



HARMONY
ALLIANCE

MIGRANT & REFUGEE
WOMEN FOR CHANGE



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

**HARMONY ALLIANCE:
MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN FOR CHANGE**

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

October 2019 – October 21

Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program and to formally endorse its inaugural Reflect RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Reflect RAP provides Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change a roadmap to begin its reconciliation journey. Through implementing a Reflect RAP, Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change will lay the foundations for future reconciliation initiatives.

We wish Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change well as it takes these first critical steps in its reconciliation journey. We encourage the organisation to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on the successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change on its first RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Message from our Chair

Indigenous Australians represent the oldest living civilisation on earth. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the custodians of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We commit to this acknowledgement on an ongoing basis in a manner that is meaningful in our everyday practice and conversations.

It is vital now more than ever before that, while engaging in any discourse on multiculturalism in modern Australia, we actively seek out any opportunities to examine ourselves and our positioning in relation to the fact that Australia is yet to recognise the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as Australia's First Nations.

It is a commitment of the Harmony Alliance to ensure that the starting point of any conversation we have in relation to the rights of migrant and refugee women is firmly centred around the broader conversation on the rights of First Nations women and First Nations people. Speaking the truth requires intercultural and intersectional dialogue on acknowledgement, reconciliation, responsibility and collaboration.

Our approach is based on the sincere belief that conversations and dialogues provide a space for self-reflection, deep listening and learning, particularly for learning from the multiple histories, experiences and narratives that are Indigenous Australian. These conversations, where undertaken, must be held with full regard to our own subjectivities.

As we take the first steps in our reconciliation journey, we reflect on the words of Dr Jackie Huggins who recently stated:

“Don't expect Aboriginal people to easily welcome you into our world. Some of us will be more open and tolerant than others. It is—it must be remembered—a very long history of violence, of mistrust, of guilt and fear that cannot be simply erased overnight.”

With this in mind, it is important to consider that dialogue also involves a recognition of our place as Australian women from migrant and refugee backgrounds within an overall context of First Nations' rights and self-determination. Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is one step in this direction, and will serve as a foundation for our ongoing work towards reconciliation.

Maria Dimopoulos
Chair
Harmony Alliance

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

Our business

The Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change is the newest of the six National Women's Alliances, funded by the Federal Office for Women to ensure all women's voices are heard in various decision-making processes. Our aim is to provide a national inclusive and informed voice on the multiplicity of issues affecting the quality of engagement, participation and contribution of migrant and refugee women in Australia. We combine grass roots participation and strong community voices with institutional reach and powerful policy advocacy networks to empower migrant women to directly influence systems and to drive positive change.

The Harmony Alliance is made up of five key bodies – Members; Council; Governance Committee; Young Women's Advisory Group; and the Secretariat. Each body plays a different role in the alliance and will therefore have different roles to play in supporting the Reconciliation Action Plan.

