

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 November 2002

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(22) Output: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Senator Ludwig (L&C 21) asked:

- (a) Can you provide a copy of the Community Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) policy guidelines?
- (b) Provide a breakdown of how those (Municipal Services) funds are allocated – to which areas and what the money was expended on?

Answer:

- (a) A copy of the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) policy 2002-05 is attached. The Policy was approved by the ATSI Board, in April 2002.
- (b) Municipal Services funding is provided through Regional Council budgets. The 2002-03 Regional Council allocations for Municipal Services amount to \$41,170,694. A dissection of the Municipal Services allocations by State/Territory jurisdiction is as follows:

Victoria	\$ 754,323
Queensland	\$ 3,934,917
South Australia	\$ 7,562,419
Western Australia	\$16,674,376
Tasmania	\$ 227,689
Northern Territory	\$12,016,970

Based on Municipal Services expenditure over the last couple of financial years, it is expected that the 2002-03 Municipal Services allocations will be expended as follows:

Essential Services Infrastructure Maintenance	\$ 31,500,000
Diesel Fuel for Power Generation	\$ 6,500,000
Essential Service Operators	\$ 2,000,000
Environmental Health Workers	\$ 300,000
Home Living Skills	\$ 200,000
Landscaping Dust Control Measures	\$ 300,000
Dog/Animal/Pest Control	\$ 300,000

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(23) Output: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Senator Ludwig (L&C 21) asked:

- a) Provide a breakdown of the funds expended to date in relation to the welfare reform and participation program.
- b) Can you also show the geographic area and the area of welfare reform?
- c) Also, provide a copy of the guidelines for that component?

Answer:

a) - b) Sub-Output 5.6 Welfare Reform - Participation has been included into the ATSIC output structure during 2002-03 in response to the 2001-02 Budget Measure 'Promoting Self-reliance for Indigenous People - Community Participation Agreements and Capacity Building'.

The following table provides a summary of expenditure to 13 December 2002 by geographical region.

ATSIC Region	2001-02	2002-03	TOTAL
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
National Office*	890.2	95.8	986.0
Alice Springs (NT)	79.7	0.0	79.7
Murdi Paaki (NSW)	50.0	50.0	100.0
Wunan (WA)	0.0	3.5	3.5
Peninsula (QLD)	6.0	0.0	6.0
Kamilaroi (NSW)	29.0	0.0	29.0
Wangka-Wilurrara (SA)	8.0	0.0	8.0
TOTAL	1062.9	149.3	1212.2

Note: * Costs not clearly attributable to a defined region have been attributed to the National office. This includes community consultations from across ATSIC Regions as well as National projects like the National Indigenous Governance Conference.

- c) A copy of the guidelines is attached to question no. 24. The guidelines for the initiative are still under development. They will be based on the broad

policy parameters set by the Government and the lessons learned through subsequent engagement with a number of Indigenous communities around these themes as part of an action research approach to developing a policy framework and implementation plan.

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SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 November 2002

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(24) Output: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Senator Crossin (L&C 22) asked:

Provide a copy of the policy framework under which ATSIC is operating and rolling out the Community Participation Agreements (CPAs)?

Answer:

The aim of the Community Participation Agreements initiative is to involve the community in identifying practical ways people can contribute to their families and communities in return for their income support. Communities will also be able to plan for better service delivery at the local level. An important part of the initiative is to build community capacity. ATSIC's role is to assist communities to develop and manage the Community Participation Agreements and support activities such as leadership, strengthening culture and community governance.

The goals of the CPA/Capacity Building initiative are:

- Greater participation by individuals in community designed activities that contribute constructively to family and community life;
- Enhancement of community cohesion and structures;
- Communities are able to verbalise their needs and aspirations and develop actions to address those needs; and
- Individuals receive their full entitlements under the income support system.

By achieving these goals it is hoped that in the future:

- Government agencies will be better able to respond to the needs and aspirations identified of communities;
- Communities will have the skills to explore potential opportunities and linkages with other government programs, services and the private sector;
- Individuals will possess the necessary skills to capitalise on local opportunities;
- Communities will be better able to address social issues; and
- Communities will have control over their own future.

The development of the initiative is underpinned by a number of key principles.

