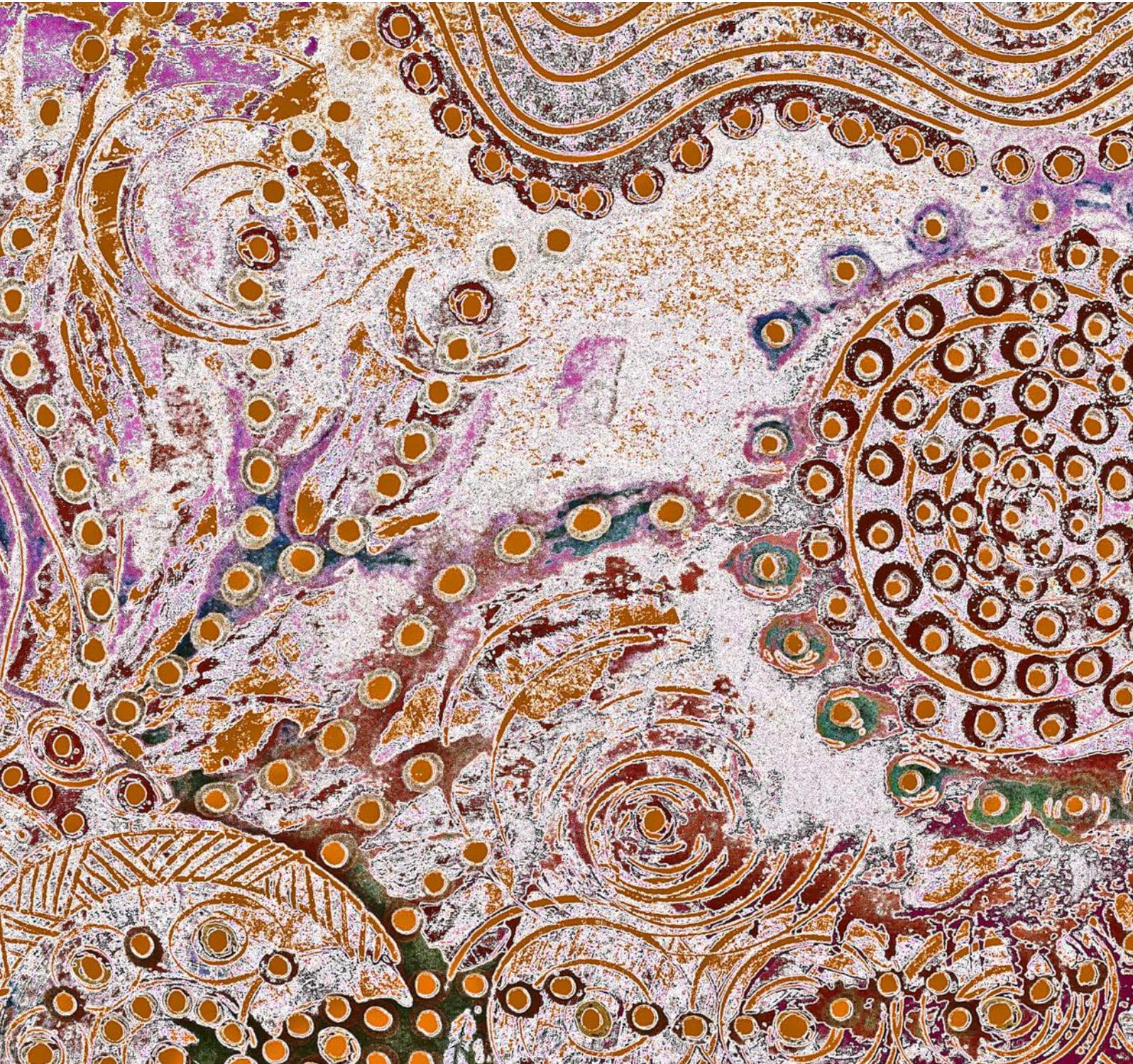


Doing business together

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Inclusion in the Australian Co-operative and Mutual Sector

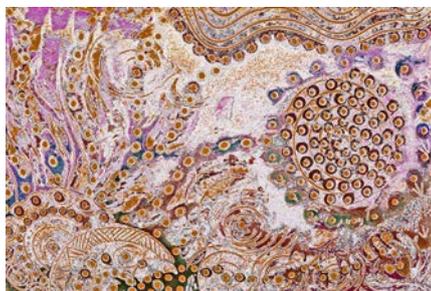


Note of appreciation

We recognise and appreciate the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people and organisations who contributed their rich, sometimes painful and often hopeful stories to this review.

The authors wish to express their appreciation for time and valuable inputs of the participants in the project working group. We are also grateful for the energy, skills and commitment of the project team; Pastor Ray Minniecon, Joanna Kitchen, Estelle Fyffe, Michael Hercock and Hazel Leano.

Cover art



Debra Beale

Ancient Healing
Mixed Media
80 x 106cm

Artist bio

My name is Debra Beale and I am a Sydney-based Artist and Designer Maker. I come from the Palawa/Yorta Yorta and Gamilaraay/Wonnarua Nation. I was born in Surry Hills, Sydney and have been practising art for over 25 years.

My artwork tells a narrative of my Aboriginal cultural practices, focusing on cultural heritage, family and community. It is a combination of Women's Business, with a process of acknowledging the past and moving forward to the future. A healing journey celebrating with song and dance and laughter.

My artwork (Ancient Healing) represents an Australian Aboriginal Ancient Culture. It tells a narrative of fresh water and being on country. My homelands where I grew up, Griffith NSW. I remember as a young girl the fresh water creeks I used to swim in, they had yabbies, fish and mud mussels. I used to catch the yabbies, cook them each afternoon when I got home from school. I would share them with my brothers and sister and sometimes dad would put them into a soup if he was making one.

I went home after 20 years and there is no sign of those creeks. They are either dried up or the old rice and wheat farmers no longer need water for their properties and filled them in. The land is dry and you couldn't imagine anyone ever living there.

My artwork represents these ancient creeks and water holes. I remember how they once were flowing and thriving with life. The colours depict the landscape and its environment which is embedded into my memory as a young girl.

With thanks to



Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative was established in 1987 by ten founding member artists. They were Euphemia Bostock, Fiona Foley, Michael Riley (dec.), Tracey Moffatt, Jeffrey Samuels, Bronwyn Bancroft, Avril Quail, Fern Martens, Arone Meeks (dec.), and Brenda L. Croft. These ten artists were striving for recognition from the mainstream art society and their diversity was unparalleled. They challenged preconceptions around urban based Aboriginal Artists and created a unique space for themselves within the art world.

Boomalli continues to survive 34 years later and is committed to promoting and supporting artists from New South Wales Aboriginal language groups. Boomalli's artist members are based in Sydney and in regional areas of New South Wales. Boomalli provides a space for our artists to exhibit, work and tell their stories through their art.

Boomalli is located at 55-59 Flood St Leichhardt NSW and runs a regular exhibition program.



Doing business together

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Inclusion in the Australian Co-operative and Mutual Sector

Prepared by: Pastor Ray Minniecon, Joanna Kitchen, Estelle Fyffe, Michael Hercock, Doug Faircloth





Acknowledgement of Country

Pastor Ray Minniecon
Kabi Kabi Goreng Goreng Ambryn

I hold in my hands a piece of the soil from whose lands I now live on. The Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. I acknowledge the wisdom, knowledge, and expertise of the Gadigal ancestors in their custodianship of these lands that I now call my home. I acknowledge and recognise their ancestors whose wisdom have cared for this land for millennia. Through this soil, I recognise and acknowledge the families and children of the Gadigal clan who lived and celebrated and communed together on these lands. I also acknowledge and recognise all the blood that was shed on these lands, either in violence or innocence.

I acknowledge and recognise the elders who have come recently, who have toiled and died on these lands and left us a legacy so that all people can enjoy the benefits of their labour on this soil today.

I acknowledge the responsibility I have in stewarding and caring for these lands. This responsibility now rests on my shoulders. My responsibility is to care for the land and soil upon which I now live so that our children's children can celebrate and enjoy the fruits of this soil so that they too can live a healthy, prosperous and happy life on the land and soil of the Gadigal people.

I also acknowledge and recognise our collective responsibility that we all have to care for all the lands and soils we have the honour to be birthed upon and to live and work upon.

Let us affirm our connection to the lands we now live and work upon. Let us acknowledge our elders who worked on these lands for our benefit.

Let us pledge that we too will steward the land according to the wisdom, knowledge and expertise that we now possess so that we can pass on to our children's children, the best that our land can provide for them and their children's children.

Let us also undertake together the important task to care for our Mother Earth so that our future generations are not robbed or deprived of their rightful inheritance that is our responsibility to pass on to them so that they can enjoy the same entitlements and benefits that we have enjoyed on these.¹

¹ We have used "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander", "Indigenous", "First Peoples", "Aboriginal Australian" interchangeably to refer to Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. We do acknowledge that the use of some of these terms are not without contention and we apologise if this causes any offence – it is not our intention. We acknowledge that there is inherent contention in the use of general descriptors such as "Indigenous" or "Aboriginal", particularly in its suggestion that a homogenous culture exists, which we know is not the case. We acknowledge the continuous existence of multiple Indigenous communities within Australia.

If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.

Aunty Lela Watson
Speech to the United Nations, 1985

Author's note

Pastor Ray Minniecon
Kabi Kabi Goreng Goreng Ambryn



Let us be truth tellers.

Let us speak the truth to each other with faith, hope and love.

Not charity.

Not handouts.

Not from a deficit mentality.

Not welfare.

We want to build our future with you on the assets that have made us the oldest surviving culture on the planet. Some of the assets that we bring to the table are deeply embedded in our culture and spirituality: Resilience. Hardiness. Vision. Yearning aspirations. Trust. Hope. Strategic thinking. Collaboration and co-operation. A new way of seeing and being. A new way of conducting business. A situational leadership style that allows for multi-leadership growth and diversity. We will bring to the table a new language. We have much to learn from each other. We will need strong and willing partnerships, joint ventures, the best that we can achieve together because we are going on a wild and rugged walk down some very slippery slopes. We will need the best guides. We will need the best advice. We will need to take the best path, even if, for some of us, it takes us through rugged valleys and through uncharted waters and leads us down garden paths that have not been trod. If we start on this premise, then we will be sure that we can map out a pathway that will be lead us through those slippery slopes and rugged terrains to opportunities that we have never considered or imagined. But the opportunities that arise on this journey will come at a cost. But we can guarantee that we will build a pathway not just for ourselves but for the ones who seek to follow the path that we have made for them. Perhaps out of this pandemic, co-operatives will give new meaning, new opportunities, new aspirations and new goals for our companies, our people, our communities, and our nation. We have put together an outline or framework of the analysis of the current economic, political and cultural scenario with the hope that this will guide us toward that new future we all aspire to but, as yet, have unsuccessfully achieved with the satisfaction that we all yearn for.