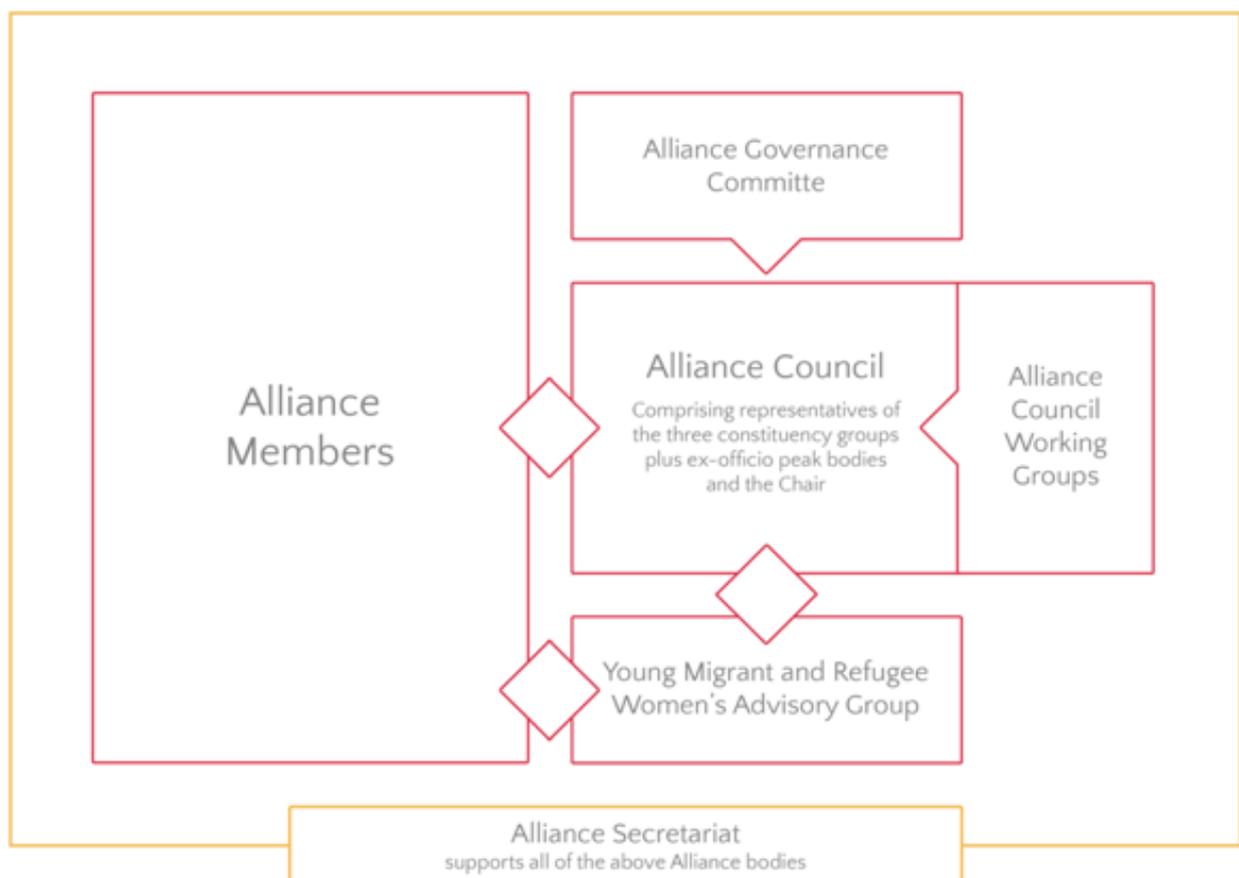
Members of the Harmony Alliance are drawn from three constituency groups:

1. National, state-wide and local organisations representing migrant and refugee women in Australia;
2. National, state-wide and local organisations working for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women in Australia; and
3. Individuals identifying as women from migrant or refugee backgrounds who, in a personal capacity, are making a substantive contribution for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women in Australia.

The Alliance Council is delegated by the Members to carry out the work of the Harmony Alliance in line with the set strategic directions. The council is led by an independent chair and made up of elected representatives from the three constituency groups, as well as ex-officio peak national bodies. The Council is supported by the Governance Committee, which provides high-level advice on strategic growth, sustainability, good governance and effectiveness of the Alliance.

The Young Women’s Advisory Group is made up of individuals identifying as women from migrant or refugee backgrounds aged 18-28 years. The Advisory Group provides advice to the Alliance Council on issues as they relate to young women and drives specific projects work in consultation with the Alliance Council.

All bodies receive substantive and logistical support from the Alliance Secretariat auspiced by Migration Council Australia in their Canberra Office. The Secretariat is the only body with paid employees. It currently consists of one fulltime Manager, who reports to the CEO of Migration Council Australia and one part-time junior officer. It is assisted by employees and volunteers of Migration Council Australia when needed. The Alliance does not currently employ any Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff.



Our RAP

The Harmony Alliance is a newly established organisation that acts as a voice for migrant and refugee women. The organisation aims to provide opportunities for migrant and refugee women to have a voice in policy decisions, on both a domestic and an international level, and promotes greater involvement of migrant and refugee women in all aspects of economic, political and civil life. As an organisation focused primarily on the rights of migrant women, it is critical for us to reflect on the ongoing impacts of colonisation and how we can work to support to support the rights and self-determination of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sisters. Furthermore, many women from migrant backgrounds share Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, and it is important that we work to better advocate for their rights and voices. A Reconciliation Action Plan is important to outline how we will engage with these questions, as well as to embed the values of human rights, equality and inclusion in Harmony Alliance's work.

The Harmony Alliance is a relatively new organisation, and is early in its reconciliation journey. Our Council has set a strong intention to focus on reconciliation, and to support the implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

We have established a partnership with our sister National Women's Alliance, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alliance (NATSIWA). Of note, in May 2018, the Harmony Alliance produced a joint submission with NATSIWA to the Australian Law Reform Commission's review of the Family Law System, and we have agreed to work in partnership to support the implementation of the Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity (JCCD)'s *National Framework to Improve Accessibility to Australian Courts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and Migrant and Refugee women*.

