



MYAN NSW

Multicultural Youth Affairs Network

MYAN NSW KAIROS Program

Evaluation Report

30 May 2024

Developed by For-Purpose Evaluations



"KAIROS gives you the space and time to learn more about yourself and others. In a world where we are constantly rushing from one thing to the next, KAIROS is a breath of fresh air that allows you to connect with others and remember what is truly important in life." – KAIROS Participant

Acknowledgements

For-Purpose Evaluations acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which MYAN NSW conducts their services, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We pay respect to Elders past and present.

For-Purpose Evaluations would like to thank the people who generously provided essential insights and perspectives to this report. We are grateful for their openness when discussing their experiences.

About For-Purpose Evaluations

[For-Purpose Evaluations](#) is a social enterprise supporting for-purpose organisations around the world to create and implement social impact measurement and evaluation frameworks, and to evaluate existing programs and projects. We also provide interactive capacity building workshops on the topics of social impact measurement, theory of change, program logic models and communicating impact. We balance a robust academic approach with a pragmatic understanding of what it is really like to provide high quality supportive programs to people and communities with complex needs. Please see our [website](#) for testimonials and a list of previous and current clients. You can follow us on [LinkedIn](#) to learn more about our day-to-day work.

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Executive Summary

This evaluation identifies the key outcomes of the KAIROS Program for participants, and the inclusive design elements that support these outcomes. The KAIROS program was delivered in Sydney between November 2022 and April 2024. The evaluation was conducted by [For-Purpose Evaluations](#) between May 2023 and May 2024 and combines outcomes harvesting and theory-based evaluative approaches.

The evaluation asks the following learning questions:

1. What outcomes do the young people in the program experience? How does the program contribute to these outcomes?
 - a. Specifically, how does the program build conversations about how young women and girls respond to and recover from times of crisis?
2. What program design elements contribute to safer spaces for young women and girls from cultural communities?

About MYAN

MYAN NSW is a state-wide specialist youth organisation, supporting young people arriving in Australia within a humanitarian context. Working closely with refugees, migrants and cultural communities, MYAN NSW provides support and safe spaces for young people to build the skills, knowledge, and networks they need to actively participate in Australian society. MYAN NSW provides best practice leadership to a statewide network of practitioners within the youth and settlement space. MYAN NSW engages, connects, and builds community service sector capacity, to meet the needs of multicultural young people, using a trauma-informed lens.

About the KAIROS Program

The KAIROS Program is a media and participation project for young women and girls¹ from cultural communities, delivered by MYAN NSW as part of the COMPACT Alliance. The program invests in young women and girls as responders to global violence, equipping them to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from community violence through capacity building, critical thinking, and the development of a strong and resilient network. Through a series of workshops, youth events, and intercultural conversations, young people build resilience to harmful public discourse around race, culture, and identity. The word KAIROS means ‘the right time’ in Greek. MYAN NSW believes now is the right time to respond to the needs of these individuals.

¹ The KAIROS Program’s definition of young women and girls also includes femme-identifying, queer and gender diverse young people.

Why the KAIROS Program Matters

Young women and girls from cultural communities tackle complex and intersectional discrimination. This discrimination is often exacerbated by trauma and loss due to their resettlement experiences and separation from their cultural histories.²

“For those of us that live in diaspora, we make a homeland wherever we are. My people are dispersed all around the world, and there's no homeland to go back to. There is barely anybody back home.” – KAIROS Participant

These groups are at risk of exposure to isolation, mental, emotional, and physical violence, racial profiling, and criminalisation. Yet many young people from cultural communities lack a space where they feel comfortable to explore their grief, acknowledge and embrace their identities, and recover from the effects of harmful public debate and gender based violences.

“I feel like there is nowhere for me and my community to speak about these things.” – KAIROS Participant

Summary of Findings

The findings of the evaluation are presented in the table below.

Learning Question 1: Participant Outcomes	
Participants felt safe and included. They increased their skills, knowledge, and resilience as well as their connection with others.	
<u>Participants felt safe</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants felt safe to express vulnerability without judgement and participate in a way that was appropriate for their needs. 100% of participants strongly agreed that they trusted the KAIROS staff to support them to participate fully. <p><i>“The safety of the space created a sense of security within me, which let me let my guard down and truly feel safe.” - KAIROS Participant</i></p>	
<u>Participants felt included</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants felt included and able to express their authentic selves through storytelling. 100% of participants strongly agreed they felt included by KAIROS Program staff. <p><i>“It was a warm space where we didn’t need to be strong, we could just share with each other” – KAIROS Participant</i></p>	

² Soulier (2017)

Participants increased their skills, knowledge and resilience

- Participants built their cultural identity, have a better understanding of how their stories are made, framed, and understood. This experience contributes to their ability to remain resilient and navigate adversity.

"I can now appreciate the strength and resilience of my parents at a deeper level and feel more connected to my family and culture." – KAIROS Participant

"(I have learned to) represent my culture beyond my community." – KAIROS Participant

Participants formed connections

- Participants formed connections with like-minded people and broadened their social network.

"I felt like I've been able to find community in a lot more people and feel more confident about making connections with people and strengthening friendships." – KAIROS Participant

Barriers

Low overall attendance at KAIROS Program Events and lack of repeat attendance

- Low overall attendance and lack of repeat attendance at KAIROS Program Events impacted the positive outcomes for participants, specifically their feelings of safety and inclusion.

"It felt jarring having to start again each session with new people and build up rapport and trust each time. I would have liked to have deepened my connections and relationships with the attendees each time." – KAIROS Participant

Learning Question: Safer Spaces

Design Elements

Developing the Safer Spaces Assessment Tool

- For-Purpose Evaluations and MYAN NSW have developed the Safer Spaces Assessment Tool [Safer Spaces Tool] as a resource for the sector to determine what 'good' looks like when creating safer, more inclusive spaces.
- The Safer Spaces Tool uses a rubric method and is informed by findings from this evaluation and secondary research. It has six "Elements of Inclusive Design" and four levels of achievement (considering, aware, working on it and leading).

- As part of the development of the Safer Spaces Tool the evaluators applied it to the KAIROS Program to assess how “safe” participants feel.

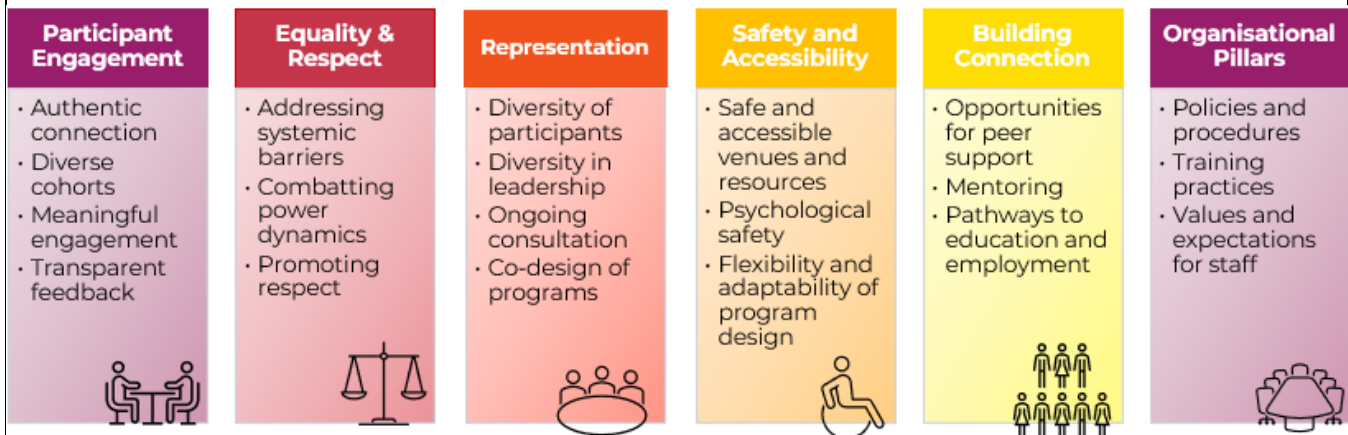


Image 1: The six elements of inclusive program design, that contribute to creating safer spaces.

