

# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS DISASTER RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK



# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS DISASTER RESILIENCE

National Indigenous Disaster Resilience (NIDR) is a research program at Monash University. Established in 2022, NIDR has quickly established itself as a leading national research centre, and the only research centre dedicated to investigating and quantifying the impacts major disaster events have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

NIDR is grounded in an understanding that climate change is producing more frequent and severe disasters. Despite the growing recognition that major disasters disproportionately impact Indigenous peoples, there is a little evidence and knowledge regarding how these events impact Indigenous peoples in ways that are different to other Australians. There is also little information or knowledge on Indigenous priorities during major disaster events.

NIDR aims to address these gaps, while challenging dominant discourses that focus on vulnerabilities alone, and focus on First Nations knowledge and leadership in disaster resilience and recovery.





**ZOE SCHULTZ**  
**RESEARCHER**



**BHIAMIE WILLIAMSON**  
**PROGRAM LEAD**



**LUCY CONNOLE**  
**PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

## WHO WE ARE



**ALEX PERLINSKI**  
**RESEARCHER**



**NELL REIDY**  
**RESEARCHER**



**KAYTLYN O'NEIL**  
**RESEARCHER**



**BETH PATCH**  
**COMMUNICATIONS**

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are over-represented in disaster-declared LGAs.



**3.8%**

of Australia's population is  
Indigenous



**15.2%**

average Indigenous population  
of disaster-declared LGAs

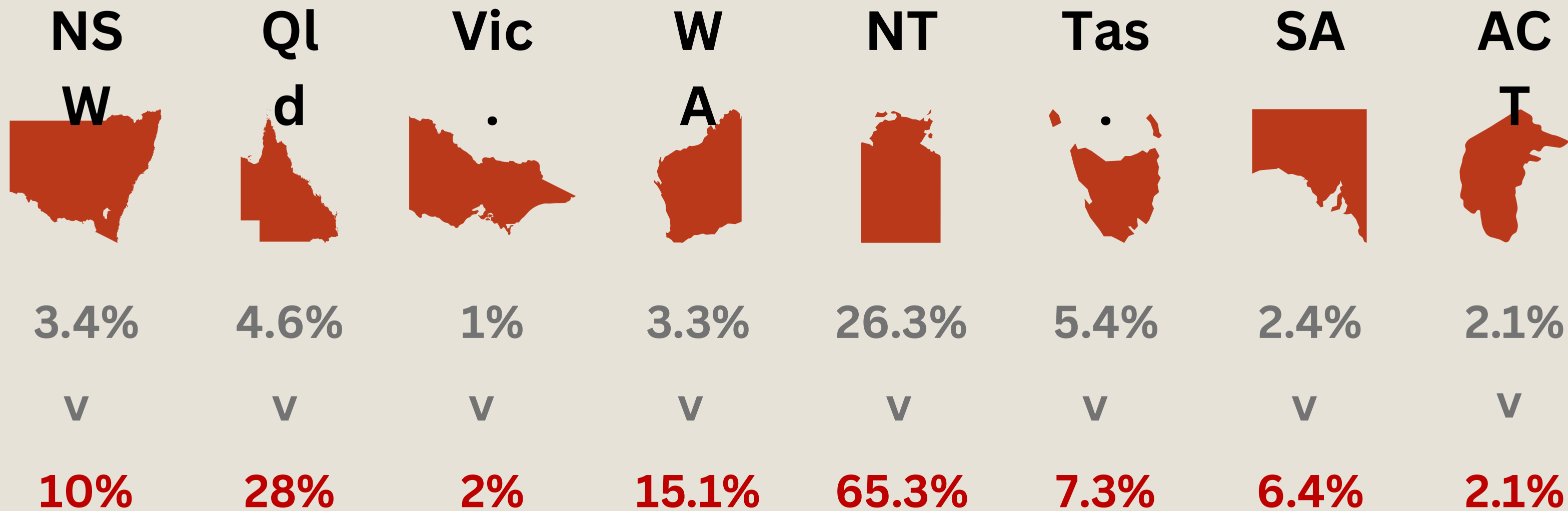
**2 out of 3 disaster declarations have been made in LGAs with an Indigenous population higher than the national average.**



**3,874 out of 5,590**

disaster declarations have been made in LGAs where Indigenous peoples make up more than 3.8% of the population





49 of the 50 most disaster-declared LGAs have an Indigenous population higher than the state or territory average.

