

# Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators — questionnaire

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## *Attachments*

- Framework for reporting on Indigenous disadvantage

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## What is this questionnaire about?

This questionnaire seeks your response to specific issues where suggestions for changes to the indicator framework have been made in previous consultations.

This questionnaire supplements the more general Request for Comment document, which you should also have a copy of.

We are also happy to receive your comments on other indicators.

You may find it useful to refer to the Overview of the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2005 while answering these questions. The main Report and Overview can be found on the Review website at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp>. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact the Secretariat on (03) 9653 2100 or email [gsp@pc.gov.au](mailto:gsp@pc.gov.au)

## Some points to keep in mind

The key task of the Report is to publish indicators that are relevant to both governments and Indigenous stakeholders, and that can demonstrate the impact of programme and policy interventions. Whilst there are potentially dozens of indicators, the Report is deliberately limited to a few significant indicators that best tell the story of what is happening across Australia.

When first selected, the strategic change indicators<sup>1</sup> in the framework had to satisfy a set of criteria. Any proposed changes would still need to substantially satisfy these criteria.

### Selection criteria for strategic change indicators

- Relevance to priority outcomes (*see the circles at the top of the framework*)
- Actions in the strategic areas for action should result in positive outcomes
- Meaningful to stakeholders and principally to the Indigenous community
- Sensitive to policy interventions and changes in policy settings
- Supported by strong logic or empirical evidence
- Unambiguous and clear in meaning and interpretation
- The existence of, or ease of developing, supporting data sets

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<sup>1</sup> But not the headline indicators.

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The strategic change indicators were chosen to target those areas where actions were likely to have the most impact in the short and long term on reducing Indigenous disadvantage. In considering changes to indicators, or potential new indicators, it is important to keep this goal in mind.

## **Usefulness of the Report**

For the Report to remain relevant to both governments and Indigenous stakeholders it needs to be easily understood by both audiences. The Report should clearly identify the issues and key messages.

### *Questions*

1. How useful do you find the three main parts of the Report:
  - ... the Overview
  - ... the main Report
  - ... the supporting tables (available electronically on the Review website [www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp))
2. How would you rate the clarity and overall readability of the Overview and the main Report and how could it be improved?
3. Is the analysis sufficiently thorough and comprehensive?
4. How could the Report's usefulness be improved?

## **Things that work**

Data are not available for all areas of the framework, and individual success stories don't always show up in aggregate data. Case studies, often under the heading, 'Things that work', were included in the 2005 Report to promote positive outcomes and let others learn from successful initiatives. They illustrate how things can change for the better.

Some common themes in things that work include:

- cooperative approaches between Indigenous people and government and/or private sector
- community involvement in program design and decision-making
- good governance

- on-going government support.

