy of our organisations to grow leadership and enable new opportunities to emerge.

**First Nations women's models of leadership and governance**

Sustain and invest in the spaces that enable women to learn and lead from our place of knowing through self-governed programs and community-controlled organisations.

**Foster relationships for impact and influence**

Form the spaces for women and girls to network and grow their ideas in collaboration with public and private stakeholders through knowledge sharing, designing promising initiatives and developing investment frameworks to sustain work over the long-term.

**Build the evidence base to support effective practice**

Through the leadership of organisations such as AILC, AIATSIS, and the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute (AIGI) in partnership with women and girls we must support community-led research and documentation of our models of leadership and cultural governance to integrate these models across society and all workplaces.

**Community organising and participation**

- Prioritise and substantially increase investments in First Nations community-controlled service delivery sectors, and recognise and invest in the importance of women's organisations in supporting the career development, mentorship and training of women and community—such as Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPYWC), Waminda South Coast Women's health and Welfare Aboriginal Corporation and Yanalangami: Strong Women, Strong Communities leadership program.
- Provide dedicated sustained funding to organisations, festivals and networking community groups to support women's gatherings and collaborations this includes DIYDG, Women of the World (WOW), the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA), Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC) and the Winds of Zenadh.

**Suggestion:** As a First Nations woman could you set up a forum, workshop or on-Country gathering with others in your community to identify your societal leadership and governance principles and structures? Together you could work on embedding these principles across organisations and governance models within your community.

- Explore mechanisms to guarantee gender parity within community-controlled organisations and bodies.

**Yanalangami: Strong Women, Strong Communities** offered through Tranby National Indigenous Adult Education and Training, seeks to grow and amplify the sovereign voices, stories, and aspirations of First Nations women Changemakers. Yanalangami is a Darug/Dharug Nation word meaning, we walk together, me and you. The Yanalangami program connects women, cultivating a culturally-safe and supportive community for the Changemakers through a series of empowerment workshops, and professional development opportunities. Drawing on their community experience, Yanalangami enhances women's leadership skills via yarning circles and story sharing practice to foster women's self-confidence, resilience, and strength. The Yanalangami program is designed through Tyson Yunkaporta's 8 Way Method, weaving cultural practice, knowledge, and leadership content together to empower women as Changemakers. The Yanalangami program focuses on cultivating wellbeing, following the understanding that leadership is not something that happens in isolation, but takes the strength of many women empowering each other and walking together to create meaningful change.<sup>26</sup>

**Policy and law reform**

- Policy-makers to work with women's networking groups and community-controlled organisations to develop innovative funding models (such as dedicated funding streams for women-led programs and services) and mutual trust models (such as Queensland Tracks to Treaty<sup>27</sup>) so aspects of their work which are not essential service delivery can be self-sustaining.
- First Nations principles of leadership and governance to be integrated into policy-making processes for both governments and corporations. Effective ways to facilitate this process would be to design spaces for First Nations policy-making, such as policy labs.

**Data and knowledge co-creation**

- Fully fund research and data-collection on women's place-based leadership carried out by key First Nations research bodies including AILC, AIATSIS, the Lowitja Institute, and AIGI. Research must be owned and controlled by women, and pathways and training should be developed for girls to engage in research, data-collection and evaluation.
- Develop, design and invest in First Nations-led programs and courses such as certificates in First Nations politics or local government, based on First Nations governance and women's knowledge.

**Consider:** Across the globe, formalised gathering spaces are emerging where like-minded people can come together to form powerful ideas and access tools and resources to make them a reality. These spaces—the underlying purpose of which is to empower people regardless of their background or economic situation—have come to be known as community-maker spaces. They can include events, working spaces and accessible trainings, as well as networking opportunities, and learnings about new technologies and knowledges. We must fund First Nations women and girls community-maker spaces to grow ideas and initiatives.

**ACTION**  
**2.1**

**Mainstream readiness to become First Nations gender responsive**

Mainstream institutions have a responsibility to ensure the services and activities they undertake are both culturally and gender responsive. Mainstream institutions and society as a whole have much to gain from understanding and embedding our leadership practices—providing a much more collaborative and grounded response to ways of working. In order to embrace First Nations knowledges as well as becoming culturally-safe places for First Nations women to work, mainstream institutions must ensure the full and effective participation and empowerment of First Nations women and girls. Institutions must go above and beyond Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) processes and be prepared to transform and design organisational structures to meet the needs of women and girls. Key to this process is having women and girls at the forefront of design and decision-making.

**Sectors and institutions embrace women's decision-making power**

All institutions embed First Nations gender justice and equality as a key principle and commit to strong accountability and evaluation mechanisms, such as benchmarks, targets, employment pathways and succession planning.

**Strengthen government and institutional accountability**

All institutions to hold greater responsibility for their actions, decisions, policies and services through recognising First Nations models of governance which value collective responsibility, power-sharing and working with, rather than for, communities.

**Recognise and eradicate all forms of discrimination**

We need culturally-responsive education and truth-telling programs, anti-discrimination media campaigns and resources, workplace training and accountability mechanisms including zero-tolerance discrimination policies.

**Changing hearts and minds**

- All Australians to take accountability and responsibility for addressing intersectional discrimination—sexism, racism, classism and ableism—that perpetuates violence and harm against women, girls and gender and sexually diverse persons, and creates barriers to our social, economic and political participation.
- Develop curriculum content and media campaigns to promote gender-transformative stories and representation of our women and girls' leadership, to challenge harmful stereotypes, racism and sexism, and to reshape dominant leadership approaches.

**Policy and law reform**

- Reform all Indigenous Procurement Policies across jurisdictions to include a gendered lens.
- Provide all Australians with access to First Nations governance and leadership education and training. This must include an understanding of free, prior and informed consent, First Nations models of leadership and accountability and models of effective and genuine engagement. This has the potential to ensure policy frameworks are no longer top-down and detached from community.

**Governance and institutional supports**

- Mainstream institutions and organisations to commit to targets and measures for women's recruitment and retainment. This includes introducing flexible work practices, gender and culturally responsive leave, cultural responsiveness training, adopting special measures and identified positions, and offering intersectional and healing-informed supports and training.

- Strengthen the role and authority of women and senior local cultural leaders in community decision-making and delivery of services and education through setting targets for the representation of women in advisory and decision-making roles in government, business, mainstream and community-controlled organisations.
- Develop accountability and transparency mechanisms to ensure women's voices are respected and responded to, and so community can examine decision-making processes and outcomes for greater confidence in government and mainstream institutions performance.