KAIROS Program

The KAIROS program demonstrated consistently high levels of understanding and application of the six design elements and is assessed as ‘working on it’ or ‘leading’ in all areas. Two areas of particular strength for the KAIROS Program are:

Equality and Respect

- Staff maintained a strong commitment to combatting power dynamics and ensuring participants felt safe to engage in a way they were comfortable to.
- The program amplified the voices of underrepresented groups and offered culturally safe and respectful spaces to share and connect.

Accessibility & Safety

- The program consistently acknowledged and responded to the unique needs and abilities of participants.
- Staff maintained a strong commitment to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of participants, mitigating the risk of people being retraumatised by any aspects of the program.

Recommendations

The KAIROS Program has achieved its goal of achieving positive change for participants. The KAIROS Program provides an environment where participants feel safe, included, connected, and built their resilience.

The recommendations below consider what comes next for the KAIROS Program and opportunities for the design of future programs.

Finding	Recommendation
KAIROS successfully created safe spaces for young women and girls from cultural communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise the process used by the KAIROS Program to create safe spaces to ensure consistency across other MYAN NSW programs. • Use the Evaluation findings and Safer Spaces Tool to reflect internally and set actions to progress to toward 'leading' in all six design elements. • Set a timeframe to review progress towards the agreed actions.
The KAIROS Program offered a unique space for young women and girls from cultural communities to come together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider "what comes next?" for participants, to sustain the KAIROS Program's impact and support sustainable connections between participants. Options include offering informal opportunities to connect and or continue providing a digital platform for participants to have key conversations and maintain connection. • Share "what works" with the sector through the Safer Spaces Tool to encourage other organisations to create spaces for people affected by intersecting areas of vulnerability.
Low overall attendance at KAIROS Program Events and lack of repeat attendance at events presented a barrier to achieving positive outcomes for participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider strategies to encourage more consistent attendance and higher participation rates for future programs. This will contribute to the creation of consistently safe and inclusive spaces for participants.

Introduction

MYAN NSW engaged For-Purpose Evaluations to evaluate the MYAN NSW KAIROS Program. The KAIROS Program was delivered in Sydney between November 2022 and April 2024. Data was gathered and analysed for this evaluation between May 2023 and May 2024.

About MYAN

MYAN NSW is a state-wide specialist youth organisation, supporting young people arriving in Australia within a humanitarian context. Working closely with refugees, migrants and cultural communities, MYAN NSW provides support and safe spaces for young people to build the skills, knowledge, and networks they need to actively participate in Australian society. MYAN NSW provides best practice leadership to a statewide network of practitioners within the youth and settlement space. MYAN NSW engages, connects, and builds community service sector capacity, to meet the needs of multicultural young people, using a trauma-informed lens.

About the KAIROS Program

The KAIROS Program is a media and participation project for young women and girls³ from cultural communities, delivered by MYAN NSW as part of the COMPACT Alliance. The program invests in young women and girls as responders to global violence, equipping them to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from community violence through capacity building, critical thinking, and the development of a strong and resilient network. Through a series of workshops, youth events, and intercultural conversations, young people build resilience to harmful public discourse around race, culture, and identity. The word KAIROS means ‘the right time’ in Greek. MYAN NSW believes now is the right time to respond to the needs of these individuals. Through a series of workshops, youth events, and intercultural conversations, young people built their resilience to harmful public discourse around race, culture, and identity.

³ The KAIROS Program’s definition of young women and girls also includes femme-identifying, queer and gender diverse young people.



Image 2: KAIROS Program participants take part in a youth panel (as part of the program activities) at the ABC to discuss their experience being part of the KAIROS Program.

The KAIROS Program was co-designed with participants to ensure that the program delivery was inclusive and supportive of their needs. Participants were provided a safe space to explore inherited cultural grief and to develop tools to continue these conversations in and beyond their communities.

Why the KAIROS Program Matters

Young women and girls from cultural communities tackle complex and intersectional discrimination. This discrimination is often exacerbated by trauma and loss due to their resettlement experiences and separation from their cultural histories.⁴

“For those of us that live in diaspora, we make a homeland wherever we are. My people are dispersed all around the world, and there's no homeland to go back to. There is barely anybody back home.” – KAIROS Participant

These groups are at risk of exposure to isolation, mental, emotional, and physical violence, racial profiling, and criminalisation. Yet many young people from cultural communities lack a space where they feel comfortable to explore their grief, acknowledge and embrace their identities, and recover from the effects of harmful public debate and gender based violences.

“I feel like there is nowhere for me and my community to speak about these things.” – KAIROS Participant

About COMPACT Alliance

COMPACT Alliance is a community resilience-building initiative which recognises the threat posed to community harmony and social cohesion from fear, hate and division in

⁴ Soulier (2017)

society. COMPACT Alliance supports organisations to build capacity and collaborate across the sector, actively maintaining strong and responsive networks, operating across sectors and communities.

The findings within this Evaluation Report have been linked, where appropriate, to the outcomes within the COMPACT Alliance's Program Logic Model, which can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Program Outputs

The MYAN NSW KAIROS Program included 34 registered participants who had the opportunity to take part in seven distinct events. An overview of each event is summarised in the table below.

Event	Date	Overview
Consensus Building	May 2023	Co-designing and establishing the methodology for the program, creating guidelines for a safe space, and incorporating participant perspectives into event ideation.
General Catch-Up	Jun 2023	General catch-up
ABC Media Workshop	Jul 2023	Exploring how media stories are informed, created, and told, building participants capacity to identify and question "who gets to talk about us and how?"
Intercultural Conversation 1	Aug 2023	Discovering cultural practices, values, and traditions to build connection to culture and history. Learning about other cultures, values, and perspectives.
Intercultural Conversation 2	Nov 2023	Discovering First Nations culture and history. Learning about connecting with nature and country and reconciling multiple identities through exploration of shared histories.
Mental Health Project Roundtable	Dec 2023	Discussion between ABC and KAIROS cohort to gather context and firsthand insight, to improve ABC journalists' understanding of the issues facing today's youth.
ABC Youth Forum	Mar 2023	Sharing the learnings and experiences of the cohort, using the skills developed throughout the KAIROS Program, including further discussion of unnuanced media reporting.

KAIROS Program Events were intentionally scheduled at various times of the day, to cater to the different schedules of all participants, enhancing accessibility and ensuring opportunities to participate. While participants were invited and encouraged to attend events, participation was voluntary to promote flexibility and inclusivity in the program delivery. This approach aimed to engage participants in the activities they felt most comfortable with. The diagram below illustrates the number of participants at each event.

