Deloitte.

murawin
CREATE IMPACT

Social
Research
Centre

Our Way Changing Tracks – Final report

Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs

July 2022

Deloitte
Access **Economics**

Contents

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands, waters, seas and communities across the areas where this project has taken place, for they are the keepers of the memories, traditions and cultures of their Country. We pay our respect to the Elders past, present and emerging.

As a Project Team from diverse cultural backgrounds, we appreciate the opportunity to learn and grow towards making a difference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families across Queensland.

We would also like to thank all people in communities, service providers and government agency/partner organisations for their important contribution to this project.
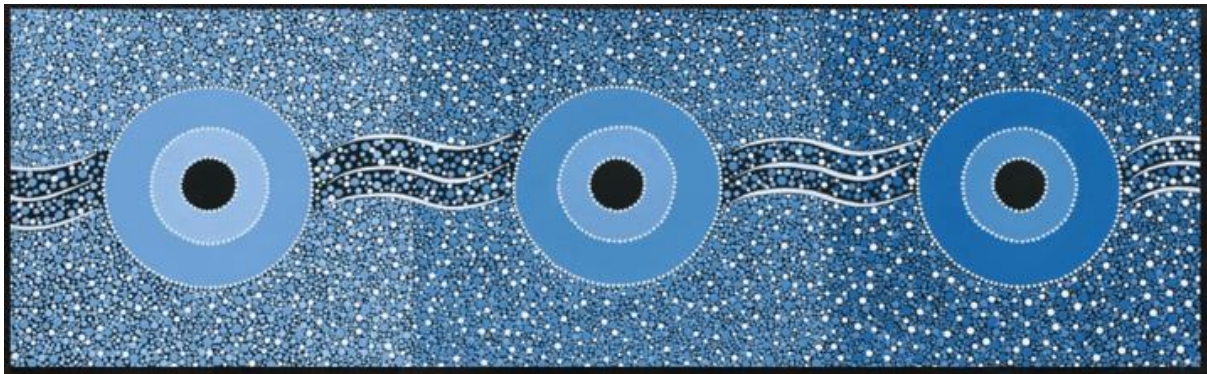
Artwor Nyiirun Gathay Yayn.Giliyn ("Walking Together") by Birrbay artist Angela Marr-Grogan

Limitation of our work

General use restriction

This report is prepared solely for the internal use of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. This report is not intended to and should not be used or relied upon by anyone else and we accept no duty of care to any other person or entity. The report has been prepared for the purpose of evaluating progress made with the *Our Way* Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and the *Changing Tracks* Evaluation Plan. You should not refer to or use our name or the advice for any other purpose.

Glossary

Acronym	Full name
ACCO	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation
DCYJMA	Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
DSDSATSIP	Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
DoE	Department of Education
DESBT	Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
DCHDE	Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney-General
DSDSATSIP	Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
FWS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services
LTC	Local Thriving Communities
NCC	National Children's Commissioner
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
QATSICPP	Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak
QFCFB	Queensland First Children and Families Board
QH	Queensland Health
WOF	Wellbeing Outcomes Framework

Final report snapshot

The Queensland Government and Family Matters Queensland are continuing to work in partnership with communities and key stakeholders to implement *Our Way* and *Changing Tracks: an action plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2022*. *Our Way* is in its fifth year of implementation. Two of the seven action plans have been implemented. This final report provides findings and recommendations related to the strength of the *Our Way* system and opportunities to strengthen the ongoing implementation of *Our Way.*

There have been notable achievements since *Our Way's* establishment in 2017. The *Child Protection Act 1999* has been amended to allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to make decisions for the child in relation to child protection matters. In partnership with Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP), the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA) has commenced planning for the implementation of delegated authority across more areas. There has been continued investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services (delivered by ACCOs) to support families to care for their children, with a recent evaluation observing a high level of success in de-escalating risks and addressing family needs. **More government agencies are also embedding community voice in the design of strategies and initiatives which relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**, although there is an opportunity to align different government strategies to *Our Way* as a whole-of-government strategy.

Notwithstanding these positive achievements, **transformative change – as originally conceived during the design of the *Our Way* strategy - requires building on what works, as well as rethinking and reshaping what does not**. The complexity of needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families requires innovation and a system with many levers operating in unison. Since *Our Way's* implementation, there is evidence that some system stakeholders have made positive changes to the way they make decisions, undertake strategic planning and implement processes which are aligned with *Our Way's* principles. **However, these changes have yet to occur at the desired scale and pace to achieve *Our Way's* objectives**. Genuine partnerships and co-design are required for the "our" in *Our Way* to reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities. **Not all government agencies consider themselves to be part of the *Our Way* system, which has impacted cross-system collaboration and the desired level of engagement with this strategy**. At this stage, there is also scope for institutional mechanisms – such as those that relate to funding and governance arrangements – to be recalibrated to support community-led decision making.

In the remaining fifteen years of this strategy, **there is an opportunity to consider how different system stakeholders can work together to build on earlier successes**. Most system stakeholders commend the intent and vision of the strategy. However, there is scope for **future *Our Way* actions to be bolder and more transformative**. This includes placing greater focus on early intervention and prevention so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children do not enter the child protection system in the first place. All system stakeholders – including central government agencies – **need to align their policy, processes and practice with *Our Way's* Theory of Change and Program Logic Model**. Government mechanisms have to be re-oriented to elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance. There needs to be concerted efforts to call out and eliminate racism which still exists in the system. The community-controlled sector must be provided resources and supports to ensure ACCOs are well positioned to succeed and lead future service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These reforms need to be underpinned by robust data collection and performance monitoring processes to measure changes within the system and the life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The status quo is unacceptable. More should be done so that Aboriginal and Torres Islander children and young people have equal opportunities to thrive and are empowered to have a say on policies and laws which affect them.

1 Executive summary

Background

The Queensland Government worked in partnership with Family Matters Queensland and community organisations to develop *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037*. *Our Way* is a 20-year strategy to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in the child protection system in Queensland and close the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. *Our Way* outlines the vision and aspiration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in Queensland to grow up safely and cared for in family, community, and culture. Across Queensland, *Our Way* is being delivered via a whole-of-system and partnership approach with Family Matters Queensland, Queensland First Children and Families Board and Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP).

Our Way is built on the [Family Matters Building Blocks](#), to realise its vision:

1. All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe universal and targeted services necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children
3. Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive
4. Governments and community services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Way is being delivered through a series of seven rolling action plans (see Table iChart iFigure i). This approach allows for flexibility whereby future action plans can build on the outcomes achieved and challenges identified from prior action plans to create transformational systems change. The action plans span across three phases: *Changing Tracks* (2017-2022), *Breaking Cycles* (2023-2031) and *Hitting Targets* (2032-2037).

Figure i *Our Way* timelines
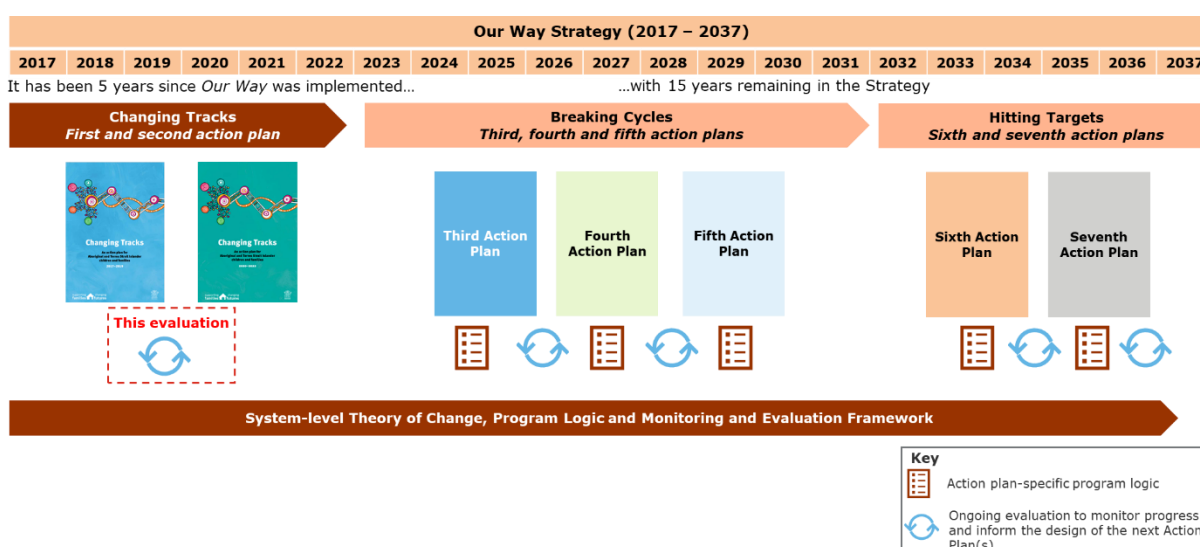
Source: Deloitte Access Economics

Our Way and its action plans are aligned to the goals of national and state initiatives and strategies. At a national level, *Our Way* is aligned to the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* The aim of the Closing the Gap is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all life outcomes. Closing the Gap contains a specific child protection

target to reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45 per cent by 2031. At the state level, the implementation of *Our Way* and associated action plans builds on work underway through a range of initiatives including the Family Matters Campaign, the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Strategy, Path to Treaty and *Supporting Families Changing Futures: Advancing Queensland's child protection and family support reforms*.

Evaluation approach

Deloitte Access Economics, Murawin and the Social Research Centre have been commissioned by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA) on behalf of strategy partners to evaluate progress made by *Our Way* and the *Changing Tracks* Action Plans (see Figure i). As illustrated in Figure ii, this evaluation consists of two main phases. In the first phase, the evaluation involved project planning in mid-2020 and two phases of annual progress reporting (2020 and 2021). The second phase of the evaluation is a systems level evaluation led by Deloitte Access Economics and Murawin, which culminates in the delivery of a final evaluation report (this report) in 2022.

Figure ii Overview of evaluation timelines
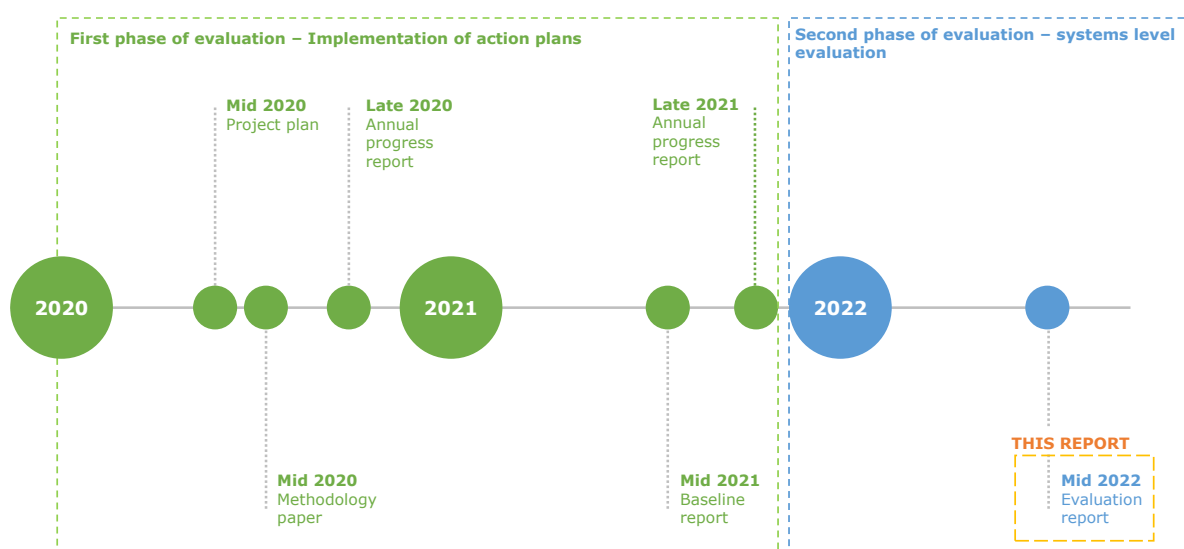
Source: Deloitte Access Economics

The first phase of the evaluation focused on the implementation of action plans. The baseline report noted that improvements are starting to be made within the *Our Way* system. However, more work is required to articulate the system change sought through *Our Way*, and the extent to which all stakeholders can act, share accountability, collaborate and contribute to the attainment of its objectives.

Towards the end of the first phase of the evaluation, there was consensus among strategy partners, Deloitte and Murawin that the evaluation questions required reconsideration. This is not uncommon in longer term evaluations, where evaluation scope and approach are iteratively refined to ensure the evaluation framework continues to be fit-for-purpose.

Lessons from the first phase of the evaluation identified a need for additional information to strengthen the foundation for ongoing and future evaluation of action plans within *Our Way*. It was agreed that the second phase of the evaluation should seek to develop a Theory of Change and program logic model. This will help ensure future actions are strongly aligned to focus areas that will have the greatest impact in the remaining fifteen years of *Our Way*.

Systems level evaluation

Given findings identified in the first phase of this evaluation, it was agreed that **the second phase** of the evaluation would be a systems level evaluation. The objectives of this phase are to:

- Develop a clearer link between the objectives of *Our Way*, the change sought, and the actions required to achieve these outcomes. As part of this process, a Theory of Change and program logic model were developed in collaboration with system stakeholders.
- Identify potential solutions to engender greater cross-system stakeholder buy in to *Our Way*. This is critical to support the system transformation required to achieve the vision of *Our Way*.
- Unpack stakeholders' views on how to collectively build on what is working well and how things could be done differently to enable the effective implementation of the strategy.

The second phase of the evaluation consists of three main activities – Theory of Change and program logic model workshops (n=19) semi-structured interviews with selected government stakeholders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives (n=25) and a network analysis survey (n=23).

Key findings on the *Our Way* system

System stakeholders

The *Our Way* system (see Figure iii) consists of stakeholder groups who collectively have shared responsibility to achieve the *Our Way* objectives. These groups include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, peak bodies, NGOs, the corporate sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), politicians and both federal and state government agencies. During consultations, stakeholders reiterated that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are the central focus of the *Our Way* system, and their needs should be at the forefront of decision making. Actions undertaken by system stakeholders to work towards the attainment of the *Our Way* objectives are influenced by other ongoing strategy and policy work at a national and state level – for example, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and specific strategies developed by Queensland agencies to improve outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. There is opportunity to align these distinct yet inter-related policies to strengthen the whole-of-system approach to implementing *Our Way*.

Figure iii Visual representation of the *Our Way* system
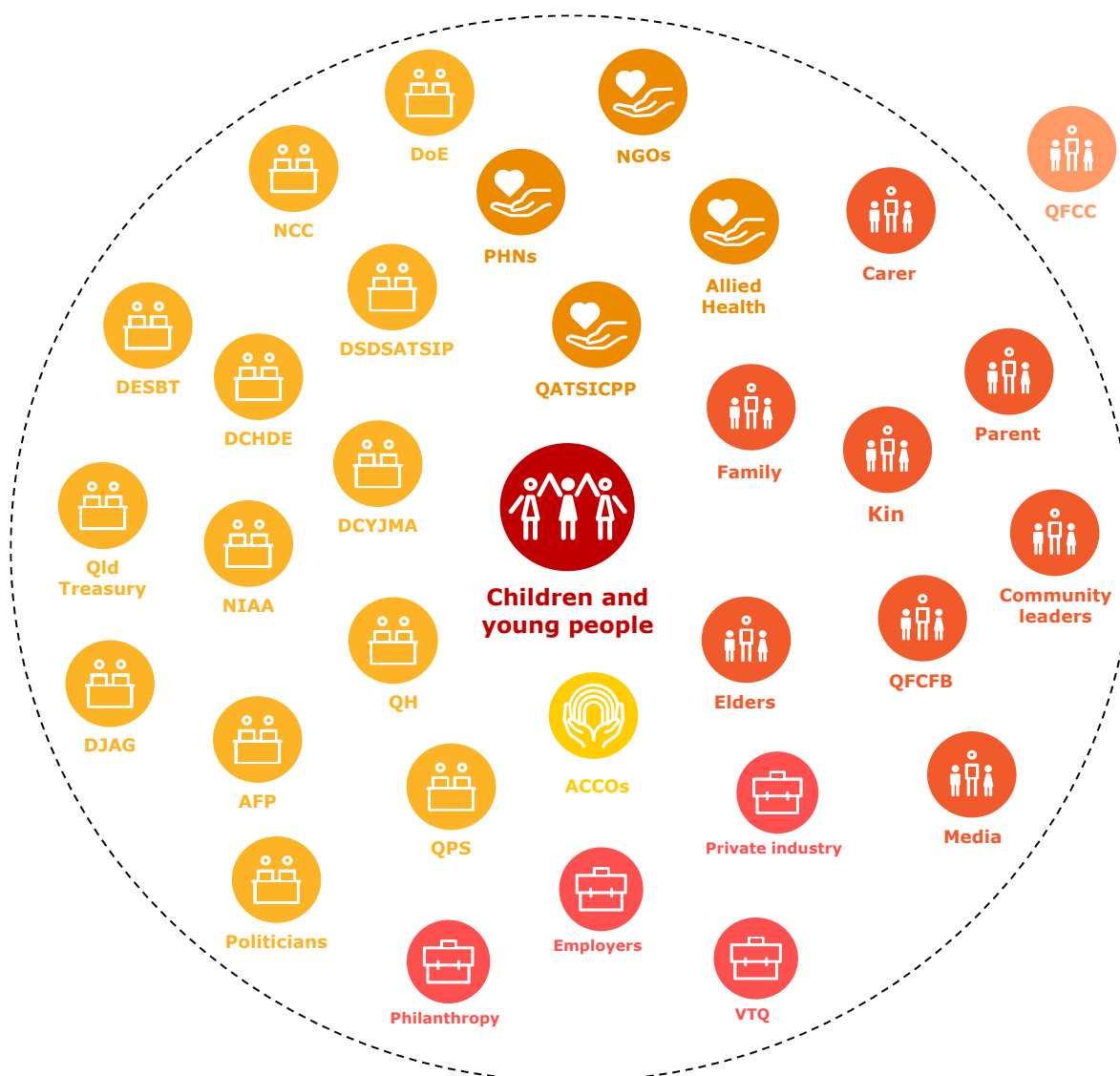
Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis of *Our Way* workshop feedback
Note: QFCC has been visually placed outside of the circle to reflect their independent oversight role in the Queensland child protection system

Awareness and alignment to *Our Way's* vision
There is some variation in the extent to which government stakeholders are aware of and perceive strong alignment to the vision of *Our Way*. Results from the 2022 network analysis survey indicate that those who work in ACCOs are more likely than government stakeholders to be aware of *Our Way* and their organisations' role in achieving *Our Way's* objectives. In terms of role, those who are part of frontline service delivery were less likely to demonstrate strong awareness and alignment to the vision compared to survey respondents who are part of central policy and strategy formulation. This is consistently highlighted during consultations, where stakeholders reported inconsistent levels of awareness of *Our Way* across different levels of government. Another key theme is that some frontline agencies do not consider themselves to be part of the *Our Way* system, and therefore do not actively engage with the strategy. This has undermined ongoing efforts for effective cross-system collaboration.

Actions and changes to date since the establishment of *Our Way*
There is evidence that *Our Way* has led to some positive changes in the way organisations make decisions, undertake strategic planning and implement processes which support self-determination

among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For example, two-thirds of *Our Way* survey respondents (which primarily consist of DCYJMA and ACCO representatives) agreed that their organisation has implemented processes that genuinely provide mechanisms for young people and families to have a say in decisions that affect them, compared to 12 per cent who disagreed. However, survey responses indicate scope for these changes to take place at a larger scale and across more organisations. Survey respondents who work in strategic and policy development roles were more likely to have changed their ways of working to be aligned with *Our Way's* principles compared to those who directly deliver frontline services.

Existing collaboration within the *Our Way* system

There have been observed changes in collaborative working approaches between government agencies, service providers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives to enable the implementation of *Our Way*. Regular quarterly meetings were perceived to support information sharing among executives across different agencies. Survey respondents (primarily those who work in DCYJMA and ACCOs) cited examples of collaboration with a range of system stakeholders through sharing information (including data), participating in knowledge transfer and the sharing of resources. However, stakeholders who were interviewed said data sharing was an ongoing barrier to community-led decision making. Survey respondents reported that it was less common for collaborations to take place through joint planning and the implementation of collaborative funding models.

The survey revealed variation in the frequency of collaboration. There was generally no observed changes in the frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA and other government agencies since the implementation of *Our Way*. However, the was an increase in the frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations (such as ACCOs and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP)). Despite increases in the frequency of collaboration, the general consensus among all stakeholders was that the impact of these collaboration was not significant. This indicates scope for more genuine partnerships and meaningful collaboration among different system stakeholders.

Implementation enablers and barriers

The implementation of *Our Way* has been supported by three key factors:

1. Greater trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector has improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to more culturally appropriate services. This is evidenced by the recent outcomes evaluation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services (which are delivered by ACCOs) which identified positive outcomes in terms of successfully meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and reducing the extent to which families experienced child safety investigations after exiting the program. Stakeholders identified scope for the Government to support the collective growth of this sector moving forward to ensure more community members can benefit from these services.
2. Initiatives and services that embed elements of co-design and strong community voice are more likely to be well received by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. There is a need to identify, showcase and scale successful service delivery models.
3. The recent changes to legislation and governance arrangements reflects progress to greater community-led decision making. For instance, stakeholders commended the ongoing implementation of delegated authority to permit one or more of the Chief Executive's statutory functions or powers for an Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander child under the *Child Protection Act 1999* to be delegated to the Chief Executive of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entity.

However, there are a number of implementation challenges which have hindered the achievement of *Our Way's* objectives, including:

1. Structural racism which continues to exist within some parts of the system, despite significant government investment to address this.

2. Variation in cultural competency among non-Indigenous organisations. There are also some place-based variations in the quality and cultural appropriateness of services which should be investigated further.
3. Fear-based decision making (e.g., fear of losing power, risk aversion and resistance to change).
4. Variation in the strength of accountability mechanisms associated with the key objectives of *Our Way* across agencies and different levels of government.
5. Insufficient progress in transforming funding and procurement arrangements to reflect the intended shift in power to the community (including the community-controlled sector).

There are three main suggested lessons to strengthen the future implementation of *Our Way*:

1. Increase focus on early intervention so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children do not enter the child protection system in the first place. Culture needs to be recognised as a protective factor which increases the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
2. Ensure that future *Our Way* actions are bolder and more transformative to achieve the desired change in the system. This means going beyond establishing plans and governance arrangements and ensuring that actions are impactful and directly support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
3. Strengthen data collection mechanisms which incorporate community voice to measure the success of *Our Way*.

These lessons have informed the design of the Theory of Change (see page 15).

Changing the *Our Way* system

This evaluation found that at times, there appeared to be a disconnect between how the actions and activities being delivered under *Our Way* were contributing to the transformational change needed to achieve the objectives of *Our Way*. As part of the second phase of this evaluation, a Theory of Change has been developed in collaboration with key system stakeholders from several government agencies, ACCOs and representatives of the Queensland First Children and Families Board. This Theory of Change is intended to guide positive changes within the system, increase the level of engagement from all system stakeholders and identify the key priority areas that the Strategy will focus on delivering reforms and activities in to achieve its objectives. Importantly, it highlights that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are at the heart and centre of the system.