**Think & Act:** Does your workplace have a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)? Consider working with Reconciliation Australia to create new or expand existing RAPs to include targets and actions to enhance women's leadership across all institutions and develop assessment and auditing tools.





## Thematic area 2: Language, land, water and cultural rights

### VISION:

Our children are born surrounded by family, wrapped in community and kinship supports. From our earliest years, we are immersed in our languages and educated in our knowledges in balance with Western learnings. We can choose to live on, access and have control over our homelands, developing and engaging in culture-based institutions and economies. Women's knowledges, songlines and ceremonies are recognised for their equal worth and importance to men's and together our Laws are upheld, respected, intergenerationally transferred and embedded within local, regional and national governance and decision-making. First Nations women are united through climate justice networks which centre our sophisticated systems of knowledge and are driven by our innovative solutions. This is a way of being that we have always known could exist—because we've lived it and been here before. Our ancestors rejoice, for we have come home.

### THE RESPONSE:

This priority area puts forward the actions to invest in and support First Nations women and girls to meaningfully exercise our rights to learn, practise and transmit language, knowledge, Law, ceremony, songs and cultural practices. It outlines how we must:

- Revive and integrate our languages across learning systems, workplaces and the emergence of new economies;
- Enable women and girls to spend meaningful time on Country and come together for cultural and ceremonial gatherings;
- Protect our cultures and knowledges through a national framework that recognises living heritage;
- Upgrade and create a robust, sustainable infrastructure for all communities that embraces new technology;
- Engage in gender-sensitive healing-informed approaches to agreement-making;
- Protect the rights of children and young people from the multiple harms of climate change; and
- Centre First Nations women in climate justice solutions.

**ACTION**  
**3.1**

**Thriving languages, spoken every day, throughout all of life**

Languages speak life—they tell of our interwoven ecological, kinship and economic systems. Women raise children in language and know language-speaking imparts unique knowledges for collective care and societal governance.

National recognition and resourcing of language-use supports family and gender-equitable models of care where language, culture, intergenerational relationships, and nurture are intertwined. This provides a vehicle for growing language-based jobs and economies, from service delivery, authorship and editing to tourism and ecosystem management. It is time to reverse the loss and let languages flourish to unleash the intersecting benefits for societal health and prosperity.

**Create the content and infrastructure for language immersion**

Grow the potential for collaborations across communities, organisations, and national institutions to create imaginative multimedia language resources to embed in education and apply throughout life, and to support communities to rename places.

- See Major Priority 6, Action 6.3 of *Societal healing and intergenerational wellbeing, for further information on embedding language and culture in the national curriculum.*

**Growing economies through language and culture**

Encourage investments and local business planning to increase meaningful training and employment in language enterprises such as ecotourism, curriculum development, interpreting and carer supports.

**Integrating languages across workplaces and service supports**

All services to explore and embed local creative ways to guarantee first languages and ensure interpreters are present so as to form environments of recognition, safety and care, and that languages are built into programs and service delivery.

**Policy and law reform**

- Expand the Australian Government Action Plan for the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages<sup>44</sup> to become a national multiyear strategy linked to Closing the Gap.<sup>45</sup>
- Implement existing language frameworks and promising initiatives, including resourcing all schools to embed the Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages,<sup>46</sup> alongside *Yalbillinya: National First Languages Education Project*<sup>47</sup> to support language teaching. Further, consider national rollout of the New South Wales (NSW) Language and Culture Nest program<sup>48</sup> linking communities speaking languages to the education system. Also, integrate languages into cultural safety across all sector policies, and guarantee that all First Nations peoples who speak their language as a first language can access supports in their languages.

- Proactive approach needed by all states and territories to restore First Nations place names by committing to restoration processes in geographic/place naming legislation. This includes supporting signage across state and national parks and working with communities to determine and protect sacred areas.

NSW is the first state to protect and maintain Aboriginal languages in legislation. The *NSW Aboriginal Languages Act 2017*<sup>49</sup> establishes a trust to oversee the development of a 5-year Strategic Plan to guide revival work, annual reporting, and support for local language activities. All states and territories should adopt processes for communities to lead in the formation of meaningful language legislation that does not simply recognise but provides the supports for active language use. **As a First Nations person, what would you like to see in legislation to protect and nurture your languages?**

**Governance and institutional supports**

- Strengthen the national institutional fabric of language bodies, including the 22 Language Resource Centres, AIATSIS, the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF), the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF), First Languages Australia (FLA), Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs), and the entire education system to: collaborate and create interactive resources; work strategically with language communities to awaken and grow languages; and strengthen linkages between language development, education, employment and career pathways.
- Introduce annual AIATSIS National Indigenous Language Reports<sup>50</sup> monitoring language maintenance.
- Organisations and schools develop language integration mechanisms such as dedicated KPIs for community engagement.

**Think:** Does the organisation you work for have a language policy, and if so, does it have the resources and processes to implement it? Can you/your organisation engage with the local community to create meaningful language-use policy?

**Digital access**

- Embed culturally-appropriate language software for recording language across all schools, communities, and language centres, and facilitate community collaborations with organisations like Miromaa and ALNF to access digital training, create local digital resources and apps, and engage in language learning, gatherings and symposiums.

The Pertame Master-Apprentice Program<sup>51</sup> (MAP) is focused on language revival and strengthening and intergenerational knowledge transfer between Pertame women, from Grandmothers to great-granddaughters. Pertame is an endangered language with fewer than 10 fluent speakers. The MAP is a leading language revival program developed by Native American communities which rapidly develops fluent speakers through language immersion by bringing together elder speakers (Masters) with adult learners (Apprentices). The Pertame program aims to professionally develop female apprentices into fluent speakers and teachers through a range of immersion training including 15–20 hours of learning a week, on-Country camps, active teaching in the classroom, and completion of requirements for Cert 1 in Language and Knowledge.

**ACTION**  
**3.2**

**Women's knowledges reinvigorated and embraced across sectors**

Etched into this continent, women's Laws, ceremonies and cultural practices contain one of the greatest encyclopedias of knowledges on earth. Australia must celebrate, protect and integrate them into the national identity. In a rapidly changing world, structural reforms are needed to guarantee women can regularly access Country, engage in processes of (re)connection—particularly for Stolen Generations, use new technologies to protect and archive knowledges, and ensure self-determined ownership and communal control of knowledge and data. Such reforms would protect our knowledges from exploitation, so women can confidently grow and share knowledges while gaining social and economic benefits. Driving reforms through a national framework of living heritage protections and knowledge revitalisation could be world-leading, contributing to sustainable, innovative, and equitable ecological, economic, and social systems.