Foreword

Rob Slocombe
Group Chief Executive Officer, RAC WA



During 2019 I was privileged to present RAC's third Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This is a significant step on our journey which extends our commitment to reconciliation and builds on the work led by my predecessor, Terry Agnew.

As the current Chair of the Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM), Terry delivered our first Reflect RAP more than seven years ago.

Our organisation and our people have reflected on our cultural awareness and on our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We have implemented many small, but meaningful changes to internal processes including how we communicate our commitment to reconciliation.

- In our business operations we endeavour to have a positive impact on Aboriginal communities, through procurement with Indigenous businesses and delivery of our services such as a road safety education to remote schools and a Cultural Centre at RAC Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort.
- Through the leadership of our people, we aim to build relationships of respect and opportunities to contribute to better social and economic outcomes for First Australians.
- We have extended our focus on reinforcing the foundations of respect and understanding that we have started to build within our organisation. As we mature our approach to reconciliation, we aim to achieve more meaningful outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and businesses.

As a member-owned organisation with more than 1.2 million members we are committed to our community of Western Australians and to being a driving force for positive community change.

As a founding member of the BCCM, we share this commitment to community and to all co-operative, mutual and member-owned firms. Together, we touch the lives of 8 in 10 Australians. Together we operate in nearly every industry sector, from mobility to banking, insurance, housing, health and more.

RAC was pleased to be a founding partner of this initial report, opening up a conversation about the role of the member-owned business sector and to contribute to better social and economic outcomes for First Australians.

Doing Business Together points to a path where the transformative power of the co-operative business – an intrinsically empowering, community-centric business model – can be leveraged to grow existing, and new, Aboriginal community-owned and controlled businesses. Through the concerted efforts of all Australian co-operative and mutual enterprises, we can also advance our national progress toward reconciliation.

This is the beginning of a new journey. By working together as a sector, walking side by side with First Nations peoples, we champion true reconciliation in Australia and drive a better future.

This is the beginning of a new journey. By working together as a sector, walking side by side with First Nations peoples, we champion true reconciliation in Australia and drive a better future.

Rob Slocombe
Group Chief Executive Officer, RAC WA

*It's a calling to come together,
within our organisations and
beyond them. Our aim is to be
doing business together.*

Executive Summary

When the BCCM engaged the authors of this report to undertake the third research project in a tripartite series examining diversity and inclusion in Australian co-operative and mutual enterprises (CMEs)² there was optimism and excitement that the team would deliver an impactful piece of research.

From inception, the research methodology was developed to be inclusive of the voice of the community that the report seeks to investigate. This has proved to be instrumental in the conclusions reached.

The purpose of this project was to frame the challenge of inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities within the CME sector in Australia. The report reaches a more ambitious conclusion; that CMEs and the CME sector can go further.

Adoption of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is critical for our sector and members. However, the community of co-operatives and mutuals can go further.

We can take our principles and embed them as a broader philosophy of inclusion that improves access to employment opportunities for First Nations people but also shares ownership and facilitates economic participation.

More than that, the report concludes that we should promote different forms of ownership, especially shared ownership that reflects the culture, and embraces the aspirations of Australia's First Nations people for their communities.

This report brings together the knowledge of Aboriginal representatives from Australian co-operatives and mutuals, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous CME leaders to investigate the state of play for Indigenous inclusion and to frame the possibilities for the future. It raises questions and new opportunities for Australian CMEs to do business in a more inclusive way and to support Aboriginal people to grow their own CMEs.

The report concludes that CMEs and the CME sector have a huge opportunity to engage in transmission of the CME business model for the social and economic empowerment of Indigenous Australians.

It's a calling to come together, within our organisations and beyond them. Our aim is to be *doing business together*.

Thank you to the researchers and academics who contributed to the report and to the community leaders who led the way. Thanks also to our members who participated in the consultation and shared their insights through the Reference Group.

²The BCCM has investigated gender and disability inclusion in the CME sector in two previous reports which can be found on the website www.bccm.coop

About Reconciliation Action Plans

Adoption of a Reconciliation Action (RAP) is one way of contributing to, and increasing, Indigenous economic inclusion. This can be one of the outcomes of a RAP.

In an effort to become more inclusive, many organisations have moved to incorporate RAPs into their strategy and governance. RAPs are an important starting point and integrate an organisational focus on inclusivity of First Nations people in day-to-day operations and impact on the lives of First Australians in meaningful ways.

But CMEs can go further and do better. Through embracing co-operative principles and embedding them into our operations, they bring a broader philosophy of inclusion to the fore – one that shares more than employment and procurement opportunities but provides for shared ownership and economic participation.

About the project

The Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM) has developed this research report to evaluate the state of equality and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, enterprises and people within the co-operative and mutual enterprise (CME) sector in Australia. The report outlines the research and recommendations that emerge from the findings.

Project methods

The primary focus of the research was qualitative. The interviews, consistent with Stand Point Theory, collated the responses using a Human Design Model. Twenty eight interviews were undertaken, supported by reference group meetings used to reflect questions and findings from the research team.

Additional focused literature, document and data reviews were undertaken to cross reference research findings with other related research. This research provided cross referencing to the findings, supporting confidence in the conclusions and the analysis.

Project findings

Findings were organised in two chapters: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people's inclusion in the Australian economy and Australian co-operative and mutual enterprises (including the role and outcomes of RAPs) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-operatives and mutuals.

Inclusion (Report Chapter 2)

Findings and implications related to Indigenous inclusion in the Australian economy include:

Theme 1: Current Scenario

Finding: Historical exclusion of Indigenous Australians, politically and economically, led to low accumulation of wealth across many Indigenous communities.

Implications: Systemic responses are required to meet the multiple layers of Indigenous exclusion.

Theme 2: Historical Analysis

Finding: Progress has been made in reconciliation and inclusion since the amendment of the Constitution in 1967, yet the wealth gap between Aboriginal communities and the broader community remains significant. Self-determined Aboriginal wealth creation is, mostly, a relatively recent phenomenon.

Implication: Public policy continues to perpetuate control and intervention in Aboriginal economic and social life. Aboriginal self-determined wealth creation is best met through Aboriginal-owned and controlled businesses that are not controlled or limited by government legislation more than any other businesses.

Theme 3: Interconnected and intersecting roles

Findings: Cultural values interacting with business systems creates different obstacles and opportunities unique to Indigenous peoples.

Implications: Understanding how these cultural systems interact with business systems is essential to the success of Aboriginal business.

Theme 4: Reconciliation Action Plans

Findings: The design and implementation of RAPs by co-operatives and mutuals is a common modality used for addressing Indigenous inclusivity in the CME sector.

However, RAPs, as internal tools for CMEs, do not necessarily address the external systemic questions that Indigenous communities and organisations (e.g. Uluru Statement from the Heart, constitutional reform, land rights) are facing.

It is this project's intention to explore the nuances and challenges surrounding the understandings and practice of Indigenous inclusivity in the current climate.

Implications: The uptake of RAPs has catalysed significant shifts in co-operative and mutual measurement of Indigenous inclusion but a new approach to systemic change that transcends the organisational level is required to fully address inclusivity.

The BCCM, as the peak body for the CME sector, has a unique opportunity to advocate and represent the systemic issues confronting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where they relate to economic participation and ownership and control of enterprise.

Theme 5: Not through a "deficit lens": Learning from good practice

Finding: Aboriginal world views can provide a wealth of knowledge and insight for Australian economic development and ensure economic policies respond to Aboriginal community needs. Supporting inclusion provides opportunities for Aboriginal people and the broader economy. Aboriginal inclusion should be seen through a strengths-based lens.

Implications: Aboriginal inclusion can be accelerated when all parties change their world view to recognise strengths and Indigenous knowledge.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-operatives (Report Chapter 3)

Findings and implications related to Indigenous inclusion in the Australian economy include:

Theme 6: Indigenous co-operatives and mutuals

Finding: 222 Indigenous-owned and controlled co-operatives and mutuals deliver diverse services, responding to community needs with a focus on cultural, health and human services.

Implication: Existing Indigenous CMEs are primarily focused on and are successfully responding to community cultural, health and care needs. There is potential for the development of new Indigenous CMEs in non-government funded industries such as agriculture, but this may require focused support to realise additional community benefits.

Theme 7: Issues and challenges for Indigenous co-operatives

Finding: Indigenous co-operatives have significant knowledge to share regarding how to operationalise co-operatives, including the benefits of the model and challenges to be overcome.

Implication: Supporting and empowering Indigenous voices within the CME sector will strengthen the entire CME sector and result in the development of new and more effective solutions to support Indigenous economic and social inclusion and self-determination.

Theme 8: Benefit of CMEs within Indigenous communities

Finding: Indigenous CMEs are:

- Motivated to achieve income and opportunity not only for the enterprise, but for their community.
- Generating significant social capital as well as private capital.
- Acting as a tool for effective social empowerment and self-determination.

There is an opportunity for significant growth in Indigenous CMEs in Australia.

Implications: CMEs hold a unique set of principles based around the concepts of solidarity and self-help that are aligned to Indigenous cultural values, community needs and that also support the goals of self-determination and economic participation.

Theme 9: Indigenous business: “Sleeping Giant”

Finding: Indigenous business is a “Sleeping Giant” with a significant competitive advantage.

Implication: The CME business model should be one of the options available to Indigenous business on an even footing with other options, particularly where there is a desire for the business to reflect Aboriginal values.

Supporting and
empowering Indigenous
voices within the CME
sector will strengthen
the entire sector

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: 'Let's Yarn'

'Let's Yarn' is proposed as a coordinated approach to drive the 'Visibility and Voice' of Indigenous co-operatives within the CME sector, and to increase recognition of the Indigenous CME business sector generally. Recommended actions:

1. BCCM to profile Indigenous CMES to the BCCM membership.
2. BCCM to coordinate an Aboriginal Voice within the BCCM network.
3. BCCM members to celebrate the work of their Indigenous CME members and their culture.

It is proposed that, as a first step, the BCCM coordinates a two day Aboriginal-only CME corroboree followed by a meeting open to all BCCM members, to discuss this recommendation.

Recommendation 2: Let's come together

A coordinated approach to drive the development of the Indigenous CME sector across Australia will promote inclusion of the Indigenous CME sector in economic life. It is imagined that this initiative will demonstrate CME leadership and impact across all business sectors. Inherent in this coordinated approach is the development and implementation of a CME sector Indigenous business strategy that would transparently include Indigenous procurement targets within CMES supply chains, and include a focus on procurement from Indigenous CMES. The BCCM's coordination activities should include: profiling the goods and services sought, procurement targets, and competitive considerations.