These are that CPAs:

- Are community owned and driven;
- Increase self-reliance through social and economic involvement in community;
- Address the debilitating aspects of welfare dependence, while promoting the developmental opportunities of mutual obligation;
- Support appropriate community decision-making structures;
- Support innovative and flexible arrangements to address community needs;
- Bring government and communities together; and
- Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture.

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS/
CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE
OVERVIEW OF STRATEGY
December 2002**

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the strategy for implementing the Community Participation Agreements/ Capacity Building initiative. This document recognises that the implementation plan is a lengthy document designed for those who will administer the initiative and that other stakeholders may have a need for a more concise overview.

2. GOVERNMENT AIM OF THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS INITIATIVE

The stated aim of Government in funding the Community Participation Agreements initiative as part of the *Australians Working Together* package is as follows.

“These agreements will involve the community in identifying practical ways people can contribute to their families and communities in return for their income support. Communities will also be able to plan for better service delivery at the local level.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission will assist communities to develop and manage the Community Participation Agreements and support activities such as leadership, strengthening culture and community governance.”

Australians Working Together Fact Sheet – May 2001

The Government explained why Community Participation Agreements were needed by the following statement.

“There are few opportunities in some remote Indigenous communities for people on income support to meet activity test requirements. In others, people have been exempt from activity testing. We want all Australians to be active and involved in their communities, to be using their skills and potential and to be looking for work when they can”

Australians Working Together Fact Sheet – May 2001

3. WHAT MUST FEATURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT (CPA) INITIATIVE?

It is clear from the government statements that there are a number of critical features involved in the development of the CPA initiative. They are:

- Undertaking an activity in return for income support
- Focus on remote areas
- ATSIC is to work with Centrelink and the Department of Family and Community Services
- Plan for better service delivery at the local level
- Develop agreements with 94 communities
- Initiative to take place between 1 July 2001 and 30 June 2005

4. PROPOSED GOALS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS

The goals of the CPA/ Capacity Building initiative are:

- Greater participation by individuals in community designed activities that contribute constructively to family and community life;
- Enhancement of community cohesion and structures;
- Communities are able to articulate their needs and aspirations and develop actions to address those needs; and
- Individuals receive their full entitlements under the income support system.

By achieving these goals it is hoped that in the future:

- Government agencies will have the opportunity to respond to the needs and aspirations identified by the community;
- Communities will have the skills to explore potential opportunities and linkages with other government programs, services and the private sector;
- Individuals possess the necessary skills to capitalise on local opportunities;
- Communities can address social issues; and
- Communities will have control over their own future.

5. PROPOSED PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS

The principles of Community Participation Agreements are that they:

- Are community owned and driven;
- Increase self-reliance through social and economic involvement in community;
- Address the debilitating aspects of welfare dependence, while promoting the developmental opportunities of mutual obligation;
- Support appropriate community decision-making structures;
- Support innovative and flexible arrangements to address community needs and aspirations;
- Bring government and communities together;
- Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture; and
- Recognise rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

6. METHODOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

The following concepts are integrally linked and directly relevant to the intention of the CPA measure to develop sustainable and appropriate ways of increasing social and economic participation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

a) Participatory development

Participatory community-driven development involves stakeholders in sharing the development and control of initiatives which affect them, including having input into decision-making and resource use. Stakeholders can include local leaders, organisations and groups, the private sector, local governance authorities interested residents and the particular target group at which the initiative may be directed.

The goals of community-driven development processes are to respond to local needs through facilitating collective action, build problem-solving skills, and promote ownership and care of local assets. Participatory processes are the key building blocks for achieving these objectives, and for ensuring that communities are in control of planning, implementation, operation, maintenance and evaluation of development projects. Participatory processes include effective information dissemination, spaces for discussion and debate, and strategies for ensuring widespread inclusion of stakeholders.

There is a strong evidence-base from a variety of community development initiatives, including international initiatives in developing countries, that participatory processes are most effective in achieving sustainable solutions.

b) Community capacity

Community capacity refers to the mix of skills, commitment to act, knowledge and resources that a community can draw upon to grasp or create opportunities that address local issues.