### Questions

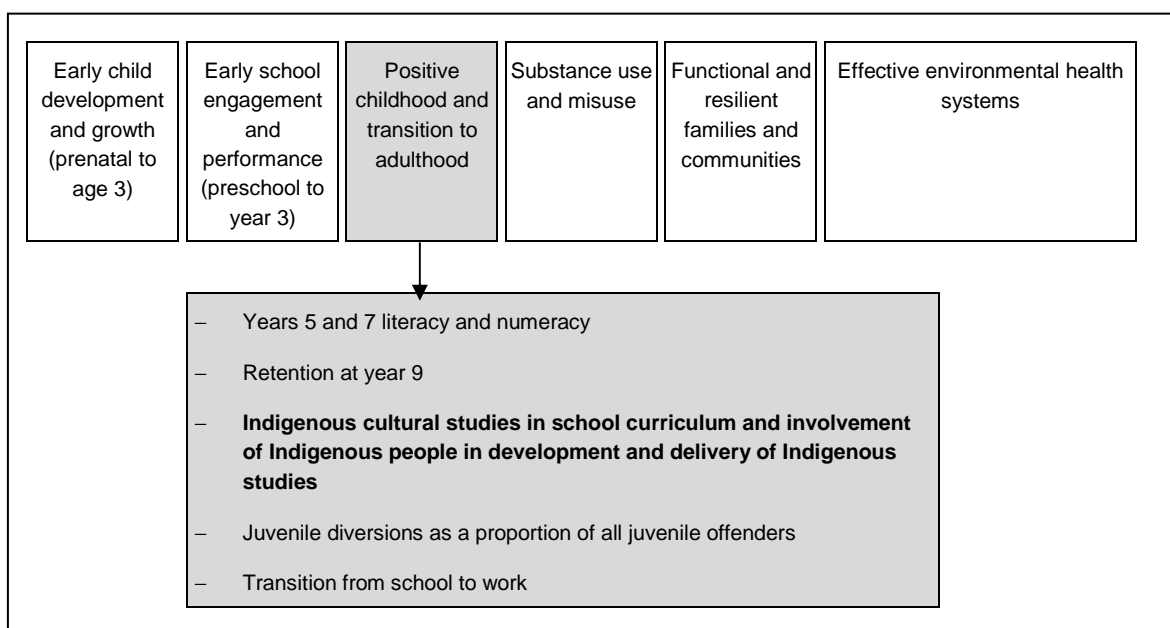
1. Are case studies and ‘things that work’ a useful part of the report?
2. If you are aware of potential case studies relevant to indicators in the Report please let us know. Consistent with the outcomes focus of the Report, case studies and examples should have achieved some measurable success or positive outcomes for Indigenous people.

### Cultural indicators

Several indicators that relate to Indigenous culture are spread across the framework. During the course of previous consultations, Indigenous people expressed many ideas about how the cultural indicators could be improved. Listed below are the cultural indicators in the Report with questions that arose out of the consultations.

#### ***Indigenous cultural studies in school curriculum and involvement of Indigenous people in development and delivery of Indigenous studies.***

This indicator is in the ‘Positive childhood and transition to adulthood’ strategic area for action (see diagram).



The absence of a culturally appropriate curriculum which is relevant to Indigenous people has been identified as one of the reasons some Indigenous children lack self

esteem, and are not motivated to attend or remain at school. Indigenous cultural studies also produce social benefits that extend beyond the Indigenous school population by increasing awareness and understanding about Indigenous history and culture in the wider population. This indicator reports some limited data which are available on school curricula, and Indigenous employment in government and Catholic schools as well as selected case studies.

