



# ACT Council of Social Service Strategic Plan 2009-2013

# Acknowledgement of Traditional Ownership

ACTCOSS acknowledges that Canberra has been built on the lands of the Ngunnawal people. We pay our respects to their elders and recognise the displacement and disadvantage they have suffered as a result of European settlement. We celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and ongoing contribution to the ACT community.

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## Vision

To live in a fair and equitable community that respects and values diversity and actively encourages collaborations that promote justice, equity and social inclusion.

## Purpose

As the peak body for the social and community services sector in the ACT, ACTCOSS provides:

- A voice for and with people living with disadvantage and inequality;
- Makes explicit and pursues a social justice agenda by leading policy research and advocacy; and
- Undertakes community sector support and development for the maintenance of a professional and influential community sector.

# Our Values

ACTCOSS is committed to operating in a way that reflects its values and underpinning principles. These include a commitment to:

- **A human rights approach**

ACTCOSS recognises the fundamental dignity of all members of the community, independent of circumstance or resources, and the importance of removing discrimination from our local community.

- **A social justice framework**

ACTCOSS will work to promote and pursue justice and equity across the local community.

- **Social inclusion and participation**

ACTCOSS embraces and celebrates the diversity of our local community and promotes and encourages the full participation of all community members.

- **Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

ACTCOSS will show leadership and support to others in promoting understanding, acceptance and responsiveness to the unique position of the first Australians as traditional owners and custodians of this land.

- **Collaborative and collective action**

ACTCOSS will work in partnership with like-minded organisations and support collaborative approaches that strengthen the community sector.

- **Sustainability**

ACTCOSS is committed to working sustainably and responsibly, in our work practices, in the way we manage ourselves as a learning organisation and how we interact with our stakeholders.

# Goal One

A community in which all people have the opportunities and resources needed to participate in and benefit from social and economic life.

## Overview

ACTCOSS will work towards this goal by undertaking broad policy research and high-level advocacy. We will provide advocacy for the community in terms of a voice and leadership aimed at bringing about informed public opinion. We will be engaged with our members and the local community, especially those who live with disadvantage and those who access community services, involving them in research and advocacy.

## Priorities

Supporting the development of an adequate, affordable and liveable housing mix in the ACT, for all residents.

Bringing social equity into environmental debates on climate change mitigation and abatement strategies.

Ensuring justice and corrections policies and practices are delivered in a human rights framework with rehabilitation at their core.

Promoting the social determinants of health as an integral part of all service delivery and planning in the ACT.

## Indicators of success

Demonstrated and respected leadership acknowledged by ACT Government and the sector.

Member and stakeholder participation and satisfaction with engagement opportunities.

Engagement in key debates, providing a representative and considered view-point.

# Goal Two

A dynamic, collaborative and viable community sector.

## Overview

ACTCOSS will work towards this goal by undertaking advocacy and supporting the building of organisations' capacity to provide high quality services. Our work under this goal will include a focus on ensuring the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures are recognised, respected and fulfilled in all activities of the sector.

## Priorities

Facilitating development opportunities and the provision of training and support.

Working with organisations to develop their internal practices within and reflective of a human rights framework.

Promoting understanding, consultation and co-operation amongst organisations, including government bodies.

Advocating with and on behalf of the sector for adequate resources and recognition.

## Indicators of success

Demonstrated and respected leadership acknowledged by the sector.

Member and stakeholder participation and satisfaction with information, services and other supports.

Greater awareness within the sector on ensuring the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures are recognised, respected and fulfilled.

# Goal Three

A well governed and managed peak body, representing a strong and diverse membership, and actively engaged with the groups we represent.

## Overview

ACTCOSS will work towards this goal by demonstrating good governance through an engaged and diverse General Committee and Executive, with robust governance and operational policies and strong leadership. We will strive to be an employer of best practice, supporting the staff of ACTCOSS in the delivery of this strategic plan. We will be engaged with our members and inclusive in our practices.

## Priorities

Developing and implementing a plan to grow the ACTCOSS membership base and services specific to our members.

The attainment of sustainable and diverse funding for the core activities of ACTCOSS.

Working collaboratively with the COSS-Network on issues of national and shared importance.

Developing ACTCOSS as an employer of choice and an industrial-relations leader within the sector.

## Indicators of success

Responsible and prudent financial management and strategic governance.

Leadership in staff conditions and development.

Strategic and quality participation with the COSS-Network.



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