**Women's ceremonial gatherings and reinvigoration of songlines**

Women's ceremony on Country to take place regularly in every region of Australia to strengthen kinship, knowledge transfer, the learning of cultural practices and songlines, and to re-inscribe across Australia women's intimate knowledges of Country and life.

**Self-determined recording and archiving**

Under the leadership of cultural authorities, with support of digital archivers, women and girls record their knowledges, songs, ceremonies and cultural practices to access and use for the benefit and wellbeing of current and future generations.

**Women's knowledges expand societal learning and ways of working**

Active use of our knowledges across sectors and to design new models in environmental protection, sciences, medicine, maternal health, child, disability, and aged care, as well as enhancing emerging technologies in AI and Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT) like Blockchain.

**Changing hearts and minds**

- Women's knowledge and culture to be celebrated in festivals, public art, museums, at national events and through prominent campaigns for women's rights so all Australians value and respect the significance and power of women's knowledges.

The Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPYWC) organise annual Law and culture camps for women from the NPY region. Ongoing feedback and internal program evaluations consistently show that women view their Law and culture as one of the most empowering, unifying and important aspects of their lives. However, NPYWC does not have reoccurring funding, and every year a significant amount of time is invested in finding philanthropic and government funds.

**Data and knowledge co-creation**

- Launch a national songlines reinvigoration project to connect and archive songlines across Australia, with a database and online portal with strong safeguards for secret knowledges.
- Run trials for communities to develop knowledge recording, sharing and application projects using blockchain.
- Enhance research about commercial economic, social and health benefits of practicing Law and culture.

Indigledger is a First Nations-owned technology platform, harnessing Blockchain to empower First Nations peoples to have control over their knowledges. They have created a digital label for consumers to scan the authenticity, traceability, and history of First Nations artwork. It brings consumers and artists together, properly values First Nations knowledges and stops exploitation.<sup>32</sup>

**Policy and law reform**

- The Australian Government to show commitment to living heritage by ratifying the *UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003*.<sup>33</sup> This could encourage states and territories to develop empowerment-based policies for sectors to proactively protect and incorporate women's knowledges into work and life.
- Australian governments to recognise and commit to maintaining the tangible and intangible living heritage of First Nations peoples including standards and guidance to maintain the interwoven and distinct knowledges of women and men, and invest to guarantee First Nations peoples with regular access to Country so as to nurture and keep heritage alive.

- Strengthen protection of individual and collective Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property<sup>34</sup> (ICIP) and Indigenous Knowledge<sup>35</sup> (IK) through either a standalone framework or via effective incorporation into copyright and Intellectual Property legislation, and increase women's access to specialist ICIP training from groups such as Terri Janke and Company.<sup>34</sup> Also, explore Blockchain technology for greater protection, ownership, and control of ICIP and IK by First Nations individuals and collectives through IP Australia.
- Introduce national deterrent penalties and compensation directed to First Nations knowledge holders for the damage misuse and appropriation of heritage, ICIP and IK.

**Community organising and participation**

- Establish a National First Nations Heritage Council, as recommended in the final report on Juukan Gorge,<sup>37</sup> to have guaranteed gender parity and strong links to community Law, culture and heritage work.
- Grow women's Law and culture organisations and programs through investing in: their Law and culture infrastructure (for example, improving Law ground facilities, providing access to vehicles, building secure storage, providing access to archive training); their strategic planning (for example, the Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Law and Culture Strategic Plan); and mapping of women's living heritage and culture. This investment should be tied to national targets to increase women's activities to those of men as part of a renewed national approach to protect heritage.

**Think & Act:** Consider and explore ways to establish STEM and emerging technology educational incubators in communities. Incubators would integrate First Nations knowledges, sciences and pedagogies into these fields, while enabling girls to learn Indigenised approaches, and develop localised solutions in STEM and tech. These initiatives could be linked to further education fellowships and scholarships with a focus on learning and knowledge application in community.

**ACTION**  
**4.2**

**Women making decisions, governing, and negotiating for Country**

Country—land, waters, sky, and the earth beneath the surface—is the interconnected living system that gives life and sustains existence for all human and non-human relatives. The rights to access and govern our Country are fundamental to self-determination and resolving injustices of dispossession. The Native Title Act began a process of recognising our rights, but there remains much unfinished business—a complex and inadequate legal system has led to watered down-rights, protracted litigation and ongoing conflict, re-entrenching trauma. Systems of land ownership and management, including native title and land rights regimes, must be reformed to uphold and translate rights into real benefits, a guaranteed economic floor and sustainable liveability. Through a First Nations gender lens, we can reform the patriarchal systems that have cumulatively marginalised First Nations women from decision-making processes. New processes of negotiation and agreement-making grounded in social justice principles, gender equity and cultural governance can lay the equitable foundations for economic, health and social wellness to benefit the entire continent.

**Gender-just treaty negotiations and agreement-making**  
Guarantee women and men equally participate in designing and progressing land negotiations and agreement-making and that compensation and ownership of assets translates into long-lasting social, ecological and economic benefits.

**Recognise women in land and water management**  
Elevate women's knowledges and roles and ensure their equal participation in decision-making, planning, design and implementation of initiatives and management projects for land and water.

**Gender-sensitive and healing-informed reform of native title and land rights**  
Across all representative bodies and negotiation processes ensure women and men can embed cultural governance, and design and deliver whole-of-life approaches to conflict resolution and mediation, as well as processes to heal the pain of disconnection.

**Changing hearts and minds**

- Resource a national campaign and regional dialogues to support the public to understand the benefits of agreement-making for all Australians.
- Enable national dialogues and information-sharing about the value of different forms of land ownership, including communal and collective forms of land title and joint-management by First Nations peoples of public lands and national parks.

**Policy and law reform**

- Australian governments to legislate a national negotiation framework—founded upon the social justice principles and UNDRIP and developed in co-design with First Nations peoples. The process must provide a holistic, comprehensive approach to the interconnected elements of land, social, economic and ecological justice for all First Nations peoples to respond to historic and contemporary injustices and the intergenerational consequences of dispossession.
- Within this approach develop a framework for compensation, with robust guidelines (building on the National Native Title Council's National Compensation Strategy) for the ongoing spiritual, cultural and economic loss of land—enabling settlement processes beyond the confines of native title.
- Continue to grow and unlock the intersecting social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits of the Indigenous Estate through a national strategy that supports investment and empowers First Nations people to determine how land is used, managed and developed.
- Embed free, prior and informed consent within the Native Title Act, land rights and all agreement-making processes.