Recommendation 3: Shared voice

The recommendation is for the BCCM to advocate for an enabling environment for Indigenous CMES. This may include seeking changes to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy or the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 – CATSI ACT. Per recommendations 1 and 2, advocacy should be informed by and include the Aboriginal Voice.

Recommendation 4: Learn from each other

The findings of the report identify the need for culturally informed business and governance education for Aboriginal people seeking to form or grow businesses, including information about CME business models. Current understanding is limited to receiving financial advice from third party business advisers whereby the cultural values of Aboriginal people are often not taken into consideration when choosing governance and business models. Key support activities the BCCM can initiate include:

- Development of an Indigenous-specific, culturally aware, CME business hub.
- Partner with Indigenous training organisation and industry partners to develop:
 - CME Indigenous-specific incubators for new CMES that focus on a broader range of industries providing clear pathways for potential Indigenous CMES and CMES that are in the early stages of development.
 - CME Indigenous-specific incubators for small to medium Indigenous CMES to build business and organisational capability, potentially in partnership with non-Aboriginal CMES.

Recommendation 5:
Our story is powerful

The collection and publication of data on Indigenous business is low. The CME sector in Australia has the ability to collate and measure clear outcomes in relation to Indigenous CMEs and be a leader in Indigenous business intelligence in Australia. This could include further development of data collection and reporting in relation to Indigenous CMEs as part of the BCCM's National Mutual Economy report project.

Recommendation 6:
Our story comes
together in a
shared path

A shared path imagines BCCM member RAPs linked together in a way that forms a common BCCM RAP with clear measurable goals and an action plan for all BCCM members to participate in. To strengthen the potency of the BCCM's RAP, it is recommended that a toolkit is developed to share knowledge and facilitate the development of shared and clear inclusion indicators based on the CME principles.

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Author's note | 7 |
| Foreword | 8 |
| Executive Summary | 11 |
| Recommendations | 16 |
| 1. About the project | 20 |
| 1.1. Overview | 22 |
| 1.2. Research Methods | 23 |
| 1.3. Context | 24 |
| 2. Indigenous Inclusivity in the Australian Economy | 26 |
| 2.1. Evolving Situation – Current Scenario | 28 |
| 2.2. Mapping challenges: Historical analysis | 29 |
| 2.3. Interconnected and intersecting roles | 30 |
| 2.4. Reconciliation Action Plans | 31 |
| 2.5. "Not through a deficit lens": Learning from good practice | 32 |
| 3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-operatives and mutuals | 34 |
| 3.1. Current role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operatives and Mutuals | 36 |
| 3.2. Benefits of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operatives and Mutuals | 38 |
| 3.3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operatives: Issues and Challenges | 40 |
| 3.4. History of Indigenous Co-operative in Australia | 41 |
| 3.5. Opportunities: The Indigenous business – a "Sleeping Giant" | 43 |
| Recommendations | 44 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Glossary and appendix | 46 |
| Glossary | 48 |
| Appendix 1: Standpoint Theory | 48 |
| Appendix 2: Consultation Themes | 49 |
| Appendix 3: Legislative and Policy Timeline Summary | 52 |
| Appendix 4: RAP Summary | 54 |
| Appendix 5: RAP Mandatory Requirements for Endorsement | 55 |
| Appendix 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operative and Mutual Enterprises | 56 |
| Appendix 7 : Additional research on Indigenous Enterprises | 57 |

About the project

Chapter 1

1.1. The Project: Overview

1.2. Research Methods

1.3. Context

The significant contribution that Australia's First Peoples have on the nation's economy is one to be celebrated, acknowledged and encouraged.

Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals

Since 2016 the Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals has been producing reports on the inclusiveness of the Australian CME sector. These research reports evaluate the state of equality in the CME sector in Australia, and through industry engagement, develop strategies with actionable objectives to give the sector a leadership position on inclusion in Australian workplaces.

Acknowledged Contribution of First Nations to the Nation's Economy

The significant contribution that Australia's First Peoples have on the nation's economy is one to be celebrated, acknowledged and encouraged. Historically, Indigenous peoples have been major contributors to Australia's pastoral, fishing and sugar industries including the building of infrastructure such as rail and roads.

The Role of Business

The role of business in supporting the principles established in the United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is not to be discounted. Of particular interest is the right of First Peoples to self-determination, and how this right complements inclusivity practices.

Project Deliverables

The project deliverables are:

One:

Genuine reflection of Indigenous voices and worldview.

Two:

Active engagement and learning of the BCCM.

Three:

A report that addresses the project scope including findings, implications and recommendations.

³Eliza's Project and Disability Toolkit Citations

1.2. Research Methods

Research Methodology and Quantitative Summary of Interviews

Interviews with leaders of Australian CMEs, including Aboriginal CMEs, was the main research method. The purpose of interviews was to frame the challenge of inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities within the CME sector in Australia.

In addition, a Reference Group was formed to provide feedback on the research project. It consisted of representatives of the following 10 CMEs, including three Aboriginal-identified CMEs:

- Australian Unity
- Bank Australia
- Beyond Bank
- Common Equity NSW
- North Queensland Toyota Cowboys
- RAC WA
- Secretariat for the Northern Australia Aboriginal Kakadu Plum Alliance (Indigenous Land and Sea Council)
- Traditional Credit Union
- Tranby National Indigenous Adult Education and Training
- The NRMA

The BCCM also participated in reference group meetings.

The interviews, consistent with Stand Point Theory (Appendix 1), collated the response using a Human Design Model as identified below. The questions were framed consistent with design thinking in a culturally, relevant manner by Uncle Ray Minniecon and Joanna Kitchen in an explorative, reflective, probing, clarifying and analytical manner.

Eight Aboriginal identified CMEs gave feedback in interviews. The questions for Aboriginal organisations were framed as follows:

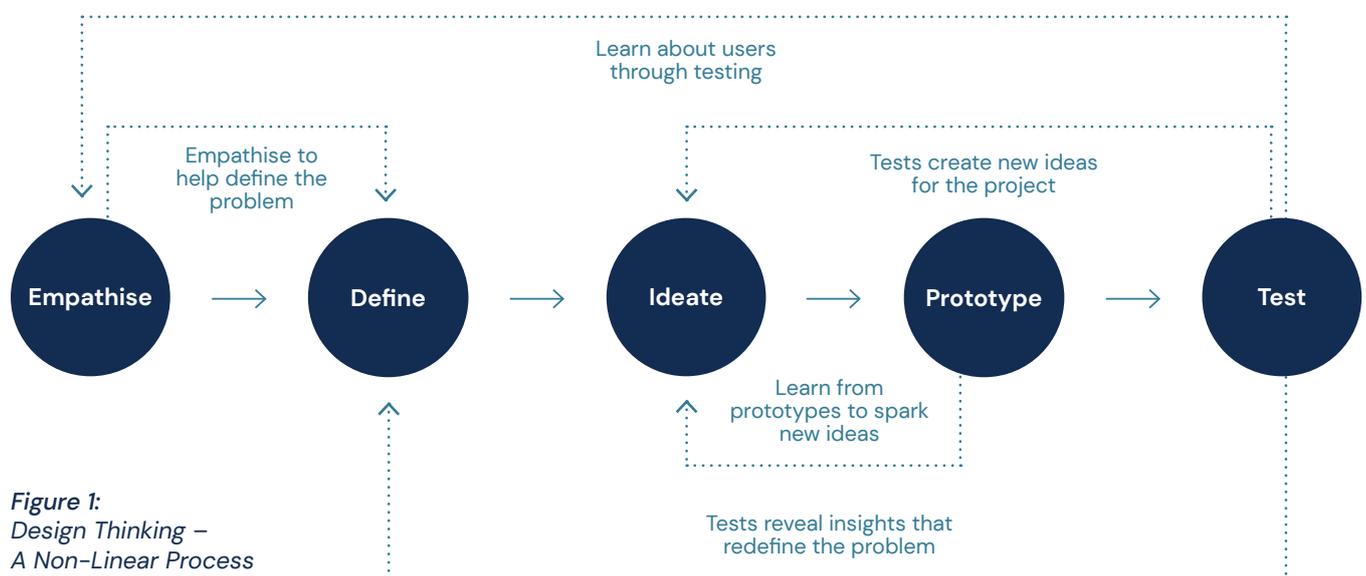
1. What does it mean to be an Aboriginal identified CME?
2. What do you need from your peak body?
3. What are the opportunities, strengths, weaknesses and threats?

Eight non-Aboriginal identified CMEs gave feedback. Questions to non-identified Aboriginal Organisations were framed as follows:

1. How inclusive are you to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?
2. What current policies and practices evidence this inclusion?
3. What do you see as some of the opportunities, strengths, weaknesses and threats?
4. What do you need from your peak bodies?

A further 12 interviews were undertaken alongside three reference group meetings to reflect questions and findings from the research team. The summary of approximately 40 hours of interviews is detailed in Appendix 2.

The questions served as a consistent framework and were used to promote conversation. The qualitative research was central to the project. The research yielded rich consultation findings summarised in Appendix 2.



A precursor to understanding inclusivity is questioning what one is being included into and who is included with whom.

Overarching Political Visions

At present, there are two very powerful overarching political visions that can blur the development of an economic vision that suits and fits into an economic vision for First Peoples. The first vision comes from the Federal Government's *"Closing the Gap"*. The second vision emerges from the *"Statement from the Heart"*, which describes the aspirations of First People's desire for Truth, Treaty and Voice. Between these two visions are some of the most challenging conditions faced by First Peoples. First Peoples are known to have the lowest economic status of all Australians.

Inclusion

This project explores what is meant by Indigenous inclusivity from perspectives that can be broadly drawn from categorical inclusions of First Peoples in the Australian economy, organisational Reconciliation Action Plans, government policies and legislation, and more importantly – inclusion among voices. It is not the purpose of this report to construct a single definition of inclusivity; instead, the project presents an exploration – and for the most part, a process of grappling with different lenses of inclusivity and its associated complexities and tensions.



Inclusivity

Indigenous Inclusivity in the Australian Economy

Chapter 2

2.1. Evolving Situation – Current Scenario

2.2. Mapping challenges: Historical analysis

2.3. Interconnected and intersecting roles

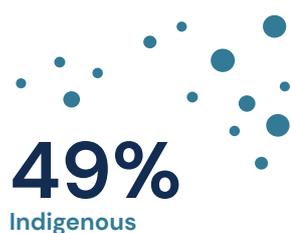
2.4. Reconciliation Action Plans

2.5. “Not through a deficit lens”: Learning from good practice

2.1. Evolving Situation – Current Scenario

The past six decades on this side of the 1967 Referendum has shown continuously shifting and evolving phases in the country’s reconciliation journey. This project acknowledges that, although not comprehensively covered, progressions have constantly been made through multiple negotiations in the complex intersections of post-colonialism oppression.

