

**From:** Make Indigenous Poverty History <grussell@ncca.org.au>

**Subject:** Make Indigenous Poverty History update

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# Indigenous MAKE POVERTY HISTORY.

## Campaign update

April 26th 2007

Greetings all,

Here we are coming into May already, and, of course, this month is huge in terms of dates and significant anniversaries. As always, we have tried to create actions that include some learning, some thinking and some activism. The big focus is on the end of May when we celebrate Sorry Day, and the 40th anniversary of the referendum. Good luck in your activities, let us know how you go.

### 40 Days of Action for 40 Years of Inaction - MAY

Download action sheets for each of the days at the MIPH website - [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#).

#### 1st May - Justice Day

On May 1st 1991, the Report into the Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody was handed down. This comprehensive report has played a significant role in shaping policies, in many aspects of Indigenous Affairs, at both State and Federal level. Therefore, on this day we are focusing on justice issues so that we understand what this important report found 16 years ago, and to remind ourselves about the issues still relevant today [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#).

#### 6th May - Anti-Violence Day

This day was initiated by the Open Binna (ear) Band from Gnibi College at Southern Cross University, who have plans to stomp out violence, particularly against children. The day has now been postponed until September, but read here how to get involved and join this great initiative [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#).

#### 13th May - Mother's Day

We all should take the time to show our mother's how much we appreciate all that they do for us. But what does poverty mean for Aboriginal mother's? How does ill health and lack of education impact on them particularly? [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#)

#### 15th May - International Day of Families

Family violence is a huge problem for the Australian community, with Indigenous people suffering disproportionately high rates. Studies show this can be attributed to the effects of colonisation. Debate can get heated when these issues are discussed - so where do you stand? [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#)

#### 22nd May - International day of biodiversity

Where there is cultural diversity there is biodiversity and Indigenous people make up 80-90 % of the world's cultural diversity. On this day take action on an issue that is threatening the Indigenous people in the Gulf of Carpentaria [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#).

#### 26th May - Sorry Day

### 40 Days of Action for 40 Years of Inaction

In 2007, we recognize the 40th anniversary of the referendum which changed the way that Indigenous people were regarded in this country. Sadly, the divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia remains stark; particularly in the areas of health, education and other key indicators of wellbeing. This year we invite you to take 40 days of action to rectify 40 years of inaction.

The 40 days of action are listed on a card and poster which are available from our office.

For each day we will post suggested actions on our website.

What will you do today to Make *Indigenous* Poverty History?

[40 Days of Action for 40 Days of Inaction](#)

### Quick Links

[Introduction to the campaign Resources](#)  
[Action Events](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

### MIPH t.shirts


Don't forget to show your support for the campaign by wearing an MIPH t-shirt to Sorry Day and other events. Order through the website: [www.makeindigenouspovertyhistory.org](http://www.makeindigenouspovertyhistory.org)

Sorry Day is held on the anniversary of the *Bringing Them Home* report. Events are being held around the country - find out how to join in [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#).

### 27th May - 40th Anniversary of the referendum.

Find out how you can mark this important day [Click here - 40 Days of Action Sheets](#).

### Torres Strait Islands

 Last year, while lobbying in Canberra, Bishop Saibo Mabo, invited us, and the politicians we met, to visit the Torres Strait to hear first hand how things are up there because too often the TSI story is not represented when we talk about "Indigenous affairs". There was a lot of support, for this, from all parties; but it was Andrew Bartlett, the Democrat Senator for Qld., (pictured above with Bishop Saibo Mabo, Pedro, Mayor of the Thursday Island, and Graeme Mundine) who took the initiative at this time.

The most consistent problems we heard about were issues with governance and housing. The TSI are subject to a complex system of councils and regional authorities. We heard from many people that this system complicates the ability of the agencies to properly deliver services.

Perhaps the most pressing issue is housing availability. A substantial amount of the housing stock on TI is public housing, which is means tested. So, when people get a good job, they are then expected to move out of their govt. housing and move into the private rental market. But what happens when the private rental market is severely limited and the rental market is distorted by the fact that mainland people who take jobs on the Islands receive rental assistance? The local people who seek to further their careers are significantly disadvantaged and struggle with the high cost of living. The fear of losing their home can really stifle their career aspirations. We heard about some good initiatives that are taking place, but we will stay in touch to see what else could be done.

We would like to thank, very much, the people we met, who shared so much with us. We appreciated the chance to talk to them about the MIPH campaign, but most of all we appreciated the opportunity to listen to their stories and learn first hand about the experience of living in the beautiful Torres Strait.

NB: this trip was made possible through funding received from Caritas Australia.

### Safina Walsh - Journeys

Safina Walsh's contemporary Indigenous art encompasses vibrant and intense tones, fluid contours and vivid imagery that intentionally portray themes of joyful hope. Her first solo exhibition, entitled 'Journeys' will showcase images ranging from the sea creatures of the Torres Strait, to topographic landscapes and the more traditional iconic Aboriginal art. Safina will be highlighting the [Make Indigenous Poverty History](#) campaign on opening night with guests having the opportunity to sign a poverty pole.

When: **Saturday 12th May 7pm** - exhibition 5th - 31st May  
Where: Lady Hawke Cafe - 1365 Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd. Mt Dandenong.

[www.artbysafina.com.au](http://www.artbysafina.com.au)

This campaign is all about getting involved and supporting initiatives that work. If you know about local programs and ideas that are making a difference please let us know. Also, don't forget to tell us

about activities that you organise to support the campaign, we'll post it on the website to inspire others.

Sincerely,  
NATSIEC

email: [natsiec@ncca.org.au](mailto:natsiec@ncca.org.au)

web: [www.makeindigenouspovertyhistory.org.au](http://www.makeindigenouspovertyhistory.org.au)

The **Make Indigenous Poverty History** campaign is an initiative of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission (NATSIEC) which is a commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

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