



natsiwa

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

NATSIWA Women Deliver 2026 Report

Background

The Women Deliver 2026 Conference (WD2026) was held from 27–30 April 2026, regionally hosted in Narm (Melbourne), Australia — the first time the global Women Deliver Conference was hosted regionally, across the Oceanic Pacific, rather than at a single location.

Women Deliver 2026 provided NATSIWA with an important opportunity to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were represented in national and international discussions on gender equality.

For NATSIWA, our participation was not just about attending the conference. We wanted to make sure we went to Women Deliver informed by what our members and women in community were telling us, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women had opportunities to actively participate and lead, and that we brought information and learnings back into our ongoing work.

Our participation included consultation before the conference, working with the other National Women's Alliances, representation through two Alliance side events, participation in First Nations and other conference sessions, engagement in gender justice and declaration discussions, maintaining a presence at the National Women's Alliances exhibition booth, contributing to the joint report to the Minister for Women and participating in the post-conference webinar.

Preparation and Consultation

In preparation for Women Deliver, NATSIWA undertook consultation with members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in community and our Advisory Group.

We held four online member meetings, with an average attendance of 4–6 members at each meeting, and three community meetings. We also surveyed our Advisory Group.

The consultation was important because we wanted the issues we took to Women Deliver to reflect what women were telling us, rather than NATSIWA deciding the priorities on their behalf.

Women raised the importance of opportunities for shared learning and making connections with Indigenous women internationally. They wanted culturally grounded and self-determined solutions that recognise Indigenous knowledge, community leadership, healing and intergenerational wellbeing. Women also raised the need for long-term secure funding for Aboriginal women's organisations and recognition of cultural authority and community-led decision-making.

The overarching message from our women was that gender equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women cannot be separated from self-determination, cultural safety, justice, healing and sovereignty.

These priorities helped guide the sessions we attended, the conversations we participated in and the issues NATSIWA raised throughout Women Deliver.

Working with the National Women's Alliances

NATSIWA worked with the other National Women's Alliances in the preparation and delivery of the collective Women Deliver activities.

This included planning the Alliance presence at the conference, the exhibition booth and two side events.

Working together provided an opportunity to demonstrate how the National Women's Alliances can collaborate on common issues, while each Alliance continues to represent the women and communities it serves.

This became an important discussion in its own right during Women Deliver, particularly with international delegates, who were interested in understanding how the Alliance model operates.

Alliance Side Events and NATSIWA Representation

NATSIWA had an active role in the two National Women's Alliances side events.

Sarah Corrigan, NATSIWA Chair and NSW Director, facilitated the first event, *This is Leadership – Diverse Communities Driving Change*. Nicole Brown spoke on behalf of NATSIWA as part of the panel.

The discussion looked at different forms of women's leadership that are often undervalued, and highlighted community-led solutions.

Approximately 120 people attended the event. The Minister for Women, Katy Gallagher, provided opening remarks, and the event was also attended by Sex Discrimination Commissioner Anna Cody and Office for Women Executive Director, Padma Raman.

NATSIWA was also represented by Ella Raciti, as our youth representative at the second Alliance event, *We Belong at the Table – Getting Young Voices into Policy*.

The event focused on the importance of bringing young women into decision-making and creating opportunities for young women to participate in policy, advocacy and leadership. Approximately 60 people attended.

Having Sarah facilitate, Nicole speak on behalf of NATSIWA and Ella participate as our youth representative, meant our women were not just attending Women Deliver. They were actively involved in leading discussions and representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

It also reinforced the importance of creating opportunities for younger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to participate in these forums and develop their experience in policy and advocacy.

National Women's Alliances Exhibition Booth

The National Women's Alliances maintained an exhibition booth throughout Women Deliver.

NATSIWA made sure that at least one NATSIWA representative remained at the booth at all times, so people stopping by could hear directly about NATSIWA, who we represent and the work we do.

The booth became much more than somewhere to provide information and promotional material. It created opportunities for conversations with delegates from Australia and overseas about NATSIWA and the National Women's Alliances.