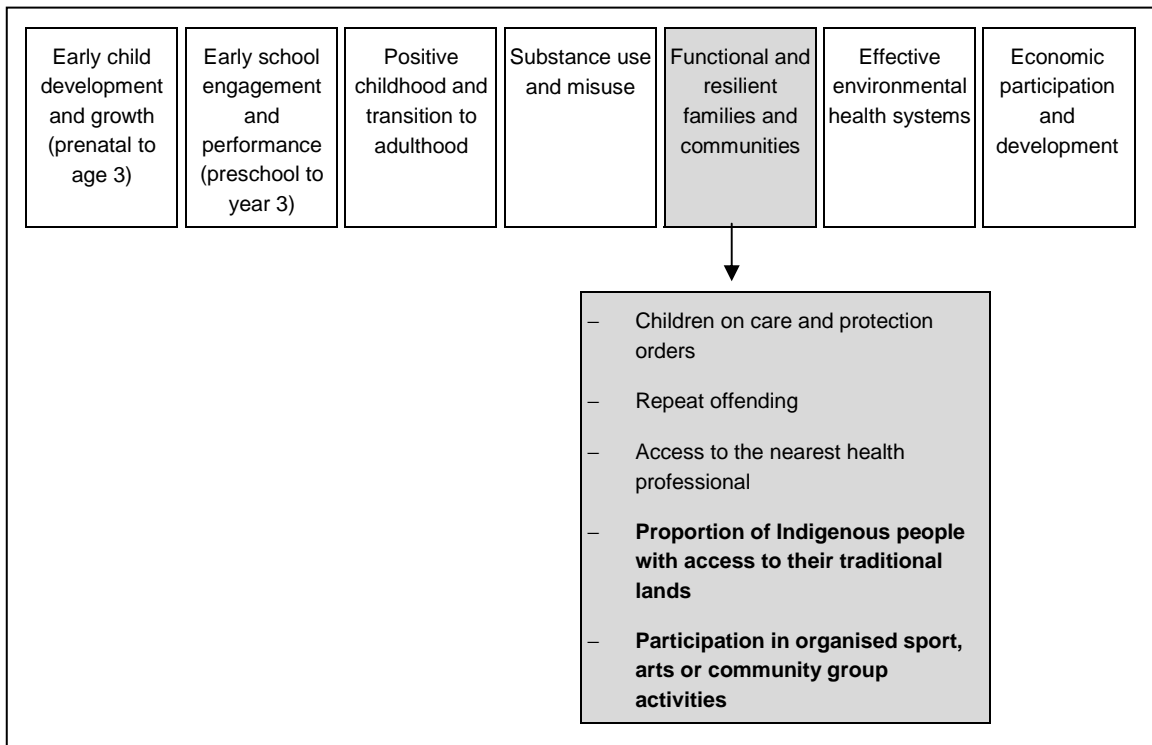
### Questions

1. Could this indicator be expressed as an **outcome**? For example, self-esteem, community engagement, reduced racism, improved learning outcomes, and school retention are some of the potential outcomes. However, apart from the last two these are not currently measurable.
2. Are you aware of any **case studies** that could be used to report against this indicator?

### ***Proportion of people with access to their traditional lands***

### ***Participation in organised sport, arts or community group activities***

These indicators are in the ‘Functional and resilient families and communities’ strategic area for action (see diagram).



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### ***Proportion of people with access to their traditional lands***

This indicator complements another indicator in the economic development and participation chapter of the Report (Indigenous owned or controlled land). Land is important to Indigenous people both culturally and economically. While no data were available for the 2003 Report, the 2005 Report included data on:

- Recognition of homelands/traditional country
- Whether currently living on homelands
- Whether allowed to visit homelands

#### *Questions*

1. Are there other aspects of access to traditional lands that could be covered? If so, are there **data** or **case studies** available?

### ***Participation in organised sport, arts or community group activities***

Taking part in organised sport, arts or community group activities can foster self-reliance, social interaction, and the development of skills and teamwork. There are very few data to report against this indicator, and none at all for Indigenous people under the age of 15 years. Consequently, the Report has relied heavily on case studies.

