



Conversation
Series

...with Brian Gleeson

Coordinator General
Remote Indigenous Services



@ipaawa #BrianGleeson





Australian Government

**Office of the Coordinator General
for Remote Indigenous Services**

What progress has been made in Indigenous Remote Service Delivery?

Presentation to IPAA WA

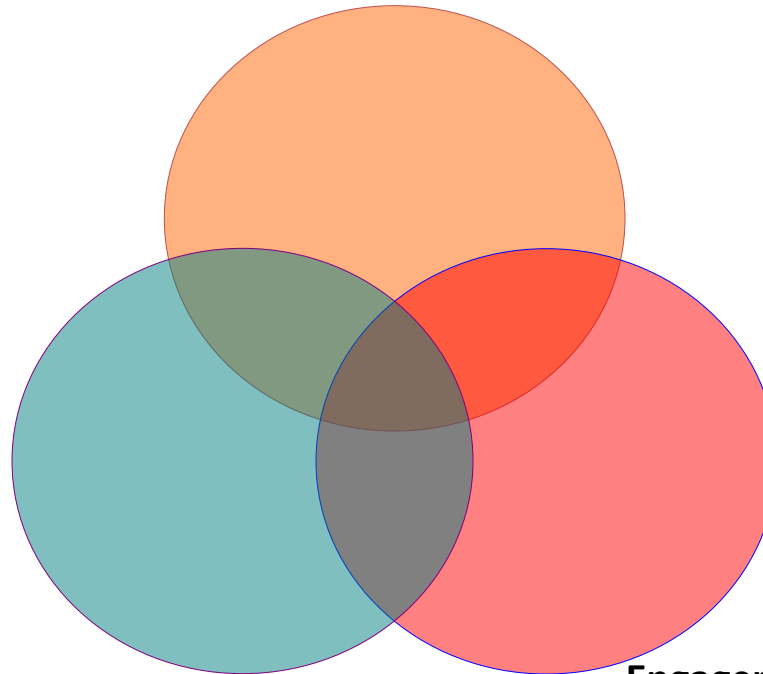
Brian Gleeson

Coordinator General for Remote Indigenous Services

24 November 2011

Closing the Gap

A COAG initiative – targets & building blocks



Accountability

*e.g. the Office of the Coordinator General
for Remote Service Delivery
Monitoring and Reporting*

Engagement and partnerships - A new way of working?

*e.g. Remote Service Delivery,
Cape York Welfare Reform Trial,
National Partnership Agreements,
National Indigenous Reform Agreements*

RSD Priority Communities



Improved engagement ... Better service systems ... Stronger communities

Governments working differently by themselves and together

looking at places rather than programs and levels of government

e.g. 29 priority remote communities, Jurisdictional Boards of Management

Governments and communities working differently together

a proper partnership with joint decisions about what will be done and how is done

e.g. Single Government Interface, Local Reference Groups

Communities working differently

being properly informed, making decisions, holding governments and service providers accountable

e.g. Local Implementation Plans, baseline mapping, performance indicators

What is it based on?

- spatial approaches – place based
- social capital and community strengthening– developing community capacity for community driven development
- social inclusion – addressing complex and entrenched disadvantage holistically
- Indigenous reform initiatives – COAG trials, ICC model, Regional Partnership Agreements, Cape York Welfare Reform trials



As my friend Fred Chaney says, we have to get rid of the "start again" syndrome that has a lot to do with politics and nothing to do with evidence. We have to see the points of light all round us and join them up.

Mick Dodson

Speech to the National Press Club, February 18, 2009

- solid policy framework incorporating high level commitment through formalised **partnerships across all governments**, funding, strong principles and parameters and a long term commitment
- explicitly **place based approach** with government staff located within each community and Local Implementation Plans allowing for holistic and integrated approaches to address the multiple challenges facing the communities
- greater recognition that new ways of working are required, including **enhanced engagement and ownership by communities** in developing the agenda of change and hence recognition of the need to support community capacity development

The Office of the Coordinator General for Remote Indigenous Services

Statutory officer established under the ***Coordinator General for Remote Indigenous Services Act 2009***:

- key element of the new model
- independent
- drive reform
- accountability and reporting



“we need to convince communities that this is a new way of working and not just a new way of describing what we have always done”

CGRIS second six monthly report

- oversee the implementation of the RSD partnership
- formally report twice a year on progress, and ensure that all government agencies are held accountable for their implementation responsibilities
- have the authority to work across agencies to cut through red tape and bureaucratic blockages and to make sure services are delivered effectively
- work with the whole of government Regional Operations Centres established to coordinate services in communities and the single government contact points located within the priority communities