The program logic model operationalises the Theory of Change by describing the inputs required to undertake activities that will produce tangible outputs and contribute towards the attainment of short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. The intent of this program logic model is to shape the design of future action plans and outline key outcomes that future evaluations can consider assessing to measure the success and implementation progress of *Our Way*. The program logic model aims to:

- influence and inform the design and implementation of the *Breaking Cycles* action plans
- outline key outcomes that future evaluations can continue tracking to measure the success and implementation progress of *Our Way*
- support the development of whole-of-system approach to implementing *Our Way*
- enable the sharing of accountability across different government and non-government agencies who are collectively responsible for delivering the best life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

In reviewing the program logic model, it is important to consider the following aspects:

- **The timeframes of *Our Way***. This system-level program logic model is intended to provide high-level guidance on the key focus areas for sustained action and change, and the outcomes that need to be achieved to attain the overarching objectives of *Our Way.* It includes less specificity on the input, activity and output components as it is expected that detailed program

logic models will be tailored for each action plan remaining in the strategy once actions are agreed upon (see Figure i).

- **The system-level approach to developing this program logic**. This program logic model takes a systems view of the positive systemic changes that need to occur for *Our Way* objectives to be attained. It therefore incorporates indicators related to system-level changes – such as stakeholders' commitment to the strategy and the extent to which stakeholders collaborate and implement key actions that are aligned with *Our Way's* shared goals.
- **The co-design approach adopted**. This program logic model has importantly been developed through engagement with key system stakeholders, including government stakeholders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, representatives from ACCOs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

Future areas of focus

This evaluation has identified four key areas of focus in the remaining years of the strategy and the key enablers of whole-of-system changes. Each focus area is elaborated in greater detail below.

1. Recognise and implement the transformative change that *Our Way* requires

There needs to be a whole-of-system recognition of the transformative change required to achieve *Our Way's* objectives. For *Our Way* to be successfully implemented, there needs to be **a paradigm shift in the role of Government**. *Our Way* advocates for greater family-led decision making. To achieve this, **the Government must be willing to relinquish control over key decisions in order to promote self-determination and support the safety, wellbeing and connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families**.

It is commendable that some government agencies are recalibrating existing policy and practice to incorporate greater co-design and community-led decision making. Positive systems change – as originally intended in the design of *Our Way* - requires these changes to occur at a larger and more consistent scale across all agencies. To achieve this, it is recommended that:

1.1 All government agencies should revisit their existing policy, legislation and strategies and develop plans to address policy / legislation / strategies that do not align with *Our Way*'s key principles within a specified timeframe. For some agencies, the current ways of working and implementing actions are insufficient to deliver the required changes. There should be clear mechanisms to identify and remedy these misalignments.

1.2 Utilise the Theory of Change and program logic model (see pages 15 and 16) to influence the design of actions to achieve the common goals articulated in *Our Way*. Importantly, the outcomes articulated in the program logic model reflect the shared responsibility of the different frontline agencies. A mechanism to design bolder and more transformative actions (rather than leveraging on existing actions that are already in place) may be required to achieve the desired outcomes.

1.3 Establish transparent and regular reporting mechanisms to the Queensland First Children and Families Board on the implementation progress and remediation activity required. Given that the improved life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are the central focus of *Our Way*, there should be clear reporting mechanisms on the progress across different socioeconomic determinants which influence their life outcomes (such as access to safe housing, early childhood education, nutrition and quality healthcare).

1.4 Identify opportunities to better embed First Nations voice in leadership, governance, service planning and decision making. This includes strategies to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in government leadership and policy decision making processes.

2.   Support the sustainable development of the community-controlled sector

The successful transformative change articulated above can only be achieved if it is accompanied with concerted efforts by both government and peak agencies to develop the community-controlled sector in a more sustainable manner. This evaluation has identified some variation in the existing capability of different ACCOs; and the need to develop a clear transition plan to invest in strengthening the community-controlled sector.

It is also recommended that:

2.1 The Government, in partnership with QATSICPP and other sector peaks develop a clear strategy and implementation plan to support investments in transition planning and capability development of the community-controlled sector. In line with the expected transfer in responsibilities, government agencies should be working in genuine partnership with ACCOs and non-indigenous child and family organisations to improve the sector's capability across a range of areas, including governance arrangements and workforce development. This ensures that ACCOs are set up to succeed from the start.

2.2 Support ACCOs' ability to innovate and scale successful approaches. ACCOs must be provided the opportunity and space to innovate their service delivery to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This can be achieved through the funding of pilots. Successful pilots can be funded and scaled to more locations. The need to trust and empower ACCOs is illustrated in the following stakeholder quote - "*the Government should take a leap of faith and support ACCOs. ACCOs know their people in a way that we would not possibly know*".

2.3 Ensure funding arrangements are recalibrated to reflect the trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector. The adequacy and structure of funding arrangements should be aligned with the complexity of work that ACCOs are tasked to do. ACCOs should importantly have the ability to exercise self-determination and have control of funding arrangements.

3.   Reorientation of government mechanisms

The Government can build on earlier successes and continue re-orienting its mechanisms to ensure that current policy, processes and practice are aligned with the ongoing transformational change advocated by *Our Way*. This can be achieved through the following recommended steps:

3.1 Call out and address systemic racism that continues to exist within the system. The Government should publicly acknowledge and challenge unconscious biases that continue to influence decision making. There should be transparent reporting mechanisms of ongoing efforts to highlight this issue and concerted steps to address them (e.g. an annual survey which captures the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who access frontline services; and the extent to which systemic racism continues to exist within the system).

3.2 Prioritise strengthening the cultural competency of public sector employees. The Government can consider delivering regular professional development and induction training sessions on how different working contexts can demonstrate alignment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (henceforth respectfully referred to as Child Placement Principle) and *Our Way*'s key principles.

3.3 Strengthen accountability mechanisms to hold all government and non-government service providers accountable for positive life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. These mechanisms could be in the form of:

  3.3.1 Explicit KPIs for all public sector workers at all levels – including frontline workers, regional directors and Directors-General. The KPIs could focus on key indicators related to specific life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.

> 3.3.2 Feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the performance of public sector organisations. This would involve soliciting feedback on an individual agency's performance from Elders / Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives as part of annual performance monitoring measures.
>
> 3.3.3 Linking funding access to the extent to which frontline agencies have implemented the Child Placement Principle. This would serve as an additional incentive to better embed cultural change among implementing agencies.

3.4 Actively value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, knowledge, history and experiences. The Government should move away from the traditional problem-based paradigm and instead, adopt a strengths-based approach which celebrates the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

4. Engender greater whole-of-system commitment to achieve *Our Way's* objectives

Our Way is ultimately a whole-of-government approach. DCYJMA and selected partner agencies have made significant strides in progressing the implementation of the Strategy. However, to achieve the transformative change articulated in the strategy, there needs to be strong engagement and commitment from all players in the system – including central government agencies, the community-controlled sector and non-Indigenous service providers.

Improving the life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children should be a key priority for all agencies – not merely agencies who deliver specific services. All government agencies need to understand their collective role in supporting positive changes in the system. This can be achieved by:

4.1 Greater advocacy of the required change from the highest levels of Government. The Government establishes governance arrangements to serve as a centralised point of accountability to raise the visibility of *Our Way*, increase engagement from other agencies and monitor the implementation of key action plans. This could include the establishment of a Cabinet sub-committee that is chaired by the Premier and includes representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. One stakeholder said:
"We would like greater engagement from central agencies around the leadership required to drive the implementation of Our Way".

4.2 Development and implementation of strategies to raise awareness of the systemic changes driven by Our Way across different levels of government. A structured communication and engagement strategy could be developed to ensure that information on Our Way's vision and implementation progress is regularly communicated to all system stakeholders, including frontline workers and community members.

4.3 Establish collaborative mechanisms to support the alignment of ongoing government strategies to *Our Way*. This evaluation found there is generally limited visibility of the different strategies that frontline agencies are implementing which will influence the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. There is an opportunity for the design of these strategies to be done in collaboration with other agencies.

4.4 Communicate the intent and impact of *Our Way* to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Even though *Our Way* was implemented in 2017, there has been limited success in raising awareness and building wide-reaching understanding of its intent and approach. Given this, there is an opportunity for more extensive community engagement in the development and implementation of the remaining action plans.

4.5 Embed the voice and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when assessing the impact of *Our Way*. There should be consideration of structured data collection mechanisms (through independent evaluations and regular internal performance monitoring mechanisms) to understand if *Our Way* has positively impacted their lives. In implementing *Our Way*, both government and non-government service providers are ultimately accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, family and community – rather than to targets and numbers. One stakeholder noted that *"the only way to measure this strategy's success is to speak directly to Aboriginal and Torres Islander people."*

Cultural perspectives on *Our Way*

As mentioned in the Baseline Report, cultural considerations are central to the evaluation approach. Maintaining a culturally safe and respectful environment for Aboriginal and Torres Islander children and families were prioritised in the *Our Way* evaluation process.

As previously discussed, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children should be the central focus of the *Our Way* system, therefore, their outcomes should be central to decision making. All other system stakeholders should collaboratively wrap around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to ensure they are culturally safe and cared for in family, community and connected to their culture. The importance of building a strengths-based cultural determinant approach to improving wellbeing outcomes for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families is critical if we are to achieve intergenerational change.

The cultural determinants of wellbeing acknowledge that stronger connections to culture and Country build stronger individual and communal identities, a sense of self-esteem, resilience, and improved outcomes across not just child protection but also in other areas including education, economic empowerment and community safety. ACCOs are key to integrating this approach sector wide.

Cultural perspectives on *Our Way* in the context of systemic change must include the application of systems thinking via an Indigenous lens. Systems Thinking is an approach to thinking that recognises components not existing in isolation, but moreover, existing as part of a larger holistic system. It involves identifying, understanding and acknowledging the interrelationships and interactions among all aspects or elements of a system.[1] This approach to thinking is not new to Indigenous peoples globally, but more of an already accepted process or way of life.[2]

High level examples of cultural considerations within *Our Way* for systemic change can include defining what the system is that requires change, identifying who exists within the system both directly and indirectly, identifying key roles and influential power holders, identifying barriers or blockages within the system and understanding the relationships within the system. Without relationships, the system cannot be realistically understood or defined; therefore, systemic change cannot be achieved successfully without established and defined relationships or connections. Other examples could include utilisation of holistic approaches to understand sustainable change on a larger scale not just on an individual level – seeing the bigger picture. Ultimately, cultural perspectives embedded into systems thinking for *Our Way* will create better opportunity for improved systems organisation, navigation and change.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people within the child protection system exist within a system that is not clearly defined to them, their families or communities. Understanding this system requires understanding other systems and components that have influenced how it exists today. Significant factors of this are historical policy factors and unpacking how the system was first established as well as understanding the changes made to how it exists at present. The difference between how the system existed historically compared to currently is important when defining what exactly the child protection system is. This creates better open opportunity for understanding why systemic change is required. One sector changing within a system will not lead to overall realistic sustainable change. Change to all components or sectors within the system is required for holistic systemic change.

A genuine and consistent process needs to be established and embedded across the whole system that identifies who exists in this system and where their responsibility lies. These responsibilities need to be clearly defined and explained to all involved in the system specifically to children, youth

---

[1] Sterman, J, 2004, 'Systems Thinking and Modelling for Complex World', *Institute for Operations Research and the Management of Sciences,* vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 324-326, viewed 23 May 2022, https://eds.s.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=4&sid=54ac0fea-b389-43c5-9d62-1563ceef138a%40redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=deakin.b1972118&db=cat00097a

[2] Heke, I, Rees, D, Swinburn, B, Waititi, R, Stewart, A, 2019, 'Systems thinking and Indigenous systems: Native contributions to obesity prevention', *AlterNative: An international Journal of Indigenous Peoples,* vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 22-30, viewed 23 May 2022, https://eds.s.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=b62ab508-3a27-4bdc-b608-26e39b124417%40redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=edsihc.299158058366987&db=edsihc

and families within the child protection system. Relationships of those within the child protection system should not be vague. The interconnection within all systems involves relationships and behaviours. These relationships within the child protection system need to be clearly defined and maintained. Naturally, any imbalanced relationship creates risk to the person at the centre of the system; the child or young person. Creating risk or systems complications for the child or young person contradicts the purpose of protection and safety. Therefore, strong and clearly defined relationships throughout the whole child protection system are vital to support the safety and protection of a child or young person. This includes defined maintained relationships between all services and stakeholders within the system, both government and non-government.

Ensuring that cultural perspectives are embedded in the system can be demonstrated in consistent and culturally safe delivered services across all areas involved with a child or young person within the system. Strong supported human resource processes and procedures, including culturally supportive supervision, competency training and mentoring are required to ensure cultural perspectives are integrated. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander models of care and engagement should be used across all services in conjunction with intersectional and intercultural collaborative approaches when working within the child protection system.

Recommended areas of focus

	1 Recognise and implement the transformative changes that *Our Way* requires	2 Support the sustainable development of the community-controlled sector	3 Re-orientation of government mechanisms	4 Engender whole-of-system commitment to achieve *Our Way's* objectives
Future areas of focus	Recognise and implement the transformative changes that *Our Way* requires	Support the sustainable development of the community-controlled sector	Re-orientation of government mechanisms	Engender whole-of-system commitment to achieve *Our Way's* objectives
Enablers of change	Strong governance arrangements which embed Indigenous leadership and community voice	Supportive legislation and policy	Equitable funding, procurement and commissioning processes	Robust data collection and performance monitoring
Details	• Align existing and new government policy, legislation and strategies with *Our Way* • Use the Theory of Change and program logic model to achieve common goals • Establish transparent and regular reporting mechanisms • Embed First Nations voice in all levels of decision making	• Invest in transition planning and support development of ACCOs • Innovate and scale successful approaches to meet needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children • Recalibrate funding arrangements to reflect trust and empowerment with ACCOs	• Call out and address systematic racism that influence decision making • Strengthen cultural competence of public sector employees • Strengthen accountability mechanisms for government and non-government service providers • Actively value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, knowledge, history and experiences	• Advocate for system-wide changes at the highest levels of Government • Raise awareness of the systemic changes being driven by *Our Way* • Collaborate and align ongoing Government work to *Our Way* • Communicate intent and impact of *Our Way* to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities • Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices into the evaluation of *Our Way*

Theory of Change

Objectives of the *Our Way* strategy: Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system and close the gap in life outcomes by 2037

Outcomes[1]

All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe universal and targeted services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children

THE OUR WAY SYSTEM

Families

Kin

ACCOs

Children and young people

Communities

Service system

Federal and state governments

Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive

Governments and community services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Future areas of focus

1 **Recognise and enable transformational change in the system**

- *Commit to genuine co-design processes that implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander solutions*
- *Enable the right to self-determination*
- *Elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance*

Sustainably develop the community-controlled sector

- *Strengthen the capacity and capability of ACCOs*
- *Shift in power and resources to the community*
- *Scale effective and innovative place-based responses*

2

3

4 **Whole-of-system commitment**

- *Whole-of-system awareness and commitment to the Our Way strategy*
- *Understand the socioeconomic structural drivers to over-representation*
- *Focus on early intervention and prevention*

Re-orient Government mechanisms

- *Acknowledge and address systemic racism*
- *Strengthen data collection to measure changes in First Nations' children's lives*
- *Improve cultural safety and competency*
- *Improve shared responsibility and accountability*
- *More equitable funding and procurement processes*

The four areas of focus and enabling activities within each represent the roots to the *Our Way* system. Actions and changes must be collectively undertaken by stakeholders to provide a strong foundation for the *Our Way* system to thrive. If this can be achieved, the four outcomes will be achieved and enable children and young people to grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

[1]The outcomes represent the Family Matters Building Blocks that are included in *Our Way*

Program logic model

Objectives of the *Our Way* strategy: Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system and close the gap in life outcomes by 2037

Future areas of focus
(guidance to influence the design of action plans)

Short term and medium term outcomes
(Outcomes achieved through implementation of the Breaking Cycles and Hitting Targets action plans)

Long term outcomes
Achievement of Our Way's objectives

1. Recognise and enable transformational change in the system

- Commit to genuine co-design processes that implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander solutions
- Enable the right to self-determination
- Elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance

2. Sustainably develop the community-controlled sector

- Strengthen the capacity and capability of ACCOs
- Shift in power and resources to the community
- Scale effective and innovative place-based responses

3. Re-orient government mechanisms

- Acknowledge and address systemic racism
- Strengthen data collection to measure changes in First Nations' children's lives
- Improve cultural safety and competency
- Improve shared responsibility and accountability
- More equitable funding and procurement processes

4. Whole-of system commitment

- Whole-of-system awareness and commitment to the Our Way strategy
- Understand the socioeconomic structural drivers to over-representation
- Focus on early intervention and prevention

Improved life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

1. The needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are met before and during pregnancy and parenting, especially during the first 1,000 days
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong*
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have access to affordable and appropriate medical care as well as a healthy lifestyle from birth to adulthood
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years*
5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years*
6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up in an environment that is free from poverty as their parents, carers and family have access to economic opportunities
7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in education*
8. Aboriginal and Torre Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways*
9. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enjoy high levels of social, mental health and emotional wellbeing*
10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have a strong sense of identity and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages*
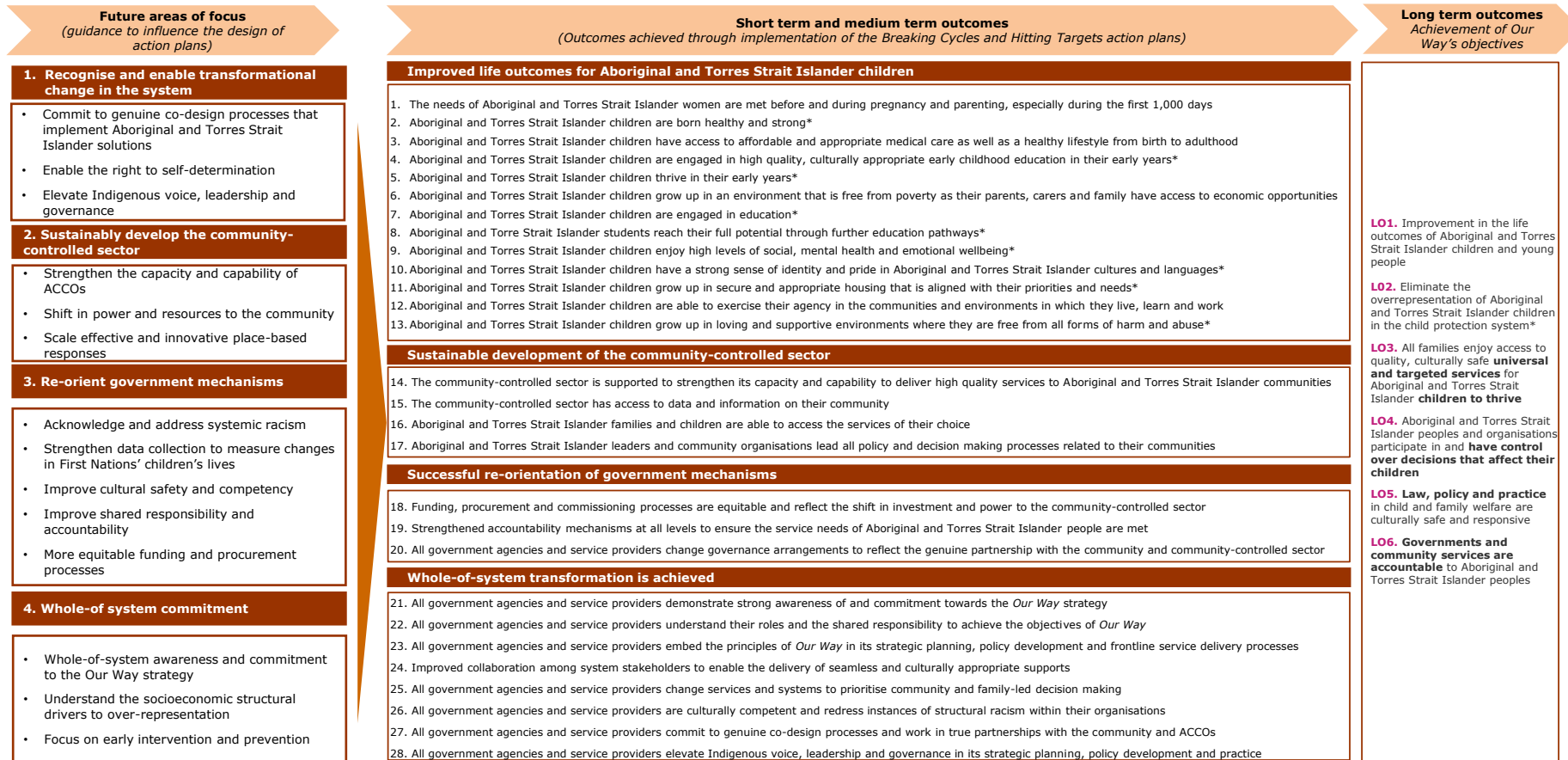11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up in secure and appropriate housing that is aligned with their priorities and needs*
12. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are able to exercise their agency in the communities and environments in which they live, learn and work
13. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up in loving and supportive environments where they are free from all forms of harm and abuse*

Sustainable development of the community-controlled sector

14. The community-controlled sector is supported to strengthen its capacity and capability to deliver high quality services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
15. The community-controlled sector has access to data and information on their community
16. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children are able to access the services of their choice
17. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and community organisations lead all policy and decision making processes related to their communities

Successful re-orientation of government mechanisms

18. Funding, procurement and commissioning processes are equitable and reflect the shift in investment and power to the community-controlled sector
19. Strengthened accountability mechanisms at all levels to ensure the service needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are met
20. All government agencies and service providers change governance arrangements to reflect the genuine partnership with the community and community-controlled sector

Whole-of-system transformation is achieved

21. All government agencies and service providers demonstrate strong awareness of and commitment towards the *Our Way* strategy
22. All government agencies and service providers understand their roles and the shared responsibility to achieve the objectives of *Our Way*
23. All government agencies and service providers embed the principles of *Our Way* in its strategic planning, policy development and frontline service delivery processes
24. Improved collaboration among system stakeholders to enable the delivery of seamless and culturally appropriate supports
25. All government agencies and service providers change services and systems to prioritise community and family-led decision making
26. All government agencies and service providers are culturally competent and redress instances of structural racism within their organisations
27. All government agencies and service providers commit to genuine co-design processes and work in true partnerships with the community and ACCOs
28. All government agencies and service providers elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance in its strategic planning, policy development and practice

LO1. Improvement in the life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

LO2. Eliminate the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system*

LO3. All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe **universal and targeted services** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **children to thrive**

LO4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and **have control over decisions that affect their children**

LO5. Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive

LO6. Governments and community services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

* Queensland Closing the Gap Implementation Plan outcomes

2 Background

This section of the report provides a brief summary of Our Way and contextual information which influence the implementation of the strategy.