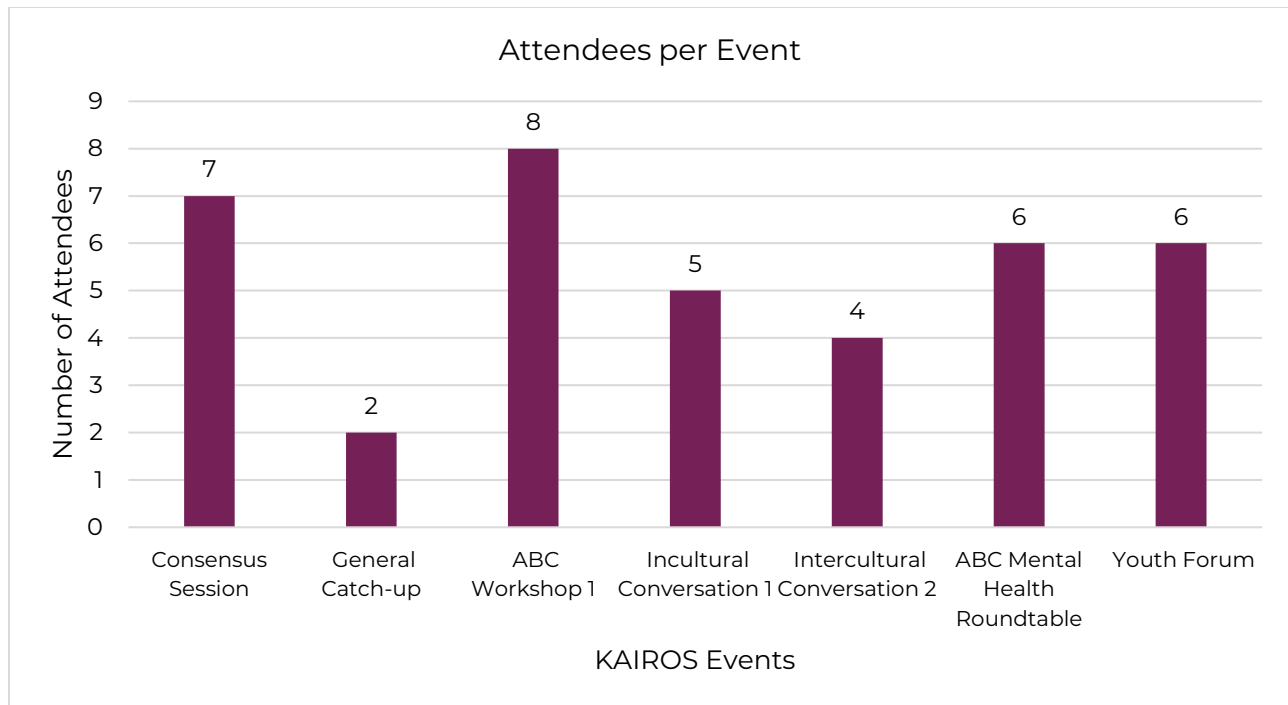


Figure 1: Number of participants per KAIROS Program Event.

Of the 34 ‘registered’ KAIROS Program participants, 22 (65%) attended 1 or more event. The majority (82%) of the 22 ‘active participants’ attended 1-2 events. The average attendance at events was 5 participants. This “dip in, dip out” approach, provided participants with flexibility but meant that event attendance was inconsistent with different people attending the events each time. This presented a challenge for participants to be able to develop connections with other participants, impacting participants feelings of safety and inclusion.

About the Evaluation

Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

1. Identify the key outcomes of the program for the young people who participate.
2. Identify the unique considerations for designing and implementing safe programs for young women and girls from cultural communities.

Learning Questions

The evaluation asks the following learning questions:

1. What outcomes do the young people in the program experience? How does the program contribute to these outcomes?
 - a. Specifically, how does the program build conversations about how people

respond to and recover from times of crisis?

2. What program design elements contribute to safer spaces for young women and girls from cultural communities?

For-Purpose Evaluations has conducted the evaluation to address the learning questions and designed the Safer Spaces Assessment Tool to both understand how MYAN NSW has created a safe space and to support the sector to do so.

Methodology

The evaluation used Outcomes Harvesting and Theory-Based Evaluation⁵ and applied a mixed methods approach. The methods used were:

- Feedback wall at group sessions
- Peer Interviews
- Staff interviews
- Observation of youth forum event
- Participant survey
- Evaluation rubric, the 'Safer Spaces Assessment Tool'

Refer to [Appendix C](#), for additional information about the methods.

⁵ [Outcomes Harvesting](#)

This evaluation identified the outcomes of the program for the young people involved by collecting evidence of what has changed and using that to determine whether and how the program has contributed to these changes.

[Theory-based Evaluation](#)

The outcomes harvested, informed the development of a [KAIROS Program Logic Model](#). Applying a theory-based evaluation approach, the evaluation considers whether the program is achieving its intended outcomes, for who and to what extent. Intended outcomes were cross referenced to the [COMPACT Alliance Logic Model](#). The evaluation seeks to present the findings from the perspective of not only what was achieved but also why or why not?

Findings

Summary of Findings

The below table summarises the evaluation findings according to each learning question, participant outcomes (learning question 1) and design elements present in safer spaces (learning question 2). Following this section is a more detailed discussion of the findings.

Learning Question 1: Participant Outcomes
<p>Participants felt safe and included. They increased their skills, knowledge, and resilience as well as their connection with others.</p> <p><u>Participants felt safe</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants felt safe to express vulnerability without judgement and participate in a way that was appropriate for their needs. 100% of participants strongly agreed that they trusted the KAIROS staff to support them to participate fully. <p><i>"The safety of the space created a sense of security within me, which let me let my guard down and truly feel safe." - KAIROS Participant</i></p> <p><u>Participants felt included</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants felt included and able to express their authentic selves through storytelling. 100% of participants strongly agreed they felt included by KAIROS Program staff. <p><i>"It was a warm space where we didn't need to be strong, we could just share with each other" – KAIROS Participant</i></p> <p><u>Participants increased their skills, knowledge and resilience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants built their cultural identity, have a better understanding of how their stories are made, framed, and understood. This experience contributes to their ability to remain resilient and navigate adversity. <p><i>"I can now appreciate the strength and resilience of my parents at a deeper level and feel more connected to my family and culture." – KAIROS Participant</i></p> <p><i>"(I have learned to) represent my culture beyond my community." – KAIROS Participant</i></p> <p><u>Participants formed connections</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants formed connections with like-minded people and broadened their social network.

"I felt like I've been able to find community in a lot more people and feel more confident about making connections with people and strengthening friendships." – KAIROS Participant

Barriers

Low overall attendance at KAIROS Program Events and lack of repeat attendance

- Low overall attendance and lack of repeat attendance at KAIROS Program Events impacted the positive outcomes for participants, specifically their feelings of safety and inclusion.

"It felt jarring having to start again each session with new people and build up rapport and trust each time. I would have liked to have deepened my connections and relationships with the attendees each time." – KAIROS Participant

Learning Question: Safer Spaces

Design Elements

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- As part of the development of the Safer Spaces Tool the evaluators applied it to the KAIROS Program to assess how "safe" participants felt.