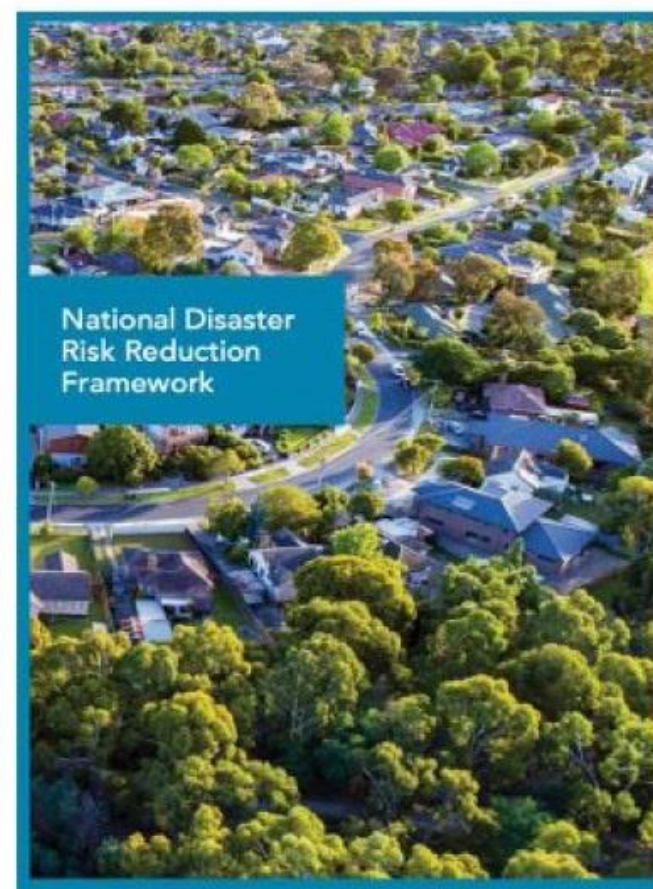
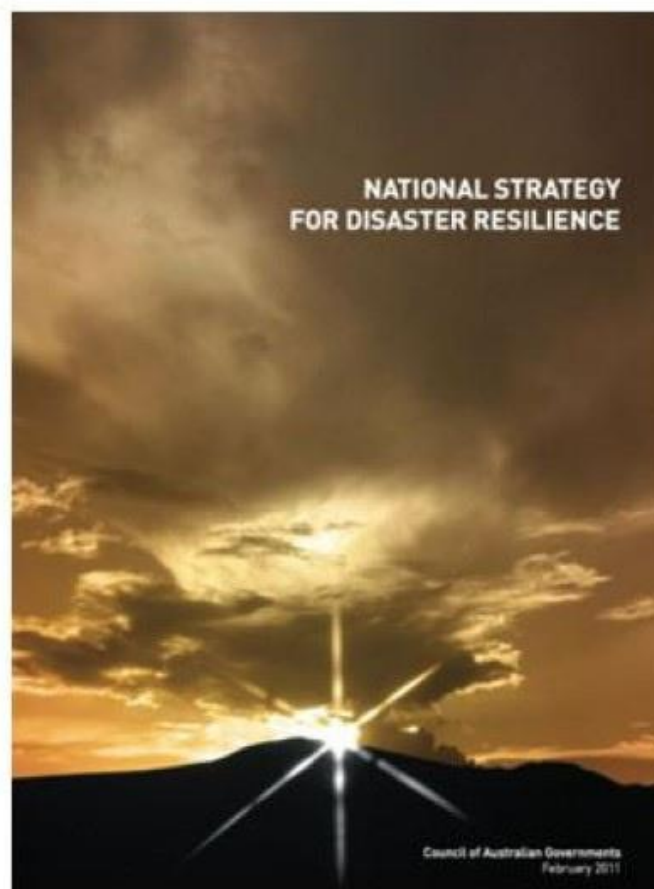
|                         |
|-------------------------|
| Baw Baw                 |
| Yarra Ranges            |
| East Gippsland          |
| Mid-Coast               |
| South Gippsland         |
| Clarence Valley         |
| Wellington              |
| Port Macquarie-Hastings |
| Kempsey                 |
| Upper Hunter            |

