Flourishing Communities, Regional, Remote and Urban

Uniting Church in Australia ASSEMBLY

Our vision

"
We live in communities where we are connected and we care for one another.

In communities all over Australia, from our big cities to remote regions, we seek the well-being of each Australian and uplift those who are on the margins.
"

Our Key Asks

Governments must fund health services, education, housing, and support for rural and remote communities, ensuring access to clean water, affordable food, and reliable technology.

Investment in infrastructure builds resilience and disaster preparedness. Addressing the cost of living pressures, particularly in rural areas, and providing quality education for isolated children is essential.

Mental health services must be adequately funded, with a focus on rural access.

Efforts to reduce stigma around mental illness should continue, fostering community support.

IN THE PAST YEAR
1 in 5 Australians experienced mental illness

VISION
FOR A JUST AUSTRALIA

**Uniting Church in Australia
ASSEMBLY**

State of the Nation

In the past year, 1 in 5 Australians experienced mental illness, with 43% affected at some point in their lifetime.

Many children face bullying, abuse, or exclusion, with 1 in 5 youth reporting online threats and 1 in 3 experiencing regular school bullying. Workplace bullying also impacts 1 in 10 workers, while 1.7 million adults faced sexual harassment in 2021-22.

Rural communities contribute significantly to Australia's economy but are burdened by rising living costs, limited housing, and fewer health services. Rural areas experience higher disease rates, shorter life expectancy, and poorer access to mental health care.

These communities also endure frequent natural disasters, with rising costs for goods, repairs, and insurance. Self-harm and suicide rates are higher in remote areas, indicating the need for targeted support and services.

Addressing mental health, bullying, and access to resources in rural areas is crucial to ensure wellbeing.

Questions to ask

- How will you support communities impacted by extreme weather and natural disasters?
- What policies will you put in place to address mental health, including in rural and remote Australia?
- How are you addressing / will you address bullying and harassment in our workplaces and schools?
- What local initiatives are possible to address important social issues including mental health, illicit drug use and bullying?

VISION
FOR A JUST AUSTRALIA