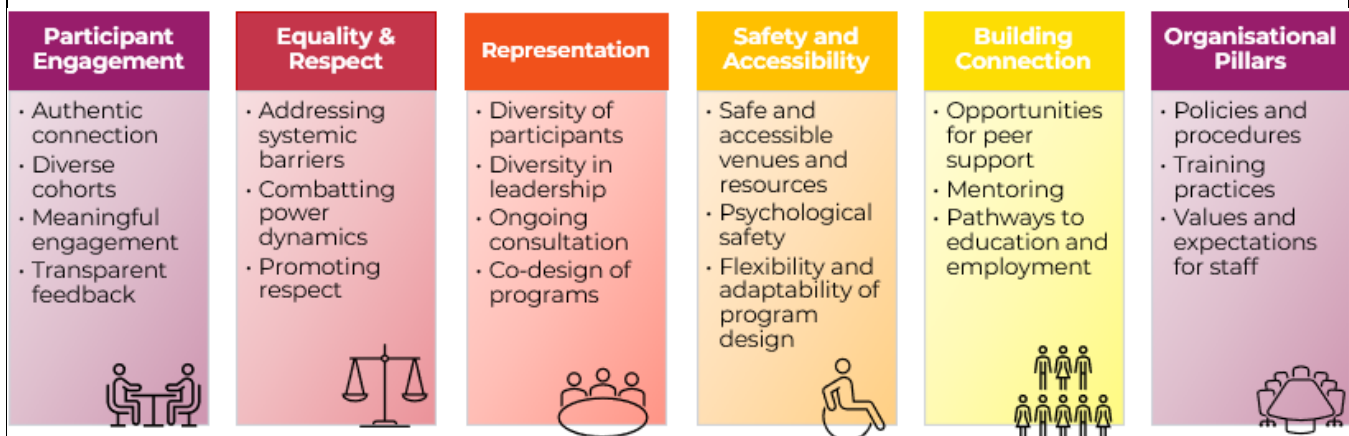


Image 3: The six elements of inclusive program design, that contribute to creating safer spaces.

KAIROS Program

The KAIROS program demonstrated consistently high levels of understanding and application of the six design elements and is assessed as 'working on it' or 'leading' in all areas. Two areas of particular strength for the KAIROS Program are:

Equality and Respect

- Staff maintained a strong commitment to combatting power dynamics and ensuring participants felt safe to engage in a way they were comfortable to.
- The program amplified the voices of underrepresented groups and offered culturally safe and respectful spaces to share and connect.

Accessibility & Safety

- The program consistently acknowledged and responded to the unique needs and abilities of participants.
- Staff maintained a strong commitment to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of participants, mitigating the risk of people being retraumatised by any aspects of the program.

The findings are explored in more detail in the following section of this report. They are divided into two parts:

- Part 1: Participant Outcomes (learning question 1)
- Part 2: Design Elements (learning question 2)

Learning Question 1: Participant Outcomes

The KAIROS Program successfully contributed to creating safe and inclusive environments for young women and girls from cultural communities to engage authentically in conversation, explore cultural histories and build connection. This evaluation found positive changes experience by participants in the following areas:

- **Safety:** participants felt safe to express their vulnerability without judgement.
- **Inclusion:** participants felt included supporting them to actively engage and contribute their perspectives.
- **Resilience:** participants built their resilience, skills, and knowledge through exploring their own and other cultures, values and perspectives and increased media literacy.
- **Connection:** participants broadened their social network.

These align to the COMPACT Alliance [Program Logic Model](#) outcomes of:

- Engage in discussions in a safe environment.
- Broaden their social networks.
- Learn about different values and perspectives.
- Greater understanding of their social and cultural context.
- Increased sense of identity, self-worth and belonging.

The KAIROS Program findings are explored in more detail below.

Safety

Participants felt safe to express themselves.

86% of participants strongly agreed that it was safe to have conversations about uncomfortable topics at KAIROS Program Events.

“I felt very safe to engage vulnerably and think deeply about these very big questions around culture and gender.” – KAIROS Participant

“The safety of the space created a sense of security within me, which let me let my guard down and truly feel safe.” – KAIROS Participant

The KAIROS Program provided a safe and healing space for participants through the creation of a physically and psychologically welcoming and accommodating space. The safety of the space supports participants to actively engage, contribute their perspectives and derive greater benefits from participation (Smith and Johnson, 2020). Using trauma-informed and Neurodivergent inclusive space design, the program proactively catered to young women and girls with autistic, neurodivergence and ADHD.

Participants reported feeling safe to express vulnerability without judgement and engage in important discussions in a safe environment.



Participants engaged in a way that they were comfortable to and was appropriate to their individual needs. Staff demonstrated alternative methods of participating such as using name tags, verbal cue cards and speaking in their own language, which offered encouragement for participants to do so too. **100%** of participants strongly agreed that they trusted the KAIROS staff to support them to participate fully.

KAIROS Participant

"I know what I'm looking for and also what and how to ask for this next time." – KAIROS Participant

Inclusion

100% of participants strongly agreed they felt included by KAIROS staff and **86%** strongly agreed they felt included by their peers. This supported participants to feel safe to be their authentic selves, including the ability to talk about difficult topics and to be able to disagree in a safe way encouraging discussion. **71%** of participants strongly agreed that they were able to openly disagree with others at KAIROS events.

Through the provision of time out spaces, toys and non-verbal methods of interaction, the KAIROS Program enabled autistic, neurodivergent and young women and girls with ADHD to feel included, without having to disclose their neurodivergent status.

“What I enjoyed the most about the program was that it was created to be such a safe space and safe environment that made me feel free to express my thoughts and opinions with those in the room.” – KAIROS Participant

Resilience

Participants built their knowledge, skills, and resilience. The ABC Media Literacy Training and the Mental Health Roundtable Discussion developed critical thinking skills and gave participants a greater understanding of their social and cultural context.

Participants developed a greater understanding of themselves, others, and the way that contextual factors, such as how they are portrayed in the media, impacts them. This supports them to respond to and recover from harmful narratives in their day to day lives.

Participants connected more deeply with their cultural and familial stories.

Through conversation and individual sharing of cultural histories and practices, participants learned about and connected with their own cultures on a deeper level. **86%** of Program participants strongly agreed that they had more opportunities to reflect on their personal and cultural history.

“I wrote a piece about my grandma, explaining her history and our relationship. We found ways to communicate, ways of knowing each other. It was a healing moment; I might not understand my long history, but I am starting to understand history and the impact it has on a family and children.” – KAIROS Participant

Participants reported developing an appreciation of the strength and resilience embedded in their narratives, which encouraged them to feel pride and confidence to represent their culture beyond their community.



Image 5: KAIROS Program Participants learn about First Nations culture and history as part of the Intercultural Conversation #2

“[I have learned to] represent my culture beyond my community!! Speaking about my culture to my community with awe and dedication to unpack the messiness that exists alongside the beauty.” – KAIROS Participant

Participants explored and learned about other cultures, values, and perspectives.

Participants learned more about other cultures and developed their understanding and respect for the struggles of others. **100%** of Program participants learned something new about another culture.

“I felt like I gained a deeper understanding and respect for Aboriginal culture and people and their struggles, along with the struggles of the other participants as well.” – KAIROS Participant

Participants built connection by learning about different values and perspectives and discovering the similarities and differences across cultural journeys.

“Exploring and learning about other people's cultures has been an amazing experience, helping me appreciate both the differences and the beautiful similarities that connect us.” – KAIROS Participant

Participants increased their media literacy.

Participants learned about the impact of cultural and social context, and gained an understanding of how their stories are made, framed, and understood. **83%** of Program participants strongly agreed that they had a better understanding of the media and how it shapes our perspectives.