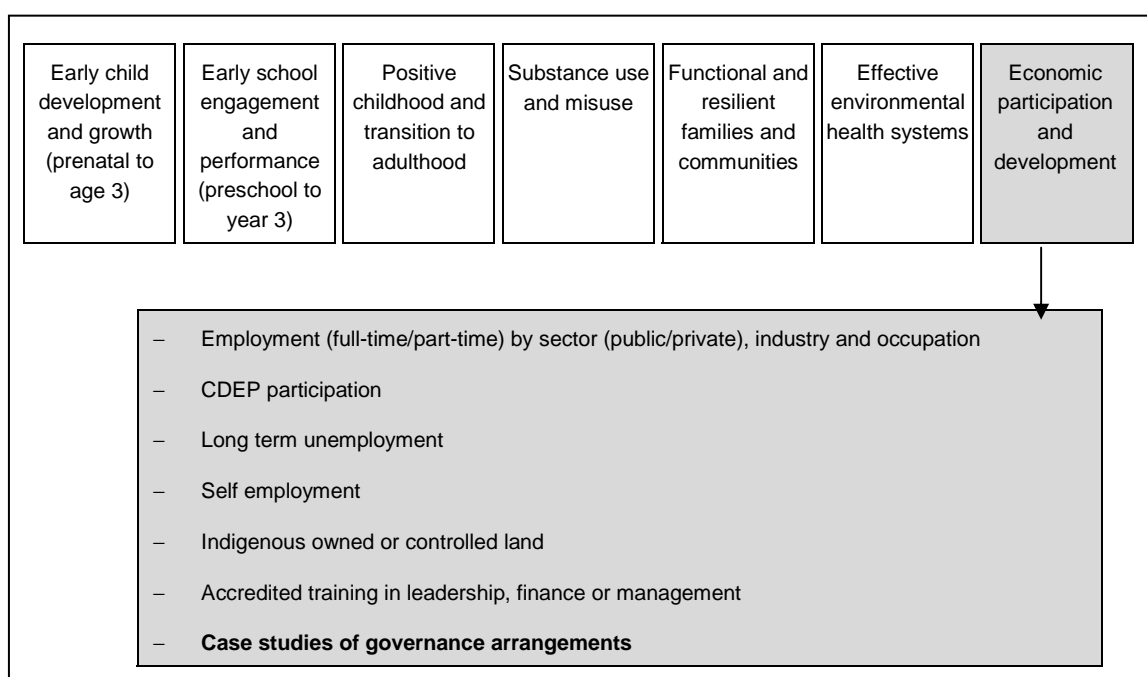
#### *Questions*

1. Are you aware of any **data** or **case studies** that could be used to report against this indicator?

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## Case studies in governance arrangements

This indicator is in the 'Economic participation and development' strategic area for action (see diagram). The indicator relates to governance in Indigenous communities and organisations. Governance has been closely linked with economic development and disadvantage, because it is a key determinant of the ability of Indigenous organisations and communities to make and implement decisions that achieve outcomes in a sustainable way. Some key determinants of governance have emerged as having universal application. These form the structure for presentation of case studies in the Report.



The key determinants of successful governance highlighted in the Report are:

- ... governing institutions
- ... leadership
- ... self determination
- ... capacity building
- ... cultural match

### Questions

1. Do you agree that these are **key determinants**? Are there others that are well established and could replace or add to these to improve the analysis and presentation?

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2. Are you aware of any **case studies** that could be used to report against this indicator? If so, would the organisation or community be willing to assist in developing the case study for **publication** and who is an appropriate person to approach?

### ***Possible new cultural indicators***

Other suggestions about possible new cultural indicators made during consultations were heritage, language and recognition of Indigenous culture and law.

### ***Heritage***

Many Indigenous people place great importance on the recognition and protection of their cultural heritage. While reporting data on heritage was beyond the scope of the first two reports, in recognition of its importance, one of the two case studies on governance in the 2005 Report was the Koorie Heritage Trust.

1. Do you think that heritage should be an indicator in the Report?
2. Some aspects of heritage that have been proposed include heritage **sites, collections and education**. Are these the most meaningful components of heritage for Indigenous people? Are there sufficient data available?
3. If a heritage indicator is included, is there an existing indicator that it could replace?
4. Would it be sufficient to ensure that the **various dimensions** of heritage are mentioned in the body of the Report, without including a specific indicator?

### ***Language***

There has been widespread support during previous consultations for an indicator related to language. This was the case whether the consultations were in a remote community or the middle of a large city. However, there were many different views about language that extended beyond culture and into the education and employment areas of the Report. The comments reflected a diversity of views.

### ***Questions***

1. Is language an appropriate indicator of Indigenous disadvantage? If so, should it reflect:



- 
- ... Indigenous language spoken as a first language, and second language?
  - ... by school children or all people?
  - ... taught in schools by an Indigenous person?
  - ... school lessons taught in Indigenous language?
  - ... capacity of children for whom English is a second language to achieve at school?
  - ... are there other aspects of language that are culturally relevant that could be included?
2. Or should this indicator reflect practical aspects of communication between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous services providers, such as Indigenous people's use of English and the extent to which service providers and government agencies take steps to ensure effective communication with speakers of Indigenous languages. Example could include:
- ... availability of interpreters or staff with Indigenous language skills
  - ... training of staff in Indigenous languages and culture
  - ... availability of suitable materials for communicating with speakers of Indigenous languages
3. Are you aware of any **data** that could be reported against a language indicator?

### ***Indigenous culture and law***

Official recognition of Indigenous culture and law covers a broad range of issues, including: observance of Indigenous protocols in ceremonies, recognition of Indigenous law and governance, local governments with cultural advisory mechanisms, and partnerships and memorandums of understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Some aspects of these are picked up in the governance case studies section of the Report.