**Governance and institutional supports**

- Review and reform with a gender and healing informed lens the funding to PBCs, Native Title Bodies and other representative bodies. Funds must support women's self-determination and processes of healing to redress land and

cultural disconnection. An independent fund for governments to support representative bodies should also be established as recommended in the Juukan Gorge final report.<sup>61</sup>

- All representative bodies to be supported to embed gender parity in governance and for this approach to be First Nations-led and controlled.
- Support First Nations peoples to establish place-based, culturally-grounded governance structures to ensure their strategic decision-making is not inhibited by burdensome administrative and reporting requirements.
- Guarantee ongoing access to applied training relating to governance, land management, strategic planning, Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) and other agreement mechanisms. Training must be gender-sensitive to promote equality of benefits particularly in regard to employment opportunities.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner in partnership with AIATSIS and other relevant stakeholders to develop a national code of ethics and standard best practice approaches for all professionals including lawyers and anthropologists engaged in native title and other land negotiation processes.

**Data and knowledge co-creation**

- Map and assess the full extent of the Indigenous Estate. This should record and articulate the various forms of ownership and agreements and corresponding rights in a clear and accessible database to allow strategic decision-making for negotiations and development.
- Gather and provide disaggregated gender data—highlighting the involvement of women in land agreement-making processes and the gendered social, cultural and economic benefits/return on investment of ILUAs—to promote greater gender-equitable outcomes.
- Develop a national network for land use negotiations and agreements to facilitate the sharing of knowledge between First Nations communities and claimants across Australia.



**ACTION  
4.3**

**Innovative on-Country supports,  
education and economies**

Being able to learn and train on Country within an education system infused with our knowledges and pedagogies begins a cycle of deep engagement with Country and the growth of cultural activities, pursuits and economies. It can train our peoples to deliver services for our communities in health, disability supports and elder care, simultaneously increasing the likelihood of establishing these services on Country and enhancing employment opportunities. First Nations peoples of all abilities have a right to live on our homelands and be able to access the culturally-safe services and supports that can keep us all well, engaged and happy. None of our peoples should be forced to leave the places that nourish us and keep us connected to Country and kin because of a lack of services. Developing the infrastructure and the structural supports to enable on-Country life and services opens endless possibilities for our peoples to thrive within healthy, engaged and productive societies which keep our culture and knowledges alive and flourishing.

**On-Country education and training to meaningful employment**

Improve access to and availability of culturally-responsive on-Country education and training opportunities which lead to meaningful employment and support the viability of women and girls living on their ancestral Country.

- See Major Priority 6, Action 6.3 of *Societal healing and intergenerational wellbeing* and Major Priority 1, Action 1.2 of *Leadership and decision-making for self-determination for more information.*

**Grow vibrant on-Country women-led enterprise**

Connecting women with research institutes, think tanks, and business supports to foster entrepreneurial aspirations and create enterprises which use cultural knowledges and include land and water use and management.

- See Major Priority 8, Action 8.4 of *Economic justice and empowerment for more information.*

**Keeping our elders and those with additional needs on Country**

Ensure accessible disability supports and elder care infrastructure, particularly in remote locations to enable access to support regardless of where people live.

**Policy and law reform**

- Develop dedicated First Nations business development strategies at the national, state/territory and regional levels which explore economic opportunities in land and water use and management. Strategies to include a comprehensive approach to overcoming access issues which restrict First Nations peoples from developing educational and economic opportunities on-Country.
- Consider legislating percentage targets to enhance First Nations access to and use of water in all river systems such as Murry-Darling Basin, to grow the potential for First Nations water economies in areas such as bushfood cultivation.
- Consider meaningful integration of First Nations women's culture and Country-based economies into the Australian Government's Northern Development Agenda.
- Abstudy supports to access on-Country education.
- Substantially increase investments to build capacity of the First Nations community-controlled service sectors and prioritise Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) as preferred service providers for First Nations funded services and programs, including aged care, disability supports, housing, health, and social services.
- All Australian governments implement the First Peoples Disability Network's (FPDN) ten-point plan<sup>62</sup> for the better implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for First Nations peoples.

**Collaborative partnerships**

- Facilitate partnerships between private bodies, schools and government to work with communities in establishing community-controlled on-Country schools.
- Continue to expand the Studio School Australia model in partnerships with communities and regions that want to develop on-Country education.
- Strengthen community connections to culturally-responsive institutes such as the Northern Institute, Social Ventures Australia (SVA) and Circulanation.

*Circulanation* is a First Nations-led not-for-profit organisation that focuses on the delivery of entrepreneurship education for First Nations peoples in the remote Northern Territory (NT). The organisation delivers a facilitated entrepreneurship program which aims to enhance entrepreneurship capabilities and leadership. In doing so, Circulanation envisions the building of an inclusive economy that celebrates culture, First Nations knowledge and Country, and which drives social equality and economic prosperity for all.<sup>63</sup>

**Data and knowledge co-creation**

- Evaluate the social, cultural, environmental, economic and fiscal return on investment from women's participation in the Indigenous Ranger Program and the Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) program.
- Develop and evaluate training programs based on ranger methods to care for and manage Country.

*Northern Institute* (NI) is an Australian 'think-tank', based at Charles Darwin University, that undertakes interdisciplinary social and public policy research. NI work in partnership with First Nations communities, NT Government and business, national and international agencies and institutions to understand the complexity of the world and the ways different knowledge and governance systems operate to improve lives and opportunities.<sup>64</sup>

**ACTION**  
**5.1**

**First Nations women at the heart of climate and Country justice**

Country is not separate but a part of us. We are the relatives of Country, its custodians, caretakers and inheritors. Climate change poses one of the greatest threats we have ever seen to our Country, our knowledge systems, our sacred sites and the places we live. While our women and girls contribute significantly to climate justice efforts, both mitigating and adapting to these challenges (as we have always done), we are likely to be disproportionately impacted by climate change in the places we live including worsening droughts, heat stress, floods and tropical storms. We are already seeing the threat to homes, cultures and livelihoods due to rising sea levels in the Torres Strait. To both repair and reconcile the damage caused, and prepare for the challenges of the future, our women and girls must be part of climate justice solutions—not only do we know our Country best, we carry the knowledge to teach and share sustainable ways of doing that recognise that when our Country is healthy, we are healthy.

Women's voices matter in designing effective climate policy and solutions. A 2019 study in the *European Journal of Political Economy* analysed data from a large sample of countries and found that female representation leads countries to adopt more stringent climate change policies. The study concludes that female representation and women's voices in policy design and decision-making may be an underutilised tool for addressing climate change.<sup>65</sup>

**Women at the heart of climate governance**

Ensure women's full and equal participation and leadership in all governance and decision-making in the pursuit of climate just and sustainable solutions.