“News and representation still have a long way to go, but events like today help grow awareness” – KAIROS Participant



Image 6: KAIROS Program participants and staff

“[I have learned that] narratives of culture and gender are manufactured and designed through a Western construct.” – KAIROS Participant

Connection

Participants made friends and learnt from other, like-minded individuals. Participants shared that they would take these connections away with them, and that the experience had improved their confidence to make new connections with people. **86%** of Program participants strongly agreed that they felt they belonged.

“I’m taking away the connections and community that I built.” – KAIROS Participant

“Everyone that I have met in the KAIROS Program has inspired me to be kinder, more empathetic and compassionate, and I have learned so much from everyone that I have met through this program.” – KAIROS Participant

I felt like I’ve been able to find community in a lot more people and feel more confident about making connections with people and strengthening friendships.” – KAIROS Participant

The program supported individuals to broaden their social network beyond the program staff and participants, for example providing them with opportunities to meet with ABC team members and find out about things like internships.



Image 7: Attendees at the Youth Panel including MYAN staff, program participants and ABC staff.

Connection through storytelling

Participants reported that storytelling built a strong sense of connection and belonging which enabled them to demonstrate their authentic selves and reclaim agency. Storytelling enables individuals and communities to find meaning and coherence in the face of suffering. Through sharing narratives, people can reclaim agency and rebuild a sense of connection and belonging (Kerr, 2019).

“I feel like I am not the only one. [I can] reclaim agency of who I am, being my authentic self.” – KAIROS Participant

Barriers to the successful achievement of participant outcomes

While program enabled flexibility for participants enabling them to opt in to attending, low numbers of participants at each event and limited participants attending more than 1 event, limited the positive outcomes for participants impacting feelings of safety and inclusion.

“It felt jarring having to start again each session with new people and build up rapport and trust each time. I would have liked to have deepened my connections and relationships with the attendees each time.” – KAIROS Participant

Contributing factors included:

- Participants not being clear what the KAIROS Program or events were about and if it was something they would benefit from.
- A perception that the KAIROS Program responding to the social and cultural needs of target groups, are meeting less “urgent or acute” needs, particularly for recently

settled migrants who are often navigating more immediate housing, social support, and employment requirements.

Staff took a creative approach to recruitment, translating promotional materials verbally, leaning on the program's affiliation with the ABC to enhance legitimacy and reaching out to have conversations with people they knew from other programs.

Learning Question 2: What Design Elements are present?

Developing the [Safer Spaces Assessment Tool](#)

For-Purpose Evaluations and MYAN NSW have developed the Safer Spaces Assessment Tool [Safer Spaces Tool] as a resource for the sector to determine what 'good' looks like when creating safer, more inclusive spaces. The Safer Spaces Tool uses a rubric method and is informed by findings from this evaluation and secondary research. As part of the development of the Safer Spaces Tool the evaluators applied it to the KAIROS Program to assess how "safe" participants felt.

Safer Spaces Assessment Tool

There are six "Elements of Inclusive Design" and four levels of achievement (considering, aware, working on it and leading) as illustrated in the diagram below. Refer to [Appendix D](#) for the full tool.

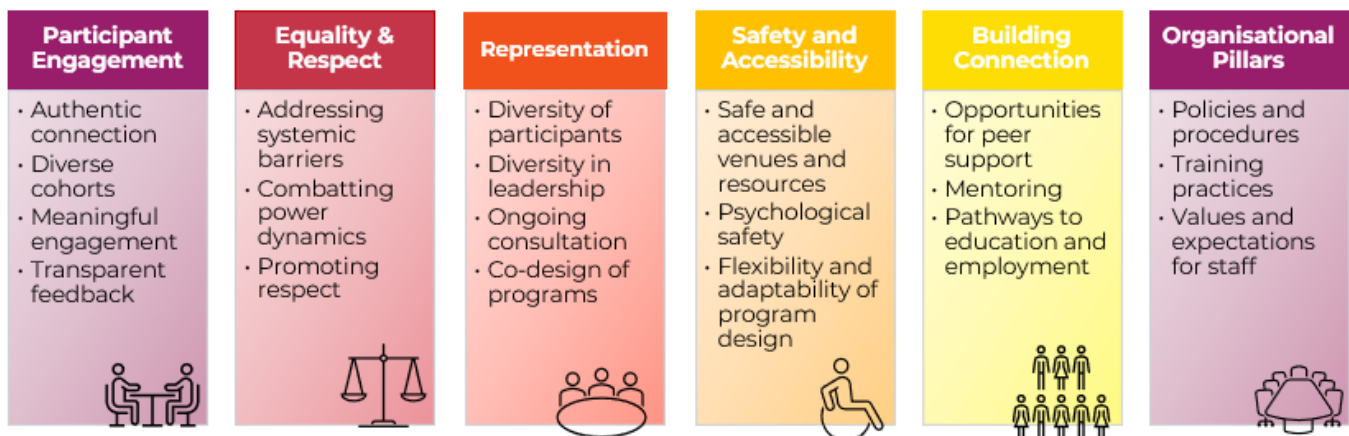


Image 6: Overview of the Six Elements of Inclusive Program Design, from the Safer Spaces Assessment Tool.

KAIROS Program Assessment

Using program data and consultation with MYAN NSW staff and program participants, this section evaluates the extent to which the Design were implemented in the KAIROS Program design and implementation. The KAIROS Program demonstrated consistently high levels of understanding and application of the design elements, being assessed as

‘working on it’ or ‘leading’ in all areas. Each design element is explored in more detail below.

Design Element 1: Participant Engagement	
Description	Authentic connection, diverse cohorts, meaningful engagement, and transparent feedback.
Assessment	Working on it
Explanation	MYAN NSW made a significant effort to facilitate and build authentic connection with participants. Staff were consistent and proactive in seeking and incorporating the perspectives of those involved, which resulted in a high level of collaboration and engagement from participants who attended events.
Examples of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive engagement strategy • Proactive contact with participants (before, during, and after events) • Co-designed Code of Conduct • Multiple feedback touch points at events and afterwards <p><i>“The check-ins at the beginning and end of each session where we each shared how we were feeling made me feel safe to participate.” – KAIROS Participant</i></p>
Recommendation	<p>Communicate with participants about what happens with their feedback, to ensure they feel valued and heard.</p> <p><i>“I would like to know what happens to that feedback. How was that feedback considered?” - KAIROS Participant</i></p>

Highlight: Co-designed Code of Conduct

Participants who attended the consensus building event were invited to join the group and discuss what values, rules, or guidelines were important to them to ensure everyone's safety and comfortability as well as for the functionality of the group.

Some of the items most important to participants were identified as:

- Knowing who is in the space.
- Agreeing to respectful boundaries at each event.
- Using language that supports everyone.
- Minimising technical language.
- Disagreeing respectfully.

