3 March 2026

> “I’m proud of how we show up for each other and for the community.” – Sector co-chair

What we talked about

Topic 1: Sector co-Chair updates

The sector co-Chair reviewed achievements and challenges in 2025. The group had successfully influenced the design of the support needs assessment to better capture informal supports and cultural contexts, as well as the Agency’s 10 guiding principles on budget models.

Challenges in 2025 included changing Agency and sector co-Chairs, and differing expectations on the scope of collaboration.

The group looked forward to further influencing support needs assessments and budgets.

Topic 2: Group reflection / discussion

The group discussed the draft update to the NDIA Engagement Framework. They also talked about participant experience of the support needs assessment and how the Agency and sector can work better together.

Topic 3: Work planning

The group discussed the decreasing demand for co-design work as the NDIA prepares for the roll out of the new way of planning, as well as the increasing demand for rapid collaboration with participants to refine SNA resources ahead of roll out.

What we heard

Sector co-Chair updates

There is confusion about which government agency leads which parts of the reform. This makes it hard for representative organisations to guide their communities.

NDIA working groups want to know key reforms before they go public. This will help working groups to better prepare the community.

Group reflection / points of discussion

- Members supported strengthened co-design elements in the Engagement Framework.
- Members want to know if an activity is to inform, consult, collaborate or co-design.
- What are the supports needs assessment questions and weightings, and how are complex needs are reflected?
- Participants want to review their assessment reports before being finalised.
- How will the new assessments process will capture complex or psychosocial disabilities, or families with multiple participants in their household?

Work planning

- The group wanted to clarify their role and scope to better focus their efforts.
- Members want to understand where we are in the overall reform program journey.
- Although co-design demand is low at this stage of the journey, early sector advice can prevent downstream consequences.
- The group could help refine the assessments process after rollout, as well as budgeting, workforce capability and participant experience.

What we agreed on

- Communication between NDIA and the group needs to be clear and timely, and members need to know where we are in the NFP reform process.
- There is value in strengthening co-design elements in the Engagement Framework update, including clear definitions of informing, consulting, collaborating and co-designing.
- There is a shared commitment to improve understanding of the new assessment process, the core SNA tool, the PECQ and how the participant experience will be captured.
- The group’s role, scope and program of work need to be further defined.

Who we met with

Participants, Disability Representative and Carer Organisations, Independent Advisory Council and NDIA staff.

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