**Transition to circular green economies**

Invest in resilient circular green economies informed by our knowledges and culture such as eco-tourism, renewable energy production, transport, land conservation and carbon abatement and food forests and markets.

**Country needs women, women need Country**

Comprehensively resource and expand land management and agriculture programs—including the Indigenous Ranger Program and Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) program—with a focus on equal employment for men and women.

**Policy and law reform**

- Introduce legislative measures to enable the legal personhood of environmental features, as in other countries such as Aotearoa/New Zealand where the Whanganui River has been attributed this status.
- Introduce stronger legal protections against the extraction of minerals and resources on First Nations Country—including lands and waters—without the free, prior and informed consent of traditional custodians, including those who are women.
- Reform the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act<sup>66</sup> to incorporate First Nations knowledges and ways of caring for Country as key principles of conservation.
- Normalise the practice of directing public and private capital towards First Nations gender-just climate solutions.
- Introduce stronger legal protections for traditional owners of carbon projects to benefit from carbon offsetting and abatement markets.
- Guarantee and support women and girls' participation at international climate conferences, including UNFCCC (COP26) and international climate justice events held under the UN SDGs.
- Governments to work with native title holders to increase ranger programs and jointly-manage the formation of national parks agreed to through ILUA processes and other agreement frameworks.

**Community organising and participation**

- Support national coordination of First Nations-led organisations involved in the delivery of carbon projects—for example, through the growth and strengthening of the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network (ICIN).<sup>67</sup>
- Establish innovative partnerships with AIGI, AICD, ORIC and IBA's Strong Women, Strong Business Initiative with a view to developing sustainable local economies and to enhancing sustainable land management initiatives. This may include research, development, funding and/or resourcing for cool burning practices, ancestral food farms, low-emissions technologies and transport, and traditional agriculture.

- Embed gender equality as a key principle across environmental governing bodies and organisations and encourage all institutions to develop gender policies and implementation plans within their organisations.

**The Indigenous Carbon Industry Network** brings together Indigenous organisations similarly involved in land management that have a role in contributing to the carbon market. The network aims to enable and empower organisations by supporting their representation in the carbon industry, providing governance support and advocating for strong policy settings that meet First Nations producers needs and interests.<sup>68</sup>

**Data and knowledge co-creation**

- Collaborate with local communities and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to strengthen data on First Nation women's access to climate finance, technologies and knowledge, and calculate the estimated return on investment in First Nations green economies.
- Map, analyse and develop a gender sensitive database of cultural and sacred sites at threat due to climate change, and create mitigation and protection strategies in response.
- Enhance public and private funding and resourcing to drive community-led and owned research focusing on women's environmental knowledges, applied practice of these knowledges in caring for Country, and the transformative power of gender-just environmental governance and decision-making.

ACTION  
5.2

### Girls and young women leading the way in sustainable solutions

Our society, governments and all decision-makers have a responsibility and a duty of care to the younger generations to ensure that what we do and design today meets the needs and aspirations of our children far into the future—this is a principle held across the globe to ensure everything we do is geared towards a future that is hospitable and healthy. For this principle to be translated into action, our girls and young women must be at the forefront of designing a future that meets our expectations and needs. In developing formal mechanisms that support our full and equal participation in climate change policy and governance, and by strengthening education connecting our youth to Country and kin by Elders and cultural leaders, we pass the seed of knowledge. Our knowledge of care and custodianship has existed for millennia to ensure that we do not make the mistakes of the past and can grow into a future that is, in its truest sense, sustainable.

#### Connecting youth to Country and kin

Strengthen cultural connections to family, community, Country and kin to enable youth to lead climate solutions from a place of confidence and strength in identity.

- See Major Priority 1, Action 1.1 of Leadership and decision-making for self-determination for more information.

#### Responsive education for sustainable existence

Invest in traineeships, fellowships, scholarships and education pathways for our girls to become scientists, rangers, politicians, engineers, researchers and teachers to lead Australia into a sustainable future.

#### Girls lead in demanding a thriving future

Create mechanisms for girls and young women's participation at all levels of environmental governance and decision-making.

#### Changing hearts and minds

- Place the principle of duty of care, and First Nations principles of caring for Country and stewardship at the forefront of economic development.
- Support women and girls in STEM by sharing stories of deadly women doing amazing work towards climate justice and creating pathways towards a better future. This will help abolish stereotypes and racially fuelled sexism, replacing the narrative with one which sees First Nations women and girls at the forefront of politics, science, business and design.
- Working in a generational mindset, share and support ideas of sustainability and climate justice that is circular rather than linear emphasising that everyone has a role in creating a stronger, more empowered future.

#### Community organising and participation

- Organise young women and girls' gatherings to discuss climate justice priorities and actions, ensuring that the knowledge, ideas and solutions shared are given a platform to inform public and private environmental decision-making. These forums may include Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation's cultural mapping camps and Karajarri Women Ranger's Supporting Youth for a Strong Future program—combining discussions of cultural knowledge sharing with climate justice.
- Invest in youth-led climate justice initiatives and organisations such as Seed and work with government across all levels to ensure their voices are informing climate policies and environmental decision-making and governance.

**Seed Mob** is an Indigenous youth-led climate network, creating a space for First Nations young peoples to get involved in climate justice. Their vision is to create a just and sustainable future that meets the needs and aspirations of our youth, combined with strong cultures and communities. Many of their campaigns, including *Protect Country* emphasise that First Nations peoples have looked after the land and water sustainably for generations, and that we can continue to do so in the future. As Country is at the heart of our identities, it is integral that First Nations youth have a role in protecting and demanding climate justice.<sup>69</sup>

#### Policy and law reform

- Strengthen legislation to ensure that all ministers have a duty of care to protect young and vulnerable people from the immediate and future harms of climate change.
- Revise national approaches including the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework,<sup>70</sup> National Strategy for Disaster Resilience<sup>71</sup> and National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy<sup>72</sup> to embed a gender-sensitive, youth and First Nations knowledge lens to responding to environmental challenges.
- Develop and promote education equity, including accessible traineeships, STEM fellowships, and closing the digital divide to create opportunities and pathways for First Nations girls to access quality education that meets their needs and aspirations.
- Guarantee First Nations youth representation and participation at local, national and international climate events, particularly those led and facilitated by world leaders such as COP26 and G20 meetings on the environment and climate justice.