#### *Questions*

1. Do you think that recognition of Indigenous culture and law should be an indicator in the Report? If so, is there an existing indicator it could replace?
2. Are you aware of any **data** that could be reported against these issues?

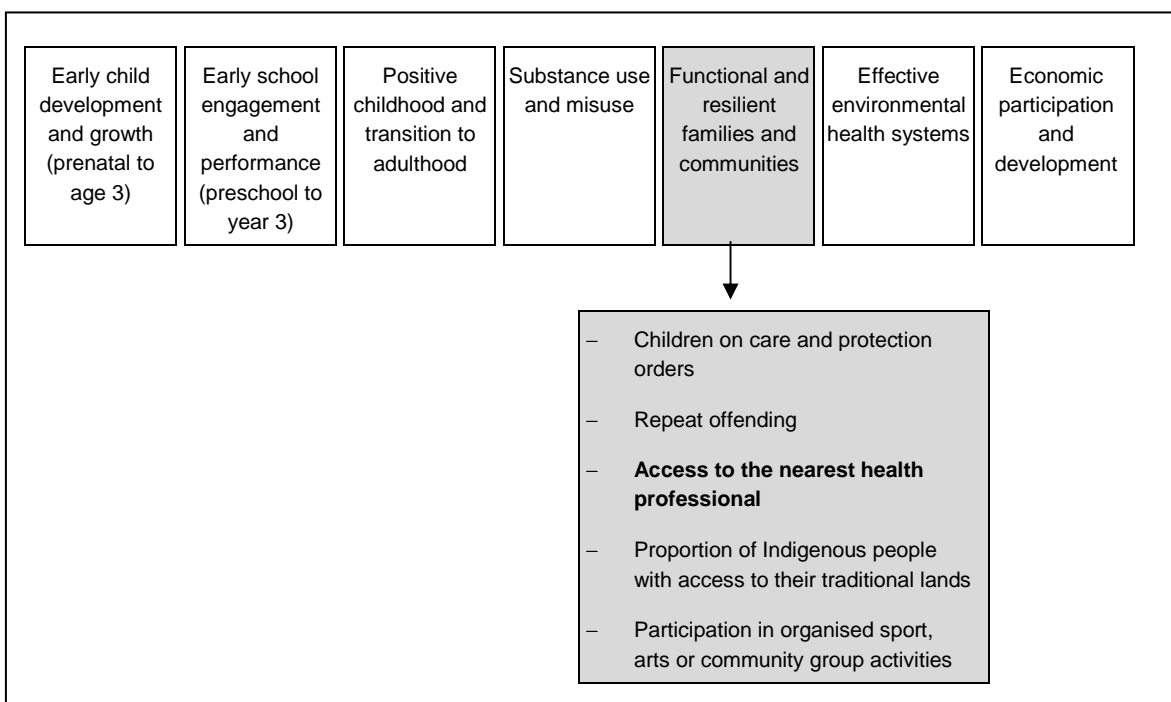
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3. Are there any other cultural indicators which you believe would better reflect Indigenous culture than those mentioned above?

## Health related indicator

### ***Access to the nearest health professional***

This indicator is in the ‘Functional and resilient families and communities’ strategic area for action.



This indicator has received some criticism on the basis that it is not seen to adequately represent the health needs of Indigenous people. In the 2005 Report, reporting against this indicator was expanded to include hospital admissions for potentially preventable chronic conditions, type 2 diabetes mellitus, and vaccine preventable diseases.

A great deal of other health data are included elsewhere in the Report. One option may be to cross reference and draw links between those parts to produce a more complete picture. These links could also draw on other aspects of the Report such as substance misuse, domestic violence, and premature death data. Their effect on life expectancy could also be made more explicit.

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## Questions

1. Do you think that reporting against this indicator with the greater linking of related data as suggested will adequately deal with this issue?
2. Can you suggest an **alternative** indicator?
  - ... if yes, can you explain why it would be better?
  - ... are there data that can be reported against it on a national level?
  - ... does it have relevance in all geographic locations — urban, regional and remote?
3. What other factors are important in Indigenous health and should they be reported on, for example:
  - ... mental health (or mental well being)
  - ... mental illness/disorder.