Rate of employment in 2018



vs.



According to Shirodkar et al. “The historical exclusion of Indigenous Australians from mainstream economic life has led to low accumulation of wealth across many Indigenous communities. Only a relative few gained formal business experience before the last decade. The result is that the vast bulk of entrepreneurially inclined Indigenous Australians likely lack the key preconditions to start a business and prosper in our capitalist economy.”⁴

The economic participation of Indigenous Australians, measured by employment, demonstrates the ongoing impact. The Closing the Gap Report 2020 shows the Indigenous employment rate at 49 per cent in 2018 compared to around 75 per cent for non-Indigenous Australians. There is also a large difference between employment in major cities (59%) and very remote areas (35%).⁵

Participation in employment provides financial and economic security – assisting in leading the path towards self-determination. Employment status also has associations with outcomes for living standards, health, social and emotional wellbeing (Bambara 2011; Gray et al 2014; Marmot 2015).⁶

Recent efforts have also been made to raise the national profiles of Indigenous-led businesses, as well as to increase the participation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples as key market stakeholders. The real numbers of indigenous business ownership are growing, as is the proportion of Indigenous owner-managers as a share of the population (3.2% in 2006 to 3.4% in 2016).⁷

Nonetheless, the rates of indigenous business ownership are relatively low in comparison with business ownership among non-Indigenous Australians. This is another indication of the significant gap in economic participation as a result of a history of discrimination.

Systemic responses are required to meet the multiple layers of Indigenous political and economic exclusion.

⁴ S Shirodkar, B Hunter and D Foley, Ongoing growth in the number of Indigenous Australians in Business, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, The Australian National University, 2018

⁵ Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Closing the Gap Report 2020

⁶ Targets based on NATSIHS 2019/19 data based on proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15–64 who are employed.

⁷ S Shirodkar, B Hunter and D Foley, Ongoing growth in the number of Indigenous Australians in Business, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, The Australian National University, 2018

Realisation of self-determining futures of our First Peoples requires the development of a sustainable “Indigenous economy”.



First Nations peoples must overcome a number of systemic challenges if they are to thrive in the Australian market economy. Intergenerational impacts of policy and legislation, stolen wages, stolen generations and reconciliation are receiving increased attention. Despite progress, many policy settings continue to hinder self-determined economic development. For example, the research team heard from CMEs of the negative impact of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy on the use of co-operative business structures. Appendix 3 details some of the key policy developments since 1967 that have presented barriers or opportunities for economic inclusion.

The Missing Link – Aboriginal business

Article 3 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples sanctions our First Peoples’ right to self-determination. This guarantees the right to freely determine and pursue their form of economic, social, and cultural development. Realisation of self-determining futures of our First Peoples requires the development of a sustainable “Indigenous economy”.

The past decade has shown an increased move towards Indigenous peoples’ ‘economic independence’ through the establishment of Indigenous businesses. Alongside these new Aboriginal-led private businesses, there is a range of Aboriginal community-owned CMEs, some established since the 1950s, providing a range of products and services related to Indigenous culture or people; including education and training, healthcare and social assistance and administrative and support services.

Finding

Progress has been made in reconciliation and inclusion since the Constitution Alteration in 1967 yet the wealth gap between Aboriginal communities and the broader community remains significant. Aboriginal wealth creation through self-determination is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Implication

Legislative changes continue a theme of control and intervention. Aboriginal self-determined wealth creation is best met through Aboriginal owned businesses that are not controlled or limited by government legislation.

"Community is stronger when we work together. It starts with a conversation."

Interviews demonstrate that Indigenous enterprises commonly operate within a context of interconnected relationships (detailed in figure 2). The intersecting roles, responsibilities and expectations can create added layers of complexity and tension between competing cultural, economic and ethical priorities.

" Community is stronger when we work together. It starts with a conversation."

" Requires patience; human contact; engage with local people; appreciate and recognise diversity; Practice human contact; Recognise important celebration in the calendar."

" Recognise the journey we all are on. There is no destination. The journey is a process toward cultural awareness and self-awareness."

In the study 'Indigenous culture and entrepreneurship in small businesses in Australia'⁸; Collins et al outline the impact of Indigenous culture on Indigenous entrepreneurs in Australian small to medium-sized enterprises. Interviews (N38) found that the relationship between Indigenous culture and Indigenous entrepreneurship is complex and sometimes contradictory. They describe that the complexity arises for various reasons including: (1) the great diversity within the Australian Indigenous community; (2) the fact that Indigenous people may also have non-Indigenous partners; and (3) the way in which racial discrimination and socio-economic disadvantage has impacted on Indigenous communities and Indigenous culture in Australia.



Figure 2: Complexity – Indigenous Inclusion and Business Operations

Finding

Cultural values, interacting with business systems creates different obstacles and opportunities unique to Indigenous peoples.

Implication

Understanding how these cultural systems interact with business systems is essential to the success of Aboriginal business.

⁸ Indigenous culture and entrepreneurship in small businesses in Australia; Jock Collins, Mark Morrison, Pakikshit Kumar Basu and Branka Krivokapic-Skoko Pages 36-48 | Published online: 06 Mar 2017

"It is a big journey and there is discomfort under the surface."

Reconciliation Australia launched their Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program in July 2006 with the main aim of helping organisations close the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians with measurable and accountable actions. A RAP provides a framework for organisations to support the national reconciliation movement. For workplaces, a RAP is envisaged as a strategic document that supports the organisation's business plan. It includes practical actions that will drive an organisation's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities in which the business operates⁹.

Adoption of a RAP is one way of contributing to, and increasing, Indigenous economic inclusion – this can be one of the outcomes of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Appendix 4 summarises information on RAPs of BCCM members participating in the Reference Group for this project. Insights from the BCCM Reference Group highlight how a RAP can challenge organisational thinking and actions and reshape attitudes for individuals. These plans bring two worlds together well described by Yothu Yindi in Treaty:

*"Now two rivers run their course,
Separated for so long,
I'm dreaming of a brighter day,
When the waters will be one."*

The RAP can provide a platform for honesty and reflection as described in this response:

" It is a big journey and there is discomfort under the surface ... Themes of discomfort, suspicion, guilt and ethics as a driver of moving to inclusivity, reconciliation and truth telling is a story shared by many."

RAP outcomes are more consistently achieved when they are led by senior executives who provide the accountability required. E.g.

" We have an internal champion which is our CFO ... that was about making sure that someone senior was accountable for the actions, not that it was just left to management to try and push this through. So, the fact that our CFO is accountable for the actions that come out of our RAPs is a key thing for us, because it means that you can't just gild the lily when it comes to these things."

The research also found that the focus of RAPs means they may not address the range of systemic questions facing Indigenous communities. Some interviews suggested that to go further a more structural and coordinated approach, built from an Indigenous understanding of the key challenges and opportunities, is required. To receive Reconciliation Australia endorsement includes minimum requirements as detailed in Appendix 5.

Finding

On a superficial level, the design and implementation of RAPs by CMEs is a defining feature in addressing Indigenous inclusivity in the CME sector. However, RAPs, as internal tools for CMEs, do not necessarily address the external systemic questions that Indigenous communities and organisations (e.g. Uluru Statement from the Heart, constitutional reform, land rights) are facing. It is this project's intention to explore the nuances and challenges surrounding the understandings and practice of Indigenous inclusivity in the current climate.

Implication

The vehicle of RAPs has been a significant shift for organisational internal measurements of inclusion but has not met the changing external environment faced by Aboriginal people and organisations. The BCCM as a peak body has a unique opportunity to advocate and represent the systemic external questions facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

⁹ www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans/

"Acknowledging Indigenous peoples capacities as leaders, innovators and business owners."

Moving from Deficit to Empowerment

Instead of viewing inclusion through a deficit lens (arguably such as those through the Closing the Gap campaign and other government programs), focusing on stories of success and various exemplar cases would be much more enabling.

Through years of Indigenous led advocacy, a new partnership agreement has been developed with a coalition of peaks around the Closing the Gap policy, focused on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There is recognition of the importance of working together with First Nations peoples and service providers in ways that recognise and value the expertise of First Nations peoples and self-determination as the key to success in policy development and service provision.

Moving away from deficit language, this new partnership around Closing the Gap can be acknowledged as progress in the right direction, positioning the voices of Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander service providers at the centre of policy development and evaluation. Closing the Gap may have started as a government-led deficit mentality but if we only focus on that we lose the more recent success from empowered voices.

" Acknowledging Indigenous peoples capacities as leaders, innovators and business owners... and enhancing (this) through capacity building programmes will paint an alternate story captured in the Uluru Statement from the Heart ... There is an opportunity to celebrate Indigenous led business."

The Uluru Statement from the Heart reflects a call for self-determination, economic empowerment, voice, treaty and truth-telling. It also reflects the resilience of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that has ensured the protection of culture and ways of knowing.



Defining an economic vision

In order to create a well-defined economic vision for First Nations Peoples of Australia, perhaps we need to ask: what do these terms mean for First Peoples? Prosperity? Capital? Assets? Wealth? Profit? These are terms and the language of the market economy. What meaning do they have for Indigenous Australians?

We know that the term 'profit' means money. So too do these other terms: prosperity, capital, assets, wealth. This is the common language of money.

But for First Peoples, those terms have different meanings: they can mean a good, profitable and prosperous life originating from the land and sea. Prosperity can include cultural wellbeing, the strength of community spirit, sustainable resource management and alignment with Indigenous spirituality.

These are some of the drivers of the Indigenous economy. First Peoples know that the land holds our memories, our wealth and the essence of our being. The land and the stories it contains is the only wealth First Peoples could possibly pass on to their children. First Peoples have embraced the knowledge that Mother Earth with all her bounty and rich culture are the source and foundations of their treasures and wealth. Without land and country, First Peoples become true paupers.

Yet, within Australia's market economy, First Peoples are forced to consider competing land and resource uses,

federal, state and other regulations, the effect on land and environmental damage, reduced or lack of access to traditional territories and resources due to expropriation of lands by governments, or interference in traditional livelihoods by outsiders.

Often when the global market economy is being discussed, the focus is on the environment or the social and community impacts. What attracts less attention, and needs to be considered and examined more closely, are the effects of the global market economy on First Nations economies.

What takes place locally is that the global market economy puts much more pressure on local Elders and community leaders to conform to the global market economy in the form of profit driven developments that require their permissions to offer financial arrangements that can have devastating effects on the land and local community harmony and spirit.

