

Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage

Key Indicators 2014

Fact Sheet #3



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women

The Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage (OID) report measures the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

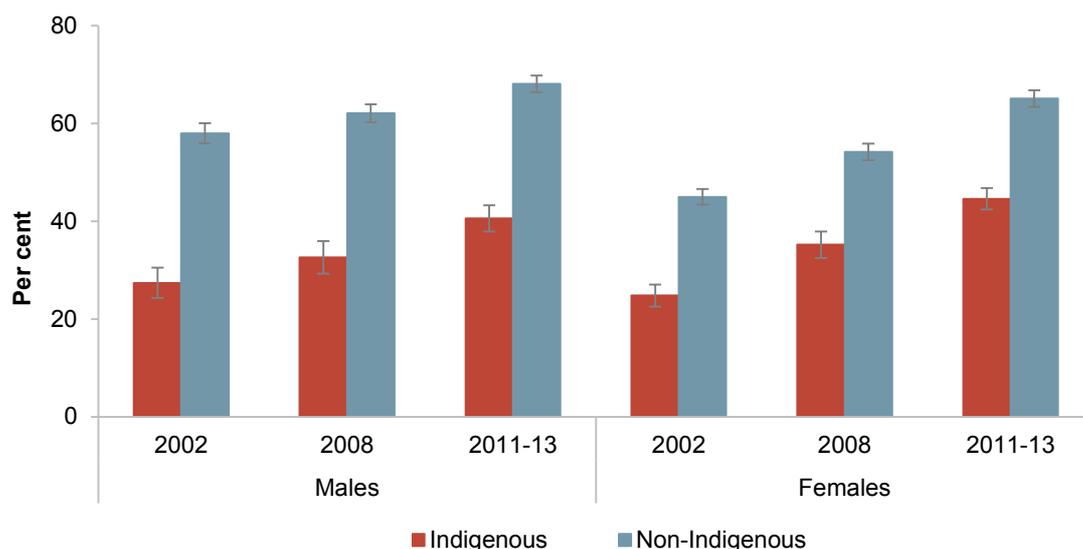
This fact sheet includes selected measures from the strategic framework of indicators in the OID report where data are available and reported by sex and where there are notable differences between men and women. Similar to the total population, approximately half of the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander population were females and half were males.

Education and training

A greater proportion of females with a Certificate III or studying

In 2011–13, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–64 years, 45 per cent of females and 41 per cent of males had a Certificate III or higher or were studying — an increase for both females and males from 2002. For the non-Indigenous population males have slightly higher rates than females (68 per cent compared to 65 per cent).

Proportion of 20–64 year olds with a post school qualification of Certificate level III or above or studying



Females have greater success in higher education

For both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students, females had greater higher education success rates than male students across all years (2001 to 2012).

In 2012, the higher education success rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female students was 74 per cent compared to 70 per cent for males.

2014

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Employment and Income

More males in the labour force and in employment

In 2012-13, for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population aged 15–64 years:

- 68 per cent of males were in the labour force compared to 53 per cent of females. This gap was similar for non-Indigenous Australians in 2011-12, though with higher rates (86 per cent for males compared to 74 per cent for females)
- 53 per cent of males were employed compared to 42 per cent of females. This gap was similar for non-Indigenous Australians in 2011-12, though with higher rates (82 per cent for males compared to 71 per cent for females).

Males had higher incomes

In 2012-13, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 18–64 years, median personal incomes were higher for males than females across all age categories (except for the 18–24 years age group).

Median personal incomes for non-Indigenous people were consistently higher than for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and followed the same trend with higher incomes for males than females across all age categories.

Life expectancy and healthy lives

Females live longer than males

From 2005–2007 to 2010–2012, life expectancy at birth for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians increased from 67.5 years to 69.1 years for males and from 73.1 years to 73.7 years for females. Life expectancy for non-Indigenous Australians is higher but the gap has narrowed since 2005–2007 for both males and females.