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Cook                |
| Armidale            |
| Central Coast (NSW) |
| Macedon Ranges      |
| Carpentaria         |
| Narrabri            |
| Muswellbrook        |
| Bega Valley         |
| Latrobe (Vic.)      |
| Tenterfield         |

|                 |
|-----------------|
| Shoalhaven      |
| Lismore         |
| Wingecarribee   |
| Lithgow         |
| Snowy Monaro    |
| Wangaratta      |
| Murrindindi     |
| Singleton       |
| Richmond Valley |
| Nambucca Valley |

|               |
|---------------|
| Tablelands    |
| Snowy Valleys |
| Boulia        |
| Cloncurry     |
| Cessnock      |
| Maranoa       |
| Townsville    |
| Western Downs |
| Barcoo        |
| Dungog        |

|               |
|---------------|
| Etheridge     |
| Port Stephens |
| Eurobodalla   |
| Hilltops      |
| Toowoomba     |
| Victoria Daly |
| Burke         |
| Tamworth      |
| Gwydir        |
| Kyogle        |



# FOUNDATIONS IN INDIGENOUS DISASTER RESILIENCE

Funded by Natural Hazards Research Australia, this two year, nationally focused project aims to address the absence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and priorities across the emergency management sector.



Through the project, we will deliver:

- Practical guides and tools for emergency management agencies and Aboriginal organisations and communities
- Academic papers, a literature review and research reports
- **National Indigenous Disaster Resilience Framework**
- a published handbook guide highlighting Indigenous leadership across the sector and principles and approaches to enhance the resilience of Indigenous people and communities
- Online resource for ACCOs, 'Governing through disasters'















# **NATIONAL INDIGENOUS DISASTER RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK**



**UNDRIP**

**SENDAI  
FRAMEWORK**

**NATIONAL INDIGENOUS  
DISASTER RESILIENCE  
FRAMEWORK**

**CLOSING  
THE  
GAP**

**NATIONAL DISASTER RISK  
REDUCTION FRAMEWORK**

# FRANCES BELLE PARKER



Frances Belle Parker is a proud Yaegl woman, painter, drawer, printmaker and installation artist from Maclean in the Clarence Valley of NSW. An accomplished artist, Frances completed FA through UNSW, and a BVA (Honours) and a Master of Indigenous Studies (Wellbeing), both at Southern Cross University. Frances is deeply inspired by her Mother's Yaegl Country and the island in the Clarence River that her Mother grew up on, Ulgundahi Island.



# GUIDING STARS



**INDIGENOUS  
DATA**



**SOVEREIGNTY**



**WISDOM**



**RESPECT**



**TRUST**



**INTRA-GOVERNMENT  
COLLABORATION**



# LANGUAGE MATTERS

**“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander”, “Indigenous” or “First Nations”, what do I use?**

- There are a range of naming conventions used to describe the original people of Australia in contemporary contexts. It must first be acknowledged that Indigenous peoples themselves reserve the right to determine the appropriate naming convention they desire, and these wishes, which may change from community to community, or between individuals, should be navigated with empathy and respect.
- Indigenous is often deployed as a single term to describe Australia’s original people.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is perhaps the most used English term.
- Torres Strait Islander was a term developed to describe the original people of the Islands of the Zenadth Kes, commonly known now as the Torres Strait, between the Australian mainland and Papua New Guinea.
- Increasingly, First Nations is another term that is being utilised.
- Other terms commonly deployed include Traditional Owners (or Traditional Custodians).
- Use of certain words may be used differently, and interchangeably, however, what these terms describe remain the same.