The worldview of Aboriginal people has much to offer the broader understanding of economics. The contemporary view of economics described as the quadruple bottom line aligns more readily to the Aboriginal standpoint than the common focus on financial profitability; with profits being a proxy for prosperity. The quadruple bottom line describes sustainable prosperity using four Ps¹⁰.

The four Ps:



People – Quality of Life:

Quality of life for people, e.g., health, vigour, wellbeing, flourishing and can also mean culture and spirituality or soul.



Profit – Competitive Productivity:

Competitive productivity in producing and distributing goods and services for consumption and profit with scarce resources.



Planet – Sustainable Ecosystems:

Individual, community, and ecosystems survival across lifespans and generations.



Progress – Adaptive Innovation:

Adaptive Innovation, e.g. adaptive learning and change; trial and error risk taking and discovery – in all aspects of people, profit, and planet, and innovations in being innovative.

Finding

The Aboriginal worldview has a wealth of knowledge and insight to offer Australian economic development and to respond to Aboriginal community needs. Supporting inclusion provides the opportunities for Aboriginal people and the broader economy. Aboriginal inclusion should be seen through a strengths-based lens.

Implication

Aboriginal inclusion can be accelerated when all parties change their world view to recognise strengths and Indigenous knowledge.

¹⁰ Adapted from: Beech Quadruple Bottom Line for Sustainable Prosperity Cambridge Leadership Development Ltd., 2013 – descriptions adapted from Social Enterprise Associates Quadruple Bottom Line Tip Sheet 13 where they also include the measure of culture, spirituality, and faith in reporting

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-operatives and mutuals

Chapter 3

3.1. Current role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operatives and Mutuals

3.2. Benefits of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operatives and Mutuals

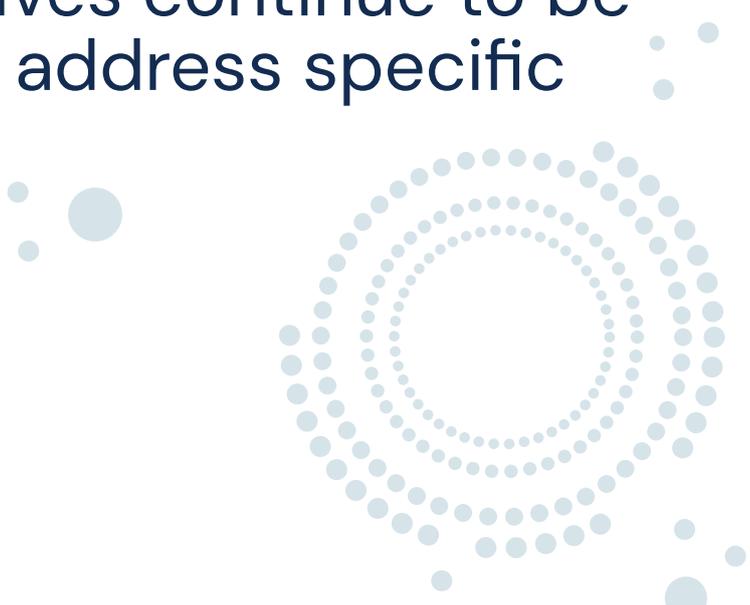
3.3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operatives: Issues and Challenges

3.4. History of Indigenous Co-operative in Australia

3.5. Opportunities: the Indigenous business – a “Sleeping Giant”

Recommendations

“These co-operatives continue to be well positioned to address specific local challenges.”



There is a well-established sector of at least 222 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and controlled co-operatives and mutuals with a combined turnover of \$1.63bn. Many of these co-operatives formed in the 1970s to provide community-controlled services that were previously either not available or delivered by governments.

An interviewee noted that in these CMEs:

“... services are delivered holistically and that these services are consistently viewed as culturally safe. Cultural safety aids these services to engage people who may otherwise be disengaged from vital services that impact of safety, health and wellbeing.”

By adopting CME structure, integrative services were achieved through an all-encompassing approach to serve community needs.

“ These co-operatives continue to be well positioned to address specific local challenges, such as local capability building and local self-determination.”

“ Co-operatives are also motivated to attract vital resources and necessary finances which provide opportunity for the developmental needs of the whole community. They have also helped to inform government departments, key organisations and other agencies on issues affecting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community’s aspirations.”

Appendix 6 provides detail of co-operative and mutual enterprises as identified by current records held by the BCCM in the first half of 2021, including a snapshot of size and distribution.

Finding

Aboriginal CMEs deliver diverse services responding to community needs with a focus on cultural, health and human services.

Implication

CMEs are focused on services in response to community needs, however other enterprises that are largely not dependent on government funding and are opportunity focused may need focused support to realise additional community benefits.



Health and medical services

Childcare and aged care services

Housing services

The major focus of these CMEs has been:

Community services



Arts and cultural services

Education and financial assistance



"We need to move more of our effort from focussing on the preconditions for reconciliation, to focussing on more substantive change."

Branka Krivokapic-Skoko's submission to the Senate Inquiry into co-operatives, mutuals and member owned firms in 2015 based on Morrison et al's report¹¹ provides the following key insights into the benefits and opportunities that can be realised through Indigenous CMEs:

1. Community-owned Indigenous enterprises and co-operatives are motivated to achieve income and opportunity not only for themselves, but for their community.
2. They generate significant social capital in their local communities (a contribution of Indigenous community owned and co-operative businesses entrepreneurship in Australia that is not sufficiently recognised and acknowledged).
3. Most Indigenous community-owned enterprises and co-operatives did not receive any support in establishing their business enterprise, though they were successful in subsequently applying for government support.
4. Indigenous enterprises (including co-operatives) in Australia are critical to the creation of jobs for Indigenous men and women in Australia. The community-owned and co-operative Indigenous enterprises surveyed predicted greater growth in Indigenous employment than did Indigenous private enterprises surveyed.
5. The majority of Indigenous enterprises surveyed demonstrate expansion across a range of business dimensions, but this is stronger in community-owned and co-operative Indigenous enterprises.
6. Indigenous community-owned and co-operative Indigenous enterprises tend to be satisfied or very satisfied with their experience as entrepreneurs.

Particular features of co-operatives and mutuals are that they encompass a business model that espouses self-development, self-governance and ownership as well as being community inclusive.

A number of Indigenous co-operatives including Tranby have been crucial in articulating Indigenous interests.

Karen Mundine's statement calls for "more substantive change" outlined in the call to action in this report:

"Reconciliation cannot just be about raising awareness and knowledge. The skills and knowledge gained should motivate us to 'braver' action. For reconciliation to be effective, it must involve truth-telling, and actively address issues of inequality, systemic racism and instances where the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are ignored, denied or reduced. That is, we need to move more of our effort from focussing on the preconditions for reconciliation, to focussing on more substantive change." (Karen Mundine in State of Reconciliation 2021; p4)

The potential of co-operatives and mutuals was reported by the organisations participating in the Reference Group and through broader consultations. It was observed that, **"the adoption of a co-operative business model and its principles, integrative services achieved positive business and community outcomes through an all-encompassing approach to serve community needs"**.

¹¹ Branka Krivokapic-Skoko Associate Professor Charles Sturt University Bathurst, 30 June 2015

Interviewees also suggested that co-operatives and mutuals:

Have significant potential for growth with resultant increase in economic participation

Are more likely to employ Indigenous people

Offer practical and effective solutions in response to local/community needs

Are more likely to contribute additional social, voluntary and benevolent benefits to the local community

Have the potential to contribute towards innovation and cultural change in health, community and social services (this offers significant economic and social benefits for Indigenous people and the broader Australian community)

CME models offer the promise of greater participation of Indigenous people in the economy, but on their own cultural terms. Although on the face of it CMEs seem to be a natural fit with First Nations values, it is vital to remember that it is simply one option when structuring a business. Informed choice on business structure is key.

Appendix 7 details additional pertinent research relating to Indigenous business that reinforces the findings in this section. A key statement in this research is the hierarchy motivation of Indigenous business leaders that identifies their first priority is to meet community needs compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts whose first priority is personal wealth creation.

Finding

Indigenous community-owned co-operatives are:

- Motivated to achieve income and opportunity not only for themselves, but for their community.
- Generate significant social capital as well as private capital.
- Act as tool for effective social empowerment and self-determination

There is an opportunity for significant growth in Indigenous-owned co-operatives and mutuals.

Implication

CME hold a unique set of principles around collectivism that are aligned to Indigenous cultural values, community needs and that also support the goals of self-determination and economic participation.

3.3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operatives: Issues and Challenges

Membership structures

Interviews raised the potential for new membership structures in Aboriginal CMEs:

“ Multi-stakeholder co-operatives are helpful and appropriate when there is a need to plan long-term for the needs of various stakeholders and the normal market relationship is leading to inefficient short-term investment horizons.”

Policy and legislation

Interviews also noted that policy and legislation has had a negative impact on the further development of established or new Aboriginal CMEs:

“ Legislative changes towards the corporate model (1984 CATSI Act) have hindered the use of co-operative models within Indigenous communities. There is also exclusion of Indigenous co-operatives from funding through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.”

Challenges

Broad challenges identified for Indigenous communities/businesses, including CMEs, included:

- **“Smallness of population”**
- **Traditional autonomies and boundaries (Native Title)**
- **Social and geographical isolation**
- **Difficulties of communication**
- **Mini societies**
- **Languages**

- **Cultural differences**
- **Impact of a technologically advanced world upon Aboriginal people has been, and continues to be, profound**
- **Economic vulnerability and domination by large corporations and government**
- **Inability to carry out mineral explorations**
- **Inability to develop basic infrastructure for industry**
- **Political and economic impotence**
- **Urbanisation**
- **Use of English for cross-cultural communication is a form or means of cultural domination**
- **Adoption of Western administrative: medical, legal, religious, commercial and educational institutions**
- **Protection of right: cultural, legal and languages, in an age of political, military, economic and highly institutionalised “super powers”, MNCs, and the mass media**
- **Feelings of powerlessness and of being unable to shape one’s own destinies**
- **Revaluation of “Business Success”: Beyond just profits.**

Finding

Indigenous co-operatives and organisations have significant knowledge to share regarding how to operationalise co-operatives, including the benefits of the model and challenges to be overcome.

Implication

Supporting and empowering Indigenous voices within the CME sector will result in the development of new and more effective solutions to support inclusion and self-determination.

3.4. History of Indigenous Co-operative in Australia

A contribution from Greg Patmore, Emeritus Professor of Business and Labour History

The earliest Indigenous co-operatives in Australia were established in the 1920s by Torres Strait Islanders engaged in the pearling trade and fishing, followed by striking Indigenous workers in the Pilbara in the late 1940s. As Figure 1 below highlights, which provides an analysis of trends in the Visual Historical Atlas of Australian Co-operatives based on a sample of 89 Indigenous co-operatives, there was a smaller wave of interest in Indigenous co-operatives in the 1950s, followed by an upsurge from the late 1960s, reaching peaks in 1981 and later in 2006. The data indicates that Indigenous co-operatives have a relatively long life span compared to Australian co-operatives, generally with an average of 27 years.

