



wa council of
social service

2023-2025

Strategic

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A plan to engage community and accelerate change

The COVID-19 pandemic experience was unprecedented, causing many to question social norms and desire a more sustainable and compassionate future. We want people to appreciate and take seriously the unique opportunity we have right now, to take action and create the kinds of communities we all want to live in.

To change the systems, behaviours and attitudes that perpetuates entrenched poverty, inequity and exclusion WACOSS challenges and develops alternative solutions to systematic structures, community priorities and galvanises community support.

WACOSS's theory of change is working together to build ownership - **Collectivise**, build broad base community support - **Convince**, and create pathways for systematic change - **Create**. The critical challenge is how we ensure a shared vision for Western Australia across Western Australian Government, public and the community Service Sector.

Strategy 2023 is bold in its ambition, challenging belief structures and cultural norms, and building community empathy. Now is the time for us as a community to come together and create a fair and just society. We invite all Western Australians to join with us to drive change and overcome entrenched poverty, inequity and exclusion.



The WACOSS fundamental why

WACOSS is the peak body for the community services sector in Western Australia and works to create an inclusive, just and equitable society. We advocate for social and economic change to improve the wellbeing of Western Australians, and to strengthen the community services sector that supports them. WACOSS is part of a network consisting of National, State and Territory Councils of Social Service, who advance the interests of people on low incomes and those made vulnerable by the systems that have been put in place.

As the peak body for the Western Australian community service sector, we believe that communities flourish where people are given the opportunity to contribute and create. We are committed to enabling and leading change that supports healthy, active and inclusive communities.

We need people to care about one another, and understand that poverty is a systemic issue that is not the fault of the individual. Fundamentally we need to foster mutual empathy and work with communities to build their capability and vitality. It is essential that WACOSS remains grounded in community and holds a membership base that aligns with our vision.

To create equitable and empowered communities there must be a strong Peak's voice that works with its members to advocate with and on behalf of those who are the furthest from levers of power and influence, to amplify their concerns and seek justice, to create a society that genuinely works for the benefit of all.



Our theory of change



Our strategic activities are foundational for social change – there is a direct causal relationship between our collectivising, convincing and creating and better community outcomes. WACOSS’s strategic activities influence and improve the systems and policies that cause and perpetuate vulnerability and adversity in the daily lives of people and families. In undertaking our work, we are contributing to an inclusive, just and equitable society.

At the centre of our theory of change is the shared vision articulated in the co-developed WA Outcomes Framework. Based on

common ownership and an agreed way of measuring what counts, the Framework enhances our understanding of what works and what doesn’t, so we can be more effective and efficient in investing and delivering services to achieve outcomes.

We believe that by having an agreed vision, language and measurement framework we can better align and coordinate our activities, show how our efforts individually and collectively add to accomplishing social change, and demonstrate our impact.

