

MEDIA RELEASE

Urgent need for governments to implement the National Agreement on Closing the Gap in full as new data paints grim picture

The data update for the *Closing the Gap Dashboard*, released today, provides a new year of data for several socio-economic targets and supporting indicators within the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement). These targets paint a grim picture and emphasise the need for all governments to urgently implement the National Agreement in full.

While indicators for the targets relating to healthy birthweight of babies; attainment of a year 12 or equivalent qualification; completion of a tertiary qualification; youth engaged in employment, education, or training; appropriately sized housing; and legal rights or interests in the sea have all seen improvements, none are on track to be met.

Concerningly, the target of a significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero is worsening against the baseline.

Only targets relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are employed and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests in Australia's landmass have shown good improvement and are on track to be met.

The Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations (Coalition of Peaks) are certain that the patchy implementation of the National Agreement by all governments is halting progress.

"When structural and systemic change is made, there will naturally be a positive effect on the trajectory of the Closing the Gaps targets. This is what the Priority Reforms are all about in the National Agreement, but we are not seeing them implemented properly by governments," said Lead Convenor of the Coalition of Peaks, Patricia Turner AM.

"The Priority Reforms are about changing the way governments work with our people. It is the comprehensive adoption of them that government parties need to understand and embrace if we are going to be able to work together to finally close the gap.

"More than two years on from the signing of the National Agreement and some governments are still talking about how they might start to tackle and implement the Priority Reforms.

"This data update should instil a sense of urgency in governments to get on with the structural change needed to the way governments work as set out in the Priority Reforms. It is clear that the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people depend on it," said Ms Turner.

Find out more about the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and its targets at www.coalitionofpeaks.org.au

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