The 1950s interest in co-operatives is associated with the Anglican Reverend Alf Clint.¹³

He believed that co-operatives were an advantage to Indigenous people because they were non-exploitative and that the co-operatives reflected the lifestyle of Indigenous clans.¹⁴ Clint found sympathy for his ideas at the Anglican Australian Board of Missions (ABM). In 1952 the ABM adopted the co-operative model as the best way for Indigenous communities to progress. It found funds for

the implementation of Christian co-operatives and appointed Clint as an organiser. In 1953 the ABM established a Co-operative Department and from this emerged the ABM Christian Community Co-operative Ltd. This body became responsible for directing all church co-operative activity and eventually overrode the role of the Co-operative Department. Clint initially planned to begin his organising activities in the Indigenous reserves and camps of NSW, but at the insistence of the ABM Chair Archdeacon Robertson, he was directed to focus on ABM missions in North Queensland at Edward River, Mitchell River, Lockhart River, Yarrabah and Moa Island in the Torres Strait. Later he also became involved in the Cabbage Tree Island Aboriginal Reserve near Ballina in Northern NSW.¹⁵

While there were a number of initial successes, some of the co-operatives faced enormous difficulties, and enthusiasm within the ABM began to wane. In May 1962 the ABM abolished its Co-operative Department and the ABM Christian Community Co-operative Ltd. from December 1962 moved towards independence. It became known as the Co-operative for Aborigines Limited and took over the running of Tranby College, which had been established to provide training assistance for Indigenous co-operativists, where Clint remained involved until his death in 1982.

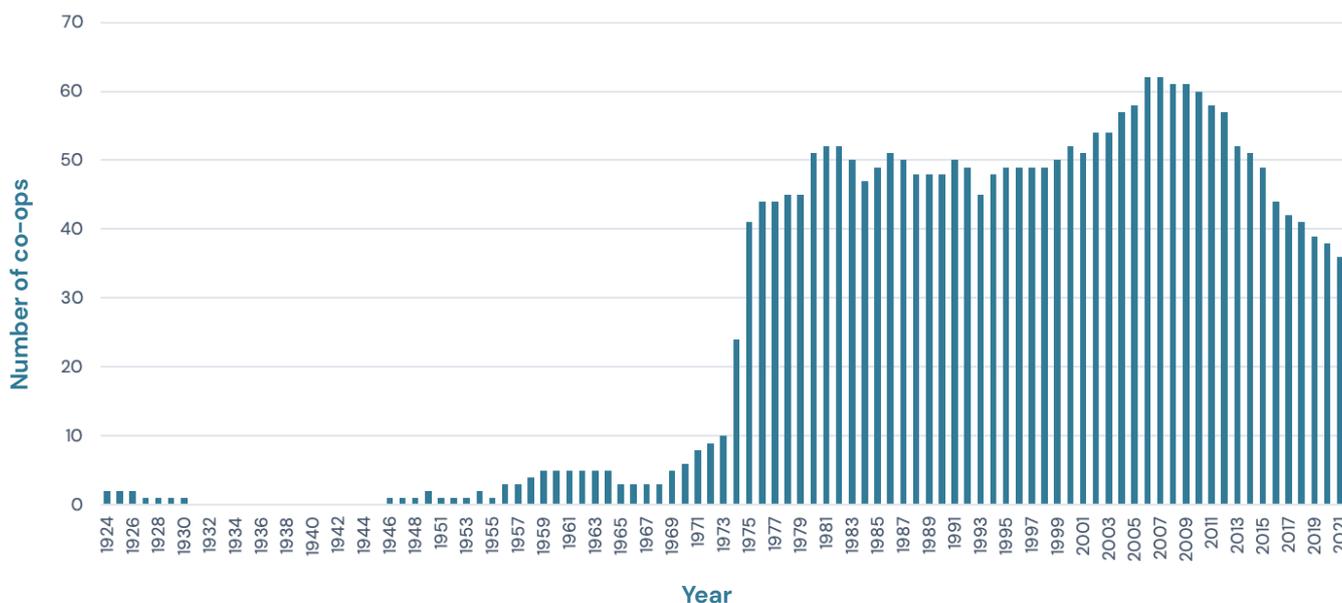


Figure 3 – Indigenous Co-operatives in Australia (Visual Historical Atlas of Australian Co-operatives – Version 23.0, September 2021¹²)

3.4. History of Indigenous Co-operative in Australia (cont.)

The last remaining link broke in 1968 when the Reverend Frank Coaldrake, chairman of the ABM, resigned from the Board of Directors of Co-operatives for Aboriginals Limited.¹⁶

The Indigenous co-operatives faced a number of economic, management and political challenges that placed barriers to the development of the movement. A major issue was the economic sustainability of remote communities. For Lockhart River, for example, the introduction of plastics led to the collapse of the trochus shell market. When they looked at mining, their efforts were undermined by the lack of legal ownership of the land by either Indigenous people or the mission, which was a basis of complaint for the emergence of the Indigenous land rights movement. One of the early activists associated with Clint was Eddie Mabo. While the movement established Tranby College in Sydney to redress training issues, there was a lack of skills in regard to basic management and accounting practices.¹⁷

The second wave emerges from the 1967 constitutional referendum, that transferred from the states to the federal government powers over Indigenous matters, and the subsequent federal funding of Indigenous communities. Indigenous co-operatives, whose services included

housing, health, cultural preservation and creating employment, grew dramatically. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service in Queensland during the 1970s, for example, encouraged Indigenous communities to form co-operatives to provide legal entities to manage the federal funding. Examples of long-standing Indigenous co-operatives include the Aboriginal Medical Service Co-operative, founded in Redfern, NSW in 1974, and the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency Co-operative, founded in Fitzroy, Victoria in 1976. Since 2006 the decline in Indigenous co-operatives can be linked to The Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, which encouraged Indigenous organisations, including co-operatives, to become corporations to receive federal government funding. This led some Indigenous co-operatives to become corporations and discouraged the formation of new co-operatives.

¹² The Visual Historical Atlas of Australian Co-operatives is a project being undertaken by Associate Professor Nikola Balnave (Macquarie University), Professor Olivera Marjanovic (UTS) and Emeritus Professor Greg Patmore (The University of Sydney) with received funding from funded by the Australian Research Council Discovery Scheme Grant DP170100573

¹³ Nikola Balnave and Greg Patmore, Aboriginal Co-operatives. The Role of Alf Clint, paper to presented to the 7th Annual AAHANZBS Conference, Auckland University of Technology, November 2015 available at <https://www.sydney.edu.au/content/dam/corporate/documents/business-school/research/research-groups/blhg/aahanzbs-2015-conference-program.pdf> accessed 19 July 2021.

¹⁴ E. Morris, "Clint, William Alfred (1906-1980)", Australian Dictionary of Biography, vol. 13, Melbourne University Press, 1993, pp. 444-445; N. Loos and R. Keast, "The Radical Promise: The Aboriginal Christian Co-operative Movement", Australian Historical Studies, vol. 25, no. 99, p. 290.

¹⁵ Loos and Keast, "The Radical Promise", p. 290.

¹⁶ Loos and Keast, "The Radical Promise", p. 290.

¹⁷ Balnave and Patmore, "Aboriginal Co-operatives"; Loos and Keast, 'The Radical Promise', p. 295.

The Indigenous business sector represents huge potential for the Australian economy.

Evidence suggests that the recent growth in Indigenous business has been influenced by a range of factors, including:

- Indigenous people seeking alternatives to traditional employment opportunities in order to provide for their families and communities
- Developing local businesses to deliver needed services within their local communities
- Increased access to government-funded programs that promote Indigenous economic development (E.g. Indigenous Business Australia and government procurement policies)
- The emergence of community-based mechanisms that promote Indigenous business development such as Supply Nation, Indigenous Chambers of Commerce, and the Global Corporate Network of Australia¹⁸

Another factor contributing to the growth of the sector is that Indigenous businesses have a competitive advantage over non-Indigenous businesses in a number of current and emerging industries. Examples cited by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) include cultural products (i.e. arts and recreation), agriculture, tourism and land and water management, as well as within emerging domestic and export markets for bush foods and bush medicine.¹⁹

The Indigenous business sector represents huge potential for the Australian economy. Citing the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs report *Open for Business: Developing Indigenous enterprises in Australia*

“For Indigenous businesses, the intrinsic knowledge contained within their unique cultures, and the immense opportunity associated with the use of Indigenous-owned and controlled lands, can be leveraged to contribute to commercial success”²⁰.

PwC Partner James van Smeerdijk states that: “Building private sector jobs and enterprise is one of the most strategic ways to close the gap in outcomes for the Indigenous community. Government, businesses and most importantly the Indigenous community itself all have roles to play in making this happen”²¹.

The PwC report states Indigenous businesses are more likely than non-Indigenous businesses to employ Indigenous workers and successful Indigenous businesses can create a “multiplier effect” that in itself can foster further economic development and wealth creation. Specifically, it can lead to a greater culture of employment and social contribution within Indigenous communities and foster an environment which supports further innovation and opportunity by inspiring the next generation of Indigenous business owners.

There is an opportunity for both established Indigenous CMEs and new Indigenous CMEs to play a role in the growth of Indigenous business. When a CME model is chosen, it has the potential to deliver the benefits outlined in 3.2.

Finding

Indigenous Business Sector is a “Sleeping Giant” with significant competitive advantage.

Implication

Co-operatives and mutual models more appropriately and accurately reflect Aboriginal values and collectivism.

¹⁸ M F Rola-Rubzen, ‘The Anatomy of the Australian Entrepreneur: Understanding micro, small and medium business entrepreneurs in Australia’, Ninti One Limited, 2011, p 36. At: http://www.nintione.com.au/resource/NintiOneReport_AnatomyoftheAustralianEntrepreneur.pdf

¹⁹ The contribution of the Indigenous business sector to Australia’s economy; PwC’s Indigenous Consulting, April 2018
²⁰ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, ‘Open for Business: Developing Indigenous enterprises in Australia’, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, p 20. At: http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=atsia/indigenousterprises/report.htm

²¹ <https://www.pwc.com.au/press-room/2018/strongly-growing-indigenous-business-sector.html>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: 'Let's Yarn'

'Let's Yarn' is proposed as a coordinated approach to drive the 'Visibility and Voice' of Indigenous co-operatives within the CME sector, and to increase recognition of the Indigenous CME business sector generally. Recommended actions:

1. BCCM to profile Indigenous CMES to the BCCM membership.
2. BCCM to coordinate an Aboriginal Voice within the BCCM network.
3. BCCM members to celebrate the work of their Indigenous CME members and their culture.