2.1 *Our Way*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland continue to experience disadvantage. Some live in unsafe situations that lead to their removal from families, communities and cultures at more than eight times the rate of non-Indigenous children[3]. More broadly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also share a continued legacy of pain, trauma, fear, distrust and anger due in part to government decisions, policies and practices.[4]

Delivering the best possible outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families is one of the Queensland Government's highest priorities. To achieve this, the Government has worked in partnership with Family Matters Queensland and community organisations to develop *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037*. *Our Way*'s vision and aspiration is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in Queensland to grow up safely and cared for in family, community, and culture.

The strategy spans across 20 years and seeks to achieve the follow objectives:
1. eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system by 2037
2. close the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Across Queensland, *Our Way* is being delivered via a whole-of-system and partnership approach with Family Matters Queensland, Queensland First Children and Families Board and Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP). As stated by the Queensland Government:

"(*Our Way)* represents a fundamental shift in how child protection, family support and other services work with – and - for, Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families".[5]

Our Way is built on four key areas (the Family Matters Building Blocks), to realise its vision:

1   All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe universal and targeted services necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive.
2   Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children.
3   Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive.
4   Governments and community services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Queensland Government has also signed the Family Matters national campaign's Statement of Commitment. The following **six principles** will underpin and guide the implementation of *Our Way*:

1. **Applying a child focussed approach**: In recognising that all actions concerning children, their best interests should be the paramount consideration and that ensuring their safety is essential.
2. **Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children**: Aboriginal and

---

[3] S Lohoar, N Butera & E Kennedy, Strengths of Australian Aboriginal cultural practices in family and child rearing, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Victoria, 2014.
[4] DCYJMA (2017) *Our Way* – a generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families
[5] https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/campaign/supporting-families/background/strategy-action-plan-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-children-families.

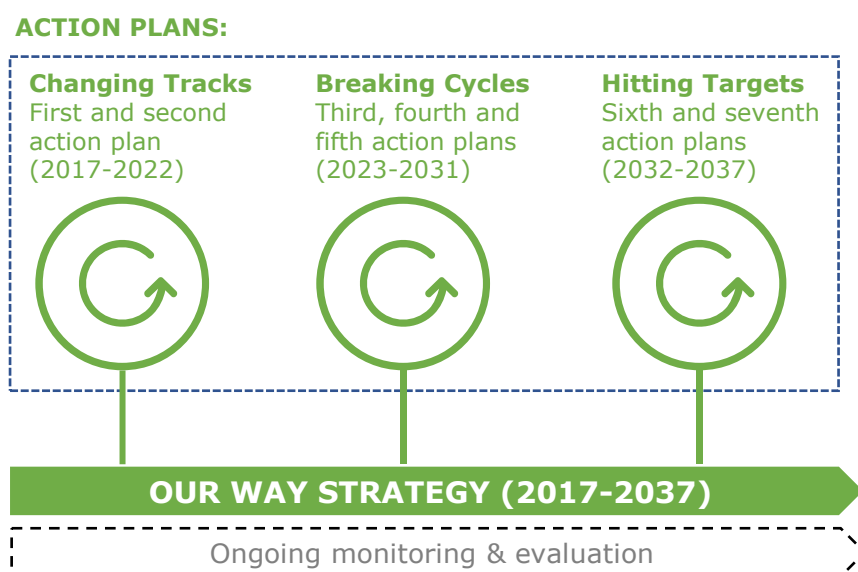Torres Strait Islander peoples having the strengths and the rights to lead change for their own children.

3. **Protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's right to live in culture**: Recognising that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, connections to family, community and culture are critical to their wellbeing and positive self-identity.

4. **Pursuing evidence-based responses**: Efforts to address the issue of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems should be based on evidence of what works and include the knowledge, wisdom and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

5. **Supporting, healing and strengthening families**: Acknowledging the unique need for healing supports to address the impacts of intergenerational trauma on families.

6. **Changing systemic racism and inequities:** Acknowledge that the current challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families result from a history of injustice and racism that remains embedded within the laws, policies and practices of our society, systems and institutions.

2.2 *Changing Tracks* action plans

2.2.1 Implementation of the *Changing Tracks* action plans

As articulated in Figure 2.1, *Our Way* is being delivered through a series of seven rolling action plans. This approach will allow flexibility where future actions are based on the outcomes achieved from prior action plans and can address new challenges and priorities. The action plans span across three phases: *Changing Tracks* (2017-2022), *Breaking Cycles* (2023-2031) and *Hitting Targets* (2032-2037) and are based on the Family Matters building blocks and principles. The development and implementation of action plans under *Our Way* are overseen by DCYJMA and receive oversight from the Queensland First Children and Families Board.

Figure 2.1 Implementation framework for *Our Way*

ACTION PLANS:

| **Changing Tracks** | **Breaking Cycles** | **Hitting Targets** |
| First and second action plan (2017-2022) | Third, fourth and fifth action plans (2023-2031) | Sixth and seventh action plans (2032-2037) |

OUR WAY STRATEGY (2017-2037)

Ongoing monitoring & evaluation

The *Changing Tracks* action plans 2017–2019 and 2020–2022 are the first two of seven action plans to guide the delivery of *Our Way*. The key priorities of *Changing Tracks* include:

- growing investment in community-controlled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and their workforce to better reflect the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples accessing these services.
- implementing delegated authority to permit one or more of the Chief Executive's statutory functions or powers under the *Child Protection Act* to be delegated to the Chief Executive of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entity.

- providing opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to have the opportunity to participate in child protection decisions that affect their lives including through an independent person or entity and the Family Participation Program.
- applying the Wellbeing Outcomes Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to ensure their safety and wellbeing through appropriately targeted investment and strengthened accountability of government and service providers.
- supporting the development and implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing strategy to address intergenerational trauma, grief, loss, violence and abuse.

2.2.2 Context on the Wellbeing Outcomes Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in Queensland

In 2019, DCYJMA developed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing Outcomes Framework (WOF) with a focus on children and young people. WOF was developed in consultation with government stakeholders, the Queensland First Children and Families Board and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and young people.

Within the WOF, there are eight interconnected wellbeing domains which represent aspects of a child and young person's life that impact on their wellbeing. They include culture and connection, economic empowerment, health, mental health and emotional wellbeing, learning and skills, home and environment, empowerment and safety.

Wellbeing outcomes are attached to each domain. Each outcome represents the ultimate state of wellbeing for children and young people for a particular domain. The WOF has informed the development of outcomes included in *Our Way's* program logic model (see Section 6.2).

2.3 Broader policy context

To achieve the *Our Way* vision, the strategy and action plans are aligned to the goals of both national and state initiatives and strategies.

2.3.1 Queensland Government strategies

At the state level, implementation of *Our Way* and associated action plans will build on work underway through a range of initiatives including the Family Matters Campaign, the Queensland Healing Strategy, Path to Treaty, Local Thriving Communities, and *Supporting Families Changing Futures: Advancing Queensland's child protection and family support reforms*. Each includes a number of current and future strategies and initiatives across Queensland Government, as outlined in the Strategy. Two additional key inputs have significantly influenced *Our Way* in terms of both design and implementation, including:

1. **Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry** (the *Carmody Review*[6]*)* - noted that child abuse and neglect are distressing and intractable social problems, made worse by avoidable failures in the very systems set up to protect children at risk of harm. The Commission concluded that the current child protection system was not ensuring the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children as well as it should or could.
2. **Supporting the national focus on Closing the Gap**[7] - aims to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. It is underpinned by the belief that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a genuine say in the design and delivery of policies, programs and services that affect them, better life outcomes are achieved. It also recognises that structural change in the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is needed to close the gap.

These two inputs have been particularly and directly influential to the implementation of *Our Way.* Additionally, there are other pieces of legislation, policy initiatives and strategies that system stakeholders are working towards which have alignment with *Our Way's* vision and building blocks. The key Queensland Government legislation, strategy and policy that complement *Our Way* are summarised in Table 2.1.

---

[6] http://www.childprotectioninquiry.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/202625/qcpci-final-report-web-version.pdf.
[7] https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/.

Table 2.1 Queensland Government legislation / policy / strategies which complement *Our Way*

Domain	Relevant legislation / policy / strategies
Healing and rights	Tracks to Treaty Statement of Commitment, A Reframed Relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and the Queensland Government
	Local Thriving Communities
	Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2021 (extended to 31 December 2022)
	Every Life, The Queensland Suicide Prevention Plan 2019-2029
	Human Rights Act 2019
Health and wellbeing	Hospital and Health Boards (Health Equity Strategies) Amendment Regulation 2021
	Making Tracks Together – Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Framework
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing Services Plan 2018-2023
	Deadly Kids Deadly Futures, Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Ear and Hearing Health Framework 2016-2026
	Growing Deadly Families: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Maternity Services Strategy 2019-2025
	Shifting Minds: Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018-2023
	Activate! Queensland 2019-2029 (Queensland Sport and Recreation Strategy)
Housing	Working Together for a Better Housing Future, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023
Safety	The Framework for Action – Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence
	National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030
Education	Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education: An action plan for Queensland
	Every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student succeeding strategy

Source: Deloitte Access Economics, DCYJMA Changing Tracks Action Plan

2.3.2 Federal Government strategies and initiatives

At a national level, *Our Way* is aligned with the following initiatives and strategies:

- Family Matters Campaign at both national and state level
- National Agreement on Closing the Gap between the Australian governments and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations
- Council of Australian Governments Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children Third Three Year Action Plan, 2015–18, Driving Change: Intervening Early
- National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010–2022
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy
- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework

- National Disability Insurance Scheme.[8]

In July 2020, the Australian Government implemented a National Agreement on Closing the Gap (hereby called the National Agreement). The National Agreement recognises that a shift in how government policies and programs are developed is required for significant improvements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people' life outcomes. It is the first time a National Agreement has been developed and negotiated in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The aim of the National Agreement is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all life outcomes. The National Agreement contains a specific child protection target to reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45% by 2031. Australian Governments have committed to implement actions which link to four Priority Reforms:

1. **Formal partnerships and shared decision making** – building and strengthening structures that empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share decision making authority with governments to accelerate policy and place-based progress against Closing the Gap.
2. **Building the community-controlled sector** – Acknowledging that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services are better for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and committing to build the capability and capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector
3. **Transforming Government organisations** – committing to systemic and structural transformation of non-Indigenous government organisations to improve accountability and respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
4. **Shared access to data and information at a regional level**: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people having access to, and the capability to use, locally-relevant data and information to set and monitor the implementation of efforts to close the gap, their priorities and drive their own development.

The Queensland Government is also working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through their representatives, at the national, state and local level, to ensure a focus on achieving long-term social and economic outcomes for Queensland's First Nations peoples. A Closing the Gap Implementation Plan has been developed to document how the Queensland Government is working to address the Priority Reforms and socio-economic targets in the National Agreement, and how progress will be evaluated. The Implementation Plan documents ongoing structural reforms that the Government is implementing to change how decision making is shared with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Key structural reforms include:

- Progressing the Path to Treaty and Local Thriving Communities
- Establishing the Queensland First Children and Families Board
- Developing Queensland's Framework for Action – Reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence
- Developing the First Nations health equity reform agenda.

The key Priority Reforms and outcomes articulated in the National Agreement are aligned with *Our Way*. There is therefore an opportunity to consider how to align both national and state-level reforms – particularly in relation to building the community-controlled sector and transforming Government organisations. This is explored further in Chapter 6 – Changing the *Our Way* system.

2.3.3 Context of disruptions in recent years

The time period in which the *Changing Tracks* action plans were implemented (2017-2022) coincided with significant external challenges to the operating environment. In particular, the recent floods, impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2019 summer bushfires have significantly impacted service delivery. As described by Family Matters[9]:

---

[8] https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/campaign/supporting-families/our-way.pdf.
[9] Family Matters (2021) The Family Matters Report 2021 – Measuring trends to turn the tide on the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care in Australia

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the social and economic ramifications of the pandemic will be felt in the years to come. While the Australian Government has recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are at greater risk from COVID-19 than non-Indigenous people, these risks extend well beyond the health threat posed by the virus itself, to higher vulnerability to social and economic impacts due to pre-existing levels of disadvantage. This has had significant flow-on effects for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families."

The Baseline Report found that travel restrictions due to COVID-19 impacted service delivery, including the ability to connect with communities and participate in cultural activities. This is consistent with recent consultations with stakeholders, who cited themes of delayed implementation of reforms due to the inability to directly engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (a core component of these reforms). In its 2021 annual report, Family Matters also noted that COVID-19 has exacerbated existing flaws within systems that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. In reviewing this evaluation's key findings, there should also be consideration of these challenging contexts.
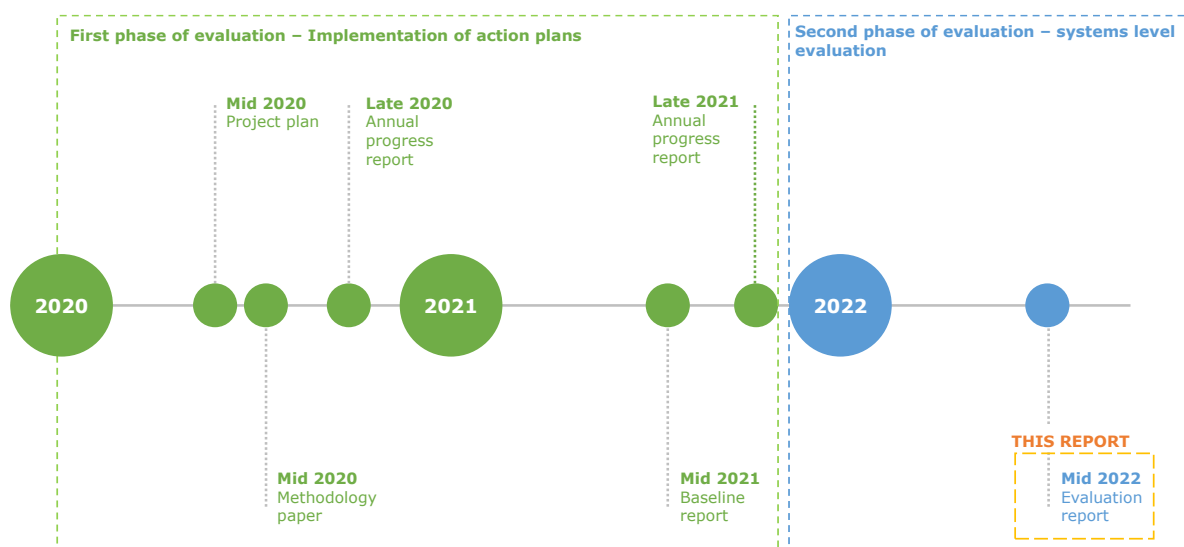
3   Approach

This section of the report provides a brief summary of the evaluation approach, including the rationale underpinning the need for a systems-level evaluation.

3.1   Overview of evaluation approach and findings to date

3.1.1   Evaluation timelines

Deloitte Access Economics, Murawin and the Social Research Centre have been commissioned by DCYJMA to evaluate progress made by *Our Way* and the *Changing Tracks* Action Plans. As illustrated in Figure 3.1, the evaluation consists of two main phases. In the first phase, the evaluation involved project planning in mid-2020, two phases of annual progress reporting (2020 and 2021). The second phase of the evaluation is a systems level evaluation, which culminates in the delivery of a final evaluation report (this report) in 2022.

Figure 3.1 Overview of evaluation timelines

3.2   First phase of the *Our Way* evaluation

3.2.1   Approach of first phase of the *Our Way* evaluation

Between June 2020 and January 2022, the first phase of the evaluation focused on the following elements:

1. ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families' voice and knowledge is valued, incorporated and remunerated in monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes
2. enabling DCYJMA and partners to be accountable for the significant investment by Queensland Government in *Our Way* – there is a key focus at this stage of *Our Way* on governments and community organisations *Changing Tracks* to:
    *   focus more on the child and how to enable families
    *   respect cultural knowledge and authority
    *   partner better and shift investment
    *   innovate and learn
    *   be more accountable
3. establishing a baseline and ongoing data collection process to inform monitoring and evaluation over the life of *Our Way*
4. identifying if the *Changing Tracks* action plans are progressing as intended at this stage of the long-term strategy
5. learning what is working well to build on achievements

6. reflecting on what needs to be changed to keep improving things over the life of *Our Way*.

The first phase of the evaluation was guided by the following evaluation questions:

Table 3.1 Initial evaluation questions

	Evaluation questions
Overarching question	OQ1. To what extent have the policy settings required to enable change been established?
Outcome	O1. To what extent are *Changing Tracks* actions contributing to the *Our Way* building blocks? O2. How and to what extent have actions and initiatives delivered expected action plan level outcomes? O3. What are the contextual factors and to what extent are they affecting (enabling and challenging) delivery of improved outcomes? O4. To what extent have the outcomes of *Changing Tracks* contributed to Unite and Recover – Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan objectives?
Impacts	To what extent are outcomes and initiatives aligned to *Our Way* contributing to: • IM1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children experiencing parity across wellbeing domains, where parity is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' aspiration • IM2. Closing the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families • IM3. Eliminating the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in the child protection system • IM4. Providing benefit across all groups in the *Changing Tracks* Priority Areas.
Recommendation	RM1. What further action is needed to sustain positive outcomes and drive continuous improvement and achievement of outcomes?

It should be noted that the revised monitoring and evaluation framework (see Appendix D) has incorporated these evaluation questions.

3.2.2   Summary of findings from the first phase of evaluation

Between 2020-21, the following stakeholders were engaged as part of the evaluation process – government stakeholders, partner organisations, service providers, and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander peoples (children, young people, families and community representatives). Through these engagements, the following findings were identified:

All Changing Tracks actions are complete or underway.

The second action plan comprises 24 targeted actions, which collectively seek to set the foundations for system change. A total of 5 actions have been completed, and 15 are in progress and on track to be delivered by the end of 2022[10].

There had been positive progress in specific areas – such as the rollout of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services, amendments to the *Child Protection Act 1999* and the establishment of the Queensland First Children and Families Board. However, the first phase of the evaluation also identified a range of system level factors that were positively and negatively influencing further progress. The evaluation identified the need to articulate the system change sought through *Our Way,* and the extent to which all stakeholders can share accountability and contribute to the attainment of *Our Way's* objectives.

Findings related to making systemic changes to achieve *Our Way*'s objectives include:

---

[10] Deloitte (December 2021) *Our Way* Annual Progress Report 2021

- **While there have been positive changes, the degree of improvements has been inconsistent across the system. The Government is still making decisions that do not meet communities' needs.** There have been some positive changes in the policy and legislative settings. For example, stakeholders cited the amendments to the *Child Protection Act 1999* as a welcomed change in terms of enabling self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, at the same time, stakeholders also highlighted other policy decisions which conflict with the intent of *Our Way* across other parts of the system. These include changes to adoption rules and court-based GPS monitoring.
- **There is variability in the role key agencies are playing to implement *Our Way*.** In order to influence key determinants of life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – as originally anticipated by *Our Way* – a whole-of-government approach is required. However, there are variations in the implementation progress of actions and levels of commitments across individual government agencies.
- **The community remains largely unaware of *Our Way*.** Although *Our Way* has been implemented since 2017, there is limited awareness and a lack of broad understanding of its intent and approach among community leaders and members – who are some of the core stakeholders of *Our Way*. In contrast, government stakeholders report higher levels of awareness.
- **The strength of accountability mechanisms vary by government agency and service provider**. While there are some mechanisms to hold government agencies and service providers accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in place, these are not consistent across government agencies nor funded service providers.
- **Some systemic barriers remain which have prevented improvements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families' access to culturally safe services**. These include insufficient translation of cultural safety and cultural competence into practice at the frontline of service delivery. This is resulting in an unwelcoming environment across all facets of delivery (built environment, design, location, lack of Indigenous staff).

The first phase of the evaluation identified a need to recalibrate the implementation of future action plans to ensure that the objectives of *Our Way* can be attained.

It was recommended for DCYJMA to focus on the following key aspects to strengthen the future implementation of *Our Way*:

- Develop a whole-of-government governance approach (or centralised point of accountability) to enable key organisations responsible for the delivery of *Our Way* to come together and influence delivery against action plans.
- Co-develop KPIs and reporting across government agencies and service providers. These reporting requirements should be embedded in overarching contractual arrangements.
- Undertake a whole-of-government co-design process, involving partner organisations, which clearly describe and transparently document the scope of responsibility for lead and supporting agencies against each action in the action plans.
- Align the WOF across all agencies (see Section 2.2.2 for more information on WOF). For instance, this would involve embedding the eight wellbeing domains in WOF in *Our Way* action design and performance measurement.

3.2.3   Implications of findings from the first phase of evaluation
Systems thinking was identified as a useful approach for understanding the actions and interrelationships between the stakeholders of the *Our Way* system and what changes may be needed to strengthen the system and improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Islander children and young people.

There was a reflection workshop held in October 2021 attended by DCYJMA and the Deloitte and Murawin team, in which there was mutual agreement and consensus on many of the key lessons learned to date. These lessons, in addition to an increased understanding of the *Our Way* context, implementation challenges and the fundamental need of children, families and communities, provide insights that will support DCYJMA in determining the most appropriate next steps. In the near term, this relates to the design and implementation of the evaluation, and over the longer term, will ultimately influence and inform the design and implementation of the *Breaking Cycles*

action plans as well as any future evaluation activity. There was consensus that the evaluation questions should be reconsidered, in light of renewed clarity in terms of the objective of the evaluation. This is not uncommon in longer term evaluations, where evaluation scope and approach are iteratively refined to ensure the evaluation framework continues to be fit-for-purpose.

Additional information is required to strengthen the foundation for ongoing and future evaluation of action plans within *Our Way*.

Lessons from the first phase of the evaluation identified a need to develop a Theory of Change and program logic model. This will help ensure stronger alignment and focus in areas that will have the greatest impact in the remaining years of *Our Way*. It will also support the development of stronger data collection mechanisms and a better articulation of Strategy outcomes (both recommendations from the *Our Way* baseline report).

3.3   Approach and objective of the second phase of evaluation

3.3.1   Objective of the second phase of evaluation

Given findings identified in the first phase of this evaluation, it was agreed that the second phase of the evaluation would adopt systems change and systems thinking perspectives. System change requires building on what works, as well as rethinking and reshaping what does not. The complexity of needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families requires innovation and a system with many levers operating in unison. This includes having sufficient change and multiple communications mechanisms in place, as well as the necessary governance, adequate funding regimes, performance monitoring and reporting mechanisms (see Section 3.4.1 for a more detailed definition of systems and systems thinking).

The objectives of the systems level evaluation (phase two) are to:

- Develop a clearer link between the objectives of *Our Way*, the changes sought and the actions required to achieve these outcomes. As part of this process, a Theory of Change and program logic model were developed in collaboration with government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives.
- Identify potential solutions to engender greater cross-system stakeholder buy in to *Our Way*. This is critical to support the system transformation required to achieve the vision of *Our Way*.
- Unpack stakeholders' views on how to collectively build on what is working well and how things could be done differently to enable the effective implementation of the strategy.