Higher rates of avoidable death and suicide for males

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males had higher rates of avoidable mortality than females across all age categories (except for the 1–4 year age group), with the rates for males aged 15–24 and 25–34 years more than twice the rates for females of the same ages.

For 2008–2012, the rate of deaths from suicide was higher for males than for females for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (2.9 times as high) and non-Indigenous Australians (3.4 times as high).

Females more likely to be obese

In 2012-13, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians similar rates of males and females (around 70 per cent) were considered to be overweight or obese (also similar for non-Indigenous males — non-Indigenous females had a lower rate). Rates of overweight were higher for males (32 per cent) than females (27 per cent), but rates of obesity were higher for females (43 per cent) than for males (36 per cent).

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Imprisonment, detention and victims of assault

Higher rates of imprisonment for males but rates for females growing faster

As at 30 June 2013:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults were imprisoned at 13 times the rate for non-Indigenous adults
- for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults, the imprisonment rate for males was more than 10 times the rate for females
 - though from a lower base, the female imprisonment rate was growing faster (a 74 per cent increase since 2000, compared with a 39 per cent increase for males)
 - the male imprisonment rate has slowed in recent years (a 6 per cent increase since 2008).

More males in youth detention and community based supervision

In 2012-13, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth aged 10–17 years, there was a daily average of:

- 1975 youth supervised in the community (1557 males and 419 females), compared with 2506 non-Indigenous youth (2056 males and 449 females). The number of males was between 3 and 5 times the number of females.
- 454 youth in detention (409 males and 47 females), compared with 329 non-Indigenous youth (294 males and 35 females). The number of males was more than 8 times the number of females.

Women experience physical assault and sexual assault at higher rates

Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous women experience physical assault and sexual assault at higher rates than men.

In 2013, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous women (in NSW, SA and the NT) reported violence by a current or previous partner at between 1.7 and 6.7 times the rate for men, and reported sexual assault at between 3.3 and 7.8 times the rate for men.

In 2011-12, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, a domestic altercation was the motive for 83 per cent of female homicides and 23 per cent of male homicides.

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Things that work – case studies

The OID report includes case studies of programs that are making a difference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Some of the case studies relating specifically to men or women or initiated by women are summarised below. The main report includes more detailed information.

The Alice Springs Domestic and Family Violence Outreach Service (NT)

- The service provides targeted support to women experiencing domestic and family violence. Their annual report noted that in 2012-13, almost 400 women were assisted, with around 80 per cent identified as Aboriginal.
- A 2012-13 evaluation found that all of the 19 women interviewed reported their safety had improved. Almost half of the women who had previously used the crisis accommodation services had not used crisis accommodation since receiving outreach services.

The NPY Women's Council

- The Council (2012 Indigenous Governance Awards Winner — incorporated organisations) is a major provider of human services in the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara lands.
- The Council's accomplishments include banning take-away alcohol sales at Curtin Springs roadhouse and the introduction of non-sniffable Opal fuel in Central Australia.

The Fitzroy Crossing Liquor Restriction (Kimberley region, WA)

- Following representations from local women, in 2007 the WA Director of Liquor Licensing imposed restrictions on the supply of alcohol into the community.
- A 2008–2009 independent evaluation by the University of Notre Dame involving interviews (with 184 people) and analysis of police data found positive effects on domestic violence, public violence and antisocial behaviour, and an increase in families purchasing food and clothes.

Coonamble Sports Mentoring Program (North-west NSW)

- The program aims to teach life skills to 12–18 year old males, through sports-based mentoring by adults at local sporting clubs.
- Although the program is small scale, and has not yet been independently evaluated, a 2009 review found that, in the first year of the project, the 15 participants showed 'increased social, emotional and relationship development' and 'skills and motivation to achieve their goals'. Reports from school coordinators in the following year stated that 14 participants either remained in school or gained employment in the following year, 'a figure previously unheard of in this area'.

This fact sheet summarises information about a selection of indicators from the OID report. The overview and main report include more detailed information.

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