"The code of conduct is not something I have seen elsewhere and it's quite refreshing to see in this environment, especially when talking about

Design Element 2: Equality and Respect	
Description	Addressing systemic barriers, combatting power dynamics, and promoting respect.
Assessment	Leading
Explanation	MYAN NSW staff maintained a strong commitment to combatting power dynamics and ensuring all participants felt safe to participate in a way in which they felt comfortable to. The KAIROS Program amplified the voices of underrepresented groups and offered culturally safe and respectful spaces to share and connect.
Examples of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff contributed to discussions, promoting safe storytelling, and ensuring opportunities for all to contribute. • Clear guidelines for behaviour were agreed on by participants to ensure respectful communication and create a sense of safety. • Staff offered alternative ways to communicate (non-verbal methods, cue cards, notebooks) <p><i>"I wrote a lot on the note pads. I tried to use every method of communication to show you can do more than one thing. Being able to speak in your own language, I would share in my own language." – Staff</i></p>


“Open communication and allowing everyone to share and be listened to and involving everyone in the discussions.” – KAIROS Participant



Image 8: Example of clear guidelines and expectations at events

Design Element 3: Representation	
Description	Diversity of participants, diversity of leadership, ongoing consultation, and co-design of programs.
Assessment	Working on it
Explanation	The KAIROS Program endeavoured to represent the voices and perspectives of a diverse cohort at multiple levels of program design and implementation.
Examples of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural diversity/lived experience in key staff to encourage underrepresented perspectives at events. • Significant consultation with a range of audiences in program development stage. • Proactively sought the perspectives of participants in event ideation and guidelines. <p><i>“[We] did lots of consultation and meetings – practitioners, LGBTQI organisations, schools, university groups. We were running our ideas past them to ask what it should look like and if it felt safe to them.” – Staff</i></p> <p><i>“The fact that the facilitators commitment to inclusivity was backed by one of the facilitators speaking in their language. All these things add to creating a really welcoming space.” – KAIROS Participant</i></p>

Recommendation	Consider committing time and funding to facilitating an online platform for all participants to express their ideas and perspectives in future programs.
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Design Element 4: Safety and Accessibility	
Description	Safe and accessible venues and resources, psychological safety and flexibility and adaptability of program design.
Assessment	Leading
Explanation	The KAIROS Program consistently acknowledged and responded to the unique needs and abilities of participants. They maintained a strong commitment to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of participants, mitigating the risk of people being retraumatised by any aspects of the program.
Examples of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MYAN Staff provided warning for heavy topics and debriefed to follow up on how the conversation had affected participants. • Consultation with senior practitioners and ongoing staff training on mental health and facilitating psychologically safe conversations. • Building comfortable physical spaces (toys, blankets etc.) • Consistent staff at events to create familiarity and a sense of safety. <div>  </div> <p><i>“The quiet spaces set up make me feel safe. A snugly rug and fidget toys are a sign that I’m safe and supported in the environment.” – KAIROS Participant</i></p> <p><i>“I showed safety by wearing a name tag, I also used verbal cue cards and made sure people knew it was ok to use them.” - Staff</i></p> <p><i>Image 9: Room set up with blankets and notepads.</i></p>

Highlight: MYAN NSW's proactive commitment to safety and equality

MYAN NSW maintained a high level of commitment to proactively responding to the needs of the KAIROS Program cohort. In particular, the KAIROS Program provided spaces which considered and catered to non-visible disabilities, as well as considering and providing a number of ways to communicate in languages other than English and forms other than verbal.

Some of the ways in which MYAN proactively provided a safe space, were:

- Utilising a cultural and clinical supervisor at all KAIROS events.
- Designing a physical space that is trauma-informed and neurodivergent inclusive (E.g. time out spaces, fidget/stimming toys, non-verbal communication methods.)
- Having a bilingual and bicultural staff who offered interpretation in 3 of the highest spoken language in NSW.

"Two autistic girls in the program reached out to me in confidence to say they had never been able to attend a program where they didn't have to personally

Design Element 5: Building Connection	
Description	Opportunities for peer support, mentoring and pathways to education and employment.
Assessment	Working on it
Explanation	<p>The KAIROS Program offered an opportunity for participants to broaden their social network by creating a deliberate safe space for young women and girls from cultural communities to connect with each other, other MYAN programs and by providing pathways to other external organisations.</p> <p><i>"Feminine identifying and women don't have as many spaces to go to – male dominated places like the gym, playing basketball – they are good places to heal for men. This space is deliberately for the cohort neglected in that space." – Staff</i></p>
Examples of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered connections to other organisations at KAIROS Program events (ABC, Democracy in Colour) • Activities at events were purposefully designed to create connection (Icebreakers, storytelling, cultural sharing)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of Slack Channel provided digital platform to have and continue important conversations after events and for those who did not attend events to have a voice. <p><i>"[The biggest thing I took away from the program was] meeting new people and getting support and building my network." – KAIROS Participant</i></p>
Recommendation	<p>Consider ways to support participants to strengthen connections such as encouraging higher attendance to program events or providing ongoing opportunities to connect after the end of the program.</p> <p><i>"I would have liked to have deepened my connections and relationships with the attendees..." – KAIROS Participant</i></p>

Design Element 6: Organisational Pillars	
Description	Policies and procedures, training practices and values and expectations for staff.
Assessment	Working on it
Explanation	MYAN NSW demonstrates a commitment to upholding the inclusivity and safety of its programs through purposefully designed and reflexive program design, policies, procedures, and training opportunities.
Examples of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff consistently conduct risk assessments, including for program design and events. Consultation with senior staff/orgs/young people to address systemic barriers. Purposeful Design: events created around goal of program, whilst adapting to the interests of participants <p><i>"We have done risk assessments prior and shared these with facilitators. We have had meetings prior, shared agenda, and there is an understanding of each other's roles. We do debrief after the event, discuss anything that went wrong and how to prevent it in future events." – Staff</i></p>
Recommendation	Whilst having event agendas open and fluid was a strategic choice which allowed participant to share what was "on their hearts", some participants would have enjoyed a more focused discussion.

	<p>Consider incorporating structured “breakout sessions” at events, to provide participants an opportunity to choose whether to delve deeper into a topic.</p> <p><i>“Have more of a specific agenda, jumping off points for conversation. I felt that some of the conversations could have been facilitated a little better to be more relevant to the event.” – KAIROS Participant</i></p>
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Recommendations