## Other indicators

### ***Substantiated child protection notifications***

### ***Victim rates for crime***

These two indicators are headline indicators. All the headline indicators are listed in the box below.

### **Headline indicators**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Life expectancy at birth                                | • Home ownership  |
| • Rates of disability and/or core activity restriction    | • Suicide and self-harm                                 |
| • Years 10 and 12 retention and attainment                | • <b>Substantiated child protection notifications</b>   |
| • Post secondary education — participation and attainment | • Deaths from homicide and hospitalisations for assault |
| • Labour force participation and unemployment             | • <b>Victim rates for crime</b>                         |
| • Household and individual income                         | • Imprisonment and juvenile detention rates             |

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### ***Substantiated child protection notifications***

This indicator only reports abuse and neglect notified to child protection services and subsequently substantiated, and does not reflect the actual level of abuse. Furthermore, it could be ambiguous. An increase in notifications and substantiations might only reflect an increase in reporting of abuse and neglect not necessarily an increase in the underlying rate.

#### *Questions:*

1. Should the indicator's **name** be changed to 'Child abuse and neglect'?
2. Should the indicator report on all types of abuse and neglect or should it report only specific types of abuse?
3. Would you support changing this indicator to report on 'Child victims of sexual assault' (based on police statistics) or 'Sexual abuse and sexually transmitted diseases in children'?
4. Are you aware of any **data** that could be reported against this issue?

### ***Victim rates for crime***

The 2005 Report included data on victims of physical or threatened violence. Another indicator included data on numbers of homicides and hospitalisations for assault. No separate data are available on victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse or other types of crime.

#### *Questions*

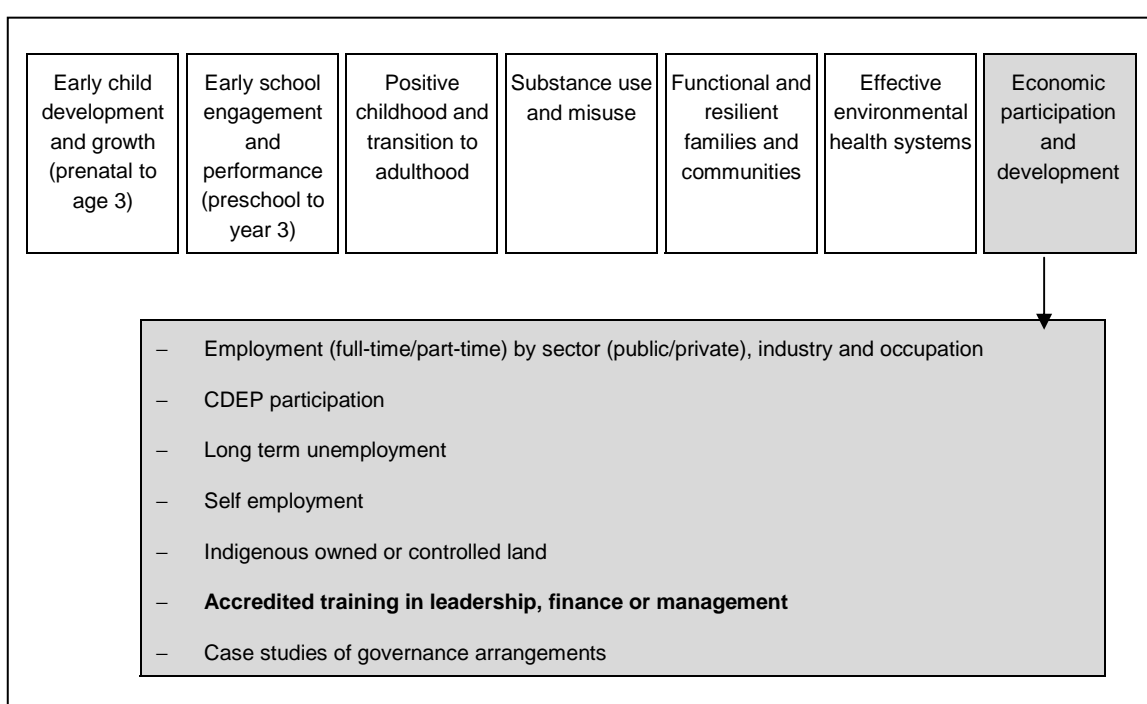
1. Should the indicator remain?
2. Should its **name** be changed to 'Victims of domestic and community violence'?
3. Are you aware of any additional **data** for this indicator?