3.4   Methodology of the second phase of the evaluation

3.4.1   Definition of systems and systems thinking

A system is defined as a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole. A basic principle of a system is that is something more than the collection of its parts.[11] In an optimal system, stakeholders act according to their individual strategies or routines, but they also act and react to what others in the system are doing.

The *Our Way* system is an example of a human service delivery system. These systems have multiple programs, policies, agencies or institutions at a national, state and local level with the common goal of achieving better outcomes for clients.[12] The characteristics of a human service delivery system include:

- Numerous subsystems – also known as "a system within a system". This means that each subsystem has its own interacting programs, policies and strategies to achieve outcomes for clients. For *Our Way*, this reflects the different government and non-government agencies which form part of the system, most of which have their own sets of legislation, policy and strategic priorities.
- Interconnections are essential for optimal results. A system typically has a goal or function that is best achieved when its components function together as a whole. For example, all frontline services – ranging from health and education to the child protection system - need to

---

[11] Arnold (2015) A definition of systems thinking: a systems approach
[12] Coffman J (2007) A Framework for Evaluating System Initiatives

operate effectively to achieve the *Our Way* vision of closing the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Being strategic about the ways in which these services connect is important as it enables their collective strengths to be leveraged. Conversely, if each of these services operate independently and in a non-aligned manner, the impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families would be reduced.

- It is a "loosely coupled" system. This means that actions in one part of the system may have limited consequences for other system parts. A loosely coupled system's parts can be autonomous or self-directed, and the incentives for them to integrate can be weak.

Systems thinking is an iterative process which takes a broad, integrated perspective examining the activities, linkages and interactions among system stakeholders. In an optimal system, stakeholders act according to their individual strategies or routines, but they also act and react to what others in the system are doing. Systems thinking is therefore a useful approach for understanding the actions and interrelationships between the stakeholders of the *Our Way* system and what changes may be needed strengthen the system and improve outcomes for children.

There are two guiding principles which underpin this systems level evaluation:

1. it will build on the findings from first phase of the evaluation
2. it will be informed by the experiences of system stakeholders. A mixed-methods approach was designed to gather insights from a range of system stakeholders.

To support the systems level evaluation, the key lines of inquiry in the second phase of the evaluation include:

1. To what extent do system stakeholders share the vision and aligns to the objectives of *Our Way*?
2. What are the activities different system stakeholders deliver to achieve the *Our Way* objectives?
3. Have there been any changes to the operating model of system stakeholders since the commencement of *Our Way*?
4. To what extent do system stakeholders see themselves as part of the *Our Way* system?
5. What barriers or enablers exist to help or hinder positive changes in the system as advocated by *Our Way*?
6. What are stakeholders' perspectives on the role of ACCOs and community in the future system?
7. What are the key learnings to support the future implementation of the remaining Action Plans?

The second phase of the evaluation consists of three main activities – workshops, semi-structured interviews with selected government stakeholders and Aboriginal and Torres Islander community representatives as well as a network analysis survey.

3.4.2   Workshops

Two workshops were organised with stakeholders to collaboratively develop an understanding of the *Our Way* system including the boundary of the system, the stakeholders involved, and the values, attitudes, processes, and structures that act as facilitators or barriers to the system working together to attain the objectives of *Our Way*. A draft Theory of Change and program logic model for *Our Way* were also discussed at the workshops.

The first workshop was held on 11 March 2022 with a group of representatives from DCYJMA, Deloitte and Murawin team. The purpose of the workshop was to conduct provisional work which would then be discussed with a wider group of stakeholders at the second workshop.

The aim of the second workshop (held on 21 April 2022) was to engage with key system stakeholders across government agencies, peak body representatives and service providers. Breadth and depth of attendance was sought to ensure that all key system stakeholders were represented, and robust and practical discussions could be had to understand the *Our Way* system

and how stakeholders could collectively make positive changes. Overall, 20 individuals attended the workshop (see Appendix A for the full list of workshop participants).

3.4.3   Stakeholder interviews

The purpose of the stakeholder interviews was to delve deeper into the views of people working within the *Our Way* system to improve outcomes for children. In total, 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 individuals (the consultation guide is outlined in Appendix B). The interview was focussed on alignment with *Our Way*, the changes have been made to date, what changes need to be made in the future, and key learnings to inform implementation of the next set of action plans.

3.4.4   Network analysis survey

Undertaking transformational systems change, such as what *Our Way* aspires to, requires a unified, integrated and collaborative approach rather than siloed efforts of individual stakeholders. Network analysis is a research method used to understand relationships and collaboration. More specifically it can construct a view of who is working with whom, how information is given or acquired, how power is concentrated or shared, and how groups form and function.

A network analysis survey was developed to gather relational data to generate a deeper understanding of the current structure and function of the *Our Way* system and identify efficient leverage points to positively influence the system's capacity to achieve the objectives of *Our Way*. The survey questions were designed in collaboration with DCYJMA (see Appendix C for the full list of survey questions) and disseminated via a snowball approach (i.e., emailed to an initial group of individuals who were encouraged to share with others) to a broad range of stakeholders across government agencies and service providers. Follow up emails were also sent two weeks after the initial invitation to encourage participation.

Overall, there were 23 respondents to the network analysis survey (see Table 3.2) with a roughly even split between people working in executive and central policy and strategy roles, regional operational and frontline service delivery roles, and other roles. DCYJMA representatives notably made up two thirds of respondents. Given the low response rate from representatives from other government agencies and non-government organisations, the network analysis and findings presented in this report are limited to the responses from DCYJMA and ACCOs. This is to avoid representing findings that are not sufficiently reliable and to protect the confidentiality of survey respondents.

Table 3.2 Number of respondents by stakeholder group who participated in the network analysis survey

Stakeholder group	Number
DCYJMA	15
DESBT	1
ACCOs	6
NGO	1
Total	23

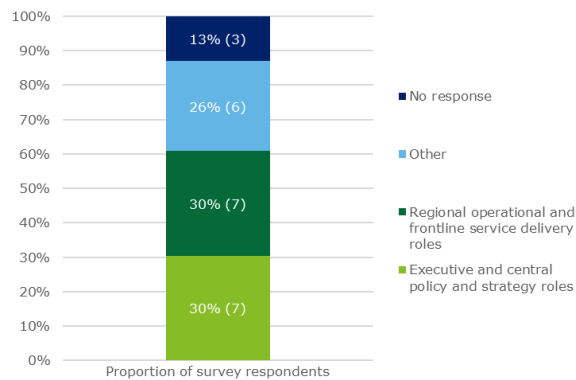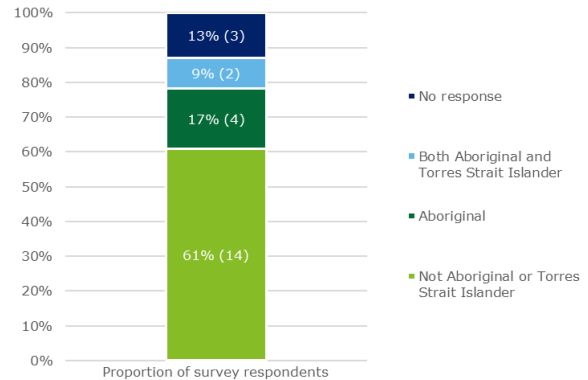Chart 3.1 Proportion of survey respondents by role

Chart 3.2 Proportion of survey respondents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey (n=23)

Most of the respondents were from South-East Queensland (17 from Brisbane and Gold Coast regions) while the remaining respondents were from Cairns and Hinterland, (2) Townsville (2), and Central Queensland (1). Six out of the 23 respondents reported identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (Chart 3.2). Respondents had been working for their respective organisations for a range of years (Chart 3.3).

Chart 3.3 Number of years survey respondents have been working for their respective organisations
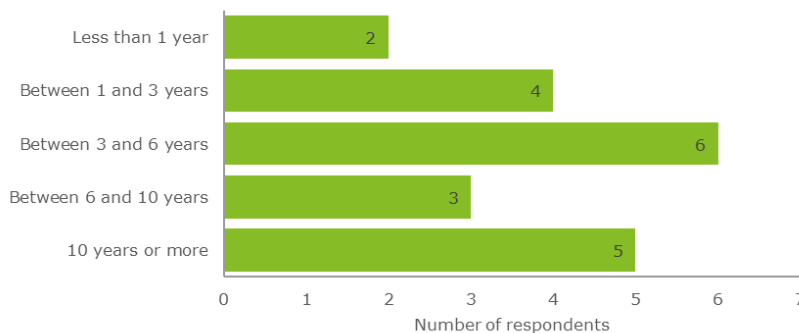
Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey (n=23)

3.5   This report

At a high level, this final evaluation report:

- describes the *Our Way* system and how different organisation work together to deliver outcomes articulated in *Our Way* **(see Chapter 4)**
- assesses the extent to which there have been improvements in the *Our Way* system following the implementation of *Our Way* **(see Chapter 4)**
- outlines the key implementation enablers and barriers which impact the achievement of *Our Way's* objectives **(see Chapter 5)**
- provide evaluation artefacts (in the form of a Theory of Change and program logic model) to strengthen the system's ability to work towards shared goals **(see Chapter 6)**
- Provides practical recommendations on how to address earlier barriers and support positive changes in the way the *Our Way* system operates **(see Chapter 7).**

3.6   Considerations and limitations

There are several considerations and limitations that readers of the report should be aware of:

1. **Systems level evaluation:** Phase two of the evaluation is focussed on examining how the *Our Way* system is currently operating and how the system could be improved to support efforts to progress towards the attainment of *Our Way* objectives. Findings related to assessment of the Changing Tracks actions plans are based on the findings from the first phase of the evaluation and is not extensively covered in this report.
2. **Representativeness of views from across the system:** Phase two of the evaluation sought to engage with all key government stakeholders within the *Our Way* system. Despite repeated attempts to engage different government agencies, some government agencies did not participate in semi-structured interviews and / or workshops. This broadly reflects the lack of engagement by selected government agencies in relation to the *Our Way* strategy – a theme explored throughout this report. Appendix A outlines the key stakeholders who participated in this phase of the evaluation.
3. **Stakeholder engagement approach:** In the first phase of this evaluation, there was substantive consultation and engagement with a broad range of system stakeholders. This included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, families and other community members, service providers and government stakeholders and partner organisations. There was limited community engagement in the second phase of this evaluation – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leaders and frontline service provider representatives were engaged during workshops and semi-structured interviews. Where possible, Deloitte leveraged earlier consultation notes (from the first phase of consultation) to incorporate the views of community members throughout the report.
4. **Limited response to the network survey:** The network analysis survey was intended to be a mechanism through which relational data on how the system currently collaborates and connects could be collected and used for the network analysis. Due to a lack of respondents from a broad range of stakeholders to the survey, the systems network analysis is limited to the perspectives of DCYJMA and ACCOs.

4 Defining the *Our Way* system

This section of the report outlines the Our Way system, the degree of awareness and alignment to the strategy's vision, actions and changes to date and the extent to which stakeholders collaborate to achieve shared goals.

Key findings

The *Our Way* system's boundary and stakeholders

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are the heart of the *Our Way* system and must be central to decision making.
2. The *Our Way* system consists of stakeholder groups who collectively have a shared responsibility to achieve *Our Way*'s objectives. These groups include children and young people, the community, the sector, the corporate sector, ACCOs and both federal and state government stakeholders.
3. Other policy work at a state and federal level - particularly the National Agreement on Closing Gap - concurrently drive the work of stakeholders within the *Our Way* system.
4. Queensland government agencies are also implementing other strategies to improve the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Thus far, *Our Way* was said to not be a key input to the design of these strategies. This represents a missed opportunity for greater alignment of actions among government agencies.

Awareness and alignment to *Our Way's* vision

5. While most survey respondents were aware of the intent and vision of *Our Way*, a smaller proportion of survey respondents agreed that governance structures are clear and that their leaders have vocalised support for *Our Way*.
6. Some frontline agencies do not consider themselves to be part of the *Our Way* system. This undermines ongoing efforts for effective cross-system coordination.
7. Stakeholders working in central policy and strategy positions are more likely to be aware of and aligned to the vision of *Our Way* than frontline workers.

Actions and changes to date

8. There is evidence that *Our Way* has led to some positive changes in the way organisations make decisions, undertake strategic planning and implement processes which support self-determination among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, survey responses indicate scope for these changes to take place at a larger scale and across more organisations.
9. The community-controlled sector is more likely to have observed positive changes in their ways of working compared to those who work in government agencies.
10. Those who work in strategic and policy development roles were more likely to have changed their current ways of working to be aligned with *Our Way's* principles compared to those who deliver frontline services.

How stakeholders work together in the *Our Way* system

11. There have been observed changes in collaborative working approaches between government agencies, service providers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives to enable the implementation of *Our Way*.
12. Stakeholders mainly collaborate with others by sharing data and/or information, participating in knowledge transfer and/or sharing, and sharing resources.

13. Information and data sharing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities continues to be highlighted as a barrier to community-led decision making.
14. The frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA and other government agencies has remained relatively unchanged since the implementation of the *Our Way*.
15. However, the frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations (through ACCOs and QATSICPP) has notably increased since the implementation of *Our Way*.
16. There is limited evidence that collaboration between stakeholders since the implementation of *Our Way* has generated more impactful outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

4.1   Context

This chapter provides an assessment of:

- The key stakeholders which form the *Our Way* system and the extent to which they see themselves as part of the *Our Way* system (see Section 4.2)
- The extent to which system stakeholders share the vision and align to the objectives of *Our Way* (see Section 4.3)
- The key activities that stakeholders collaborate on to achieve *Our Way*'s objectives (see Section 4.4)
- The extent to which there have been changes to the operating model or ways of working since the commencement of *Our Way* (see Section 4.5).

4.2   The *Our Way* system boundary and stakeholders

4.2.1   Context and approach

A fundamental component to adopting systems thinking to enact systems change is to first understand the boundary that surrounds the system and the stakeholders that are comprised within it. The *Our Way* system was defined during the workshops in collaboration with system stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, peak bodies, ACCOs and frontline service providers).

4.2.2   Description of the *Our Way* system

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are the heart of the *Our Way* system and must be central to decision making.

Our Way aims to take a holistic generational approach to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. This is achieved by embedding a child-centric approach grounded in culture to underpin interaction with stakeholders involved in engagement, practice and policy. During the workshops, system stakeholders reiterated the importance of putting the needs of children and young people at the centre of all decisions-making. This has been reflected in the *Our Way* Theory of Change presented in Section 6.1.

The *Our Way* system consists of stakeholder groups who collectively have a shared responsibility to achieve *Our Way's* objectives. These groups include children and young people, the community, the sector, the corporate sector, ACCOs and both federal and state government stakeholders.

The system is comprised of six core groups: children and young people, the community, the sector, the corporate sector, ACCOs and both the Australian and Queensland government. Further detail on the six stakeholder groups is provided in Table 4.1. Within each of these groups are a range of stakeholders as depicted in Figure 4.1.

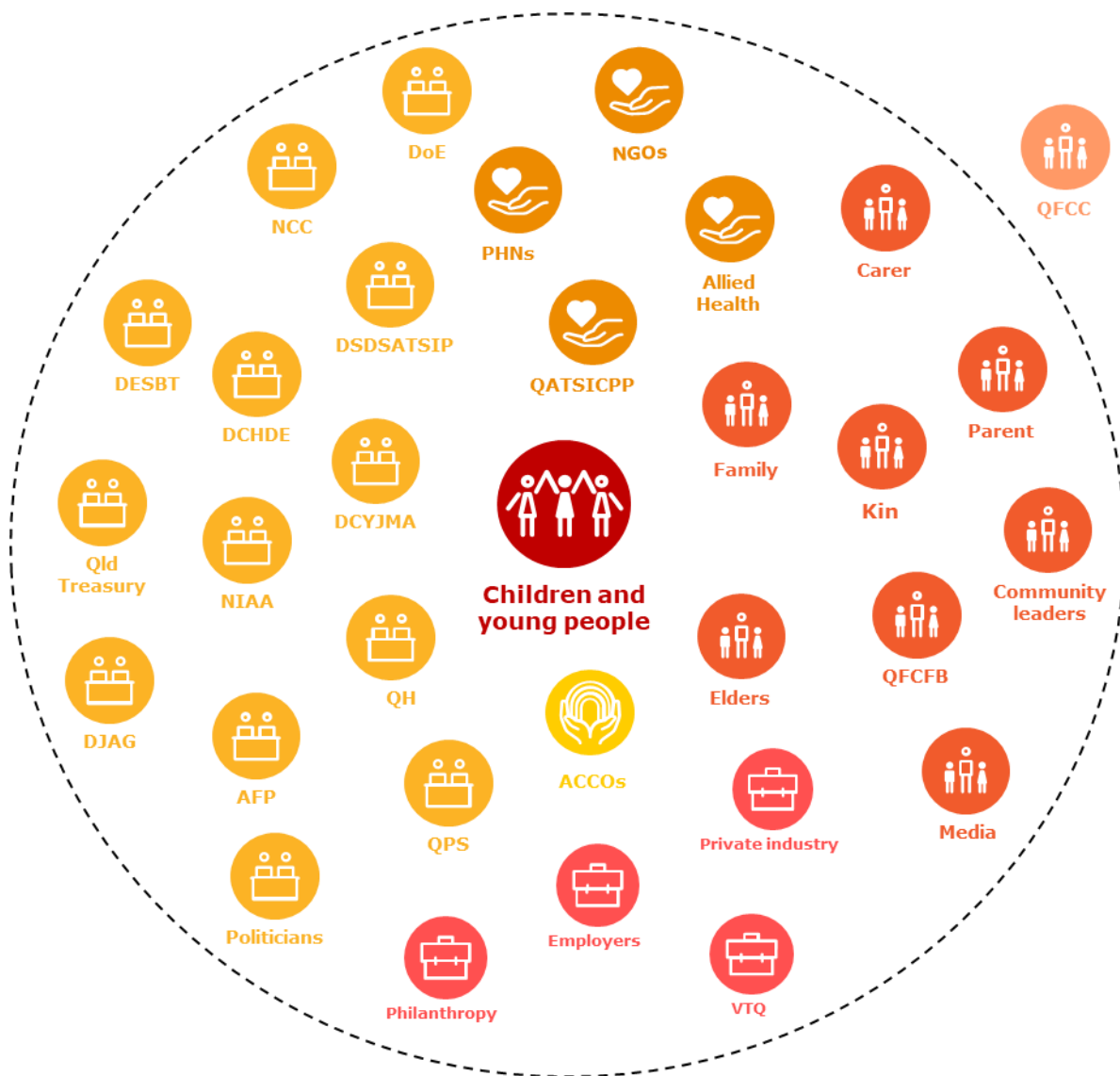Table 4.1 Key stakeholder groups in the *Our Way* system

Stakeholder group	Detail
Children and young people	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are at the heart of the system. This includes children and young people who are not currently in the child protection system (but are at risk of entering the system), those who are part of the child protection system at present, and those who have left the system (and may be at risk of re-entering). The views and needs of all these children and young people must be central to all decision making (e.g., legislative, policy, service planning and service delivery) if *Our Way* is to succeed.
Community	The community is made up of families, parents, carers, kin, elders and community leaders who care for children and young people. These stakeholders are a critical element of the system. As one stakeholder said during the second workshop *"no one cares for and protects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children like their own mob"*. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leaders (Elders and other community representatives) also play a pivotal role in preserving traditional culture, providing guidance on community issues and leading decision making on behalf of the community. Additionally, the Queensland First Children and Families Board is an important community body within the *Our Way* system as members provide diverse cultural perspectives that help to shape the implementation of *Our Way*. The media is also part of the community stakeholder group as they have influence over the perspectives that broader society form, and of the views that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people form about themselves.
Peak bodies, NGOs and commissioning bodies	This system stakeholder group includes peak bodies such as QATSICPP who support their members to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, NGOs who provide services directly to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families, and Primary Health Networks who engage with communities to co-design place-based service solutions.
Corporate sector	This system stakeholder group includes organisations such as Vocational Training Queensland (VTQ), employers, private industry and philanthropic organisations who can improve outcomes by supporting education, training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and families. Private corporations are also responsible for fulfilling their corporate social responsibilities, some of which relate to the positive outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
ACCOs	ACCOs are viewed by all system stakeholders as essential to improving outcomes and being best placed to provide services that meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.
Government	This system stakeholder group is comprised of state and federal government agencies as well as politicians that should be acting as enablers for the community and the community-controlled sector to lead and drive changes that will transform outcomes for children and young people. This includes DCYJMA who leads the implementation of *Our Way*, and a range of other Queensland government agencies who have both direct and indirect roles to play in improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people (e.g., DSDSATSIP, DESBT, DoE, QH, DCHDE, DJAG, QPS, Qld Treasury). Stakeholders at the workshops agreed that all agencies, whether system

stewards or involved in service delivery, should view themselves as part of the *Our Way* system and be making active efforts to support system transformation.

During the workshops, stakeholders also mentioned that federal politics, the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA), Australian Federal Police (AFP), and the National Children's Commissioner (NCC) are important stakeholders whose work can influence progress towards the *Our Way* objectives.

Source: Deloitte Access Economics

Figure 4.1 *Our Way* system stakeholders

Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis of *Our Way* workshop feedback
Note: QFCC has been visually placed outside of the circle to reflect their independent oversight role in the Queensland child protection system

Other policy work at a national level – particularly the National Agreement on Closing the Gap - concurrently drives the work of stakeholders within the *Our Way* system.

While *Our Way* seeks to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in Queensland, other national and jurisdictional work intersects with *Our Way* (see Section 2.3). During the workshops and stakeholder interviews, the National Agreement was

commonly cited as a policy that was well aligned with *Our Way.* Stakeholders mentioned that their work towards meeting the Closing the Gap targets was also perceived to be a measure of their progress towards the objectives of *Our Way*. Some stakeholders identified an opportunity to align Closing the Gap's Priority Reform areas with *Our Way* in the future. This was taken into consideration in the design of the *Our Way* Theory of Change (Section 6.1).

Queensland government agencies are also implementing other strategies to improve the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Thus far, *Our Way* was said to not be a key input to the design of these strategies. This represents a missed opportunity for greater alignment of actions among government agencies.

Frontline agencies provided examples of strategies and initiatives that are related to the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children*.* For example:

- DoE has developed a community-driven approach to education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in three regions via co-design and place-based consultations. During this process, DoE worked with parents, Elders and ACCOs to design a school environment and curriculum that meets the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. This entails a shift in power from school principals to the community. DoE has also recently refreshed the "*Every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Succeeding*" strategy. This strategy sets the direction on how to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in state schools and importantly recognises the importance of connection to culture. The element of co-design is reflected in the following quote: *"We challenge non-Indigenous teachers and principals to shift their power [to the community]. If parents identify curriculum as an issue, we will work with teachers to change the curriculum."*
- DSDSATSIP is working with the state's remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to establish greater decision-making authority in service delivery and economic development through the Local Thriving Communities reform.
- Queensland Health and the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council has recently developed Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Framework. This Framework seeks to actively eliminate racial discrimination and institutional racism, and influence the social, cultural and economic determinants of health through partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities to design, deliver and review healthcare services.