## Thematic area 3: Societal healing and intergenerational wellbeing

### VISION:

Australian society embraces intergenerational healing and wellbeing of people, communities, land, waters and skies. Healing is a collective responsibility, helping to make society and the Australian environment healthy, safe and trauma-free for everyone. Our women's knowledges and practices, which have sustained our healthy ways of being since time immemorial, are embedded in how people act and the ways in which systems function from education to health and planning for transport and housing. Every system is grounded in the principles of 'do no harm' and enhances empowerment and health. We have reclaimed our sovereign knowledges of birthing practices and child raising, so our women and children can live without trauma from the start of life. Where trauma does occur, there are accessible healing supports, recovery options and specific therapies. This is reinforced by a society that embraces our cultural and socio-economic protective factors. We live within interconnected sustainable communities and homes, designed around care for everyone from the young to the old, nurturing kin relationships, and easy access to lifelong education and work opportunities. We are surrounded by and spend time—whether it's for learning, work, recreation or land management—within Country that is healthy, alive and singing in every part of our continent, from big cities to rural towns and homeland communities.

### THE RESPONSE:

This priority area puts forward the actions to embed a healing-informed and trauma-aware approach across all areas of life. It outlines how we must:

- Design, deliver and sustain self-determining healing initiatives grounded in our knowledges;
- End punitive trauma responses across sectors, with an immediate focus on child protection, justice systems, and clinical settings, such as hospitals;
- Embed healing-informed work practices and policies throughout all systems;
- Reclaim child rearing and early life care knowledges and models of care, through approaches such as Birthing on Country, Child, Parent and Family Centres, as well as women and children focused rehabilitations and respite;
- Create connected structures and enabling public supports where housing, early childhood care, education and employment opportunities are designed to function together;
- Design an empowering social security system so women and children live free from poverty and are not vulnerable to traumatising circumstances; and
- Undertake national processes of truth-telling and agreement and embed these throughout education and work so all Australians play a role in the nation's healing journey.



**ACTION**  
**6.1**

**National coverage of women-designed and led healing models on Country and in community**

With healing programs and supports largely ad-hoc or non-existent, women are leading the way in healing work for our families and communities. Women are designing programs, running refuges and organisations, and are using their individual resources to counter the punitive responses that are trapping people in cycles of crisis and trauma. This burden is far too great. Communities must be sustainably supported to carry out this long-term critical work and have access to life-long on-Country healing. We must invest in existing models that work, and co-design new and innovative healing models for widespread coverage, with women's knowledges and lived experiences at the centre. Healing must have a strong focus on preventative approaches to strengthen collective identity and end the transmission and experience of trauma. We must also ensure women's ongoing roles in healing work and training are elevated and that there are pathways to advance their careers.

**Grow evidence and invest in women's healing initiatives**

Recognise and support women's roles and initiatives, record and embed their knowledges in policies, program design and workplace practices.

**On-Country healing to strengthen cultural governance, self-determination and (re)connection**

Grow pathways that support on-Country healing and strengthen cultural governance and connection to culture, kinship and Country including through ranger programs, schooling, Stolen Generation reconnection supports and working with the Native Title Tribunal, Land Councils, PBCs and ORIC.

● See Major Priority 4 within Language, land, water and cultural rights for more information.

**Healing supports for prevention, intervention, recovery and diversion**

Communities are guaranteed resources to design and deliver a continuum of care from intervention to recovery, alongside prevention and diversion initiatives. Including gender-sensitive rehabilitation, mental health supports, family violence prevention and supports, and youth and adult diversion.

**Data and knowledge co-creation**

- Build and record the evidence of women's healing knowledges and models and develop accessible resources for knowledge sharing and capacity building of service delivery.

**Consider** developing culturally-appropriate measures for collecting and recording population-level data about early childhood and lifetime trauma and life outcomes. Data could be used to analyse trends for effective service delivery planning. This should not be recorded at an individual service delivery level so as to stigmatise and form unfounded conclusions.

**Community Participation**

- The Healing Foundation<sup>73</sup> should be funded to co-design and establish widespread healing centres and hubs with women. Centres act as a one stop shop model for coordinated and holistic care.

The Healing Foundation partners with First Nations communities, organisations and women and men's groups to develop healing programs, priorities and approaches which integrate First Nations and Western knowledges and practices. The Healing Foundation evaluates programs and has grown a substantial body of evidence and accompanying resources to show what works in designing and implementing healing programs and workplace practices.<sup>74</sup> Resources specific to women's healing can be found [here](#). A broader range of healing resources and publications about programs and practices can be found on the [Healing Portal](#).

**Policy and law reform**

- Governments to co-design healing approaches to meet needs identified by women and support women in delivering programs through procurement and tendering processes.
- Governments co-design local workforce strategies, with a focus on training and learning pathways for women in either formal or informal work, with pathways to advance in their careers or to access relevant employment if they choose. To include specified positions for women in healing work.
- Governments commit to strategies such as decarceration, raising the age of criminal responsibility, reducing recidivism and the removal of children. Additionally, governments should expand Circle sentencing<sup>75</sup> and culturally-secure family violence courts.
- Governments to consider embedding laws for the protection of children from poverty which is linked to reducing trauma and re-traumatisation, and to addressing systemic inequality and discrimination. For example, the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act.<sup>76</sup>

● See Major Priority 9, Action 9.2 In Economic justice and empowerment for more information.

**Digital access**

- Expand access to women's healing resources and digital online learning, and create networks for women to gather, share learnings, access knowledge and remain connected to Country and culture.

**ACTION**  
**6.3**

**Truth-telling, language and culture throughout education**

In order to respond to our needs and aspirations, Australia must embrace other ways of doing education through investing in First Nations-led education systems, and community and on-Country schooling. This is where our children feel safe, surrounded by culture, and where learning can take place inside and outside four walls. For many First Nations children and people, the current mainstream education system is not the empowering mechanism it is designed to be—it is, in fact, traumatising for many. Our histories, cultures, languages and knowledges are almost completely absent within mainstream education, and so too are our people—our elders, educators and mentors. All schools and universities must commit to becoming healing-informed institutions and workforces that embrace the diversity and strengths of First Nations students, work collaboratively with our communities and First Nations educators, and teach with cultural intelligence. Across all institutions and subject matters, our pedagogies, histories, languages and our truth must be embedded.

**First Nations-led education and on-Country schooling**

Invest in independent community/on-Country schools, early childhood 'Language and Culture Nests'<sup>66</sup> and First Nations curriculum and methods of teaching.

**Culturally-safe, healing-informed and empowering learning environments**

Grow the First Nations education workforce, through: improving education and workplace conditions, wages and embedding First Nations knowledges and methods across all education settings; and build capacity of non-Indigenous educators through ongoing healing-informed culturally-responsive training.

