



## FINAL REPORT ON EXPENDITURE ON CHILDREN IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### Final Report



**We released our final report on 8 April 2020**

The report looks at how the safety and wellbeing of children in the Northern Territory can be improved. The focus is on how the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments can work better together to fund services.

### What we have found

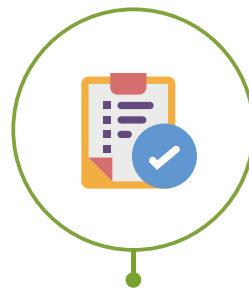
**To help prevent harm to children in the Northern Territory the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments collectively spent ...**



**About  
\$538  
million**



**Through  
9 funding  
agencies**



**More than  
700 grants**



**To more than  
500 service  
providers**



Despite these significant resources, governments are making short term funding decisions in relative isolation without a good understanding of:

- **the needs and priorities of communities**
- **existing services funded by other government agencies**

- There is significant motivation, positive reforms and pockets of good practice decision making
- But the system of children and family services is highly fragmented
- There are overlaps, duplication and gaps in expenditure effort between and within governments
- Services are poorly targeted and don't always account for cultural strengths or the needs of children and families



# What does our report propose?

A new approach to funding children and family services in the Northern Territory

## Reform area 1

Governments determine funding by working *with* communities to develop regional plans.

Governments should establish a formal coordination process (formalised in a new intergovernmental agreement) in which they:

- agree on what types of services they will each fund and in which locations
- agree to pool funds in specific policy areas or locations

## Reform area 2

Longer term, more collaborative contracting of service providers

- Transition to longer term funding (7+ years) with a relational approach to contracting that focuses on continuous improvement
- Ensure funding reflects the full cost of service delivery
- Take into account providers' ability to provide culturally appropriate services to children and families

## Reform area 3

Better, more transparent data that is shared at the community level

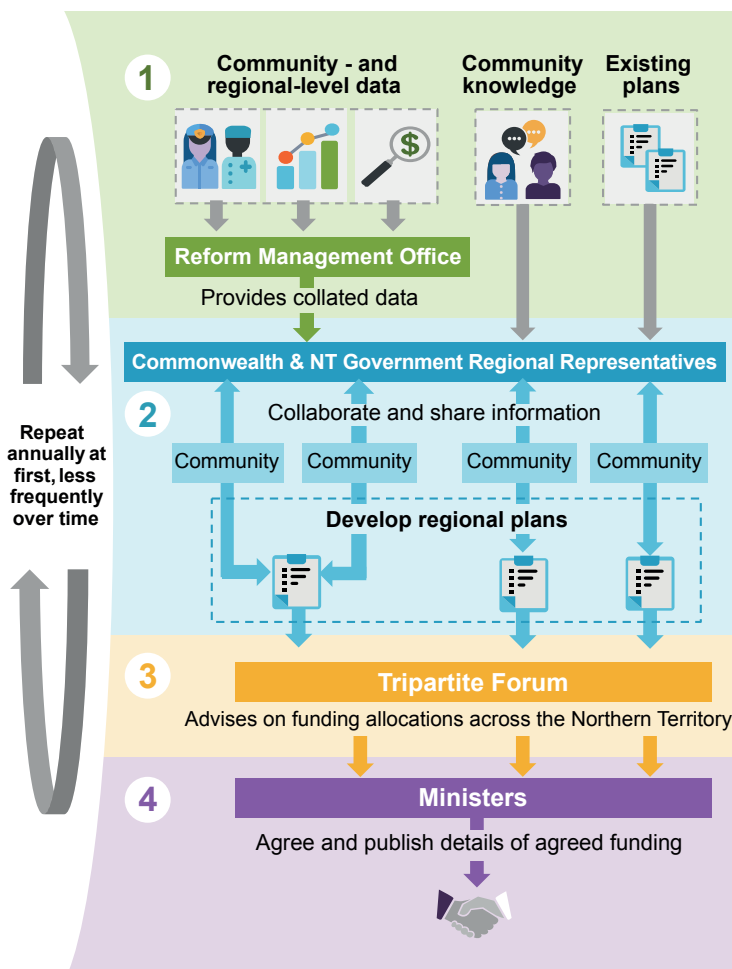
- Harness existing data on children and family wellbeing outcomes to develop and share community snapshots
- Develop a public list of children and family services available in each community
- Adopt a continuous improvement approach to monitoring and evaluation

## Reform area 4

Stronger supporting institutions

- Strengthen the role of Tripartite Forum to provide advice to governments on funding allocation and funds pooling
- Support and authorise regional network staff to work with service providers to improve services and to work with communities to develop regional plans

### We are proposing a four step process



Visit our website to read the final report

[pc.gov.au/nt-children](http://pc.gov.au/nt-children)  
or call  
1800 020 083