It is commendable that government agencies have started embedding greater community voice and co-design in their respective strategies. However, government stakeholders noted that *Our Way* did not fundamentally influence their day-to-day practice or shape strategic decisions. It was commonly reported that each government agency's own strategies, frameworks and action plans take priority over *Our Way*. So, while many felt that the work of their government agencies was aligned with *Our Way*, this was more likely a reflection of their respective agencies' core business rather than being due to cognisant effort to embody the vision of *Our* Way in their work. This highlights the opportunity moving forward for greater cross-system collaboration between DCYJMA and other government agencies to align their respective strategies to *Our Way*, given that it is a whole-of-government strategy.

4.3   Stakeholders' awareness and alignment with *Our Way*
While most survey respondents were aware of the intent and vision of *Our Way*, a smaller proportion of survey respondents agreed that governance structures are clear and that their leaders have vocalised support for *Our Way*.

The network analysis survey mainly received responses from those who work in DCYJMA and ACCOs. As illustrated in Chart 4.1, their responses indicate that:

- **There is strong awareness of the intent of *Our Way* and awareness of the action plans**. 95 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they understand the intent of *Our Way* and its objectives. 75 per cent of survey respondents were aware of the strategy and its action plans.

- **There is comparatively lower awareness on the role of their respective organisations to achieve the intended objectives of *Our Way.*** 63 per cent of survey respondents agreed to this statement and 16 per cent of survey respondents notably disagreed.
- **There is also scope to improve clarity of governance structures.** 27 per cent of survey respondents do not feel that the governance structures supporting *Our Way* are clear. This may be related to the fact that the strategy is delivered through a partnership between the Queensland Government and Family Matters Queensland. During consultations, some stakeholders noted that the delineation of responsibilities between both parties were unclear.
- **Not all leaders outwardly vocalise their support for *Our Way*.** 47 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have heard their leaders vocalise their support for *Our Way*, compared to 27 per cent of survey respondents who disagreed. This indicates that leadership commitment to *Our Way* may not have been sufficiently communicated to the broader organisation.

Chart 4.1 Survey responses to statements related to the awareness and alignment of *Our Way's* vision

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am aware of Our Way (2017-37) and its associated Changing Tracks action plans 2017-19 and 2020-22	5%		21%	47%	26%
I am aware of my organisation's role in achieving the intended objectives of Our Way	5%	11%	21%	42%	21%
I understand the intent of Our Way and its objectives to close the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families; and eliminate the disproportionate…			5%	58%	37%
I believe that our organisation shares the vision outlined in Our Way	5%	5%	5%	63%	21%
I have heard leaders in my organisation outwardly vocalise their support for Our Way	11%	16%	26%	26%	21%
I believe that the governance structures supporting Our Way are clear	11%	16%	32%	42%	

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (total responses n=23)

Some frontline agencies do not consider themselves to be part of the *Our Way* system. This undermines ongoing efforts for effective cross-system coordination.

Government agencies who were closely involved in the early design of *Our Way* – such as DSDSATSIP and DCYJMA representations - were more likely to be aware of *Our Way* and understand its intent compared to representatives from other government agencies. However, a few other government agencies – particularly central agencies – do not feel that they have a role to play in delivering *Our Way*. This is evident throughout this evaluation, when selected government stakeholders declined to participate in stakeholder interviews because they stated that they have limited awareness and involvement in implementing *Our Way*. There is an inaccurate perception among selected agencies that *Our Way* was solely a "child safety strategy". For example, one stakeholder said *"Our Way is not seen as important to other government agencies because many of them see the strategy as a child safety issue. As they do not work specifically in child protection and they are time poor, it is not seen as relevant. It is not prioritised at a senior level or explained in a way that they can relate it to the work they are doing."*

This indicates limited understanding and awareness on the collective responsibility to support the achievement of *Our Way* objectives. It may also lead to a more siloed approach to service delivery. Government stakeholders noted that there is a missed opportunity of linking other government

strategies (such as those that relate to domestic and family violence and housing) to *Our Way*, given that these issues influence the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples[13].

Stakeholders working in central policy and strategy positions are more likely to be aware of and aligned to the vision of *Our Way* than frontline workers.

Table 4.2 below disaggregates survey responses to questions related to awareness and vision alignment by employer type, role type and whether the survey respondent was of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent.

Table 4.2 Disaggregated survey responses to statements related to the awareness and alignment of *Our Way's* vision (% reflects proportion of survey respondents who agreed or strongly agreed)

Awareness and vision alignment	Employer		Role				Indigenous status		
	Gov	ACCOs	Frontline service delivery	Central policy and strategy	Executive	Other; please specify	Yes, Aboriginal	Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	No
	16	6	6	5	2	5	4	2	14
I am **aware of Our Way** (2017-37) and its associated Changing Tracks action plans 2017-19 and 2020-22	50%	83%	33%	80%	100%	80%	100%	100%	57%
I am aw**are of my organisation's role** in achieving the intended objectives of Our Way	44%	67%	33%	60%	100%	60%	75%	100%	50%
I **understand the intent of Our Way** and its objectives	75%	83%	100%	100%	100%	60%	100%	50%	93%
I believe that our organisation **shares the vision** outlined in Our Way	56%	100%	67%	100%	100%	60%	75%	100%	79%
I have heard leaders in my organisation **outwardly vocalise their support** for Our Way	31%	50%	17%	60%	100%	40%	50%	100%	36%
I believe that the governance structures supporting Our Way are **clear**	38%	17%	17%	60%	100%	20%	75%	0%	36%

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (total responses n=23)

The network analysis survey revealed that all survey respondents who were in executive positions and 80 per cent of respondents in central policy and strategy positions were aware of *Our Way* and *Changing Tracks*, compared to 33 per cent of frontline service delivery workers. This is consistent with the key themes that emerged during stakeholder consultations. The interviewees commonly reported that while there is awareness and buy in at the executive level, this has not filtered out to the regions or to frontline service delivery. Some suggested that there had been missed opportunities at the beginning of the *Our Way* to clearly communicate what *Our Way* was and how it should be used by all system stakeholders. This view was also reported by community service providers (during the first phase of this evaluation) who expressed frustration at the lack of engagement to explain the purpose of *Our Way*.

Several suggestions were made during the interviews for how awareness and engagement at the regional and local service provider levels could be improved. For example, roadshows could be used to promote awareness of *Our Way* across the regions. Some stakeholders felt that central agencies could more actively build authorising environments via regular communication across all levels of their respective government agencies. They felt that it was important for central agencies to role model organisational changes aligned with *Our Way's* vision to encourage innovation and reduce the likelihood of people defaulting to the same old ways of working.

Interviewees suggested that awareness and buy-in of local service providers could be enhanced by incorporating *Our Way* into training and learning modules for frontline workers, involving people at all levels in the leadership of *Our Way* via community of practices, regular forums and knowledge

---

[13] An example of where there has been considered thought and linkage is in the Working Together, Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-23 which references *Our Way*. The forthcoming second Youth Justice Strategy Action Plan will also explicitly link to *Our Way* to ensure the importance of the linkage is clear to all stakeholders.

circles. The development of a Theory of Change and program logic model (see Chapter 6) is intended to enable greater collaboration and alignment of actions among different agencies within the *Our Way* system.

4.4   Actions and changes to date

There is evidence that *Our Way* has led to some positive changes in the way organisations make decisions, undertake strategic planning and implement processes which support self-determination among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, survey responses indicate scope for these changes to take place at a larger scale and across more organisations.

Chart 4.2 outlines the responses to survey questions which related to actions undertaken and changes observed since the implementation of *Our Way*. The level of agreement to statements ranged between 50 to 70 per cent. For example:

- Two-thirds of survey respondents agreed that their organisation has implemented processes that genuinely provide mechanisms for young people and families to have a say in decisions that affect them, compared to 12 per cent who disagreed.
- 60 per cent of survey respondents observed that their organisation has already started working in a new or different way, compared to 18 per cent who disagreed. A similar proportion of survey respondents said they have seen examples of changes in decision making in their organisation to be better aligned with the intent and objectives of *Our Way*. This may reflect recent legislative changes related to delegated authority that were led by DCYJMA.
- About half of survey respondents agreed that they have embedded the principles of *Our Way* in their strategic planning responses, compared to 47 per cent who disagreed.

This variation indicates that positive system changes are occurring, but not at the desired scale. There is an opportunity to consider how to ensure more organisations or divisions within a government agency can be brought on the transformational change journey to achieve *Our Way's* objectives.

Chart 4.2 Survey responses to statements related to the awareness and alignment of *Our Way's* vision
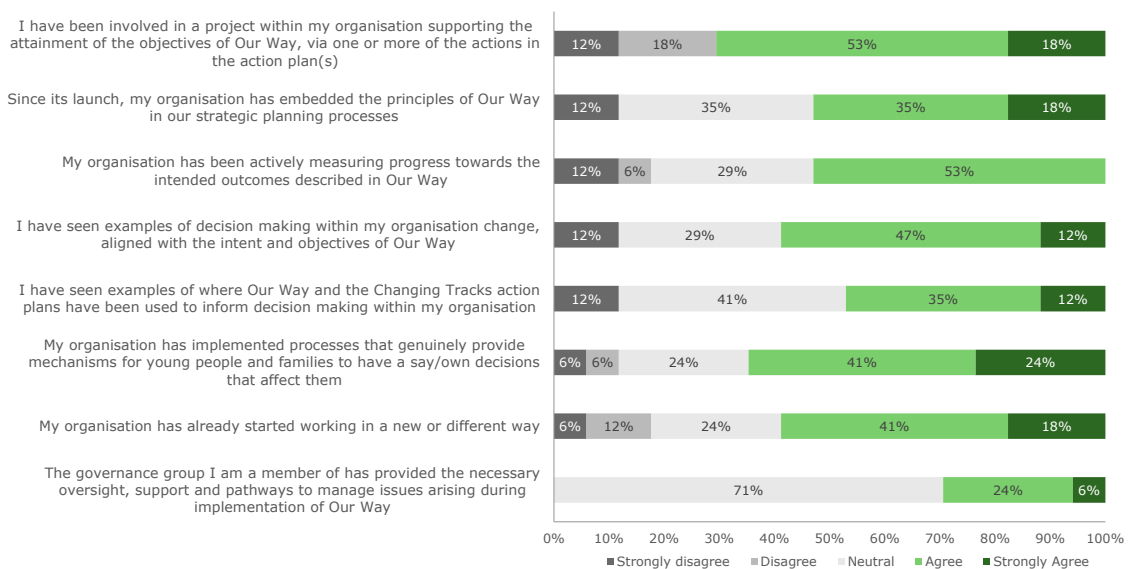
Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (total responses n=23)

The community-controlled sector is more likely to have observed positive changes in their ways of working compared to those who work in government agencies.

As outlined in Table 4.3, a disaggregation of survey responses by employment background and role revealed that:

- A higher proportion (83 per cent) of ACCO survey respondents were directly involved in a project to attain the objectives of *Our Way*. This is unsurprising, given the recent implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services which is delivered by ACCOs.
- Those who were employed at ACCOs were more likely to have witnessed changes in their current ways of working as a direct result of *Our Way*. Two thirds of ACCO survey respondents said that they have observed changes in how their organisations make decisions and work, compared to about 31 per cent of government survey respondents.
- Almost all survey respondents who were of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent (noting the comparatively small sample size of 6) agreed that their organisation has embedded *Our Way's* principles in strategic planning, decision making and their approach to work. The proportion of non-Indigenous survey respondents who observed these positive changes were generally lower across all aspects.

Table 4.3 Disaggregated survey responses to statements related to actions and changes to date (% reflects proportion of survey respondents who agreed or strongly agreed)

Actions and changes to date	Employer		Role				Indigenous status		
	Gov	ACCOs	Frontline service delivery	Central policy and strategy	Executive	Other; please specify	Aboriginal	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
	16	6	6	5	2	5	4	2	14
I have been **involved in a project** within my organisation supporting the attainment of the objectives of *Our Way*	38%	83%	17%	80%	100%	60%	100%	50%	50%
My organisation has **embedded the principles** of *Our Way* in our strategic planning processes	31%	50%	0%	60%	100%	40%	75%	50%	36%
My organisation has been **actively measuring progress** towards the intended *Our Way* objectives	31%	50%	0%	60%	50%	60%	100%	50%	29%
I have seen **examples of decision making within my organisation change**, aligned with *Our Way*	31%	67%	17%	60%	100%	40%	75%	50%	43%
I have seen examples of where *Our Way* and the Changing Tracks have been used to **inform decision making** within my organisation	31%	50%	0%	60%	50%	60%	100%	50%	21%
My organisation has implemented mechanisms for young people and families to **have a say/own decisions** that affect them	44%	50%	17%	80%	100%	40%	75%	50%	50%
My organisation has already started **working in a new or different way**	31%	67%	0%	60%	100%	60%	100%	50%	36%
The governance group I am a member of has provided the **necessary oversight, support and pathways**	19%	33%	0%	60%	50%	20%	50%	50%	14%

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (total responses n=23)

Those who work in strategic and policy development roles were more likely to have changed their current ways of working to be aligned with *Our Way's* principles compared to those who deliver frontline services.

There appears to be significant variations in the observed changes when survey responses are disaggregated by role type (Table 4.3). Notably, all executives (noting the small sample size of two) agreed that their organisation has already started working in a new or different way and have started to see positive changes in decision making which support self-determination. This contrasts with the perspectives of those who work in frontline service delivery (sample size of 6), where there was broad-based disagreement that any change has taken place since the implementation of *Our Way*.

This disconnect between changes at a central level and what takes place in regions is similarly observed during stakeholder consultations. Overall, the perception is that *Our Way* has not been well embedded across different parts of a government agency. Interviewees who are part of

strategic policy teams are more likely to prioritise *Our Way* and perceive the strategy to have changed their working approach. In contrast, stakeholders cited examples of frontline service workers not being aware of *Our Way* and not aligning their practice with the Child Placement Principle in service centres. In these instances, they are perceived to not know how and why *Our Way* should be embedded in their work. Some stakeholders attribute this to the lack of accountability mechanisms, where regional directors do not feel incentivised or compelled to implement *Our Way's* key principles in their respective contexts. The inconsistent levels of buy in across different parts of an organisation needs to be addressed, as all system levers (from leadership to frontline service delivery) need to change in order to attain the objectives of *Our Way*.

4.5 How stakeholders work together within the system

4.5.1 Current collaboration approach

There have been observed changes in collaborative working approaches between government agencies, service providers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives to enable the implementation of *Our Way*.

Stakeholders believed that *Our Way* has provided a platform for deliberate and concerted efforts across multiple government agencies to address the discrepancies in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Existing governance arrangements – such as quarterly meetings on the strategy – were perceived to support regular information sharing among different agencies.

DCYJMA and ACCOs report that overall collaboration with other government agencies is more likely to occur via ad-hoc rather than structured meetings (Table 4.4). This contrasts with stakeholder feedback, where several interviewees commented that they appreciate having structured cross-government meetings and or working groups. They commented that such mechanisms are a valuable way to be kept up to date on what other government agencies are doing, where there may be synergies across the work of different agencies and to help stakeholders feel like they are part of the system. Meetings also allow for transparent discussions regarding *"who is responsible for what, and how the work of each stakeholder fits together to contribute to Our Way"*.

Table 4.4 Proportion of total responses for structured versus ad-hoc meetings reported by DCYJMA and ACCO respondents with other system stakeholders

System stakeholders	DCYJMA		ACCOs		Total	
	Structured	Ad-hoc	Structured	Ad-hoc	Structured	Ad-hoc
DCYJMA	100%	0%	25%	75%	67%	33%
DCHDE	25%	75%	50%	50%	33%	67%
DoE	67%	33%	0%	100%	40%	60%
DJAG	20%	80%	0%	100%	17%	83%
DSDSATSIP	33%	67%	0%	100%	17%	83%
DPC	33%	67%	0%	100%	25%	75%
QH	25%	75%	100%	0%	50%	50%
Qld Treasury	33%	67%	0%	100%	25%	75%
QATSICPP	67%	33%	50%	50%	63%	38%
QFCC	25%	75%	0%	100%	20%	80%
Family Matters Qld	60%	40%	67%	33%	63%	38%
Total	47%	53%	32%	68%	42%	58%

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (n=23)

Note: % represents the proportion of responses for structured versus ad-hoc meetings of the total responses for each system stakeholder.

4.5.2 Nature of collaboration between system stakeholders

Stakeholders mainly collaborate with others by sharing data and/or information, participating in knowledge transfer and/or sharing and sharing resources.

Survey respondents were asked to identify the types of activities that were undertaken in collaboration with other stakeholders. The most frequently reported types of activities were data/information sharing, knowledge transfer/sharing and sharing resources (accounting for 19 per cent, 16 per cent and 16 per cent of overall responses respectively) (Table 4.5).

The least commonly reported activities collaborated on included shared funding/new funding models and integrated service planning (accounting for 5 per cent and 10 per cent of overall responses respectively). The stakeholder interviews and discussion at the workshops emphasised that changes to commissioning processes and funding models are key areas for change if power is to be shifted to ACCOs and the community. Integrated service planning and placed based approaches were also noted as critical elements to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families have access to services that meet their needs.

Table 4.5 Proportion of responses for each activity that DCYJMA and ACCO respondents collaborate on with other system stakeholders

Activities collaborated on with system stakeholders	DCYJMA	ACCOs	Total
Undertaken integrated service planning	11%	9%	10%
Shared data and/or information	27%	11%	19%
Participated in joint governance forums	9%	14%	11%
Established new ways of working	11%	11%	11%
Shared funding / implemented new funding models	5%	5%	5%
Participated in joint planning	14%	9%	11%
Shared resources	7%	26%	16%
Participated in knowledge transfer and/or sharing	16%	17%	16%

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (n=23)
Note: % represents the proportion of responses for each activity of the total responses for each system stakeholder.

However, information and data sharing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities continues to be highlighted as a barrier to community-led decision making.

It is acknowledged that the Queensland Government has reviewed the *Child Protection Act 1999* to simplify and broaden information sharing provisions. This Act notably states that Child Safety and an independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entity work with each other to facilitate the participation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child or child's family. The Act also acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be supported and empowered to participate in decision making processes.[14]

However, in practice, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders noted that they continue to face barriers in accessing data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. They attribute the resistance to sharing information to two key factors – the risk that identifiable information would be shared with other parties and concerns that the information shared would have adverse reputational effects on the implementing agency. Additionally, government stakeholders also observed some hesitancy to share government policy with the broader community. For example, during the process of developing child rearing legislation, there were some concerns of sharing information with the community during the consultation process as the legislation had not been

---

[14] State of Queensland (Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, 2018) Information Sharing Guidelines – to meet the protection and care needs and promote the wellbeing of children

finalised at that stage. In these instances, government stakeholders took bold steps to share with the community in spite of these challenges.

The importance of information sharing is described in the quote below: *"The first step of shifting power is knowing what is happening in your families and communities. If you do not invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be part of the solution, you prevent people from being self-determining on what the solution might be."*

4.5.3 Changes in the frequency and impact of collaboration between system stakeholders

The frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA and other government agencies has remained relatively unchanged since the implementation of the *Our Way*.

DCYJMA and ACCO survey respondents to the network analysis survey indicated that the frequency of collaboration with other government agencies had remained unchanged (Chart 4.3 and Chart 4.4). For example, around 60 per cent-90 per cent of DCYJMA survey respondents and 60 per cent-80 per cent of ACCO respondents reported that the frequency of collaboration with government agencies was about the same since the implementation of *Our Way.* These survey findings are consistent with the stakeholder interviews where interviewees commented that while there was a degree of willingness to collaborate, this willingness had not translated into material changes in current ways of working.

Chart 4.3 Changes to the frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA respondents and all other system stakeholders
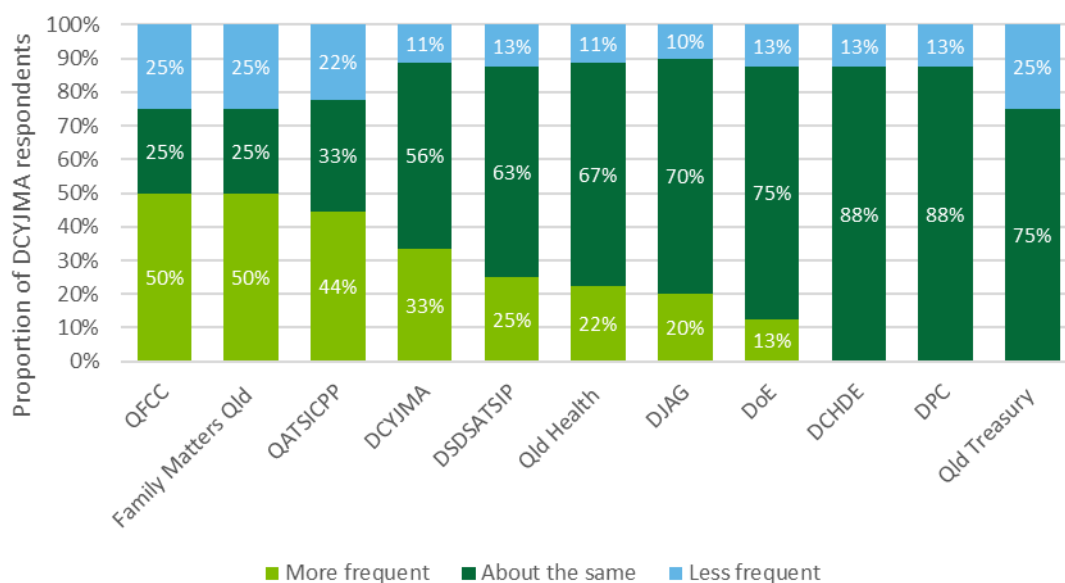
Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (total responses n=16)
Note: Number of DCYJMA respondents varied between 7-10 as not all respondents collaborate with other system stakeholders.

However, the frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations (through ACCOs and QATSICPP) has notably increased since the implementation of *Our Way*.

DCYJMA and ACCO survey respondents reported increased frequency of collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. For example, around 50 per cent of DCYJMA respondents said they were collaborating with the Queensland Family and Child Commission, Family Matters Queensland, and QATSICPP more frequently since the implementation of *Our Way* (Chart 4.3). Over half of the respondents from ACCOs reported increased frequency of collaboration with DCYJMA and QATSICPP (Chart 4.4).

Chart 4.4 Changes to the frequency of meetings between ACCO respondents and other system stakeholders since the implementation of *Our Way*

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis survey 2022 (n=6)
Note: Number of ACCOs respondents was 5 as 1 respondent did not report collaborating with other system stakeholders.

Interviews with stakeholders from other government agencies (i.e., DoE, DSDSATSIP, DESBT, DCHDE and DJAG) also indicated that there has been an increase in engagement with ACCOs and community leaders since the implementation of *Our Way*. This engagement has occurred at the central and local levels (for example, the Joint Coordinating Committee for Local Thriving Communities). Interestingly, interviewees stated that the increase in collaboration with ACCOs and community leaders has been influenced by the implementation of *Our Way*, but also a range of other policy imperatives and a gradual shift within government to recognise the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in decision making.