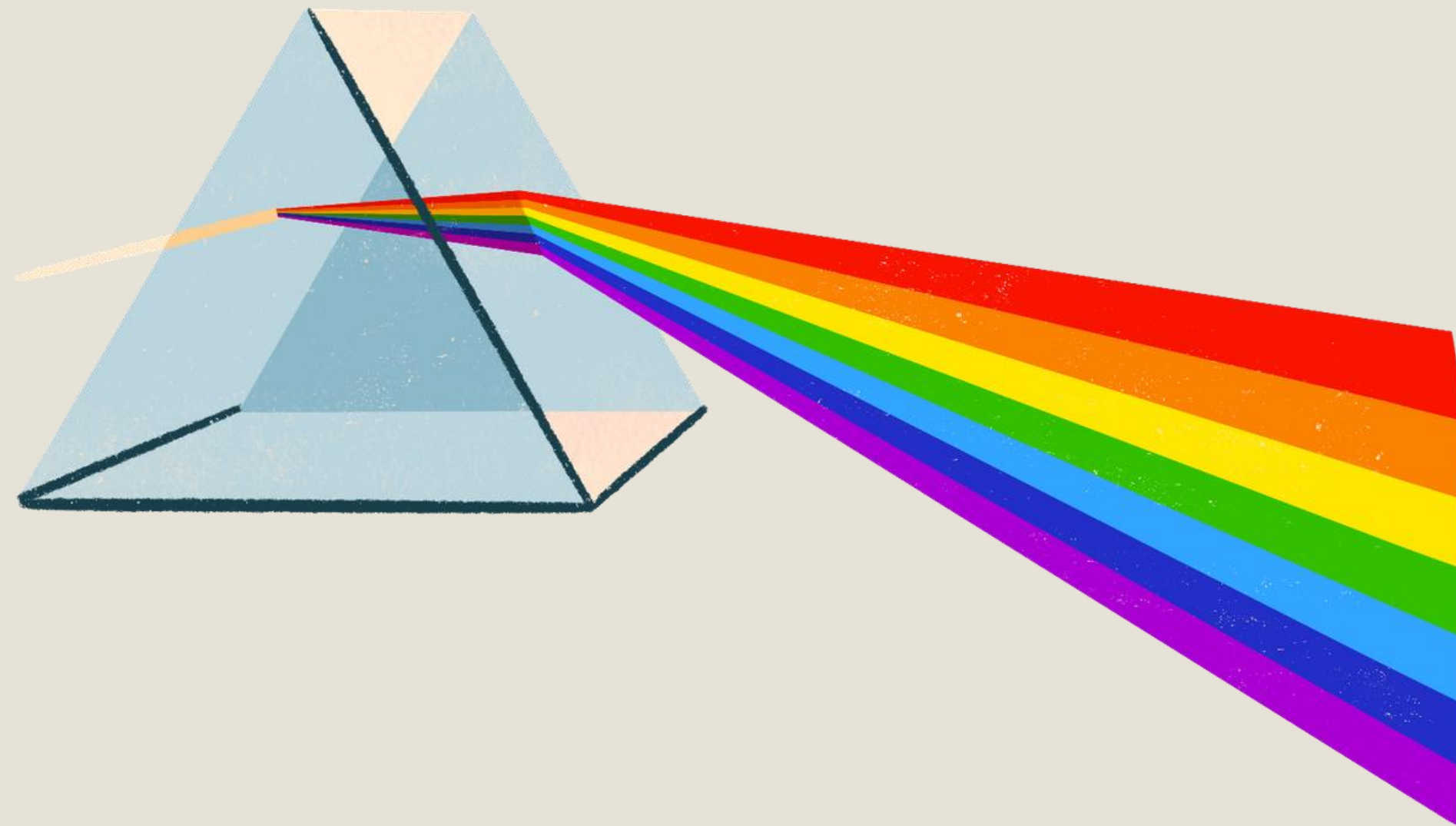
# REFRAMING THE 'PROBLEM'

- Indigenous people have been witness to climate forces which have shaped our landscapes and waterways and continue to carry stories of these processes of creation and recreation. These, alongside modern science, reveal the constant and continued presence of fires, floods, cyclones and more.
- Living with, and welcoming the often regenerative impacts of these processes became part of Indigenous peoples' lifeworlds and these knowledges remain a significant asset.
- The colonisation of Australia interrupted these natural and intact systems. Dams were built to capture and store headwaters, forests were logged, fire was suppressed and marine ecosystems were ravaged by industrial fishing.
- Indigenous groups were removed to discrete parcels of land, while new settlers built port, towns and industrial centres where resources were plentiful and Indigenous life was once sustained.
- Towns were built to facilitate expansion and support emergent industries, and consideration of safety and the natural environment was often an afterthought.
- Fires, floods, cyclones and other such events have since brought new consequences and new meaning. Their impacts became measured by what they took away, rather than what they supported.