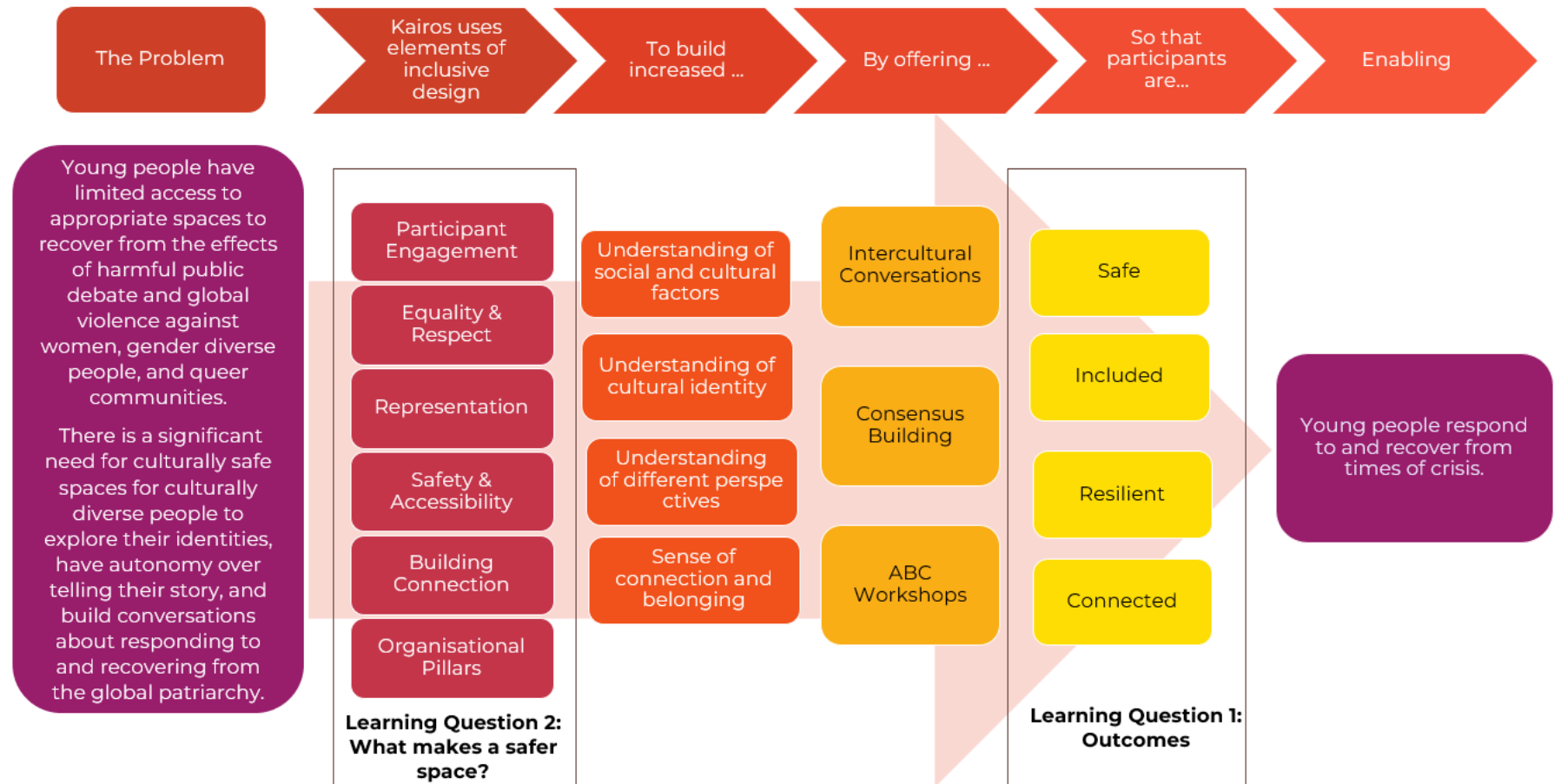
The program has achieved its goals of achieving positive change for participants. The program provided an environment where participants feel safe, included, connected, and build their resilience. The recommendations below can be considered when considering what comes next for the KAIROS Program and for designing future programs.

Finding	Recommendation
KAIROS successfully created safe spaces for young women and girls from cultural communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise the process used by the KAIROS Program to create safe spaces to ensure consistency across other MYAN NSW programs. Use the Evaluation findings and Safer Spaces Tool to reflect internally and set actions to progress toward ‘leading’ in all six design elements. Set a timeframe to review progress towards the agreed actions.
The KAIROS Program offered a unique space young women and girls from cultural communities to come together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider “what comes next?” for participants, to sustain the KAIROS Program’s impact and support sustainable connections between participants. Options include offering informal opportunities to connect and or continue providing a digital platform for participants to have key conversations and maintain connection. Share “what works” with the sector through the Safer Spaces Tool to encourage other organisations to create spaces for people affected by intersecting areas of vulnerability.
Low overall attendance at KAIROS Program Events and lack of repeat attendance at events presented a barrier to achieving positive outcomes for participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider strategies to encourage more consistent attendance and higher participation rates for future programs. This will contribute to the creation of consistently safe and inclusive spaces for participants.

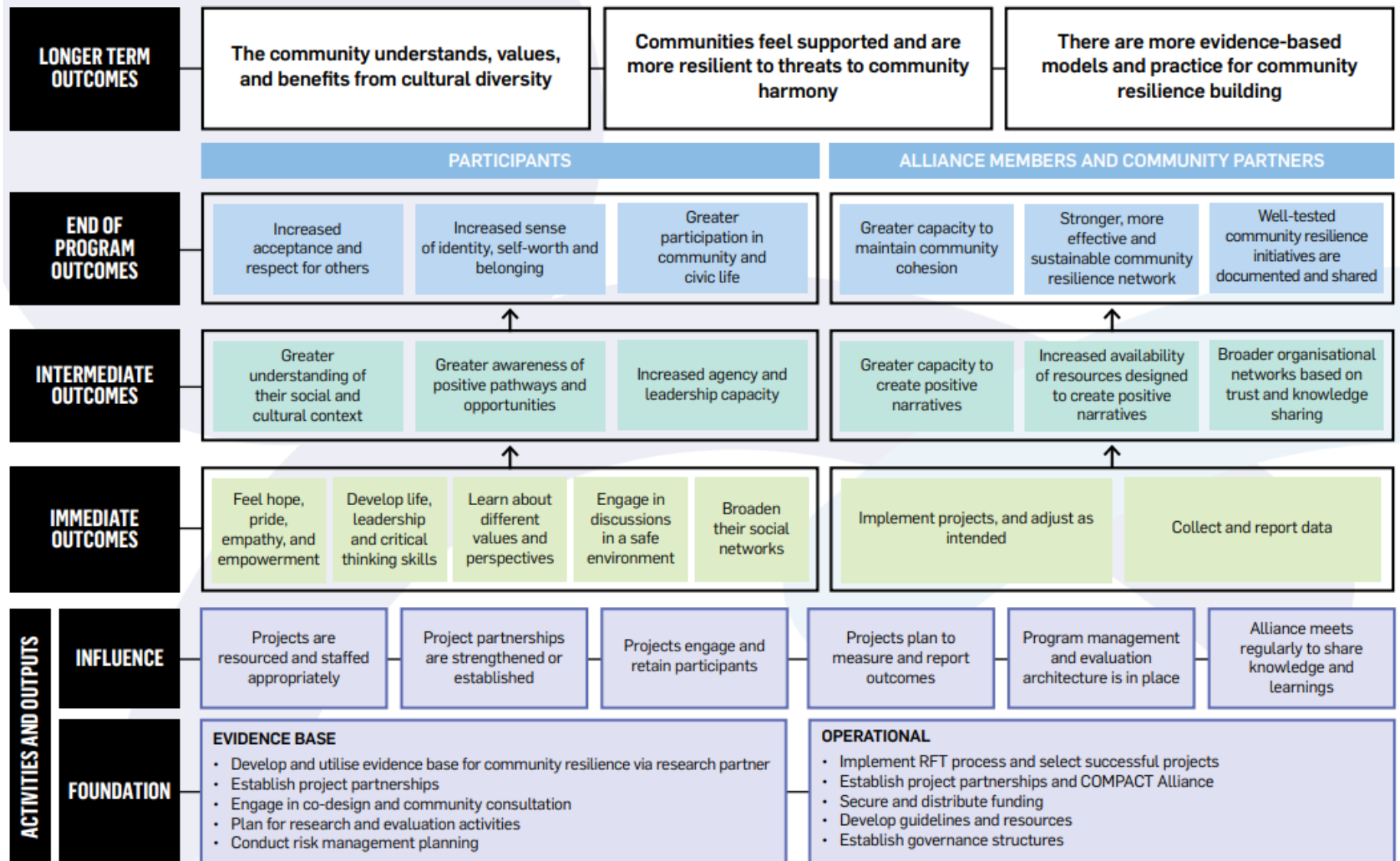
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Appendix A: KAIROS Programs Logic Model



Appendix B: COMPACT Alliance Logic Model



Appendix C: Evaluation Methodology

The table below provides additional details on the methods used in this evaluation.