There is limited evidence that collaboration between stakeholders since the implementation of *Our Way* has generated more impactful outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Despite reported increases in the frequency of collaboration between DCYJMA and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, the level of impact had reportedly remained about the same for all system stakeholders. Chart 4.5 and Chart 4.6 outline key findings from the perspective of DCYJMA and ACCO survey respondents on the extent to which the collaboration related to *Our Way* has been impactful. DCYJMA's survey responses indicated more impactful collaboration within their organisation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, but generally no change in impactful collaboration with other government agencies. Survey respondents who were part of ACCOs were less optimistic – with some survey respondents indicating that the collaboration with other government agencies have either been unchanged or in some instances, less impactful since the implementation of *Our Way*.

These survey findings were supported by the stakeholder interviews and workshop discussions where participants noted that most government agencies (apart from DCYJMA) see *Our Way* as a child protection strategy and have not been taking steps to undertake the transformational change needed to provide ACCOs with greater power and decision-making authority with regards to caring for children across the continuum of child safety. During the interviews, participants explained that other government agencies may not fully understand the need to work closely with ACCOs and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to address the upstream social

determinants (e.g., health, housing, education) that can contribute to children coming into the child protection system.

Chart 4.5 Changes to the level of impact of collaboration between DCYJMA respondents and other system stakeholders since the implementation of *Our Way*
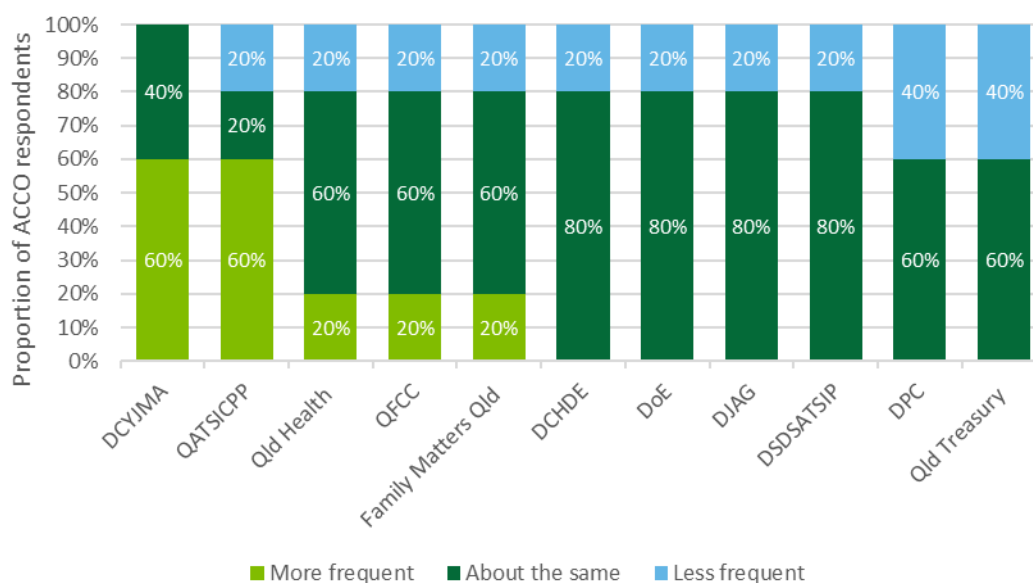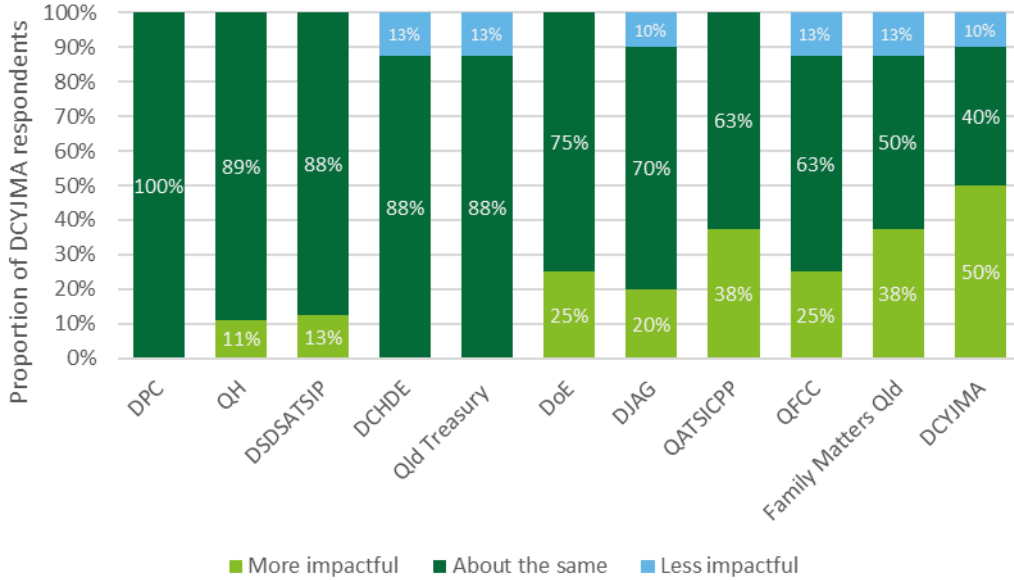

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (total responses n=16)
Note: Number of DCYJMA respondents varied between 7-10 as not all respondents collaborate with other system stakeholders.
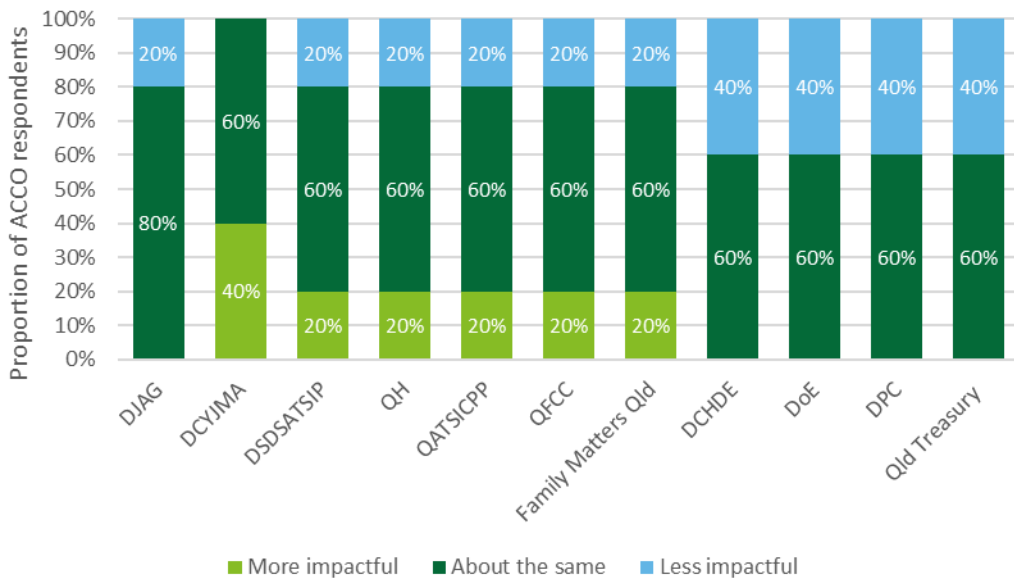
Chart 4.6 Change in the level of impact of collaboration between ACCO respondents and other system stakeholders since the implementation of *Our Way*

Source: Deloitte Network Analysis Survey 2022 (total response n=5)

5 Barriers and enablers

This section outlines key enablers and barriers which impact the achievement of the objectives of the Our Way strategy.

Key findings

Enablers

17. There is evidence of greater trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector which has improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to more culturally appropriate services.
18. Notwithstanding these positive developments, there is scope for the Government to work in genuine partnership with the community to support the sustainable development of the community-controlled sector. This extends beyond financial resourcing and includes capability building supports and workforce development.
19. Initiatives and services that embed elements of co-design and strong community voice are more likely to be well received by community members. There is a need to identify, showcase and scale successful service delivery models.
20. The recent changes to legislation and governance arrangements are commended as they echo the broader community's aspirations to have self-determination.

Barriers

21. There is a need to call out and address systemic racism that continues to exist in the system.
22. Since the implementation of *Our Way*, service providers and community members reported only limited improvement to the quality, safety and provision of targeted services. This largely reflects the variation in cultural competency among non-Indigenous organisations.
23. The fear of losing power, risk aversion and resistance to change also continues to impact the implementation of the strategy.
24. The strength of accountability mechanisms associated with *Our Way* continue to vary by agency type and across different levels of government.
25. More supportive funding and procurement arrangements are also required to enable ongoing systems change advocated by *Our Way.*

Lessons for the future implementation of *Our Way*

There are three main suggested lessons to strengthen the implementation of future *Our Way* action plans:

26. Increase focus on early intervention so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children do not enter the child protection system in the first place. Culture needs to be recognised as a critical protective factor which increases the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
27. Ensure that future *Our Way* actions are bolder and more transformative to achieve the desired change in the system.
28. Strengthen data collection mechanisms which incorporate community voice to measure the success of the strategy.

5.1   Context

This chapter provides an assessment of:

- the barriers and enablers which have helped or hindered positive changes in the system as advocated by *Our Way* (see Section 5.2 and Section 5.3).
- the key learnings to support the future implementation of the remaining action plans for *Our Way* (see Section 5.4).

5.2   Implementation enablers

This evaluation has identified three key enablers which have facilitated implementation of *Our Way*. They include trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector, the co-design of activities and initiatives and changes in governance arrangements which support more genuine and respectful partnerships between non-Indigenous service providers and the community-controlled sector. These enablers are elaborated in greater detail below.

5.2.1   Trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector

There is evidence of greater trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector which has improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to more culturally appropriate services.

There are early indications that the Queensland Government has been prioritising investment in ACCOs. Queensland leads nationally in the proportion of expenditure provided to ACCOs for family support and intensive family support services.[15] This has contributed to increased availability of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and in some instances, improved client access. An example of this is the delivery of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services (FWS) which seeks to draw on the cultural authority and experience of ACCOs to design and implement flexible models of integrated service delivery to improve the safety and living conditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who may be experiencing vulnerabilities. An implementation and outcomes evaluation of the FWS program has observed a high level of success in de-escalating risks and addressing family needs, with 93 per cent of children and families that completed a FWS requiring no further investigation by child protection in the following six months. On FWS, one stakeholder said *"the state did an amazing job in investing in FWS. They need to have a leap of faith and support the collective growth of this system".*

Notwithstanding these positive developments, there is scope for the Government to work in genuine partnership with the community to support the sustainable development of the community-controlled sector. This extends beyond financial resourcing and includes capability building supports and workforce development.

Thus far, there has been some progress in the delegation of statutory powers to ACCOs when a child protection case involves an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. For example, the *Child Protection Act 1999* was amended in 2019 to state that a relevant chief executive may delegate 1 or more of the chief executive's functions or powers under this Act in relation to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child who is (a) a child in need of protection; or (b) likely to become a child in need of protection. This allows the CEO of an ACCO to make decisions for the child in relation to child protection matters. One of the factors that Government needs to consider to ensure that the delegation of authority can be successfully implemented at a larger scale, is how Government will successfully transition responsibilities to ACCOs. ACCOs need to be supported to succeed from the start. QATSICPP and other sector peak agencies including non-Indigenous peak agencies, will need to have a significant role in the ongoing development of the ACCO sector; with QATSICPP continuing to partner with DCYJMA on the state-wide blueprint for implementation of delegated authority and accompanying sector development activities.

Stakeholders highlighted several factors that are currently hampering the sustainable development of the community-controlled sector, including:

- **A general lack of trust**. There is scope for greater empowerment and trust in ACCOs to deliver services. Not all frontline agencies have recognised that ACCOs are best placed to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities[16]. This has contributed to power imbalances that continue to persist in some existing partnerships. One stakeholder recommended for there to be *"better planning between government and ACCOS so that the approach can be collaborative instead of a master-servant dynamic".*

---

[15] Family Matters Report 2021
[16] It is acknowledged that this finding contrasts with workshop feedback where stakeholders perceived that ACCOs are best placed to provide service for their communities. This reflects differences in perception among different government stakeholders.

- **Resourcing constraints**. Stakeholders observed that some ACCOs are not sufficiently resourced to be able to deliver functions beyond direct service delivery such as performance measurement and governance arrangements. This represents an opportunity to consider how to support ACCOs to effectively scale their delivery model. Additionally, short-term funding arrangements are also said to not support an accelerated pace of capability development within the community-controlled sector. Although, stakeholders cautioned that the solution to strengthen community-controlled sector is not solely through additional funding. There should also be consideration of additional guidance to support the ongoing transition of responsibilities to the community-controlled sector.
- **Workforce development challenges**. Stakeholders noted that the community-controlled sector faces workforce attraction and retention challenges, due in part to the limited supply of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the sector. This is evidenced by examples of service providers continuously poaching talent from others.
- **Governance challenges related to hybrid arrangements**. There is general acknowledgement that the full ownership of programs and services will be progressively transitioned to ACCOs in the next decade. However, in practice, there is insufficient clarity on the role of government, ACCOs and non-Indigenous providers during this transition. ACCOs are said to be less clear on governments' expectations. This impacts the quality of partnership, as there should be clearly delineated ways of working and shared values.

5.2.2 Co-design approach to activities
Initiatives and services that embed co-design and strong community voice are more likely to be well received by community members. There is a need to identify, showcase and scale successful service delivery models.

Despite the development of common guidance and frameworks to support high quality service delivery (such as the development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and the *Our Way* strategy itself), there remains place-based differences in the quality and cultural appropriateness of service delivery. This is evidenced by observed regional differences in the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system. Some stakeholders noted that some areas have successfully reduced the level of over-representation. This is attributed to a range of factors such as the strength of collaboration with community leaders, the availability of kinship carers and the general capability of ACCOs and / or non-Indigenous service workers. Some government representatives reflected that initiatives which involve elements of co-design (such as involving community leaders in the design of service delivery model) were more likely to be well received and have strong engagement from the community. Genuine co-design is perceived to be one of the mechanisms for community members to have self-determination and choice in the services they engage with. For example, when asked about positive changes to date, one stakeholder said *"DCYJMA is taking great steps to engage and seek advice from external stakeholders in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care".*

Moving forward, it will be important to understand the key success factors underpinning more successful service delivery models in specific areas and how these factors can be replicated across other areas.

5.2.3 Governance arrangements which support genuine partnership between the community and government
The recent changes to legislation and governance arrangements are commended as they echo the broader community's aspirations to have self-determination.

There are positive signs that supportive legislation and policy have been implemented since the establishment of *Our Way* such as the implementation of delegated authority (see Section 5.2.1). Additionally, the establishment of the Queensland First Children and Families Board is seen as a critical driving force of the *Our Way's* implementation, as it reflects the Queensland Government's commitment to working collaboratively with the sector and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards better outcomes. One stakeholder said, *"the Board was less empowered to speak up initially, but now having been to a few meetings… the Board is an integral part of driving policy commitment and positive changes in the service system".*

5.3   Implementation barriers

This evaluation has also identified a range of barriers that are associated with the design and implementation of *Our Way*. These barriers include structural racism, variation in cultural competency among non-Indigenous service providers, fear-based decision making, variation in accountability mechanisms and less supportive funding and procurement arrangements. These barriers are elaborated in greater detail in subsequent sub-sections.

5.3.1   Structural racism

There is a need to call out and address systemic racism that continues to exist in the system.

There is deep-seated, intergenerational mistrust, negative attitudes and perceptions that go both ways for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the child protection / justice sectors, despite significant efforts being made by government to address this. During consultations, stakeholders consistently highlighted the need to identify and call out service systems that constrain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples voices and power through conscious or unconscious bias. The government's willingness to highlight this issue is perceived to be a critical first step towards addressing inherent racism within the system. This is illustrated in the following stakeholder quote: *"there has to be a way to have a discussion on the fact that the system is inherently racist and some workers do not view issues through the lens of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families"*. Beyond calling out instances of racism within the system, there is also a need to undertake bolder steps to eliminate racism from the system.

5.3.2   Variation in cultural competency of non-Indigenous organisations

Since the implementation of *Our Way*, service providers and community members reported only limited improvement to the quality, safety and provision of targeted services. This largely reflects the variation in cultural competency among non-Indigenous organisations.

During consultations, there is evidence that frontline agencies have increased investment in building the cultural competency of their staff. Survey respondents cited examples of cultural capability plan development and cultural engagement and education workshops. However, despite these commendable efforts, both service providers and community members observed that this has yet to translate to greater cultural competence at the front line of service delivery.

The variation in cultural competency may be driven by broader external factors such as workforce turnover which makes it challenging to embed cultural change in the operating environment of organisations. However, stakeholders also perceive that cultural capability development is not prioritised as a key focus area within selected agencies, as evidenced by limited induction and training in this area for new employees. This indicates that the level of emphasis on cultural competency may vary by individual agency.

During consultations, concerns were raised that frontline workers have limited understanding on what cultural competency looks like in the context of their roles and responsibilities. Some non-Indigenous workers perceive their own supports to be culturally appropriate and aligned with the Child Placement Principle, even if it was assessed to not be the case. Some agencies also do not have the necessary channels in place to collectively seek and monitor performance on accountability from service providers relative to the agreed approach to service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

5.3.3   Fear-based decision making

The fear of losing power, risk aversion and resistance to change also continues to impact the implementation of *Our Way*.

There is a perception that several frontline agencies are less accustomed and comfortable with the concept of family-led decision making as it involves losing power and control of solution design. This contrasts with the intent and aspirations at the highest level of government. One stakeholder cited an example of leaders (at an Executive Director level) providing permission to the rest of the organisation to innovate and support greater self-determination across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, but this aspiration is not mirrored among regional teams due to risk

aversion and resistance to change. Additionally, the lack of accountability mechanisms impacts the extent to which there are positive changes across the system. One stakeholder said *"no one in government loses their job for transgressing [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander] children's rights"*. This is explored further in the next sub-section.

5.3.4 Inconsistent accountability mechanisms

The strength of accountability mechanisms associated with *Our Way* continue to vary by agency type and across different levels of government.

There is some evidence of accountability mechanisms within agencies, although it is not consistent across government agencies. Examples of accountability mechanisms within agencies are shown below (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Overview of accountability mechanisms

Accountability mechanisms

1. Establishment and governance of the Queensland First Children and Families Board
2. Technical Working Groups, Ministerial Champions, Mayors Working Groups, Indigenous Leaders Forum and interagency committees
3. For funded service providers, as part of the procurement process there are regular reporting mechanisms, reviews and program management in place for compliance and accountability
4. The Strategic Implementation Group for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector, which provides oversight of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services and the Family Participation Program. Its membership comprises the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) of all the funded organisations, QATSICPP and senior regional and central officer staff. The group met bi-monthly through the early years of the programs and is meeting biannually at this stage.
5. Governance Group for Delegated Authority which meets regularly to co-design and oversee implementation of Delegated Authority. Membership includes QATSICPP CEO and CEO of two ACCOs (REFOCUS and Central Queensland Indigenous Development)
6. Family Matters Leadership Group – coordinated by QATSICPP
7. First Nations Council, including custodians of DCYJMA's Cultural Capability Action Plan. This Council includes Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff of DCYJMA, works directly with DCYJMA's Executive Management Board and has links with other governance
8. Local level governance groups for Delegated Authority which have involved the community-controlled sector
9. Agencies' regular meetings with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Leaders
10. Oversight by Youth Justice over the YJFLDM trial
11. A community with ACCO practitioners to discuss practice issues
12. Obligation by Youth Justice with On Country providers to work with local Traditional Owner groups, with reporting mechanisms through service meetings
13. Tender processes in Youth Justice that explicitly state that workers of services must reflect the target group cohort and that workplaces must be culturally safe places.

Source: Deloitte Access Economics

However, overall, the overwhelming consensus among stakeholders is that the accountability mechanisms in place are not sufficiently strong across the system. This is attributed to several factors:

- The absence of explicit *Our Way* KPIs to inform the assessment of a regional leader and / or frontline worker's performance. Stakeholders said that there were limited mechanisms to hold workers accountable for their failure to meet outcomes.
- The multiple layers of government make it challenging to monitor implementation (and subsequently hold individuals and branches accountable). While government leaders at a central level may have committed to the intent and principles of *Our Way*, it is difficult to monitor the extent to which these principles are implemented at a regional level.

5.3.5 Existing funding and procurement arrangements

More supportive funding and procurement arrangements are also required to enable ongoing systems change advocated by *Our Way*.

Stakeholders advocated for community voice to play a more significant role in informing funding decisions. This has already been implemented in selected areas – for example, community members sitting on panels in the selection of school principals and the ongoing implementation of Local Thriving Communities.

However, there are concerns that the funding and procurement processes have generally not been sufficiently recalibrated to be aligned with the expected shift in power and authorising environment to the community-controlled sector. Stakeholders noted the imbalance of short-term funding arrangements in place to facilitate long-term transitions in responsibilities. It is also perceived that current arrangements entrench existing power imbalances, as the Government continues to have the authority and power to defund services if outcomes are not attained. This is said to prevent sustainable development in the community-controlled sector.

5.4 Lessons for the implementation of future action plans

There are three main suggested lessons to strengthen the implementation of future *Our Way* action plans:

1. **Increase focus on early intervention so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children do not enter the child protection system in the first place. Culture needs to be recognised as a critical protective factor which increases the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.**

Stakeholders observed that there have been some improvements in some measures such as investment in community. However, this has yet to translate to meaningful improvements in outcomes (addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the system). To address this, there should be greater focus on primary prevention initiatives – such as access to early childhood education, nutrition, long-term employment and safe housing in building the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. The importance of focusing on primary prevention initiatives is illustrated in the following stakeholder feedback – *"[Our Way] needs to increase support for at-risk families to prevent the need for their children to enter the child protection system in the first place."*

2. **Ensure that future *Our Way* actions are bolder and more transformative to achieve the desired change in the system.**

There have been pockets of improvement and commendable changes to the system since the implementation of *Our Way*. However, there is generally insufficient clarity on the extent to which existing actions represent an appropriate mix of programs and services to achieve *Our Way's* key objectives. For example, one stakeholder said: *"The organisation may be aware [of Our Way] but the actions toward vision alignment seems to be superficial and real change has not been observed."* During consultations, stakeholders raised concerns on the adequacy of existing actions and strategies to bring about the desired transformative change that was illustrated in the original *Our Way* strategy document. The transactional nature of actions also makes it challenging to understand how different actions are linked to the achievement of desired outcomes. The development of a program logic model for *Our Way* (see Section 6.2) is intended to support ongoing efforts for different agencies to work towards common outcomes.

Moving forward, more significant and bolder changes are required to truly achieve the objectives of *Our Way*. All aspects of the system would need to reorient to place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at the centre (as illustrated in the Theory of Change – see Figure 6.2). This means that all implementing agencies must see themselves as key actors of the *Our Way* system. More importantly, government agencies need to understand the role they play in influencing the socioeconomic determinants which contribute to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system; and the ambitious actions required to address this. Some stakeholders said that it is insufficient to link existing initiatives to the *Our Way*

as these actions – while meaningful and important – may not be sufficient to deliver the desired change within the specified time period of *Our Way*.