It is proposed that, as a first step, the BCCM coordinates a two day Aboriginal-only CME corroboree followed by a meeting open to all BCCM members, to discuss this recommendation.

Recommendation 2: Let's come together

A coordinated approach to drive the development of the Indigenous CME sector across Australia will promote inclusion of the Indigenous CME sector in economic life. It is imagined that this initiative will demonstrate CME leadership and impact across all business sectors. Inherent in this coordinated approach is the development and implementation of a CME sector Indigenous business strategy that would transparently include Indigenous procurement targets within CMEs supply chains, and include a focus on procurement from Indigenous CMEs. The BCCM's coordination activities should include: profiling the goods and services sought, procurement targets, and competitive considerations.

Recommendation 3: Shared voice

The recommendation is for the BCCM to advocate for an enabling environment for Indigenous CMEs. This may include seeking changes to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy or the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 – CATSI ACT. Per recommendations 1 and 2, advocacy should be informed by and include the Aboriginal Voice.

Recommendation 4: Learn from each other

The findings of the report identify the need for culturally informed business and governance education for Aboriginal people seeking to form or grow businesses, including information about CME business models. Current understanding is limited to receiving financial advice from third party business advisers whereby the cultural values of Aboriginal people are often not taken into consideration when choosing governance and business models. Key support activities the BCCM can initiate include:

- Development of an Indigenous-specific, culturally aware, CME business hub.
- Partner with Indigenous training organisation and industry partners to develop:
 - CME Indigenous-specific incubators for new CMEs that focus on a broader range of industries providing clear pathways for potential Indigenous CMEs and CMEs that are in the early stages of development.
 - CME Indigenous-specific incubators for small to medium Indigenous CMEs to build business and organisational capability, potentially in partnership with non-Aboriginal CMEs.

Recommendation 5:
Our story is powerful

The collection and publication of data on Indigenous business is low. The CME sector in Australia has the ability to collate and measure clear outcomes in relation to Indigenous CMEs and be a leader in Indigenous business intelligence in Australia. This could include further development of data collection and reporting in relation to Indigenous CMEs as part of the BCCM's National Mutual Economy report project.

Recommendation 6:
Our story comes
together in a
shared path

A shared path imagines BCCM member RAPs linked together in a way that forms a common BCCM RAP with clear measurable goals and an action plan for all BCCM members to participate in. To strengthen the potency of the BCCM's RAP, it is recommended that a toolkit is developed to share knowledge and facilitate the development of shared and clear inclusion indicators based on the CME principles.

Glossary and appendix

Chapter 4

Glossary

Appendix 1: Standpoint Theory

Appendix 2: Consultation Themes

Appendix 3: Legislative and Policy Timeline Summary

Appendix 4: RAP Summary

Appendix 5: RAP Mandatory Requirements for Endorsement

Appendix 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operative and Mutual Enterprises

Appendix 7: Additional research on Indigenous Enterprises

Glossary

ATSI – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

BCCM – Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals

CATSI – Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act) 2006

CME – Co-operative and Mutual Enterprise

RAP – Reconciliation Action Plan

Appendix 1

Standpoint Theory

Standpoint theory describes an approach used in the report and its conclusions that supports the reader to adopt an alternate worldview or lens.

Drawing on standpoint theory, the space and time in which the data collection for this project occurred is recognised as a multifaceted context. The cultural interface of interest is a “multi-dimensional space of dynamic relations constituted by intersections of time, place, distance, different systems of thought, competing and contesting discourses within and between different knowledge traditions, and different systems of social, economic and political organisation” (Nakata, 2007, p199).

The theory provides a framework to explore positional tension between competing narratives and values. Positionality describes the social-historical-political location of a researcher, which in this study would include Reference Group members as well as the lead researchers, and influences their orientations. In other words, those involved in a study of this nature are not separate from the social processes they study. The competing narratives and values introduce additional levels of complexity that must be articulated to ensure the issues are understood and recommendations lead to improved outcomes.

Complexity is apparent in the different lenses on economic inclusivity and associated values and tensions. The tension of competing narratives or truths was most obvious in considering the approaches of ‘Closing the Gap’ and Uluru Statement from the Heart and raised questions on what is meant by wealth, which is reflected in the tone of this report.

Appendix 2

Consultation Themes

The tables in this section detail consultation themes organised in the human design framework. For clarity, Indigenous organisation responses have a blue background, non-Indigenous responses have no shading, while themes shared by Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations have pink shading.

Responses:

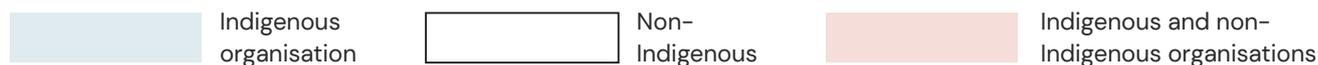


Table 1: Qualitative Research Findings

| Design Thinking | Theme |
|---|---|
| Empathise | Consultations demonstrate that these services are delivered holistically and that these services are consistently viewed as culturally safe. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of powerlessness and of being unable to shape one’s own destinies Revaluation of “Business Success”: Beyond profits. |
| | Protection of rights: cultural, legal and languages, in an age of political, military, economic and highly institutionalised “superpowers”, MNCs, and the mass media |
| | Adoption of Western administrative, medical, legal, religious, commercial and educational institutions that are not compatible with Cultural Values. |
| | Particular policies are a deterrent to growth limiting success e.g. Tranby, Toyota Cowboys |
| | Aboriginal people have been used to being isolated and pushed into the background; this is also re-setting their compasses as well to determine whether the COVID pandemic has allowed for any opportunities and build on these. |
| | It’s just not what the BCCM wants to achieve because it needs to be aligned with the vision of ‘Voice, Treaty and Truth’. This is Aboriginal peoples’ vision. It is the overall vision that related to self-determination and helping the Aboriginal peoples which is the best vehicle to help us get to our destination? |
| | The deficit is actually a question of “how do they feel like they can be a part of the economy” we don’t want to be a gap project. |
| | Different producers will have different wealth e.g. How do we distribute wealth equally amongst our business and communities? |
| | Where does the business community fit into this or how does the BCCM articulate our concerns to be genuine contributors to the business community? |
| | The RAP has a different role in non-Indigenous organisation, and it seems these are not working for some/with some of the community. Is this a weakness? |
| | Raps not addressing External Systemic Inclusion Concerns e.g. “What is your reconciliation plan externally to your company?” |
| | There is a lack of collective vision within the business sector of Australia. |
| When we talk about the market economy it often means that a few people get richer than others. Resources need to be distributed relatively. The co-operatives talk about improving community. The CME model offers a broader opportunity to the Australian economy in wealth creation for Indigenous communities. | |

Table 1: Qualitative Research Findings (cont.)

| Design Thinking | Theme |
|--|---|
| Define | Cultural safety aids these services to engage people who may otherwise disengaged from vital services that impact on safety, health and wellbeing. |
| Ranking 1 Immediate action using SWAT | <p>Weakness: The idea is not to critique ORIC or CATSI. Some people are aware of the shortcomings and how a lot of the organisations are almost being funnelled into being corporations.</p> <p>Weakness: Some organisations do not have to rely on ORIC as they cannot get the funding through this, and it is showing there are these other models that are almost set aside because of the policies we have in place currently.</p> |
| Ranking 1 | <p>Three Indigenous organisations highlighted the tension of being a co-operative and being an Indigenous organisation. They also highlighted a lot of the challenges they face and reasons why a co-operative organisation and that are Indigenous find it difficult to be able to get funding. They are not under CATSI Act as it does not incorporate co-operatives. One Organisation detailed how they rely on state funding rather than federal.</p> |
| Opportunity | <p>Multi-stakeholder co-operatives can help align the interests of otherwise competing stakeholders for example, producers and consumers.</p> <p>Multi-stakeholder co-operatives are helpful and appropriate when there is a need to plan long-term for the needs of various stakeholders and the normal market relationship is leading to inefficient short-term investment horizons.</p> <p>Note: Opportunity recognised by both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal although expressed differently</p> |
| Advocate | <p>Managing conflicting legislation as discussed in 2.2 e.g. Legislative changes towards the corporate model (1984 CATSI Act) have hindered progress of inclusivity co-operative models within Indigenous communities, for example, by exclusion of Indigenous co-operatives from funding through ORIC, and exclusion from funding for co-operatives because of being Indigenous led.</p> |
| Coincides with historical barriers | <p>When you go into this particular level, they sit under trusts and become beneficiaries of those trusts. However, the beneficiaries have no power. Therefore, that is up to the Trustee to determine what kind of programs can be implemented in your community. In those particular trustees delegate the authority such as land councils.</p> |
| Other collated challenges and weaknesses | <p>Challenges identified for Indigenous communities/businesses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smallness of population • Traditional autonomies and boundaries (Native Title) • Social and geographical isolation • Difficulties of communication • Mini societies • Languages • Cultural differences • Impact of technologically advanced world upon Aboriginal people has been, and continues to be, profound • Economic vulnerability and domination by MNCs or Transnationals corp. and government • Inability to carry out mineral explorations • Inability to develop basic infrastructure for industry • Political and economic impotence • Urbanisation • Use of English for cross-cultural communication is a form or means of cultural domination |

Table 1: Qualitative Research Findings (cont.)

| Design Thinking | Theme |
|-----------------------|---|
| Big opportunity | It was observed that the adoption of a co-operative business model and its principles, integrative services achieved positive business and community outcomes through “an all-encompassing approach to serve community needs”. |
| Opportunity | Co-operatives are also motivated to attract vital resources and necessary finances which provide opportunity for the developmental needs of the whole community. Co-operatives and mutuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have significant potential for growth with resultant increase in economic participation • Are more likely to employ Indigenous people • Offer practical and effective solutions in response to local/community needs • Are more likely to contribute additional social, voluntary and benevolent benefits to the local community • Have the potential to contribute towards innovation and cultural change in health, community and social services (this offers significant economic and social benefits for Indigenous people and the broader Australian community). |
| Ideate BCCM challenge | Part of BCCM’s role is to show that there are pathways which are more aligned with their values and putting on Indigenous lenses on to the principles of co-operatives. They will see more alignment between those Aboriginal and co-operative values. |
| Strength | Co-operatives operating continue to be well-positioned to address specific local challenges, such as local capability building and local self-determination. |
| Opportunity | Co-operatives have a huge potential for communities compared to Trusts. |
| Opportunity | There are some business leaders in the cooperative movement to engage them in those ideas within their associations which can be helpful. The co-operative model or business leaders are acutely aware of these issues and challenges. They may even have solutions that we have not thought of. |
| Opportunity | With brave and accountable actions and the willingness of the CME sector to build organisational capability, important forward steps can be taken. |

Prototype opportunities by respondents are detailed in the following table.