There was significant international interest in the Alliance model. We had numerous questions about how the Alliances are funded, how five different organisations work together, how we maintain our individual autonomy and priorities, and how we manage collaboration when organisations can also be competing for funding.

These conversations were useful because they made us think about what is different about the Australian Alliance model. Each Alliance maintains its own membership, priorities and advocacy, while also being able to come together and provide collective advice on issues affecting women.

The joint Alliance exhibition space connected with approximately 500 delegates, with strong interest from both Australian and international organisations in the work of the individual Alliances and the National Women's Alliances model.

The interest has continued beyond the conference. We have since had further conversations with people we connected with from Mexico and Africa, who were interested in understanding how our Alliance model works and exploring whether aspects of it could be relevant in their own countries.

This was an unexpected but positive outcome of Women Deliver.

Gender Justice and the First Nations Women's Statement

Gender justice became an important part of NATSIWA's engagement before and during Women Deliver.

The CEO attended meetings with June Oscar AO and her team prior to Women Deliver, with these discussions continuing during the conference.

The CEO also attended a dinner with June Oscar, where the discussion focused on the First Nations Women's Statement. An important part of this discussion was the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples as sovereign rights-holders and not merely stakeholders.

During Women Deliver, the CEO attended several other discussions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women from across Australia and Indigenous women internationally who had been involved in the declaration process. The CEO also participated in discussions with members associated with the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Institute, where the Statement was considered and finalised.

The CEO did not directly contribute text to the Declaration. NATSIWA did, however, participate in the Declaration consultation process and signed onto the Declaration, becoming the only National Women's Alliance to do so.

The discussion about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples being rights-holders, rather than stakeholders, was particularly important.

We often talk about genuine consultation and partnership, but this discussion goes further. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women should not simply be stakeholders who are asked for their views. We have cultural authority, rights and knowledge and should have a role in making decisions that affect our women, families and communities.

Gender justice is an area NATSIWA will continue to engage in and consider, within our future policy and advocacy work.

Indigenous Women's Leadership and International Connections

One of the most valuable parts of Women Deliver was the opportunity to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women from across Australia and Indigenous women internationally.

NATSIWA participated in the pre-conference event *Decolonising Futures: First Nations Indigenous Women Advancing Treaty and Global Solidarity*. Through the pre-conference and Women Deliver, NATSIWA strengthened connections with Wiyi Yani U Thangani, the Grevillea Foundation and women from the Pilbara.

NATSIWA also attended sessions including:

- *Adapting On Country – Indigenous Leadership in Climate Resilience*
- *Indigenous Birth Sovereignty Lab: From Resistance to Policy Change*
- *Decolonising Futures: First Nations Indigenous Women Advancing Treaty and Global Solidarity*
- *Moving Indigenous Women's Stories to Advocacy and Action*
- *From Sovereignty to Solidarity: First Nations Women Shaping Global Futures.*
- *Beyond Resilience: Climate Justice on the Road to COP31.*

These sessions provided opportunities to hear from Indigenous women about what is happening in their own communities and countries and to discuss common issues.

While our cultures and circumstances are different, there were many common discussions around sovereignty, women's leadership, safety, health, climate change, culture and the importance of Indigenous women being involved in decisions affecting their communities.

The opportunity for international Indigenous women's connection and shared learning was something our members had identified as important before the conference, and Women Deliver provided an opportunity to start building some of these relationships.

Climate Change

Climate change was prominent during Women Deliver and is an area NATSIWA needs to consider further in our work.

NATSIWA attended *Adapting on Country – Indigenous Leadership in Climate Resilience*, and *Beyond Resilience: Climate Justice on the Road to COP31*. Climate change was raised across several conference sessions.

Discussions highlighted how climate change and extreme weather affect women differently, including through increased caring responsibilities and impacts on health, housing, economic security and community infrastructure, displacement, increased care burdens, gender-based violence and economic exclusion, whilst recognising Indigenous women as leaders in climate action. There was also considerable discussion about the need for a stronger gender lens in Australian climate policy.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, there are additional considerations around Country, culture and community. The discussions highlighted the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and women's leadership being part of climate resilience, adaptation and disaster planning.

This is an area NATSIWA has not previously had a strong focus on, yet it is one we should consider further as part of our future policy work.