Six Monthly Reports

- **twice a year**, the Coordinator General formally **reports** to the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs
- the report ensures that **all government agencies** are held **accountable** for their implementation responsibilities
- reports have been released in November 2009, September 2010, March 2011 and September 2011



- broad architecture is in place – single government interface, machinery
- local Implementation Plans set out government and community aspirations
- some evidence of communities taking the lead
- some shifts in ways of working within governments

- the two way governance and capacity gap – governments and communities
- need to challenge existing mindsets and behaviours – embrace new ways of working
- attention to relationships and enhanced engagement – community driven development
- recognise where structural change is required – especially funding and land reform

- government under-investment and policy churn has contributed to the tenuous state of governance in many communities
- strong well-governed Indigenous communities and organisations are key to real success in achieving long lasting change on the ground
- government capacity plays a critical role in building legitimate Indigenous governance
- role and sustainability of Local Government challenging in most jurisdictions

- strong leadership and locally accepted representation systems are critical to mobilising community participation and sustaining effective governance
- genuine power to make decisions is required at the local level, which implies acceptance of local responsibility for local decisions
- credible decision making must be backed up by the reliable resources and capacity to enforce the implementation of decisions

- communicate and engage with all stakeholders, in particular Indigenous community organisations and individuals
- assess a situation and define a vision and mandate
- formulate strategies and play a central role in brokering whole of government policy solutions to match local circumstances
- budget, manage and implement strategies in partnership with communities
- evaluate, monitor and report progress and have the scope to adapt to changing circumstances

(There are) ... three interdependent foundations to Indigenous disadvantage: poor economic and social incentives; underdevelopment of human capability; and an absence of effective engagement of Indigenous Australians in the design of policy frameworks that might improve those incentives and capabilities

Henry, Ken 2007. *Creating the Right Incentives for Indigenous Development*
Address to the Cape York Institute Conference *Strong Foundations –
Rebuilding Social Norms in Indigenous Communities*, Cairns 26 June 2007

Alcohol restrictions Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek

- impacts of alcohol consumption included high levels of foetal alcohol syndrome, clear links between alcohol use and the high levels of suicide in the Kimberley since 2000, and extreme levels of domestic violence
- restrictions were put in place in Fitzroy Crossing in 2007 and Halls Creek in 2009 - basically, the only takeaway alcohol sold is light beer
- the restrictions were community generated and have resulted in significant reductions in violence, crime and injury and an increase in birth weights
- need also to pay attention to demand (not just supply)

“our prime objective was to create an environment of peace and order from where we could plan strategically and put in place the building blocks for our social recovery. ... (w)hat we have achieved so far could never have been done by government acting along. The leadership had to come from the community. we had to OWN our problems and create the pathway for recovery.

June Carter at the launch of the documentary Yajilarra, Parliament House 18 August 2009

Community approach to Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

- community leaders in the Fitzroy Valley worked with researchers to consult around the issue of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- the Lililwan Project has two stages:
 - first stage identifies children with the disorder and trials allied health therapies
 - second stage involves a multi-disciplinary assessment of the health and development of the children surveyed in Stage 1
- widespread community support – 95% of families with children aged seven and eight years old agreed to participate in the study
- report due for release in 2013

In the Fitzroy Valley, Aboriginal parents have summoned the courage to look their own children in their eyes, to name the issue and take responsibility and to work towards a better future. This takes immense courage and I truly recognise that.

June Oscar, Nulungu Reconciliation Lecture, August 2011

Community safety in Ardyaloon

- Alcohol and Drug Management Plan was developed by community representatives, service providers and agencies
- training for residents to encourage family and friends to access appropriate professional support for substance misuse
- need for an upgrade of recreational facilities to be used for diversionary activities for youth at risk:
 - upgrade of the Ardyaloon oval
 - Community Hall Renovated, including commercial grade kitchen
 - Djarindjin Basketball Courts in the process of being upgraded
- a community survey to be conducted on the recreational needs of the community

Summary – government's role is to

- create an environment where communities can improve their own circumstances
- empower communities in their efforts to solve their own problems
- respond to priorities that lead to sustainable outcomes
- support capacity building efforts
- provide ongoing support and investment to meet community priorities

Insanity : doing the same thing and expecting a different result

Albert Einstein

Questions?



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