**Embed First Nations knowledges, cultures and languages from early years to university**

Invest in the development of quality cultural and language resources and curriculum content co-designed and delivered with First Nations communities, educators and elders, for all students at all stages of education.

See Major Priority 3, Action 3.1 of *Language, land, water and cultural rights for more information.*

**Truth-telling throughout education**

All education institutions commit to mandatory truth-telling units and teaching of local histories and actively work to confront gender stereotypes, racism and all discrimination, at every stage of education.

**Policy and law reform**

- Increase funding to and expansion of First Nations independent school networks and early childhood 'Language and Culture Nests' such as those delivered across NSW by the Aboriginal Education and Communities directorate.<sup>65</sup>
- Conduct First Nations education review and implement strategies for redesigning an education system for First Nations children, as called for by the Utyerre Apanpe First Nations Educators Network.<sup>66</sup>
- Co-design targeted strategies to increase recruitment and retention of First Nations teachers and invest in More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative (MATSITI).<sup>67</sup>
- Incorporate First Nations languages in the school curriculum in each jurisdiction, in line with the Australian Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.<sup>68</sup>
- Enhance the growth of the Curricula Project<sup>69</sup> and the national rollout of its contents to incorporate First Nations knowledges and culture in the education system.
- Incorporate mandatory truth-telling units in the Australian Curriculum and throughout all subject areas through school and into university.
- Embed Healing Foundation resources into the Australian Curriculum and teacher training programs.

**Learn more and do more:** The National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) advocates for an independent First Nations education system and reform of the national mainstream system, to incorporate truth-telling, First Nations knowledges and lived experiences, and to centre the voices of young mob. NIYEC are driving a campaign, *Learn Our Truth*, encouraging schools, educational leaders, and students to teach and learn Indigenous history and the full extent and impact of the settler history of Australia.<sup>69</sup>

**Governance and institutional supports**

- Guarantee the mechanisms for collaborative and consultative processes in enhancing the education system including: establishing Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies<sup>71</sup> in each jurisdiction; embedding First Nations units directed by First Nations people in each education department; and re-establishing First Nations independent school support networks at regional, state and territory, and national levels.
- Grow and expand partnerships with First Nations education institutes, such as Stronger Smarter, NIYEC, Children's Ground and Studio Schools Australia, to create empowering pathways into further educational opportunities for girls and young women, including STEM, arts, humanities and social science training and careers.

**Community organising and participation**

- Organisations such as ILF, the Sharing Stories Foundation, language resource centres and First Nations education and training organisations should be invested in to develop relevant local resources with communities.

Organisations such as the NIYEC and Children's Ground, and the *In My Blood It Runs* film and campaign, all support major educational reform and the development of a First Nations-led education system. In April 2019 Children's Ground brought together First Nations educators from several nations. The gathering formed the Utyerre Apanpe First Nations Educators Network to develop an education system designed and delivered by First Nations peoples and to work with governments to determine future education policy.<sup>72</sup>

**Has your school or university had a screening of *In My Blood It Runs*?** <https://inmyblooditrans.com/screenings/>

ACTION  
7.1

### Women and child-centred culturally-safe maternal and early life models of care

Our Law contains extensive teachings about the rewarding, challenging and life-affirming journey of maternal health, birthing and growing children on Country. First Nations women's Birthing on Country (BOC)<sup>101</sup> and in community (BIOC)<sup>102</sup> models are metaphors used to describe culturally secure models that support women to reclaim our sovereign birthing rights, knowledges and practices. These models do not literally mean birthing on Country but capture the sense of birthing in a culturally safe environment that feels connected to home and community. Birthing models and centres of our own design provide holistic health, culturally-informed wrap-around supports, continuity of care throughout and beyond pregnancy, creating trauma free birth experiences. Whilst we advocate support for birthing on Country as a priority choice for First Nations women, regardless of where birthing takes place, a culturally-safe and responsive First Nations and non-Indigenous maternal health workforce is also vital. Mainstream birthing suites and programs must also be designed to be responsive to the social and emotional needs of our women and families.

#### Reclaim sovereign birthing rights

Expand throughout Australia First Nations-designed birthing centres that support Birthing on Country (BOC)<sup>103</sup> and in community (BIOC) to strengthen and reclaim women's sovereign birthing rights, knowledges and practices.

#### Culturally and clinically safe birthing suites and programs

First Nations specific pregnancy programs integrating our knowledges should be available across all maternal care and hospitals, guaranteeing continuity of care pre and post birth, with additional supports for mums and babies experiencing harms such as homelessness, violence, alcohol and drug use.

#### Culturally-responsive maternal health workforce

Grow the First Nations nursing and midwifery workforce through targeted culturally-safe strategies that include improving education and workplace conditions, wages and embedding First Nations maternal knowledges and practices across all maternal health settings.

#### Community organising and participation

- Establish local at-home and in-community birthing programs to significantly reduce travel for birth and if travel is necessary family supports and a consistent birthing companion must be guaranteed.
- Realise the opportunities created by recently passed midwives' indemnity legislation,<sup>104</sup> by increasing funding for community-controlled organisations through Medicare and other dedicated funding pathways to train and employ midwives in communities. The scheme should be extended to include midwives attending homebirths to further support BOC models.
- Explore the implementation of 'bundled payment and pricing' models to improve access to birthing centres and continuity of culturally-safe midwifery and nurse care.

The Birthing in Our Community Program (BIOC) in Brisbane brings midwives and family support workers together to provide women and families with holistic culturally-safe supports, including consistent same-midwife support, transport to care services, in-home visits, perinatal psychology, and linking to housing, financial and legal services. A seven-year evaluation of the program found that it had resulted in a 50% reduction in preterm births, which has almost closed the gap in comparison with non-Indigenous pre-term birth rates.<sup>105</sup>

#### Policy and law reform

- Move from policy aspiration and strategic suggestions to the actualisation of BOC approaches across the country, from urban to remote. Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) to be resourced to design and implement a BOC actualisation plan alongside a nursing and midwifery strategy and develop training, targets and timeframes for establishing BOC models and increasing First Nations employment, linked to Closing the Gap.

- Embed the CATSINaM Nursing and Midwifery Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework across all universities and vocational nursing and midwifery courses.
- Commit to reducing child protection interventions at birth and in early years through establishing rooming-in models for substance-using mothers in partnership with First Nations women's detoxification, rehabilitation and wrap-around support programs.

#### Data and knowledge co-creation

- Fund the Molly Wardaguga Research Centre<sup>106</sup> and other relevant and culturally-safe research bodies to develop approaches to BOC and BIOC in co-design with First Nations women. Ensure at least one site in every jurisdiction and grow to cover all regions.
- Fund CATSINaM, in partnership with communities and RTOs, to develop core content curricula to be used for placements and local vocational training.