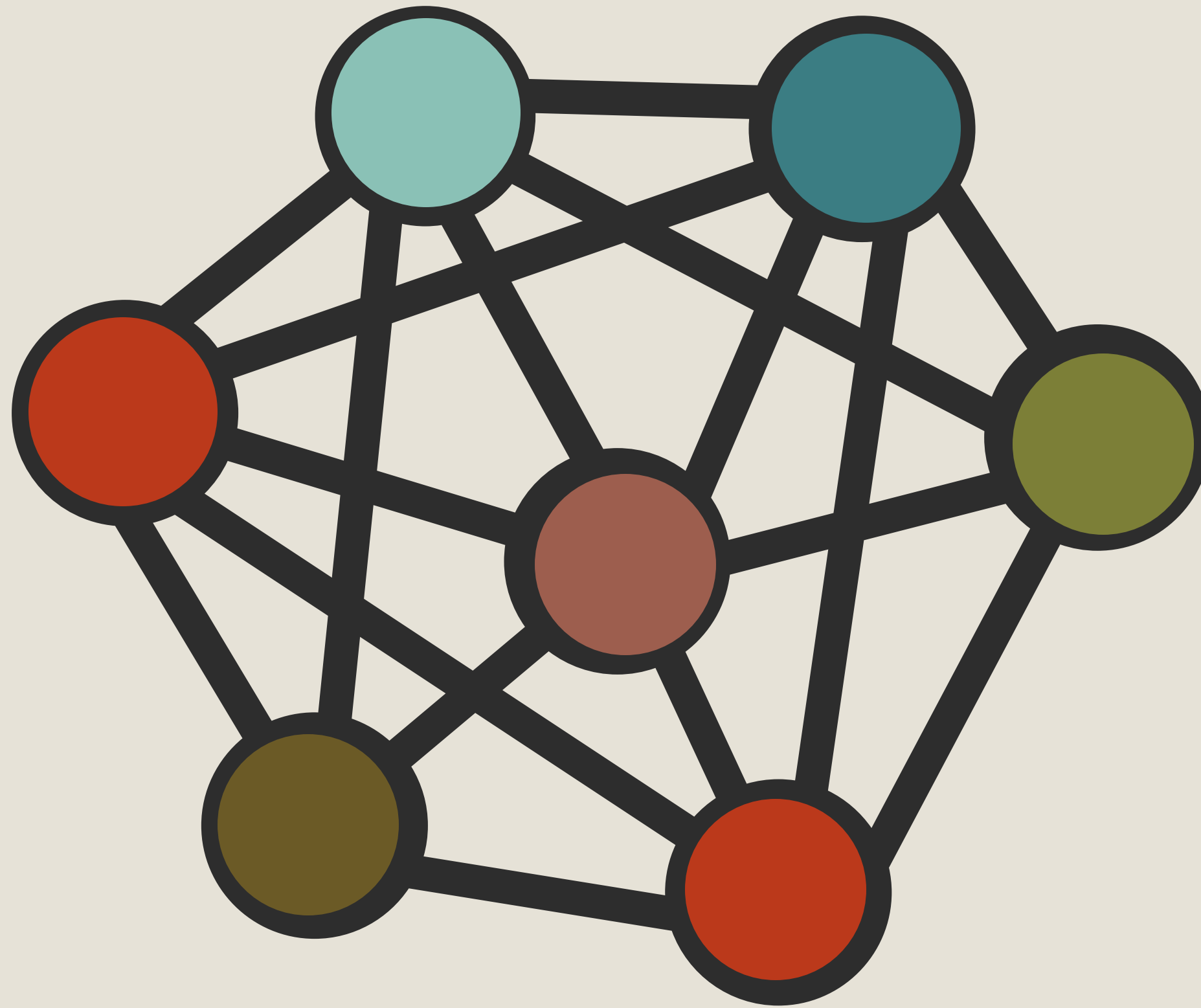


# REFRAMING THE 'PROBLEM'

- Practices of dispossession, cultural suppression, child removal, exclusion from workforces, education systems, healthcare and home ownership have resulted in extreme disenfranchisement.
- Impacts continue to have consequences that have created a *spectrum of disadvantage*