We are working to boost open dialogue between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and migrant and refugee women. Our Victorian launch (March 2018) featured Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women leaders, who extended the opportunity for migrant and refugee women to work more closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women on issues of mutual concern. In November 2018, the Chair of Harmony Alliance hosted a panel at the International Metropolis Conference in Sydney on the topic First Peoples and multicultural Australia: an intercultural dialogue on recognition, reconciliation, truth and collaboration.

The Alliance is also working to ensure that the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work are acknowledged and respected by our members and staff. All Harmony Alliance events or speaking engagements include a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country. All Harmony Alliance Secretariat e-mail signature blocks include an Acknowledgement of Country.

Internally, our Reconciliation Action Plan is championed by our Council, under the leadership of the Chair, Maria Dimopoulos, alongside the efforts of the Secretariat, which provides substantive and logistical support to all members and bodies of the Harmony Alliance.

Relationships



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	• Invite our Sister Alliance, NATSIWA, to connect with our RAP Working Group to guide the implementation of our RAP.	July 2019	Manager, Secretariat
	• Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local or sphere of influence.	December 2019	RWG
	• Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders stakeholders and organisations.	February 2020	Junior Policy Officer, Secretariat
2. Build relationship through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	• Encourage members, staff and volunteers to attend a NRW event.	27 May- 3 June, annually	Manager, Secretariat
	• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our members, staff and volunteers.	27 May- 3 June	Junior Policy Officer
	• Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June	Chair
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	• Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff and members.	June 2019	Chair
	• Circulate the RAP among the Alliance Members, and promote at the annual Harmony Alliance Membership Forum	June 2019	Manager, Secretariat
	• Amend the member welcome email to include reference to the RAP.	July 2019	Junior Policy Officer
	• Publish the RAP on the Harmony Alliance internet for members and stakeholders to access.	October 2019	Manager, Secretariat
	• Publish a Reconciliation Statement on Harmony's website	October 2019	Manager, Secretariat
	• Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey	February 2020	Chair (with support from RWG)
	• Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey	February 2020	Chair (with support from RWG)
	• Promote increased representation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in relevant processes and platforms that Harmony Alliance is involved in.	Review May 2020	Chair
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	• Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination	August 2020	Manager, Secretariat
	• Provide recommendations to Migration Council Australia (as the employer of Harmony Alliance Staff), to ensure HR policies and procedures meet best practice.	October 2020	Manager, Secretariat

Respect



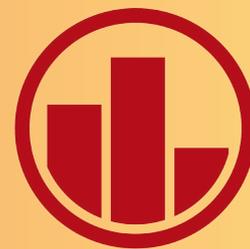
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation. 	December 2020	Manager, Secretariat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. 	January 2021	Manager, Secretariat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate and encourage staff, volunteers and members to use Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride online. 	May 2021	Junior Policy Officer
6. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff, members and volunteers of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. 	July annually	Manager, Secretariat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce our staff, volunteers and members to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events. 	July annually	Junior Policy Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	July annually	Chair
7. Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area. 	February 2021	Chair, with support from RWG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff and member's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	Review May 2020	Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge and respect Traditional Owners on Alliance published materials 	Review December 2019	Manager, Secretariat

Opportunities



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. 	October 2020	Manager, Secretariat
9. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	February 2020	Manager, Secretariat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate available avenues for future procurement opportunities from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses 	March 2020	Manager, Secretariat
10. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership within our organisation. 	August 2020	Manager, Secretariat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote membership to women from migrant and refugee backgrounds who share Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage. 	Review May 2020	RWG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build an understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members to inform future advocacy opportunities for the Alliance. 	June 2020	

Governance and Tracking Progress



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG 	<p>June 2019</p> <p>Sept 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>	<p>Council</p> <p>Manager, Secretariat</p> <p>Manager, Secretariat</p>
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP activities. 	<p>Sept 2019</p> <p>June 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>	<p>Manager, Secretariat</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>Chair, with support from RWG</p>
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. 	<p>30 September 2019</p>	<p>Manager, Secretariat</p>
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	<p>March 2020</p>	<p>Manager, Secretariat</p>

For all enquiries regarding the Harmony Alliance RAP, please contact:

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