Communities, individuals and groups within communities differ in their levels of capacity. It is important to assess the existing levels of capacity as well as the limits of that capacity when designing appropriate processes and developing new actions. Where possible, development processes should include opportunities for local stakeholders to build capacity while engaged in the process itself. For example, instead of employing a consultant to design and administer a survey, local stakeholders are assisted to design, administer and analyse their own survey.

c) Social capital

Social capital is a concept that has spawned a number of definitions and theoretical debates, but there is essentially agreement that it refers to social relationships – the ‘glue’ that holds people together, or the ‘lubricant’ that facilitates collective action for mutual benefit. In essence, social capital refers to the qualities of interpersonal relationships, and the degrees of connection these provide within and between groups of people. Without a degree of social capital, cooperation in collective action cannot occur and access to the information and opportunities that arise from connections to others is severely limited.

Social capital is also seen as underpinning the development of other kinds of capital, such as physical, economic, environmental and cultural capital. Processes that build on existing good relations, and seek to extend such relations, can exponentially increase the pace of development across all the capitals.

d) Strengths / assets mapping

Community development techniques include mapping the strengths or assets of a community as well as identifying issues and problems. Strengths or assets mapping entails collecting information on the human capital in a given community, its physical infrastructure and equipment, its social infrastructure (local groups and organisations), and economic capital (including businesses). The information is then used for a variety of purposes such as contributing to community planning, linking people with common interests, finding gaps in services and sparking new community actions and enterprises, identifying better uses for existing community resources.

The process of developing CPAs with interested communities could include the use of an adapted strengths/assets mapping tool as a means of collecting information on available and potential opportunities for social and economic participation. It may also be used for collecting the views of local people about the kinds of activities they consider income support recipients should be required to participate in, and how local people could be involved in the compliance aspect of activity testing.

e) Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research is a methodology appropriate to projects that aim to maximise participant ownership and control and experiential learning. It is a cyclical process involving planning, action, reflection and change, and it ensures that the target group participants and other stakeholders are closely involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Rather than waiting until the end of a project before evaluating it, participatory Action Research enables learning along the way and it allows for adjustments to be made in response to such learnings, and it creates a culture of continuous improvement.

Participatory Action Research is consistent with the aim of the CPA measure to closely involve Indigenous community members in developing appropriate local agreements and mechanisms for implementation.

7. PROPOSED APPROACH TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS

The Community Participation Agreements initiative must incorporate a flexible approach to allow for the wide variety of community-driven responses that may arise. While there are some key expectations of Government in funding this initiative, they do not limit a selected community's ability to develop plans to build individual and community capacity. They merely reflect a Government intention to share responsibility with the community.

The proposed approach consists of a selection process along with a staged agreement process. The selection of communities will at least initially be determined by some core baseline criteria developed by stakeholder agencies. The primary criterion is remoteness. However, governance structures, readiness, potential for sustainable partnerships and accommodation availability are a range of other issues that might be considered. Selected communities will be provided with a basic outline of the CPA initiative. If these communities wish more information on CPAs, ATSI and Centrelink can provide a community information session on the initiative.

A stage one agreement commences if the community agrees that they wish to investigate the CPA process further. The major activities involved in stage one are the development of a

community profile (including a list of participation activities) and the building of capacity within the community to maintain, interpret and market the community profile. This process will be assisted by expertise funded by ATSIC and approved by the community to work with the community. During this stage, an individual or team will be drawn from the community as a point to sustain and promote the CPA initiative within the community.

The completion of the community profile and activity list will lead into the development of stage two agreements. In stage two, community members will be expected to undertake activities detailed in the community profile either formally or notionally in return for income support.

During stage two the community may also work with government and non-government organisations in the region to develop actions to address needs and aspirations identified in the community profile.

Funding is intended to support:

- Agreement making;
- Capacity development;
- Change management;
- Improvements to governance; and
- Community profiling.

The CPA initiative is funded to 30 June 2005 and cannot guarantee ongoing funding beyond that date. CPAs cannot guarantee changes to service delivery arrangements. For example, if the community profile indicates that the community believes a school should be built on community, this does not require governments to respond accordingly.

8. PARTICIPATION OPTIONS

The extent of participation approaches might form a matrix with the following axes:

- Voluntary to compulsory
- Informal to formal
- Individual to selected groups, to family/clan groups to community-wide to Regional

The range of approaches are too numerous to clearly define and any such definition would lend itself to a prescriptive range of implementation models rather than the community-driven approach requested by Government. Each community has their own needs and aspirations. Consequently, the community will choose the participation framework most suitable to them.