# A MULTITUDE OF PROBLEMS



# AREAS OF WORK

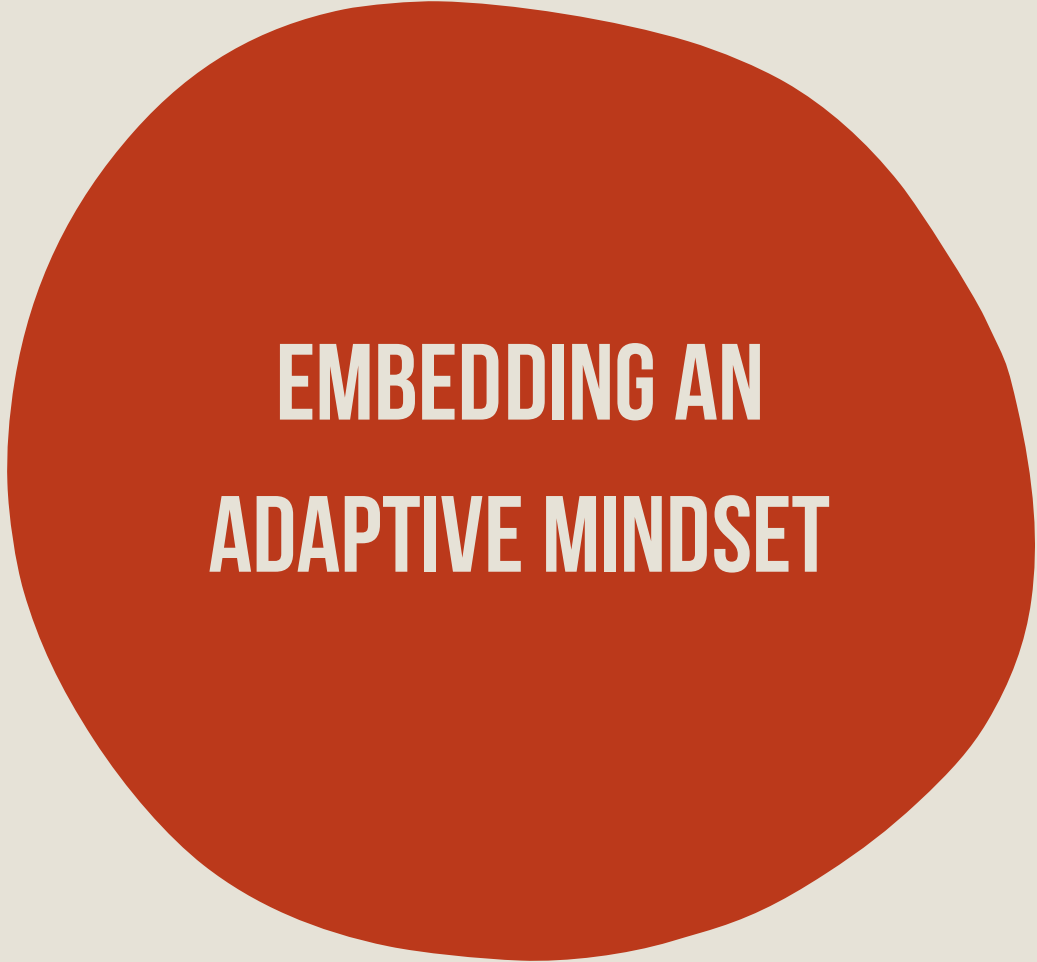
**EMBEDDING AN  
ADAPTIVE MINDSET**

**VALUING  
'VALUE'**

*HEAL, DON'T HARM*

*BUILD BACK TOGETHER*





## EMBEDDING AN ADAPTIVE MINDSET

- 
- 
- Adaptation – the ability to form, and reform, in response to the shocks, stress and changing circumstances.
  - Adaptation is often framed as a challenge for communities, institutions and organisations, but they have particular relevance for individuals.
  - Adaptive mindsets refers to the ability for individuals that occupy positions of influence and decision-making, to form and reform approaches, strategies, and decisions to respond to shocks, stress, and changing circumstances.



## VALUING 'VALUE'

- 
- The concept of 'value' has a distinct cultural dimension that is often unknown, unspoken, or made not important.
  - In emergencies decisions are made according to values, some of which are codified in laws and policies (life>property> environment).
  - 'Valuing Value' creates an understanding that values are rarely universal, and the values held by Indigenous people may be different to non-Indigenous people.