The Caring for Mum on Country project, which takes a decolonising participatory action-research approach, is working in collaboration with Yolngu women from Galaiwinku in Northeast Arnhem Land to integrate Yolngu and Western medical pregnancy and childbirth knowledge systems. Pregnant women in Galaiwinku have to fly hundreds of kilometres by themselves to give birth, which can be distressing and traumatic. A major objective of the project is to form a community-based cohort of First Nations doula-childbirth companions, known as Yolngu djakamirr, to provide cultural, emotional and spiritual support and a skilled birthing companion before, during and after childbirth. Charles Darwin University has partnered with the Australian Doula college to deliver djakamirr training in Galaiwinku to grow the cohort, and reinvigorate Yolngu maternal health, pregnancy and birthing knowledges and care practices.<sup>107</sup>

**ACTION  
7.2**

**A transformed First Nations children, women and family centred early childhood education and support system**

Early years care, health and education supports, alongside social security payments that keep families out of poverty, must be made widely available. This system must account for the intersectionality of disability, family violence, drug and alcohol use and other complex needs, and work to reduce contact with the child protection system. There must be immediate supports including women and children's refuges, respites, rehabilitations, family violence healing and counselling supports, and integrated therapeutic and clinical supports. Women must also have access to flexible education and workforce participation if wanted. This approach is fundamentally based in prevention to keep women and children healthy and safe and together, without the intervening harms of youth detention and child removal.

**A healthy first 2000 days**

Women and families should be supported to plan regional rollouts of first 2000 days initiatives, including Connected Beginnings,<sup>108</sup> the Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program,<sup>109</sup> and First 1000 Days Australia.<sup>110</sup>

**All mothers and carers raise families free from poverty**

Re-design the social safety net and childcare system to guarantee access to universal culturally-safe free early childhood education and care, and ensure adequate non-punitive social security payments that keep women and children safe and together.

**Wrap-around therapeutic healing supports, interventions and family centres**

Expand the design and establishment of culturally-safe child, parent/carer and family programs and centres—accounting for intersectional needs such as disability supports, and ensuring that children are supported to remain with family and kin and raised in culture.

**Policy and law reform**

- Implement the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy and the workforce development strategy under Closing the Gap.<sup>111</sup>
- End and replace all punitive reporting requirements for childcare and parenting payments.
  - See Major Priority 9, Action 9.1 of Economic justice and empowerment for more information.
- Amend the Social Security Act to include mandatory application of an intersectional gender and trauma-informed lens to account for factors such as family violence, the needs of women and children with disabilities, remoteness and access to services.
  - See Major Priority 8, Action 8.1 of Economic justice and empowerment for more information.
- Governments annually monitor the impact of all social security payments on children, parents and single mothers/carers.
- Embed the *National Quality Framework's* guiding principles across all Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC) centres.<sup>112</sup>
- Co-design dedicated funding stream arrangements, including an increase of funding to ECEC services for children and families with disabilities, therapeutic and/or clinical needs.
- Design and implement equal non-transferable "use it or lose it" parental leave policies for men and women.
- Reform processes such as the Blue Card system in Queensland which make it increasingly hard to be carers for kin whilst lengthy processing increases vulnerability of children.

Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre in the Fitzroy Valley of Western Australia supports the health and wellbeing of women and their families through a range of programs including the Baya Gawiy Buga yani Jandu yani u Centre.<sup>113</sup> Baya Gawiy includes both an Early Childhood Learning Unit (ECLU) and a Child and Parent Centre to provide holistic support to women and their children. Embedded with First Nations knowledges and language and their principle of 'many ways of knowing and doing', the ECLU makes learning for children meaningful and connected to community whilst also preparing them to walk in two worlds.

**Collaborative Partnerships**

- Develop strategies—in partnership with SNAICC, regional peaks, ECEC centres and governments—for the recruitment and retention of First Nations ECEC staff. This should include gender-sensitive flexible training and employment pathways with additional supports including childcare placements and housing particularly in remote regions.

**Data and knowledge co-creation**

- Map the gaps in childhood and wrap-around family supports and research and co-design solutions with communities. In addition, support SNAICC's call to develop an innovative intermediary community First Nations body to broker childhood service design and delivery where there are current gaps.<sup>114</sup>
- Work with SNAICC and research institutions to gather evidence on First Nations early childhood learning and child raising knowledges and practices. This should be used to develop local educational resources and to scale up culturally-responsive ECEC, rather than depending on international evidence that may not be appropriate.

- <sup>1</sup> Country Needs People, *Strong Women on Country: The Success of women caring for country as Indigenous rangers and on Indigenous Protected Areas*, <[https://www.countryneedspeople.org.au/strong\\_women\\_on\\_country](https://www.countryneedspeople.org.au/strong_women_on_country)>.
- <sup>2</sup> Molly Wardaguga Research Centre, *Caring for Mum on Country* (Web Page 2021) <<https://www.birthingoncountry.com/caring4mum>>.
- <sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Indigenous Australian Languages: Celebrating 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages* (2019) <<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/indigenous-australian-languages>>.
- <sup>4</sup> Claire Slattery, *Foundation launches million-dollar plan to record Australia's songlines*, ABC News (online) 19 October 2016 <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-10-19/race-to-save-indigenous-languages-as-they-fade-away/7946006>>.
- <sup>5</sup> Yanalangami, 'Our Story' (Web page, 2021) <<https://www.yanalangami.com.au/our-story/>>.
- <sup>6</sup> NPY Women's Council, 'Law and culture' (Web page, 2021) <<https://www.npywc.org.au/about/law-and-culture/>>.
- <sup>7</sup> Kimberley Aboriginal Law Centre, *Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Strategic Plan for language, Law and culture 2021-2026*, <http://kalacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/KAWSP-2021-2026-Screen-2.pdf>>
- <sup>8</sup> Joint Standing Committee on Northern Australia, Parliament of the Commonwealth, *A Way Forward: Final Report into the destruction of Indigenous heritage sites at Juukan Gorge* (Final Report, October 2021) <[https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportjnt/024757/toc\\_pdf/AWayForward.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportjnt/024757/toc_pdf/AWayForward.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf)>.
- <sup>9</sup> Seed Mob, 'About Seed' (Web page, 2021) <<https://www.seedmob.org.au/>>.
- <sup>10</sup> Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, *Baya Gawiy Buga Yani Jandu Yani U* (Web page 2021) <<https://mwrc.com.au/pages/baya-gawiy>>.