Note: To increase the validity of the findings, given the low attendance rates at program events, methods and stakeholders were triangulated and flexibility was offered for how participants could engage in data collection. For example, feedback walls were used with participants at sessions, peer interviews were held in person and on the phone and the end of program participant survey was issued electronically with participants offered translation or to be able to complete with a staff member over the phone.

Method	Description	# Responses
Feedback wall at group sessions	A feedback wall is a feedback and reflection activity that MYAN staff facilitated at the end of each group session. Participants were invited to leave comments, suggestions, or opinions on sticky notes, which they placed on a board. The feedback wall enabled participants to feedback in a structured and transparent format.	N/A
Peer Interviews	Participants were provided with interview questions and support to conduct semi structured interviews with each other, working in pairs. Participants either wrote responses or recorded them.	7
Staff interviews	Semi-structured interviews with MYAN NSW Staff running the KAIRS Program	2
Observation of youth forum event	FPE attended the youth forum, observing the panel discussion and speaking with participants about their experience.	N/A
Participant survey	End of program survey	7
Evaluation rubric 'Safer Spaces Assessment Tool'	The tool development was informed by evaluation data and external research and was tested with MYAN staff and participants.	5 ⁶ (3x staff and 2 x participants)

⁶ Three staff and two participants provided direct feedback and input into the rubric creation and KAIROS Program assessment.

Appendix D: Safer Spaces Assessment Tool

Refer to the full Safer Spaces Tool for additional information and user guide.

SAFER SPACES ASSESSMENT TOOL	CONSIDERING	AWARE	WORKING ON IT	LEADING
Participant Engagement: An ability to build and maintain authentic relationships across diverse cohorts, enabling participants to meaningfully engage, contribute to program design and implementation and contribute to improvements through honest evaluation and feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited awareness Lack of understanding of importance Minimal engagement with elements and how they apply to the workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic understanding Some initial discussions about the significance No formal structures, policies or practices in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking active steps Developing policies and procedures Efforts may not be consistent or "business as usual" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently applying policies and practices Systems for doing so are fully established The organisation serves as a model for others
Equity & Respect: A commitment to addressing systemic barriers and combatting power dynamics to ensure equal opportunities for all participants to be involved. A commitment to creating a respectful environment for all participants, regardless of perspectives and beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using only one-way communication method No feedback mechanism yet Limited staff engagement during programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff respond to participant requests but do not actively seek feedback. Informal discussions about program improvement Program details and updates communicated using one-way method (website, announcement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple feedback channels Strategic outreach to engage diverse participants Proactive communications for program (social media, email) Purposeful connection before, during and after events Consultation/Codesigned programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed response to feedback (program updates, new policies, adjustments) Commitment to co-design in program design, implementation and evaluation. Purposeful connection before, during and after events
Representation: A commitment to amplifying the voices of underrepresented groups throughout all levels of program design, implementation and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff not yet actively sharing at events No guidelines yet on expected behaviour for participants Staff do not yet intervene in disagreements No current capacity for people to communicate in languages other than English or in alternative ways (cue cards, notepads) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff participate and share during activities. Staff model expected behaviours Staff respond to inappropriate behaviours when they occur Staff informally attempt to ensure participants have opportunity to speak (offer alternative ways to communicate where possible) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff regularly try to break down power dynamics (e.g., rotating leadership roles, genuine sharing) COC outlining expectations for behaviour agreed before and during events Staff proactively ensure equal participation opportunities Staff seek specific feedback from underrepresented groups Cultural needs considered in design: prayer room & breaks, food) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff share, engage and break down power dynamics consistently Ongoing consultation with underrepresented groups in program design and evaluation Policies and practices consistently promote respectful communication Cultural needs consistently considered and accommodated Resources available to communicate in languages other than English and non-verbal forms



SAFER SPACES ASSESSMENT TOOL	CONSIDERING	AWARE	WORKING ON IT	LEADING
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited awareness Lack of understanding of importance Minimal engagement with elements and how they apply to the workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic understanding Some initial discussions about the significance No formal structures, policies or practices in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking active steps Developing policies and procedures Efforts may not be consistent or "business as usual" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently applying policies and practices Systems for doing so are fully established The organisation serves as a model for others
Accessibility: Ensuring the physical and psychological safety of participants as they participate in a program. Includes a commitment to flexibility in design, to ensure accessibility for the unique needs, time commitments, abilities and needs of all participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited consideration for physically accessible venues Lack of awareness or training on psychological safety No clear behavioural guidelines yet developed Minimal effort to accommodate needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic expectations regarding behaviour communicated. Some effort to accommodate needs & commitments Minimal consideration of psychological safety Some resources available for participants with other needs Accessible venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trauma-informed facilitation Staff proactively recognise and respond to needs & adjustments Code of Conduct agreed by all Programs accommodate time commitments Resources and referral services available based on needs Accessible venues and locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff psychological safety training CoC embedded in program delivery (registration, at each event) Regular consultation and updates made based on feedback Resources and support proactively provided to participants and staff Flexible program design to respond to commitments & needs
Connection: Understand the key role of community and creating and promoting connection opportunities within and outside program. Supporting staff and participants to broaden network and strengthen protective factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No methods for participants to connect outside of program yet No opportunities for peer support or community building during events yet Lack of awareness of the importance of connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional efforts to support staff/part. to expand networks Initial discussions about the role of connection in program design and events Minimal commitment to connecting people outside of program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff offer community-building activities outside formal events Opportunities for peer support (e.g., mentorship, collaborations) Connections with similar orgs Program design promotes connection for participants (name cards, introductions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint partnerships with other orgs to build community Program/events serve as hub for connection opportunities Digital platforms available to encourage ongoing connection Pathways to education and employment available
Organisational Pillars: The fundamental organisational structures which contribute to the creation of an inclusive and safe environment. Training, practices and policies address barriers to inclusion and contribute to an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and safe. See examples below.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited awareness of organisational structures that contribute to inclusion. No inclusive practices or policies in place yet No formal risk assessments undertaken yet No trainings available for staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial conversations about organisational structures Basic policies in place, with limited implementation Basic understanding or risk and impact on safety Training available on request Initial discussions on evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational structures discussed, reviewed and revised Policies and practices designed to create respectful environment. Risk and safety a key aspect of program design Mandatory staff training Participatory evaluation of programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational structures fully aligned with principles of inclusion and regularly revised Policies and practices consistently reinforce culture of safety & respect Comprehensive training embedded Evaluation practices centre voice of participants
Examples of Organisational Pillars	<div> Training: Psychological safety, cultural safety, trauma informed facilitation, unconscious bias, effective communication across diverse groups, understanding intersectionality, inclusive program design, evaluations. </div> <div> Policies/Procedures: Equal opportunity, hiring, diversity and inclusion, anti-discrimination, equity, trauma-informed care, flexible participation, feedback and evaluation, conflict resolution, co-design, accessibility. </div> <div> Organisational structures: Decision-making processes, communication channels, resource allocation, hierarchical structures, performance evaluations, organisational culture, recruitment practices, professional development. </div>			