Inequitable and unjust society

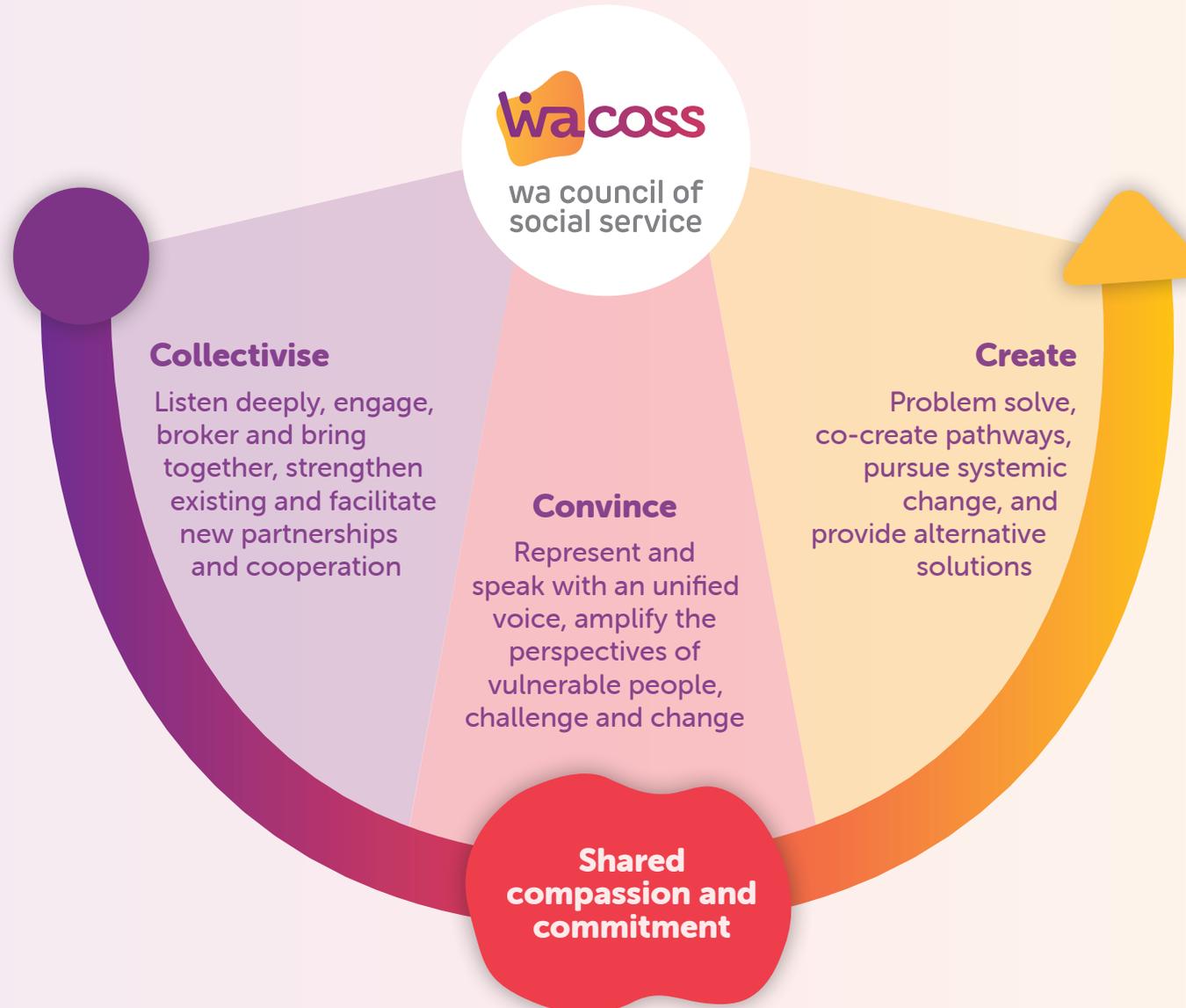
Stakeholders

- ◆ People and communities who live with vulnerability and disadvantage
- ◆ Broader Western Australian communities
- ◆ WACOSS members
- ◆ WACOSS peers and allies
- ◆ State, Federal and local governments

An inclusive, just and fair society

Western Australian people, families and communities

- ◆ Safe and free from harm
- ◆ Financially secure and have suitable, stable and culturally appropriate housing
- ◆ Are healthy and well
- ◆ Have the skills, resources and experiences to contribute to the economy/ community
- ◆ Are connected to communities/ culture



Engaging Community and Accelerating Change

Strategy 2023 – 2025

Our Vision

Inclusive, just and equitable society.

Our Purpose

We drive social change with communities, through collective action and policy formulation, strengthening community services and influencing decision makers to ensure justice and equity.

Our Values



Heart

Our work is grounded in care and compassion for a fairer world



Curiosity

We seek bold and empowering ideas and solutions to issues our communities face



Integrity

Our approaches reflect and respect human rights and our practices are ethical and inclusive



Tenacity

We have the courage to persevere for transformative and positive change

Our Strategic Catalysts to accelerate change

1 Building on a strong organisation

How we will drive change

- ◆ Embed and bring to life our values across our systems and processes in a work environment which provides opportunities for staff to grow
- ◆ We foster a strong collaborative WACOSS membership and Western Australian communities
- ◆ We forge partnerships and increase resources to deliver our purpose
- ◆ Best practice in governance

How we will measure success

- ◆ Staff engagement and feedback
- ◆ Annual membership survey
- ◆ Financial sustainability and funded projects with partners
- ◆ Highly functioning and engaged board and membership

2 Collaborating with people, families and communities

- ◆ Expand partnerships and relationships with diverse people, families and communities
- ◆ We are an effective ally for Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations and Aboriginal leaders in the journey to self-determination

- ◆ Communities, regions, people with lived experience and the sector are involved and support our work
- ◆ The WACOSS team is engaged and collaborating with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal leaders, supporting self-determination

3 Influential research and policy

- ◆ WACOSS develops influential policy and research focused on wellbeing and a just and inclusive community that works with our members and strategic partners to translate it into effective action

- ◆ Increase in Government investment, commitment, and/or policy in key focus areas:
 - Ensure low income workers and households have adequate resources and quality of life
 - Women's economic participation and the true value of care work
 - Child, family and community wellbeing
 - Justice reinvestment
 - Climate resilience for low income households
 - Digital inclusion

Our Strategic Catalysts to accelerate change

4 Powerful movement for social and economic justice

How we will drive change

- Strengthen public support, and enable citizen-led action, to increase social and economic justice and compassion
- WACOSS is a powerful trusted voice advocating for a Western Australia free from poverty and disadvantage
- Champion investments in social capital, human capital, and financial capital to eliminate poverty and to meet the needs of individuals, families and communities

How we will measure success

- Increased public and community support for WACOSS vision and campaigns
- Elevating the powerful voices of people experiencing poverty and ensure they are supported to participate in process and decisions which impact their lives
- Increased investment in early invention and preventative programs that are designed in place by communities

5 Enhance the value of the community service sector

- Support widespread adoption and implementation of the WA Outcomes Framework and shared measurement for evaluating services
- Government funding is committed to creating a robust community service sector to maintain a strong civil society, socially and economically
- Governments recognise the women dominated industries make enormous contributions to the economy.

- Develop and embed agreed community priorities and outcome measurements in service design, procurement, service delivery and review
- An increase of 10% in funding for new Community services that meets growing demand
- Improve systemic State Government funding, including an indexation policy that reflects the real cost increases
- Government demonstrate they value the economic and social value of the Community Service Sector
- An outcome from the Fair Work Commission on industry-level gender pay equity that results in a significant increase in award wages, matched by government funding



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