

Over the next four weeks we will be publishing a Mercy Moments each week to give time and attention to the results of the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report which looks at the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. The report was commissioned in 2017 by the Indigenous Affairs Group of the Commonwealth Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, now the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and the Australian Human Rights Commission.

WOMEN'S VOICES

Wiyi Yani U Thangani translates to 'Women's Voices' in the Bunuba language. The key aim of Wiyi Yani U Thangani is to amplify the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, and to reflect the holistic and interconnected nature of their lives. The project also provides recommendations to improve the lives of women and girls.

Wiyi Yani U Thangani has been guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the following key pathways have been outlined:

- Supporting strong families and communities
- Living and belonging
- Healthy and engaged lives
- Thriving communities and sustainable economies (p16 of the Community Guide)

Commissioner Jane Oscar AO, the first woman to be appointed as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner who launched the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report asserts,

We need our women to be at the decision-making table and designing the policies that impact our lives. The Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Report sets out this call to action in a First Nations female-led plan for structural change. It is not a report for the shelf.

... every day, we should think about the power and potential of our First Nations women and girls who carry the knowledge and wisdom from an ancient lineage of matriarchs.

... It's a strengths-based message for all Australians to see, to hear, to learn of the remarkable resilience and capabilities of our women and girls, who have the solutions but lack a seat at the table.

Mercy Partners is committed to walking with our First Nations people in the journey of reconciliation. We accept and honour the Uluru Statement from the Heart and support an Indigenous voice to parliament and constitutional recognition and we acknowledge the tireless and important work of First Nations women across Australia.

The Wiyi Yani U Thangani project is now in Stage 2 with more opportunities for community involvement to unite and keep First Nations women's voices on everyone's agenda.

Information used in this Mercy Moment is copyright to © Australian Human Rights Commission 2020.



We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the lands on which our ministries exist and the Elders both past and present on whose land we walk, work and live.

REFLECTION: How could you use the information in the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report to inform your response to First Nations women and girls' disadvantage in Australia?

REFERENCES: Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report and Community Guide at wiyiyaniuthangani.humanrights.gov.au