



## Statement of Strategic Intent: 2018 - 2021

### Opening statement

Catholic Social Services Australia is the Catholic Church's peak national social services body. Responding to the situation of people living on the margins of the community is central to the life and teachings of Jesus, as articulated in the Gospels. Social services are essential to the mission of the Catholic Church.

### Vision

Catholic Social Services Australia envisages a fairer, more inclusive Australian society that reflects and supports the dignity, equality and participation of all people.

### Mission

Catholic Social Services Australia provides leadership in advancing the social service ministry of the Catholic Church in Australia.

### Value Proposition

As a national advocate, Catholic Social Services Australia works with its members to produce evidence/research which informs public opinion and assists lawmakers to develop just and compassionate social and economic policies that will improve the lives of the poor and vulnerable in Australia. In doing so, Catholic Social Services Australia fosters connectedness and partners with Catholic social service providers.

## Operations

Catholic Social Services Australia draws on the experience of decades of Catholic social service and social policy development in Australia. It serves the Bishops of Australia, Leaders of Religious Institutes, Catholic social service organisations and the broader Church community in advancing the social service ministry of the Church.

Catholic Social Services Australia carries out its Mission by interacting with Catholic organisations, governments, other churches, research institutions and all people of goodwill, to advance the development of social and economic policies, programs and other strategic responses that enhance the human dignity of every person and work towards the social, economic, and spiritual well-being of the Australian community.

## Principles of Catholic Social Teaching

In pursuit of its mission, Catholic Social Services Australia seeks to prioritise the following core principles of Catholic Social Teaching:

- **Dignity of the person**

Our vision for society springs from our understanding of the fundamental dignity, sanctity and worth of every human life.

- **Common good and community**

People are fundamentally social beings, and how we organise socially, politically and economically has implications for our capacity to grow in community

- **Preferential option for the poor**

The most important measure of the success of our community is the manner in which we direct our resources to assist those most in need.

- **Rights and responsibilities**

Our participation in community brings with it both a range of rights and protections and a range of duties and obligations.

## Organisational Values

- **Compassion**  
Demonstrating a commitment to the concerns of the poor and marginalised.
- **Collaboration**  
Building partnerships and alliances on common concerns within the Church and the wider community, locally, nationally and internationally.
- **Excellence**  
Pursuing evidence and research based best practice and continuous improvement in all aspects of our work.
- **Accountability**  
Focusing on delivering outcomes and operating in a manner that is both transparent and efficient.
- **Innovation**  
Being prepared to take risks in pursuit of our objectives and encouraging passion and integrity.

## Strategic Priorities

- 1) **To advocate with a distinctive Catholic voice for all people who are poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged, particularly children, young people, families and Indigenous people, by:**
  - 1.1 Influencing public policy and legislation through engagement with decision-makers using sound evidence based in research and the lived experience of Catholic social service providers;
  - 1.2 Campaigning for social justice;
  - 1.3 Speaking out with the most disadvantaged in all aspects of our work;
  - 1.4 Drawing on Catholic Social Teaching principles to frame and guide our work.

**2) To develop and strengthen the Catholic social services sector in Australia through:**

- 2.1 Supporting the sustainability of member agencies by fostering a network-wide culture of collaboration, connectedness, mutual support and trust;
- 2.2 Facilitating opportunities for member engagement in relevant national policy, research and practice developments.

**3) Reflecting and celebrating the Catholic Church's mission of charity and social justice, including by:**

- 3.1 Fostering Catholic identity and mission among Member Agencies;
- 3.2 Facilitating pathways and programs for leadership development and mission formation in Catholic identity and mission across the Catholic Social Services Australia network;
- 3.3 Ensuring constructive links with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Religious Australia and other organisations of the Catholic Church;
- 3.4 Developing alliances and partnerships with other agencies in order to further our social service ministries.

**4) Ensuring the capacity and sustainability of the Catholic Social Services Australia to deliver the strategic priorities, through:**

- 4.1 Provision of a sound funding base;
- 4.2 Skilled and mission-focused Board and staff;
- 4.3 Effective administrative and communications strategies and systems.