# HEAL, DON'T HARM

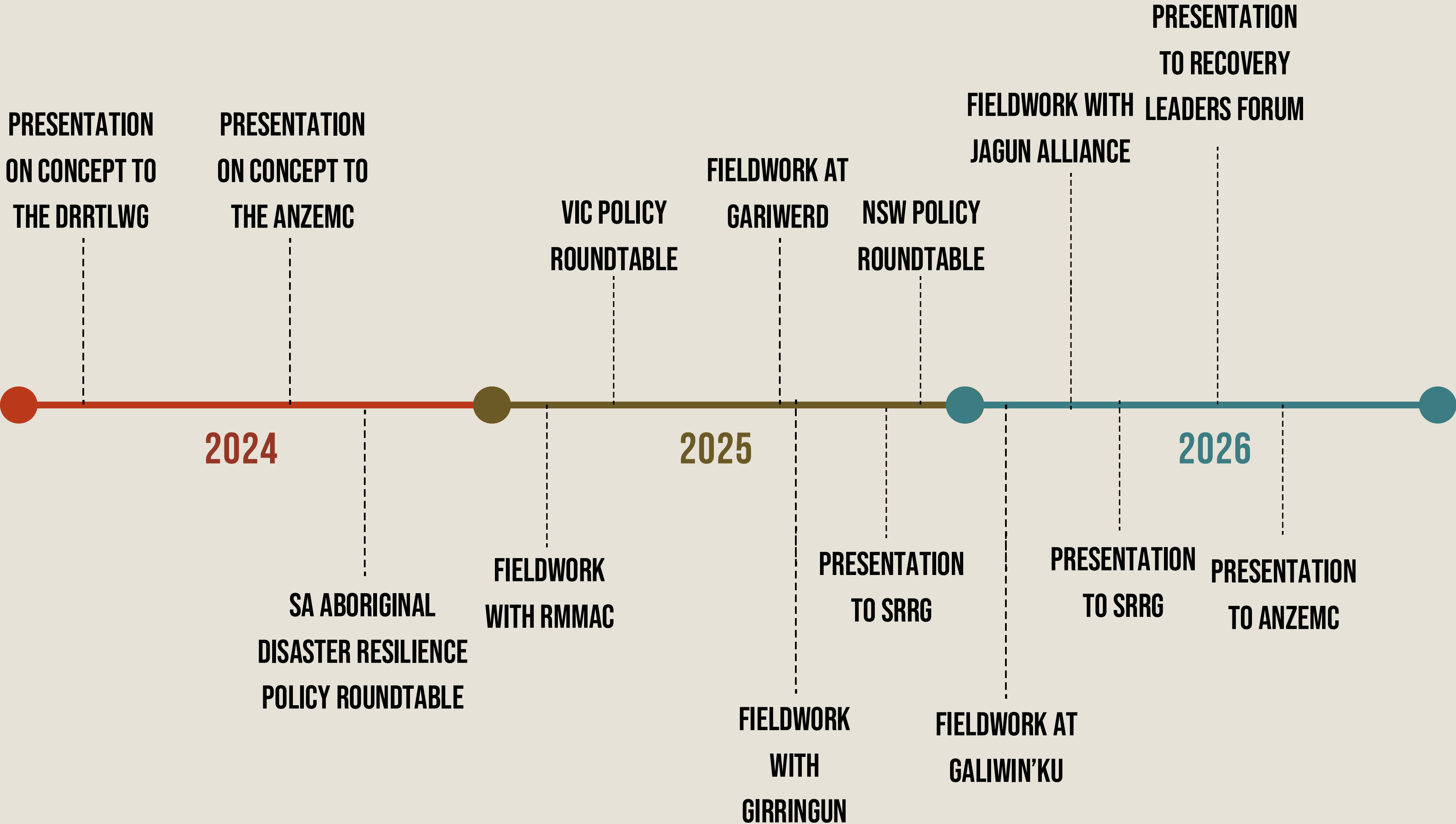
- 
- 
- Racism exists. In times of emergencies, no one, and no community, should be treated differently or made to feel unwelcome, or like an inconvenience.
  - Emergencies are stressful times, and emergency service staff have a responsibility to be individuals that provide a sense of calm and confidence.
  - In times of fires, floods, cyclones, and heatwaves, racism should not be an additional hazard that Indigenous people face.



## BUILD BACK TOGETHER

- 
- Recognising that Indigenous people suffer the continued disadvantages of colonisation, post-disaster recovery provides important opportunities to recalibrate Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships.
  - Longer term recovery provides opportunities to work together, and agency staff should embrace these as important moments that can provide restoration and healing.
  - Effective recovery begins by being a person first, and taking responsibility to foreground community needs and priorities before policies and administration.





## NEXT STEPS

- **August 2026** - Engaging with states and territories
- **August 2026** - Consulting First Nations Peaks
- **August - September 2026** - Incorporating all feedback and finalising Framework
- **October 2026** - Final Framework to ANZEMC for endorsement



# QUESTIONS?

Get in touch:  
[nidr@monash.edu](mailto:nidr@monash.edu)