3. Strengthen data collection mechanisms which incorporate community voice to measure the success of *Our Way*.

The assessment of outcomes is currently hampered by a general paucity of evidence to monitor and assess progress. For example, one stakeholder identified the opportunity to measure alignment with the Child Placement Principle to inform funding and performance management decisions on individual service providers. This is further complicated by data ownership issues, where it is not clear or consistently understood who the data custodians are, despite *Our Way* and action plans outlining activities for lead agencies.

6 Changing the *Our Way* system

This section provides evaluation artefacts (in the form of a Theory of Change and program logic model) to strengthen the system's ability to work together.

6.1 Theory of Change

6.1.1 Definition

A Theory of Change explains how the activities undertaken by an intervention (such as a project, program or policy) will contribute to a chain of results that leads to the intended or observed outcomes and impacts. A Theory of Change is a useful tool for describing how particular ways of working or activities can contribute towards the attainment of desired outcomes.

6.1.2 Rationale of developing a Theory of Change

Since the implementation of *Our Way* in 2017, there has been notable progress in specific areas, with most actions included in action plans on track to be fully implemented. However, as illustrated in Chapter 5, there is generally insufficient clarity on the extent to which the actions and activities being delivered under *Our Way* were contributing to the achievement of the desired outcomes. While there is continued agreement with the intent and vision of *Our Way*, the implementation of positive changes remains confined to specific aspects of the system. This Theory of Change is therefore intended to develop a clearer link between the objectives of *Our Way*, the change sought and the actions required to achieve these objectives. It aims to provide guidance to all system stakeholders, who have a collective responsibility to align their strategy, policy and practice with *Our Way's* principles.

6.1.3 Approach to developing the Theory of Change

This Theory of Change has been developed through extensive workshop discussions with government stakeholders, ACCOs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders. The second workshop notably had significant representation from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This is aligned with the intent of embedding co-design and community voice in the design of *Our Way* and its evaluation. There were three main activities which informed the design of the Theory of Change:

1. Vision exercise

Workshop participants were asked to articulate *Our Way's* vision through the question "if *Our Way* has been successfully implemented in 10 years, what are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families experiencing in Queensland? The word cloud in Figure 6.1 summarises the feedback received from stakeholders. Through this exercise, the following five key themes were assessed to be most prominent – access to self-determination, empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, healing, connection and strength. These key themes have been embedded within the Theory of Change and are described below:

- The current system is wrong, as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are at the bottom, rather than the top of the system.
- The status quo is unacceptable – the government needs to change the way they are currently working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In particular, there were strong calls for government to step back and let go so that families can make decisions for themselves.
- The Priority Reform Areas in the Closing the Gap agreement are considered to be generally appropriate for *Our Way*. There should therefore be consideration of how to align *Our Way's* Theory of Change to them.

Figure 6.1 Word cloud for "if *Our Way* has been successfully implemented in 10 years, what are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families experiencing in Queensland?"

Source: *Our Way* Theory of Change workshop

2. Future actions

Workshop participants were asked to outline key actions that system stakeholders should stop, start and continue doing to attain *Our Way's* objectives. The table below summarises key themes that emerged through this discussion.

Table 6.1 Detailed feedback received on actions to achieve *Our Way's* objectives

Key themes	Example of feedback from stakeholders
Theme 1: Recognising transformational change in the system	
1. Government to relinquish control	• *"Being open to change"* • *"Accepting there is no one right way"* • *"Challenging each other"* • *"Believing and trusting power in First Nations' hands is not a threat"* • *"Stop adopting outside saviour approaches with a lack of community collaboration"* • *"Stop thinking Government has the answers alone"* • *"Asking and not assume"*
2. Empower parents, families and communities to have self-determination	• *"Listening and act on community solutions"* • *"Trusting and empowering communities and families to make decisions for their children and young people"* • *"Seeking the perspectives of children, young people and their families"* • *"Putting children and families first"*
3. Elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance	• *"Valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership"* • *"Enabling Indigenous leadership and governance"* • *"Continuing to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a voice"* • *"Looking to our cultural leaders"*

Theme 2: Sustainably develop the community-controlled sector

4.	Shift and balance investment to the community and ACCOs	• *"Resourcing community-controlled organisations"*
5.	Strengthen the capacity and capability of ACCOs	• *"Long term investment strategy and commitments"* • *"Investing in our partnerships"*

Theme 3: Re-orient government mechanisms

6.	Shared responsibility and accountability	• *"Shared accountability framework with KPIs"* • *"Ensuring that the change is the responsibility of everyone and not just a select few"* • *"Increasing accountability and develop mechanisms to ensure this"*
7.	Address trauma and enable healing	• *"Focusing on truth and healing"* • *"Not accepting the status quo"* • *"Addressing systemic racism"* • *"Even when discussion is hard, keep engaging"*
8.	Recognise culture as a protective factor	• *"Actively value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, knowledge, history and experiences"* • *"Understand that culture is central to all areas of being, not a standalone outcome"* • *"Being cultural centric in our thinking and response"* • *"Stop using a deficit frame around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people"*
9.	Equitable funding, procurement and commissioning processes	• *"Transfer commissioning processes"* • *"Cease funding arrangements in a way that grows competition rather than collaboration"*

Theme 4: Whole-of-system commitment

10.	Whole-of-system awareness and commitment to *Our Way*	• *"Seek other champions across communities and government"* • *"Continue to stay committed and united to achieve our shared goals"* • *"Sharing success"* • *"Stop thinking of this as a child protection issue alone"*
11.	Effective collaboration and genuine partnerships	• *"Break down barriers to work together in true partnership"* • *"Tackling challenges together"* • *"Find opportunities to do things together"* • *"Establish community engagement frameworks across government agencies"* • *"Stop developing unaligned policy"* • *"Share information and resources"*

Source: Deloitte Access Economics' analysis of *Our Way* Theory of Change workshop

6.1.4   Implications on the design of the Theory of Change

Based on the feedback received through the workshop and semi-structured interviews, a Theory of Change was designed (see Figure 6.2). The key elements of the Theory of Change are elaborated further in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Theory of Change elements

Theory of Change elements		Details
	The roots of the *Our Way* system: Four main future areas of focus and enabling activities	The four priority areas were drawn from key priority actions identified by stakeholders during the Theory of Change workshop (see Table 6.1). These actions and changes have to be collectively undertaken by system stakeholders over the remaining years of *Our Way*.
		Given the well-established cross-system buy in to the Closing the Gap priority areas as well as potential synergy gains through alignment with *Our Way,* the priority areas are also generally aligned with Closing the Gap's Priority Reform Areas. However, there is comparatively more focus on whole-of-system commitment and engagements due to stakeholder feedback on the need to increase collaboration and partnerships within the *Our Way* system.
	The *Our Way* system: Key stakeholder groups	The *Our Way* system is included in the Theory of Change to reflect that this strategy requires whole-of-system commitment from all stakeholders in the system. Importantly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are placed at the heart of the system to reflect the need for all system stakeholders to prioritise their needs and closing the gap in their life outcomes. All other stakeholders should collaborate and provide wrap-around supports to ensure they can grow up safe and cared for in family community and culture (the *Our Way* vision).
	Our Way's building blocks	*Our Way* is built on the Family Matters Building Blocks. Given that most stakeholders agree with the intent and vision of *Our Way*, these building blocks were included in the Theory of Change to explain how key priority areas can support the achievement of outcomes included in these building blocks.

Source: Deloitte Access Economics

Figure 6.2 The *Our Way* Theory of Change

Objectives of the *Our Way* strategy: Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system and close the gap in life outcomes by 2037

Outcomes[1]

All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe universal and targeted services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children

THE OUR WAY SYSTEM

Families
Kin
ACCOs
Communities
Children and young people
Service system
Federal and state governments

Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive

Governments and community services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Future areas of focus

Recognise and enable transformational change in the system

1

- *Commit to genuine co-design processes that implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander solutions*
- *Enable the right to self-determination*
- *Elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance*

Sustainably develop the community-controlled sector

2

- *Strengthen the capacity and capability of ACCOs*
- *Shift in power and resources to the community*
- *Scale effective and innovative place-based responses*

Whole-of-system commitment

4

- *Whole-of-system awareness and commitment to the Our Way strategy*
- *Understand the socioeconomic structural drivers to over-representation*
- *Focus on early intervention and prevention*

Re-orient Government mechanisms

3

- *Acknowledge and address systemic racism*
- *Strengthen data collection to measure changes in First Nations' children's lives*
- *Improve cultural safety and competency*
- *Improve shared responsibility and accountability*
- *More equitable funding and procurement processes*

The four areas of focus and enabling activities within each represent the roots to the *Our Way* system. Actions and changes must be collectively undertaken by stakeholders to provide a strong foundation for the *Our Way* system to thrive. If this can be achieved, the four outcomes will be achieved and enable children and young people to grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

[1]The outcomes represent the Family Matters Building Blocks that are included in *Our Way*

6.2   Program logic model

6.2.1   Definition

A program logic model operationalises the Theory of Change by describing the *inputs* required to undertake *activities* that will produce tangible *outputs* and contribute towards the attainment of short-, medium- and long-term *outcomes*.

6.2.2   Context on the development of program logic model

The first phase of the evaluation identified the need to develop a system-level program logic model. The program logic model aims to:

- influence and inform the design and implementation of *Breaking Cycles*
- outline key outcomes that future evaluations can continue tracking to measure the success and implementation progress of *Our Way*
- support the development of a whole-of-system approach to implementing *Our Way*.

In reviewing this program logic model, it is important to consider the following aspects:

- **The timeframes of *Our Way**. Changing Tracks* is the first step in this inter-generational 20-year strategy (see Figure 6.3). This system-level program logic model is therefore intended to provide high-level guidance on key focus areas for the remaining five action plans. There is therefore less specificity on inputs and outputs. It is expected that a more detailed program logic model will be developed alongside each action plan once specific actions are finalised.
- **The system-level approach to developing this program logic**. This program logic model takes a systems view of the positive systemic changes that need to occur for *Our Way* objectives to be attained. It therefore incorporates indicators related to system-level changes – such as commitment to the strategy and the extent to which key players collaborate and implement key actions that are aligned with *Our Way's* shared goals.
- **The co-design approach adopted**. This program logic model has importantly been developed through engagement with key system stakeholders, including government stakeholders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, representatives from ACCOs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

Figure 6.3 *Our Way* timelines
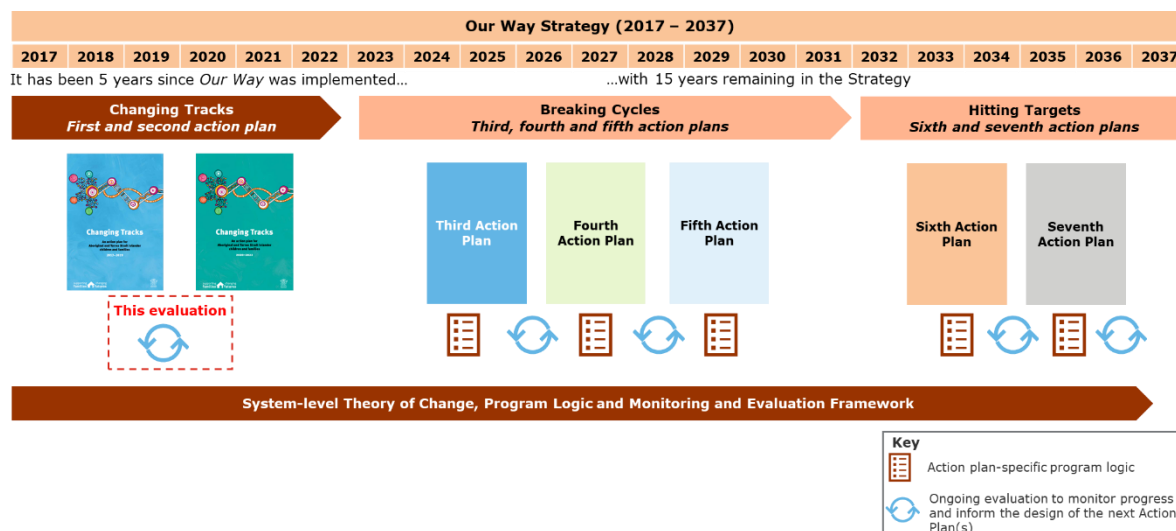
Source: Deloitte Access Economics

The full system-level program logic model is described in Figure 6.4. It consists of the following components:

1. **Guidance on activities and outputs –** The four key priority areas articulated in this program logic model is consistent with the Theory of Change. These areas are intended to guide and influence the design of specific actions in the remaining action plans. It is expected that action

plan-specific program logic models would provide greater detail on specific actions and how they are linked with these key reform areas.

2. **Short and medium-term outcomes –** The program logic model outcomes reflect the types of outcomes that are expected to be achieved following the implementation of the remaining five action plans in the next fifteen years. These outcomes are categorised into four main categories:
   a. **The life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children**. The list of outcomes is aligned with the domains included in the WOF and Queensland's Closing the Gap implementation plan[17]. It also reflects stakeholder feedback that system stakeholders need to collectively address socioeconomic determinants which can prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from entering the child protection system.
   b. **The sustainable development of the community-controlled sector.** A key aspect underpinning *Our Way's* transformational change is the transition of decision making and responsibilities to the community-controlled sector. Each action plan is therefore expected to include actions which would strengthen the capability and capacity of the community-controlled sector.
   c. **Successful re-orientation of government mechanisms.** This reflects the expected changes in legislation, funding and governance arrangements to be aligned with *Our Way's* principles. It also identifies key internal changes related to eliminating structural racism and strengthening the cultural competency of all government employees.
   d. **The achievement of whole-of-system transformation.** Positive changes in human service delivery systems – as intended by *Our Way* – require changes in behaviours, attitudes, collaboration and awareness across the system. It is therefore important to track the extent to which these changes have occurred across different agencies.

3. **Long-term outcomes –** The first two outcomes (LO1 and LO2) reflect the strategy's long-term vision. The remaining outcomes (LO3 to LO6) are aligned with the Family Matters building blocks. If *Our Way* is successfully implemented, these long-term outcomes would be attained by the end of this strategy (2037).

6.3   Monitoring and evaluation framework

As part of the second phase of the evaluation, it was agreed that the monitoring and evaluation framework can be strengthened further. The revised version is summarised in see Appendix D. This version of the framework:

- Draws on learnings from the evaluation on key success factors that will contribute to the success of *Our Way*. Identifies enablers of change – such as whole-of-system commitment and the reorientation of government mechanisms have been included in the framework. It is recommended that these enablers are continuously monitored.
- Serves as guidance for future evaluation plans. It is likely that the framework will be continuously refined to take the design of future action plans into account. The framework is expected to support conversations on the types of qualitative and quantitative data that will need to be collected as part of future evaluations.
- Complements the Theory of Change and Program Logic to support future evaluations. The Theory of Change's future areas of focus features prominently in the framework. Similarly, outcomes included in the program logic model have also been included.

---

[17] Queensland Government (2021) Queensland's 2021 Closing the Gap Implementation Plan

Figure 6.4 Program logic model

Objectives of the *Our Way* strategy: Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system and close the gap in life outcomes by 2037

| Future areas of focus *(guidance to influence the design of action plans)*	Short term and medium term outcomes *(Outcomes achieved through implementation of the Breaking Cycles and Hitting Targets action plans)*	Long term outcomes *Achievement of Our Way's objectives*
1. Recognise and enable transformational change in the system • Commit to genuine co-design processes that implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander solutions • Enable the right to self-determination • Elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance	**Improved life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children** 1. The needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are met before and during pregnancy and parenting, especially during the first 1,000 days 2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong* 3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have access to affordable and appropriate medical care as well as a healthy lifestyle from birth to adulthood 4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years* 5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years* 6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up in an environment that is free from poverty as their parents, carers and family have access to economic opportunities 7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in education* 8. Aboriginal and Torre Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways* 9. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enjoy high levels of social, mental health and emotional wellbeing* 10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have a strong sense of identity and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages* 11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up in secure and appropriate housing that is aligned with their priorities and needs* 12. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are able to exercise their agency in the communities and environments in which they live, learn and work 13. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up in loving and supportive environments where they are free from all forms of harm and abuse*	**LO1.** Improvement in the life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people **LO2.** Eliminate the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system* **LO3.** All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe **universal and targeted services** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **children to thrive** **LO4.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and **have control over decisions that affect their children** **LO5. Law, policy and practice** in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive **LO6. Governments and community services are accountable** to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
2. Sustainably develop the community-controlled sector • Strengthen the capacity and capability of ACCOs • Shift in power and resources to the community • Scale effective and innovative place-based responses	**Sustainable development of the community-controlled sector** 14. The community-controlled sector is supported to strengthen its capacity and capability to deliver high quality services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities 15. The community-controlled sector has access to data and information on their community 16. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children are able to access the services of their choice 17. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and community organisations lead all policy and decision making processes related to their communities	
3. Re-orient government mechanisms • Acknowledge and address systemic racism • Strengthen data collection to measure changes in First Nations' children's lives • Improve cultural safety and competency • Improve shared responsibility and accountability • More equitable funding and procurement processes	**Successful re-orientation of government mechanisms** 18. Funding, procurement and commissioning processes are equitable and reflect the shift in investment and power to the community-controlled sector 19. Strengthened accountability mechanisms at all levels to ensure the service needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are met 20. All government agencies and service providers change governance arrangements to reflect the genuine partnership with the community and community-controlled sector	
4. Whole-of system commitment • Whole-of-system awareness and commitment to the Our Way strategy • Understand the socioeconomic structural drivers to over-representation • Focus on early intervention and prevention	**Whole-of-system transformation is achieved** 21. All government agencies and service providers demonstrate strong awareness of and commitment towards the *Our Way* strategy 22. All government agencies and service providers understand their roles and the shared responsibility to achieve the objectives of *Our Way* 23. All government agencies and service providers embed the principles of *Our Way* in its strategic planning, policy development and frontline service delivery processes 24. Improved collaboration among system stakeholders to enable the delivery of seamless and culturally appropriate supports 25. All government agencies and service providers change services and systems to prioritise community and family-led decision making 26. All government agencies and service providers are culturally competent and redress instances of structural racism within their organisations 27. All government agencies and service providers commit to genuine co-design processes and work in true partnerships with the community and ACCOs 28. All government agencies and service providers elevate Indigenous voice, leadership and governance in its strategic planning, policy development and practice	

* Queensland Closing the Gap Implementation Plan outcomes

7 Looking ahead

This section summarises recommended future areas of focus to strengthen the implementation of Our Way in the remaining years.

Our Way is in its fifth year of implementation. There have been momentous achievements such as the implementation of Delegated Authority in two early adopter sites and rollout of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services. However, some implementation barriers remain in this complex system with multiple levers. Stakeholders from different parts of the system have identified the valuable opportunity to work together in a more effective manner and make more transformational changes to build a system that works for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In the remaining 15 years of *Our Way*, it will be important to build on what works and rethink and reshape what does not. Figure 7.1 illustrates the four key areas of focus for the remaining years of *Our Way* and the key enablers of positive systems change.

Figure 7.1 Future areas of focus
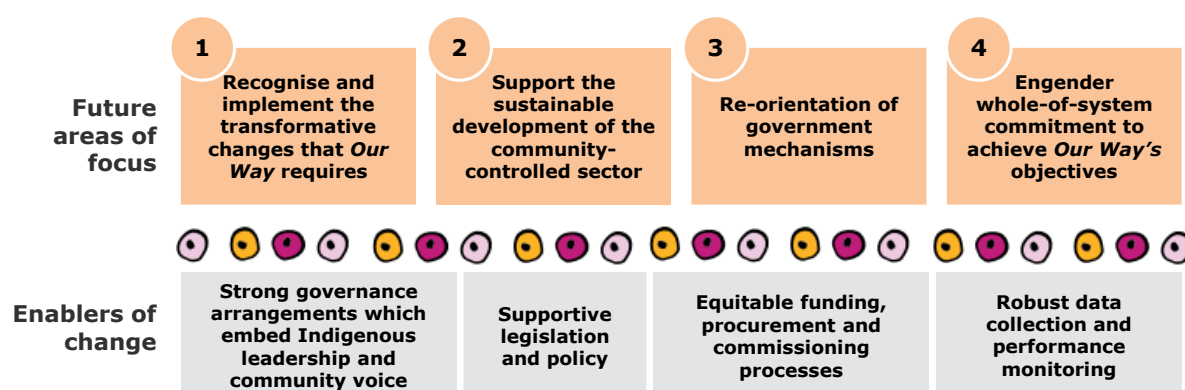
More detailed recommendations underpinning each area of focus is elaborated in greater detail below:

1. Recognise and implement the transformative change that *Our Way* requires

There needs to be a whole of government recognition of the transformative change required to achieve *Our Way's* objectives. For *Our Way* to be successfully implemented, there needs to be **a paradigm shift in the role of Government**. *Our Way* advocates for greater family-led decision making. To achieve this, **the Government must be willing to relinquish control over key decisions in order to promote self-determination and support the safety, wellbeing and connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families**.

It is commendable that some government agencies are recalibrating existing policy and practice to incorporate greater co-design and community-led decision making. Positive systems change – as originally intended in the design of *Our Way* – requires these changes to occur at a larger and more consistent scale across all agencies. To achieve this, it is recommended that:

1.1 All government agencies should revisit their existing, policy, legislation and strategies and develop plans to address policy / legislation / strategies that do not align with *Our Way*'s key principles within a specified timeframe. For some agencies, the current ways of working and implementing actions are insufficient to deliver the required changes. There should be clear mechanisms to identify and remedy these misalignments.

1.2 Utilise the Theory of Change and program logic model (see Section 6.1 and 6.2) to influence design of actions to achieve the common goal articulated in *Our Way*. Importantly, the outcomes articulated in the program logic model reflects the shared responsibility of the

different system stakeholders. A mechanism to design bolder and more transformative actions (rather than leveraging on existing initiatives that are already in place) may be required to achieve the outcomes articulated.

1.3 Establish transparent and regular reporting mechanisms to the Queensland First Children and Families Board on the implementation progress and remediation activity required. Given that the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are the central focus of *Our Way*, there should be clear reporting mechanisms on the progress across different socioeconomic determinants which influence their life outcomes (such as access to safe housing, early childhood education, nutrition and quality healthcare).

1.4 Identify opportunities to better embed First Nations voice in leadership, governance, service planning and decision making. This includes strategies to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in government leadership and policy decision making processes.

2. Support the sustainable development of the community-controlled sector

The successful transformative change articulated above can only be achieved if it is accompanied with concerted efforts to develop the community-controlled sector in a more sustainable manner. This evaluation has identified some variation in the existing capability of different ACCOs; and the need to develop a clear transition plan to invest in strengthening the community-controlled sector. QATSICPP will play an important role in leading this work. It is recommended that:

2.1 The Government, in partnership with QATSICPP and other sector peaks develop a clear strategy and implementation plan to support investments in transition planning and capability development of the community-controlled sector. In line with the expected transfer in responsibilities, government agencies should be working in genuine partnership with ACCOs and non-indigenous child and family organisations to improve the sector's capability across a range of areas, including governance arrangements and workforce development. This ensures that ACCOs are set up to succeed from the start.