Table 2: Prototype

| Design Thinking | Theme |
|----------------------|---|
| Prototype | Trying to apply the 5% representation target for Australian Unity which is probably higher than other organisations’ targets. |
| Change the landscape | CATSI Act means they cannot identify as Aboriginal organisation because of the actual Act but where the recommendations pick that up – one of the clearest things that the BCCM can do is make sure that co-ops meet the CATSI Act. |
| Education | If Aboriginal Community understood CME Principles, alongside Business acumen, they would potentially move away from Sole Trades and Trustee models. Within this context a toolkit should be developed. |

Appendix 3

Legislative and Policy Timeline Summary

Table 3: Legislative timeline summary

| Name | Strategic Focus and Framework | Notes |
|--|---|--|
| Constitution Alteration (Aboriginals) 1967 | Amended section 51xxvi and repealed section 127. | Passed by Parliament 10 August 1967; followed national referendum 27 May 1967. Gave the Federal Government the power to make laws for Indigenous Australians in states and included all Indigenous Australians in the population for constitutional purposes. |
| Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 (ACA Act). | | This was changed to ORIC. |
| Office of Registrar of Aboriginal Organisations. Established 1977. | Allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to form corporations. | |
| Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (ALRA) | Land is vested in representative land councils that work to deliver tangible economic, social and cultural benefits to Aboriginal communities in NSW. | |
| Native Title Act 1993 (NTA) | To provide a national system for the recognition and protection of native title and for its co-existence with the national land management system. | |
| National Native Title Tribunal 1994 | Providing for the recognition and protection of native title; establishing a mechanism for determining claims to native title; an establishing ways in which future dealings affecting native title (future acts) may proceed. | |
| Reconciliation Australia Established 2001 | | Reconciliation Action Plan Program launched 25 July 2006. |
| Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006. (CATSI) | Establishes the role of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations and allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to form corporations. This means corporations will always be owned and controlled by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. | The CATSI Act was passed by the Australian Parliament in October 2006. It began on 1 July 2007, replacing the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 (ACA Act). |

Table 3: Legislative timeline summary (cont.)

| Name | Strategic Focus and Framework | Notes |
|--|---|---|
| United Nations Declaration of the Rights of indigenous Peoples. 2007 | See articles: 3, 23 and 24 | Article 3 refers to the right of First Peoples to self – determination, to freely determine and pursue their form of economic, social and cultural development. |
| Office of Registrar of Aboriginal Organisations renamed as ORIC. | | Legislative changes towards the corporate model (1984 →CATSI Act) have hindered progress of inclusivity and diversity through co-operative models within Indigenous communities, for example, by exclusion of indigenous co-operatives from funding through ORIC, and exclusion from funding for co-operatives because of being indigenous led. |
| OCHRE 2013 | Opportunity. Choice. Healing. Responsibility. Empowerment | http://www.nntt.gov.au Choice Responsibility Empowerment |
| Statement from The Heart 2017 | Voice, Treaty, Truth | |
| Transforming Relationships 2018 – 2023 | Return of public lands to Aboriginal control/ownership. Recovery of Aboriginal languages. The cultural capability of NSW public servants. | https://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/research-and-evaluation/Research-Agenda-2018-2023-web.pdf Economic Prosperity. |
| National Coalition of Peaks 2020 | Closing the Gap | |

Appendix 4

RAP Summary

Table 4: RAP Summary

| Organisation | Sector | RAP | Practices Approach Focus – all underpinned by principles of relationship, respect, opportunity and governance. |
|------------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| Australian Unity | Health and wellbeing | RAP launched in 2016 (RAP 18-20) | Underpinned by principles of relationships, respect, opportunity and governance, the RAP sets out actions across the business in employment, learning and development, business development, products and services, events and communications, governance and representation. |
| The NRMA | Motoring, tourism, transport | RAP (July 2019 – 2022) “Stretch” | Aims to deepen connections between the NRMA and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, mutual learning and respectful understanding of cultures and local regions, celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and creating opportunities to address social and economic disparities. Actions focus on employment and training, cultural competency, Australian tourism and supplier diversity. |
| Bank Australia | Banking | RAP (July 2018–June 2021) “Stretch” | <p>The RAP contains objectives to increase the economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to embed reconciliation into every aspect of the business. In developing the RAP key themes were highlighted which bring together the large number of actions.</p> <p>These themes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff engagement • Community support • Customer and partner engagement • Financial inclusion and employment • Connecting to country • Reporting and governance. |
| RAC WA | Motoring, tourism, insurance | Stretch RAP commencing 2020 | The RAP sits within the commitment of RAC WA to inclusivity. An Inclusion Council assesses the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy with the key focus areas of enabling all abilities, gender equity and reconciliation. |

Appendix 5

RAP Mandatory Requirements for Endorsement

The following table details Reconciliation Australia's²² minimum requirements for a RAP to be endorsed.

Table 5: RAP Mandatory requirements for endorsement

| Mandatory RAP Working Group requirements for RAP endorsement | |
|--|---|
| Reflect | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optional to establish a RAP Working Group to oversee development of the RAP.• Must commit to establishing a RWG as an action within the RAP. |
| Innovate | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must establish or have an existing RWG to oversee development of the RAP.• Must demonstrate how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented.• Must commit to identifying a RAP Champion/s as an action within the RAP.• Must commit to meet <u>at least</u> four times per year as an action within the RAP.• Must commit to develop a Terms of Reference as an action within the RAP. |
| Stretch and Elevate | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must have an existing RWG to oversee development of the RAP• Must demonstrate how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented.• Must have an identified RAP Champion/s from senior management.• Must have representation from senior management across different areas of the organisation.• Must commit to meeting <u>at least</u> four times per year as an action within the RAP.• Must commit to reviewing and maintaining a Terms of Reference as an action within the RAP. |

²² www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans/

Appendix 6

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-operative and Mutual Enterprises

Table 6: Aboriginal led Co-operative and Mutual Enterprises (CMEs) in Australia²³

| Description | Number |
|---|---------|
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CMEs: | 224 |
| Incorporated as co-operatives: | 83 |
| State breakdown: | |
| ACT: | 2 |
| NSW: | 66 |
| NT: | 27 |
| QLD: | 55 |
| SA: | 12 |
| TAS: | 1 |
| VIC: | 41 |
| WA: | 20 |
| Other metrics: | |
| Total turnover: | \$1.63b |
| Total assets: | \$1.75b |
| Total equity: | \$1.31b |
| Membership: | 22,000 |
| Direct employment: | 12,468 |

Source: BCCM, 2020

²³ Based on data collected by the BCCM as of the first half of 2021

Appendix 7

Additional research on Indigenous Enterprises

In 2014 Morrison et al undertook a comprehensive research study: 'Determining the factors influencing the success of private and community-owned Indigenous businesses across remote, regional and urban Australia relating to Indigenous businesses'. Research included interviews with 324 Indigenous entrepreneurs in private (n=263), community (n=51) and co-operative (n=10) enterprises in urban, regional and remote areas of all states and territories of Australia apart from Tasmania. The comprehensive nature of the report and the findings provide important evidence relevant to this study. Key elements of the report have been reproduced in this section along with a similarly influential report 'The contribution of the Indigenous business sector to Australia's economy', PwC Indigenous Consulting April 2018.

Relevant findings from Morrison et al with some additional discussion from authors of this report are:

1. Business types are diverse as detailed in table 2. The table also details the gender differences within each sector.
2. Community and co-operative businesses are also developing well in terms of increasing employment, opening additional offices/outlets and purchasing new equipment (although their sales and profit growth is less than for private firms).
3. Community and co-operative businesses were also found to make substantive non-financial contributions to their communities, and more so than privately-owned businesses. Table 3 details the positive impact of all Indigenous enterprises and the stronger benefits to communities provided by community owned co-operatives.
4. Uneven growth was identified across locations. Remote, and to a lesser extent regional areas, found a greater proportion of community-owned businesses and co-operatives who experienced growth. However in urban areas where there was a much higher proportion of privately-owned firms who are experiencing higher profit growth.
5. Female entrepreneurs face particular challenges in developing their businesses, yet they were found to be critical for achieving employment for Indigenous females.

Table 7: Community Contributions – Indigenous Enterprises

| Community Contributions | Privately Owned | Community Owned | Co-operative |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Volunteer time to be involved in local community events or activities not related to their business | 61% | 61% | 90% |
| Been on management or organising committee | 12% | 19% | 17% |
| Sponsor local sport teams or cultural events | 54% | 55% | 70% |
| Provide discounted/free goods or services to Community Groups or Events: | | | |
| Occasionally | 36% | 20% | 0% |
| Frequently | 36% | 57% | 80% |
| Provide advice and support not paid for: | | | |
| Occasionally | 22% | 20% | 10% |
| Frequently | 56% | 69% | 80% |
| Seek to employ Indigenous People | 62% | 94% | 100% |
| Give percentage of profits to community organisations and initiatives | 17% | 49% | 40% |
| Act as positive role model for young people in community | 89% | 92% | 90% |

Source: Morrison et al 2014 'Determining the factors influencing the success of private and community-owned Indigenous businesses across remote, regional and urban Australia'

Motivation of Businesses: non-Indigenous and Indigenous specific

PwC provided the following insights from their report 'The contribution of the Indigenous business sector to Australia's economy'; "In addition to being more likely than non-Indigenous businesses to employ Indigenous workers, the creation of successful Indigenous businesses can create a 'multiplier effect' that in itself can foster further economic development and wealth creation. Specifically, it can lead to a greater culture of employment and social contribution within Indigenous communities and foster an environment which supports further innovation and opportunity by inspiring the next generation of Indigenous business owners". The report demonstrates that the motivation of the proponents of the Indigenous enterprise is a powerful factor leading to the outcomes discussed in their report. The table demonstrates a completely inverse motivation of Indigenous businesses to those of non-Indigenous enterprises.

Table 8: Comparison of the non-Indigenous and Indigenous specific motivations (by rank) for starting a business

| Questions | Non-Indigenous business | Indigenous specific business |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| To improve my income | 1 | 4 |
| To become my own boss | 2 | |
| To improve my lifestyle | 3 | 3 |
| To become wealthy | 4 | |
| To create employment for myself or my family members | 5 | 2 |
| To contribute to my community by increasing employment opportunities | | 2 |
| To contribute to my community by providing a needed service | | 1 |

Source: PwC's Indigenous Consulting: The contribution of the Indigenous business sector to Australia's economy – page 10, April 2018

*Business Council of
Co-operatives and Mutuals*

BOOM

THIS IS SOCIAL BUSINESS