Health and Birthing Sovereignty

NATSIWA attended the *Maypilama/Indigenous Birthing Sovereignty Lab*.

This was relevant to our existing health advocacy and the issues women continue to raise about access to culturally safe health services.

The discussion around birthing sovereignty also connected with the broader discussions at Women Deliver around self-determination and gender justice.

For NATSIWA, culturally safe health care is not only about women being able to access a service. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women also need to be involved in decisions about how services are designed and delivered and what culturally safe care looks like for our women and communities.

What We Learnt

Women Deliver reinforced many of the issues our women are already raising with NATSIWA, but it also gave us some new areas to consider.

One of the strongest learnings was how interconnected the issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are.

Women's safety cannot be separated from housing and economic security. Health cannot be separated from cultural safety and access to services. Caring responsibilities affect women's employment and economic security. Climate change will increasingly impact health, caring, housing, communities and Country.

The gender justice discussions also gave us a different way of looking at consultation, partnership and decision-making.

The discussion about being rights-holders, rather than stakeholders, is particularly important for NATSIWA. We need to consider what this means for our advocacy and for the way governments engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Another important learning was the value of youth participation. Having Ella represent NATSIWA demonstrated why we need to intentionally create opportunities for younger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to participate in policy, advocacy and leadership.

We also learnt that there is considerable international interest in the National Women's Alliances model and opportunities to share what we have learnt about collaboration, whilst maintaining the autonomy of individual organisations.

Outcomes and Follow-up

Our work did not finish when the conference ended.

NATSIWA contributed to the National Women's Alliances joint report to the Minister for Women, ensuring that our activities, experiences and learnings were reflected in the collective report.

The CEO also represented NATSIWA and spoke as part of the National Women's Alliances post-conference webinar, where we shared our experiences and key learnings from Women Deliver with the sector and other stakeholders.

NATSIWA gained 25 sign-ups through the broader Women Deliver engagement.

Our learnings and activities were shared with our membership via email and members meetings.

We have also continued some of the relationships established through Women Deliver, including conversations with international contacts interested in the National Women's Alliances model, support to assist organisations to incorporate Cultural safety framework's into their work.

Acknowledgement and Appreciation

NATSIWA would like to acknowledge and thank the Office for Women for providing the funding and opportunity for the National Women's Alliances to participate in Women Deliver 2026.

As a small national organisation, attending an international conference of this scale would otherwise be difficult for NATSIWA. The funding enabled us to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were represented not only as a delegate, but as a facilitator, speaker and youth representative.

We particularly appreciated the opportunity to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women from across Australia and Indigenous women internationally. The conversations and relationships established through Women Deliver have continued beyond the conference and have opened opportunities for further shared learning and collaboration.

We also appreciated the opportunity to attend alongside the other National Women's Alliances. It gave us time to work together, better understand each other's work and demonstrate the Alliance model to an international audience.

NATSIWA is grateful for the opportunity to participate in Women Deliver 2026 and to take the voices and priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women into this national and international forum.

What This Means for NATSIWA

Women Deliver gave NATSIWA an opportunity to take the priorities raised by our women into a much broader forum and bring back new ideas, relationships and areas for future work.

There are several areas we will continue to build on:

Gender justice is one of these, particularly the work around sovereignty, rights, cultural authority and decision-making. The concept of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as rights-holders rather than stakeholders is something NATSIWA will continue to consider in our policy and advocacy work.

Climate change is another. We need to better understand what climate change means for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and how it intersects with Country, health, housing, caring responsibilities, safety and economic security.

We also need to continue creating opportunities for younger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to participate in NATSIWA's advocacy and represent our women in both national and international forums.

The international connections made through Women Deliver provide opportunities for further shared learning with Indigenous women and for NATSIWA to contribute to international conversations about Indigenous women's rights, sovereignty and gender equality.

Most importantly, Women Deliver reinforced the importance of the process we used: listen to our women before we go, take their priorities with us, make sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have opportunities to participate and lead, bring the knowledge back, and use what we have learnt to strengthen our advocacy.

This is an approach NATSIWA will continue to build on when participating in national and international forums