2.2 Support ACCOs' ability to innovate and scale successful approaches. ACCOs must be provided the opportunity and space to innovate their service delivery to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This can be achieved through the funding of pilots. Successful pilots can be funded and scaled to more locations. The need to trust and empower ACCOs is illustrated in the following stakeholder quote - "*the Government should take a leap of faith and support ACCOs. ACCOs know their people in a way that we would not possibly know*".

2.3 Ensure funding arrangements are recalibrated to reflect the trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector. The adequacy and structure of funding arrangements should be aligned with the complexity of work that ACCOs are tasked to do.

3. Re-orientation of government mechanisms

The Government can build on earlier successes and continue re-orienting its mechanisms to ensure that current policy, processes and practice are aligned with the ongoing transformational change advocated by *Our Way*. This can be achieved through the following recommended steps:

3.1 Acknowledge systemic racism that continues to exist within the system. The Government should publicly acknowledge and challenge unconscious biases that continue to influence decision making. There should be transparent reporting mechanisms of ongoing efforts to highlight this issue and concerted steps to address them (e.g., an annual survey which captures the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who access frontline services; and the extent to which systemic racism continues to exist within the system).

3.2 Prioritise strengthening the cultural competency of those who work in non-Indigenous organisations. The Government can consider delivering regular professional development and

induction training sessions on how to change their current ways of working to align with the Child Placement Principle and *Our Way*'s key principles.

3.3 Strengthen accountability mechanisms to hold all government and non-government service providers accountable to positive life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. These mechanisms could be in the form of:

    3.3.1 Explicit KPIs for all public sector workers – including frontline workers, regional directors and Director Generals. The KPIs could focus on key indicators related to specific life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.

    3.3.2 Feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the performance of public sector organisations. This would involve soliciting feedback on an individual agency's performance from Elders / Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives as part of annual performance monitoring measures.

    3.3.3 Linking funding access to the extent to which frontline agencies have implemented the Child Placement Principle. This would serve as an additional incentive to better embed cultural change among implementing agencies.

3.4 Actively value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, knowledge, history and experiences. The Government should move away from the traditional problem-based paradigm and instead, adopt a strengths-based approach which celebrates the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

4. Engender greater whole-of-system commitment to achieve *Our Way's* objectives

Our Way is ultimately a whole-of-system strategy. DCYJMA and selected partner agencies have made significant strides in progressing the implementation of *Our Way*. However, to achieve the transformative change articulated in *Our Way*, there needs to be greater collective ownership of *Our Way*. This evaluation has identified inconsistent levels of buy in from selected government agencies, which has hampered more widespread and systemic changes to government policy and practice. Additionally, there is also limited awareness and understanding of *Our Way* among community members.

Improving the life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children should be a key priority for all agencies – not merely agencies who deliver specific services. All government agencies need to understand their collective role in supporting positive changes in the system. This can be achieved by:

4.1 Greater advocacy of the required change from the highest levels of Government. The Government establishes governance arrangements to serve as a centralised point of accountability to raise the visibility of *Our Way*, increase engagement from other agencies and monitor the implementation of key action plans. This could include the establishment of a Cabinet sub-committee that is chaired by the Premier and includes representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. One stakeholder said: *"We would like greater engagement from central agencies around the leadership required to drive the implementation of Our Way".*

4.2 Development and implementation of strategies to raise awareness of the systemic changes driven by *Our Way* across different levels of government. A structured communication and engagement strategy could be devised to ensure that information on *Our Way's* vision and implementation progress is regularly communicated to all system stakeholders, including frontline workers and community members.

4.3 Establish collaborative mechanisms to support the alignment of ongoing government strategies to *Our Way*. This evaluation found there are intersections between different strategies that agencies are implementing which influence the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. There is an opportunity for the design of these strategies to be done in collaboration with other agencies.

4.4 Communicate the intent and impact of *Our Way* to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Even though *Our Way* was implemented in 2017, there has been limited success

in raising awareness and building wide-reaching understanding of its intent and approach. Given this, there is an opportunity for more extensive community engagement in the development and implementation of the remaining action plans.

4.5 Embed the voice and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when assessing the impact of *Our Way*. There should be consideration of structured data collection mechanisms (through independent evaluations and regular internal performance monitoring mechanisms) to understand if *Our Way* has positively impacted their lives. In implementing *Our Way*, both government and non-government service providers are ultimately accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, family and community – rather than to targets and numbers. One stakeholder noted that *"the only way to measure this strategy's success is to speak directly to Aboriginal and Torres Islander people."*

Appendix A Number of stakeholders consulted

The table below outlines the number of stakeholders (and their respective organisations) who participated in semi-structured interviews and workshops as part of the second phase of this evaluation. For comparison, the table also includes the number of stakeholders who were invited to participate in this evaluation.

System stakeholders	Number of stakeholders who were invited for interviews / workshop	Number of participants who were interviewed	Number of participants who attended workshops
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service	2	n/a	2
Central Queensland Indigenous Development	1	n/a	0
DCYJMA	17	9	13
DCHDE	1	1	0
DESBT	1	1	0
DJAG	2	1	0
DoE	2	1	0
DPC	2	1	0
DSDSATSIP	5	4	1
Family Matters	2	2	1
Kurbingui Youth and Family Development	1	n/a	1
Life Without Barriers	1	n/a	1
Office of the Child and Family Official Solicitor	1	n/a	0
QATSICPP	6	4	1
QFCC	1	0	1
QFCFB	3	0	2
QH	2	1	0
Qld Treasury	2	0	0
Total	**50**	**25**	**23**

Appendix B Stakeholder interview consultation guide

Alignment with *Our Way*

1. Could you please describe your role within the organisation you work for?

2. How familiar are you with *Our Way*, and the Changing Tracks Action Plans?

***Our Way* objectives**

- Close the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families; and

- Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system

3. To what extent do you perceive that your organisation shares the vision and aligns to the objectives of *Our Way*?

4. What are the activities your organisation delivers to achieve the *Our Way* objectives (either formally through the Action Plan actions or through other organisational activities)?

5. To what extent do you feel the Changing Tracks actions your organisation has been involved in align with the objectives of *Our Way*?

Making changes

6. In order for the objectives of *Our Way* to be achieved, system change is required. To what extent do you perceive your organisation sees itself as part of the *Our Way* system?

7. What change is required in the system in order for *Our Way* to achieve its intended objectives? What barriers or enablers exist to help or hinder this change?

8. Has your organisation made any changes to its operating model (including people, processes and technology/information sharing) since the commencement of *Our Way*? To what extent have these been effective, and why/why not?

9. What role do you think Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations and community should play in the future system? What barriers/enablers will impact upon this?

Breaking Cycles Action Plans

10. Reflecting on your experience of implementing *Our Way* to date, what are the key learnings that you will take forward to support implementation of the remaining Action Plans?

Final Comments

11. Are there any other comments or areas that have not been discussed that you would like to bring up?

Appendix C Network analysis survey

Part 1 - About you

Q1. Do you work for:
- o   Government
- o   Non-government organisation
- o   Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation
- o   Other, please specify;
- o   N/A - I am a community member

Q2. You selected Government in the previous question, which area of Government do you work for?
- o   Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
- o   Department of Communities and Housing, Digital Economy and the Arts
- o   Department of Education
- o   Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- o   Department of Seniors, Disability Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- o   Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- o   Queensland Health
- o   Queensland Treasury
- o   Other; please specify: _____

Q3. You selected Non-government organisation in the previous question, which organisation do you work for?
- o   Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak or member of this organisation
- o   Queensland Family and Child Commission
- o   Family Matters Queensland or member of this organisation
- o   Other; please specify: _____

Q4. Which region is in the headquarters for your organisation located within?
- o   Cairns and Hinterland
- o   Central Queensland
- o   Central West
- o   Darling Downs
- o   Gold Coast
- o   Mackay
- o   Brisbane North
- o   Brisbane South
- o   North West
- o   South West
- o   Sunshine Coast
- o   Torres and Cape
- o   Townsville
- o   West Moreton
- o   Wide Bay

Q5. Do you identify as working on a traditional land?
- o   Yes
- o   No

Q6. What is your current role? Please select the role most appropriate to your role in your organisation.
- o   Frontline service delivery
- o   Regional operational

  o Central policy and strategy
  o Sector development
  o Executive
  o Other; please specify: _____

Q7. How long have you been at this organisation?
  o Less than 1 year
  o Between 1 and 3 years
  o Between 3 and 6 years
  o Between 6 and 10 years
  1. 10 years or more

Q8. Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?
  o Yes, Aboriginal
  o Yes, Torres Strait Islander
  o Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
  o No
  o Prefer not to say

Q9. Are you a member of one or more of the *Our Way* governance groups which support, guide and oversight the strategy?
  o QFCFB
  o ATSIRCG
  o Family Matters Leadership Group
  o Strategic Implementation Group
  o *Our Way* Strategic Interagency
  o Governance Group for Delegated Authority
  o First Nations Council
  o Local Level Alliances for Delegated Authority

Part 2. Understanding stakeholder alignment

Q10*.* Please select the extent to which you agree with the following statements (five point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree):

Awareness and vision alignment
o I am aware of *Our Way* (2017-37) and its associated *Changing Tracks* action plans 2017-19 and 2020-22
o I am aware of my organisations role in achieving the intended objectives of *Our Way*
o I understand the intent of *Our Way* and its objectives to close the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.
o I believe that our organisation shares the vision outlined in *Our Way*
o I have heard leaders in my organisation outwardly vocalise their support for *Our Way*
o I believe that the **governance structures supporting** the strategy have clear roles/alignment/understand intent

Q11. Please select the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

Actions and changes to date
o I have been involved in a project(s) within my organisation that are supporting the attainment of the objectives of *Our Way*, via one or more of the actions in the Action Plan(s)
o Since its launch, our organisation has embedded the principles of *Our Way* in our strategic planning processes
o Our organisation has been actively measuring progress towards the intended outcomes described in *Our Way*
o I have seen examples of decision making within our organisation change, aligned with the intent and objectives of *Our Way*
o I have seen examples of where *Our Way* and the *Changing Tracks* action plans have been used to inform decision making within our organisation
o My organisation has implemented processes that genuinely provide mechanisms for young people and families to have a say/own decisions that affect them

o   My organisation has already started working in a new or different way
o   The governance group I am a member of has provided the necessary oversight, support and pathways to manage issues arising during implementation of the strategy

Part 3. Understanding stakeholder relationships
The attainment of the objectives of *Our Way* is dependent on a whole-of-system response. The following questions ask you to identify which organisations your organisation collaborates with and in what ways, in order to attain the objectives of *Our Way*.

Q12. In the context of achieving the objectives of *Our Way,* select the organisations that your organisation is/ or has collaborated with since the implementation of *Our Way – Changing Tracks*.

o   Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
o   Department of Communities and Housing, Digital Economy and the Arts
o   Department of Education
o   Department of Justice and Attorney-General
o   Department of Seniors, Disability Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
o   Department of the Premier and Cabinet
o   Queensland Health
o   Queensland Treasury
o   QATSICPP
o   QFCC
o   Family Matters Queensland

Q13. How would you rate the frequency of collaboration between your organisation and others since the implementation of *Our Way*?

o   Less frequent
o   About the same
o   More frequent

Q14. How would you rate the level of impact that the collaboration between your organisation and others had on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families since the implementation of *Our Way*?

o   Less impactful
o   About the same
o   More impactful

Q15. Please select the activities you collaborate on with each organisation in order to achieve the objectives of *Our Way.*

o   Undertaken integrated service planning
o   Shared data and/or information
o   Participated in joint governance forums
o   Established new ways of working
o   Shared funding / implemented new funding models
o   Participated in joint planning
o   Shared resources
o   Participated in knowledge transfer and/or sharing
o   Other (please add)

Q16. Please select how frequently you collaborate/connect with each organisation in order to achieve the objectives of *Our Way.*

o   Structured – daily
o   Structured – weekly
o   Structured – monthly
o   Structured – several times per year
o   Ad hoc – daily
o   Ad hoc – weekly
o   Ad hoc – monthly
o   Ad hoc – several times per year

o   Other (please add)

Q17. In the context of achieving the objectives of *Our Way*, what facilitated collaboration between organisations?

o   Project management
o   Good working relationships
o   Strong leadership from senior level
o   Transparent communication
o   Shared goals
o   Information dissemination to all levels of stakeholders
o   Other (please add)

Q18. In the context of achieving the objectives of *Our Way*, what hinders collaboration between organisations?

o   Lack of policy imperative
o   Lack of incentives
o   Poor leadership
o   Lack of time
o   Lack of resources and facilities
o   Lack of communication
o   Challenges of remote working
o   Other (please add)

Part 4. Closing questions
Q19. Please describe any future actions and improvements required to achieve and sustain positive outcomes and drive continuous improvement of policy, program and service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families?

Q20. Are there any other comments you would like to make in relation to *Our Way* and the current process to support planning for the incoming Breaking Cycles - Action Plans?

Appendix D Monitoring and evaluation framework

Evaluation focus	Suggested indicators		Suggested data source
Domain 1: Appropriateness			
Evaluation question 1: To what extent were the design of Action Plan actions appropriate?			
Design of actions	1. The extent to which Action Plan actions are clearly linked to Our Way's building blocks as well as other evaluation artefacts (e.g., future areas of focus and outcomes articulated in the *Our Way* Theory of Change and program logic) 2. The extent to which the design of actions is underpinned by a clear evidence base on what works for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities 3. The extent to which the design of actions considered contextual factors such as workforce availability, budget and the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 4. The extent to which the design of actions incorporated learnings and recommendations from earlier *Our Way* evaluations	•	Business cases and policy documents on action design
Domain 2: Process			
Evaluation question 2: To what extent has the Action Plan been implemented as intended?			
Fidelity	5. The extent to which the implementation of actions have been timely, effective and consistent with initial design decisions 6. The accessibility of Action Plan actions 7. The extent to which leading agencies have supported the effective implementation of Action Plan actions	•	Relevant policy documents
		•	Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members
Implementation	8. Key implementation barriers and enablers which impacted the implementation of action plans 9. The extent to which implementation barriers and enablers varied by context – such as location, type of initiative and target cohort	•	Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members

Evaluation focus	Suggested indictors	Suggested data sources
Domain 3: *Our Way's* future areas of focus		
Evaluation question 3: To what extent has there been progress in addressing *Our Way's* key reform areas?		
1: Transformative changes in the system	10. The extent to which there have been changes in systems / policies to support genuine co-design processes and greater community-led decision making 11. Reported increase in Indigenous voice, leadership and governance in decision making processes among government agencies and non-Indigenous service providers 12. The extent to which the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities perceive that they have greater access to self-determination	• Action plan implementation documents • Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members
2: Sustainable growth of the community-controlled sector	13. Level of investment in ACCOs 14. Reported improvements in the level of genuine partnerships between ACCOs and non-Indigenous organisations 15. Effectiveness of ACCO services (e.g. the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services) in meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 16. The extent to which ACCOs are supported to grow in a sustainable manner (e.g. through capability building and workforce development initiatives) 17. The extent to which successful place-based services or initiatives (delivered by ACCOs) are allocated additional funding resources for further expansion	• Evaluation of services delivered by ACCOs • Documentation of capability building supports • Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members
3: Re-orientation of government mechanisms	18. Reported reduction of systemic racism among non-Indigenous organisations 19. Reported improvements in cultural competence among non-Indigenous service providers 20. The extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to information and services enabling participation in the informed decision-making regarding their own lives 21. The extent to which funding, procurement and commissioning mechanisms across all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples reflects trust and empowerment of the community-controlled sector 22. Number, quality and independence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander accountability mechanisms. This involves measurement on the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms at all levels to drive changes in behaviour and practice to align with *Our Way's* principles	• Assessment of funding and procurement arrangements in place • Assessment of performance agreements of all service providers who deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children • Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members
4: Whole-of-system commitment	Measurement of: 23. Government agencies and service providers' awareness of *Our Way* strategy 24. Government agencies and service providers' demonstrating commitment to the *Our Way* strategy	Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members

25. Government agencies and service providers' awareness of their collective roles and responsibilities to achieve positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
26. Reported improvements in collaboration among government agencies and service providers to deliver seamless and culturally appropriate supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
27. The prioritisation and delivery of early intervention initiatives across different agencies to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system
28. The degree of change in policy settings to enable whole-of-system changes (e.g., changes in legislative

Evaluation focus	Suggested indictors	Suggested data sources
Domain 4: Outcome		
Evaluation question 4: To what extent has *Our Way* contributed to improved life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children? (Note: the domains are aligned with the Wellbeing Outcome Framework or WOF).		
WOF domain: Culture and Connection (Our children are strong in culture)	29. Levels of participation in language and cultural practice 30. Level of knowledge of and pride in identity, e.g. connection between Elders and children and young people, transference of cultural knowledge 31. Levels of access o and communal ownership of traditional lands, seas and waters 32. Rates of discrimination based on race, e.g. both community racism and systemic institutional racism within the child safety, community services and justice system 33. Level of recognition and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, including capacity to participate.	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members
WOF domain: Economic empowerment (Our children have access to every opportunity)	34. Level of youth and parental/carer job security 35. Level of parental/carer employment 36. Rates of youth in employment/training/education, including youth awareness of and interactions with Indigenous-owned enterprises 37. Household financial wealth 38. Household net adjusted disposable income	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members • Closing the Gap • Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children • Household Income and Wealth, Australia • ABS Census of Population and Housing
WOF domain: Health (Our children are strong and healthy)	39. Life expectancy 40. Birthweights 41. Immunisation rates	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members

	42. Healthy physical development, e.g. obesity and chronic conditions such as diabetes and eye problems 43. Dental health 44. Maternal health 45. Parental mental health	• Closing the Gap • AIHW's Children's Health indicators
WOF domain: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing (Our children are hopeful)	46. Level of parental wellbeing 47. Rates of access to mental health services 48. Rates of attempted suicide, suicide and self-harm 49. Frequency and nature of help-seeking 50. Time devoted to personal care 51. Rates of alcohol and substance use 52. Rates of participation in positive activities (e.g. sport and recreation, cultural practice)	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members • Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework report • Closing the Gap data • National Youth Information Framework • National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey
WOF domain: Learning and skills (Our children learn, develop and thrive)	53. Levels of educational attainment and participation 54. Early childhood education participation (0–4 years) 55. Level of early childhood development 56. Level of parental engagement in child learning 57. Performance in English, Maths and Science (at Year 4 and Year 9) 58. Attainment of Year 12 or equivalent qualification 59. Completion of tertiary qualification 60. Level of maternal and paternal educational attainment and participation 61. Assessment on the extent to which children are developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members • Closing the Gap data • AIHW's Children's Headline indicators • The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children • NAPLAN results • Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey
WOF domain: Home and Environment (Our children live in safe and healthy homes)	62. Housing expenditure 63. Access to suitable and appropriately sized housing, including access to outdoor and recreational spaces 64. Housing conditions, including sanitation, air pollution, housing problems 65. Housing tenure 66. Perceptions of feeling safe in the home 67. Rates of homelessness	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members • ABS Household Expenditure Survey • Closing the Gap data • NATSISS • Primary data to be gathered • The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children • AIHW National Social Housing Survey, as reported in Indigenous community housing • AIHW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: a focus report on housing and homelessness

Evaluation focus	Suggested indictors	Suggested data sources
WOF domain: Empowerment (Our children are heard)	68. Levels of access to opportunity: education, employment, training throughout all stages of life 69. Level of child and youth engagement for developing laws, policies and programs 70. Level of youth voter participation 71. Youth perceptions of ability to have a say 72. Use and engagement of technology and social media 73. Membership of social, community, or civic groups 74. Level of life satisfaction 75. Social and emotional development in the early years (2 to 6 years) 76. Treaty making	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members • National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey • Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children
WOF domain: Safety (Our children are safe)	77. Representation in child protection 78. Representation in youth justice 79. Representation in criminal justice 80. Rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children 81. Perceptions of safety (e.g. feeling safe alone at night) 82. For those in the child protection system: Frequency and nature of interactions with family members and kin 83. Reports of bullying 84. Nature and extent of relationships with peers, siblings, adults (including parents/carers, teachers)	• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members • Closing the Gap data • National Youth Information Framework • Closing the Gap data • AIHW's Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story, based on analysis of NATSISS and Personal Safety Survey (PSS) • NFPAC • AIHW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2017 online data tables

Impact

Evaluation question 5: To what extent has *Our Way* led to the closing the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families?

The gap in life outcomes is closed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families	85. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four-year olds enrolled in early childhood education 86. Teenage births - age specific birth rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women aged 15-19 years 87. Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 15- 24 years engaged in education, training or work (percentage) 88. Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies born with a healthy weight range 89. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children developmentally vulnerable in one or more of the Australian Early Development Census domains	• DCYJMA performance data and Family Matters Report • AIHW report: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle Indicators 2018–19: measuring progress

Evaluation focus	Suggested indictors	Suggested data sources
Evaluation question 6: To what extent has *Our Way* eliminated the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in the child protection system?		
The disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in the child protection system is eliminated	90. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that received family support services 91. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care 92. Safe reunification indicator 93. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children subject to substantiations	• DCYJMA performance data and Family Matters Report • AIHW report: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle Indicators 2018–19: measuring progress
Evaluation question 7: To what extent has *Our Way* generated more positive outcomes across all groups in the Changing Tracks Priority Areas?		

	94. Reported level of agreement that the outcomes and initiatives of *Our Way*, Changing Tracks provide equitable benefits across the following groups:
	  • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women under 25 years, and their partners, before and during pregnancy and parenting (Priority Area 1)
	  • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged two to five years requiring access to health and disability programs (Priority Area 2)
	  • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who have complex needs and children at risk (Priority Area 3)
	  • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care/disconnected from family and kin (Priority Area 4)
	  • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people aged 15 to 21 years in or leaving out-of-home care (Priority Area 5)
		• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members

Efficiency		
Evaluation question 8: How efficiently was the *Our Way* strategy implemented?		

	95. The extent to which programs / services (delivered as part of the action plans) are:
	  ○ delivered at the lowest possible cost (technical or productive efficiency),
	  ○ delivered to the areas of greatest need (allocative efficiency); and
	  ○ continuously realising efficiency gains by finding better or lower cost ways to deliver outcomes (dynamic efficiency).
	96. The extent to which the benefits of programs / services distributed in an equitable manner among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in different communities
		• Policy documentation on funding and access to initiatives
		• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders and service providers

Future areas of improvement		

Evaluation focus	Suggested indictors	Suggested data sources
Evaluation question 9: What further action is needed to sustain positive outcomes and drive continuous improvement and achievement of outcomes?		

	97. What are the recommended improvements to the following aspects of Action Plan design and implementation:
	    o The design of individual actions
	    o The fidelity of Action Plan implementation
	    o The achievement of intended outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
		• Surveys and consultations with government stakeholders, service providers, children, young people, families and community members

Deloitte.