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### ***Accredited training in leadership, finance or management***

This indicator is included in the framework with the purpose of reporting capacity building in governance. The data presented show the number of Indigenous students undertaking courses at TAFE and university in finance and management related subjects. In future reports, data on Indigenous governance and leadership courses may also be available for inclusion. While capacity building is dealt with in the section of the Report on governance case studies, no national data are available.

This indicator is in the ‘Economic participation and development’ strategic area for action (see diagram below).

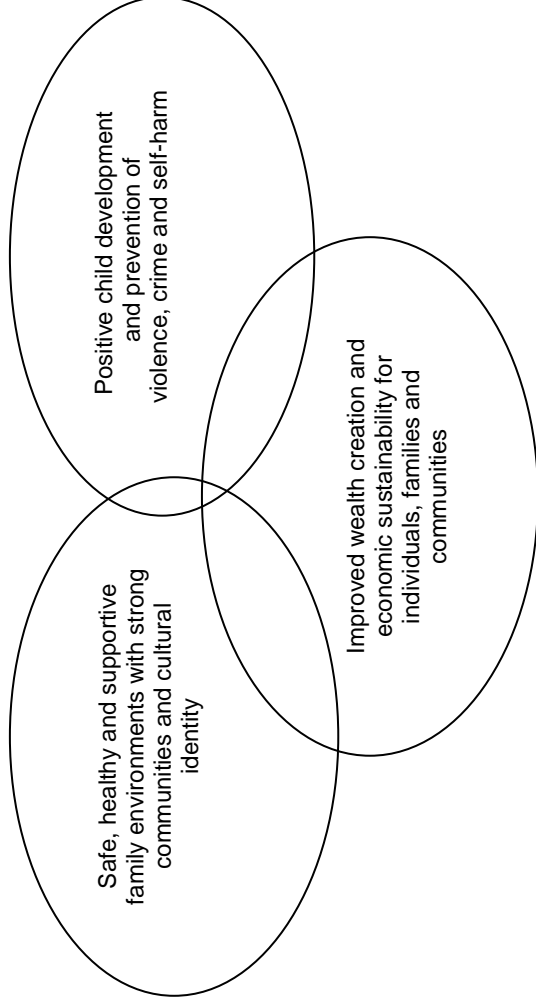


### ***Questions***

1. Are you aware of any **data** that could be reported in relation to governance (not just capacity building)?
2. Do you think that **data** on finance and management courses, and Indigenous courses on leadership and governance reflect **capacity building**?
3. Should the indicator’s **name** be changed to ‘Training in governance and leadership’?

## Multi-level indicator framework: priority outcomes

Indigenous people and governments have agreed the following outcomes. These outcomes are closely linked to each other — progress in one area can assist progress in the others



## Multi-level indicator framework: headline indicators

The headline indicators measure progress in achieving the priority outcomes. They are a small set of high level indicators, which usually take some time to respond to changes in government policies.

- Life expectancy
- Rates of disability and/or core activity restriction
- Years 10 and 12 retention and attainment
- Post secondary education – participation and attainment
- Labour force participation and unemployment
- Household and individual income
- Home ownership
- Suicide and self-harm
- Substantiated child protection notifications
- Deaths from homicide and hospitalisations for assault
- Victim rates for crime
- Imprisonment and juvenile detention rates

## Multi-level indicator framework: strategic areas for action

Governments have agreed to focus policy attention on the following seven strategic areas. Over time progress in these areas is expected to lead to improvement in the headline indicators and priority outcomes. Progress is measured by a series of strategic change indicators, which can be influenced by government policies and programs in the short to medium term.

